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**Teachers as victims, abusers and bystanders  
of school violence in Cyprus.**

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## Abstract

This study investigated the prevalence of school violence in Cyprus from the perspective of teachers as victims, abusers, and bystanders. The sample comprised 1913 educators from various schools in Cyprus who participated in the second phase of the survey. Data was collected using an online questionnaire developed by the Developmental Psychology Lab at University of Cyprus and statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS. To investigate the factors associated with teachers' experiences of school violence, four hypotheses based on gender and teaching experience were examined. The hypotheses included the idea that female teachers may be more likely to experience bullying than male teachers, younger teachers may be more likely to experience bullying, and experienced teachers may be more likely to be perpetrators of violence, while less experienced teachers may be more likely to witness it.

Keywords: school bullying, teachers, bystanders, victims, abusers, teaching experience.

## 1. Introduction

School bullying is a major concern that impacts both students and teachers in Cyprus, as well as in other parts of the world (Olweus, 1993). Research constantly shows that bullying in schools is a widespread problem in Cyprus, with a substantial number of students reporting incidents of bullying during their time in school (Stavrinides, 2014). School violence has become an increasing concern in Cyprus in the recent years, with instances ranging from physical attacks to verbal abuse as bullying behaviors (Fanti, 2020).

While students are frequently portrayed as the major victims and perpetrators of school violence, it is critical to remember that teachers can also be victims, abusers, and bystanders of school violence (Alamprites, 2007). The present study, will examine the teachers as victims, abusers, and bystanders of school violence, with a special emphasis on whether this is a problem in Cyprus.

School bullying is defined as any behaviour that is harmful or potentially dangerous to the physical or emotional well-being of students, teachers, or other school employees (Cornell et al., 2013). Bullying is often expressed as physical aggression, such as fighting, the use of weapons or others forms of violent acts such as vandalism or property destruction. Additionally, can be presented as verbal or psychological abuse, such as gossiping, social isolation and exclusion (Olweus, 1993). School violence can occur among students, among students and teachers, or between teachers and other members of the school staff (Olweus, 2013). Bullying may happen in school context, in the classroom, playground, or even outside of school grounds (Fanti,2020).

### 1.1 Victims, Abusers and Bystanders

They are individuals who are repeatedly exposed to intentional harm, aggression, or harassment by the abusers (Olweus, 1993). Victims of school bullying frequently feel lonely and powerless, and they may experience low self-worth and mental health concerns (Olweus, 1993). Furthermore, they may face difficulties in trusting others since they have encountered betrayal or abuse from individuals they trusted (Fanti, 2020). As a result they have difficulties forming and maintaining relationships, due to their trust issues (Hymel, et al., 2015). It is crucial to highlight that these phenotypes may not be present in all victims of bullying, and that individuals may experience bullying in a variety of ways (Fanti, 2020).

Abusers may have a variety of characteristics that contribute to their behaviour. Abusers are frequently presented as physically or socially stronger than victims, and they may use their power and influence to threaten or injure others (Fanti & Henrich, 2010). They may also have a record of previous bullying behaviors or they have family factors that can explain these behaviors, such as hostility and violence (Hymel, et al., 2015). In certain situations, abusers may not completely comprehend the consequences of their behaviour and may fail to recognise that their activities are hurtful or wrong (Twemlow, et al., 2010).

Bystanders of bullying behaviors can also contribute to the problem's persistence. Teachers and other school employees may observe indications of bullying. For example they may notice instances of bullying, such as verbal or physical altercations, exclusion from activities, and cyberbullying (Bradshaw, et al., 2007). They may observe or hear students being insulted, bullied, or mistreated in person or online. Both students and teachers may witness bullying while failing to intervene or report it, or they may even participate in it. Bystanders

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may be driven by a desire to fit in or be accepted by others, they may concern of becoming a victim themselves or they do not know how to react (Stavriniades, et al., 2016).

The effects of bullying can be severe and long lasting for every participant. Specifically, they may experience physical symptoms such as stomachaches, headaches, and difficulty sleeping (Ttofi, et al., 2011). Additionally, they may also struggle with low self-esteem and mental health issues such as depression and anxiety (Olweus, 2013). Also they may struggle academically due to the stress and distraction of the bullying, and may also be more likely to skip school or drop school (Espelage, et al., 2013).

