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DIFFERENTIATED PSYCHOSOCIAL AND COGNITIVE PROFILES OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN BULLYING

Abstract

The aim of this study was to identify and compare the differentiated personality profiles of students involved in bullying situations as victims and aggressors. Bullying is viewed as aggressive behavior characterized by a power imbalance, repetition, and intentional harm, necessitating an analysis beyond a simple aggressor-victim dichotomy. The empirical study involved 71 students from Secondary School No. 66 in Almaty, with a mean age of 15.3 years. The methodology included a theoretical analysis of the literature and empirical methods utilizing the D. Olweus "Bullying"

questionnaire and the 14-PF questionnaire. The Olweus diagnostic revealed that 29 students had encountered bullying, with 19 classified as aggressors and 10 as victims. A comparison of the personality profiles of the “Victim” and “Bully” groups, conducted using the Mann-Whitney U-test, successfully identified five statistically significant differences. The Victim profile is characterized by heightened vulnerability in the emotional and regulatory spheres, showing significantly higher sensitivity (I+) and excitability/anxiety (D+), along with low self-control (Q3-) and circumspection (F-). Conversely, the Bully profile demonstrates a combination of external impulsiveness and internal tension. They are significantly more heedless (F+) and practical/realistic (I-). Additionally, they exhibit a high level of self-control (Q3+) and an elevated score on the Neurasthenia/Hamlet Factor (J+), indicating internal discomfort that is likely compensated for by aggressive behavior. Although definitive conclusions on statistical significance are limited by the small sample size, the findings clearly differentiate the personality profiles of bullying participants. Aggressors are impulsive individuals with high internal tension who employ regulated aggression. Victims are sensitive, anxious, and weakly self-controlled individuals. The results affirm the need for targeted, stratified interventions that account for the specific psychological mechanisms underlying each role.

Keywords: bullying, aggressive behavior, bully-victim, compensatory aggression, minors

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ДИФФЕРЕНЦИРОВАННЫЕ ПСИХОСОЦИАЛЬНЫЕ И КОГНИТИВНЫЕ ПРОФИЛИ УЧАЩИХСЯ, ПОДВЕРГШИХСЯ БУЛЛИНГУ

Аннотация

Целью данного исследования было выявление и сравнение дифференцированных профилей личности учащихся, подвергающихся буллингу как жертвам, так и агрессорам. Буллинг рассматривается как агрессивное поведение, характеризующееся дисбалансом власти, повторением и преднамеренным причинением вреда, что требует анализа, выходящего за рамки простой дихотомии «агрессор-жертва».

В эмпирическом исследовании приняли участие 71 учащийся средней школы № 66 города Алматы, средний возраст которых составил 15,3 года. Методология включала теоретический анализ литературы и эмпирические методы с использованием опросника Д. Ольшеуса «Буллинг» и опросника 14-PF. Диагностика Ольшеуса показала, что 29 учащихся столкнулись с буллингом, 19 из них были классифицированы как агрессоры, а 10 – как жертвы. Сравнение профилей личности групп «Жертва» и «Агрессор», проведенное с использованием U-критерия Манна-Уитни, позволило выявить пять статистически значимых различий.

Профиль «Жертва» характеризуется повышенной уязвимостью в эмоциональной и регуляторной сферах, демонстрируя значительно более высокую чувствительность (I+) и возбудимость/тревожность (D+), а также низкий самоконтроль (Q3-) и осмотренность (F-).

Напротив, профиль «Агрессор» демонстрирует сочетание внешней импульсивности и внутреннего напряжения. Они значительно более беспечны (F+) и практичны/реалистичны (I-). Кроме того, они демонстрируют высокий уровень самоконтроля (Q3+) и повышенный балл по фактору неврастения/гамлетизма (J+), что указывает на внутренний дискомфорт, который, вероятно, компенсируется агрессивным поведением.

