

# A Summary of Research on Campus Bullying in China

Ruohan Yuan

Yucui middle school, China

**Abstract.** Campus bullying is a universal problem in the world, and it is also the focus of attention of Chinese academia and all walks of life at present. This paper combs the important research literature about campus bullying in China, collates the connotation and types of campus bullying. In addition, this paper analyzes the research achievements and representative viewpoints and summarizes the shortcomings of existing research, including its causes, harms and coping strategies. The following important research fields and topics are analyzed in order to provide new ideas for the further study of this phenomenon.

**Keywords:** *campus bullying, China, review*

## 1. Introduction

Campus security has always been a major concern of the Chinese government. In recent years, bullying in primary and secondary schools among students has become more and more serious, which greatly endangers campus security. A survey of 5864 primary and secondary school students in 10 provinces and cities conducted by the China Youth Research Center in 2015 showed that 32.5% of the students were occasionally bullied, and 6.1% of the respondents said that bullying occurred occasionally. A sample survey of 104825 primary and secondary school students in 29 counties of China in 2016 found that the incidence of bullying among students was 33.36%, among which 4.7% were often bullied and 28.66% were occasionally bullied.

In order to effectively reduce the incidence of bullying, in April 2016, the Office of the Education Supervisory Committee of the State Council issued the Notice on the Special Management of Campus Bullying, which called for the management of campus bullying by means of physical, language and internet. This was the first time that China has raised the management of campus bullying to state behavior. Academic circles have also launched a series of studies around the problem of bullying. As far as the distribution of research topics in the existing literature is concerned, the causes, characteristics, current situation, strategies and Countermeasures of campus bullying have been the focus of scholars' research in recent years. From the perspective of literature research, it can be divided into sociology, psychology, law and education, etc. In order to provide a reference for other researchers, this paper systematically combs the existing research results in China and summarizes the consensus of the research.

## 2. Study on the Connotation of Campus Bullying

### 2.1 The Meaning of Campus Bullying

How to define campus bullying is the primary concern of researchers. Liu Tianbo and Gong Lunjun (2009) believed that bullying was an aggressive and violent behavior, which generally manifests as intentional harm to the body and mind of others through direct bullyings, such as push, abuse and isolation, exclusion and other indirect bullying. It has five characteristics: diversity, repetition, universality, imbalance, concealment and difficulty to judge. Li Ai (2016) held that campus bullying refers to the act of intentionally and intentionally infringing upon the property, body and mind of bullied students by one or more students directly or indirectly. Wang Dawei (2016) pointed out that campus bullying refers to bullying, hegemony and aggression between primary and secondary school students, which has other characteristics such as self-healing, concealment, universality and harmfulness.

Most studies show that campus bullying occurs among students, violates norms or social expectations, and is repetitive. However, according to the different subjects involved, campus

bullying can be divided into bullying between teachers and students, and bullying between social workers and students. Some students beat teachers because of disobedience to teachers' supervision. Many campus bullying incidents are often incidental. The repeated incidents are included in the elements of campus bullying, which narrows the scope of campus bullying and is not conducive to the protection of victims.

## **2.2 Contents of Campus Bullying**

Campus bullying involves different people and generally breeds in the school micro-society. Sun Xiaobing and Liu Haimin (2015) believed that campus bullying mainly consists of bullies, bullies, assistants and bystanders. Teachers, educational administrators, principals and parents become protectors, and also one of the main deterrents of campus bullying. Yang Ling and Bi Xianshun (2016) believed that campus bullying is mainly composed of bullies, victims, assistants and bystanders. Both bullies and victims were the part of the school membership structure. Wang Dawei (2016) believed that the subject, time, place and form are the four basic elements of campus bullying.

According to the above research, the bully in a strong position controls the victim and oppresses the assistant, while the victim is in a weak and controlled position; the assistant attaches to the bully and causes harm to the victim in some way together with bully; while the bystander's inaction increases the probability of the bullying recurrence and the possibility of campus bullying. Most of the victims are teenagers, including primary and secondary school students. As far as time is concerned, campus bullying not only occurs during school but also outside school time. It can occur in classrooms, playgrounds, canteens and other places in the interior of the school. It may also occur outside school, abuse, beating, violent assault, criminal offenses and other explicit bullying and collective alienation. Recessive bullying such as discriminatory atmosphere is the two main manifestations of campus bullying.

## **2.3 Types of Campus Bullying**

At present, researchers' judgment on campus bullying covers a wide range of forms. Zhang Guoping (2011) believed that campus bullying includes physical bullying, verbal bullying, social bullying, online bullying and sexual bullying. Sun Xiaobing and Liu Haimin (2015) believed that the main ways of campus bullying were physical bullying, verbal bullying, relationship bullying, network bullying and so on. Lin Jincui (2017) held that campus bullying was divided into physical bullying, verbal bullying, social bullying, cyberbullying, and sexual bullying.