## 1.2 Relationship between Teachers and Students

The success of a student's and teacher's well-being depends in large part on the interaction between them. A positive and supportive bond between teacher and student can promote feelings of trust and admiration, as well as boost students confidence and comfort levels. This relationship have variety of positive effects, such as improve in academic performance and a better school experience in general (Huang, 2018). On the other hand, a tense or hostile teacher-student connection can be harmful to a student's education and wellbeing. Students may be less motivated to study and more prone to disengaging from the classroom if they don't feel respected or encouraged by their teachers (Le ,2018).

It is also important to consider the relationship between students and teachers, and how this can contribute to prevent bullying (Thapa, et al., 2013). It is possible when teachers create a positive and supportive learning environment that students are more likely to feel comfortable and confident, and less likely to engage in bullying behaviour (Swearer, et al., 2009). On the other hand, when teachers are unsupportive or even dismissive, or when there is a lack of trust and respect between students and teachers, students may be more likely to engage in bullying behaviors (Olweus, 1993).

### 1.3 Teachers as victims, abusers and bystanders of school bullying

School bullying is a serious problem that can affect both students and teachers and has negative effects for everyone concerned (Rigby, 2012). Teachers are daily exposed to school bullying and they may be victims, abusers, or bystanders. Although the literature is limited, it is essential to consider their viewpoints and the reality that school bullying can also have negative effects on them (Twemlow, et al., 2004).

#### 1.3.1 Teachers as victims

It is possible for educators to become targets of bullying in Cyprus, although there has only been one study done on this topic in Cyprus, Alamprites carried it out in 2007. According to Alamprites (2007), bullying exhibited to teachers is a problem that affects teachers in Cyprus, with research revealing that a large proportion of teachers report having experienced bullying at some point during their employment.

It is possible that students will harass professors, either directly or indirectly. This can take the form of verbal or physical abuse, as well as behaviours such as interrupting class or refusing to follow the rules (Reddy, et al., 2003). Research has revealed that children who bully their teachers may have variety of characteristics, including low self-esteem, trouble with anger, and a lack of empathy (Alamprites, 2007). As a consequence of bullying by students, it is possible for educators who are bullied to suffer a variety of negative effects, including stress, burnout, and dissatisfaction in their overall job. It is possible that they also struggle with emotions of powerlessness and vulnerability, and they could find it challenging to keep a classroom environment that's upbeat and encouraging (Twemlow, et al., 2010).

### 1.3.2 Teachers as abusers

There is a lack of research in this field, despite the fact that it is feasible for teachers in Cyprus to bully in their classrooms. Research conducted on bullying in schools in Cyprus typically centre their attention on the notion that students are the perpetrators of the behaviour rather than exploring the idea that instructors may be the abusers of bullying.

Students may be bullied by their teachers in a number of different ways, for example verbal abuse, physical abuse, or they may use power and authority in a manipulative or abusive manner (Kozubal, et al., 2019). Studies have shown that teachers who bully their students may be struggling with a variety of personal issues or challenges, such as a desire to maintain control in the classroom, a lack of understanding the impact of their actions, or a combination of these factors (Twemlow, et al., 2010).

Bullying by teachers can have a severe substantial influence on the lives of the children who are bullied. Students who are bullied by their teachers may be at a greater risk of experiencing negative effects on their mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being (Twemlow, et al., 2006). Furthermore, bullying by teachers can also contribute to a hostile and toxic atmosphere at school, which can have a negative impact on the academic growth and development of all students (Espelage, et al., 2014). This can be especially destructive because students may believe they have little power to defend themselves against a teacher and may not have the same support and resources available to them as they would if they were being harassed by a classmate (Kozubal, & Mathews, 2019).

Also, Twemlow Fonagy & Sacco at their study (2006), have shown that instructors who had been bullied as children are more likely to bully their students and be bullied by their students. In this study 45% of teachers admitted to having bullied a student. The results of the

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factor analysis revealed two distinct types of bullying teachers: a bully-victim type and a sadistic bully type.

### 1.3.3 Teachers as bystanders

The school's faculty members are also potential witnesses to bullying incidents and can watch the behaviour of bullies. Teachers tend to be most observant of school bullying because they are exposed to the interactions and acts of students in their classrooms and on school grounds (Farley, 2018). Thus, they have a crucial role in identifying and responding to incidences of bullying, as well as in ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment for all students (Farley, 2018).