Заключение: Хотя окончательные выводы о статистической значимости ограничены небольшим размером выборки, полученные результаты четко различают профили личности участников агрессии. Агрессоры — импульсивные личности с высоким уровнем внутреннего напряжения, использующие контролируемую агрессию. Жертвы — чувствительные, тревожные и слабоконтролируемые личности. Результаты подтверждают необходимость

целенаправленных, стратифицированных вмешательств, учитывающих специфические психологические механизмы, лежащие в основе каждой роли.

Ключевые слова: травля, агрессивное поведение, буллинг-жертва, компенсаторная агрессия, несовершеннолетние

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БУЛЛИНГКЕ ҰШЫРАҒАН ОҚУШЫЛАРДЫҢ САРАЛАНҒАН ПСИХОӘЛЕУМЕТТІК ЖӘНЕ КОГНИТИВТІ ПРОФИЛЬДЕРІ

Аңдатпа

Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты құрбандарға да, агрессорларға да қорқытуға ұшыраған оқушылардың жеке басының сараланған профильдерін анықтау және салыстыру болды. Қорқыту биліктің теңгерімсіздігімен, қайталануымен және қасақана зиян келтірумен сипатталатын агрессивті мінез-құлық ретінде қарастырылады, бұл қарапайым "агрессор-Құрбан" дихотомиясынан тыс талдауды қажет етеді.

Эмпирикалық зерттеуге Алматы қаласының № 66 орта мектебінің 71 оқушысы қатысты, олардың орташа жасы 15,3 жасты құрады. Әдістеме Д.Ольвеус "Буллинг" сауалнамасы мен 14-РФ сауалнамасын қолдана отырып, әдебиеттің теориялық талдауы мен эмпирикалық әдістерді қамтыды. Ольвеус диагнозы көрсеткендей, 29 оқушы қорқытуға тап болды, олардың 19 – ы агрессорлар, ал 10-ы құрбандар ретінде жіктелді. Манн-Уитнидің U критерийін қолдана отырып, "жәбірленуші" және "Агрессор" топтарының жеке профильдерін салыстыру бес статистикалық маңызды айырмашылықты анықтады.

"Жәбірленуші" профилі эмоционалды және реттеуші салалардағы осалдықтың жоғарылауымен сипатталады, бұл айтарлықтай жоғары сезімталдықты (I+) және қозғыштықты /мазасыздықты (D+), сондай-ақ өзін-өзі бақылаудың төмендігін (Q3 -) және парасаттылықты (F -) көрсетеді.

Керісінше, "Агрессор" профилі сыртқы импульсивтілік пен ішкі кернеудің үйлесімін көрсетеді. Олар әлдеқайда немқұрайлы (F+) және практикалық/шынайы (I-). Сонымен қатар, олар өзін-өзі бақылаудың жоғары деңгейін (Q3+) және неврастения/гамлетизм факторы (J+) бойынша жоғары баллды көрсетеді, бұл агрессивті мінез-құлықпен өтелетін ішкі ыңғайсыздықты көрсетеді.

Қорытынды: статистикалық маңыздылық туралы қорытынды Тұжырымдар үлгінің кішігірім өлшемімен шектелгенімен, алынған нәтижелер агрессияға қатысушылардың жеке профильдерін нақты ажыратады. Агрессорлар - бақыланатын агрессияны қолданатын ішкі шиеленістің жоғары деңгейі бар импульсивті тұлғалар. Жәбірленушілер-сезімтал, мазасыз және бақыланбайтын адамдар. Нәтижелер әр рөлдің негізінде жатқан нақты психологиялық механизмдерді ескере отырып, мақсатты, стратификацияланған араласулардың қажеттілігін растайды.