# **3. Extensive Study of Campus Bullying**

## **3.1 Causes of Campus Bullying**

In-depth analysis of the causes of campus bullying and effective intervention is the key to solve the problem of bullying. At present, there are different conclusions on the causes of campus bullying. Liu Tian-E and Gong Lunjun (2009) believed that schools attach importance to intellectual education, lack of legal education, disharmony between teachers and students, and "retaliation" of expelled students were the school factors that cause bullying. Moreover, the family causes of bullying were the old concept of education, the aggravation of poverty and wealth in families, the unhealthy family education and family environment; adolescents' factors included adolescents' personality weakness, age characteristics and adolescents' mental health; and the social factors leading to bullying mainly lied in the unhealthy campus surrounding environment, unhealthy social culture and the influence of unhealthy social atmosphere. Li Ai (2016) believed that the main reasons for bullying on campus lied in the unique psychological characteristics of adolescents, the influence of family education, peer groups, the bad demonstration of mass media, the lack of moral education in schools. Li Hanshue (2016) pointed out that the social causes of bullying lied in the influence of bad social atmosphere and unhealthy network environment in the current era. The unfair management of students, the lack of school management system and management behavior,

the lack of school culture construction and the poor quality of teachers, the mobility of parents, family changes, the only child education, the poor communication between families and schools, and the poor quality of parents are the family causes of school bullying; as far as adolescents themselves are concerned, whether they are bullies, bullies or bystanders, they may have physical defects or weak personality. At the same time, the lack of relevant government policies and regulations objectively gives the campus bullying space. Marejun (2016) believed that the formation of campus bullying was related to four factors: individuals, families, schools and society. Firstly, some adolescents have bad hobbies, such as smoking and drinking, and poor academic performance. Being isolated is more likely to be bullied or bullied. (2) Families with low parents' income, poor education and simple and crude methods of discipline, and families with indifferent family relations will increase the probability of bullying their children. (3) The level of school management norms, the effect of legal education, cultural construction, hardware construction and teachers' legal literacy should increase significantly. Degree and equality may affect the incidence of bullying. (4) The bad demonstration of mass media and the "retaliatory heart" of students who are treated unfairly by society may lead to campus bullying. Liu Jian (2017) believed that the causes of student bullying were social, cultural and ideological anomie, disorder of social behavior norms, personality disorder of students, failure of school moral and legal education and social common. The unbalanced mechanism of the role of Li Xiang, Ai Hao and Wei Wei (2017) argued that the change of social structure and the lack of rules, the inability and helplessness of school governance, the change of family structure and the disability of students' individual physical and mental development led to campus bullying. Ma Changshan (2017) believed that the spread of equal difference consciousness and the lack of rational values were the social environment conditions for the problem of campus bullying. The lack of civic education was an important inducement for the occurrence of bullying on campus; the lack of educational correction and the lagging system construction have promoted the spread of bullying on campus.

Some scholars have analyzed the causes of campus bullying from different perspectives. From a sociological perspective, Zhang Guoping (2011) pointed out that campus bullying can be explained by cultural transmission theory, structural tension theory, social control theory, labeling theory and broken window theory. Zhang Zhe and Shi Huijing (2014) believed that the social and ecological factors affecting campus bullying can be explained by cultural transmission theory, structural tension theory, labeling theory and broken window theory. It includes four aspects: individual level, interpersonal level, organizational level and community level. Wei Yemei and Fan Guorui (2016) pointed out that campus bullying was influenced by social order anomie, family structure disability, lack of social rules and anti-campus culture.

From the perspective of psychology, Zhang Enyou and Chen Sheng (2016) argued that the growing phenomenon of campus bullying stems from the cognitive bias of various sectors of society and the anti-social psychology of some primary and secondary school students in the process of socialization. Hu Chunguang (2017) believed that theoretically, the causes of bullying could be attributed to power root theory, frustration attack hypothesis, social cognitive theory and psychological skill theory.

From the perspective of criminology, Li Wannan (2016) believed that the bully's similar consciousness is the internal cause of campus bullying, and the influence of external factors such as school, family and so on may also lead to bullying. He also emphasized that the policy of protection and leniency of juveniles in Chinese law has to some extent intensified the imitation of bullying, and that juveniles bully may lack of legal deterrence. Wang Dawei (2016) pointed out that the occurrence of school bullying among adolescents may be related to their adolescent phobia and the driftability of adolescent behavior, as well as the influence of bad school subculture.

