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# Experiences of Peer Bullying among Adolescents and Associated Effects on Young Adult Outcomes: Longitudinal Evidence from Ethiopia, India, Peru and Viet Nam

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## EXPERIENCES OF PEER BULLYING AMONG ADOLESCENTS AND ASSOCIATED EFFECTS ON YOUNG ADULT OUTCOMES: LONGITUDINAL EVIDENCE FROM ETHIOPIA, INDIA, PERU AND VIET NAM

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## ABSTRACT

Being bullied has been found to have a significant impact on children's physical and mental health, psychosocial well-being and educational performance, with lasting effects into adulthood on health, well-being and lifetime earnings. Little is known about bullying in low- and middle-income countries, however. This study uses a mixed methods approach combining survey analysis of the predictors and associations with being bullied, with qualitative data to explore the context in which bullying occurs and the social processes that underpin it. Findings show that better data collection and increased resource allocation to bullying prevention are needed. The development and evaluation of different types of effective, sustainable and scalable bullying prevention models in low- and middle-income country contexts are priorities for programming and research.

**Keywords:** : bullying, peer groups, physical health, mental health, gender, education, ethnicity

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Globally it is estimated that more than one in three students between the ages of 13 and 15 are regularly bullied by peers. Being bullied has been found to have a significant impact on children's physical and mental health, psychosocial well-being and educational performance, with lasting effects into adulthood on health, well-being and lifetime earnings. Most research, including cross-cultural comparative work, has focused on high-income countries, identifying a range of predictors and effects associated with being bullied. Far less is known about bullying in low- and middle-income countries.

This paper is a contribution to the UNICEF Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children, which analyses how structural factors interact to affect everyday violence in children's homes, schools and communities. The results of the multi-country study intend to inform national strategies for violence prevention. We use longitudinal data from the Young Lives study of childhood poverty conducted in four countries: Ethiopia, India (the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana), Peru and Viet Nam to address three core questions:

- Which children are bullied and how at age 15?
- What is associated with certain groups of children being bullied?
- Are there long-term associations between being bullied at age 15 with psychosocial indicators (self-efficacy, self-esteem, parent relations and peer relations) at age 19?

We use a mixed methods approach combining survey analysis of the predictors and associations with being bullied, with qualitative data to explore the context in which bullying occurs and the social processes that underpin it.

### ■ Key findings:

Being bullied by peers is prevalent across countries, particularly verbal and indirect bullying:

- Indirect bullying, such as measures to humiliate and socially exclude others, is the most prevalent type of bullying experienced at age 15 across three of the four countries, ranging from 15 per cent of children in Ethiopia to 28 per cent in India.
- Verbal bullying is also prevalent, affecting a third of children in Peru and a quarter in India.
- Physical bullying is the least prevalent form and lower than the other types, with the exception of India where the rate of children experiencing physical bullying is similar to other types of bullying.
- Boys are at greater risk than girls of being physically and verbally bullied and girls are more likely to be bullied indirectly.

Markers of disadvantage and difference put children at risk of being bullied:

- Poorer children are consistently more likely to be bullied in India and experience some types of bullying (physical, social exclusion and attacks on property) in Viet Nam than their less poor peers.



- Out-of-school children are more likely than children attending school to be bullied by types of verbal bullying (Ethiopia, India and Viet Nam), physically in Ethiopia and Viet Nam, and by types of indirect bullying in India and Viet Nam.
- Children's experiences of being bullied are often a reflection of disadvantage, stigma and discriminatory social norms within wider society towards certain groups.

Being bullied at age 15 is associated with negative effects on psychosocial indicators at age 19:

- Being bullied is associated with later negative effects on self-efficacy (the capability to cope and recover from setbacks), self-esteem (sense of self-worth or value), peer and parent relations. While physical bullying typically receives the greatest attention, we find negative associations between each type of bullying and later psychosocial indicators.
- In statistical terms, the size of the negative effects on psychosocial indicators are modest. However, given that the negative effects are associated with bullying experienced over four years earlier, this illustrates the potentially longer-term, damaging effects. While most evidence on the effects associated with bullying comes from high-income countries, this is evidence that longer-term negative associations with bullying are experienced in low- and middle-income countries also.
- Bullying is corrosive to social relations. Qualitative evidence suggests that children who are bullied find it difficult to seek help from peers, teachers and parents, often fearing harsh punishment. Quantitative analysis links children who were made fun of or bullied indirectly at age 15 with having poorer relations with their parents at age 19 in Viet Nam and Peru.

Efforts to tackle peer bullying have often lagged behind other forms of violence affecting children but have been given new impetus by the United Nations General Assembly (2014) Resolution on protecting children from bullying. Both the United Nations Resolution and the Sustainable Development Goals, which include targets and indicators on the protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation, are important opportunities to stimulate greater international and national attention to violence affecting children more generally, as well as the specific dynamics of bullying. This includes better data collection and increased resource allocation to bullying prevention. The development and evaluation of different types of effective, sustainable and scalable bullying prevention models in low- and middle-income country contexts are therefore priorities for programming and research.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Globally it is estimated that more than one in three students between the ages of 13 and 15 are regularly bullied (Fleming and Jacobsen, 2010: 75). Rather than constituting a harmless part of children's everyday interactions as is sometimes claimed (for critiques see Dunne, Humphreys and Leach, 2006; Finkelhor and Tucker, 2015; Leach, 2003), bullying by peers has been found to have a profound impact on children's physical and mental health, psychosocial well-being and educational performance, with lasting effects found on adult health, well-being and lifetime earnings (Brown and Taylor, 2008; Lereya et al., 2015; Olweus, 1996; Takizawa, Maughan and Arseneault, 2014; Wolke et al., 2013). In response, efforts to tackle peer bullying have risen up the international policy agenda, as evidenced by the United Nations General Assembly (2014) Resolution on protecting children from bullying. This paper was commissioned as part of the UNICEF Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children, which analyses how structural factors interact to affect everyday violence in children's homes, schools and communities. It is hoped that the results of the multi-country study will better inform national strategies for violence prevention.<sup>1</sup>

The paper makes two principal contributions to the field of violence prevention and particularly bullying. First, most research into peer bullying has focused on children's individual psychological characteristics or psychosocial well-being – both in terms of predictors as well as effects. Less attention has been given to how structural factors, such as poverty and inequality, shape the contexts within which children interact and where bullying occurs (Elgar et al., 2009; Hong and Espelage, 2012; Horton, 2014). In response, the paper is framed by a structural determinants approach (Viner et al., 2012) to explore how children's experiences of being bullied occur within the context of wider economic and social inequalities, such as poverty and gender norms, which shape the power dynamics that underpin interpersonal relationships and interactions. We also employ a life course approach to understand how experiences of being bullied in adolescence influence outcomes in early adulthood (Dornan and Woodhead, 2015).<sup>2</sup>

Second, despite the universal nature of bullying, most research, including cross-cultural comparative work, has focused on high-income countries (Denmark et al., 2005; Jimerson, Swearer and Espelage, 2009; Smith et al., 1999). Far less is known about the predictors and effects associated with being bullied in low- and middle-income countries where bullying has received less attention in research, policy and programming than other forms of violence affecting children (Michaud, 2009; UNICEF, 2014). This paper uses data from the Young Lives longitudinal study of childhood poverty conducted in four countries: Ethiopia, India (the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana), Peru and Viet Nam. We start by reviewing the literature on the predictors and effects of being bullied and provide an overview of the policy context in the four Young Lives countries before then describing the methodological approach taken. Using a mixed methods approach we address three core questions: Which children are

<sup>1</sup> For more information on the multi-country study, see [www.unicef-irc.org/research/274](http://www.unicef-irc.org/research/274).

<sup>2</sup> We recognize the problematic assumptions bound in with relying on an age-based delineation of childhood and adulthood. However, for the sake of simplicity, we draw on the definition of a child contained in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) as a 'human being below the age of eighteen years' (United Nations, 1989). We use outcomes data that were collected when the Older Cohort were aged 19. We use the term 'young adulthood' for this phase of life.

bullied and how at age 15?<sup>3</sup> What is associated with certain groups of children being bullied? Are there long-term associations of being bullied at age 15 with psychosocial indicators (self-efficacy, self-esteem, parent relations and peer relations) at age 19? We end by drawing conclusions for research and assessing the implications for policy.

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<sup>3</sup> Questions on the experience of multiple forms of bullying were asked only to the Older Cohort children interviewed for Young Lives, when they were 15 years old. Therefore, this paper draws on quantitative data exclusively from this cohort; see section four for more details on methodology. In addition, general trends suggest that bullying is most common in the earlier part of adolescence (10–15 years).

## 2. PEER BULLYING: DEFINITIONS, PREDICTORS AND EFFECTS

We review the literature to provide an overview of definitions of bullying and evidence on what factors have been found to put children at risk of being bullied and what the effects of being bullied are on children's outcomes. This review is intended to inform our later analysis and identify key gaps and potential contributions rather than being a comprehensive review. Where possible we draw on literature and systematic reviews and then illustrate findings with reference to specific studies. We draw predominately on those from high-income countries given the focus of research to date, and concentrate on the predictors and effects of peer bullying.

### 2.1 Definitions of bullying

Bullying is usually defined as the systematic abuse of power (Rigby, 2002) involving the repeated infliction of negative actions intended to cause harm or discomfort, over time. Bullying is directed against an individual less able to defend him or herself physically or psychologically, including by being outnumbered or if "the 'source' of the negative actions is difficult to identify or confront as in social exclusion from the group" (Olweus, 1996; Olweus, 1999: 10–11). We adopt this definition of bullying to highlight inequalities of power, rather than to pathologize children and young people as aggressive (Horton, 2015). Bullying is therefore treated as distinct from other acts of peer violence, such as one-off, random incidents, targeted at different individuals on different occasions, fighting or exchanges between individuals equally able to defend themselves, or sexual assault (Olweus, 1996: 334–6).<sup>4</sup> Recognizing a broader spectrum of violent actions is undoubtedly important in addressing peer victimization. However, in this paper we focus on bullying actions in order to maintain conceptual clarity on the phenomenon under examination. We predominately focus on children's experiences of being bullied, given the availability of data in the Young Lives questionnaires (see section 4), but within the qualitative analysis (section 6) also discuss children bullying others.

Traditionally the concept of bullying has been applied to physical acts of violence. However, adopting a broader definition is imperative given that different groups of children experience different types of bullying depending, for example, on their age and gender (Carbone-Lopez, Esbensen and Brick, 2010: 333; UNESCO, 2015: 3). Multiple forms of bullying can be identified, including direct attacks, either physical (such as hitting or kicking) or verbal (name-calling, nasty teasing, issuing verbal threats and so on) or indirect actions,<sup>5</sup> often using third parties to damage social relationships, self-esteem and/or social status by spreading rumours, gossip and other measures aimed at social isolation and exclusion (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen, 1992; Crick and Grotpeter, 1995; Smith, 2004; Underwood, 2002).<sup>6</sup> Attacks on property, such as

<sup>4</sup> Critics have argued that such definitions of bullying are problematic by excluding other forms of peer aggression and victimization, including one-off incidents of severe physical violence or sexual assault, and that there are difficulties with defining what constitutes a power imbalance (Finkelhor, Turner and Hamby, 2012). Long-term associated effects have also been found with single events of peer victimization, even if these are not systematic or repeated (Arora, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> Indirect bullying is sometimes referred to as social or relational bullying. However, these terms relate more to the outcomes of the bullying rather than the specific nature of the bullying action (Smith et al., 2002: 1120). All bullying is relational. Consequently, we use the term indirect bullying in this paper.

<sup>6</sup> Sexual harassment, such as non-consensual touching, witness or exposure, is sometimes included within definitions of bullying or 'sexual bullying'. Bullying is frequently expressed or experienced in gendered ways and there can be considerable overlap with gender-based violence as bullying can encompass acts or threats of a sexual nature or related to gender norms and stereotypes (Bhatla et al., 2014: 6; UNESCO, 2015: 2). However, it is important for effective policy and advocacy responses not to lose a focus on the specific dynamics and impact of sexual assault within more widespread bullying behaviours.

vandalism or theft of personal items, are a further sub-type of bullying although they feature far less frequently (Dunne, 2007: 509; Finkelhor, Turner and Hamby, 2012; Mynard and Joseph, 2000; Ponzo, 2013). In this paper we focus on these four different types of bullying. Finally, in recent years there has been a rise of cyberbullying, using the Internet or mobile phones to send emails or texts or post messages on social network sites in order to intimidate and upset others (Pinheiro, 2006: 22; UNICEF, 2014: 122–123). This is beyond the scope of this paper as Young Lives does not collect data on cyberbullying.

## 2.2 Predictors of bullying

The literature lacks consensus on the predictors of being bullied. The reasons for bullying cited here are similar to those given in the violence prevention literature generally. Liu and Graves (2011: 557) identify the following reasons for the differences in the predictors of being bullied:

- variances in the definitions and conceptualisation of bullying
- variations in country contexts, including different cultural conceptions of bullying
- differences in age and population groups sampled
- methodological differences in assessing and measuring bullying, including in different settings such as schools or workplaces.

Consequently in the sub-sections that follow we identify factors that have been found to predict children being bullied according to a structural determinants framework, highlighting where similar findings have been found across studies and where there is conflicting evidence.

### 2.2.1 Structural factors

Structural determinants are factors arising from the ways in which societies (and institutions, such as schools, which are microcosms of wider societies) are organized politically, economically and socially to create inequalities in power, wealth, status and access to resources and information (Viner et al., 2012). There are two related ways in which structural factors may operate to increase the risk of children being bullied. First, inequalities in income, education status or norms relating to gender, sexuality and ethnicity in part shape school and community environments and interpersonal relationships and may combine with individual characteristics to render some children more vulnerable to bullying than others. Children may be bullied because they are poor or disadvantaged, being marked out as different from other children or because of stigma towards certain social groups. The evidence on bullying and poverty is mixed. Some studies have found that children from poorer households were not at greater risk of being bullied; see for example Brown and Taylor's (2008) analysis of children who were bullied at ages 7 and 11 using the British National Child Development Study. In contrast, Ponzo's (2013) study in Italy found that children aged 9 and 13 from poorer families, with parents with low levels of education as well as children of immigrants were all more likely to be bullied at school.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See also Mühlenweg's (2010) study of primary school children across 17 countries, which found that children from immigrant backgrounds were more likely to be bullied.

The second way in which structural inequalities may contribute to bullying is through the creation of stressful living environments with poor social connectedness that contribute to higher levels of bullying overall. Here a number of other studies have found income inequality rather than individual socio-economic status to be predictive of bullying (Hong and Espelage, 2012: 315). For example, higher income inequality was associated with greater bullying among 11-year-old boys and girls across 37 countries (Elgar et al., 2009). The percentage of children who reported bullying other children was four to five times greater in countries with high income inequality.