Түйін сөздер: қорлау, агрессивті мінез-құлық, қорқыту құрбаны, компенсаторлық агрессия, кәмелетке толмағандар

Introduction. Bullying is a pervasive form of aggressive behavior characterized by an imbalance of power, repetition, and a deliberate intent to cause harm. Understanding this phenomenon requires moving beyond a simple dichotomy of aggressor and target. Contemporary research delineates a spectrum of involvement, classifying students into three primary roles: the Pure Perpetrator (Bully), the Pure Victim (Target), and the Bully-Victim (individuals who both perpetrate and experience victimization). Effective prevention and intervention strategies depend critically upon the nuanced understanding that the personal characteristics, cognitive deficits, and emotional architectures associated with each role are fundamentally distinct [1].

Methods. The theoretical methods employed included theoretical analysis of the extant scientific literature, along with the generalization and systematization of these data. The empirical research methods are represented by the "Bullying" methodology by D. Olweus, and the 14-PF methodology. In the course of the study, the D. Olweus questionnaire was administered, which helped identify groups prone to participating in a bullying situation as aggressors and victims. Subsequently, the participants were divided into control (aggressors) and experimental (victims) groups. The 14-PF questionnaire was administered to both groups, and the results obtained were compared. The study involved 71 students from Secondary School #66 in the city of Almaty. The gender ratio was 39 females and 32 males. The average age of the students was 15.3.

Results. The analysis of differentiated participant profiles is crucial because strategies effective for mitigating anxiety in a pure victim may fail entirely for a bully-victim suffering from externalized aggression and impulsivity. By identifying the specific psychological mechanisms driving involvement—ranging from narcissistic defense mechanisms to impaired social problem-solving—clinicians and educators can deploy tailored responses, thereby improving the efficacy and longevity of anti-bullying programs [2].

The following table synthesizes the key distinguishing characteristics identified across psychological, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions, providing an anchor for the detailed examination of each role (Table 1) [3,4].

Table 1. Comparative Characteristics Across Bullying Participant Roles

Characteristic Domain	Bully (Perpetrator)	Victim	Bully-Victim (Highest Risk)
Primary Psychological State	Narcissism, Dominance, Defiance	Anxiety, Depression, Submissiveness	Poorest Overall Psychosocial Health
Key Cognitive Mechanism	High Disengagement; Attribution Bias	Low Assertiveness; Negative Self-Image	Impulsivity; Poor Problem-Solving Skills
Academic/School Outcome	Poor School Adjustment; Difficulty with Rules	Difficulty Making Friends; Loneliness	Lowest GPA, Lower Achievement Scores (Highest Risk)
Behavioral Risk (Externalizing)	Drug/Substance Use; Overt Aggression; Conduct Problems	Submissiveness; Physical Distress	Delinquency, Weapons Possession, High Injury Risk

The profile of the pure perpetrator is defined by a constellation of traits centered on dominance, aggression, and specific personality deficits. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses confirm a positive association between high narcissistic traits and elevated levels of bullying involvement in adolescence. These individuals are frequently characterized by dominant and defiant behaviors, often exhibiting generalized aggression, conduct problems, and the presence of callous-unemotional traits. They are also prone to excessive substance and alcohol use, difficulty with rules, and poor school adjustment.

Interestingly, research indicates that bullies, despite their dominant external presentation, are also reported to be prone to low self-esteem, a vulnerability often shared with victims. The positive association with high narcissistic traits concurrent with reports of low self-esteem suggests that the bullying behavior is frequently an expression of **compensatory aggression**. The aggressive drive for

dominance functions as a defensive maneuver designed to protect a vulnerable ego structure. Bullying, in this context, is deployed to maintain perceived social status and superiority, preventing the external collapse of a fragile self-concept and distinguishing the perpetrator from individuals whose high self-worth is genuinely stable [5,6].

The sustained engagement in bullying is predicated on specific cognitive distortions that facilitate the initiation and maintenance of aggression without guilt or remorse. Two critical mechanisms are the hostile attribution bias and moral disengagement.

