

Visual Representations of *Bullying* by Secondary School Students: A Gender-Based Approach

Representaciones visuales de bullying realizadas por alumnos de educación secundaria: una perspectiva de género

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine traditional bullying and cyberbullying experiences through gender consideration. Participants were youth from second and fourth year studying at a secondary school located in the city of Guadalajara (Spain). They portrayed their vision of bullying through the drawing technique. The analysis proceeded by making an objective preliminary examination and a following discussion reporting the main findings and conclusions. Results revealed that male teenagers are more likely to engage in and suffer physical aggressions, exclusion group and cyberbullying, whereas female teenagers do not comprise the common aggressor type but suffer verbal aggression, exclusion forms, cyberbullying and gender-based harassment.

Key words: traditional bullying, cyberbullying, gender consideration, aggressors, victims.

Resumen

Este estudio investiga el acoso escolar tradicional y el ciberacoso desde una perspectiva de género. Los participantes cursaban segundo y cuarto de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en un instituto de Guadalajara (España). Estos tuvieron que reflejar el acoso escolar a través de un dibujo. El procedimiento del análisis consistió en realizar un estudio objetivo y una discusión con los hallazgos más significativos. Los resultados demostraron que el sexo masculino constituye el principales agresor y víctima de agresiones físicas, discriminación y ciberacoso. El sexo femenino actúa en menor medida como agresor, pero sufre agresiones verbales, diferentes formas de exclusión, ciberacoso y violencia de género.

Palabras clave: acoso tradicional, ciberacoso, perspectiva de género, agresores, víctimas.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to experts on bullying research, «it is likely that bullying has gone on in schools for as long as schools have existed» (Smith & Sharp, 1994). For this reason, detailed studies have reported that bullying is a long-standing recognisable problem in schools all over the world which is worth considering for students' suitable improvement of both academic and personal development (Olweus, 1994; Smith, 2008; Li, 2006). Therefore, research on this topic has been done worldwide, creating, therefore, bullying own history; including real stories, such as the famous *Tom Browns' School Days* published by Thomas Hughes in 1875 or dated surveys in New Zealand 1997 reporting that the second worst thing a child has ever experienced in life was the act of having been bullied (Maxwell & Carroll-Lind as cited in Sullivan, 2011, p. 3). Moreover, nowadays' existing literature about this topic is comprised by important surveys carried out by organisations such as the UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). In addition, the great interest in this issue by psychologists, educators, sociologists, among others, has led to an important wide social movement, *The Global Education 2030*, with the aim of providing an «inclusive and quality [education] which promotes a lifelong learning opportunity for all» (UNESCO, 2017). Not only what we all know about bullying within school centres, but also about the new continuously and universally growing phenomenon of cyberbullying, arose due to technology advance, create an imbalance of power among students and, therefore, discomfort and exclusion (Olweus, 1994; Smith, 2008; Kowalski et al., 2012).

As this paper will take Spain, particularly Guadalajara, as the main focus of the analysis, it is important to broach some of the up-to-date information. In one of the latest and startling pieces of research carried out in Spain by the widely known organisation *Save the Children*, 21.487 students (between 12 and 16 years old) participated in a survey. This study reports that 9.3% suffered what is known as traditional bullying, which will be further explained in the following section, and 6.9% cyberbullying (Calmaestra et al., 2016, p. 29). Furthermore, Iñaki Piñuel and Araceli Oñate (2007) also carried out leading research in the field. In their study, they concluded that out of a total of 24.990 participant students from fourteen regions, 24,4% males suffer from bullying and

21,6% females do so, constituting a total of 23,3% students suffering from school bullying (2007).

As this article places its focus on a gender-based study, it is worth noting the fact that a growing number of studies have started dealing with gender differences to analyse both traditional bullying and cyberbullying. Studies such as in London carried out by the psychologist experts Peter. K. Smith et al. (2008) or in Canada by QUING LI (2006) have dealt with gender differences to examine both traditional bullying and cyberbullying. In Spain, a more recent study conducted by the organisation ANAR (*Ayuda a Niños y Adolescentes en Riesgo*) in 2017 called attention to the fact that gender matters when studying this socially deviant behaviour. In particular, the report aimed to answer some basic questions about the involvement of girls and boys in bullying. More specifically, it was suggested that boys were more likely to both engage and suffer traditional bullying than the female counterpart. In this line of thought, Ballesteros (2017) claimed that girls were more likely to both engage and suffer cyberbullying (pp. 34-61).

This paper discusses bullying from a gender perspective that may broaden our contextualisation of bullying experiences, and thus, seek for possible workable future solutions to prevent bullying situations. Consequently, a positive impact on students' attitude, and in turn, on their academic performance would be created by focusing on students' overall being. My research, which frames within the Spanish context – particularly in a secondary school in Guadalajara – would hopefully develop growing consciousness among the target audience; that is, school community members (teachers, school counsellor and other administrators) and outsiders (parents and/or other family members). This research, as many authors, such as Willard (2004) points out, «is not to be the final word, [but] only a step towards increased understanding» (p. 2).

