

Experiences of gender-based violence among adolescent schoolgirls in India

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords:</p> <p>school-violence physical health psycho-emotional health online violence intersectional perspective</p>	<p>This study examines the experience of violence among adolescent schoolgirls from selected institutions in the Hazaribag district of Jharkhand, India. It maps the nature and extent of such incidents and examines how such violence affects a person's physical, emotional, and psychological health from a sociological perspective, considering factors such as how differently it affects students from different social groups, who the perpetrators are inside and outside the school, and the extent of such violence against students in private, public, or other types of schools. This descriptive and explanatory research used a mixed-methods approach to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Questionnaires, interview schedules, and informal focus group discussions were the main methods of data collection. The narrative method and SPSS software were used to analyze the qualitative and quantitative data, respectively. The study finds that female students are particularly vulnerable to school violence because of the gender factor involved, which cannot be isolated from gender-based violence. It also reveals sociological aspects, such as the means of transportation used by students, which are clearly related to their economic position, social category, etc., which play a very important role in such experiences of violence. The research contributes to the development of a gender-sensitive and violence-free educational atmosphere in which social justice education is more likely to be found.</p>

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Introduction

School-based violence against women is prevalent across all parts of the world. According to a report jointly published by UN Women (United Nations Women) and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), more than 246 million children in and around schools, experience gender-based violence every year (Human Rights Watch, 2020). Many research reports have also shown that school violence is a widespread form of violence across the world, and women students face abuse of such a kind for several different reasons, with gender at the core (Human Rights Watch, 2020; UNESCO, 2017). In a variety of different locations, such as going to school or coming home from school, in the playground, during class hours or short breaks, school violence may occur. Consequently, violence against children that occurs outside of school hours may be included in the concept of school violence (Merrill et al., 2018). Again, it has been noted that family members or other guardians of school children, caregivers, teachers, or fellow students may be the perpetrators of violence (Ferrara et al., 2019). Children's self-esteem and ability to excel suffer long-term ramifications when they are exposed to such violence. It's a public health concern because such violence (verbal or non-verbal/physical) during a person's formative years has the greatest effect on their psychological well-being. It is also a human rights violation since it prevents the victim from progressing naturally in certain situations.

These forms of violence can be broadly classified into two overlapping categories: explicit gender-based violence (i.e., overt incidences such as gender-based assault, sexual harassment, coercion, and rape) and implicit gender-based violence (i.e., covert incidences of violence such as bullying, verbal and psychological abuse, the unofficial

use of free labor by teachers, etc.) (Morrison et al., 1994; Ngakane et al., 2012; Tamutiene, 2008). In our society, stereotypes and gender norms push schoolgirls to be particularly vulnerable to such violence. About half of the victims of sexual assault worldwide as per various reports, for example, are girls younger than 16 years of age (RAINN, n.d.; UN Women, n.d.; UNESCO, 2017). Such violence jeopardizes their physical and socio-emotional development and has detrimental long-term implications for school-going adolescent women. However, quite frequently, school-based cases of gender violence are not treated differently from other types of school violence (Dunne et al., 2006; UNESCO, 2017). Lombard (2013) also discovered that cultural embedding is very common in gender-based violence, and that questioning it, particularly in schools, is rarely considered. Aside from administration, young school children seem to believe that violence is an inextricable part of male identity (Birmingham City University, n.d.; Breines et al., 2000), and they embrace it as if it were some other forms of violence. In addition, the experiences of school going women in various socio-economic groups vary considerably (Engage, n.d.; Proctor et al., 2017; Tsouroufli, n.d.). While researching the impact of school children's socioeconomic circumstances on their behavior in school, Stalmach et al. (2014) found that socioeconomic factors influence the form and occurrence of school aggression. Children from low-income households and single-parent families in Poland are more likely to be victims of violence. Differences in socioeconomic status have also been described as a major determinant of school violence and exclusion in India. Caste, class, gender, disability, and geographical location have been established as key considerations in discrimination (Boston Study Group, 2018; Garg, 2017; Kurian, 2015; Rege, 1998).

With the advent of educational technology and communication techniques, it has been found that major technological interventions have been made in the fields of education. This is particularly important now, in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, as several online outlets have risen to prominence in the education and knowledge sharing processes. Physical classrooms have been replaced by online schooling. However, socioeconomic status and gender identity have been theorized as significant fault lines in assessing the scope and excellence of emerging technologies (DiMaggio et al., 2001; Ignatow & Robinson, 2017; Kaur & Jain, 2020; Nanda, 2020). According to numerous studies, gender school violence has resurfaced on online channels as well, and it will continue in the post-Covid-19 period, too (Global Fund for Women, n.d.; World Wide Web Foundation, 2020).

Therefore, it is necessary to identify and understand gender-based school violence, its forms, and consequences for a developing country like India that is struggling with poverty and inequality and stereotypical roles of gender. This research study aims to sociologically analyze school violence in the same context and focuses on three-fold objectives i.e., to know the frequency and to recognize the nature of verbal and non-verbal school violence experiences of secondary and higher secondary school going (adolescent) women, to evaluate the implications of such violence on their physical, psychological, and emotional wellbeing, and to understand their response to such violence. The study also aims to investigate the opinions of respondents about the extent of school violence on both offline and online platforms. This study takes a stance on the empirical aspects of the facts and experiences of school violence among adolescent women, and it bases its theoretical position on “social justice education” in this context, which

acknowledges a critical feminist approach to understanding the reality (Gandolfi & Mills, 2023; Lynch, 2023).

Method

This research study used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Quantitative research strategy is concerned with quantifying data and aims to describe data in terms of frequency, mean, mode, and other statistical methods. It raises questions such as “how many”, “how often” or the “degree of occurrence” of the phenomena being investigated. Whereas the qualitative approach is much more interested in explaining the facts and data and the causal relationship that underlies it. It aims at a contextual interpretation of the phenomena and to explain how people view their experiences and the universe around them (Akanle et al., 2017).