Aggressive youth exhibit a hypersensitivity to ambiguous peer behaviors, often interpreting neutral or accidental actions as hostile or threatening. This perceptual distortion, known as the hostile attribution bias, dictates the initial reaction to social cues. This bias has been demonstrably linked to relational aggression, particularly when the perpetrator perceives relational provocations. Therefore, when faced with an uncertain social cue, the perpetrator's cognitive processing predisposes them to interpret the situation as necessitating an aggressive or retaliatory response, which sets the stage for bullying [7].

Once an aggressive action is initiated, moral controls must be neutralized to allow for repeated perpetration. Bullies consistently exhibit the highest levels of moral disengagement, a process rooted in egocentric reasoning. Moral disengagement functions by allowing the individual to rationalize their harmful actions, fostering a state of indifference toward the victim and effectively eliminating empathetic feelings.

The sequential nature of these two cognitive deficits is crucial for understanding the behavioral cycle. Hostile attribution bias dictates the initial perception, serving as a trigger for the aggressive response by misinterpreting an ambiguous cue as justification for action. Moral Disengagement then steps in to provide the ethical justification, neutralizing the internal conflict that would normally arise from harming another person, thus enabling the sustained pattern of aggression without remorse. Effective intervention, therefore, requires a two-pronged approach that targets both the perceptual distortion and the subsequent ethical rationalization.

The pure victim role is characterized by significant psychological distress and a lack of effective social and behavioral mechanisms to counteract victimization. Their profile is dominated by internalizing psychopathology and deficits in emotional regulation. Victimization is intrinsically linked to heightened psychological morbidity. Bullied students experience a significantly higher prevalence of internalizing disorders, including anxiety and depression. Quantitative analysis shows that bullied individuals had a mean score of 43.30 ± 19.74 on the Primary Care Anxiety and Depression Scale, indicating elevated rates of these conditions compared to non-bullied peers. Concurrently, victims suffer from impaired self-perception. They report consistently lower self-esteem, with a mean score of 44.62 ± 9.94 on self-esteem scales, and maintain a generally negative self-image. Behaviorally, victims tend to be physically smaller than their peers, submissive, and lack assertiveness. The psychological impact of victimization creates an internalizing feedback loop. The distress stemming from high anxiety and depression compounds the existing behavioral style of submissiveness and low assertiveness. This state of chronic psychological distress and low self-worth reinforces behaviors that signal vulnerability to potential aggressors, inadvertently making the student a more visible and predictable target. This cyclical process traps the student in the victim role, demonstrating how internalizing pathology sustains external victimization [8].

Social difficulties are central to the victim's experience. Victims frequently exhibit difficulties making friends, which contributes to profound feelings of loneliness and physical and psychological distress. In managing the emotional fallout of being targeted, victims frequently employ **maladaptive emotion regulation strategies**. These strategies, especially prevalent in the early period following victimization, include rumination, self-blame, acceptance, and planning. Compared to perpetrators and non-involved control groups, victims demonstrate a higher overall reliance on these maladaptive techniques. While both bullies and victims display difficulty in the mentalizing of emotions, particularly anger, victims may possess a slight communicative advantage. Victims tend to use more

terms related to anger, suggesting a marginally higher capacity for verbalizing emotional states compared to perpetrators. However, the core issue remains the chronic psychological distress coupled with a reliance on self-defeating regulatory strategies [9,10].