A few scholars have also studied the causes of campus bullying from the perspective of educational culture. Cai Lianyu (2016) combined with the theory of Western scholars' cultural studies, pointed out that under the influence of school "escape culture", aggression in some teenagers' personalities has become increasingly prominent, and gradually resulted in bullying. Su Chunjing, Xu Shuhui, Yang Humin (2016) were based on the perspective of family education and

pointed out that bullying born from Chinese traditional "harmony" culture, unconscious reinforcement and confirmation of bullying by "tolerance" culture, neglect of family education and outdated parental education concepts.

### **3.2 Harm of Campus Bullying**

Sun Xiaobing and Liu Haimin (2015) believed that campus bullying not only hindered the healthy growth of adolescents but also threatened the safety of campus. Zhang Shuai (2016) believed that bullying would affect the physical and mental health of bullies, victims and bystanders health, destroying school teaching order and atmosphere, endangering social security, and the bully's family relationship may deteriorate accordingly.

Some scholars have analyzed the impact of campus bullying on the subjects involved from a micro perspective. Zhang Enyou and Chen Sheng (2016) believed that bullying will lead to the formation of negative personality, make it difficult for bullies to adapt to their studies, and create social barriers. These effects also exist in bullies and promote their aggressive tendencies. Hu Chunguang (2017) believed that campus bullying will affect youth. Teenagers have long-term negative physical and mental impacts, which affect their normal personality development. Adults who have been bullied on campus would have higher incidence of deviant behavior than those who have not been bullied; bystanders who witnessed the bullying and did not lend a helping hand may learn to solve problems by violent attack and form aggressive personality; those who have been deliberately attacked and injured by others for a long time. Victims of bullying may develop negative personality, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or even suicide. Lin Jinshui (2017) believed that adults who were not strictly controlled during childhood and learning were prone to criminal cases, and in the long run, anti-social behavior may occur. The long-term impact of bullying was low academic achievement, drug and alcohol abuse and even suicide. Zhang Dajun (2017) believed that the short-term impact of campus bullying on the mental health of victims was mainly manifested in the harm of peer abuse to internalization, externalization and self-concept of victims; the long-term impact was reflected in the impact of peer abuse experiences in children and adolescents on the mental health of victims in adulthood. In addition, campus bullying may lead to the emergence of bullies. More anxiety and depression symptoms, social withdrawal and delinquency, poor academic performance, and higher risk of antisocial personality disorder in adulthood.

## **4. Countermeasure Research on Campus Bullying**

In view of the various causes of campus bullying, many researchers have put forward many comprehensive coping strategies. Sun Xiaobing and Liu Haimin (2015) believed that in terms of bullying prevention, the government should formulate relevant laws and regulations and put them into practice at all levels. In the field of education research, relevant special theoretical research should be actively carried out. Principals, faculty and staff should form anti-bullying networks with parents and local residents. Teachers and parents should also pay attention to improve their ability to cope with bullying, timely care for children's psychology and help them grow healthily. Li Han-xue believed that the fundamental way to solve the problem of bullying on campus lied in adhering to the concept of comprehensive governance, integrating multiple forces such as the government, schools, families and communities, clarifying the responsibilities of the relevant subjects, and building a coordinated mechanism for the management of bullying on campus. According to Ma Leijun (2016), a complex way to intervene in campus bullying should be adopted, including establishing complete legal norms, improving the prevention, responding, three-level work system and correcting problem students. Hu Chunguang (2017) believed that prevention and treatment of bullying should firstly improve teachers' and students' awareness of campus bullying; secondly, pay attention to high-risk bullying groups in schools and provide them with information and early intervention strategy; Thirdly, give bullies the opportunity to learn self-understanding and create change; Fourthly, provide appropriate intervention treatment for the bullied; Fifthly, provide

family counseling services. The research of Wang Qiran, Chen Xi and Wang Shuai (2017) was addressed their views from three aspects: strengthening the consultation of students' mental health, safeguard the safe environment of campus, strengthen the work of legislation certification, and put forward suggestions on campus bullying management.

From a sociological point of view, Wei Yemei and Fan Guorui (2016) believed that the prevention and control of campus bullying should strengthen the comprehensive management of the social environment, form a good interaction of "home-school-teachers-students-parents and children", and carry out the anti-bullying governance reform within schools. Yang Ling and Bi Xianshun (2016) believed that public reason should be guided first, such as sexual attention to campus bullying; secondly, control the culture of social violence and improve the social and cultural atmosphere; thirdly, adjust social conflicts and promote healthy interpersonal interaction; fourthly, integrate the multi-main forces of society, establish an education system for correcting bad behavior; fifthly, improve social work services, build support network to help bullies and victims; strengthen community prevention and public order, and create good social order.

