Silent Struggles of Bullying: Live Experience of Deaf Learners

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ABSTRACT

Bullying is a pervasive issue that affects learners of all backgrounds, yet the unique experiences of Deaf students remain insufficiently explored in existing literature. Despite growing awareness of bullying in educational settings, there is a gap in understanding how Deaf learners experience and respond to such aggression. This study aimed to investigate the lived experiences of Deaf learners in bullying and the contexts in which these experiences occur. It sought to illuminate the silent struggles they endure and provide insights into potential interventions. Employing a qualitative phenomenological research design, the study was conducted in a government school in Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, involving eight Deaf learners selected through snowball sampling. Approval was secured from relevant authorities, and informed consent was obtained from participants before data collection. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted using audio and video recordings, supported by field notes and document reviews. The data collected were then transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis to identify key patterns and themes. Findings revealed that Deaf learners experienced four key forms of bullying: verbal bullying, social exclusion, emotional distress, and physical health effects. These experiences often took place in classrooms, across the school environment, during childhood, and in peer interactions. Notably, teacher interventions were observed to provide some relief, yet inconsistencies remained. The study uncovered that bullying deeply affected participants emotionally—causing sadness, anger, and isolation—and physically, with symptoms such as stomachaches and disrupted sleep. It was concluded that bullying significantly affects Deaf learners' emotional and physical well-being, emphasizing the widespread and multifaceted nature of the issue across various contexts. It was recommended that schools implement targeted anti-bullying policies inclusive of Deaf learners' needs, and that educators, families, and communities collaboratively engage in creating safer, more inclusive environments that nurture resilience and positive peer interactions.

Keywords: Bullying Experiences, Deaf Learners, Educational Environment, Lived Experiences

INTRODUCTION

"Bullying can happen as an adult, it can happen as a child, in college, or your work place, everywhere", Porsha Williams (2024). This quote states that bullying can happen to kids, adults, and even in college or at work. It shows that bullying can be everywhere and affect anyone. This reminds us that we must keep working to stop bullying everywhere. Bullying impacts everyone involved—those bullied, those who bully, and bystanders. It's associated with negative consequences like mental health issues, substance use, and even suicide. Communicating with children is essential to identify bullying and related concerns, as research shows that bullied children often experience significant physical, emotional, social, academic, and mental health issues. For instance, a 2025 narrative review found that bullying leads to anxiety, depression, poor academic performance, and other psychological problems that can persist into adulthood (Han et al., 2025). Similarly, a 2023 meta-analysis revealed that bullied children are nearly three times more likely to develop depression than their peers, highlighting the importance of early detection and intervention through open communication (Jones et al., 2023).

Bullied children often develop various health complaints, including depression, sleep disturbances, and physical symptoms such as dizziness, which contribute to poorer overall health (Wolke & Lereya, 2015). Additionally, bullying is associated with higher rates of absenteeism and school dropout, affecting both victims

and perpetrators (Gastic, 2014). In extreme cases, prolonged bullying has been linked to violent retaliation, including school shootings; a U.S. Secret Service report found that approximately 80% of school attackers had experienced bullying prior to the incident (Vossekuil et al., 2002). Moreover, children who engage in bullying behavior are at increased risk of exhibiting violent or risky behaviors in adulthood, such as substance abuse, criminal activity, and involvement in abusive relationships (Ttofi, Farrington, & Lösel, 2012). These findings highlight the serious and long-lasting consequences of bullying for all involved, emphasizing the need for early intervention and effective communication. Addressing bullying comprehensively to prevent these detrimental outcomes and foster healthier environments for children and adolescents (Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (ASPA), 2021).

A study by Berchiatti et al. (2021) examines the correlation between the student-teacher relationship and students' social status within the peer group and bullying tendencies among children with Special Education Needs (SEN), Learning Difficulties (LD), and typical development. A sample of 320 children, including those with LD, SEN, and a control group, participated in the study. Children with special educational needs (SEN) and learning disabilities (LD) face greater challenges in social participation and are more vulnerable to bullying compared to their peers without disabilities (National Bullying Prevention Center, 2023; StopBullying.gov, 2020). Research indicates that the dynamics of bullying in this population are closely linked to the quality of student-teacher relationships and the social status of these children among peers. Effective collaboration among special education teachers has been shown to play a critical role in reducing bullying by enhancing teachers' knowledge, pedagogy, and curriculum tailored to these students' needs (Smith, 2018). Furthermore, strong teacher-student connectedness increases teachers' comfort and willingness to intervene in bullying situations involving students with SEN and LD, promoting safer and more inclusive school environments (O'Brennan, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2014). These findings underscore the importance of understanding and addressing bullying within the context of social interactions and educational support systems to foster inclusion and protect this vulnerable group.

Another study by Sehrish and Anis (2021) investigates bullying among students with special needs (SN) in university settings, an area that has yet to receive much attention in research. The study was conducted using a phenomenological approach; the study involved 10 participants with SN who shared their experiences of bullying while studying alongside peers without SN. Through semi-structured interviews, participants revealed various negative experiences of bullying within university environments, highlighting an often-overlooked issue of victimization among students with special needs (SN) in higher education. Research supports that students with special educational needs or disabilities face higher risks of bullying compared to their peers, which includes physical, verbal, social, and cyberbullying forms (Pinquart, 2017; Blake et al., 2012). These students often lack awareness and resources to effectively address bullying, underscoring the importance of targeted training and support programs to empower them (González-Contreras, 2017; Jenaro et al., 2018). The findings from qualitative studies and European projects emphasize that bullying in higher education settings remains a critical area requiring more attention to create inclusive and safe environments for students with SN (UNESCO, 2021).