The field for conducting this research study was a district called Hazaribag in Jharkhand state. The Hazaribag district was chosen as the area for this study for two reasons. First, it is a small town, but it has recently emerged as a new hub for the temporary and permanent migration for education from nearby villages, districts, and sub-districts, and the second, the population of the district represents a significant number of tribal, non-tribal and different caste communities. It can therefore be better suited for mapping experiences from an intersectional perspective.

The present research is a cross-sectional study of a mixed type, i.e., both descriptive and explanatory. A descriptive form of study is one that gives a description of a phenomenon, mechanism, system, or relationship and raises questions about “what”, “when” and “where” of a process or phenomenon (Loeb et al., 2017). On the other hand, the purpose of the explanatory research is to understand the “why” and “how” of a

phenomenon or situation (Babbie, 2011). The cross-sectional study provides for the examination or evaluation of a phenomenon or sample selected for the study at a given time (Akanle et al., 2017).

Data was collected by three means: direct interaction, online and telephone channels, during the fifteen days timespan from November 15 to 30, 2020. Some students were interviewed (with semi-structured questions) and their answers have been registered by us. Some volunteers have also been chosen with their consent to collect the responses of some of the other students. They were also trained and paid accordingly for their work. Two key digital forums, Email and WhatsApp, were used to distribute the questionnaire to secondary and senior secondary school respondents, and filled questionnaires or answers written on blank papers marked with question numbers were obtained on the same channels. Interview schedules were also used to record some of the respondents' responses, where interviews were conducted via cell phones and WhatsApp calls. They were either recorded by us or by chosen volunteers. The questionnaire (mix of open & close-ended) and interview schedule is bilingual, containing questions in Hindi and English. Five focus group discussions (FGDs) (semi-structured & informal) were also conducted by taking four school-going women into each group at a time.

With the help of purposive sampling technique, both government and non-government (private) educational institutions were chosen. Respondents from these institutions were again chosen from among women students of secondary and higher secondary classes by snowball technique as the schools are being closed due to the pandemic of covid-19. Student volunteers were selected for this purpose after obtaining consent from them and were asked to contact and record the responses of school going women from secondary and

higher secondary classes. The volunteers were also trained accordingly and paid for their hard work. In total, respondents were presented with 40 questionnaires and interview schedules and 33 (82.5 percent) of them were returned to us in the completed form. It was possible because of the efforts of our selected volunteers. In certain cases, teachers were contacted in person or via telephone and asked to provide female students with contact details to record their answers. For focused group discussion over online channels, preferably WhatsApp video calling facility and Zoom platform, 5 groups each consisting of 4 people were also created from among these female students and their subjective experiences were recorded. Respondents have been informed about the purpose of the study, its relevance to society and the importance of their response and opinion in the analysis. They were all assured of anonymity and confidentiality and were maintained in full during and after the study. Names and personal identity have also been removed in this research for this purpose.

The quantitative data collected were evaluated and represented by tables and graphs using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and MS-Excel tools. A narrative approach has been adopted for the analysis of qualitative data.

Results and Discussion

School violence has been recognized as a serious challenge to the social justice approach in education. According to the Global Status Report on "School Violence and Bullying" released in 2017 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2017), school violence is usually perpetuated by teachers, school officials and staff, fellow students, and members of the wider community. It also involves the bullying of children traveling

to and from school. Morrison and others (1994) found that the students somehow, to a differing degree, encountered some form of school violence against them. The causes of school violence include structural inequalities, many of which are focused on socio-economic and gender disparities.

Table 1 provides data on experiences of violence in school among different social groups, categorized by the frequency of these experiences: “Not at all,” “Sometimes,” and “Often.” The table also presents the total count and the percentage of the total population for each social category. Among all respondents, 24.2% have never experienced violence, 72.7% have experienced it sometimes, and 3.0% have experienced it often. Therefore, about 75.7 percent of all respondents have at least sometimes experienced an act of violence at school. Again, students from different social groups experienced any such situation of violence to varying degrees. Several sociological factors can be considered to explain these variations, and these differences may be due to historical, economic, and social disparities among these groups. It also reflects the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities in the education system.

Therefore, intersectionality can compound the vulnerabilities of certain individuals within these categories. However, the disproportionate enrollment of students from various socioeconomic categories makes it difficult to determine the precise level of violence encountered among social categories.

Table 2 presents data on experiences of violence outside of school among different social groups, with a focus on how often these experiences occur. Among all respondents, 27.3% have never experienced violence outside of school, 48.5% have experienced it sometimes, and 24.2% have experienced it often. Therefore, about 72.7 percent of the sample was made up of people who have experienced violence outside of school campuses, either sometimes or often, while traveling to or from school. In addition, OBC and “others” caste groups witnessed more violence (42.5 percent) outside school campuses than SCs and STs combined (30.4 percent).

The table demonstrates that experiences of violence vary significantly among social groups. For instance, “OBC” respondents have the highest percentage (12.1%) of individuals who experience violence

			How often experience violence in school?			Total
			Not at all	Sometimes	Often	
Social category of the respondent	SC	Count	1	6	0	7
		% of total	3.0%	18.2%	.0%	21.2%
	ST	Count	1	3	0	4
		% of total	3.0%	9.1%	.0%	12.1%
	OBC	Count	3	8	0	11
		% of total	9.1%	24.2%	.0%	33.3%
	Others	Count	3	7	1	11
		% of total	9.1%	21.2%	3.0%	33.3%
Total		Count	8	24	1	33
		% of total	24.2%	72.7%	3.0%	100.0%

Table 1. Experiences of violence in school among different social groups

Source: Fieldwork

			How often experience violence outside the school?			Total
			Not at all	Sometimes	Often	
Social category of the respondent	SC	Count	0	5	2	7
		% of total	.0%	15.2%	6.1%	21.2%
	ST	Count	1	3	0	4
		% of total	3.0%	9.1%	.0%	12.1%
	OBC	Count	2	5	4	11
		% of total	6.1%	15.2%	12.1%	33.3%
Others	Count	6	3	2	11	
	% of total	18.2%	9.1%	6.1%	33.3%	
Total		Count	9	16	8	33
		% of total	27.3%	48.5%	24.2%	100.0%

Table 2. Experiences of violence outside the school among different social groups
 Source: Fieldwork

“Often,” which is half the total average of 24.2%. These disparities may be influenced by the social, economic, and historical factors that affect each group. For instance, the higher percentage of OBC respondents experiencing violence may be connected to their socio-economic status and societal discrimination. Therefore, intersectionality is essential to understanding these experiences fully.