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The great interests in conducting studies on school bullying and cyberbullying as well as in fighting for a more inclusive education have attracted my attention and have made a great commitment to come under a closer scrutiny. This study aims at heightening a real awareness about the impor-

tance of expanding the literature on this topic from a gender-based approach. It is true that although much has been done on the research on investigating bullying through a gender perspective, there is a scarce of studies that analyse bullying and cyberbullying in the Spanish context. This fact leads to the need of updating data in order to enlarge our knowledge about today's situation. Therefore, students, as being the ones aware of current bullying situations, have been considered as the starting point of my research in order to deeply analyse both traditional bullying and cyberbullying experiences through gender factors. More particularly, this study seeks to scrutinise the way bullying is depicted in pictures as well as the different points of view offered by male and female participants with the purpose of understanding, in terms of gender, the current academic atmosphere within the Spanish context.

That said, the objectives can be summarised as follows:

- To analyse students' representations of female and males as both aggressors and victims.
- To analyse to what extent male and female perspectives differ in terms of gender.
- To provide a wider knowledge about school bullying in the twenty-first century.
- To be able to collaborate on the already existing literature to seek for future workable and precautionary solutions.

After having clarified the points of departure of the present study and after having done pieces of research highlighting gender inequality as a domineering factor in today's society, it has been possible to formulate a bold hypothesis based on previous data: boys might be more likely to be involved in and suffer physical aggressions, as masculinity is stereotypically tied to «physicality» (Addis & Hoffman, 2009). Girls, on the other hand, may engage and suffer either traditional indirect bullying or cyberbullying as «teasing or gossip about peer» is more associated with girls rather than boys (Lossi Silva et al., 2013, p. 6822).

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The definition of the term *traditional bullying* has been improved and broadened throughout time based on the very first definitions offered by pioneers on the topic. The Swedish physician Peter-Paul Heinemann (1969) used the term *mobbing* (in English *mobbing*) to refer to «peer bullying, harassment», involving both physical and either mental or psychological aggressions from one individual/s to another (Heinemann as cited in Larsson, 2008, pp. 3-4). However, it was not until Olweus' definition when investigation towards bullying started being fully conducted (Menin, 2021). Olweus (1994) explained the action of bullying as follows: «A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to [deliberate and painful acts] on the part of one or more other students» (p. 1173). Furthermore, he drew a line between direct and indirect bullying. The former implies «open attacks on the victim», whereas the latter is carried out «in the form of social isolation and intentional exclusion from a group» (Olweus, 1994, p. 1173). Furthermore, contemporary researchers define *bullying* by means of considering participants: «bully, assistant of the bully, [victim/s], defender of the victim and outsiders» (Eriksen, 2018 as cited in Menin, 2021, p. 3). Consequently, an imbalance of power is created which fosters an atmosphere of superiority as well as situations of exclusion.

Now that the concept of *traditional bullying* in its traditional terms has been introduced, it is worth-mentioning the continuously growing phenomenon of cyberbullying resulting from the huge technological breakthrough as well as the powerfulness of social media (Erdur-Baker, 2010, p. 110). A complete review held by Peter and Petermann (2018) stated that there have been twenty-four definitions on the term of cyberbullying between 2012 and 2017. Therefore, several definitions by different authors have been chosen in order to comprise a concise understanding about this phenomenon (Menin, 2021, p. 2).

According to Smith et al (2008), cyberbullying, while presenting the main purpose of hurting others as traditional bullying, can be considered an «aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group of individuals, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself». (p. 376). Cyberbullying main sub-

types implies harassing others through «phone calls, text messages, video clips bullying filmed by another, and ... circula[ting] pictures [through social media means] (Smith et al., 2008, p. 376). Moreover, Willard (2007) explains that «[c]yberbullying can be happening 24/7 [and, additionally, one of the biggest concerns is that] [d]amaging texts and images can be widely disseminated and impossible to fully remove» (p. 1). In this line, aggressors have access to indelible content with no publishing restrictions as having the chance of spreading any information through media means. Furthermore, Erdur-Baker (2010) defines cyberbullying as a way of harassing which allows aggressors to adopt a hidden identity and, therefore, it provides a safer place not only for bullies, but also for victims to seek for possible revenge (Erdur-Baker, 2010, p. 110). In other words, the idea of cyberbullying defined by these authors provide a concise and clear definition on this phenomenon. They all agree on the idea that cyberbullying is a powerful technological tool which offers aggressors not only different handy electronic possibilities with which they are able to constantly damage feeble victims, but also anonymous identities which leads them to gain more power.

