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## Using the PhotoStory Method to understand the cultural context of youth victimisation in the Punjab

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Bullying is an international issue that is only just beginning to be researched in India and anecdotal evidence in Punjab, India, has suggested that most schools in the Punjab are in denial about bullying on campus. Our aim was to investigate the nature of bullying in this region using the PhotoStory Method. We sought to discover how young people in India perceived and experienced incidents of bullying. Three Punjabi schools were issued with ipads that students could use to email the researchers their illustrated stories about bullying. Using the Pic Collage App, 33 students aged 12-15 sent PhotoStories about experiences of victimization. Many stories described incidents of physical harassment, name calling and 'Eve teasing', which left students feeling sad, embarrassed, depressed and helpless. However, only four PhotoStories described incidents that met the definition of bullying i.e. that involved repetitive, hurtful behaviour perpetrated by a person or persons that could be considered more 'powerful' than the victim. Nonetheless, the stories, while not lengthy and overly descriptive, did indicate that physical acts of aggression between peers were common in and outside school. The findings are discussed in relation to definitional issues and the need to implement anti-violence programs in Indian schools.

**Keywords:** bullying, eve teasing, photostory, punjab, indian adolescents

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## Introduction

Research suggests that about half of the school students in India experience some form of bullying either at school or online. A recent 2012 Microsoft survey of bullying involving 7,644 young people aged 8-17 in 25 countries, found that Indian youth had a high rate of bullying and were ranked the third highest of all the countries in cyberbullying (53%). Unlike most other countries, the prevalence of cyberbullying and face-to-face bullying in India was found to be almost the same (Microsoft Corporation, 2012).

While bullying is an international issue, it is only just beginning to be researched in India. The extent of this pervasive issue has been highlighted by the research of Sundaram and Alexander (2012) in a South Indian study, which showed that 58.7% of male and 65.9% of female students aged 14 to 18 believed that bullying was present on campus. Another study in Southern India of adolescents aged 14-16 by Srisiva, Thirumoorthi and Sujatha (2013) found the prevalence of bullying by peers and class mates was 56%, while only 7% of respondents in this study indicated that they had not been subjected to any form of bullying.

Furthermore, a cross-national study of bullying in Melbourne, Seattle and Mumbai in 2010 by Solomon, Solomon, Toumbourou, and Catalano (2013) found an average prevalence rate of about 28% for a representative sample of Mumbai students in year 5 and year 9. These statistics are alarming since research by Skrzypiec, Slee, Askell-Williams & Lawson (2012) and Gini & Pozzoli (2008) suggests that young people involved in bullying are at greater risk of psycho-social maladjustment and mental health problems than those who have no involvement in bullying. In a study of 1,313 South Australian adolescents, Skrzypiec et al. (2012) found that students who were involved in bullying, as victims, bullies or bully-victims were more likely to be screened as abnormal on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 1997).

The reasons for being bullied were examined by Srisiva, et al., (2013) in their Southern India study of young people. They found that over two-thirds (67%) of respondents indicated that they were bullied because of poor academic performance, while just over one third (36%) reported being bullied because of their skin colour, just under one third (31%) because they were poor and about one in eight (13%) because of their caste. However, India is a diverse and complex country, comprising 29 states (Singh et al., 2003) and seven union territories. There are various languages, religions, and customs amongst its people, although English is generally taught in schools and it is widely spoken. While Hindi is the national language, there are 22 officially recognized languages, each with a distinct script and literature, and vast cultural differences exist between people living in the north and south of India. Within India there are also a myriad of sub-castes with four main castes as well as the 'Dalits' or outcastes. The various castes operate in a divisive manner and result in mutually exclusive cultural groups with their own values and beliefs (Rajan, n.d.). With such cultural diversity the variety of reasons associated with bullying may vary from one region to another. Our research was centred in Northern India, in the Punjab region, where research on bullying has been sparse. Anecdotal evidence in Punjab, India, suggested that most schools in the Punjab are in denial about bullying on campus. Our aim in this study was to investigate the nature of bullying in this region using the PhotoStory Method. We sought to discover how well young people in India perceived and experienced incidents of bullying using an innovative method (PhotoStory) to collect data regarding their experiences of bullying.