By close interactions with students, teachers are able to see instances of bullying. They may observe instances of verbal or physical altercations, exclusion from activities, and other forms of aggressive behaviour (Espelage, et al., 2014). In addition they can witness bullying through direct encounters but teachers can also observe it through indirect methods. In fact, they may detect more subtle types of bullying, such as social isolation, taunting, and gossip. For instance, they may see alterations in a student's behavior or academic performance, such as an increase in absenteeism or a drop in grades.

These modifications may be the result of bullying, and teachers might utilise them as indicators to investigate more and provide assistance to the student (Farley, 2018). Teachers have a crucial role in watching and responding to school bullying. By recognising the signs and symptoms of bullying, they can act early and offer assistance to individuals in need. Moreover, by creating a positive and supportive learning environment, they can assist or even prevent bullying from occurring (Lodge, et al., 2010).



## 2. The present study

This study aims to analyse the role of teachers as bystanders, abusers, and victims of school bullying. While teachers play a crucial role in preventing and responding to occurrences of bullying, there is a lack of research on the topic in Cyprus. This study intends to address this gap in the literature by investigating teachers' experiences with school bullying and their perspectives of their role in preventing and responding to bullying events.

In addition, the study will evaluate the extent to which teachers may engage in bullying or become victims of it. This part of the research is significant because it provides light on the complexity of the school bullying issue and underlines the necessity for teacher assistance and intervention. The purpose of this study is to improve awareness of the role of teachers in preventing and responding to school bullying in Cyprus.

### Hypothesis:

1: Female teachers are more likely to experience bullying than male teachers.

Female teachers are more likely than male teachers to encounter bullying. This may be due to a variety of reasons, such as gender stereotypes and cultural expectations around caregiving (Espelage, et al., 2010). Due to the nature of their employment, which entails interacting directly with students and parents, female teachers may be more vulnerable to bullying and exposed to more scrutiny and criticism. In addition, female instructors may be less likely to report bullying occurrences or seek assistance out of anxiety.

Correlation between the teachers age or experience and their involvement in school bullying

## 2: Younger teachers are more likely to face bullying

Younger teachers are more vulnerable to bullying due to their inexperience. Teachers who are not as familiar with the school's culture and standards may struggle to establish their authority and manage their classroom. In addition, younger teachers may be considered as easier targets for bullying since they are viewed as less confident or forceful.

## 3: Teachers with more experience is possible to be abusers

It is crucial to emphasise that, despite the common belief that experienced teachers are less likely to engage in bullying, it is nevertheless possible for experienced teachers to engage in abusive behaviour. Twemlow, Fonagy, and Brethour, (2006) study suggests that experienced teachers may participate in more subtle kinds of bullying, such as social isolation or verbal abuse, which are more difficult to detect than physical aggressiveness. This could be due to the fact they may use power and authority in a manipulative or abusive manner to maintain control.

## 4: Teachers with less experience are more likely to be bystanders

Less experienced teachers might be more likely to witness bullying situations. Younger teachers maybe less confident in their abilities to notice and intervene in bullying situations, which could hinder their capacity to serve as effective bystanders. However, there is currently insufficient research on this topic.

### 3. Methodology

#### Study Design

The data for this study were collected from Developmental Physiological Lab University of Cyprus during the second phase of the survey on the phenomenon of school violence. The survey was structured into three phases, with the first phase in 2021, second phase conducted during the 2022 and the third and last phase in 2023. The aim of the project is to collect data from parents/guardians, students, and teachers on the phenomenon of violence in schools in Cyprus. The research project is part of the framework of the National Strategy for Violence Prevention and Intervention, Cyprus Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sports. The study has been approved by all relevant bodies of the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sports (Cyprus Pedagogical Institute) and the National Bioethics Committee of Cyprus.

#### Participants

A total of 5616 parents/guardians, 2918 students, and 1913 teachers from 603 schools of all levels and provinces of Cyprus participated in the second phase of the survey. The survey was administered online, and the average time to complete the questionnaires was approximately 30 minutes for parents and children and 20 minutes for teachers. The survey included questions on various aspects of school violence, including the types of violence experienced, the frequency of incidents, and the factors that contribute to the occurrence of violence.

The teacher participants in this study had an age range of 24-65 years old (N=1913; 77.9% female). Teachers from 302 schools across all regions of Cyprus participated, with the majority teaching in Nicosia schools and smaller participation rates from Limassol, Larnaca, Paphos, and Famagusta (3.3%). Of the final sample, 9.6% were kindergarten teachers, 29%

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were teachers in public elementary schools, 33.5% were teachers in public high schools, and 25.2% were teachers in public high schools and technical schools. In addition, 2.9% of the total sample were teachers in private schools. Of the participating teachers, 55.5% stated that they have received training in issues related to behavior problems, which may have influenced their ability to recognize and report incidents of school violence.

