

# **Eradicate School Bullying and Build Harmonious Campus ——Analysis and prevention of school bullying based on the sociological perspective**

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**Key words:** School bullying, social anomie, ecological system theory, cognitive and behavior theory, campus subculture, social worker's intervention

**Abstract:** Recently, school bullying incidents in primary and secondary school occur frequently and related news reports emerge in endlessly, which may be quite lamenting. Frequent incidents of bullying are no longer just small scale of chippings in the campus, which can be a precursor of social violence in the near future. From the perspective of sociology, this paper has an in-depth analysis of school bullying and proposes the preventive strategy. Eventually, this paper aims to give suggestions about preventing and eradicating school bullying, thus contributing greatly to the construction of harmonious socialist society.

## **1. Introduction**

In recent years, school bullying incidents in primary and secondary school occur frequently and related news reports emerge in endlessly, which can be quite shocking and horrifying. Frequent incidents of bullying have caused great harm to the teenagers in the campus. Therefore, school bullying is not only small scale of chippings in the campus, which may become a precursor of social violence. This issue has become a social governance problem that can't be ignored.

## **2. Status quo and definition of school bullying**

### **2.1 Status quo of school bullying**

According to rough statistics, the media reported over 30 school bullying incidents only in 2016. As a matter of fact, the actual number of real occurrence can be far greater than this number. From June 1, 2014 to June 31, 2015, the number of news related to "school bullying" reached 36761, the number of related thesis reached 39189, and the number of related micro-blog reached a staggering 721947. Chinese scholar Zhang Wenxin has ever investigated 9235 students in the primary and secondary school, finding that the number of bullies and those being bullied respectively accounts for 6.2% and 22.2%; in junior secondary school, the number of bullies and those being bullied respectively accounts for 2.6% and 12.4%. Generally speaking, nearly 1/5 of the students have ever been involved in school bullying.

### **2.2 Definition of school bullying**

Olweus, the scholar from Norway, is the earliest one to conduct research on school bullying. The school bullying was defined as that, school bullying is not accidental, but a long-term and frequent event when a student is exposed to one or more of the major negative behaviors for a long time and repeatedly. Britain's Department for Education and Skills defined the following three situations as school bullying: First, the behavior repeatedly and deliberately intended to cause harm or sustained damage; occasional events in some cases can also be regarded as bullying; second, purposeful harmful behaviors given by individuals or groups; third, individuals feel weak against bullying due to the imbalance of powers. *Notice About The Special Treatment Of Bullying On Campus* issued by Office of the Education Steering Committee of the State Council defines school bullying behavior

as intentionally or maliciously bullying and insult behavior by means of limbs, language and Internet.

### **3. Analysis of the causes of school bullying**

#### **3.1 Social anomie provides an opportunity for school bullying**

At present, China is in the period of social transformation. In this period, all sorts of chaos in can be described as a state of social anomie according to the concept of sociologist Durkheim. In his book *Suicide*, Durkheim describes "anomie" as a confusion state of individuals and societies when social norms and social values are relatively fragile. In this chaotic state, the "anomie" may occur as the social control and influence on the individual weaken. Robert Morton's theory of social anomie also believes that human deviant behavior has a profound social structure root. That is, the disorder of social structure is one of the important reasons causing social violence.

China is witnessing the frequent period of "anomie" in the social transformation. School is a subsystem of the social system, and the two sides can not be separated. As a result, campus students will inevitably suffer from the subtle influence caused by the environment of the whole society. At the same time, the social anomie can't be effectively controlled due to the imperfect laws and regulations. For example, China's laws and regulations stipulate that, minors under the age of 14 are not subject to criminal responsibility regardless of behavior harming society; for those who are in 14 to 16 years old, there are only 8 serious crimes in criminal responsibility (intentional murder, intentional injury causing serious injury or death, rape, robbery, drug trafficking, arson, explosion, poisoning).

#### **3.2 Defects of family structure may bury "seed" for school bullying**

According to the ecological system theory and cognitive behavior theory, prior to becoming a complete social person, the minor must acquire social mainstream rules and values through education, so as to finish the socialization process of individual. In essence, this process happens earliest and the most typically in family.

Based on the relevant data, rural-urban fringe zone, remote villages, urban shanty towns and other left-behind children gathering place are also the frequent campus bullying places. According to statistics, the number of left-behind children aged 0~17 in China reached 69.7275 million as of 2010, of which the number of left-behind children in rural areas was as high as 61.0255 million, accounting for 87.52% of the total. In addition, in recent years, the number of single parent families has also increased greatly with the increasing divorce rate in China. According to the interview conducted by the journalist of Ningxia Daily, the crime rate of the children from single parent families accounted for 30% of the total number of children committed crimes.

The absence of parental education may cause the family structure defects in traditional and stable family, in which case minors lack of control and education from the family. They may lack important educational subjects and become flawed individuals. Moreover, they are reluctant to be constricted by the social rules and values, which may cause school bullying. Yu Juanjuan, deputy director of specialized committee for juvenile protection of the National Lawyers Association of China claimed that: "Parents of flow and left-behind children are often busy living, who rarely care about their children's education, so that their children are bullied due to lack of protection, or become the king of campus and get far away." Dislocation of family structure may harbor a bitter brew for the school bullying in the future.