Having said that, traditional bullying and cyberbullying present similarities in the sense that both are carried out following the purpose of harassing helpless individuals. However, they also have their own unique characteristics. Accordingly, traditional bullying can be done either directly or indirectly by a known bully, whereas cyberbullying implies the use of electronic devices to harass victims and, what is more, both the aggressor and the victim may keep an anonymous identity.

4. METHODOLOGY

In the Spanish context, only 10% of bullying cases are visible in schools due to violent aggressions and, thus, leaving 90% of significant invisible cases (Puñuel, 2007). In this line, the present study establishes a focus on secondary students themselves with the aim of throwing light on possible hidden perspectives. Therefore, in order to carry out the study, I contacted a previously-agreed-to-be-kept anonymous secondary school located in the Spanish city of Guadalajara. The school centre supported the idea of the study by attracting participants who were youth in second-

and-fourth year secondary courses between the ages of thirteen and sixteen. More particularly, an overall of 45 students participated, out of whom 25 were second year students and 20 fourth year students. Although the number of drawings related to gender perspectives is not representative, comprising an overall of 14 pictures, out of which 8 pictures correspond to second year secondary students and the remaining 6 to fourth year secondary students, the content is valid and adequate. See chart below:

Table 1
Study Participants

YEAR	MALE PARTICIPANTS	FEMALE PARTICIPANTS	OVERALL
Second-year students	4	4	8
Fourth year students	3	3	6

The study was conducted in November 2019 when students were given a talk about the importance of understanding their views about nowadays' bullying situations. Hence, they were asked to express their feelings and understanding about bullying through drawing technique on the underlying assumption that students might express themselves better through drawing rather than words. In order not to stray from my analysis, drawings related to gender issues have been exclusively chosen. Students were not given very specific guidelines in order for them to feel free to convey their real opinions within a fifteen-minute limited time. They were given a blank piece of paper and colourful markers in case they wanted to use them.

The analysis procedure would provide me a lot of insight into teenagers' understanding on the topic. Special focus was given to facial and body features, colours, objects and possible symbolisation as well as the type of bullying, all essential for the analysis and later discussion.

5. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The first part of this section gives a general overview of the research findings. The main findings discussed are focused on the analysis of second-and

fourth-year secondary students from a gender perspective. Firstly, general findings of second year students' visual representations are discussed followed by fourth year secondary students' ones. The second section deals with a more in-depth discussion of the results and the last section focuses on the differences encountered between male and female participants' perspectives from a gender-based approach.

5.1 Drawings' general overview

5.1.1 Second Year Secondary Students' drawings

In general terms, both male and female students drew in a childish way as depicting stick without arms nor feet figures. Male aggressors, represented in seven out of eight pictures, do have either smiling or furious faces and do powerfully engaged in peer support in order to surround a weaker most-of-the-time female victim. Moreover, they carry different objects worth of heed: from simple and ordinary ones, such caps or mobile phones to extreme violent ones, particularly weapons. Colours are not significant for the purpose of the analysis. On the other hand, female figures as aggressors are only depicted once, having all mad expressions and identical hair colour as well as mobile phones.

Male victims, represented in three out of eight pictures, are small and situated in the middle surrounded by pressure groups. Body features and colours are no significant for the purpose of my analysis; otherwise, facial expression show their unhappy and lonely lives. Male figures do suffer both indirect and direct aggressions. Female victims – represented in five out of eight pictures – differ according to their position within the picture; however, they can be classified as follows:

1. A gender violence female victim surrounded exclusively by a group of men;
2. a widely-open-to-critics female facing and standing up in front of an audience and;
3. a female victim situated in one side of the picture as a way of exclusion group.

They are depicted either with sad expressions or blank faces. Colours are not generally significant, but some exceptions will be further explained. Female victims do suffer indirect bullying, cyberbullying and gender-based harassment (As further explained in the discussion below and observed in *Annex*). In what follows, I will introduce a brief explanation of fourth year secondary students' drawings.

5.1.2 Fourth Year Secondary Students' drawings

Alike second year secondary students, these students childishly drew sticky confusing figures as not presenting distinctive trait features of neither masculinity nor femininity. However, insults written by students are directed to male figures, hence, this resolves the difficulty to tell apart the gender.

Male aggressors, present in all the pictures, do harass others either at school or at home, in the latter situation through electronic devices and always forming groups of at least three members. They were drawn with powerful and happy faces, and some of them even with devil horns. Males were represented ready to carry out both indirect bullying and cyberbullying. Furthermore, it is to be noted that female aggressors – represented in two out of seven drawings – are situated either among male aggressors or at home practising the phenomenon of cyberbullying. Female facial expressions seem to be also powerful and pleased. Body features and colours are no significant for the purpose of the analysis.