### **2.2.2 Institutional settings**

Most research on peer bullying has focused on bullying in schools, noting that institutional settings may give rise to bullying, particularly as it is difficult for children to leave school without great cost (Horton, 2011b: 271; Smith, 2004: 98; Smith and Mortia, 1999: 1). Certain institutional features may increase the likelihood of bullying taking place. In high-income countries studies have found links between higher levels of bullying in schools and fewer teachers supporting children's learning or monitoring break times, large class sizes and increasing pressures to cover a large curriculum (Horton, 2011b: 272; Olweus, 1993). In resource poor settings, especially in low- and middle-income countries where education systems have undergone rapid expansion and classroom overcrowding and inadequate teacher supervision are common, these pressures may be intensified and contribute to higher levels of bullying (Plan International, 2008: 39).

The ways in which schools are organized and the norms and values promoted, whether explicitly or implicitly, especially through disciplinary practices, can give rise to increased levels of bullying. For example, a study into violence in schools in Ghana, Malawi and Zimbabwe, highlighted how gender-based violence occurred against the backdrop of high levels of corporal punishment and bullying (Leach, 2003). Abusive and bullying behaviours exhibited by boys towards girls and younger boys were encouraged by the authoritarian nature of the school setting, which discouraged girls from questioning the behaviour of boys (or the abuse perpetrated by adult male teachers) and from seeking help from both male and female teachers who ignored such behaviours. The actions of teachers can therefore shape the behaviours and responses of children and reinforce gender norms. It is well documented that teachers sometimes verbally abuse, ridicule and humiliate children or incite students to bully others (Bhatla et al., 2014: 15; Covell and Becker, 2011: 16; Horton, 2011b: 272; Pinheiro, 2006: 15). In addition, children who feel that their teachers do not intervene adequately to stop bullying are less likely to seek help (Hong and Espelage, 2012: 317). Studies of bullying in Peru and Viet Nam have identified a 'code of silence' surrounding bullying involving teachers and students (Horton, 2011a; Merino, Carozzo and Benites, 2011).

Bullying can therefore reflect and reproduce wider inequalities of power and resources. Understanding the factors that put children at risk of being bullied and building preventative programmes requires attention not only to individual behavioural characteristics, which has been the predominant focus, but also to factors at institutional, community and structural levels which may give rise to, or reduce, bullying.

### **2.2.3 Interpersonal relationships**

Children's interpersonal relationships are shaped by the environments in which they are situated. Research on bullying has identified a number of risk factors in children's daily environments and the importance of children's relationships with adults in the family, as well as with adults and peers in school and the community (for a review see Pepler, Craig and Haner, 2012). A key theme that emerges is the association between witnessing or experiencing one type of violence within the home or community and being bullied. Children who witness domestic violence, experience either harsh or over protective parenting, or who are from families that were deemed to lack cohesion, have been found to be at greater risk of being bullied (Espelage and Swearer, 2003: 376; Hong and Espelage, 2012: 316–317; Plan International, 2008). In cohort data from the UK and United States (US), about 40 per cent of children who were maltreated were also bullied (Lereya et al., 2015: 529). While there has been less research into predictors of bullying outside the home and the school, associations have been found between higher levels of bullying and more violent communities (Hong and Espelage, 2012: 317).

Research into children's interpersonal relationships and bullying has tended to focus on the aggressive behaviour exhibited by some children (e.g. Olweus, 1993). However, an alternative stream within the literature focuses on the social processes of inclusion and exclusion that mark children's peer interactions (for an overview see Horton, 2011b; Horton, 2015). Children's peer interactions also become increasingly important with age and particularly during adolescence with the formation of identity (Carbone-Lopez, Esbensen and Brick, 2010; Lereya et al., 2015: 524; UNICEF, 2014: 112).

### **2.2.4 Individual characteristics**

While characteristics such as age, gender and ethnicity are individual attributes, the opportunities or constraints associated with these characteristics are structurally determined. For example, social norms may dictate that girls and boys have different opportunities or face different risks.

General trends suggest that bullying is most common in the earlier part of adolescence (10–15 years) with transitions from primary to secondary school being a key factor (Espelage and Swearer, 2003 172–3; Hong and Espelage, 2012: 313). Younger children – age 12 or younger (Fleming and Jacobsen, 2010: 75; Olweus, 1996: 340) or children who are young within their grade (Ponzo, 2013) – have been found to be at greater risk of being bullied. The types of bullying which children experience also vary by age. Physical bullying has been found to decrease with age, whereas verbal and indirect bullying does not always decline (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen, 1992; Rivers and Smith, 1994).

In general, boys have been found to be more likely to experience bullying in low-, middle- and high-income countries (Brown and Taylor, 2008: 391; Ponzo, 2013: 1075; UNESCO, 2015: 5). However, caution should be exercised, as girls are often more likely to experience less recognized forms of indirect bullying (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen, 1992). In the UK, boys have been found to be three times more likely to experience physical bullying, whereas girls were at greater risk of indirect bullying, especially during adolescence, affecting one-third of girls compared with one-fifth of boys (Rivers and Smith, 1994).

Ethnic minority children, children with learning or other disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) young people have also been found to be at greater risk of bullying (Hong and Espelage, 2012; Knox and Conti-Ramsden, 2003; Nabuzoka, 2000; Pinheiro, 2006: 15; Rivers, 2001; Smith, 2004; UNICEF, 2014: 129). However, the evidence is inconsistent, with studies in the United States suggesting that whether or not ethnic minority children are bullied is not associated with minority status alone but also with the ethnic composition of the school and community and whether they are in the minority or in an environment with peers from similar backgrounds (Espelage and Swearer, 2003: 372).

Individual external appearance – such as having physical characteristics that deviate from what is considered the norm (being over- or under-weight compared with peers, wearing glasses and so on) – or personality types – such as appearing more insecure, anxious or less likely to retaliate – have been identified as predictors of being bullied (Brown and Taylor, 2008; Hong and Espelage, 2012: 314; Olweus, 1996). In particular, children who have a high body mass index (BMI) have been found to be at greater risk of experiencing bullying than their peers (Janssen, Boyce and Pickett, 2004). Yet conflicting evidence exists on the role of other physical characteristics. While some studies have found that physical characteristics did not predict the likelihood of being bullied whereas personality type was a significant factor (Olweus, 1996), others have found that physical characteristics considered to be ‘unattractive’ predicted being bullied (Brown and Taylor, 2008: 391).

## 2.3 The effects of bullying

Peer bullying has been associated with a range of negative outcomes for children. In the following sub-sections we summarize evidence on the effects of being bullied on health and psychological well-being, education and lifetime earnings.

### 2.3.1 *Physical and mental health*

Being bullied by peers is associated with poorer physical health, including psychosomatic problems in childhood (Espelage and Swearer, 2003: 373) as well as poor health in adulthood (Wolke et al., 2013). For example, in the United States, children who were bullied between the ages of 9 and 16 were at greater risk of poorer health outcomes in adulthood, including regular smoking, self-reported illness and diagnosis of serious illness (ibid.). Even more extensive effects have been found on mental health and psychosocial well-being. These include externalizing problems (such as aggression, risk behaviours and delinquency), internalizing difficulties (e.g. depression, anxiety, self-harm and suicidality) and social functioning (Hawker and Boulton, 2000; Hanish and Guerra, 2002; Lereya et al., 2015; Olweus, 1996; Schäfer et al., 2004; Smith, 2004). A meta-analysis of 18 longitudinal studies concluded that internalizing problems predicted both the likelihood of being bullied, as well as being a consequence of bullying, so creating “a vicious cycle that contributes to a high stability of peer victimization” (Reijntjes et al., 2010; see also Takizawa, Maughan and Arseneault, 2014; Wolke et al., 2013).

Bullying can have different effects on boys and girls. Some studies suggest that being bullied results in a greater range of negative psychological consequences for girls given



the ways in which girls are socialized to maintain close friendship groups (Carbone-Lopez, Esbensen and Brick, 2010: 4). Conversely, other studies suggest that boys are more likely to be repeatedly bullied and experience multiple types of bullying and so the effect on boys' outcomes is greater, particularly with regards to externalizing behaviours (Hanish and Guerra, 2002).

The effects associated with being bullied also vary by type of bullying. Despite the greater focus on physical bullying, evidence suggests that the negative effect of indirect bullying on children's outcomes, including self-esteem and educational performance, is as great if not greater (Carbone-Lopez, Esbensen and Brick, 2010; Ponzio, 2013). In addition, indirect bullying may be less easily detected by adults, and studies have shown that both boys and girls were more likely to tell an adult if they experienced physical or verbal bullying rather than indirect bullying (Rivers and Smith, 1994: 361).

### **2.3.2 Educational achievement**

While the majority of studies have focused on psychosocial outcomes of bullying, a few researchers have investigated the effects of being bullied on schooling. The evidence appears mixed with some studies finding no impact on educational outcomes (Hanish and Guerra, 2002; Woods and Wolke, 2004) whereas others find associations between experiencing bullying and low achievement (Olweus, 1996: 344). A meta-review of 33 studies concluded that being bullied had a small but negative correlation with academic achievement (Nakamoto and Schwartz, 2010). A study investigating the effects of bullying on Italian pupils at ages 9 and 13 found that at both these ages bullying was associated with significantly lower scores in reading, maths and science, with the effects being larger at age 13 and for children who were bullied repeatedly (Ponzio, 2013). One channel by which bullying may lead to poorer educational achievement is via elevated levels of stress affecting mental health and poorer memory functioning, in addition to other factors, such as higher levels of absenteeism (Vaillancourt et al., 2011).

### **2.3.3 Lifetime earnings**

Poor educational performance has implications for children's human capital development and future labour market opportunities. Using longitudinal data from the British National Child Development Study, Brown and Taylor (2008) found that children who were bullied at age 7 or age 11 had significantly lower educational achievement at 16 and lower wage earnings and growth in earnings over the life course. The effects were larger for children bullied in early adolescence. Similar findings have been found across other European countries (Ammermüller, 2007) and in the United States effects were found on financial hardship and difficulties in keeping jobs (Wolke et al., 2013).

## **2.4 Summary**

In summary, the literature review has highlighted that the evidence on the predictors of being bullied is inconsistent; however, economic inequality, the nature of the school environment, gender (differing by type of bullying) and belonging to an ethnic or other minority group emerge as significant across a number of studies. There is more consistent evidence on the effects of being bullied, associated with poorer health, psychological and psychosocial outcomes, educational attainment and wage earnings in adulthood.

The literature review has also identified two key gaps. First, there has been a greater focus on individual and interpersonal factors that may predict bullying rather than the dynamic relationship between structural determinants and the ways in which peers interact. Second, research on bullying comes predominately from high-income countries and far less is known about the predictors and effects associated with bullying in low- and middle-income countries or about effective, sustainable and scalable anti-bullying programmes. It is important to assess how far research in high-income settings is of relevance to other contexts. Studying bullying in low- and middle-income countries is hampered by both a scarcity of data and also the lack of comparable data across different contexts due to the use of different measures and different recall periods and socio-cultural factors that may influence reporting (Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) on Violence against Children, 2012; Pinhero, 2006; Plan International, 2008; UNESCO, 2015; UNICEF, 2014: 119).

Using Young Lives survey data we are able to start to build a picture of the predictors and effects associated with being bullied in four low- and middle-income countries and through qualitative analysis explore the social context in which bullying occurs. In the following section we provide an overview of the policy contexts and the limited evidence and responses to bullying in which we situate our findings.

### 3. BULLYING IN ETHIOPIA, INDIA, PERU AND VIET NAM: POLICY CONTEXTS

Bullying is encapsulated within physical and mental violence along with the recognition that bullying “not only harms a child’s physical and psychological integrity and well-being in the immediate term, but often has severe impacts on his or her development, education and social integration in the medium and long-term” (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2011). Article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989) stipulates that:

*States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*

Despite near universal ratification of the UNCRC, bullying is a form of violence affecting children that has received less attention than others in research, policy and programming. In addition, the United Nations General Assembly (2014) Resolution on protecting children from bullying notes the need for greater evidence on bullying and in particular on causes and effects. Table 1 (pages 18 and 19) provides a brief overview of laws, policies, programmes and previous studies on bullying in the four Young Lives study countries: Ethiopia, India (the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana), Peru and Viet Nam.<sup>8</sup>

To summarize, across the four countries under study, the scant evidence that exists suggests that peer bullying is widespread and affects large numbers of children, yet the focus on bullying prevention in policies and programmes has been limited.

<sup>8</sup> The compilation of the table was based on literature searches and in consultation with key national informants. However, there may be other studies in national languages or small-scale programme interventions that are not captured here.