The data suggests that the “others” category has the highest percentage of

respondents who have never experienced violence outside of school. 18.2% of the castes other than SC, ST, and OBC have not at all experienced a violent situation while going to or from school. It is possible that some individuals within this category may have protective factors that reduce their exposure to violence, as the “others” group also stands out, with 15.2% of respondents experiencing violence either often or sometimes. This indicates that individuals who do not fit neatly into the specific SC, ST, or OBC

Types of schools		How often experience violence in school?			Total	
		Not at all	Sometimes	Often		
Government	Count	2	8	0	10	
	% of total	6.1%	24.2%	.0%	30.3%	
Private	Count	6	14	1	21	
	% of total	18.1%	42.4%	3.0%	63.6%	
Others	Count	0	2	0	2	
	% of total	.0%	6.1%	.0%	6.1%	
Total		Count	8	24	1	33
		% of total	24.2%	72.7%	3.0%	100.0%

Table 3. Experiences of violence in school of different types
 Source: Fieldwork

categories may still face significant violence outside of school due to their gender.

Table 3 provides insights into how the type of school (government, private, or others) is associated with varying experiences of violence among students. These disparities can be understood sociologically in terms of socio-economic differences, school environments, and the quality of education. The table shows that, compared to government schools (24.2%), private schools have a higher percentage of students who have encountered violence (45.4%). About 3% of the students have observed violence often, and they all belong to private schools. This is because the government and private schools have different cultures, disciplinary systems, and educational environments.

The disparities in violence experiences may be linked to socio-economic factors too. Private schools frequently have higher tuition fees and relatively little regulation by the government. Therefore, more often, the experiences of violence among students are related to verbal warnings and corporal punishments for non-payment of fees on time. Also, more frequent verbal and nonverbal abuse, such as corporal punishment, arises from tougher discipline management, which is thought to be a requirement in private schools. However, many of the respondents

have also identified that verbal violence is more often directed at them as abuse due to their gender identity. Lack of teachers' training to treat students is one of the major factors that can be blamed for the aggravated experiences of violence among students in private schools.

Government schools, on the other hand, could have a more diverse student population, including students with lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The requirement for tuition and other fees is also kept minimal. Government schools are likewise subject to more liberal regulations, and there have been clear instructions that using corporal punishment against children is harmful to their physical, mental, and psychological development.

Table 4 demonstrates how the type of school is associated with varying experiences of violence outside of school among students. The table reveals that the type of school a student attends is associated with different experiences of violence outside of the school. Private schools have a higher percentage of students who have experienced violence often (15.2%) compared to government schools (6.1%). This difference may be due to factors related to the school environment, the socioeconomic backgrounds of the students, and community factors. Among all students,

Type of school		How often experience violence outside the school?			Total
		Not at all	Sometimes	Often	
Government	Count	1	7	2	10
	% of total	3.0%	21.2%	6.1%	30.3%
Private	Count	8	8	5	21
	% of total	24.2%	24.2%	15.2%	63.6%
Others	Count	0	1	1	2
	% of total	.0%	3.0%	3.0%	6.1%
Total	Count	9	16	8	33
	% of total	27.3%	48.5%	24.2%	100.0%

Table 4. Experiences of violence outside the school of different types

Source: Fieldwork

Types of schools		How often experience that the violence is because of your gender?			Total
		Not at all	Sometimes	Often	
Government	Count	1	5	4	10
	% of total	3.0%	15.2%	12.1%	30.3%
Private	Count	4	8	9	21
	% of total	12.1%	24.2%	27.3%	63.6%
Others	Count	0	1	1	2
	% of total	.0%	3.0%	3.0%	6.1%
Total	Count	5	14	14	33
	% of total	15.2%	42.4%	42.4%	100.0%

Table 5. Experiences of violence among students based on their gender in different types of schools
 Source: Fieldwork

about 27.3% have never experienced violence outside of school, whereas a significant proportion of them, i.e., 72.7% of total students, have experienced either verbal or non-verbal violence inflicted upon them; 48.5% have experienced it sometimes, and 24.2% have experienced it often. Those who reported having witnessed violence outside of the school, there are more students from private schools (39.4%) than those attending government schools (27.3%). However, again, among those who experienced any such situation, they stated that they either used to go to school on foot or go alone to their schools and to their homes from school. Those who use transport facilities or are accompanied by someone are less likely to experience any such violence.

The data also suggests that students in government and private schools may be exposed to different community and neighborhood influences, which can affect their experiences of violence outside of school. Factors such as the safety of the neighborhood, peer groups, and access to resources may vary among these different types of schools.

Table 5 shows how the kind of school and gender are related to the various

experiences of gender-based violence among students and whether the violence inflicted upon students is gender-based and related to their gender. These differences can be understood through the lenses of socio-economic disparities, school culture, gender sensitivity, and inclusion practices.

Among all respondents, 15.2% have never experienced gender-based violence; however, a gigantic number, i.e., 84.8% of the sample population, are those who consider that the violence perpetrated against them is related to their gender identity, where 42.4% have experienced it sometimes and 42.4% have experienced it often. The table also reveals significant differences in the experiences of gender-based violence among students in different types of schools. Among all the respondents, more than half of them (51.5%) belong to private schools and consider that school violence is based on gender. Whereas, 27.3% of the respondents belong to government schools and consider school violence to be based on gender. Private schools have a higher percentage of students who have experienced gender-based violence often (27.3%), while government schools have a lower percentage (12.1%). This may be indicative of different attitudes, cultures,

How Often Violence Perpetrators Identified

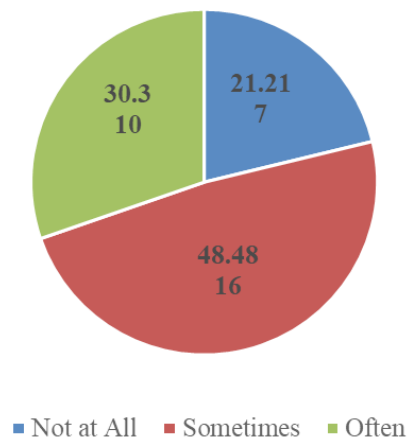


Figure 1. *Identification of perpetrators of violence*
Source: *Fieldwork*

and educational environments regarding gender in these schools. The curricula, teacher attitudes, and peer interactions can all impact the prevalence of such violence.