The Bully-Victim group represents the highest-risk demographic in bullying research, characterized by a complex dual pathology that merges the internalizing deficits of the victim with the externalizing behaviors of the bully. Bully-victims are distinguished by a complex profile that includes impulsivity, low self-esteem, poor social skills, and poor problem-solving capabilities. They suffer from the combined effects of aggression and targeting. This convergence of vulnerabilities results in severe psychosocial compromise. Bully-victims report the **poorest psychosocial health** when compared to pure bullies, pure victims (who only marginally report better psychological health), and neutral students. They also experience greater **social isolation** than all other groups, which significantly contributes to their classification as an extremely high-risk population. They are at increased risk for a range of problems, including psychological disturbance, depression, anxiety, ADHD, and conduct disorder. The combination of high distress and externalized aggression places bully-victims at the extreme end of behavioral risk. They report the greatest levels of problem behavior, including delinquency, substance use, and specific acts such as **weapons possession**. Furthermore, they face a higher risk for physical injury due to their propensity for externalized behaviors and involvement in aggressive conflicts. The group's high-risk status stems from a nexus of violence and isolation. Impulsivity and poor social competence drive them into aggressive conflict, leading to severe social rejection and maximal isolation. Crucially, they lack both the inhibitory control of the pure bully and the protective social network of the pure victim. This absence of protective factors and the subsequent isolation escalate their vulnerability, driving them toward highly dangerous coping mechanisms, which manifest in the alarming statistics regarding delinquency and injury [11].

The multifaceted struggles of bully-victims translate directly into academic failure, compounding their long-term developmental risk. This group demonstrates significantly poorer academic adjustment than their peers, evidenced by **lower GPAs and lower achievement test scores**. Furthermore, bully-victims report the worst attitudes toward school. While poor school adjustment is also a characteristic of pure bullies, the data shows that pure bullies do not necessarily hold better school attitudes than bully-victims, underscoring the severity of the bully-victim's academic disengagement. Their cumulative social, psychological, and academic challenges classify them as one of the most urgent populations for intervention within the school environment.

The manifestation and stability of bullying behavior are significantly modulated by contextual factors such as gender, age, and socioeconomic status. Gender provides a necessary lens through which to examine aggression. Boys are generally found to be more overtly aggressive and overtly victimized than girls. Conversely, girls are typically more relationally victimized. However, across international studies, findings regarding the prevalence of relational aggression between genders are mixed, with some studies showing similar rates or slightly higher rates in boys, while others show higher rates in girls [12]. For boys, bullying behavior appears to be somewhat more stable across school years and is specifically related to lower levels of prosocial behavior. This stability suggests that male bullying may be more strongly linked to entrenched antisocial personality traits and a pervasive lack of prosocial skills. In contrast, research indicates that bullying in girls may be "more related to social group dynamics". This observation implies that female relational aggression might be more strategic, utilized as a tool for social control and status maneuvering, making it highly sensitive to peer context and potentially less stable as an inherent individual trait. This differential stability has profound implications for intervention design, requiring a focus on individual trait change for boys and group dynamic restructuring for girls (Table 2) [13].

Table 2. Gender differences in bullying manifestation

Bullying Role/Type	Boys	Girls	Key Observation
Overt Aggression	Generally higher and more common	Lower rates	Boys report greater acceptance of physical aggression
Relational Aggression	Mixed findings, often similar to girls' rates	More relationally victimized than boys	Pattern is mixed for perpetration across countries
Behavioral Stability	More stable across school years; related to lower prosocial behavior	Less stable; potentially more related to social group dynamics	Suggests trait vs. context dependence

Longitudinal studies indicate that for young adolescents, particularly those in 8th through 10th grades, bullying roles show moderate consistency across new and familiar settings. This persistence suggests that established behavioral patterns are difficult to shift in this age bracket, necessitating early intervention. A systematic review of anti-bullying programs confirms that the resulting outcomes are significantly influenced not only by gender and age but also by the **socio-economic status** of the participants. These variables must be systematically analyzed when designing and evaluating intervention efficacy .

The demonstrated differentiation in personal characteristics across bullying roles mandates the deployment of targeted, stratified intervention modalities. For the **Perpetrator**, intervention must primarily focus on cognitive restructuring to address the Hostile Attribution Bias and on strategies to activate moral empathy to counteract Moral Disengagement. This could involve targeted cognitive-behavioral group interventions aimed at improving impulse control and shifting ethical justification processes. For the **Victim**, the essential intervention needs include implementing social skills training to address poor social competence and loneliness , coupled with comprehensive clinical support to manage the high prevalence of internalizing disorders such as anxiety and depression. The **Bully-Victim** population, due to its unique combination of extreme internalizing and externalizing risk , necessitates the highest intensity and most comprehensive clinical support. Interventions must simultaneously address their impulsivity, academic failure, and severe psychosocial isolation.

