

The Role of Teacher-Student Relationship on Teachers' Attitudes towards School Bullying

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Abstract : Positive teacher-student relationship has been found to affect students' attitudes towards bullying and, in turn, their engagement in bullying behavior. However, no investigation has been conducted to explore whether teacher-student relationship affects teachers' attitudes towards bullying. The aim of this study was to examine the role of teacher-student relationship on teachers' attitudes towards bullying in terms of bullying seriousness, empathic responding, and likelihood to intervene in bullying situation. A cross-sectional, descriptive design was employed among a convenience sample of 173 school teachers (50.9% female) of 12 to 17-year-old students. The teachers were recruited from secondary public schools of three governorates in the Northern district of Jordan. Each group of students has multiple teachers for different subjects. Results showed that teacher-student relationship is partially related to teachers' attitudes towards bullying. More specifically, having a close teacher-student relationship significantly increased teachers' perception of bullying seriousness and empathy but not the likelihood to intervene. Research is needed to examine teachers' obstacles for not providing bullying interventions, as the barriers may be culturally contextualized. Meanwhile, interventions that promote quality teacher-student relationship are necessary to increase teachers' perception of bullying seriousness and empathy. Students have been found to adopt the values of their teachers, and this may deter them from engaging in bullying behavior.

Keywords : school bullying, teachers' attitudes, teacher-student relationship, adolescent students

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