The data suggests that there may be differences in gender sensitivity and inclusion practices in these schools. It also highlights the need for promoting gender sensitivity and inclusion across all types of schools, but especially in private schools where gender-based violence is more prevalent.

Figure 1 shows the degree to which school-violence perpetrators are identified. The data in this figure implies that there is a significant portion (almost half, at 48.4%) of school-violence cases where perpetrators are only sometimes identified, according to the respondents. This may indicate inconsistencies in reporting, surveillance, or the effectiveness of systems in place to detect and deal with such incidents. This also indicates that the violence occurs inside schools or that the perpetrators are sometimes known to the victims.

The relatively low percentage in the “Often” category (30.3%) indicates that the identification process is working well and consistently. This also suggests that in about 30.3 percent of cases, the perpetrators

are known to the victims, and they are not strangers. There might be best practices or more effective strategies that can be learned from these instances and applied more widely to improve overall school violence prevention and response efforts.

Therefore, the figure indicates that there is room for improvement in terms of consistency in identification, which is crucial for preventing and addressing violence in schools. Further analysis may be necessary to understand the factors contributing to these identification patterns and to develop strategies for more effective prevention and intervention.

The key factors contributing to school violence are patriarchal social norms, power dynamics, gender role expectations, and stereotypes (UNESCO, 2017). (Ngakane and others (2012) have also found that school violence is used as part of discipline that students and instructors follow. The reproduction of broader patriarchy is still much of the school culture, and thus differential gender relations have been reinforced by discipline. The rationale offered behind the corporal punishment to boys (i.e., canning (use of sticks to provide bodily punishment), whipping (use of leather-like

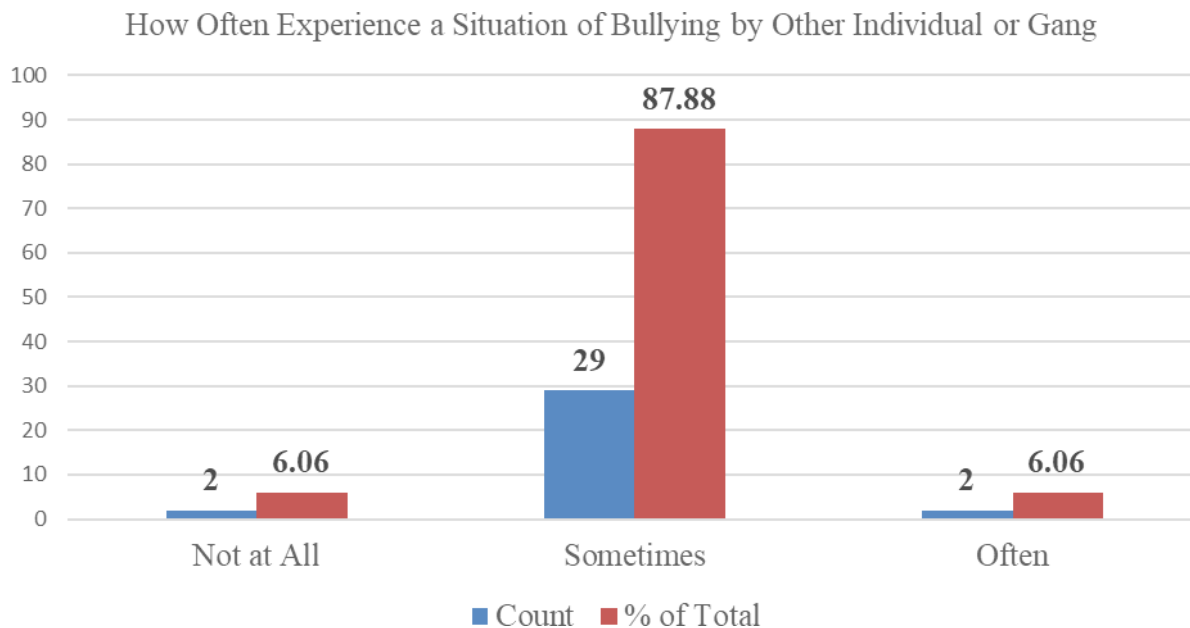


Figure 2. Experience of a situation of bullying by an individual or a gang
 Source: Fieldwork

stick), slapping, or some other type of verbal plus physical injury such as hitting the head or body) was that it helps them learn how to be uncomplaining and tough. However, girls are given corporal punishment for being unquestioning and submissive. Canning is seen as a primary means of maintaining a culture of power differentials in schools. Bullying, a form of violence, is an unintended aggression prevalent in adolescent children that includes either actual or perceived power imbalance. Bullying against girls was another way to carry forward feminine and masculine identities and to maintain and further promote the notion of “aggressive masculinities” and “compliant femininities”. Sexual violence against women students including unwelcome physical, verbal, and non-verbal behavior, and the use of abusive and derogatory language towards them is another way to assert the patriarchal culture in schools. There are also many reasons why children do not want to tell their experiences of violence, among which the major one is the trust deficit, fear of further repercussions, social stigma, feeling of shame and guilt, confusion, or lack of proper mechanism

to deal with the situation or the fear of not being taken seriously (UNESCO, 2017).

Figure 2 suggests that a significant majority of respondents (87.88%) report experiencing bullying by an individual or a group of people “sometimes,” and about 6.06% have experienced it “often.” This high prevalence indicates that bullying by an individual or a group of people is a prevalent issue within the context of school violence. The questions surrounding bullying can reveal patterns and power dynamics within the community or school. Also, many instances of bullying go unreported due to fear, social pressure, or a lack of trust in authorities. There can be a number of factors that influence whether individuals report bullying or keep it to themselves. The low percentage in the “not at all” category (6.06%) might indicate underreporting.