It is important to note that the self-selection of participating teachers and schools may limit the generalizability of the findings to the wider population of teachers in Cyprus. However, the sample size of 1913 teachers provides a satisfactory basis for analysis and inference.

#### Data Analyses

All statistical analyses were conducted using the SPSS statistical software package. In the results section, the focus is on statistically significant correlations or regression coefficients with a significance level set at  $p < .05$ . In cases where statistically non-significant correlations are found, this will be mentioned in the discussion section.

#### Limitations

It is important to note some limitations of the research. First, the final sample was collected through an open invitation to all schools in Cyprus, which resulted in a non-random sampling method. As a result, the analysis may not accurately reflect the population of Cyprus, and the findings may only provide an indicative picture. In addition to the limitations of the sampling method, there may be limitations related to the self-report nature of the survey, as respondents may not report incidents of school violence accurately or may be reluctant to disclose sensitive information. The results should be interpreted with caution, considering these limitations.

#### 4. Results

In order to examine the hypothesis 1: Female teachers are more likely to experience bullying than male teachers are, we performed statistical analyses in SPSS. Firstly, we created a frequency Table 1 of the gender variable to get an overview of the gender distribution of the teachers in the sample. Table 1 indicates that 1913 teachers from all over Cyprus participated in this survey. The participants included 1227 female teachers and 348 male teachers. It shows that there are more female respondents (77.9%) than male respondents (22.1%).

Secondly, we conducted an independent t-test (Table 2) to compare the mean bullying scores between male and female teachers. It appears that, males reported lower levels of experiencing being hit or kicked compared to females. On the other hand, males reported higher levels of experiencing being offended or humiliated compared to females. The output shows that there are some differences between male and female respondents. Although, this gender differences showed are very small and as it seems no statistically significant.

We performed an independent t-test (Table 3) to examine if there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores between male and female teachers and we used an alpha level of .05 for all statistical test. The t-test result was not significant  $p > .05$ , indicating that there is no significant difference in the level of violence experienced by male and female teachers. As a result we have to reject hypothesis 1: Female teachers are more likely to experience bullying than male teachers.

Table 1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	348	18,2	22,1	22,1
	female	1227	64,1	77,9	100,0
	Total	1575	82,3	100,0	
Missing	System	338	17,7		
Total		1913	100,0		

Table 2

	Please select your gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Hit or kick?	Male	337	1,08	,322	,018
	female	1195	1,20	,470	,014
Offend or humiliate?	Male	337	1,40	,643	,035
	female	1194	1,52	,656	,019
Deliberately oppose you with the intention of causing you psychological harm?	Male	337	1,39	,597	,033
	female	1195	1,35	,596	,017
Defame?	Male	337	1,39	,623	,034
	female	1194	1,32	,558	,016
Bully or blackmail or threaten?	Male	337	1,34	,566	,031
	female	1194	1,30	,525	,015

Table 3

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2- tailed )	Mean Differenc e	Std. Error Differenc e	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Violence from students	Equal varianc es assume d	2,00 2	,15 7	- ,73 0	1531	,466	-,01825	,02500	- ,0672 9	,0308 0
	Equal varianc es not assume d			- ,70 7	516,73 0	,480	-,01825	,02582	- ,0689 8	,0324 9

Then we divided the teacher's experience into five groups based on decades of experience, ranging from 0 years of experience to 49 years of experience, in order to look into the potential correlation between a teacher's experience and their engagement in school bullying. To examine the hypothesis 2 : Younger teachers are more likely to face bullying; we first constructed a frequency table (Table 4) of the experience of the teachers. It appears (Table 4) that the majority of teachers are in the groups 10-29 years of experience, with relatively few teachers in the other categories.

Then we performed a t-test, in order to compare the means in each age groups. It appears at Table 5 that teachers with 0-9 years of experience report the lowest levels of victimization across all categories. Teachers with 10-19 years of experience report slightly higher levels of victimization, while those with 20-29 years of experience report similar levels to those with 10-19 years of experience. Teachers with 30-39 years of experience report the highest levels of victimization in most categories, particularly in terms of being offended or humiliated and being deliberately opposed with the intention of causing psychological harm. It is important to note that the differences between the groups are generally small.