**TABLE 1 – Policy context and studies on bullying in Ethiopia, India, Peru and Viet Nam**

	Laws	Policies	Programmes	Data and evidence
<b>Ethiopia</b>	No	Anti-bullying measures are not contained in educational or other policies.	No specific anti-bullying programmes identified.	Very limited research on bullying (Pereznieto et al., 2010: 31). Across Africa it has been noted that non-physical violence, including bullying, often goes unrecognized and is undocumented (African Child Policy Forum, 2014).
<b>India</b>	No legal provisions covering bullying but ragging (intimidation of new or younger students, usually in higher education institutions by older students through the use of physical, verbal or sexual intimidation or abuse) is prohibited by a 1997 law in Andhra Pradesh and is now considered covered by provisions under the Indian Penal Code (Raghavan Committee Report, 2007).	A Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) Government Order (2015) recognized the problem and severity of bullying and ragging in schools and outlined a series of interventions at state, district and school level to start to develop a more systemic response to bullying.	Following the 2006-2007 Raghavan Committee, which was established by the MHRD to recommend anti-ragging measures, a free telephone and email helpline was established.	<p>Cross-sectional studies on the prevalence of bullying and its effects on children's outcomes, including psychosomatic symptoms, poor psychosocial well-being, difficulties concentrating in class and social isolation (Malhi, Bharti and Sidhu, 2014; Ramya and Kulkarni, 2011; Srisiva, Thirumoothi and Sujatha, 2013).</p> <p>One study conducted in Chandigarh, north India, found that boys were 6.6 times more likely than girls to be victims of physical bullying but girls were 1.3 times more likely to be victims of bullying overall (Malhi, Bharti and Sidhu, 2014).</p> <p>Poverty, poor academic achievement, appearance and skin colour or complexion were reported as the principal reasons for being bullied by children in Coimbatore city, Tamilnadu (Srisiva, Thirumoothi and Sujatha, 2013).</p>
<b>Peru</b>	<p>Law 29719 (Ley que promueve la convivencia sin violencia en las instituciones educativas) approved in 2011 is intended to promote peaceful coexistence in educational institutions.</p> <p>The law establishes the mechanisms for diagnosing, preventing, avoiding, punishing and eradicating violence, including bullying, between students in educational institutions.</p>	Law 29719 requires teachers to detect, act and denounce major acts of harassment to the Consejo Educativo Institucional (CONEI); or if acts of bullying are considered minor then to undertake disciplinary measures against the students involved.	Limited interventions based in Lima and typically individual initiatives rather than widespread, systematic programmes (Merino, Carozzo and Benites, 2011).	<p>Limited studies on bullying. Existing studies are concentrated in the capital city Lima and/or have an epidemiological focus (for a review of studies see Merino, Carozzo and Benites, 2011).</p> <p>Studies have found boys are more likely than girls to be bullied and that bullying is most common between the ages of 10 and 16 (Crookston et al., 2014: 86).</p> <p>Using Young Lives data, Crookston et al. (2014) found that children who were bullied at ages 8 and 15 were at a higher risk of engaging in risk behaviours, including smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol and sexual relationships.</p>

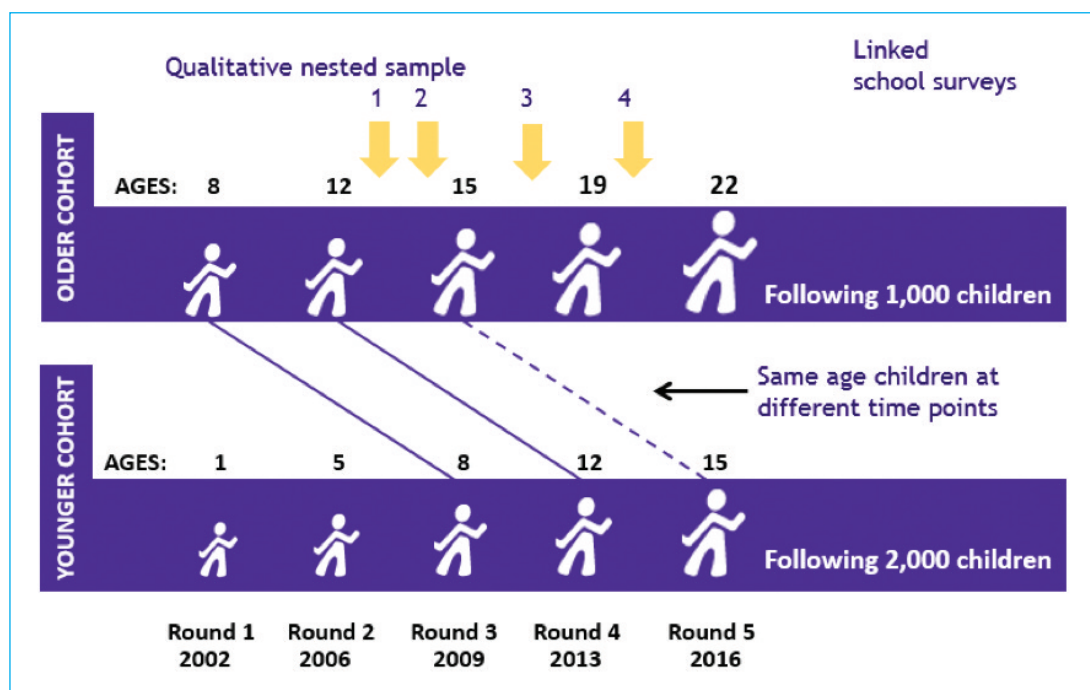
	Laws	Policies	Programmes	Data and evidence
<b>Viet Nam</b>	No	Violence prevention in schools in general has been the focus of a series of education-related decrees and directives issued by the Government (Nguyen and Tran, 2013: 9). However, explicit measures or policies to tackle bullying have not been introduced (Horton, 2011a: 17).	The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) launched a campaign called 'Child Friendly Schools, Active Students' in 2008 focused on building safer learning environments and teaching children life skills.	Several studies document the prevalence and types of violence experienced by students in school (for an overview see Bhatla et al., 2014: 181). Two studies have found that nearly one in five students experiences non-physical forms of bullying by their peers (Bhatla et al., 2014: 181; Nguyen and Tran, 2013).  Ethnographic research on bullying has been conducted in lower secondary schools in Haiphong and Hanoi (Horton, 2011a; Horton, 2014) – see discussion in section 2.

## 4. DATA AND DESCRIPTION OF KEY VARIABLES AND MEASURES

### 4.1 Sample

We use data from Young Lives – a two-cohort longitudinal study of childhood poverty following approximately 12,000 children in Ethiopia, India (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana), Peru and Viet Nam since 2002 (see Figure 1).

**FIGURE 1 – Young Lives study design**



Questions on the experience of multiple forms of bullying were addressed only to the Older Cohort children when they were 15 years old. Therefore, this paper draws on quantitative data exclusively from this cohort. In particular, it will consider Round 3 (2009) and Round 4 (2013) of the child and household questionnaires. Table 2 summarizes sample sizes of these data.<sup>9</sup>

**TABLE 2 – Sample sizes of the relevant Young Lives datasets**

	Ethiopia		India		Peru		Vietnam	
	Age 15 (Round 3)	Age 19 (Round 4)	Age 15 (Round 3)	Age 19 (Round 4)	Age 15 (Round 3)	Age 19 (Round 4)	Age 15 (Round 3)	Age 19 (Round 4)
Female	475	421	494	487	312	294	492	462
Male	496	488	482	465	358	341	484	425
<b>Total</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>887</b>

<sup>9</sup> Attrition is very low compared with other longitudinal studies. More detailed information about sample characteristics, sample design, studysites, tracking and attrition is given in the Round 4 Survey Design and Sampling fact sheets for each country. See [www.younglives.org.uk/content/sampling-and-attrition](http://www.younglives.org.uk/content/sampling-and-attrition) (accessed 19 April 2016).

## 4.2 Sample selection and sites

Using a multi-stage sampling procedure, children of the right age and their households were randomly sampled within 20 selected sites. Sites were selected following a semi-purposive sampling strategy in order to fulfil the objectives of Young Lives as a study of childhood poverty. As a result, wealthier areas were excluded from the sample and poor areas were over-sampled. In addition, sites were chosen to be broadly representative of geographic, ethnic and livelihood diversity but are not nationally representative. Study teams in each of the four countries followed slightly different processes adapted to local circumstances to select the sites (see Escobal and Flores, 2008; Kumra, 2008; Nguyen, 2008; Outes-Leon and Sánchez, 2008).

Since Young Lives covers a wide diversity of children from different backgrounds in each country (Escobal and Flores, 2008; Kumra, 2008; Nguyen, 2008; Outes-Leon and Sánchez, 2008), the samples are suited to modelling factors that matter for children's development across time. The Young Lives samples are not designed to monitor child outcome indicators at the national level or to directly compare prevalence rates or outcomes across the countries within the study. Instead, the cross-country nature of the study design enables us to examine the similarities and differences in the outcomes associated with bullying across the four countries (Dornan and Woodhead, 2015: 8).

## 4.3 Qualitative sub-sample

Four rounds of longitudinal, in-depth qualitative interviews have been conducted with a nested sub-sample of Young Lives children (25 Older Cohort, 25 Younger Cohort per country, with an equal number of boys and girls), their parents, teachers and community members. The qualitative research took place in three of the sites in Viet Nam, four in India, four in Peru and five in Ethiopia. The sites were selected to explore variations in location, ethnicity and social and economic circumstances (see Crivello, Morrow and Wilson, 2013). Within the sites, children were randomly selected from the larger Young Lives sample. The interviews were semi-structured around key themes, such as: well-being, risk and resilience; education, work, and time-use; and access to services and social support (see Crivello, Morrow and Wilson, 2013). Children were not asked specific questions on bullying but discussions arose spontaneously when they were exploring their experiences in schools and relationships with peers. The interviews were conducted by local research teams fluent in local languages and were voice-recorded, transcribed and translated. Data are thematically coded and analysed using Atlas-ti.

In this paper we adopted an iterative or cyclical approach to bring together the survey and qualitative data (Moran-Ellis et al., 2006), whereby initial analysis of the qualitative data together with the literature review generated some key themes for exploration in the survey data. We then drew on our qualitative findings to explore the descriptive and analytical patterns identified in our survey analysis. We therefore bring together the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data, which is often lacking in research into violence in schools (Leach, 2015: 30).

For the qualitative analysis we adopted a thematic approach to the interviews conducted with children, primarily during the third qualitative round when the Younger

Cohort was aged 9–10 years and the Older Cohort was aged 16–17 years to identify patterns regarding children’s experiences of being bullied. We then identified case studies that illustrated these wider patterns to explore in more depth how bullying manifests in children’s lives.

#### 4.4 Measures

The surveys consist of household, child and community questionnaires designed to capture a wide range of topics, including health and well-being, schooling, work, family circumstances and community context. The most detailed questions on bullying and victimization were asked in the third survey round when the Older Cohort was 15, which are the analytical focus of this paper, and we use the responses to these questions to explore outcomes at 19.<sup>10</sup>

##### ■ Key measure: peer bullying

At age 15 children completed (self-administered) questionnaires independently of the interviewer in which they were asked whether other young people had bullied them (e.g. made fun of them, beat them) and, if so, how frequently they had experienced each type of bullying during the past year: never, once, two or three times, or four or more times. In line with the literature review we do not consider one-off incidents of victimization and define bullying as repetitive actions taking place two or three times, or four or more times.

The nine items on bullying and victimization in the Young Lives questionnaire (see items 1–9 in Table 3) were taken from the nine-item, standardized Social and Health Assessment Peer Victimization Scale (Ruchkin, Schwab-Stone and Vermeiren, 2004), an adaptation of the longer Multidimensional Peer Victimization Scale (Mynard and Joseph, 2000). The shorter scale has been validated in multiple countries, usually in school settings, but has also been used in research with vulnerable children in Cape Town, South Africa (Cluver and Orkin, 2009). The short version was piloted in the Young Lives study countries; children were asked if they had experienced over the past year any of the specific types of bullying listed as items 1 to 9 in Table 3. This contrasts with questionnaires that ask more general questions about bullying by peers in any setting, not confined to the school environment.<sup>11</sup>

Table 3 (page 23) lists the types of bullying included in the standardized Social and Health Assessment Peer Victimization Scale and how they were measured.

<sup>10</sup> In the second round of the survey 12-year-old children were asked whether they had been teased at school by other pupils. However, the translation of ‘teasing’ into local languages presented challenges in measuring the concept of bullying, as in some contexts words associated with teasing may be regarded as a playful way of interacting between classmates. In Round 3, on the other hand, the experience of bullying is measured in an indirect but more precise way, by asking for information on specific actions experienced by children.

<sup>11</sup> After piloting, all questions were kept the same except for the wording of item 6, which was slightly modified from ‘made uncomfortable by standing too close to you’ to ‘made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time’, as the former was not considered unacceptable or problematic by children in all settings.



**TABLE 3 – Indicators of bullying**

Indicator	Type of bullying
<i>Method of computation to measure bullying</i>	
Response options when a child was asked if they had experienced the following types of bullying are: never; 1 time; 2–3 times; 4 or more times. For each item, we construct a dummy variable equal to 1 if answers are '2–3 times' or '4 or more times', and coded 0 otherwise.	
Item 1	Punched, kicked or beaten you up
Item 2	Hurt you physically in any other way
Item 3	Called you names or sworn at you
Item 4	Made fun of you for some reason
Item 5	Tried to get you into trouble with your friends
Item 6	Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time
Item 7	Refused to talk to you or made other people not talk to you
Item 8	Tried to break or damaged something of yours
Item 9	Took something without permission or stole from you
<i>Measuring types of bullying</i>	
Physical bullying	Child defined as physically bullied if item 1 and/or 2 equals 1
Verbal bullying	Child defined as verbally bullied if item 3 and/or 4 equals 1
Indirect bullying	Child defined as indirectly bullied if item 5, 6, and/or 7 equals 1
Attacks on property	Child defined as bullied by attacks on property if item 8 and/or 9 equals 1

Using the nine items we were able to examine whether children had been bullied physically, verbally, indirectly or by their property being attacked. We define a child as having been bullied if they experienced any of the sub-types of bullying more than once.

#### **4.4.1 Outcomes: psychosocial indicators**

Psychosocial indicators have been identified to have an important role in predicting children's future outcomes, including performance in the labour market and crime and antisocial behaviour (Cunha and Heckman, 2008). We use psychosocial measures to explore how bullying experienced at the age of 15 is associated with psychosocial indicators at the age of 19.

At age 19 four psychosocial scales were administered:

- the general self-efficacy scale, which measures belief in the capability to cope and recover from setbacks (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995)
- the general self-esteem scale (Self-Description Questionnaire I), which measures an individual's judgement of self-worth or self-value
- the parent relations scale (Self-Description Questionnaire II), which captures positive relations with parents
- the peer relations scale (Self-Description Questionnaire I) which captures positive relations with peers.

The general self-efficacy scale is used with adolescents and adults and has been adapted to many countries (Scholtz et al., 2002). The other scales are widely used

instruments considered to be the most validated self-concept measures (Bryne, 1996). These four scales were translated into national and local languages and piloted in the four Young Lives countries. After piloting, the team decided to keep all items positively worded (see Yorke, Ogando Portela and Singh, forthcoming).

**TABLE 4 – Psychosocial scales**

Scale	Statements
Response options for the following statements are: strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree. To construct each scale, we standardized each item (subtract the mean and divide by the standard deviation) within each country. We then average all standardized items across the non-missing values of the questions.	
<b>General self-efficacy scale</b>	<p>I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough</p> <p>If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want</p> <p>It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals</p> <p>I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events</p> <p>Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations</p> <p>I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort</p> <p>I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities</p> <p>When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions</p> <p>If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution</p> <p>I can usually handle whatever comes my way</p>
<b>General self-esteem scale</b>	<p>I do lots of important things</p> <p>In general, I like being the way I am</p> <p>Overall, I have a lot to be proud of</p> <p>I can do things as well as most people</p> <p>Other people think I am a good person</p> <p>A lot of things about me are good</p> <p>I'm as good as most other people</p> <p>When I do something, I do it well</p>
<b>Parent relations scale</b>	<p>My parents understand me</p> <p>I like my parents</p> <p>My parents like me</p> <p>If I have children of my own, I want to bring them up like my parents raised me</p> <p>My parents and I spend a lot of time together</p> <p>My parents are easy to talk to</p> <p>I get along well with my parents</p> <p>My parents and I have a lot of fun together</p>
<b>Peer relations scale</b>	<p>I have lots of friends</p> <p>I make friends easily</p> <p>Other kids want me to be their friend</p> <p>I have more friends than most other kids</p> <p>I get along with other kids easily</p> <p>I am easy to like</p> <p>I am popular with kids of my own age</p> <p>Most other kids like me</p>

Table 4 lists the statements included in each scale. For each statement children were asked to choose from the following response options: strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree. Table 4 also describes the procedure to compute all four psychosocial indices used in the analysis of the effects of bullying. A test of the internal reliability for each scale indicates that the items comprising the scale are fairly congruent (Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.7 or higher) (see Appendix 1 for descriptive statistics of the psychosocial scales).