#### **3.3 Facilitating role of campus subculture development**

The mainstream social culture is often taught in school teaching. This process doesn't depend on the will of students, in which scores are taken as the core benchmark to judge students. Illich mentioned in the *Deschooling Society* as that, "School arbitrarily determines the content and time for students to learn. Students often strengthen their revolt to school education when they feel more manipulated than expected. In order to find the basis for resistance, students tend to construct the culture that can

reflect their will and values, which may form the subculture of the campus contradictory to the mainstream culture of the campus.

Campus subculture mainly contains the following implications: First of all, campus escape culture. The campus escape culture can be further divided into "silent escape" and "offensive escape", in which the latter is often the main body. Campus escape culture supports students to form an informal group. Being of strong offensiveness and bullying, this group usually does not agree with the school and will conduct bullying behaviors; Second, crowd mentality. According to the theory of conformity, individual ideas and behaviors can be involuntarily aligned with most people under the guidance and pressure of the group. Therefore, in the school bullying, all people will seek to more active bullying behavior for fear of being excluded; Third, the brotherhood culture. They try to build their own community and culture by imitating gangs and other social groups. As a result, they will seek to school bullying and conquer the weak by strong domineering.

#### **4. Prevention and control strategies of school bullying**

##### **4.1 To strengthen the comprehensive management of social environment and vigorously promote the socialist core value system**

Sound norms facilitate good atmosphere. The prevention and treatment of school bullying call for the joint efforts of the whole society and the school.

First, at present, China is undergoing the period of social transformation. Therefore, we must rebuild the good order of society. It's imperative to strengthen the comprehensive management of social environment and vigorously carry forward the socialist core values. Only by vigorously promoting the socialist core values can we reshape the sound social atmosphere. In this case, the positive mode can get through the campus and among students. The cultivation of correct values can help to nip the bud of school bullying in mentality.

Second, the government must accelerate to optimize relevant laws and regulations, introduce concrete policies. The government should reduce social problems through some policies, such as the off-site college entrance examination and schooling for migrant workers' children etc. Moreover, the government shall cut the number of left-behind children and migrant children groups, so as to reduce the number of school bullying at the root. At the same time, the relevant laws and regulations should be revised and perfected, so that it can become a powerful guarantee for the prevention and control of school bullying.

Third, it's imperative to guide the rational public attention to the event, which is the basis of public opinion for forming related strategy. The news reports about bullying on campus should be practical and realistic, but not exaggerating. Relevant media shall not wrongly lead the public opinion, leading to the intensification of events. It's necessary to prevent the emergence of "pregnant women effect". Through publicity and education, the public ought to rationally view the problem, so as to create a good social atmosphere for the prevention and control of school bullying.

##### **4.2 Formulate "Family - School - Society" linkage mechanism, jointly prevent and control school bullying**

First, the family should create a harmonious and happy atmosphere, so that children grow up in a warm family environment, and successfully complete their socialization process. If the children has become bullies or those being bullied, parents should timely feedback to the teacher. Meanwhile, they shall positively handle school bullying based on social efforts, social workers and other treatment assistance organizations.

Second, the school should strengthen the construction of the teaching staff. All teachers shall pay attention to school bullying through the relevant training, who shall handle school bullying in a proper way in face of the school bullying. Furthermore, the school should strengthen hardware facilities investment and publicity. Cameras can be installed in the hidden sites of campus, so as to achieve all-round monitoring of the campus. Meanwhile, by means of theme class meetings, blackboard publicity and leaflets, students shall understand the school bullying and establish a

correct concept. Schools should also communicate with students' parents and equip professional social workers, so that they can carry out different casework or group work for bullies, bullies and onlookers based on professional knowledge and skills.

Third, the society should vigorously develop social worker speciality and cultivate social workers. Supported by the relevant agencies and funding, society can form volunteer team and get ready to control and prevent the school bullying.

#### **4.3 Strengthen the professional talent training of social work in China and introduce social worker as intervention mechanism into the prevention and control strategy**

Guided by the altruism, based on scientific theory and knowledge, social workers tend to help others by appropriate methods, who try to convey the the core value concept of "helping people to help themselves". The service target covers children and youth, family services and school social work etc. As a manifestation of social anomie, the prevention and handling of school bullying call for social support, and social work is the most effective way in social support. Social workers can help the bullies, those being bullied and onlookers in the school bullying incidents by means of individual case work and group work. By previous work, social workers can incorporate resistance of school bullying into all kinds of educational activities. Positive actions shall be sought to mediate and tackle school bullying. Starting from three parties of school bullying, the incidents can be eradicated at roots, so as to further prevent school bullying.

Social workers have professional solutions to school bullying. It's imperative to strengthen the cultivation of professional social workers in China, so that they can participate in handling this issue as a powerful force.

## **5. Conclusion**

School bullying is a quite complicated social problem. It is urgent to solve this social problem at present, which calls for the joint efforts of all the members of society. For school bullying, previous prevention is better than later handling. Only by joint efforts and cooperation can we really realize zero school bullying and build a truly harmonious society.

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