There are cultural and social norms that may contribute to or discourage bullying behavior. Bullying is often a manifestation of power imbalances, too, and certain groups may be more vulnerable to bullying due to their social position. For example, the culture that stresses masculinity promotes bullying

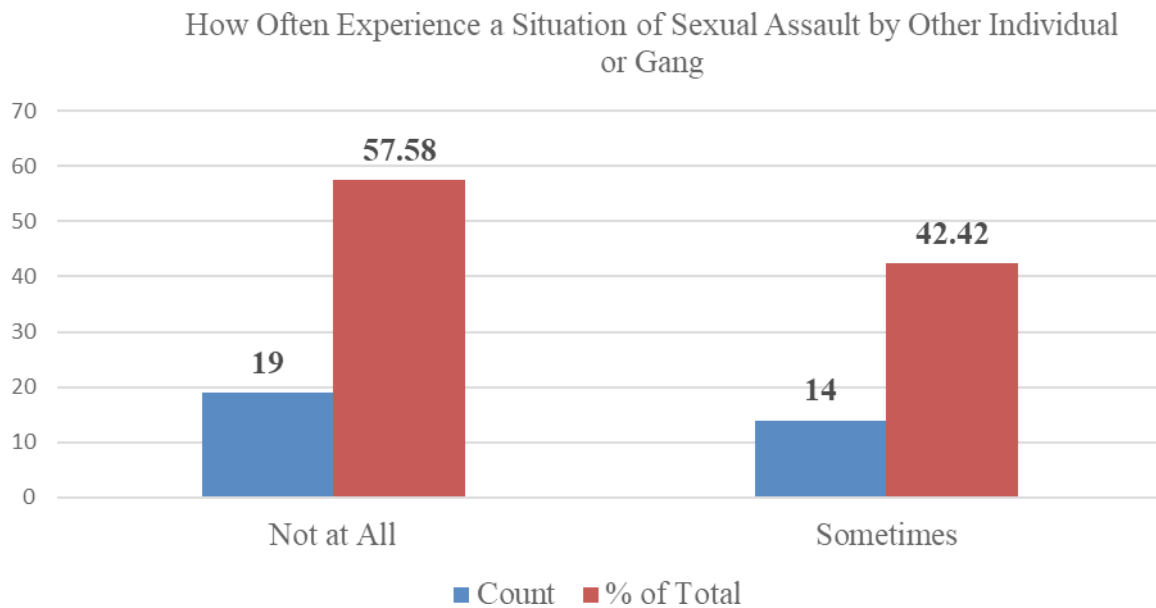


Figure 3. *Experience of a situation of sexual assault by an individual or a gang*
 Source: *Fieldwork*

behavior against female members of society. Therefore, bullying can affect an individual's sense of identity and socialization. Understanding these norms and factors can shed light on why bullying occurs and persists and is essential for developing effective interventions and support systems to address and prevent bullying.

Gender norms and power dynamics also play a significant role in the occurrence of sexual assault. A higher percentage of females may experience sexual assault compared to males in a patriarchal society.

Figure 3 indicates that a significant percentage of individuals have experienced sexual assault, with about 42.42% of the responses falling into the "Sometimes" category. However, more than half of the respondents (57.58%) have not experienced any such sexual assault in the context of school violence. This further shows that bullying is the most common form of school violence. Therefore, a sociological analysis is necessary to understand the complex social, cultural, and institutional factors that contribute to the prevalence of bullying and

sexual assault and the impact they have on individuals and communities.

Bullying by teachers often involves power imbalances between educators and students. The abuse of authority can lead to various forms of bullying, including verbal abuse, humiliation, or unfair grading practices. Sexual assault by a teacher is a severe form of abuse of power, as it involves an authority figure victimizing a student. Teacher bullying and sexual assault can have a lasting impact on a student's educational experience and future opportunities.

Understanding students' agency and their ability to address and report teacher bullying and sexual assault is important. Factors such as classroom size, teacher training, and school culture can affect the prevalence of teacher bullying and sexual assault. The extent to which teachers are held accountable for their behavior and how students are protected by anti-bullying policies is vital. It is also important to investigate how educational institutions respond to allegations of sexual assault by teachers. This includes examining the