#### 4.5 Ethics

Young Lives obtained ethics approval from the University of Oxford and from the Instituto de Investigación Nutricional in Peru (IIN) for data collection.<sup>12</sup> A shared Memorandum of Understanding on ethics has been developed across the countries in the study (Morrow, 2009). Fieldworkers receive ethics training and report back on the ethical challenges encountered. Serious cases of abuse and exploitation are referred to relevant authorities and service providers, or where these do not exist local teams may investigate informal support networks available to children and families.

Informed consent was obtained from caregivers and children. All the names of children and communities are pseudonyms. Asking children about potentially distressing experiences, such as bullying, raises important ethical considerations. These questions were asked because it is essential that research on violence affecting children is sensitive in order to document its effects, strengthen policy responses and design more appropriate and effective interventions (Ennew and Pierre-Plateau, 2004: 17). The questions on experiences of bullying were contained in a self-administered questionnaire, which children completed on their own and when completed put in a sealed envelope. Fieldworkers were trained how to respond appropriately if children appeared distressed (Morrow, 2009).

#### 4.6 Limitations

There are a number of caveats that should be taken into account when interpreting the findings of this paper. First, our bullying measures are not restricted to schools where the scale has been widely validated, so they capture children's experiences of bullying in diverse settings, such as the home, school, community, and so on. This is both a strength (capturing bullying in settings beyond just the school, which have not been explored empirically, and including children not attending school) and a challenge, with the limitation of not being able to distinguish where bullying is taking place.

Second, the measure does not capture which peer performed the bullying and whether it was the same person or group repeatedly bullying the respondent. This could result in a potential overestimation of bullying experiences by counting one-off incidents performed by different peers as bullying. Third, the measure has a long reporting time frame (the last year) compared with other studies with shorter recall periods. Fourth, the measure captures frequency but not intensity or severity of bullying, although this is a limitation common to many measures of bullying. Fifth, not all children had sufficient literacy skills

<sup>12</sup> There were no appropriate research ethics committees or institutional review boards in Vietnam, Ethiopia and India at the time of data collection (2009) so Young Lives did not have in-country ethics approval. This has now changed as ethics governance has begun to expand globally and in-country ethics approval for all countries is being sought for the final survey round.

to complete the questionnaire on their own, especially in Ethiopia and India, and so in some cases required the assistance of an interviewer, which may have led to under-reporting and social desirability bias in some contexts.

Lastly, this paper presents associations between bullying and later psychosocial well-being but does not prove causality. There may be unobserved variables, not captured in the regression models, which could influence both bullying and psychosocial well-being, such as whether a child has moved to a different locality or has changed or left school. We attempt to reduce the likelihood of reverse causation through the use of longitudinal analysis measuring psychosocial indicators at a later time-point to bullying; certain psychosocial indicators (e.g. peer relations) may be showing latent personality traits that influence the tendency to be bullied. Using lagged measures where possible reduces the risk of reverse causality but does not entirely remove the possibility that there could be a loop of causation between the independent variables (psychosocial scales) and the dependent variable (bullying measure).

In the following sections we address each of the core questions in turn:

- Which children are bullied and how at age 15?
- What is associated with certain groups of children being bullied?
- Are there long-term associations of being bullied at age 15 with psychosocial indicators (on self-efficacy, self-esteem, parent relations and peer relations) at age 19?

## 5. WHICH CHILDREN ARE BULLIED AND HOW AT AGE 15?

Table 5 reports the prevalence of different forms of physical, verbal, indirect and property bullying, experienced twice or more in the last year by 15-year-olds. Indirect bullying is the most prevalent type of bullying across three of the countries, affecting over a quarter of children in India and Viet Nam and approximately a third of children in Peru. Physical bullying is the least prevalent type of bullying across three of the countries, with the exception of India, where it is nearly as common as the other types. It is also noteworthy that verbal bullying is common across the countries, affecting a third of children in Peru, a quarter in India and a fifth in Viet Nam. In India and Peru, attacks on property are also at similar levels as verbal and indirect bullying. This highlights not only the prevalence of bullying across the four countries but also the importance of looking beyond just physical bullying behaviours to examine emotional and psychological forms (UNESCO, 2015: 3).

**TABLE 5 – The prevalence of different forms of physical, verbal, indirect and property bullying, experienced twice or more in the last year by 15-year-olds (%)**

Type of bullying	Ethiopia	India	Peru	Viet Nam
Child experienced physical bullying	5.4	22.4	8.2	7.0
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	4.9	17.5	4.0	5.3
Hurt you physically in any other way	1.5	12.2	6.6	3.9
Child experienced verbal bullying	14.2	26.5	33.8	20.3
Called you names or sworn at you	7.7	16.9	28.5	7.2
Made fun of you for some reason	9.4	14.5	14.5	17.7
Child experienced indirect bullying	15.0	28.1	31.9	27.4
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	9.6	15.5	17.2	8.9
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	5.9	9.0	15.1	21.0
Refused to talk or made other people not talk to you	5.8	14.9	14.8	5.0
Child experienced attacks on property	10.5	27.2	31.9	9.0
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	2.5	12.3	11.3	5.1
Took something without permission or stole from you	9.8	22.1	28.7	6.1
<b>Observations</b>	<b>971</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>958</b>

The following sections explore which children are more likely to experience different types of bullying by examining the associations between bullying and a range of child and household characteristics. Initial analysis of the qualitative data combined with the literature review generated key themes for exploration in the survey data. We first present the key findings from the analysis of survey data and then in section 6 draw on the qualitative analysis to explore the dynamics underpinning the emerging bullying patterns. The survey analysis discussed below is presented in Appendices 2–6. Appendices 2–4 (gender, weight/height and enrolment status) present simple descriptive analysis, specifically comparisons of means between boys and girls, between thin or stunted children and children who were not thin or stunted, and

between children enrolled in school compared with non-enrolled children. Appendices 5 and 6 (wealth and ethnicity) relate to characteristics which are typically geographically concentrated. Descriptive analysis is performed using cluster fixed-effects<sup>13</sup> regression analysis to compare differences within communities between poorer and less poor groups of children, and between children belonging to majority or minority ethnic groups (rather than across the whole sample). We report principal patterns only.

## 5.1 Bullying and gender

There are statistically significant differences in the type of bullying that boys and girls experience at age 15 (see Appendix 2). Boys are significantly more likely than girls to experience physical bullying in Ethiopia, India and Viet Nam. In India, which is the sample with the highest reported experience of physical bullying, 26 per cent of boys report physical bullying compared with 19 per cent of girls. Boys also report higher levels of experiencing verbal bullying in Ethiopia and India; in each case girls were about half as likely to report verbal bullying as boys.

In contrast, girls are more likely to experience indirect bullying in India and Peru. Attacks on property are mixed, with boys at greater risk in India and girls in Peru. These general patterns are in line with studies from high-income settings which have found that while boys experience more physical and verbal bullying, girls are at greater risk of being bullied indirectly (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz and Kaukiainen, 1992; Rivers and Smith, 1994).

## 5.2 Bullying and children's physical characteristics

Children's physical characteristics have often been associated with being bullied (see for instance Janssen, Boyce and Pickett, 2004). While much of the literature has focused on obesity and being overweight as predictors of being bullied, these factors – which are less common in low-income countries – do not present clear differences in the prevalence of being bullied in any of the four Young Lives study countries (see Appendix 3). Instead, thinness (low weight for age) in India is associated with a greater risk of being physically or verbally bullied (33 per cent of children with a low weight for age reported being physically bullied, compared with 19 per cent of their peers). Stunting (having a low height for age) is a risk factor for being physically bullied in India and Peru, but not for other forms of bullying. For example 27 per cent of children who were stunted in India reported being bullied, compared with 20 per cent of children who were not stunted (see Appendix 3).

Strikingly, there are a couple of findings where children who were not thin or stunted were more likely to report certain types of bullying than thin or stunted children in Ethiopia and India. Though these are less common, there are two possible explanations. First, it may be that more advantaged children are the ones who are marked out as different in poorer and fairly homogenous communities. Second, we cannot discount the possibility that as literacy levels are lower among the more disadvantaged children,

<sup>13</sup> A fixed effects regression is equivalent to adding n-1 dummy variables for each community or cluster in which children live. This way, each cluster dummy variable absorbs the effects particular to each community, and by controlling for unobserved heterogeneity we are able to compare differences between children living within the same community. The total number of clusters in each regression is 20. We limit the analysis to purely descriptive statistics and so we do not control for any additional variables.

these children may have needed interviewer assistance in responding to the self-administered questionnaire and so may have answered these questions in a more socially desirable way.

### 5.3 Bullying and enrolment status

The majority of studies examining bullying have been conducted in a school setting and so exclude from the analysis those children who do not attend. However, emerging from the qualitative data was a strong divide between children attending school and children out of school, which manifested in experiences of being bullied. We examined the differences between these two groups in being bullied and found that in general children who are out of school report higher levels of bullying (see Appendix 4), though differences are often not significant. The most clear cut evidence comes from Viet Nam, where out-of-school children are significantly more likely to be bullied across all four types of bullying: physical, verbal, indirect and property attacks. For example while 6 per cent of enrolled Vietnamese children reported being physically bullied, 11 per cent of out-of-school children reported physical bullying. In addition, in Ethiopia and India out-of-school children are significantly more likely than children who attend school to be made fun of by their peers. Out-of-school children in Ethiopia are also significantly more likely to report being physically bullied and in India being verbally bullied. These new findings highlight the importance of researching bullying as a phenomenon that does not only occur in schools.

### 5.4 Bullying and economic status

To examine the associations between bullying and children's economic status we separated children into three groups ranked by a measure of household wealth (which contains three equally weighted components: housing quality, service quality and consumer durables). Results were produced using regression analysis, using cluster fixed effects, as noted above, to allow comparison within communities (see Appendix 5). Results can be interpreted as the percentage point difference between least poor tercile (reference group) and the bottom or middle tercile for children living in the same communities.

The clearest evidence of poor children being most likely to be bullied across all four types comes from India, and by some types (physical and property attacks) in Viet Nam. In India, poorer children were 12 percentage points more likely to be physically bullied and 19 percentage points more likely to be verbally bullied than the least poor children.

By contrast in Ethiopia, where the results are significant, the evidence suggests that the poorest children reported less bullying than the least poor children. For example, poor children were 10 percentage points less likely to report verbal bullying. This may be a true finding, as the literature review suggests mixed evidence on the relationship between poverty and bullying, but we are cautious since the sample size of children in Ethiopia reporting bullying is much lower than the other countries and therefore there is a greater probability that cases exist within the data that are not representative of the whole population. The small sample size may be a result of the challenges noted earlier with the use of a self-administered questionnaire in contexts of low literacy. In addition, in the qualitative interviews discussed below, the links between poverty and bullying emerged as a strong theme in the Ethiopian data.

## 5.5 Bullying and ethnicity or caste

As with the discussion of the association between bullying and wealth above, the analysis in Appendix 6 reports regression results (using cluster fixed effects), which helps account for the different locations of ethnic groups. This allows us to compare reports of bullying, having controlled for the effect of community differences. Appendix 6 reports the percentage point difference of the studied group from the reference group. Such analysis inevitably highlights country specific patterns in differences, and not all differences between groups are significant. However some important differences are identified, in particular children from the Scheduled Tribes in India were 18 percentage points more likely to report verbal bullying than the more advantaged 'other castes' reference group.

## 5.6 Summary

As highlighted in the literature review the evidence on the predictors of being bullied is mixed and often specific to the country and context being researched (UNESCO, 2015: 6). In Young Lives data the key findings suggest the following:

- *Boys* are at greater risk of physical and verbal bullying and girls are more likely to be bullied indirectly.
- *Poorer children* are consistently more likely than wealthier children to be bullied in India and experience some types of bullying (physical, social exclusion and attacks on property) in Viet Nam.
- *Out-of-school children* are more likely than those attending school to be bullied by types of verbal bullying (Ethiopia, India and Viet Nam), physically in Ethiopia and Viet Nam, and by types of indirect bullying in India and Viet Nam.



## 6. WHAT IS ASSOCIATED WITH CERTAIN GROUPS OF CHILDREN BEING BULLIED?

We use qualitative data to explore further the survey findings by examining how the contexts in which children are growing up and wider inequalities of poverty, ethnicity or caste and gender norms shape children's experiences of being bullied. In general we draw out key themes that emerged across all four countries, illustrating each with reference to case studies of individual children. We note where themes were more present or more pronounced in some countries.

Two overarching themes emerged. First, as found in the survey, children described being bullied on account of factors that marked them out as different, such as by having poor quality clothes, being from an ethnic minority or having physical characteristics that are considered to deviate from the norm. Second, qualitative analysis illustrates how children's experiences of being bullied are often therefore a reflection of disadvantage, stigma and discrimination within wider society towards certain groups, as children's interactions replicate and reinforce wider power dynamics and social norms. While we draw primarily on children's experiences of being bullied, we also reflect on accounts where children describe bullying actions towards others, in order to triangulate perspectives on bullying.

### 6.1 Poverty, status and markers of difference

Poverty featured heavily, both explicitly and implicitly, as a key factor in children's accounts of being bullied, particularly in Ethiopia and India. Children described verbal bullying that directly referred to their impoverished circumstances, whether through name-calling and insults such as 'child of a destitute' or through making fun of the poor quality of their clothing or their lack of shoes. In Ethiopia, clothes serve as an obvious indicator of children's economic status and attract insults to the extent that children missed school rather than be bullied. For instance, 12-year-old Kebenga,<sup>14</sup> living in rural Oromia, Ethiopia, described being absent from school for three days because of not having clothes after having faced insults from his peers on a previous occasion:

*I went to school barefoot because my shoes were torn apart. Then students laughed at me, and some of them insulted me calling me a 'poor boy'. It was last year. I informed my parents of the problem I faced and they bought me new shoes the next day.*

Conversely, children remembered the occasion of getting new clothing as one of the happiest events in their life because it gave them dignity, security and protection from insults from their peers. Kassaye, aged 10 (rural Amhara, Ethiopia) had been living with his grandparents as there was no one to take care of their livestock. He was unhappy because they were unable to buy him clothes or school materials, which attracted name-calling. He described his happiest event as occurring:

*This year, when I had new clothes and new shoes I was very much happy. You know, if my friends look dirty, they are called 'bad ones'; but if they look neat, everybody appreciates them. So, I became happy when I dressed neatly.*

<sup>14</sup> All names are pseudonyms.

