

Understanding The Terminology Used To Describe Bullying Acts In Qatar.

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the perception of bullying amongst Qataris and Arabic speakers in Qatar by covering several areas (1) to what extent is the term "tanamour" used amongst Arabic speakers to refer to bullying and how far is it promoted; (2) attempts to identify which other words might be used to explain bullying in the country; (3) To what extent are people aware of distinguishing bullying from incidents according to the criteria of imbalance of power, intention, and repetition. Three scenarios were presented orally which contained incidents of bullying or aggression. The first scenario described intentional and repeated direct bullying (a boy continuously having his chocolate stolen at school). The second related a case of intentional and repeated cyberbullying (two boys continuously spread rumours about their classmate). The final scenario was not a case of bullying but rather, a one-off incident where a boy hits their classmate. Participants were asked to describe how they saw these incidents so that the terms used could be recorded (part A). This phase allowed people to describe events in their own words freely without prompting. In the second phase, participants were asked to select from a previously determined list, the most appropriate word they felt described the three scenarios already given and were presented via a laptop. The list contained commonly used terms for bullying behaviours in Arabic. However, if participants felt none of the words adequately described the behaviours, they were encouraged to use their own. Participants were not informed directly that the meetings would be about bullying but rather 'behaviours they may encounter in daily life'. They were also told that there were no 'correct answers' and to just state their opinion as they wished (including saying nothing or ending participation if they wanted). Two researchers were present at every meeting except one where it was appropriate for a female only. All sessions were recorded except one where participants found it inappropriate. Focus groups included 36 participants and took place either in participant's homes or places of work, and took 20-60 minutes long depending on group number and length of discussion. The study took place amongst families, friends and social workers in Qatar where 36% of the sample were Qataris and the rest were from other different Arabic speaking countries such as Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Palestine, Bahrain, Jordan, Somalia and Iraq. Even though this is a preliminary study, the findings indicate that there is some diversity due to the differences in cultures as there is considerable confusion with regards to the terminology used to describe bullying in Arabic. With respect to the aims of the study it has been unequivocally demonstrated that 'tanamor' is not widely used in Qatar and that when it is, it is often misused. There isn't a clear word emerged that has any equivalence to bullying in English. It is clear that there is a tremendous amount of work to be done to qualify both a term and concept behind this damaging behaviour in the Middle-East.