

When bullies rule schools

Bahrain has the second highest bullying rate among school students globally

TDI | Manama
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A recent study has shockingly revealed that Bahrain has the second highest school bullying rates for elementary stage students globally, stressing that 43 per cent of students were bullying victims.

The study, conducted by Bahraini educationalist Dr Mariam Al Qassab, showed that verbal bullying is the most common type of bullying at Bahrain's schools. It also revealed that male students were more exposed to school bullying when compared to female pupils.

Dr Al Qassab was a speaker at a local event that aimed to reduce school bullying incidents.

Speaking to Tribune, she said, "Bullying is a negative behaviour that is annoying and hurtful, deliberate and repeated, by one or more persons, and is directed against a person who finds difficulty to defend himself/herself."

"Bullying is divided into three types that include physical, verbal and social bullying. It consists of three parties, which are the bully, the victim and the spectator.

"Globally, and according to 80 international studies, the average exposure of youth to traditional bullying is estimated to be



Dr Al Qassab speaking at the event.



Students who underwent anti-bullying training at the event.

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DR AL QASSAB

around 35pc and 15pc are exposed to electronic bullying," Dr Al Qassab stated.

Dr Al Qassab also said that according to a study conducted by the Boston University, Bahrain comes second in terms of bullying cases reported among pupils studying in the first six academic years.

She explained: "According to official statistics of the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, 37.3pc of the Bahraini youth were victimised by cyber bullying, while 30pc practised it.

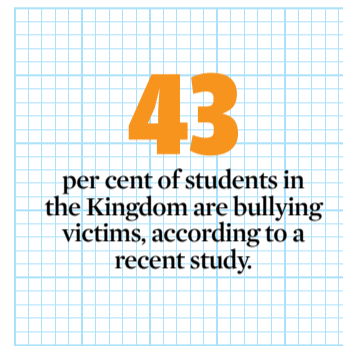
"Another local study showed that 65.3pc of Bahrainis were exposed to bullying at schools. Bahrain is a diversified society and this high rate of bullying is

unlikely to be reported in such a society."

The expert stressed on the necessity of raising more awareness on bullying in Bahrain, calling upon parents and decision makers to be more involved in combatting such phenomena.

"There are no official statistics on bullying available yet from the Education Ministry or Labour and Social Development Ministry," she added.

On her part, Naseem Anti-Bullying Initiative President Enas Al Fardan said the initiative trained 600 students of both genders in six schools on methods to combat



She commented: "This global and dangerous phenomenon has negative impact on students in the short and long run. This may push students who were victimised by bullies to hate schools and the entire educational process.

"It could also lead to more serious psychological problems such as depression, anxiety and suicide. Combatting bullying at schools should be a priority to maintain school psychological safety of children, as they spent most of their time at schools. A safe and non-violent school environment should be provided to every student."

bullying.

Ms Al Fardan also said 11 infographics; three short films and 23 paintings on anti-bullying were also introduced to the students.



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