Poverty also contributed as an indirect factor in children being bullied by other children. For example, children explained how others would excluded them from social activities because they had to care for family members or undertake other paid and unpaid work.

A similar dynamic of being marked out as different and so bullied, often by name-calling, being socially excluded or by being treated with a lack of respect, was reported by children from ethnic minority or disadvantaged caste backgrounds in mixed communities. This is illustrated by two case studies from India and Viet Nam.

YThinh was 16 years old and from the Cham H'roi ethnic minority group in Viet Nam. At the end of seventh grade he got into many fights with other children who bullied him because of his ethnicity. YThinh described how another boy "mocked me for being 'an ethnic' and then punched me with his fist". He could not endure the continued bullying and added, "I couldn't digest the lessons. So I felt tired of learning." He left school and worked on the family farm.

Similarly, Rajesh, age 16, from the Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh, described being treated disrespectfully and bullied because he belonged to a caste group with low social status. Rajesh said:

*They are from higher classes and we are from lower classes... We give respect to them, but they didn't give it to us... We are six to seven people and we stayed in the queue in the hostel for food, but our higher-class students come in the middle of the queue. If we ask "why do you do that?", they scold me (Pells, Dornan and Ogando Portela, 2013: 8–9).*

In Ethiopia two children described being bullied because of having very black skin. In the north of Ethiopia this is associated with being descended from slaves. Mihertu, from rural Tigray, left school at age 15. He described feeling different from other children in his neighbourhood because he was 'very black' and was called names. He also had a swelling on his face and felt very self-conscious, believing that everyone was looking at him.

As found in the survey analysis there were also cases of children being bullied on account of having physical characteristics that were perceived to deviate from the norm. In India, Tejaswini explained how she did not like being around most other children, noting how one girl in particular hit and bit her. She felt this occurred because she was thin and this made her unhappy. In contrast, another girl, aged 14, described how: "While having our tiffin, we make fun of my friend Faheen who is fat, saying, 'Fatso, you are finishing all the tiffins.'" Similarly in Peru, Cecilia, aged 9, said she liked her classmates apart from two who teased her by calling her fat. She did not tell her teacher because he has told them he did not want to know anything about their fights, but she did tell her mother and said she wants to change her teacher (van der Gaag with Pells and Knowles, 2012). As found in the survey data, boys in Peru also reported being physically bullied because they were short.

Children's interactions, including bullying towards peers, therefore do not take place in a vacuum but may be shaped by wider inequalities that discriminate against certain

groups. Not all contributory factors to bullying are necessarily linked with structural factors. For example being under- or overweight may be an indication of malnutrition due to poverty but this is not always the case. However, a common thread to all of these accounts of bullying is a tendency to view difference negatively that takes specific forms depending on what is 'different' for specific contexts.

## 6.2 Social and institutional contexts

The accounts also raise questions about the social and institutional contexts which give rise to bullying and the social norms that both shape and are reinforced by bullying. Within the qualitative analysis that follows we see how peer bullying can be a reflection of the widespread use of violence, specifically harsh disciplinary practices by teachers and by parents. Bullying reproduces hierarchies of power and is used to reinforce conformity with social or gender norms. This is illustrated by the following three examples of disciplinary practices within schools, relationships between children in and out of school, and gender-based bullying and harassment.

### 6.2.1 Disciplinary practices and violent environments

Across the four countries many children in the qualitative interviews described being hit by parents and teachers, as well as experiencing fighting or bullying between peers, so being subjected to multiple forms of violence in different locations. Within schools bullying is often part of a wider violent environment, where harsh disciplinary practices such as corporal punishment serve to normalise violence. Corporal punishment is also used to reinforce gender norms and affects different groups of children disproportionately, particularly poorer students and children from other disadvantaged backgrounds (Morrow and Singh, 2014; Ogando Portela and Pells, 2015). The use of corporal punishment by teachers and violent behaviour between peers are linked as children may draw on similar strategies in interacting with peers. In Peru, adolescents justified the use of physical violence against peers using the same argument made by teachers to justify corporal punishment, namely the need to teach a lesson and change behaviour (Rojas, 2011). This is illustrated in the following extract from a focus group discussion:

*Diego: Killing people is wrong.*

*Interviewer: And lynching them?*

*Peter: Maybe a little whipping will do.*

*Interviewer: You share his opinion?*

*Javier: Yes, I'd beat him up, but not kill him.*

*Felipe: Almost kill him.*

*Peter: Leave him agonising.*

*(Ibid.)*

Boys also identify 'negative' behaviours, such as other boys reporting violence to teachers, considered to be feminine behaviour and in need of punishment through brutal practices such as *hacer poste* ('the pole'), where several students carry another student, open his legs wide and run against a pole to hit his genitals.

*Interviewer: Why do you beat up your classmates?*

*Peter: For revenge.*

*Dante: It s a joke...*

*Peter: Sometimes for fun.*

*Interviewer: Sometimes for fun?*

*Javier: When some of us are bored, we beat them up.*

*Peter: Beating, beating.*

*Interviewer: When is revenge needed?*

*Felipe: When somebody gets the rest punished...*

*Sergio: When one pays, everyone else pays. When it rains, we all get wet.*

*(Ibid.)*

In this way peer relations end up reproducing the authoritarian and masculine system of the school, where power relations are closely associated with control through physical strength (Rojas, 2011). In contrast, girls may be expected to conform to gender norms of being gentle and well behaved, thus more likely to be punished for transgressing these norms, and so adopt indirect methods to bully others (Horton, 2015).

Similarly, in Viet Nam girls and boys also play an important role in the disciplinary system acting as class monitors or 'Red Stars' who note down the names of fellow students who talk or misbehave in class to give to the teacher. In this way children are used to enforce discipline and reinforce power structures. While some children did not report being bullied on account of being a class monitor, others described how children who had been reported to the teachers and beaten, then beat and threatened the class monitor in retaliation.

### **6.2.2 Social norms and out-of-school children**

Relationships between children who attend school and those who are out of school reflect pervasive social norms. This theme emerged most clearly in Ethiopia and India where powerful discourses exist over who is considered a 'good child', usually one who studies hard and is clean, neatly dressed and well behaved. Children who cannot attend school – whether because of poverty or the need to work to support the household, or being alienated from the school environment in another way – are not able to conform to these norms. Considerable stigma is attached to children who are out of school and both teachers and caregivers warn against the dangers of enrolled children becoming corrupted by their out-of-school peers. As Kebenga (age 12, rural Oromia, Ethiopia) explained:

*They [his parents] advise me not to have friends who are out of school. They advise me to have children who are learning. They believe that those who are out of school can spoil my behaviour. As a result, I stopped relationships with friends who are not learning.*

Caregivers and teachers describe children out of school as being undisciplined. For example, in India children recounted how teachers beat children who were 'dirty' or irregular in attending school. Children adopted and replicated adults' behaviour and wanted to beat children who were not in school.

Consequently, there exists a big divide between children who attend school and those who do not, which results in what can be conceived as bullying behaviours on both sides. We saw in the survey findings that out-of-school children in Ethiopia, India and Viet Nam were at greater risk than those attending school of experiencing at least one type of bullying. Mikitu, aged 12 from rural Oromia, Ethiopia, captures the mutual apprehension and misunderstanding between school children and those children who are out of school: “Those who are at school have better behaviours as compared with those who are outside school. Those who are out of school fight with each other. They are not disciplined.” These two groups of children seem to constitute two camps, which at times might be afraid of each other, might be mocking each other and even bullying one another. Children who did not attend school discussed not being liked by children who were in school, who did not socialize with them or treat them with respect (Morrow, 2013: 263). On some occasions this led to retaliation by children who were out of school, for example by verbally or physically threatening or bullying their peers, including on their way to school.

### **6.2.3 Gender norms and bullying**

While evidence from the survey data pointed to the greater vulnerability of boys in general to physical and verbal bullying, girls were found to be at higher risk of experiencing indirect bullying. In the qualitative interviews a more subtle picture was revealed of some of the bullying experienced by girls, which reflected unequal gender norms and overlap with gender-based violence by encompassing harassment and intimidation of a sexual nature or related to gender norms and stereotypes. Adolescent girls in Ethiopia and India experience being intimidated on the way to and from school. For example, Harika, aged 14, described the difficulties that girls faced on the journey to and from school in rural Andhra Pradesh and the fear of bullying and harassment from boys. This has led to some girls dropping out of school and for others it has caused difficulties in studying. Harika explained:

*Earlier we used to be in school [doing homework] but now no one stays back after school... we all decided now in 10th class we return home fast. [...] Big boys used to come and sit there, at the school... Because other boys come to the school, so they [the girls] don't come now.*

In Ethiopia, girls gave similar accounts. Hafley, aged 17, described her relief at having moved closer to her school: “In the past, when I was in the village, children were beating us, waiting for us along the road to our school, but here thanks to God there is no one that beats me.” When interviewed at age 12 Hafley had described boys harassing her on the way home from school and explained: “We cannot study because we always worry about the boys’ threat. We are frightened always.”

Gender-based bullying occurs also within schools, affecting girls’ capabilities to engage with schooling. In Ethiopia and Andhra Pradesh girls described fear of using the toilets, which are often not gender-segregated and so the girls feel unsafe and concerned about bullying and harassment from boys (Pells, 2011: 10). This is particularly problematic during menstruation, leading to girls being absent each month (Sommer and Sahin, 2013).

### 6.3 Summary

In summary, most of the research into bullying has focused on the individual and behavioural traits to the neglect of socioeconomic factors (Elgar et al., 2009) and the “social, institutional and societal contexts within which it occurs” (Horton, 2014: 1). While we recognize that individual attributes can indeed increase the risk factors for bullying, we have also demonstrated how structural inequalities, such as poverty and unequal power relations, lead to social norms that support harmful actions and may shape interactions between peers and so render some children more vulnerable to bullying. Children may be targeted on account of their status or identity, with bullying behaviours being used as a means to reinforce conformity to gender and other norms related to the privileged position within wider society of certain groups as opposed to others (Bhatla et al., 2014: 3–5; Pinhero, 2006: 15; UNESCO, 2015: 5). This has the potential to compound existing disadvantage, such as when children are absent or leave school, or live in fear as a result of being bullied.

## 7. ARE THERE LONG-TERM ASSOCIATIONS OF BEING BULLIED AT AGE 15 WITH PSYCHOSOCIAL INDICATORS AT AGE 19?

Evidence on the longer-term consequences of bullying reviewed in the literature section earlier predominantly came from high-income countries. This section extends the knowledge base for low- and middle-income countries by testing the associations between bullying experienced at age 15 and psychosocial indicators at age 19.

We used regression analysis<sup>15</sup> to examine what shapes later psychosocial well-being and used earlier experiences of bullying as one of a range of potential determinants. As ‘outcomes’ or dependent variables we use the ranking of responses given by young adults to a series of psychosocial statements, which are summarized into scales of self-efficacy, self-esteem, parent relations and peer relations (see Table 4).<sup>16</sup> As independent variables we used reported bullying alongside a series of child and household control variables, since these may also have affected the dependent variable. For self-efficacy we have a related measure of agency collected at age 15, which we use as a lagged control. The core question for analysis is: are experiences of bullying at age 15 associated with effects on these psychosocial indicators at age 19?

The associations between psychosocial indicators and the different measures of bullying are shown in Appendices 7–10. Each measure of bullying (the nine items in the scale and the four types of bullying derived) was entered separately in the regressions (as an independent variable). Therefore, for each outcome variable, we have estimated as many regressions as coefficients. This technique creates a huge number of regressions and so these are summary tables, focusing only on the associations with bullying, and do not show the full models.

Each column in Appendices 7–10 presents different specifications. In column 1 we show the results from models estimated without control variables. In column 2 we include controls for child and household characteristics (age in months, gender, ethnicity, height-for-age z-scores, mother’s education, wealth index and household size) in each of the models to test if these change the association between bullying and the psychosocial outcome. Below, we summarize the results for each psychosocial indicator explored.

### 7.1 Self-efficacy (Appendix 7)

Most coefficients shown in Appendix 7 were negative, suggesting that being bullied was associated with lower self-efficacy. In most models, the results were not significant. Significant negative associations were found in Peru between verbal bullying, attacks on property and self-efficacy. These associations remained significant across the specifications (with and without controls) suggesting that being bullied at age 15 has lasting negative associations with self-efficacy measured at the age of 19.

In India and Ethiopia, significant negative associations with bullying were only evident after controlling for other factors: children who reported being verbally bullied (in India)

<sup>15</sup> Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions with cluster fixed effects. The cluster fixed effects approach takes into account the clustered sampling design. In addition, the cluster fixed effects approach controls for unobserved characteristics at the community level, which may affect how children develop.

<sup>16</sup> Descriptive information on the scales is presented in Appendix 1.

and children who had been physically hurt (in Ethiopia) have lower self-efficacy at age 19. In all three countries, these associations remain significant once we control for a lagged measure of agency, a related construct measured at age 15.<sup>17</sup>

In Viet Nam, we found one significant but counter intuitive result: that children who reported being physically hurt had higher self-efficacy. However, the coefficient is only marginally significant (at 90 per cent confidence interval level) and is no longer significant once we control for lagged measure of agency.

## 7.2 Self-esteem (Appendix 8)

As with self-efficacy across the four countries, most of the associations between bullying and later self-esteem were negative but not significant.<sup>18</sup> We identified a small number of significant negative associations. In Ethiopia there were two negative associations: that being hurt physically and being called names or sworn at were both associated with lower later self-esteem. In India we do not see significant findings. In Peru verbal bullying (specifically being made fun of) and attacks on property were found to have negative associations with self-esteem. In Viet Nam, children who reported that others bullied them by trying to get them into trouble with their friends at the age of 15 had associated lower levels of self-esteem at age 19.