5.2 Findings

5.2.1 Students' representations of male bullies

It can be argued that second year students' drawings are more representative in the sense of having depicted male aggressors as authoritative and violent figures, mainly observed through their spiky hair, frown lines, outstanding height and, what is more, through meaningful object such as weapons.

Figure 1
Criminal Violence



Note. Source, Male Student.

However, both courses did emphasise on the idea that male aggressors are the most powerful figures following a clear social common pattern as every bullying act is displayed in groups. As Lossi Silva et al. (2013), bullying provoked by males is clearly «[a] mechanism of interaction between peers» (p. 6822). Therefore, it can be stated that bullying can be regarded as a social mannish event. In other words, male bullies, as following an almost identical social pattern, support each other fomenting, therefore, masculine power.

Male teenagers are the main aggressors involved in traditional bullying; not only direct bullying (although this type of bullying represented in a greater extent by second year student) but also indirect bullying (type of bullying represented in a greater extent by fourth year students), and in a lesser extent, cyberbullying. Moreover, although better seen through the analysis of second year's drawings, the male figure seems to have full control of every situation, owing to the fact that he can harass both men and women – the latter in a greater extent. In this line, it is worth discussing a second-year students' picture (see *figure 2*) in which a gender-based violence situation is depicted.

Figure 2
Gender Based Violence (1)

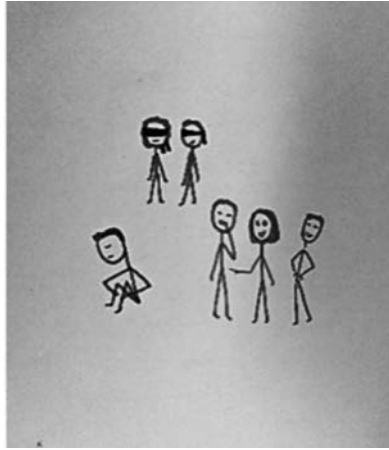


Note. Source, Male Student.

A female coloured in pink, being this the ideal sexual and feminine colour, (Koller, 2018, p. 418) is surrounded by a group of eight male figures which have spiky hair and furious expressions, all supporting each other and representing powerfulness. Furthermore, male aggressors have long arms as trying to reach the victim, and consequently, beat her. Actually, it seems she had been already beaten because of her crossed pink eye. According to Farokhi and Hashemi (2011), «[l]arge hands found in children's drawings [represent] ... those who steal [whereas] small hands [do] indicate the emotions associated with insecurity and helplessness» (p. 2223). In this picture, male figures long for the female victim as their possession as being a mere object to be stolen.

On the contrary, male bullies, represented by fourth year students, exclusively bully male victims together with the support of female aggressors, although the latter being secondary characters as being depicted in a lesser number of times. In other words, although aggressors may or not bully others together with a female character, the presence of a male powerful figure is seen in most of the drawings putting, thus, the female – adopting a secondary aggressor's role – aside. This is clearly exemplified in *figure 3*.

Figure 3
Exclusion group



Note. Source, Female Student.

Another worth mentioning aspect is today's representation of bullying having a dual purpose. Bullies do want not only to harass weaker individuals and, therefore, become powerful and gain popularity at school, but also record the situation for them to wield even more their power– both in real and virtual lives. This exemplified through a worth discussing below picture.

Figure 4
Dual Purpose Activity



Note. Source, Male Student.

Bullies seem to occupy different roles as, on the one hand, the biggest figure – assuming the main command – is throwing the male victim's book, and, on the other hand, a smaller bully, labelled as the defender of the bully, is recording the whole situation. Therefore, although bullying main aim is meant to hurt others, today's bullying does accomplish more than one single purpose.

Having said that, although both courses depicted males as main all-powerful aggressors, there are two different points of view according to second- and fourth-year students. The former group showed that male aggressors seem to be more likely to be involved in traditional direct bullying; emphasising on the examples of extreme violence due to the representation of weapons, and they seem to have the female victim as their main target. The latter group represented male bullies as being highly involved in traditional indirect bullying as well as cyberbullying, being a male figure their main victim. Hence, students may gain different perspectives and approaches depending upon their age.

5.2.2 Students' representation of female bullies

As mentioned above, female figures are secondary characters when coming to bullying others as encountered few examples. Nevertheless, although scant evidence has been collected, there are some general worth discussing aspects. Male and female bullies are very much alike in understanding bullying as an accessible escape route planned for entertainment as observed through their smiley happy faces.

Female bullies unlike men are represented without weaponry but mainly with mobile phones as their major tool used to reject and marginalise their victims. Although this idea is commonly agreed by both courses, perspectives do change when referring to bullying as a social event. More particularly, according to second year students, cyberbullying carried out by female teenagers is likely to occur socially.

Figure 5
Exclusion group



Note. Source, Female Student.

However, the counterargument is that fourth-year students represented cyberbullying as an individual activity (see *figure 6* below).