The PhotoStory method is an adaptation of the photovoice methodology, which is framed in feminist theory (Wilkin & Liamputtong, 2010) and is consistent with the principles of participatory research (Israel, Schulz, Parker & Becker, 1998). The photovoice method was first defined by Wang, Cash and Powers (2000) as “a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique” (p. 82). Photographs taken by participants in a photovoice study are used to highlight issues that require change (Drew, Duncan & Sawyer, 2010). At the end of the study, the photos taken by participants are organised for showing, particularly to the targeted audience, in an exhibition, a book publication or some other visual display. The aim is to use the photos to ‘voice’ participants concerns and lobby for change. So the photovoice approach seeks emancipation, as it facilitates individual empowerment using the photos as a vehicle of expression to petition change (Catalani & Minkler, 2010).

There are several advantages to using photovoice. This approach engages participants whose voices are not typically heard because they feel intimidated or lack confidence, and who are reluctant to come forward to add their voice to the issue at hand (Strack, Lovelace, Jordan & Holmes, 2010). Cohen (2012) noted that the option of using photographs eases any reticence felt by participants to express their opinion. Photovoice studies can “challenge participants, provide nuances, trigger memories, lead to new perspectives and explanations, and help to avoid researcher misinterpretation” (Hurworth, 2003, p. 3). This approach is also effective for bridging the power gap between the researcher and a participant (Keremane & McKay, 2011). Photographic data provided by participants is more likely to reflect their personal world and inner thoughts, as well as offer insights that are not easily captured by words and discussions (Bessell, Deese & Medina, 2007; Palibroda, Krieg, Murdock & Havelock, 2009).

The photovoice approach is also flexible and open to adaptations and adjustments (Wilkin & Liamputtong, 2010). Catalani and Minkler (2010) have noted that “the majority of photovoice efforts alter Wang’s methodology to suit the needs and constraints of researchers’ unique projects. As a result of this tailoring, the manifestations of partnership and of photovoice methodology vary broadly across the participatory spectrum” (p. 447). The addition of stories, which are attached to the photos, is one adaptation that has proved particularly useful. In their study of sustainable water management in rural Australia, Keremane and McKay (2011) altered the photovoice method by asking participants to record their thoughts about each photograph taken. This new version of the photovoice approach, Keremane and McKay termed ‘PhotoStory’. An added advantage of the PhotoStory method is the ability to obtain rich descriptions as photos are used to trigger stories that illustrate a participant’s thoughts and concerns. In 2013 researchers at Flinders University used a PhotoStory approach to investigate the perceptions of child well-being by Australian parents (see Skrzypiec, Murray-Harvey & Krieg, 2013).

We reasoned that Indian children, with limited English literacy skills, would not find the task of taking photographs to assist them to describe bullying daunting and that it would be easier for them than discussions broken by the translations of an interpreter. The aim of our study was to gain an understanding of bullying from the child’s perspective. In addition and compliant with the photovoice approach, we sought to

collate the children's PhotoStories into a book, which would be shown to school educators and other stakeholders to raise awareness and counter denials that bullying was non-existent in Punjabi schools.

It is common in photo studies for researchers to supply participants with cameras (eg. Drew, Duncan, & Sawyer, 2010; Gabhainn & Sixsmith, 2006; Keremane & McKay, 2011). However, since we sought stories together with photos we found a suitable 'app', namely 'Pic Collage' that was free and could easily be downloaded and used with an ipad. The Pic Collage app is a video and photo-editing application that allows text to be added to photos, or videos, which are embedded on the same page and saved as a .jpg image. It is available in several languages, including English, French, Italian, German and Chinese, although currently it does not accommodate any Indian languages. An added feature of 'Pic Collage' is that it allows the edited collage to be saved and uploaded to social websites or sent to others by email. In our study we provided schools with ipads, which had the Pic Collage App that students could take a turn in using, and which could be e-mailed to us in Australia.

Ethics approval to undertake this study was provided by each of the Universities before the data collection began.