We performed an ANOVA test (Table 6) between violence from students and the five groups of teachers experience, in order to explore if there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores between them  $p > .05$  . As it seems at Table 6, no significant difference in violence from students across the five groups. As a result, we have to reject 2: Younger teachers are more likely to face bullying.

Table 4 *Teachers Experience*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Years	0-9	354	18,5	22,9	22,9
	10-19	506	26,5	32,7	55,6
	20-29	497	26,0	32,1	87,7
	30-39	187	9,8	12,1	99,7
	40-49	4	,2	,3	100,0
	Total	1548	80,9	100,0	
Missing	System	365	19,1		
Total		1913	100,0		

Table 5

Teachers Experience		Hit or kick?	Offend or humiliate?	Bully or blackmail or threaten?	Deliberately oppose you with the intention of causing you psychological harm?	Defame?
0-9	Mean	1,12	1,51	1,31	1,32	1,31
	N	346	346	346	346	346
	Std. Deviation	,378	,686	,545	,599	,555
10-19	Mean	1,17	1,48	1,30	1,39	1,32
	N	502	501	501	501	501
	Std. Deviation	,436	,665	,528	,611	,562
20-29	Mean	1,19	1,47	1,31	1,37	1,36
	N	487	487	487	487	487
	Std. Deviation	,467	,624	,532	,598	,595
30-39	Mean	1,25	1,55	1,32	1,31	1,35
	N	182	182	182	183	182
	Std. Deviation	,503	,652	,544	,541	,592
40-49	Mean	1,50	1,50	1,25	1,25	1,25
	N	4	4	4	4	4
	Std. Deviation	1,000	,577	,500	,500	,500
Total	Mean	1,18	1,49	1,31	1,36	1,33
	N	1521	1520	1520	1521	1520
	Std. Deviation	,446	,655	,534	,596	,574



Table 6  
Violence from Students

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	,255	4	,064	,386	,818
Within Groups	250,162	1517	,165		
Total	250,417	1521			

To examine hypothesis 3: Teachers with more experience is possible to be abusers we performed an ANOVA test to investigate the relationship between teacher experience and conflict between students and teachers. Based on the ANOVA results (Table 7), we can see that the  $p > .05$ , so we reject hypothesis 3.

Table 7  
Conflict between teachers and students

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3,104	4	,776	2,071	,082
Within Groups	557,501	1488	,375		
Total	560,605	1492			

In order to examine hypothesis 4: Teachers with less experience are more likely to be bystanders. We analyze six aspects of teachers everyday life included: quality of life, helplessness, and importance of prevention, ignoring violence, normalization, and handling bullying. As it appears in Table 8, in terms of quality of life, teachers in all groups reported a relatively high mean score, with the highest mean score in the 40-49 group. However, teachers in all age groups also reported feeling helpless to some degree, with the highest mean score in the 0-9 group. Teachers in all groups, with the highest mean score in the 30-39 group, saw prevention as important. However, ignoring violence and normalization were also present, with the highest mean score for ignoring violence in the 40-49 group and the highest mean score for normalization in the 0-9 age group. Finally, when it comes to handling bullying, teachers in all

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age groups reported a relatively high mean score, with the highest mean score in the 20-29 years group.

According to results in Table 8, it appears that more experienced teachers are dealing with bullying at school and not normalizing it. On the other side, inexperienced teachers may not know how to deal with bullying at school and are more likely to act as bystanders. Therefore, we will not reject 4 : Teachers with less experience are more likely to be bystanders.

Table 8

Teachers Experience		Quality of life	Helplessness	Importance of prevention	Ignore violence	Normalization	Handling bullying
0-9	Mean	4,1847	2,0795	2,9964	2,2194	1,7680	3,8569
	N	327	323	323	319	319	316
	Std. Deviation	1,18130	,63665	,51083	,79432	,65116	,59804
10-19	Mean	4,3389	2,0218	2,9865	2,2175	1,7164	4,0459
	N	481	475	475	469	469	463
	Std. Deviation	1,13248	,66894	,47315	,70683	,61199	,51138
20-29	Mean	4,3699	1,9236	2,9788	2,2345	1,7591	4,1137
	N	473	471	471	469	469	461
	Std. Deviation	1,13352	,63231	,47520	,67018	,61978	,46361
30-39	Mean	4,4771	1,6742	3,1209	2,0698	1,6570	4,1604
	N	179	176	176	172	172	171
	Std. Deviation	1,04553	,58549	,43618	,70571	,58620	,46151
40-49	Mean	5,4500	1,0000	3,4722	2,2500	1,0000	4,3571
	N	4	4	4	4	4	4
	Std. Deviation	,75498	,00000	,26255	1,25831	,00000	,45550
Total	Mean	4,3344	1,9577	3,0039	2,2059	1,7327	4,0405
	N	1464	1449	1449	1433	1433	1415
	Std. Deviation	1,13655	,65204	,47993	,71802	,62122	,52192