Figure 6
Cyberbullying as an an Individual and Group Activity



Note. Source, Female Student.

This may suggest that cyberbullying is a safer place than traditional bullying for the aggressors as they have the opportunity to conceal and create an assumed identity, as well as to keep themselves anonymous and virtually

protected (Erdur-Baker, 2010, p. 110). Therefore, bullies do not need peer support as when dealing with traditional bullying.

5.2.3 *Students' representation of both male and female victims*

With regard to this part of the article, I have decided to include the comparative study of male and female victims within one single section for a better understanding about the differences encountered, which mainly express the students' perspectives in terms of age.

There is a to-be-explored crucial aspect when examining students' view on the topic because of this important reason: while second year students deemed female teenagers as their target victims, fourth-year students considered exclusively males as theirs.

Male and female victims were drawn with similar features as both are presented as helpless characters. Furthermore, although most of the male figures were attributed with a face and its corresponding facial parts, seemingly meaning that they have been provided with a particular identity, it is of great importance to mention an example (see figure 10) in which the victim's face does present a distorted image as both mouth and eyes are misplaced as if a previous fight had allegedly taken place.

Figure 7
Dual Purpose Activity



Note. Source, Male Student.

Moreover, there is a worth mentioning female figure depicted with a totally blank face which may reflect aggression towards women associated with a general social identity rather than with a specific one. As «there [might be] instances in which there are hidden meanings behind [certain symbols]» (Farokhi & Hashemi, 2011, p. 2223), it is important to pay attention to this specific detail (see *figure 8*). Therefore, all this seems to suggest that female victims who are generally represented without a facial expression can appear to be with no voice to appeal for help nor eyes to see reality, and what is more, students may relate women's harassing to women suffering in silence and with a hidden identity.

Figure 8
Gender Based Violence (2)



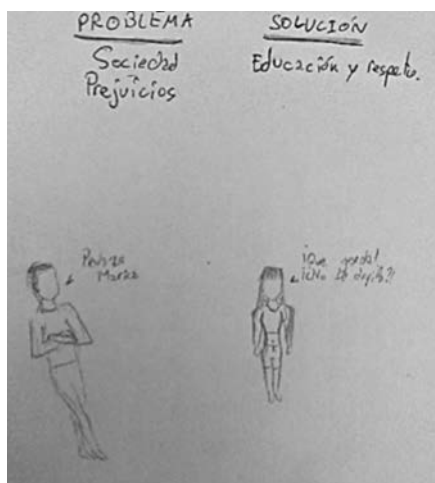
Note. Source, Female Student.

Female victims are also represented without clothes or almost naked proving that women are widely open to critics (see again *figure 2*). Besides that, some figures were depicted without following the so-called traditional standards of female beauty. Regarding this latter aspect, it is true that ideals of feminine beauty are «arbitrary» and changeable over time and cultures (Bradley University). Nevertheless, by placing a focus on Western society, the concept of beauty is mostly associated with «feminine physical attractiveness» (Bovet, 2018, p. 327). In the article «The impact of Western beauty ideals on the lives of women and men» written by Calogero et al. (2007), it is said that standards of feminine beauty include: «thinness, ...

ultra lean figure [including] a flat stomach, thin waist, boyish hips, long legs, well-developed breasts, well-defined muscles, and flawless skin» (Groesz et al., 2002; Harrison, 2003 as cited in Calogero et al., p. 11).

By having represented women with the previous remarkable features, students are aware of women being opened to critics when not following female beauty standards in the twenty-first century. This is exemplified in the image below in which the way society sees woman and feminised men is depicted.

Figure 9
Social Prejudice



Note. Source, Female Student.

On the one hand, the female character is represented with shorts and a short-sleeve T-shirt showing her navel, and what is more, with open arms and straight legs being, thus, opened to social critics. In fact, the drawing's author wrote few offensive words directed to her, specifically *gorda* («fat») and the question *¿no te depilas?* («don't you wax your legs?»). Regarding the former comment, it can be pointed out that the figure is not overweight, but slim. Hence, this may suggest that society desire to achieve the perfect and unreachable woman body. On the other hand, the male figure is depicted following a social female gender norm since, alike «women [, the male figure] ... sit[s] in closed postures or with their legs crossed, which is regarded feminine» (Vrugt & Luyerink, 2000 as cited in Tiljander, 2007,

p. 2). For this reason, the male character is attributed with the insult «marica» (*queer*). In addition, by following the gender canons of masculinity, «men sit in wide positions with their legs spread, which is regarded masculine» (Vrugt & Luyerink 2000 as cited in Tiljander, 2007, p. 2). Therefore, it can be argued that homosexuals are also victims and, seemingly bullied by male characters as men tend to «avoid stereotypically female activities» (Thompson & Pleck as cited in Burn & Ward, 2005, p. 254). Hence, heteronormativity is still seen as the normal sexual role within the current Spanish society, and thus, creating an atmosphere which reinforces male superiority. Having said that, both traditional bullying and cyberbullying create atmospheres in which gender inequality is caused through sexist and homophobic words.