## **Method**

It is standard practice to provide a definition of bullying to research participants to ensure consistency of understanding. For example, a study by Skrzypiec, Slee, Murray-Harvey & Pereira (2011) included the following description for students completing a questionnaire about bullying:

Students sometimes bully students at school by deliberately and repeatedly hurting or upsetting them in some way; for example, by hitting or pushing them around, teasing them or leaving them out of things on purpose. But it is not bullying/harassment when two young people of about the same strength have the odd fight or quarrel. (p.294)

However, we deliberately did not follow this protocol in this study. This was because we wished to examine how young people in India would describe incidents that they perceived as 'bullying', particularly in terms of how they felt and responded to the incident. Indeed, we wished to investigate how closely their descriptions of 'bullying' incidents would fit this definition. While instructions (and responses) were in English, Indian researchers described behaviours that were commonly referred to in the research literature as 'bullying' such as being pushed, hit or kicked, excluded and teased, to participants in Punjabi. The Indian researchers did not include descriptions of repeated acts or of any power imbalance between the victim and perpetrator.

We visited schools with our Indian colleagues and provided three Punjabi schools with ipads for use in the PhotoStory study and which they could keep once the research was over. We set-up the ipads and demonstrated the Pic Collage App to one staff member at each school. We asked the staff member and our Indian colleagues to recruit student volunteers for the study. Students at one city and two rural Punjabi schools were asked to use the Pic Collage App on the ipad to express their views of bullying.

Students were invited to:

Use a photograph or picture to illustrate something that you would like to tell us about bullying. What you might like to tell us might just be an opinion that you have, or it may involve telling us about something that you have witnessed or experienced. If you tell us about a bullying incident try and tell us how it made you feel and about what you or others did or should have done, about it.

Participants were instructed to follow ethical protocol:

If you want to use a picture, or take a photo that has a person in it that is not you, you need to get permission from them and if that person is someone aged less than 18, you also need to get permission from her/his parent.

The ipads were left at the schools for students to use and over a period of 6 months they e-mailed their PhotoStories to researchers in Australia, who consulted with the Indian researchers to interpret the results. Being able to easily send their PhotoStories direct to the researchers was a strong feature of this procedure as it helped ensure the anonymity of the students.

## **Results**

PhotoStories were received from 33 Punjabi students. The average age of students was 13.7 yrs. Just over half (57.6%) of the participants who sent stories were males. As shown in Tables I and II, all of the stories described incidents where the author experienced victimization, which in most cases (83.9%) involved male perpetrators. Just over one third (n=7) of the 19 males who sent PhotoStories indicated that they were bullied by another male or males who were stronger or older, and therefore more 'powerful' than them. However, only four PhotoStories described incidents that met the definition of bullying i.e. that involved repetitive, hurtful behaviour perpetrated by a person or persons that could be considered more 'powerful' than the victim (see Figure 1 for examples). This included three stories by females who were bullied by males. It should be noted that in India females are commonly perceived as inferior and second class citizens (Sekher & Hatti, 2010).

### *Types of incidents*

A large proportion of the stories (n=13) described incidents of physical harassment – of being pushed or beaten. Figure 2 shows examples of physical aggression by males towards a female aged 13 and a male aged 14.

Commonly reported amongst students were incidents involving teasing, particularly name calling. As shown in Figure 3, using the family name to tease an individual was frequently reported by some students.

'Eve-teasing', which refers to a wide range of acts, from verbal taunting and bodily touching to physical assaults on women (Rogers, 2008, p. 79), was described by several of the females who sent stories about the harassment they experienced from males (see Figures 1 & 4 for examples).

