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WHO ARE SCHOOL BULLY-VICTIMS AND HOW CAN I HELP THEM: PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES FROM SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Introduction:

Bully/victims mean someone who is both being bullied and is bullying others simultaneously. They have more problems in life adaption, interpersonal relationship, academic performances, and mental disorder than bullies or victims (Copeland, Wolke, Angold, & Costello, 2013; Khamis, 2015; Zych et al., 2017). Therefore, they require greater attention and assistance from school teachers. However, compared to bullies or victims, until now, there still lacks studies for exploring how can teachers handle their bullying and victimizing situation. Moreover, according to the idea of social information processing (SIP) model, teachers' handling strategies may be influenced by their views to bully-victims. However, notably, there also lacks relevant studies to explore teachers' views to bully-victims. In sum, this study aims to explore school teachers' views regarding bully-victims, and their handling strategies for bully-victims.

Methods:

A total of 10 school teachers from Taiwan were invited to participate in interviews (3 males and 7 females; an average of 8.9 years of teaching experience). This study collected data by semi-structured interviews. The qualitative data analysis method (Wolcott, 2008) was adopted to analyze these data. In order to increase the trustworthiness of this study, the calculation of Intercoder reliability and Case analysis meeting are employed in this study (Merriam, 2002).

Results:

Most of the teachers believed that the bully-victims initially are victims due to their improper characteristics and behaviors. For instance, they have poor emotional control; they easily provoke others; they cannot read others' expressions well. These will lead to situations that they often have conflicts with others and then gradually are bullied. However, with the accumulations of negative impacts caused by their continual victimization such as accumulations of negative emotions and low self-esteem, this will cause them to attack more vulnerable targets to enhance their self-esteem, vent their emotions, transfer victimized targets, and prove their capabilities. Therefore, they eventually become bully-victims.

Most of the teachers initially recognized bully-victims as victims. However, when they have more and more interactions with bully-victims, and realize more and more perspectives from bully-victims' peers, they will begin to adjust their views to bully-victims. Notably, these views to bully-victims will influence teachers' handling strategies to them.

Because the bully-victims' situations are complicated and school bullying is a school level incident, most of the teachers adopt handling strategies based on the idea of ecological system theory to solve bully-victims' situation. Notably, because of bully-victims not only bully others but also are bullied, teachers prefer to employ both assistance and punishment in parallel for solving bully-victims' needs and problems.

Implications:

1. Teachers should pay more attention to the causes of bully-victims so that they can prevent initial victims from becoming bully-victims.
2. Teachers should comprehensively collect information from the bully-victims' entire system for understanding the causes of bully-victims' bullying or victimizing situation so that organize appropriate handling strategies to intervene them.
3. Cooperating with the entire system of bully-victims and combining discipline and assistance strategies for helping bully-victims is really important.

keywords: school bullying, teachers, teachers' views, handling strategies, bully-victims.

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