## 5. Discussion

The first hypothesis of our study suggested that female teachers were more likely to be bullied than their male teachers, our statistical analysis revealed no significant difference between genders. While it may be tempting to view this as a failure of the hypothesis, it is essential to note that this is actually a positive result for the gender stereotypes in the matter. Furthermore, we have to underline that there was significant difference of male (22.1%) and female (77.9%) participants and this may affected the results. Also, this fact indicating that maybe female teachers are more concern about bullying issues.

The second hypotheses we investigated in our study was the possibility that younger teachers are more likely to face bullying by students. This hypothesis was based on the notion that younger teachers may be perceived as having less experience or knowledge than their more senior colleagues, making them more vulnerable to mistreatment. Nevertheless, our data did not support this prediction, we did not detect a statistically significant difference in the rates of bullying reported by younger and more experienced instructors. This suggests that there may be individual differences in how teachers experience victimization, and that other factors beyond experience level may play a role in determining a teacher's risk of being victimized.

In fact, our research found some indication that more experienced teachers may be more vulnerable to bullying as victims than less experienced instructors. We did notice a tend towards greater rates of bullying among teachers with more years of experience, however the difference was not statistically significant. Although, a study published in the journal "Educational Research" by Howard and Johnson (2004) discovered that experienced instructors were more likely to report as victims with more frequent incidents of bullying and harassment. Furthermore, Twemlow and Sacco (2015) discovered in another study published in the journal "Psychology in the Schools" conclude in similar results.

The third hypothesis we investigated in our study was the possibility that instructors' experiences made them more likely be abusers towards students. Nevertheless, our findings did not support this hypothesis, there was no statistically significant difference in the rates of bullying perpetration reported by teachers with varying levels of experience. These findings show that teachers do not regard themselves as bullies and may be unaware of the extent to which they mistreat or intimidate their students. It is crucial to highlight that our study only examined teachers' impressions and did not consider the perspectives of students. Further research is needed to better understand the relationship between teachers' experience and their propensity to engage in bullying behaviours.

The fourth hypothesis that was not rejected in our study was that less experienced teachers are more prone to be bystanders of bullying. This hypothesis was verified by our findings, which revealed a positive relationship between years of experience and teachers' reported ability to handle bullying occurrences effectively. This emphasizes the significance of offering teachers the right training and assistance, particularly those with less experience, in order to address and prevent school bullying. By doing so, instructors can develop the skills necessary to give their pupils a secure and encouraging environment. Further research in this area is needed to determine the most effective training and support strategies for teachers of varying experience levels to combat school bullying.

## 6. Conclusions

Overall, this study provides important insights into the complex dynamics of bullying in the school setting, and underscores the need for continued research and intervention efforts to support teachers and students in creating safe and inclusive learning environment. By better understanding the factors that contribute to bullying and its impacts on teachers and students alike, education system can develop effective strategies for prevention and intervention, and promote positive social and emotional development for all.

We have to highlight that there is limited research on the topic of school violence involving teachers in Cyprus. While there have been several studies on the prevalence and consequences of school bullying in Cyprus, these studies have primarily focused on students. Further research is needed to replicate and extend these findings, examining the role of teacher experience and gender in school bullying. Another potential area of research is to investigate the differences in teachers' experiences of bullying across different levels of education, from kindergarten, primary school and high school. Additionally, this study could explore how teachers' responses to bullying might differ based on the age of their students or the specific educational context. By examining these differences, researchers could gain a better understanding of how bullying affects teachers across various levels of education, and identify strategies for preventing and addressing bullying in schools. Another idea for future research is the impact of bullying on teachers' mental health and well-being. While our study focused primarily on teachers experiences of bullying, further investigation could help to shed light on the potential long-term impacts of bullying on teachers mental health, job satisfaction, and career trajectories. Such research will provide a better understanding of the complex dynamics of school violence and inform effective prevention and intervention strategies to promote a safe and inclusive school environment for all.

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