**Table I: Summary of Male Story tellers and their PhotoStories**

Age	Gender	Perpetuator	Aggression type	Story summary	Notes	Feelings
12	m	males	exclusion	excluded by boys in his class	no mention of power imbalance	helpless
12	m	male	teasing	had plate of food kicked and teased by an <b>older boy</b>	no mention of repetition	
12	m	males	teasing	teased by other male Cricketers	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	
13	m	male	name calling	made fun of parents' name in front of whole class	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	
13	m	male	teasing	pushed school bag and teased him	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	depressed
13	m	male	physical	slapped by an <b>older boy</b> for no reason	no mention of repetition	embarrassed
14	m	male	physical	hit by a water bottle by an <b>older boy</b> when trying to fill his own water bottle	no mention of repetition	could do nothing
14	m	male	physical	pushed towards the toilet seat by an <b>older boy</b>	no mention of repetition	
14	m	male	physical	injured foot when pushed by an <b>older boy</b>	no mention of repetition	could say nothing
14	m	male	physical	beaten by a male classmate for no reason	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	
14	m	males	physical	beaten by two male classmates	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	
14	m	male	teasing	teasing by writing parents name on blackboard every day and wall of his house	no mention of power imbalance	helpless
14	m	female	physical	slapped by girl for no reason	no mention of repetition	sad, could do nothing
14	m	female	physical	chair pulled out from under the victim	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	
14	m	male	physical	repeatedly slapped by a <b>stronger boy</b> who beats him if he complains	<i>meets bullying definition</i>	helpless
14	m	male		<b>older boy</b> threw his bag from his desk	no mention of repetition	felt bad and hopeless
15	m	male		abused by a classmate	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	felt sad
15	m	male	phys/tease	beaten by a boy after the victim reported him for teasing	no mention of power imbalance	felt sad
15	m	male		had test paper torn by a boy who had previously been a best friend	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	felt sad

**Table II. Summary of Female Story tellers and their PhotoStories**

Age	Gender	Perpetuator	Aggression type	Story summary	Notes	Feelings
13	f	unknown	teasing	teased by others - thought to be inferior than them	no mention of bullies gender, age, repetition	
13	f	male	physical	pushed by <i>a male</i> classmate	no mention of repetition	
13	f	female	physical	knocked over by a girl while waiting in a queue	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	
13	f	female		skipping rope was snatched from her by a group of <b>older girls</b>	no mention of repetition	helpless
14	f	unknown	name calling	name on board and made fun of	perpetrator(s) unknown	
14	f	unknown	name calling	the name of the girl and the name of a boy was written on the wall	perpetrator(s) unknown	embarrassed
14	f	male	teasing	repeatedly teased <i>by boy</i> who was punished by staff and the bullying stopped	<i>meets bullying definition</i>	
14	f	male	threat	<i>boy</i> threatened to beat this girl	no mention of repetition	
14	f	male		<i>boy</i> placed a brick in this girl's bag	no mention of repetition	
14	f	males		harassed by a <i>boy</i> who whistled at girl and then by his friends the next day	<i>meets bullying definition</i>	sad, helpless
14	f	female	physical	pushed by a girl causing her to fall	no mention of repetition or power imbalance	
14	f	males	teasing	teased and chased by two <i>boys</i> on a motorcycle	<i>meets bullying definition</i>	was afraid
14	f	males		harassed by two <i>boys</i> in a car	no mention of repetition	
15	f	male	teasing	teased by a <i>boy</i> who was punished and then the teasing stopped	no mention of repetition	



14 M

This is the photo of my class. I want to tell you about a boy who is physically stronger than me. Whenever he passed by me, he always slapped me without any reason. When I complained against him then he beat me afterwards. Because of this I don't tell anything to anyone. I feel helpless.



14 F

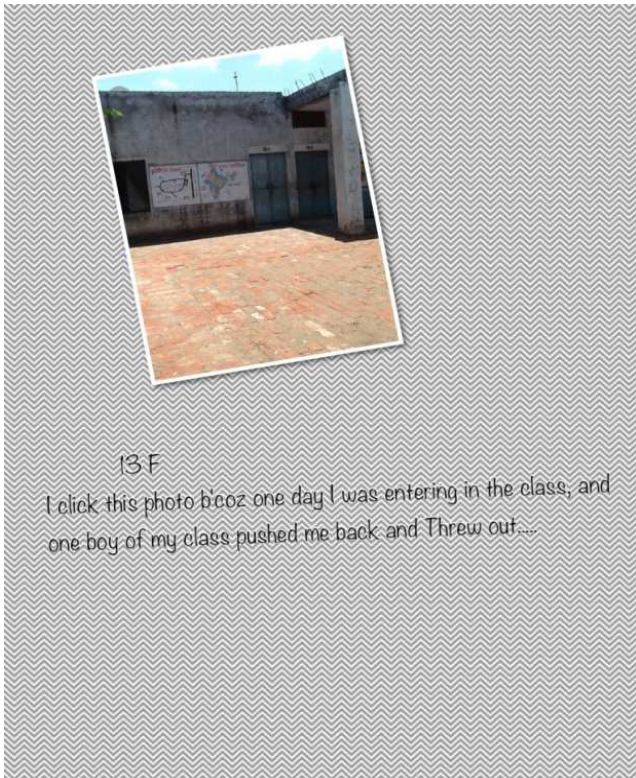
This road reminds me a day when I was going back to my home along with my friends. Two boys on motorcycle chased us. We reached home fastly. Next day they again teased and chased us. I was afraid. I didn't want to go to school. But I told everything to my class teacher and he helped me out of that problem.....