## 7.3 Parent relations (Appendix 9)

Most coefficients were again negative, though only some of the associations were significant. No significant results were found in Ethiopia. While in India the verbal bullying results were significant in column (1), these were no longer significant in column (2), suggesting the initial association with bullying reflected another factor. In Peru and Viet Nam, however, there was much more evidence, and the associated effects were larger. In both countries, being bullied across a number of types (physical, verbal, indirect and attacks on property) was associated with worse parent relations. In Viet Nam being physically bullied was associated with a reduction of about a third of a standard deviation in the parent relations scale. The measures of parent relations included responding to statements such as 'My parents are easy to talk to' and 'My parents understand me'. Across the four countries in the qualitative interviews children often reported not telling caregivers (and teachers) that they were being bullied as they were afraid that they would be punished, including being hit or beaten, for being badly behaved or getting into trouble with other children. There were cases of children talking to their parents, who then went to school to ask for help in addressing the situation, and of children being protected by older siblings. However, these tended to be in the minority. We therefore would expect that if children who are being bullied found it difficult to talk to their parents about their situation they would possibly score less well on this scale.

## 7.4 Peer relations (Appendix 10)

As with the other outcomes, the typical coefficient is negative but often not significant. Few results are significant in Ethiopia or India, though results from India are counter intuitive – that is, reporting someone having stolen something was associated with a

<sup>17</sup> Self-efficacy is the only psychosocial scale which has a related measure (agency) collected at an earlier point in time when children were 15. To keep the tables comparable we do not show these results in Appendix 7 but the results are available on request.

<sup>18</sup> There are several coefficients in India and few in Viet Nam that are positive but are very close to 0 and can lie on the negative side of the scale due to where the confidence intervals are spread.



small (one-tenth of a standard deviation) but significant impact on improved peer relations. A clearer cut story emerges in Peru and Viet Nam where a number of significant associations are found between domains of bullying and negative relationships with peers.

## 7.5 Summary

In summary, the coefficients identified in Appendices 7–10 are usually negative, though often not significant. First, this means that bullying at age 15 tends to be associated with lower self-esteem, self-efficacy, parent and peer relations at age 19, but only in a minority of cases are these results statistically significant. Second, effects tend to be modest in size. The coefficients can be understood in standard deviations, which is a way of measuring sample distribution. In a normal distribution, 95 per cent of cases are expected to lie between two standard deviations of the middle, so the differences of one standard deviation are very large. Appendix 7 provides an example where being physically hurt in Ethiopia at 15 is associated with a reduction in self-efficacy at 19 of about one-tenth of a standard deviation. Third, between model 1, which only controls for bullying, and model 2, which adds a series of child and household controls, the coefficients do not tend to change markedly, suggesting there is an underlying association between bullying and psychosocial well-being. Fourth, while the literature review earlier noted that much of the discussion over bullying is of physical bullying, we find negative associations with each type of bullying and later psychosocial indicators.

## 8. DISCUSSION

Within this paper we have undertaken exploratory analysis on the predictors and effects of bullying in adolescence in four low- and middle-income countries.

In this discussion section we return to the evidence and gaps identified in the literature review to consider the extent to which our findings consolidate existing knowledge and the ways in which our analysis contributes to a nascent evidence base on bullying in low- and middle-income countries, and to identify directions for further research.

First, the role of poverty and inequality in driving bullying has been relatively underexplored and the literature review revealed that the limited survey evidence in this area is mixed. Within Young Lives survey data we find that poorer children are consistently more likely to be bullied in India and experience some types of bullying (physical, social exclusion and attacks on property) in Viet Nam. In the qualitative interviews, particularly from Ethiopia and India, children describe the multiple ways in which poverty marks them out as different from their peers, whether because they lack clothes or, indirectly, because they have to work and so are excluded by peers from social activities. Children's accounts of bullying in this paper strongly mirror qualitative research from the UK, which has illustrated how the stigma associated with bullying leads to children being insulted for not having 'good' clothes, such as designer trainers or material goods, and being socially excluded by peers (Ridge, 2009).

Structural disadvantages such as poverty or unequal power relationships that underpin entrenched discriminatory norms can therefore put different groups of children at risk of being bullied, but the form these markers of difference take is often shaped by context. This includes the capacities of institutions and services, as well as the pressures put upon them. Children do not go to school for fear of being bullied by peers and punished by teachers for lacking materials, or because of stigma associated with poverty or other socially disadvantaged groups. Typically, research on peer bullying has focused on bullying within schools, yet we find that out-of-school children are more likely to be verbally bullied in Ethiopia, India and Viet Nam, physically bullied in Ethiopia and Viet Nam, and indirectly bullied in India and Viet Nam. In the context of low- and middle-income countries where large numbers of adolescents are no longer in school, better understanding of how institutional and interpersonal forms of exclusion intersect is important in designing policies and programmes to reach all children, especially those not in school.

Second, children's experiences of bullying are also shaped by age and gender. We have observed how girls and boys often experience different types of bullying, with boys at greater risk of experiencing physical and verbal bullying, whereas girls are at greater risk of bullying by more 'hidden' indirect means. This is consistent with general trends observed in the literature. The types of bullying experienced may also vary by age. For example, during adolescence, girls report greater harassment from boys, shaped by wider gender inequalities. Placing the age-gender nexus in context is vital to examine how specific social norms reinforce bullying.

Third, this highlights the importance of a mixed methods approach to bullying, bringing together survey data with qualitative research to explore the more subtle, less observable or easily measurable forms of bullying and the ways in which markers of

difference play out in different contexts. This is particularly important in understanding forms of emotional violence, such as verbal or indirect bullying, which may take different forms in different contexts. Furthermore, there is a need to develop better instruments to capture bullying in different settings and to work on better or alternative data collection methods. For example, the lower levels of bullying reported in Ethiopia may result from the questionnaire not being fully self-administered. There may also be cultural differences in the way the questions were understood. However, in the qualitative interviews where relationships have been built up between the respondents and fieldworkers, children discussed their experiences of being bullied. As well as triangulating different types of data, there is the need to adopt alternative methods, such as audio computer-assisted personal interviewing (A-CAPI), which enables children with low literacy to complete questionnaires on sensitive topics in private.

Fourth, our analysis highlights the potentially long-term implications of bullying. Bullying experienced in mid-adolescence was associated with lower self-efficacy and self-esteem and poorer peer and parent relations in early adulthood, though the effects were often small and not statistically significant. The patterns varied by type of bullying and by country. For example, children who experienced verbal bullying at age 15 had significantly lower self-efficacy in India and Peru at age 19 and lower self-esteem in Peru. Given the exploratory nature of this analysis, more in-depth investigation is needed into how different contextual factors shape the different dynamics observed in each country. Other studies have found similar variations between countries. Analysis drawn from 19 low- and middle-income countries included in the World Health Organization (WHO) Global School-based Student Health Survey (GSHS) found differences ranging from 7.8 per cent in Tajikistan to 60.9 per cent in Zambia, of students aged 11–13 years who reported experiencing bullying in the last month (Fleming and Jacobsen, 2010).

Moreover, experiences at school and in the home are connected. Qualitative analysis showed that children who experienced bullying often found it difficult to talk to anyone, including their parents, about the difficulties that they were experiencing. Children who were verbally bullied (made fun of) or bullied indirectly at age 15 scored lower on a parent relations scale at age 19 in Viet Nam and Peru. This was also the case for children who were physically bullied in Viet Nam and who experienced attacks on their property in Peru. Likewise, bullying influences children's relations with their peers. Physical bullying, verbal bullying (being made fun of) and types of indirect bullying experienced at age 15 were all associated with young adults having worse peer relations at age 19 in Peru and Viet Nam. In Ethiopia indirect bullying and having property broken or damaged was associated with worse peer relations and the latter was also the case in Peru.

In summary, this longitudinal analysis suggests that bullying experienced in adolescence is associated with negative psychosocial well-being in early adulthood. Psychosocial indicators such as self-esteem and self-efficacy are not only inherently important for children and adults' well-being but also have been shown to have instrumental value in negatively affecting other domains, such as engagement with schooling and labour market outcomes, resulting in lost potential for individuals and societies (Cunha and Heckman, 2008). More research is required to unpick the dynamics observed but our evidence is consistent with bullying being associated with lower psychosocial outcomes and this might be one pathway by which later life chances are negatively affected.

## 9. CONCLUSION

Bullying is a global phenomenon but less is known about the predictors and effects associated with it in low- and middle-income countries and whether these differ from those in high-income countries. Using longitudinal data collected from children in four countries (Ethiopia, India, Peru and Viet Nam) we found associated effects on young adults' psychosocial well-being (self-efficacy, self-esteem, parent and peer relations) with bullying experienced in adolescence. Bullying is therefore not merely a harmless rite of passage. Verbal and indirect bullying are the most prevalent types and are associated with a range of negative psychosocial outcomes, so underscoring the importance of directing greater attention to psychological and emotional forms of bullying that are often less visible, less researched and less recognized than physical bullying (UNICEF, 2014: 56).

Examining the structural determinants and social context brings an important and often missing dimension to prevention efforts by revealing how bullying is often enmeshed in environments where other forms of violence – whether physical, such as corporal punishment, or verbal, such as verbal abuse from adults – are widespread. This shifts the focus from an over-emphasis on individual children's so-called aggressive behaviour, which runs the risk of pathologizing large groups of children, to addressing the social and institutional contexts that give rise to bullying, and the contributory role of physical and emotional violence perpetrated by adults (Horton, 2015). It also highlights the ways in which boys and girls are vulnerable to different types of bullying and at different ages on account of social norms regarding what is considered appropriate or acceptable behaviour for boys and girls and at different ages. These norms in turn are reinforced in different settings, such as in the home and at school. More research is essential to better understand how such mechanisms give rise to and sustain bullying in different contexts, in order to improve prevention efforts, in particular, the ways in which experiences in the home and school are positively or negatively mutually reinforcing.

Efforts to tackle peer bullying have often lagged behind those directed at other forms of violence affecting children but have been rising up the international policy agenda, as indicated by the United Nations General Assembly (2014) Resolution on protecting children from bullying. Both the UN Resolution and the Sustainable Development Goals, which include targets and indicators on the protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation, are important opportunities to stimulate greater international and national attention to violence affecting children more generally, as well as the specific dynamics of bullying, including better data collection and increased resource allocation to violence prevention.

Evidence on bullying prevention interventions comes from high-income countries and so care is needed in extrapolating likely impacts and costs to low- and middle-income countries with different school systems and greater resource constraints. Systematic reviews report evidence that school-based interventions can reduce the level of bullying within schools, however studies do not show that there have been consistent effects across interventions (Cantone et al., 2015; Ttofi and Farrington, 2011; Vreeman and Carroll, 2007). The most consistent evidence for effective anti-bullying

approaches is where a 'whole school approach' is adopted, which employs a variety of techniques, including co-creating school rules, teacher training and classroom interventions (Vreeman and Carroll, 2007) although often the programme is not followed up and it is not clear if effects are maintained (Cantone et al., 2015).

Schools offer an important platform for teaching the values of tolerance and diversity (Office of the SRSG on Violence against Children, 2012). To do so it is necessary to address wider cultures of violence in school (and within communities and the home), of which bullying is both a part and a reflection. In particular, institutional cultures that permit corporal punishment and other forms of harsh discipline, and dissuade children from seeking help, should be addressed. However, our findings illustrate that not all children affected by bullying are in school and there are also links between what happens at home and in the community and what happens in schools. The development and evaluation of different types of effective, sustainable and scalable bullying prevention models that are adapted to low- and middle-income country contexts are therefore priorities for programming and research.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 – Descriptive statistics of the psychosocial scales

#### Descriptive statistics

	Ethiopia		Andhra Pradesh		Peru		Viet Nam	
	No	SD	No	SD	No	SD	No	SD
Self-efficacy scale	908	0.57	951	0.62	615	0.57	885	0.53
Self-esteem scale	908	0.59	952	0.55	615	0.58	885	0.57
Parent relations scale	908	0.64	952	0.68	612	0.67	885	0.66
Peer relations scale	908	0.63	952	0.64	615	0.66	885	0.6

No = Number of children who responded; SD = Standard deviation; means=0 in all scales

#### Cronbach's alpha coefficients

	Ethiopia	India	Peru	Viet Nam
Self-efficacy scale	0.773	0.821	0.772	0.709
Self-esteem scale	0.735	0.675	0.723	0.701
Parent relations scale	0.755	0.816	0.823	0.811
Peer relations scale	0.781	0.792	0.811	0.746

Source: Yorke, Ogando Portela, Singh (forthcoming).

**APPENDIX 2 – Bullying types by gender**

Types of bullying	Ethiopia			India			Peru			Viet Nam		
	Boys	Difference in means (girls–boys)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (girls–boys)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (girls–boys)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (girls–boys)	t-statistic
Child experienced physical bullying	0.077	<b>-0.048***</b>	-3.307	0.261	<b>-0.071***</b>	-2.651	0.090	-0.017	-0.765	0.091	<b>-0.042**</b>	-2.537
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	0.071	<b>-0.044***</b>	-3.146	0.224	<b>-0.100***</b>	-4.156	0.045	-0.005	-0.293	0.076	<b>-0.045***</b>	-3.135
Hurt you physically in any other way	0.018	-0.006	-0.712	0.127	-0.009	-0.449	0.076	-0.015	-0.748	0.040	-0.003	-0.258
Child experienced verbal bullying	0.172	<b>-0.061***</b>	-2.727	0.350	<b>-0.166***</b>	-5.935	0.364	-0.057	-1.506	0.205	-0.004	-0.148
Called you names or sworn at you	0.085	-0.016	-0.924	0.254	<b>-0.164***</b>	-6.968	0.319	<b>-0.070*</b>	-1.945	0.080	-0.017	-0.991
Made fun of you for some reason	0.119	<b>-0.052***</b>	-2.807	0.173	<b>-0.058**</b>	-2.575	0.155	-0.021	-0.754	0.174	0.006	0.229
Child experienced indirect bullying	0.158	-0.015	-0.668	0.248	<b>0.065**</b>	2.237	0.271	<b>0.100***</b>	2.708	0.262	0.023	0.807
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	0.095	0.001	0.058	0.146	0.018	0.790	0.164	0.023	0.748	0.085	0.007	0.396
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	0.063	-0.008	-0.546	0.066	<b>0.048***</b>	2.604	0.125	<b>0.057**</b>	1.977	0.201	0.018	0.673
Refused to talk to you or made other people not talk to you	0.063	-0.010	-0.691	0.144	0.012	0.527	0.120	<b>0.060**</b>	2.108	0.045	0.011	0.754
Child experienced attacks on property	0.117	-0.025	-1.278	0.309	<b>-0.073**</b>	-2.532	0.271	<b>0.100***</b>	2.708	0.078	0.022	1.214
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	0.026	-0.003	-0.326	0.142	<b>-0.038*</b>	-1.825	0.114	0.000	0.010	0.049	0.005	0.335
Took something without permission or stole from you	0.105	-0.015	-0.792	0.258	<b>-0.072***</b>	-2.692	0.240	<b>0.104***</b>	2.853	0.049	0.023	1.511

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

Note: independent t-tests were performed for each of the nine items included in the measure of bullying and for each type of bullying experienced (physical, verbal, indirect and attacks on property). The t-test tested the equality of means within two groups, in this case boys and girls.