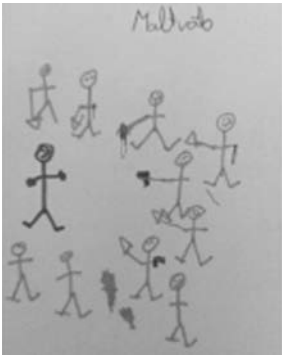

As mentioned in the previous section, while she-figures are bullied by male and female aggressors, he-figures are mainly bullied by male aggressors. As Angelica Lossi Silva et al. (2013) stated that ... practices are more frequent among boys than among girls, with significant differences for physical aggression ... [and] [f]or other victimization subtypes, gender differences were not statistically significant...” (p. 6825). In other words, boys are considered victims of either direct physical aggression – as depicted by second year students and, what is more, sometimes in a very violent way or, alike girls, indirect aggression and cyberbullying, as exemplified by fourth year students. The main gender difference concerning victimisation is that –being the aggressor a male figure– men do suffer from direct physical attacks whereas women gender-based violence.

5.3 Gender differences and similarities found between male and females’ perspectives

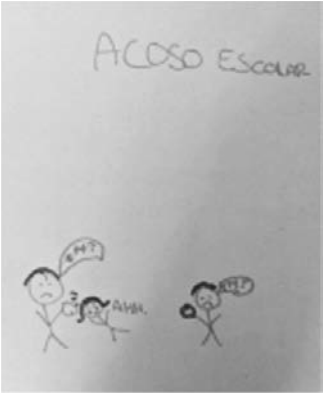

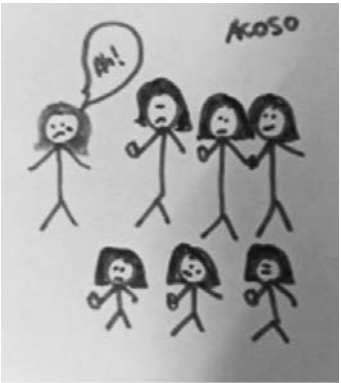
Although the main aim of the study was to scrutinise students’ representation of figures, both bullies and victims, it is also relevant to consider the differences and similarities with regards to the authors’ perspectives. On the one hand, second-year secondary male students understand bullying as a violent scene in which male figures are the main partakers. Therefore, these younger participants opted for traditional direct bullying as the main type of bullying by considering both female and male character as victims. In addition, it can be analysed the way male students defined bullying as a mannish event. On the other hand, female second-year secondary students



deemed bullying as a discriminatory act for women and men not following the traditional social gender norms. Additionally, there has been a great emphasis on the way women are inferior to men by drawing helpless figures which face gender-based harassment situations. Both male and female participants understand bullying as an entertaining movement mainly led by powerful male figures. See chart below to check detailed information:

Table 2
Second-year secondary students' representation of bullying

PARTICIPANT GENDER	TYPE OF BULLYING AND FIGURES INVOLVED
<p>Male student 1</p> 	<p>Direct Bullying Bullies: male Victim: Female</p>
<p>Male student 2</p> 	<p>Direct Bullying Bullies: male Victim: male</p>
<p>Male student 3</p> 	<p>Direct and indirect bullying Bullies: male Victim: male</p>


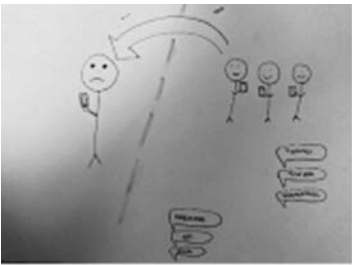
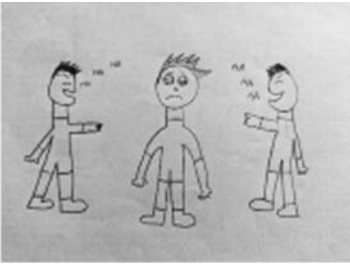
*Visual Representations of Bullying by Secondary School Students:
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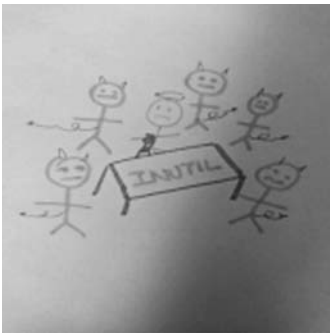