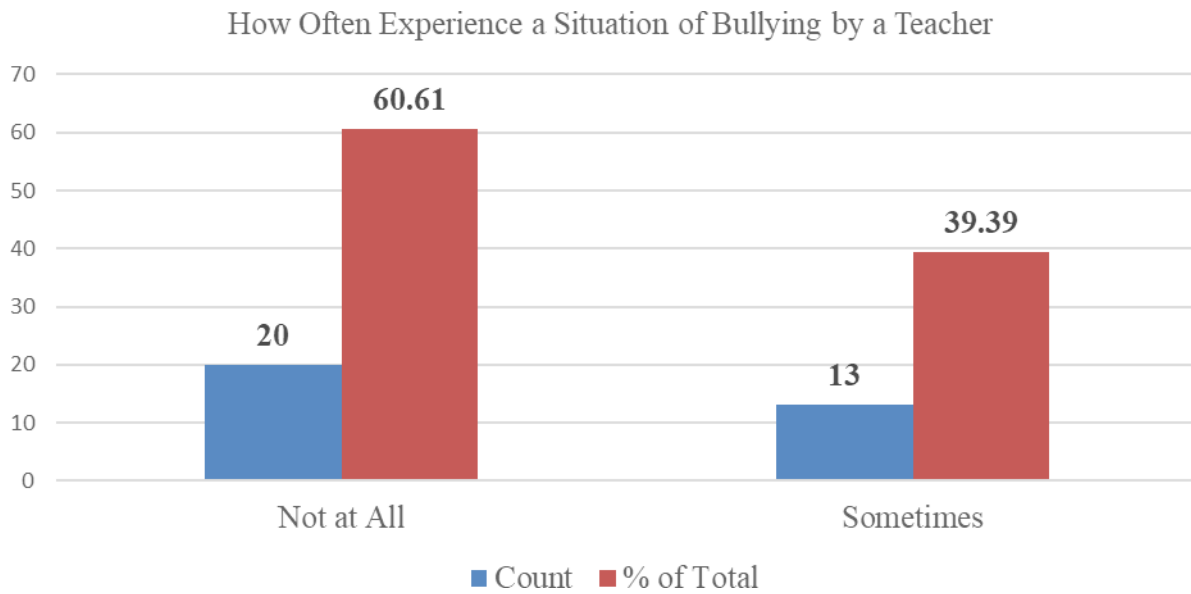


Figure 4. Experience of a situation of bullying by a teacher
 Source: Fieldwork

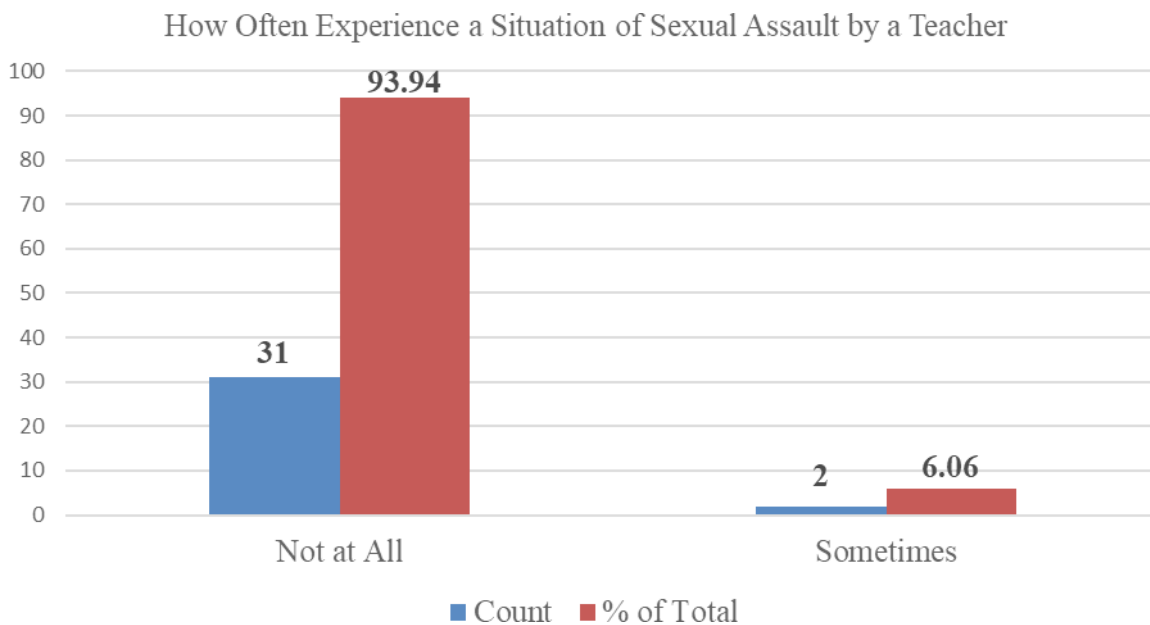


Figure 5. Experience of a situation of sexual assault by a teacher
 Source: Fieldwork

effectiveness of reporting mechanisms, disciplinary actions, and support services available to victims. A critical focus would be on the stigmatization of victims and the role of societal perceptions of authority figures in shaping behavior.

Figure 4 indicates that a significant percentage of individuals have not

experienced bullying by a teacher, and their responses fall under the “not at all” category (60.61%). However, it is essential to recognize that underreporting of teacher bullying can occur due to power dynamics, fear of retaliation, or concerns about the consequences of reporting. The “Sometimes” category suggests that a substantial number

of students (39.39%) report experiencing teacher bullying too.

The high percentage in the “not at all” category (93.94%) suggests that the vast majority of individuals in the study have not experienced sexual assault by a teacher (Figure 4.5). However, there are some who believe that sexual assault by a teacher happens sometimes (6.06%). Such experiences of school violence, either as victims or witnesses, have a negative and detrimental effect on the development and well-being of students and the educational culture. In schools, violence, whether verbal, physical or sexual, harms adolescents’ psycho-physical health and emotional stability and well-being.

Tamutiene (2008) found that teachers’ use of social power against students in schools has a very negative impact on their motivation for learning and their presence in the classroom. The most damaging situations arise when teachers either support bullying or engage with some students against others on their own, and others are being labeled as

idiots, or mistreated, ignored, humiliated, or intimidated.

Figure 6 indicates that a significant percentage of individuals have not at all experienced corporal punishment by a teacher (33.33%). However, the relatively high percentage in the “Sometimes” category (66.67%) suggests that a significant portion of individuals in the study have experienced corporal punishment by a teacher. The absence of respondents in the “often” category may suggest that frequent corporal punishment is not a common occurrence in this specific context. However, it is essential to recognize that corporal punishment is often underreported, especially in settings where it is considered socially or culturally acceptable. Different societies may have varying levels of acceptance or rejection of this form of discipline. The practice remains a sociological concern due to its potential for harm and its reflection of power dynamics, legal frameworks, cultural norms, and the need for changes in educational practices and attitudes toward discipline.