**APPENDIX 3 – Bullying types and physical characteristics****a. Thinness**

Types of bullying	Ethiopia			India			Peru			Viet Nam		
	Boys	Difference in means (not thin-thin)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (not thin-thin)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (not thin-thin)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (not thin-thin)	t-statistic
Child experienced physical bullying	0.065	-0.018	-1.231	0.330	<b>-0.143***</b>	-4.775	0.000	0.083	0.425	0.071	-0.001	-0.041
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	0.060	-0.017	-1.181	0.272	<b>-0.133***</b>	-4.882	0.000	0.041	0.291	0.063	-0.011	-0.519
Hurt you physically in any other way	0.017	-0.003	-0.384	0.192	<b>-0.095***</b>	-4.028	0.000	0.067	0.378	0.031	0.008	0.449
Child experienced verbal bullying	0.141	-0.001	-0.027	0.318	<b>-0.074**</b>	-2.320	0.500	-0.164	-0.489	0.189	0.016	0.413
Called you names or sworn at you	0.065	0.021	1.210	0.218	<b>-0.068**</b>	-2.508	0.000	0.284	0.889	0.063	0.011	0.429
Made fun of you for some reason	0.099	-0.012	-0.630	0.161	-0.022	-0.876	0.500	-0.356	-1.423	0.165	0.012	0.341
Child experienced indirect bullying	0.134	0.028	1.208	0.295	-0.019	-0.594	0.000	0.318	0.965	0.252	0.024	0.564
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	0.090	0.012	0.624	0.181	-0.035	-1.330	0.000	0.172	0.643	0.087	0.002	0.076
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	0.050	0.016	1.060	0.084	0.007	0.320	0.000	0.151	0.596	0.190	0.021	0.531
Refused to talk to you or made other people not talk to you	0.042	0.026*	1.688	0.169	-0.026	-0.992	0.000	0.150	0.592	0.031	0.022	1.049
Child experienced attacks on property	0.077	<b>0.044**</b>	2.238	0.299	-0.035	-1.074	0.500	-0.182	-0.549	0.079	0.013	0.470
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	0.022	0.001	0.086	0.111	0.017	0.724	0.000	0.115	0.508	0.047	0.005	0.217
Took something without permission or stole from you	0.065	<b>0.055***</b>	2.857	0.261	-0.053*	-1.748	0.500	-0.214	-0.667	0.048	0.015	0.661

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

Note: independent t-tests were performed for each of the nine items included in the measure of bullying and for each type of bullying experienced (physical, verbal, indirect and attacks on property). The t-test tested the equality of means within two groups; in this case thin and not thin children.

**b. Stunting**

Types of bullying	Ethiopia			India			Peru			Viet Nam		
	Boys	Difference in means (not stunted-stunted)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (not stunted-stunted)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (not stunted-stunted)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (not stunted-stunted)	t-statistic
Child experienced physical bullying	0.061	-0.010	-0.633	0.274	<b>-0.076***</b>	-2.693	0.146	<b>-0.083***</b>	-3.231	0.075	-0.006	-0.330
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	0.054	-0.006	-0.380	0.215	<b>-0.061**</b>	-2.369	0.049	-0.010	-0.552	0.066	-0.017	-0.977
Hurt you physically in any other way	0.018	-0.003	-0.388	0.150	<b>-0.043*</b>	-1.962	0.122	<b>-0.073***</b>	-3.128	0.040	-0.001	-0.088
Child experienced verbal bullying	0.126	0.024	0.970	0.282	-0.027	-0.919	0.364	-0.037	-0.826	0.185	0.023	0.759
Called you names or sworn at you	0.069	0.013	0.695	0.174	-0.009	-0.355	0.304	-0.027	-0.646	0.075	-0.004	-0.181
Made fun of you for some reason	0.087	0.011	0.542	0.159	-0.020	-0.834	0.182	-0.048	-1.456	0.150	0.034	1.159
Child experienced indirect bullying	0.123	0.040	1.551	0.276	0.006	0.204	0.318	-0.001	-0.015	0.247	0.034	1.008
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	0.069	<b>0.038*</b>	1.827	0.144	0.018	0.730	0.185	-0.018	-0.510	0.080	0.012	0.548
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	0.043	0.022	1.335	0.065	<b>0.037*</b>	1.909	0.178	-0.036	-1.057	0.172	0.048	1.554
Refused to talk to you or made other people not talk to you	0.054	0.006	0.347	0.150	0.000	0.014	0.136	0.017	0.508	0.076	-0.033**	-1.969
Child experienced attacks on property	0.101	0.007	0.324	0.241	<b>0.050*</b>	1.649	0.298	0.028	0.634	0.093	-0.003	-0.159
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	0.018	0.010	0.875	0.109	0.022	0.985	0.137	-0.030	-0.991	0.057	-0.008	-0.474
Took something without permission or stole from you	0.090	0.012	0.568	0.203	0.031	1.091	0.250	0.048	1.119	0.066	-0.007	-0.386

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

Note: independent t-tests were performed for each of the nine items included in the measure of bullying and for each type of bullying experienced (physical, verbal, indirect and attacks on property). The t-test tested the equality of means within two groups; in this case stunted and not stunted children.



**APPENDIX 4 – Bullying and enrolment status**

Types of bullying	Ethiopia			India			Peru			Viet Nam		
	Boys	Difference in means (not enrolled-enrolled)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (not enrolled-enrolled)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (not enrolled-enrolled)	t-statistic	Boys	Difference in means (not enrolled-enrolled)	t-statistic
Physical	0.049	<b>0.040*</b>	1.674	0.224	0.001	0.046	0.078	0.061	1.411	0.057	<b>0.048**</b>	2.470
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	0.046	0.033	1.455	0.181	-0.029	-0.997	0.040	0.007	0.211	0.042	<b>0.049***</b>	2.839
Hurt you physically in any other way	0.015	0.005	0.373	0.121	0.008	0.333	0.064	0.031	0.782	0.034	0.012	0.802
Verbal	0.137	0.051	1.394	0.247	<b>0.080**</b>	2.348	0.337	0.012	0.162	0.187	0.060*	1.950
Called you names or sworn at you	0.076	0.013	0.468	0.161	0.037	1.282	0.281	0.061	0.835	0.060	<b>0.045**</b>	2.291
Made fun of you for some reason	0.087	<b>0.061**</b>	1.994	0.130	<b>0.068**</b>	2.521	0.149	-0.056	-0.997	0.167	0.031	1.049
Indirect	0.155	-0.046	-1.235	0.278	0.007	0.211	0.316	0.033	0.441	0.256	<b>0.079**</b>	2.301
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	0.098	-0.019	-0.604	0.155	-0.003	-0.094	0.168	0.051	0.842	0.082	0.020	0.927
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	0.062	-0.032	-1.312	0.081	<b>0.039*</b>	1.755	0.147	0.062	1.098	0.200	0.043	1.362
Refused to talk to you or made other people not talk to you	0.056	0.013	0.526	0.149	-0.001	-0.043	0.150	-0.028	-0.488	0.038	<b>0.050***</b>	2.988
Attacks on property	0.108	-0.029	-0.898	0.291	<b>-0.083**</b>	-2.427	0.323	-0.067	-0.914	0.078	<b>0.046**</b>	2.096
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	0.023	0.017	1.015	0.130	-0.033	-1.303	0.114	-0.014	-0.277	0.040	<b>0.047***</b>	2.817
Took something without permission or stole from you	0.101	-0.032	-1.022	0.243	<b>-0.100***</b>	-3.150	0.295	<b>-0.124*</b>	-1.700	0.053	0.025	1.388
<i>Observations</i>		870			753			623			738	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

*Note:* independent t-tests were performed for each of the nine items included in the measure of bullying and for each type of bullying experienced (physical, verbal, indirect and attacks on property). The t-test tested the equality of means within two groups, in this case children enrolled and not enrolled in school.

**APPENDIX 5 – Bullying types by wealth**

Types of bullying	Ethiopia		India		Peru		Viet Nam	
	Bottom tercile	Middle tercile	Bottom tercile	Middle tercile	Bottom tercile	Middle tercile	Bottom tercile	Middle tercile
Child experienced physical bullying	0.023	-0.008	<b>0.122***</b>	0.069	0.044	0.010	<b>0.038**</b>	0.009
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	0.026	-0.009	0.077**	0.056*	-0.015	0.006	0.040*	0.014
Hurt you physically in any other way	0.024	0.009	0.075**	0.015	0.049	-0.001	-0.009	-0.004
Child experienced verbal bullying	<b>-0.101*</b>	<b>-0.074*</b>	<b>0.190***</b>	<b>0.110**</b>	0.033	0.071	0.019	0.016
Called you names or sworn at you	-0.020	-0.012	<b>0.123***</b>	0.038	0.000	0.058	0.025	-0.013
Made fun of you for some reason	<b>-0.078**</b>	<b>-0.064**</b>	<b>0.127***</b>	<b>0.099***</b>	-0.002	0.023	0.016	0.026
Child experienced indirect bullying	-0.054	<b>-0.073**</b>	<b>0.100*</b>	0.040	0.006	0.052	0.042	-0.029
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	-0.048	<b>-0.041*</b>	0.053	0.007	-0.017	-0.014	-0.009	-0.028
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	0.019	0.001	0.032	-0.003	-0.008	0.065*	0.017	-0.008
Refused to talk to you or made other people not talk to you	-0.025	<b>-0.066***</b>	<b>0.121***</b>	<b>0.078**</b>	0.027	0.009	<b>0.103***</b>	<b>0.042***</b>
Child experienced attacks on property	<b>-0.110**</b>	<b>-0.115***</b>	0.070**	0.045	-0.022	-0.018	<b>0.077**</b>	0.032
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	-0.001	-0.026*	0.053	<b>0.050**</b>	0.037	0.004	<b>0.055**</b>	<b>0.037*</b>
Took something without permission or stole from you	<b>-0.117***</b>	<b>-0.114***</b>	0.059	0.025	-0.042	-0.036	0.050	0.015
<i>Number of observations (in regressions)</i>	905		910		609		900	

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

Reference group: Top tercile of wealth index.

Note: the table summarizes results from fixed-effects regression models. Full models are available on request from the authors. Each row (by country) reflects a different regression model. The dependent (outcome) variable is each of the nine items included in the measure of bullying and each type of bullying experienced (physical, verbal, indirect and property attacks). The independent (control) variables being studied are bottom and middle tercile (vs reference group top tercile of wealth index). Cluster fixed-effects are included in each of the regressions with robust standard errors clustered at the cluster level (20 sites). No other control variables are included.

**APPENDIX 6 – Bullying types and ethnic or caste groups**

Types of bullying	Ethiopia			India			Peru	Viet Nam
	Oromio	Tigrinia	Other ethnic group	Scheduled Castes	Scheduled Tribes	Backward Classes	Spanish	Kinh
Child experienced physical bullying	-0.010	0.015	-0.022	0.055	0.074	0.050	-0.001	0.004
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	-0.016	0.014	-0.025	0.037	0.047	0.032	0.034**	0.020
Hurt you physically in any other way	<b>0.014**</b>	0.052	0.025	0.014	0.023	0.039	-0.033	-0.032
Child experienced verbal bullying	-0.043	0.003	-0.082	<b>0.107*</b>	<b>0.183***</b>	0.044	0.021	<b>0.100*</b>
Called you names or sworn at you	-0.029	-0.003	-0.052	<b>0.074*</b>	<b>0.119***</b>	0.044	0.034	0.005
Made fun of you for some reason	-0.080	0.026	-0.071	<b>0.089*</b>	<b>0.134**</b>	0.023	0.001	<b>0.086*</b>
Child experienced indirect bullying	<b>-0.104*</b>	-0.102	-0.117**	0.043	0.089	0.024	-0.036	0.044
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	-0.077	<b>-0.100**</b>	<b>-0.116***</b>	0.027	0.116	0.056*	0.032	0.010
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	<b>-0.064*</b>	<b>-0.123***</b>	<b>-0.094**</b>	0.031	0.029	0.005	-0.009	0.017
Refused to talk to you or made other people not talk to you	0.014	-0.002	-0.020	0.033	0.065	0.017	-0.038	<b>-0.066*</b>
Child experienced attacks on property	-0.049	-0.123	<b>-0.079*</b>	0.089	0.040	<b>0.096**</b>	0.105	-0.010
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	0.011	-0.006	0.052	<b>0.095**</b>	0.047	<b>0.050*</b>	0.023	-0.035
Took something without permission or stole from you	-0.045	-0.116	<b>-0.068*</b>	0.065	0.067	<b>0.064*</b>	0.097	0.007
<i>Number of observations (in regressions)</i>	905			917			606	928

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

Reference group: Ethiopia (Amhara), India (other castes), Peru (indigenous), Viet Nam (ethnic minorities).

Note: the table summarizes results from fixed-effects regression models. Full models are available on request from the authors. Each row by country reflects a different regression model. The dependent (outcome) variable is each of the nine items included in the measure of bullying and each type of bullying experienced (physical, verbal, indirect and property attacks). The independent (control) variables being studied are dummy variables for ethnic groups (vs reference group). Cluster fixed-effects are included in each of the regressions with robust standard errors clustered at the cluster level (20 sites). No other control variables are included.