*This is the photo of my class. I want to tell you about a boy who is physically stronger than me. Whenever he passed by me, he always slapped me without any reason. When I complained against him then he beat me afterwards. Because of this I don't tell anything to anyone. I feel helpless ... Male, 14*

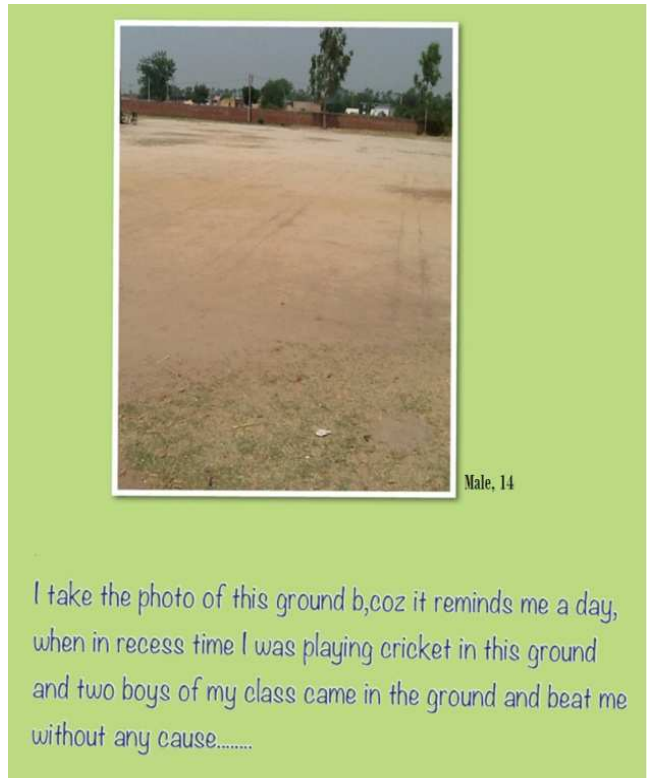
*This road reminds me a day when I was going to my home along with my friends. Two boys on motorcycle chased us. We reached home fastly. Next day they again teased and chased us. I was afraid. I didn't want to go to school. But I told everything to my class teacher and he helped me out of that problem ... Female, 14*

**Figure 1. Examples of PhotoStories about being bullied**





*I click this photo b'coz one day I was entering in the class, and one boy of my class pushed me back and threw out ...Female, 13*



*I take the photo of this ground b'coz it reminds me a day, when in recess time I was playing cricket in this ground and two boys of my class came in the ground and beat me without any cause ...Male, 14*

**Figure 2. Examples of PhotoStories about physical aggression**



14 M

*This is the incident of my previous class. One boy wrote the name of my parents on blackboard everyday. I said him not to do that, he started writing that names on the wall of my house. I felt so helpless.*



13 M

*This board reminds me a day, when a boy wrote my parents name on the board and make my fun in front of whole class...*

*This is the incident of my previous class. One boy wrote the name of my parents on blackboard everyday. I said to him not to do that. He started writing that name on the wall of my house. I felt so helpless ... Male, 14*

*This board reminds me a day when a boy wrote my parents name on the board and make my fun in front of whole class ... Male, 13*

**Figure 3. Examples of PhotoStories about “teasing” using a student’s family name**



14 F

I click this photo because on this road a boy of my school always teased me, I forbid him many times, but he didn't stop. Then I told to my school teachers and they punished him, then he stopped teasing me....