Research assessing intervention efficacy suggests that whole-school interventions are generally more effective in achieving broad reduction in bullying behaviors than interventions delivered solely through classroom curricula or social skills training alone. Programs such as KiVa have shown effectiveness, particularly among elementary school students, although efficacy among middle school youth is often conditional on age. Specific focused interventions, such as the Social skills group intervention, which targets children with high social anxiety and victimization, have been shown to effectively reduce aggressive behavior and antisocial affiliation, though the measured effect sizes tend to be modest. Notably, the systematic review concluded that the overall efficacy of programs is moderated by participant age, gender, and social-economic status. However, some focused interventions showed encouraging results, demonstrating that the patterns of behavioral change did not differ significantly based on the reason for inclusion or the participant's gender, suggesting boys and girls benefited equally from treatment in those specific contexts.

To further refine intervention efficacy, future research must concentrate on underlying biological and neurological determinants. Empirical attention is needed to understand the heritability of perpetration (aggression) and victimization, specifically examining gene-by-environment interactions that may predispose certain youth to involvement. Furthermore, understanding the neurobiology of

emotional regulation in bullies is critical. Such research promises to inform the development of highly specific, supportive strategies designed to reduce the sustained perpetration of bullying behaviors.

In addition to the theoretical analysis of the material, an empirical study was conducted. A total of 71 students from Secondary School No. 66 participated in the study. The research consisted of two stages:

1. Identifying propensity to participate in bullying situations

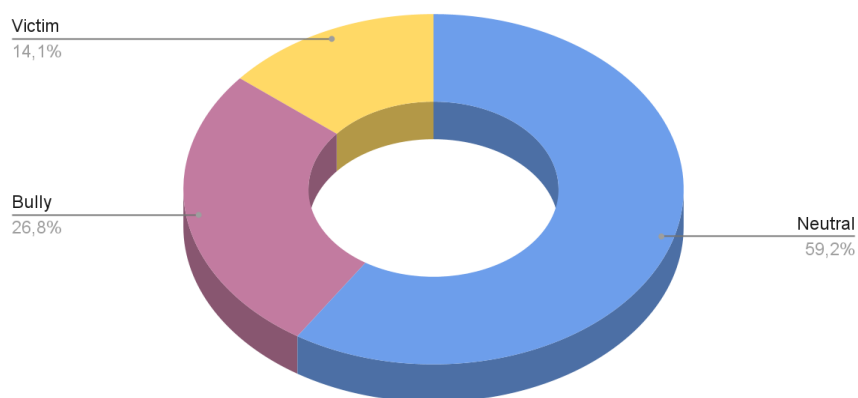
At this stage, students were asked to complete the "Bullying" diagnostic questionnaire by D.Olweus (likely the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire). This questionnaire enables the determination of whether a student has encountered bullying and the role they assumed: as a perpetrator, a victim, or a neutral participant.

2. Comparison of participants personality profiles

The Olweus diagnostic successfully identified three categories of students: those prone to aggression, those prone to victim behavior, and those who were neutral. During the second stage of the study, we planned to compare the students prone to aggression and those prone to victim behavior with the goal of identifying unique behavioral patterns within these distinct groups.

In the course of the D. Olweus diagnostic, it was revealed that among the studied sample, there were cases where students had encountered a bullying situation. 29 students had faced bullying. The breakdown of roles among this group was: 19 of them were bullies (aggressors) and 10 were victims of bullying (Diagram 1)

Diagram 1. Results of D. Olweus's diagnostics



The results for the victims and the bullies were compared using the U-criterion (Mann-Whitney U test). In the course of the comparative analysis, some differences were found, but due to the small sample size and the low level of significance, definitive conclusions regarding their statistical significance cannot be drawn (Table 3).