**APPENDIX 7 – Coefficients on the measure of bullying and the self-efficacy scale**

Outcome variable: self-efficacy	Ethiopia		India		Peru		Viet Nam	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
<b>Measures by type of bullying experienced</b>								
<b>Physical bullying</b>								
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	-0.061 (0.077)	-0.082 (0.076)	-0.017 (0.054)	-0.021 (0.052)	-0.055 (0.081)	-0.018 (0.083)	0.067 (0.056)	0.082 (0.048)
Hurt you physically in any other way	-0.087 (0.053)	<b>-0.110**</b> (0.052)	-0.032 (0.029)	-0.025 (0.028)	-0.053 (0.033)	-0.035 (0.034)	0.035 (0.034)	0.048* (0.028)
<b>Verbal bullying</b>								
Called you names or sworn at you	-0.021 (0.030)	-0.041 (0.030)	-0.017 (0.028)	-0.036 (0.027)	-0.028 (0.029)	-0.033 (0.030)	-0.023 (0.028)	0.000 (0.032)
Made fun of you for some reason	-0.034 (0.036)	-0.050 (0.035)	-0.017 (0.026)	-0.015 (0.030)	<b>-0.068**</b> (0.026)	<b>-0.078***</b> (0.026)	0.001 (0.027)	0.007 (0.026)
<b>Indirect bullying</b>								
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	-0.015 (0.030)	-0.015 (0.027)	-0.025 (0.022)	-0.017 (0.024)	-0.021 (0.036)	-0.002 (0.037)	-0.025 (0.035)	0.001 (0.034)
Refused to talk or made other people not talk to you	-0.039 (0.044)	-0.055 (0.040)	<b>-0.038*</b> (0.021)	-0.032 (0.020)	-0.053 (0.032)	-0.040 (0.029)	-0.021 (0.040)	0.004 (0.041)
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	0.007 (0.037)	-0.009 (0.034)	-0.061 (0.035)	-0.039 (0.038)	<b>-0.044*</b> (0.025)	-0.029 (0.022)	-0.020 (0.023)	-0.004 (0.018)
<b>Attacks on property</b>								
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	-0.005 (0.037)	-0.013 (0.037)	0.020 (0.036)	0.013 (0.034)	-0.013 (0.028)	0.000 (0.027)	-0.011 (0.025)	0.000 (0.024)
Took something without permission or stole from you	0.012 (0.026)	0.000 (0.032)	0.033 (0.020)	0.019 (0.017)	<b>-0.067***</b> (0.021)	<b>-0.067***</b> (0.020)	-0.014 (0.037)	-0.001 (0.035)
Individual controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Cluster fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

\*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ .

Note: the table summarizes results from regression models. Full models are available on request from the authors. Each cell reflects a different regression coefficient and standard error. The dependent (outcome) variable is children's self-efficacy at 19 years in standard deviations. The independent (control) variables being studied are shown in the row (coefficient and standard error) again in standard deviations. The columns reflect a 'step-wise' approach. Column (1) models were estimated without control variables. Column (2) includes controls for child and household characteristics as follows: age in months, gender, ethnicity, height-for-age z-scores, mother's education, wealth index and household size.

**APPENDIX 8 – Coefficients on the measure of bullying and the self-esteem scale**

	Ethiopia		India		Peru		Viet Nam	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
<b>Measures by type of bullying experienced</b>								
<b>Physical bullying</b>								
Physical bullying	-0.021 (0.081)	-0.038 (0.081)	0.016 (0.058)	0.035 (0.061)	-0.094 (0.108)	-0.072 (0.115)	-0.007 (0.068)	0.006 (0.069)
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	-0.034 (0.039)	-0.047 (0.042)	0.005 (0.035)	0.023 (0.037)	-0.039 (0.051)	-0.016 (0.054)	-0.022 (0.036)	-0.016 (0.038)
Hurt you physically in any other way	<b>-0.102*</b> (0.058)	<b>-0.126*</b> (0.062)	0.001 (0.027)	0.015 (0.028)	-0.069 (0.050)	-0.045 (0.052)	-0.019 (0.037)	-0.021 (0.040)
<b>Verbal bullying</b>								
Verbal bullying	0.017 (0.072)	-0.022 (0.078)	-0.012 (0.033)	0.016 (0.034)	<b>-0.101**</b> (0.048)	<b>-0.086*</b> (0.046)	-0.005 (0.055)	0.005 (0.054)
Called you names or sworn at you	-0.043 (0.032)	<b>-0.060*</b> (0.033)	-0.006 (0.020)	0.007 (0.020)	-0.004 (0.027)	0.008 (0.026)	-0.025 (0.032)	-0.010 (0.034)
Made fun of you for some reason	-0.001 (0.042)	-0.015 (0.043)	-0.004 (0.035)	0.010 (0.037)	<b>-0.075***</b> (0.025)	<b>-0.072***</b> (0.023)	-0.016 (0.028)	-0.016 (0.029)
<b>Indirect bullying</b>								
Indirect bullying	-0.049 (0.062)	-0.073 (0.064)	-0.027 (0.045)	-0.024 (0.046)	-0.051 (0.058)	-0.051 (0.055)	-0.019 (0.036)	-0.006 (0.039)
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	-0.022 (0.026)	-0.027 (0.028)	-0.034 (0.027)	-0.034 (0.028)	-0.039 (0.044)	-0.032 (0.047)	<b>-0.068**</b> (0.032)	<b>-0.067**</b> (0.031)
Refused to talk or made other people not talk to you	-0.013 (0.036)	-0.027 (0.034)	-0.020 (0.020)	-0.021 (0.018)	-0.002 (0.039)	-0.010 (0.038)	-0.008 (0.046)	0.010 (0.048)
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	-0.049 (0.049)	-0.069 (0.049)	-0.019 (0.026)	-0.015 (0.030)	-0.014 (0.036)	-0.017 (0.032)	0.000 (0.024)	0.008 (0.023)
<b>Attacks on property</b>								
Attacks on property	-0.039 (0.049)	-0.069 (0.060)	0.074 (0.049)	0.082 (0.048)	-0.049 (0.039)	<b>-0.071*</b> (0.040)	-0.064 (0.081)	-0.030 (0.076)
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	-0.070 (0.047)	-0.077 (0.049)	-0.005 (0.022)	0.001 (0.023)	-0.014 (0.032)	-0.001 (0.031)	-0.016 (0.037)	-0.007 (0.035)
Took something without permission or stole from you	-0.027 (0.030)	-0.037 (0.040)	0.029 (0.027)	0.033 (0.028)	-0.018 (0.025)	-0.032 (0.025)	-0.054 (0.049)	-0.037 (0.048)
Individual controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Cluster fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

*Note:* the table summarizes results from regression models. Full models are available on request from the authors. Each cell reflects a different regression coefficient and standard error. The dependent (outcome) variable is children's self-esteem at 19 years in standard deviations. The independent (control) variables being studied are shown in the row (coefficient and standard error) again in standard deviations. The columns reflect a 'step-wise' approach. Column (1) models were estimated without control variables. Column (2) includes controls for child and household characteristics as follows: age in months, gender, ethnicity, height-for-age z-scores, mother's education, wealth index and household size.

**APPENDIX 9 – Coefficients on the measure of bullying and the parent relations scale**

	Ethiopia		India		Peru		Viet Nam	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
<b>Measures by type of bullying experienced</b>								
<b>Physical bullying</b>								
Physical bullying	-0.032 (0.103)	-0.047 (0.111)	-0.053 (0.061)	-0.032 (0.052)	-0.154 (0.109)	-0.140 (0.119)	<b>-0.248*</b> (0.128)	<b>-0.192*</b> (0.107)
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	0.023 (0.042)	0.019 (0.049)	-0.048 (0.035)	-0.013 (0.035)	-0.098 (0.059)	-0.079 (0.066)	<b>-0.126**</b> (0.053)	<b>-0.104**</b> (0.038)
Hurt you physically in any other way	-0.014 (0.061)	-0.036 (0.063)	0.014 (0.035)	0.024 (0.033)	-0.082 (0.052)	-0.069 (0.054)	<b>-0.144*</b> (0.073)	<b>-0.109*</b> (0.059)
<b>Verbal bullying</b>								
Verbal bullying	-0.016 (0.068)	-0.056 (0.072)	<b>-0.070**</b> (0.028)	-0.016 (0.035)	<b>-0.089*</b> (0.046)	-0.070 (0.047)	<b>-0.151**</b> (0.071)	<b>-0.126*</b> (0.062)
Called you names or sworn at you	-0.030 (0.031)	-0.045 (0.035)	<b>-0.066**</b> (0.027)	-0.032 (0.024)	0.002 (0.028)	0.016 (0.028)	<b>-0.111*</b> (0.058)	-0.083 (0.049)
Made fun of you for some reason	-0.003 (0.039)	-0.014 (0.042)	<b>-0.059**</b> (0.025)	-0.037 (0.029)	<b>-0.092***</b> (0.025)	<b>-0.079***</b> (0.026)	<b>-0.094**</b> (0.039)	<b>-0.090**</b> (0.035)
<b>Indirect bullying</b>								
Indirect bullying	-0.012 (0.051)	-0.028 (0.042)	-0.068 (0.049)	-0.063 (0.047)	<b>-0.146**</b> (0.065)	<b>-0.146**</b> (0.066)	<b>-0.102**</b> (0.048)	<b>-0.088*</b> (0.050)
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	-0.024 (0.033)	-0.024 (0.033)	-0.009 (0.027)	-0.004 (0.025)	<b>-0.109**</b> (0.040)	<b>-0.103**</b> (0.040)	-0.066 (0.039)	<b>-0.055*</b> (0.030)
Refused to talk or made other people not talk to you	0.014 (0.049)	-0.002 (0.049)	-0.008 (0.034)	-0.005 (0.031)	-0.030 (0.043)	-0.039 (0.044)	-0.046 (0.055)	-0.012 (0.045)
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	-0.020 (0.033)	-0.023 (0.036)	<b>-0.082**</b> (0.038)	<b>-0.087*</b> (0.044)	-0.071 (0.045)	-0.074 (0.046)	-0.017 (0.025)	-0.013 (0.023)
<b>Attacks on property</b>								
Attacks on property	-0.001 (0.062)	-0.040 (0.064)	-0.105 (0.070)	-0.086 (0.064)	<b>-0.128**</b> (0.053)	<b>-0.128**</b> (0.055)	-0.028 (0.064)	0.013 (0.063)
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	-0.052 (0.048)	-0.055 (0.052)	-0.064 (0.041)	-0.047 (0.039)	-0.031 (0.046)	-0.011 (0.041)	-0.040 (0.046)	-0.038 (0.048)
Took something without permission or stole from you	-0.016 (0.036)	-0.028 (0.039)	-0.042 (0.034)	-0.024 (0.029)	<b>-0.073*</b> (0.035)	<b>-0.080**</b> (0.037)	-0.053 (0.031)	-0.038 (0.036)
Individual controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Cluster fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

*Note:* the table summarizes results from regression models. Full models are available on request from the authors. Each cell reflects a different regression coefficient and standard error. The dependent (outcome) variable is children's parent relations at 19 years in standard deviations. The independent (control) variables being studied are shown in the row (coefficient and standard error) again in standard deviations. The columns reflect a 'step-wise' approach. Column (1) models were estimated without control variables. Column (2) includes controls for child and household characteristics as follows: age in months, gender, ethnicity, height-for-age z-scores, mother's education, wealth index and household size.

**APPENDIX 10 – Coefficients on the measure of bullying and the peer relations scale**

	Ethiopia		India		Peru		Viet Nam	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
<b>Measures by type of bullying experienced</b>								
<b>Physical bullying</b>								
Physical bullying	0.065 (0.088)	0.008 (0.081)	0.033 (0.069)	0.060 (0.072)	<b>-0.250**</b> (0.097)	<b>-0.248**</b> (0.090)	<b>-0.167*</b> (0.086)	<b>-0.178*</b> (0.086)
Punched, kicked or beaten you up	0.013 (0.038)	-0.028 (0.036)	0.025 (0.040)	0.054 (0.040)	-0.090 (0.054)	<b>-0.097*</b> (0.052)	<b>-0.089**</b> (0.040)	<b>-0.106***</b> (0.036)
Hurt you physically in any other way	-0.014 (0.074)	-0.067 (0.067)	-0.010 (0.039)	0.010 (0.038)	<b>-0.128***</b> (0.042)	<b>-0.131***</b> (0.041)	-0.032 (0.043)	-0.025 (0.038)
<b>Verbal bullying</b>								
Verbal bullying	0.027 (0.063)	-0.011 (0.065)	0.003 (0.037)	0.038 (0.036)	-0.104 (0.065)	<b>-0.112*</b> (0.059)	-0.081 (0.057)	-0.081 (0.059)
Called you names or sworn at you	-0.045 (0.041)	-0.064 (0.041)	-0.032 (0.029)	-0.016 (0.028)	-0.028 (0.042)	-0.036 (0.035)	-0.044 (0.037)	-0.044 (0.038)
Made fun of you for some reason	-0.001 (0.042)	-0.017 (0.041)	0.006 (0.025)	0.027 (0.027)	<b>-0.113***</b> (0.034)	<b>-0.118***</b> (0.034)	<b>-0.053*</b> (0.029)	<b>-0.057*</b> (0.029)
<b>Indirect bullying</b>								
Indirect bullying	-0.091 (0.063)	<b>-0.109*</b> (0.060)	0.002 (0.044)	0.004 (0.048)	-0.068 (0.058)	-0.044 (0.056)	-0.064 (0.045)	-0.068 (0.049)
Tried to get you into trouble with your friends	-0.010 (0.033)	-0.011 (0.033)	0.018 (0.026)	0.018 (0.026)	-0.027 (0.035)	-0.008 (0.039)	<b>-0.103***</b> (0.036)	<b>-0.109***</b> (0.036)
Refused to talk or made other people not talk to you	-0.041 (0.048)	-0.054 (0.041)	0.018 (0.028)	0.017 (0.028)	-0.019 (0.035)	0.001 (0.036)	-0.067 (0.043)	-0.060 (0.046)
Made you uncomfortable by staring at you for a long time	-0.051 (0.051)	-0.079 (0.051)	-0.023 (0.029)	-0.018 (0.035)	<b>-0.084**</b> (0.039)	<b>-0.077*</b> (0.040)	0.007 (0.023)	0.010 (0.024)
<b>Attacks on property</b>								
Attacks on property	-0.045 (0.061)	-0.067 (0.063)	<b>0.077*</b> (0.037)	<b>0.089**</b> (0.035)	<b>-0.136**</b> (0.065)	<b>-0.139*</b> (0.067)	<b>-0.088*</b> (0.047)	-0.066 (0.044)
Tried to break or damaged something of yours	<b>-0.122**</b> (0.046)	<b>-0.139**</b> (0.050)	0.017 (0.023)	0.034 (0.026)	-0.061 (0.037)	-0.052 (0.037)	<b>-0.103***</b> (0.024)	<b>-0.101***</b> (0.026)
Took something without permission or stole from you	-0.049 (0.030)	-0.057 (0.035)	<b>0.070**</b> (0.028)	<b>0.076***</b> (0.026)	<b>-0.057**</b> (0.027)	-0.044 (0.028)	-0.042 (0.039)	-0.034 (0.040)
Individual controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Cluster fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.

Note: the table summarizes results from regression models. Full models are available on request from the authors. Each cell reflects a different regression coefficient and standard error. The dependent (outcome) variable is children's peer relations at 19 years in standard deviations. The independent (control) variables being studied are shown in the row (coefficient and standard error) again in standard deviations. The columns reflect a 'step-wise' approach. Column (1) models were estimated without control variables. Column (2) includes controls for child and household characteristics as follows: age in months, gender, ethnicity, height-for-age z-scores, mother's education, wealth index and household size.