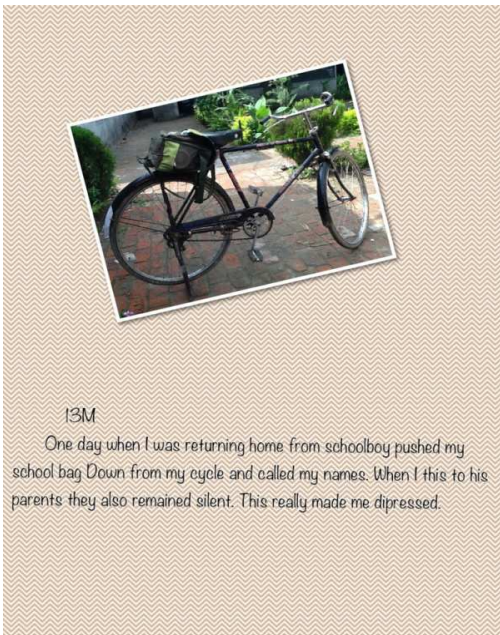
14 F

This photo reminds me about the days when I went to tuition every day, one boy started chasing and whistled me every day, when I requested him to not do this than next day he brought his some friend also and they all whistled. I felt helpless and very sad. Due to this I left my tuition.

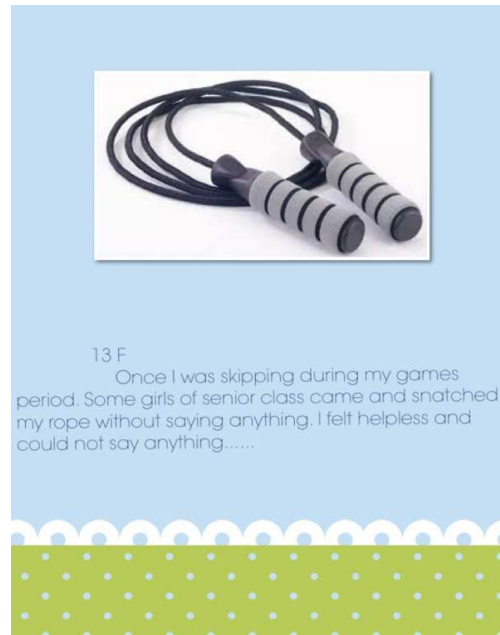
*I click this photo because on this road a boy of my school always teased me. I forbid him many times, but he didn't stop. Then I told to my school teachers and they punished him, then he stopped teasing me ... Female, 14*

*This photo reminds me about the days when I went to tuition every day. One boy started chasing and whistled me every day, when I requested him to not do this. Then next day he brought his some friend also and they all whistled. I felt helpless and very sad. Due to this I left my tuition ... Female, 14*

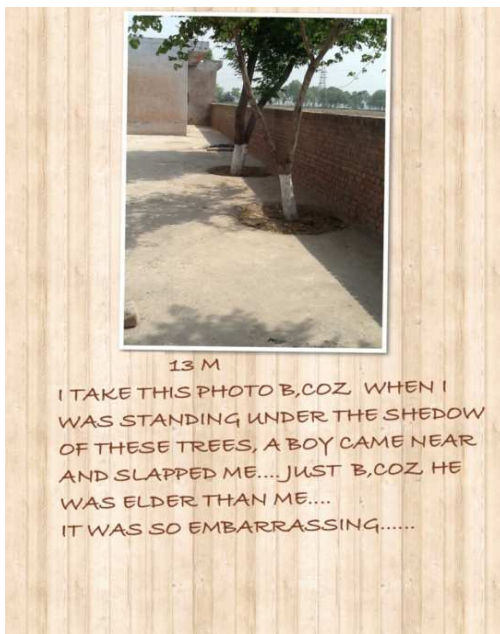
**Figure 4. Examples of PhotoStories about “Eve-teasing”**