The comparison of student personality profiles, divided into "Victim" and "Bully" groups, using the 14-Factor Questionnaire (14-PF) and the Mann-Whitney U-test, revealed five statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) that clearly delineate two contrasting psychological profiles.

The Victim group demonstrates heightened vulnerability in both the emotional and regulatory spheres. They are significantly more sensitive (I+) (mean 7.8 vs. 4.8 for bullies), which indicates greater emotionality, susceptibility to feelings, and tenderness. Victims are also characterized by high excitability (D+) (mean 6.1 vs. 3.0), pointing to a tendency towards anxiety and reactivity. Behaviorally, they exhibit low self-control (Q3-) (mean 3.5 vs. 5.4) and high circumspection/restraint

(F-) (mean 3.6 vs. 6.6), which collectively makes them less organized and socially passive, increasing their vulnerability.

Table 3. The comparison of results between the **Victim group** and the **Bully group** was conducted using the **U-criterion (Mann-Whitney U test)**

№	Factors	Mean Victim	Mean Bully	u	№	Factors	Mean Victim	Mean Bully	u
1	A	7	5,5	>0,05	8	H	5,5	4,8	>0,05
2	B	6,2	7,8	>0,05	9	I	7,8	4,8	<0,05
3	C	3,8	4,6	>0,05	10	J	3,5	6,1	<0,05
4	D	6,1	3	<0,05	11	O	4,5	4,5	>0,05
5	E	6,7	5	>0,05	12	Q ₂	5,4	6,8	>0,05
6	F	3,6	6,6	<0,05	13	Q ₃	3,5	5,4	<0,05
7	G	5,8	6,3	>0,05	14	Q ₄	4,9	6,1	>0,05

In contrast, the Bully profile is characterized by a combination of external impulsiveness and internal tension. They are significantly more heedless, impulsive, socially bold (F+) (mean 6.6) while being realistic/practical (I-) (mean 4.8), suggesting less empathy and more rigidity in judgment. Despite their behavioral unruliness, the Bullies score high on the Neurasthenia/Hamlet Factor (J+) (mean 6.1 vs. 3.5 for victims), pointing to internal discomfort or tension that is likely compensated for by aggressive external behavior. Importantly, their actions are not purely reactive, as they possess higher self-control (Q3+) (mean 5.4), which allows their aggression to be more purposeful and regulated.

Thus, Victims are sensitive, anxious, and weakly self-controlled individuals, while Bullies are impulsive, emotionally tough individuals with high internal tension, who utilize purposeful aggression as a means of adaptation or release from discomfort.

Conclusion. The analysis of student participants in bullying demonstrates that involvement is not a unitary state but a spectrum defined by unique, differentiated psychological and cognitive profiles. Pure Perpetrators are characterized by a compensatory blend of high narcissism and defensiveness, facilitated by hostile attribution and moral disengagement, which enables aggression without remorse. Pure Victims struggle predominantly with internalizing distress, low self-esteem, and maladaptive emotional regulation, perpetuating a feedback loop of vulnerability and targeting.

The Bully-Victim stands out as an extremely high-risk group, suffering from the convergence of profound internalizing distress, cognitive deficits (impulsivity, poor problem-solving), and externalized behavioral pathology (delinquency, weapons possession). Their extreme social isolation and pervasive academic failure necessitate the highest levels of clinical and educational resource allocation.

Effective anti-bullying policy requires acknowledging this stratification, moving decisively beyond simple, one-size-fits-all strategies. Interventions must be precisely tailored to target the specific psychological mechanisms driving each role: cognitive restructuring for the perpetrator, social skills and clinical mental health support for the victim, and highly comprehensive, multi-faceted interventions for the high-risk bully-victim population, all while accounting for moderating variables such as age, gender, and social-economic factors.

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