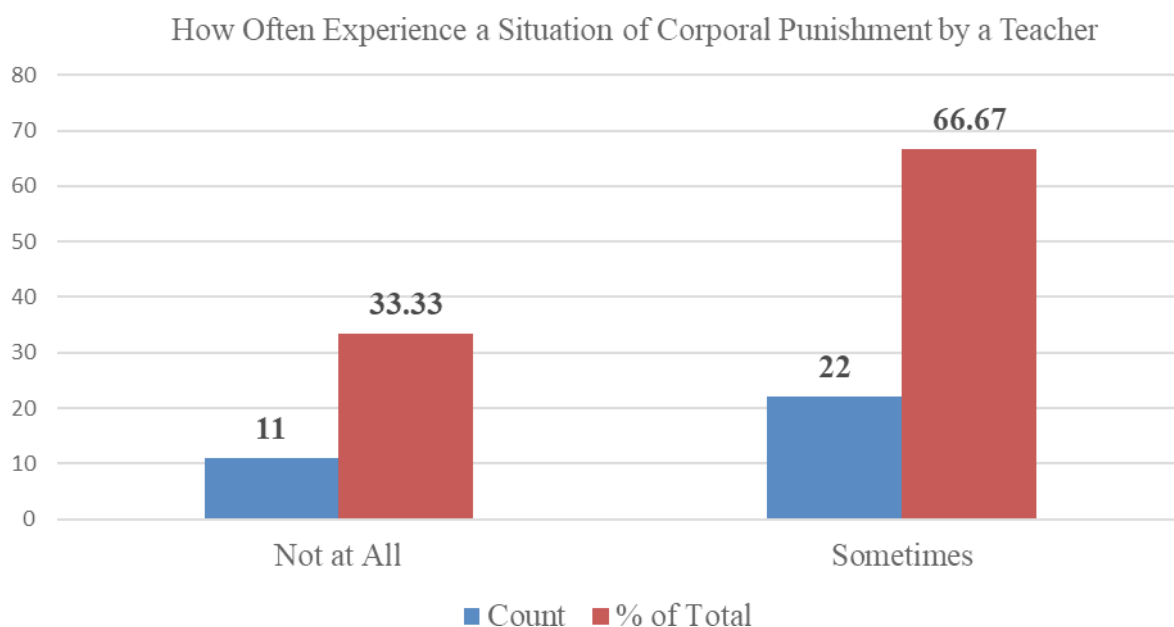


Figure 6. Experience of a situation of corporal punishment by a teacher
Source: Fieldwork

How Often School Violence Results into Any Physical Harm

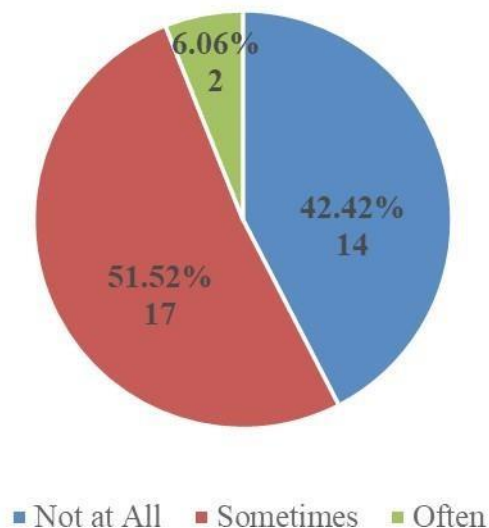


Figure 7. School violence into physical harm
 Source: Fieldwork

Further, a broad description has been given to violence by incorporating physical, psychological, emotional, and developmental dimensions into it (Morrison et al., 1994). Physical violence involves assault and injury and often accompanied with psychological, emotional, and developmental damage. Psychological harm may arise without physical injury, as in the case of the threat of physical harm and future disadvantages. It includes mental trauma and distress, depression, and anxiety. Emotional harm is a situation of lack of trust and confidence in others. It has a negative effect on one’s sense of being connected to the system, and the process, and one starts fearing inclusion and activity. Developmental harm, on the other hand, hinders academic, intellectual, imaginative, and cognitive development.

“School violence” may include physical aggression, bullying, fighting, or any form of harm inflicted by one student or a group of people or by a teacher on another within or outside the school setting during and immediately before and after the school hours while traveling to school from home

and home from school. The definition can vary, but it is essential for understanding the data. Those who experience violence may face physical, emotional, and psychological consequences, which can influence their academic performance and overall well-being.

Figure 7 shows that in 57.6% of cases, school violence causes physical harm, with more than half of the respondents (51.5%) believing that it sometimes results in physical harm. However, a significant number of respondents also have not felt any such correlation, and they think verbal violence is more prominent or that they have never experienced a situation of violence in their schools.

It is further evident that school violence cannot be isolated from broader societal issues such as poverty, discrimination, and access to resources. For example, transport means being taken by a student from home to school, and from school to home is a major determinant of outside school violence, as stated by the respondents during the interview. These factors can influence the

How often School Violence Results into Any Psychological and Emotional Harm

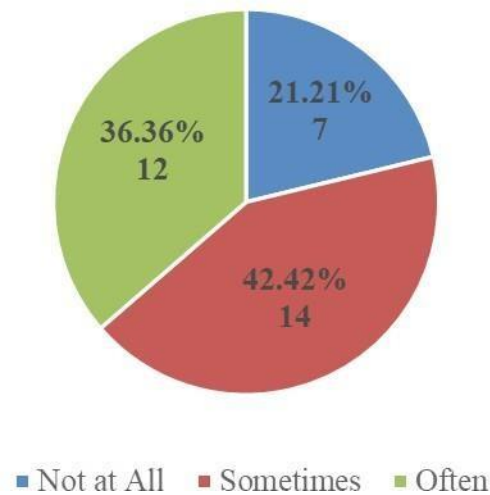


Figure 8. School violence into psycho-emotional harm
Source: Fieldwork

prevalence and consequences of violence in schools. Further, the schools may have anti-bullying programs, conflict resolution strategies, or security measures in place, which can impact the prevalence of violence.

School violence can also have a significant psychological and emotional impact on students who experience it. This impact may include anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and post-traumatic stress.

Figure 8 shows that a substantial portion of students (78.8% in total) experience some level of psycho-emotional harm due to school violence, while 36.4% of them believe it happens very often. Respondents also stated that the students may not always report psycho-emotional harm, and there can be a social stigma attached to being a victim of bullying or violence, which may impact reporting rates. Respondents further identified that the overall school climate plays a significant role in the prevalence of psycho-emotional harm. Therefore, schools may have bullying initiatives, counseling services, or mental health support systems in place. A school with a positive and inclusive

atmosphere is less likely to foster violence and harm.

Therefore, a further sociological analysis would delve into the complex web of factors that influence these statistics, including the psychological and emotional consequences of school violence, gender variations, reporting and intervention, school climate, and broader societal and institutional factors. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for addressing and preventing physical and psycho-emotional harm in schools. Many reports and research studies have also noted cyberbullying and online sexual abuse and harassment including use of abusive language as the most prevalent form of violence against children on the internet-driven educational age (DiMaggio et al., 2001; Ignatow & Robinson, 2017; UNESCO, 2017). Female students on this platform were again described as the most vulnerable of them.