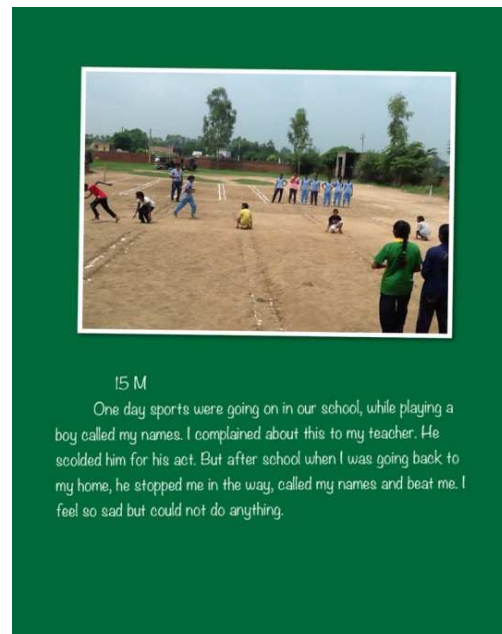
*One day when I was returning home from school boy pushed my school bag down from my cycle and called me names. When I [told] this to his parents they also remained silent. This really made me depressed... Male, 13*



*Once I was skipping during my games period. Some girls of senior class came and snatched my rope without saying anything. I felt helpless and could not say anything ... Female, 13*



*I take this photo b'coz when I was standing under the shadow of these trees, a boy came near and slapped me ... just b'coz he was elder than me ... it was so embarrassing ... Male, 13*



*One day sports were going on in our school. While playing a boy called [me] names. I complained about this to my teacher. He scolded him for this act. But after school when I was going back to my home, he stopped me [on] the way, called [me] names and beat me. I fely so sad but could not do anything ... Male, 15*

**Figure 5. Examples of PhotoStories about how participants felt about being bullied and harassed**

Not all stories described how students felt about the anti-social acts they were experiencing. However, many of those who expressed their feelings revealed that they felt helpless, sad or depressed and indicated that they could say or do nothing about the aggressive acts being targeted at them (see Figure 5 for examples). Noteworthy is that fewer girls than boys indicated how they felt about the harassment.

## **Discussion**

While the English expression of the students who sent stories was not perfect and the PhotoStories were not lengthy and overly descriptive, the stories did convey the message that some students have been the targets of aggressive behaviour from peers and other school mates in India. Ranging from teasing and name calling to beatings and threats, these anti-social behaviours have left many victims feeling sad, embarrassed, depressed and helpless. As such, it appears that many of the participants are likely to develop psycho-social maladjustment, typically found amongst victims in other countries as a result of being subjected to such aggressive victimisation (Gini & Pozzoli, 2008; Skrzypiec et al., 2012). As noted earlier bullying is considered to be a particularly damaging form of aggression since it is associated with harmful socio-emotional and physical outcomes for all individuals involved (bullies, victims and bystanders). Typically bullying is assessed using questionnaires although a small number of studies have used methods such as children's drawings to understand their experience of the event. A limited amount of research (e.g. Bosacki, Marini, & Dane, 2007) has used the medium of children's drawings to understand their experience of school bullying. The innovative feature of the present study was to use ICT and images to gather data regarding the nature of the bullying experienced by Indian students.

However, we must stop short in our interpretation of the behaviours described by the participants in their stories as being acts of bullying, at least according to the definition provided by Olweus (1999):

In my definition, the phenomenon of bullying is thus characterised by the following three criteria: (1) It is aggressive behavior or intentional "harm doing" (2) which is carried out "repeatedly and over time" (3) in an interpersonal relationship characterised by an imbalance of power. One might add that the bullying behavior often occurs without apparent provocation. This definition makes it clear that bullying may be considered a form of abuse, and sometimes I use the term "peer abuse" as a label of the phenomenon. (p. 11)

This definition clearly delineates bullying or 'peer abuse' from other acts of aggression. As such, few of the stories provided by the participants contained descriptors that matched the elements necessary to identify the aggressive acts as bullying. However, it was our intent to allow students to interpret 'bullying' in their own way and to write their stories accordingly. There is nonetheless evidence in the stories that some young people in the Punjab region, India, are the targets of bullies. Although the prevalence of bullying in this region remains to be measured through quantitative means, the PhotoStories clearly indicate that officials and educational authorities cannot deny that bullying occurs amongst school mates and that schools could benefit from anti-bullying interventions.