<p>Male student 4</p>  <p>The drawing shows the words 'ACOSO ESCOLAR' at the top. Below, a male stick figure is pointing towards a female stick figure who has a sad expression. Another male figure is nearby with a speech bubble.</p>	<p>Direct Bullying Bullies: male Victim/s: female</p>
<p>Female student 5</p>  <p>The drawing depicts several stick figures. Arrows point from some figures to others, some of whom have sad faces. There are handwritten words like 'Ustedes', 'estas cosas', and 'pasa'.</p>	<p>Direct and Indirect Bullying Bullies: male Victim/s: female</p>
<p>Victim/s: female Female student 6</p>  <p>The drawing is titled 'ACOSO'. It shows a group of female stick figures. One figure on the left has a speech bubble that says 'Ah!'. The figures are arranged in two rows.</p>	<p>Cyberbullying Bullies: female Victim/s: female</p>

<p>Female student 7</p> 	<p>Indirect Bullying Bullies: not specified Victim/s: male and female</p>
<p>Female student 8</p> 	<p>Indirect Bullying Bullies: male Victim/s: male</p>

Fourth-year secondary students' perspective on bullying differ from second-year secondary as they opted for indirect bullying as well as cyberbullying as the main subtypes of bullying. Nevertheless, among the former group, there are not significant differences in points of view when dealing with a gender analysis because both female and male participants depicted similar situations of exclusion group and cyberbullying. However, it is important to mention the fact that the female character appears for the first time not only as an aggressor together with male characters but also as an individual cyberbully who does not need peer support as having social media means as powerful tools which can provide bullies with hidden identities and, consequently, security as not having to deal with face-to-face bullying situations. – which clearly expose boys as the main bullies. Moreover, it is of great significant to highlight that older students consider bullying as an act that takes place not only at the school centre but also outside since cyberbullying let aggressors to harass others anywhere. See chart to check detailed information:

Table 3
Fourth-year secondary students' representation of bullying

PARTICIPANT GENDER	TYPE OF BULLYING AND FIGURES INVOLVED
<p data-bbox="319 320 467 347">Male student 1</p>  <p>The drawing shows three stick figures. On the left, a figure holds a book. In the center, a smaller figure stands. On the right, a figure holds a smartphone. A book is also shown on the ground between the left and center figures.</p>	<p data-bbox="692 338 1012 414">Cyberbullying and Direct Bullying Bullies: male Victim/s: male</p>
<p data-bbox="319 751 467 778">Male Student 2</p>  <p>The drawing shows a stick figure on the left holding a smartphone. A large curved arrow points from the smartphone towards three stick figures on the right. Below the figures are several speech bubbles containing illegible text.</p>	<p data-bbox="783 769 922 846">Cyberbullying Bullies: male Victim/s: male</p>
<p data-bbox="319 1183 467 1210">Male Student 3</p>  <p>The drawing shows three stick figures. The figure on the left and the figure on the right are pointing towards the central figure. The central figure has a sad or angry expression.</p>	<p data-bbox="776 1201 928 1277">Indirect Bullying Bullies: male Victim/s: male</p>

<p>Female Student 1</p> 	<p>Indirect Bullying Bullies: male and female Victim/s: male</p>
<p>Female Student 2</p> 	<p>Indirect Bullying Bullies: male Victim/s: male</p>
<p>Female Student 3</p> 	<p>Cyberbullying Bullies: male and female Victim/s: male</p>

By having contrasted some information, it can be argued that groups from different ages have a difference sense of perspective when representing the phenomenon of bullying. Generally, younger students see bullying as a violent and aggressive physical event whereas older ones understand it as a way of excluding others through both face-to-face and virtual insults. See

chart below to have a clear picture of students’ general point of view from a gender perspective:

Table 4
Overall information about students’ perspectives

	Direct Bullying	Indirect Bullying	Direct and Indirect Bullying	Cyberbullying	Male Bullies	Fermale Bullies	Male and Fermale Bullies	Male Victims	Fermale Victims	Male Fermale Victims
Male students	4	1	1	2	7	0	0	5	2	0
Fermale students	0	4	1	2	3	1	2	4	2	1

From an overall perspective, male students mostly consider direct bullying, and in a lesser extent indirect and cyberbullying, done generally to male victims as the main type of harassment. Otherwise, female students find both indirect and cyberbullying as main subtypes against, for the most part, males. Although having encountered some marked and striking differences, it is clear that both genders do know that bullying situations are led by domineering male figures whose victims can be either male or female individuals – who may feel different from the rest by not following the general social gender canons, as seen in students’ representations.

6. CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTIVE

The study carried out aimed at developing a better understanding of both traditional bullying and cyberbullying through the analysis of second- and fourth-year secondary students’ drawings. This analysis has shown the way students present a clear view of bullying happening in today’s schools. Drawings do define the gender social stereotypes as male teenagers are associated in a greater extent with physical aggressions whereas female teenagers with verbal tactics as being considered physically weaker. This information leads us to visualise a context which comprises an atmosphere of gender inequality. As for traditional bullying, the present study has suggested that female aggressors seem to be less powerful than the male counterpart because of having been depicted as secondary and less frequent bullies. On the contrary, male aggressors seem to be clearly domineering.

ering figures who powerfully and intimidatingly harass both male and female victims. Moreover, a key point to consider is the presence of extreme violence, especially represented by the younger students, which proves to be part of school visible direct bullying. On the contrary, indirect bullying and, what is more, cyberbullying, represented in a greater extent by older students, deal with the hidden side of bullying. Cyberbullying is commonly practiced because of students' highly knowledge on the diverse functions of technology. In this line, although male aggressors bully others through social media means, females are the ones who will be probably seizing said means as a tool for bullying. More particularly, as males are ruling traditional direct bullying as well as indirect bullying by reinforcing the featured traditional masculine stereotypes of strength and violence, females are consequently left aside from male brutality. Therefore, females have felt the necessity of fomenting cyberbullying through social media as being a safer place to hide their identities and to practice, among all, verbal bullying. Moreover, despite of students' perspectives differing in terms of age and gender, bullying has been defined as a mainly social mannish event whose aim is to harass weaker individuals while entertaining themselves and supporting each other.

Last but not least, it is important to point out the way findings – projecting the current picture of bullying – such as violent scenes (including physical aggression to both genders), verbal aggressions, exclusion from groups and cyberbullying harassing, may assist in the design of precautionary measures for bullying intervention. Results do «deserve great attention from researchers, teachers, school boards, education and health professionals and families» (Angelica Lossi Silva et al., 2013, p. 6828) in order to diminish this problematic phenomenon, and therefore, strike a balance by breaking positions of power as participants were capable of labelling bullying as a cause for a gender imbalanced society. This would contribute towards the improvement of students' overall being and, consequently, academic performance.

Once having a real picture about students' feelings and perspectives on the topic, it is worth mentioning that this analysis provides reliable information which does indicate the way bullying is contextualised through gender factors. Participants were able to portray the main aspects useful to define and determine the problems to be tackled in a hopefully non-far

future. As pointed out in the introduction, this research does not comprise «the final word, [but] only a step towards increased understanding» (Willard, 2004, p. 2).

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ANNEX

Second Year Students' drawings

Figure 10. *Gender Based Violence (1).*
Participant 1: Male student



Figure 11. *Criminal Violence.*
Participant 2: Male student



Figure 12. Exclusion group.
Participant 3: Female student



Figure 13. Gender Based Violence (2).
Participant 4: Female student



Figure 14. Gender Based Violence (3).
Participant 5: Male student

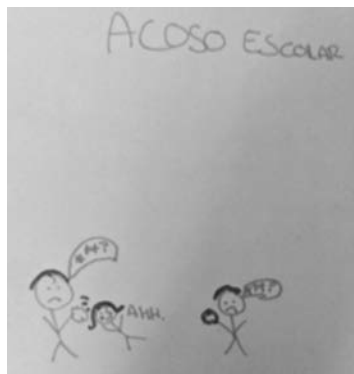


Figure 15. Social Prejudice.
Participant 6: Female student



Fourth Year Students' drawings

Figure 16. Exclusion group.
Participant 9: Female student



Figure 17. Dual Purpose Activity.
Participant 10: Male student



Figure 18. Bullies as devils.
Participant 11: Female student

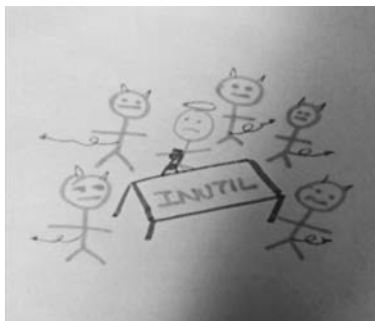


Figure 19. Cyberbullying.
Participant 12: Male student

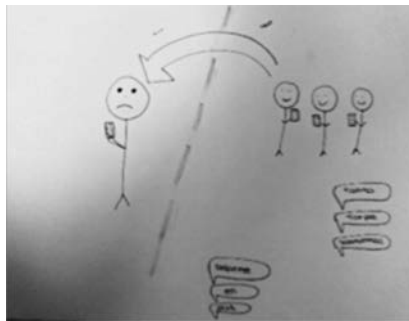
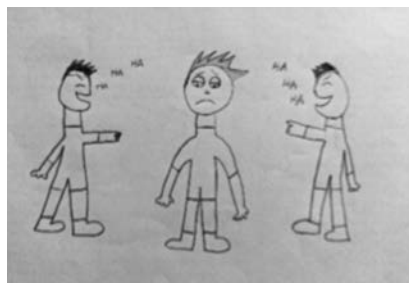


Figure 20. Cyberbullying as an
an Individual and Group Activity.
Participant 13: Female student



Figure 21. Harrasing the
one being different (2).
Participant 14: Male student



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