Figure 9 reveals that perceptions about the occurrence of school violence differ between online and offline environments. A significant proportion of respondents

Platform Where More Probability of Occuring Violence

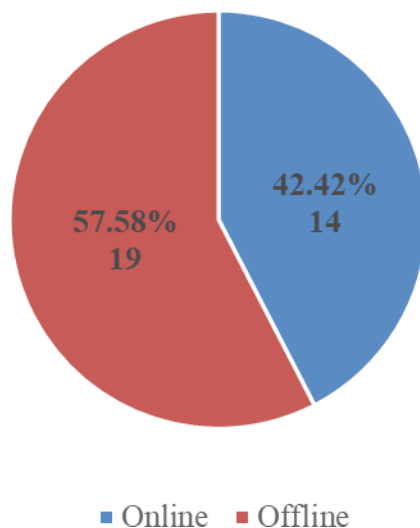


Figure 9. Platform with more probability of occurrence of school violence
Source: Fieldwork

(57.58%) believe that the probability of school violence occurs offline or in physical spaces, while 42.42% think it occurs online. This contrast reflects the distinction between violence that takes place in the real world, such as bullying in school hallways or outside the school, and violence that occurs in virtual spaces, like cyberbullying through social media or online platforms.

The greater emphasis on offline violence might indicate that many people still associate school violence with traditional forms of bullying, physical altercations, or interpersonal conflicts that take place in a school's physical environment. In contrast, the lower percentage for online violence could suggest that some people may underestimate or downplay the prevalence and impact of cyberbullying and other forms of online school-related violence.

The discrepancy between online and offline violence could also be due to issues related to underreporting and awareness. Online violence might be underreported, making people less aware of its extent, whereas offline violence is more visible and,

as a result, more likely to be reported and acknowledged. The data also indicates the evolving nature of school violence. While traditional forms of offline violence have been a concern for decades, the rise of digital technologies and social media has introduced new dynamics to school violence, such as online harassment, cyberbullying, and the spread of violent content. The percentages suggest that society is still grappling with understanding and addressing these emerging challenges.

Conclusion

A significant number of respondents from the sample described themselves as victims of violence, and, in many instances, these aggressions are gender-based. They face verbal and non-verbal assault not only on school campuses but also outside school campuses. Additionally, school violence occurs more frequently in physical than online educational environments; however, online violence is also noticeably high. The perpetrators of violence are also more

frequently identified, despite some occasions when they are not.

Students from private schools are frequently more prone to experience violence. Additionally, students in the OBC and open categories experience school violence more frequently. However, most respondents fall into the OBC and open categories for this sample. Further, because SCs and STs are primarily enrolled in government schools, which are typically closer to their homes, they experience less violence while traveling than other student groups who are primarily enrolled in private schools, which are farther from their homes. However, girls from the upper middle-class experience less abuse outside of school for two reasons: first, they travel to and from school with someone they know from home, and second, they use a means of transportation more frequently, limiting their exposure to outside society. Because of this, the distance to the school and the availability of transportation are associated with the experiences of violence among students.

Talking about the types of violence that have occurred in schools includes bullying by other students, strangers on routes to and from school, or by a group of people. Bullying by teachers is also common, although it happens much less frequently. Sexual assault by others, such as by individual boys or, more frequently, gangs of boys, is prevalent in schools, but fewer people witness it than those who have not experienced it. It frequently involves the use of abusive and demeaning words and derogatory language. Additionally, a substantial majority of students acknowledge corporal punishment, and most respondents denied sexual abuse by teachers, despite some students acknowledging it. Many of the respondents claimed that teachers were more worried about them and declined to speak of sexual abuse quite quickly. It also

draws attention to the cultural norm that views sexual discussions as taboo.

A significantly higher percentage of the sample is made up of those who believe that school violence can result in any kind of physical harm than it does of people who disagree. Most respondents- roughly three-fourths- reported psychological distress and emotional instability because of school violence. Along with its negative effects on mental and emotional health, bullying has also been affecting one's physical well-being.

This research also indicates that there are gender dimensions not only for school violence but for silence and submissiveness, too. "Silence" is another type of violence in which victims are not even allowed to talk about their experiences and narratives, such as in cases of "sexual violence talk" here. The notion of silence can be based on several factors; again, gender dynamics play a dominant role, and that is commonly seen in social interactions and gendered public relations.

The repetitive culture in which children are taught to be compliant and submissive to gender roles or norms plays a significant role in primary socialization and fuels school violence. Schoolgirls' exposure to more covert forms of violence, such as psychological, emotional, and sexual assault, shows their greater vulnerability to distress and anxiety that negatively impact their wellbeing and hamper their internal and intellectual growth. Consequently, the adversity of situations under which they continue is difficult to challenge openly, as it is less manifest, even though it can have more dangerous and disadvantageous repercussions for them. Such allegations are more commonly rejected against male perpetrators of violence in a patriarchal setup, and women are blamed more often if some are acknowledged. Such circumstances cause mistrust, discomfort, and psycho-

emotional fear among women and thus further obstruct their personal, social, and intellectual growth.

Therefore, there are greater opportunities to explore the nature of school violence against girl student learners, including silence, and to explore the causal explanation and repercussions for one's own and social development. Again, in the Indian case, the online trend in education is a relatively new, mass-scale phenomenon. However, it has been seen globally that social injustices and stereotypes are often mirrored online and are very prominent. Sexual abuse is another major challenge emerging on online media platforms that needs urgent attention. On such a forum, women have once again surfaced as a vulnerable group. Further, the reasons can be found in their historical marginalization in almost every sphere, including education and technology. Therefore, the modes, types, and effects of violence against women, particularly adolescent school-going women, need to be further and thoroughly investigated.

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Declaration of Ownership

This article is our original work.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest to declare in this article.

Ethical Clearance

The study was approved and presented at the Northern Regional Conference on Women's Studies, India.

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