As far as psychology is concerned, Bai Yan (2016) pointed out that pro-social behavior of children could be trained through model training, empathy training, attribution reinforcement and game activities to reduce the incidence of bullying on campus. Zhang Enyou and Chen Sheng (2016) argued that the key to improve bullying on campus lied in changing the cognitive bias of all sectors of society, cultivating healthy interpersonal psychology of primary and secondary school students and cultivating healthy interpersonal communication psychology of primary and secondary school students. Strengthen the individual psychological intervention of primary and secondary school students. Zhang Shiya and Huang Fuquan (2017) used the theory of positive psychological capital, pointed out that expanding and building students' positive emotions can develop their positive psychological capital, thereby restraining campus bullying, while enhancing education satisfaction.

As far as law was concerned, Zhou Yong (2016) believed that in order to tackle the problem of campus bullying in China, a national anti-campus bullying law should be formulated as soon as possible. It was also important to establish a national bullying early warning- notification- investigation-psychological intervention mechanism, increase the punishment of bullies, combine punishment with prevention, and increase the responsibility of parents to discipline their children. Xu Fenghua, Xu Jie and Huangdao (2016) believed that the prevention and treatment of bullying should set up a school bullying Governance Committee to carry out special rectification, clarify the legal responsibility of the school and its management subjects, strengthen the punishment and improve the legal relief system of campus bullying. Yan Xiangying and Yao Jianlong (2017) suggested that improve the middle intervention measures of campus bullying, give the right of punishment and school building, and improve the governance mechanism of campus bullying from three aspects: family, society and school.

As far as education was concerned, Zhang Shuai (2016) believed that the intervention of campus bullying should make clear rules of educational content and optimize educational behavior; balance the proportion of rule education and give consideration to the combination of heteronomy and self-discipline education; strengthen education guidance and supervision to help every student grow up. Su Chunjing, Xu Shuhui and Yang Humin (2016) believed that school bullying should be prevented from the source of family education. The cultivation of children's good qualities and sound personality should be paid more attention, the education of children's cognition and rules, and the legislation of family education to clarify parents' responsibilities in children's education.

In addition to the above theoretical perspectives, some scholars have also studied anti-campus bullying strategies from other perspectives. Song Yanhui (2017) from the perspective of national governance, pointed out that the prevention and treatment of campus bullying and violence should establish a national campus violence database, stratified management of school safety; while establishing a national network reporting platform, social forces should be combined to optimize the achievements of young people. From the perspective of campus ethics, Wang Jiayi, Yan Xiaocheng and Yan Hongxia (2017) believed that the campus bullying should be ethically intervened in the ethical construction of campus culture and the ethical construction of campus interpersonal

communication culture to reduce the occurrence of campus bullying fundamentally. Zhou Jia and Ma Qiaoling (2017) suggested that interest should be formed through the formation of the path of peer attachment. Teams should carry out interesting activities to intervene in students' bullying behavior, draw lessons from value clarification theory to enhance emotional support and weaken emotional involvement, and encourage the creation of psychological sitcom to eliminate the psychological and organizational basis of bullies in the form of opening up a second classroom to curb bullying behavior.

## **5. Conclusion**

### **5.1 As Far as the Research Content is Concerned, the Existing Research Does not Clearly Distinguish Between the Concepts of “Campus Bullying” and “Campus Violence”**

Clear definition of campus bullying is an important prerequisite for preventing and curing bullying. Understanding of the concept of campus bullying will affect the choice of its governance countermeasures. If the difference between campus bullying and related concepts can not be correctly defined, it will be difficult to reflect the necessity of special governance. Therefore, clear concept provides the necessary premise and solid foundation for effective governance of campus bullying. The concept of campus bullying has not formed a unified understanding, which is not conducive to the effective management of campus bullying. As far as the research perspective is concerned, the existing research perspective is relatively single. In fact, the problem of campus bullying is a comprehensive problem and is also the result of the overlap or conflict of values in many fields of society. Each field and its value orientation should be responsible for bullying behavior of primary and secondary school students, and each field or area should be responsible for bullying behavior of primary and secondary school students. Contradictions and inconsistencies between fields are also the causes of bullying. Current studies mainly analyze the problem of campus bullying from sociological, psychological, legal or pedagogical perspectives, but comprehensively study about its causes from various perspectives and propose countermeasures will be more conducive to the problem.

### **5.2 As Far as Research Perspectives are Concerned, the Existing Research Perspectives are Relatively Single**

In fact, the problem of campus bullying is comprehensive, and it is also the result of the overlapping or conflict of values in many fields of society. Each field and its value orientation should be responsible for bullying behavior of primary and secondary school students, and the contradictions and inconsistencies between each field are also the causes of bullying. The existing studies mainly analyze the problem of campus bullying from the perspective of sociology, psychology, law or pedagogy, but comprehensively study about its causes from various perspectives and put forward countermeasures will be more conducive to the problem and need further research and investigation.

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