Reports of teasing using one's family name was commonly reported by some students. This was a new finding that the Indian colleagues explained was quite meaningful in India. In the Punjab region families

are known by only a handful of hierarchical last names and there is status associated with a particular surname. Sometimes teasing occurs by caste-typing individuals based on their family name.

It was clear from the PhotoStories provided by the female participants that sexual harassment, or 'eve-teasing' was a common occurrence. Olweus (2007) has noted that playful teasing between friends is not considered bullying, but that repeated teasing between people who are not friends and where there is a power imbalance (as in the case of harassment of females by males), is most likely to be categorised as bullying. The discrepancy in alignment of 'eve-teasing' with bullying has been noted by Mohanty (2013) who suggested that a more effective term might be to use the dysphemism 'Sita-bullying'. According to Mohanty (2013), "this would strike home to many Indians as Sita is the pious wife of the Hindu god Rama and above moral reproach; she is still seen as the exemplary daughter, wife, and mother" (p. 1) in contrast to biblical Eve, who led Adam astray and is blamed for his submission to temptation.

While some may neutralise their responsibility and liability as perpetrators by considering 'eve-teasing' as innocent fun (Tharoor, 2007), the impact it can have on female victims was demonstrated in one of the PhotoStories where the victim reported that she stopped going to tuition in order to avoid it (see photo story in Figure 4). In neighbouring Bangladesh, Akhter (2013) has observed that many girls are prevented by their families from obtaining an education because keeping a girl at home helps them avoid experiences of 'eve-teasing'. Furthermore, 'eve-teasing' may involve more than just 'teasing' and may range from lewd comments and stalking, to sexual assault, and rape (Tharoor, 2007). Studies which explore whether 'eve-teasing' is systematic harassment that is intended to cause harm would further elucidate the association of 'eve-teasing' and bullying.

A study by Kaur and Preet (2014) of females aged 12-45 experiencing 'eve-teasing' in the Punjab region found that 67% reported that they were the victim of these types of experiences in public spaces "usually"(61.3%) or "always" (6.7%). In their study Kaur and Preet found that nearly half (46.6%) of the females reported nightmares (13.3%) and problems sleeping (33.3%) following eve-teasing as well as feelings of anxiety and sadness, and nearly two-thirds were filled with feelings of "hatredness for the opposite sex" (p. 101). This study indicates that 'sita-bullying' affects the psycho-social and emotional well-being of victims, particularly since 46.7% of the participants in Kaur and Preet's study indicated that they "never" told their parents about the eve-teasing. The prevalence of impact of eve-teasing calls for interventions to change this behaviour of males towards females, and the classroom would be an appropriate place for the implementation of gender equality programs to curb 'eve-teasing' and build respect for women.

The PhotoStories suggested that males were also the targets of aggressive behaviours from other males, although whether males were being bullied was difficult to determine from the PhotoStories. Nonetheless, the stories suggest that physical acts of aggression between males are common and that some victims feel helpless to defend themselves or seek help. More needs to be done to address this type of violence amongst school-aged individuals and to develop communities where there is mutual respect between individuals irrespective of caste or social class.

Methodologically the use of ICT and the 'PhotoStory' method proved to be particularly advantageous in gathering data. The method was easily monitored by the schools involved in relation to providing students

with access to the ipads. Anecdotally the students reported 'enjoying' using the ipads and the Pic Collage App was readily employed by the students. The method was particularly suited for data gathering where language (e.g. as in the use of questionnaires) is likely to be problematic which confirms previous research (Skrzypiec et al., 2013).

One limitation of this study was that participants were using the English version of the Pic Collage App (because at the time of the study, a Hindi version was not available). Although Indian teachers assisted students in telling their stories, the narratives were constrained by students' knowledge of English. The study could be improved by allowing participants to express their views in their own language. The findings from this study are limited in their transferability as it is not known how representative participants were of young people aged 12-15 in the Punjab region or India.

## Conclusion

The PhotoStory method proved successful in eliciting stories from young people about bullying in India. The stories indicated that bullying and other aggressive acts are being experienced amongst school mates in and outside school. Participants described feelings of sadness, depression and helplessness as a result of victimisation. We would suggest that educational authorities in India turn their attention to addressing this phenomenon, in order to improve the psycho-social well-being of victims.

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