A systematic review conducted by Falla, et.al (2021) examines recent research on bullying among school children with disabilities, highlighting the lack of comprehensive studies in this area. The review follows the guidelines of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) statement. Out of 55 children included in the reviewed studies, most were conducted on small cohorts without differentiation based on types of disabilities. Methodological variations and a lack of specialized instruments hindered consensus and robust conclusions across studies. Victimization is a predominant form of bullying experienced by schoolchildren with disabilities, who are more likely to be bullied than their non-disabled peers (Falla, Sánchez, & Casas, 2021; Maïano et al., 2016). Despite the high prevalence, research specifically targeting children with disabilities remains limited, and there is an urgent need for more extensive and specialized studies to develop effective prevention and intervention programs tailored to this vulnerable population (Falla et al., 2021). The World Health Organization highlights that power imbalances increase the vulnerability of children with disabilities to bullying, yet efforts to address this issue are hindered by limited research expertise and challenges in understanding these children's behaviors (WHO, as cited in Falla et al., 2021).

Furthermore, there is a significant gap in understanding bullying experiences among deaf learners in educational settings. While bullying negatively impacts mental health, academic performance, and social relationships broadly, the unique challenges faced by deaf students—such as communication barriers and social exclusion—are under-researched (Maïano et al., 2016; Falla et al., 2021). Deaf students may experience bullying differently, including being excluded or teased due to their hearing impairment, which can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and stress. Understanding how bullying affects deaf students is crucial for developing targeted support and creating more inclusive school environments (Maïano et al., 2016).

This study aims to explore the bullying experiences of deaf students through direct inquiry, providing insights into how bullying affects their emotions and coping strategies. Such research can inform policies and interventions to better protect deaf students, promote safer schools, and foster inclusivity (Falla et al., 2021; Maïano et al., 2016).

Research Objectives

This study explored the lived experiences of Deaf learners regarding bullying and investigated the contexts in which these experiences occur. Specifically, it aimed to understand what the lived experiences of Deaf learners in bullying are, and the contexts surrounding these experiences. Through direct inquiry with Deaf students, the study sought to uncover how bullying affects them emotionally and socially, as well as how they cope with such victimization. Based on the findings, the study intends to recommend intervention plans tailored to address the unique challenges faced by Deaf learners in educational settings, with the goal of fostering safer and more inclusive school environments that better support and protect this vulnerable population.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it unearthed the experiences of bullying among deaf learners, a topic that researchers have not explored enough. By understanding how bullying affects deaf students, researchers can create better support systems to help them. This research can also raise awareness about the challenges deaf students face and advocate for changes to make schools more inclusive and safer. Further, this study's findings can potentially improve the well-being and educational experiences of deaf learners and contribute to creating a more equitable educational environment for all students.

Review of Related Literature

Bullying Among Special Populations

A study by Bouldin et al. (2021) looked at bullying among kids who are deaf or hard of hearing. They followed certain guidelines for doing this kind of review. They looked at studies about deaf kids aged 0 to 21 years. They started with 70 studies, then narrowed it down to 23, and finally ended up with 17 studies for their review. They found that out of these 17 studies, nine compared how much deaf kids were bullied compared to kids who could hear. Seven of these studies said that deaf kids were bullied more. However, two studies found that deaf kids bullied others less.

Research indicates that factors such as the educational setting and the support received from family and friends play a more significant role in bullying risk among deaf children than the use of hearing aids or visible assistive devices (Bouldin et al., 2021; Pinquart & Pfeiffer, 2015). Deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) children are more likely to experience victimization compared to their hearing peers, though they may bully others less frequently (Bouldin et al., 2021; Pinquart & Pfeiffer, 2015). Bullying among deaf children is linked to adverse outcomes such as sleep disturbances and increased anxiety, which can further affect their well-being and academic performance (Bouldin et al., 2021). These findings highlight the importance of focusing research efforts on developing targeted interventions that address the unique social environments and support systems influencing bullying in this population, aiming to create safer and more supportive school experiences for deaf learners (Bouldin et al., 2021; Pinquart & Pfeiffer, 2015).

Overview of Bullying Among Students with Disabilities

Bullying is a serious and widespread problem affecting about one-third of children globally, with prevalence rates varying by country and context (UNESCO, 2018; StopBullying.gov, 2024). Children with disabilities, including those with autism or learning difficulties, are more likely to be bullied than their non-disabled peers, experiencing higher rates of victimization and associated emotional and social difficulties such as loneliness and, in some cases, aggressive coping behaviors (Falla, Sánchez, & Casas, 2021; Maïano et al., 2016). Research also suggests that children with milder disabilities tend to be bullied less than those with more severe disabilities, and the type of educational setting—whether inclusive or segregated special classes—can influence bullying rates. For example, online bullying has been found to be slightly more prevalent among children in segregated schools compared to those in inclusive settings (Falla et al., 2021). Despite the high prevalence and serious consequences, research on bullying among children with disabilities remains limited, often based on small samples primarily from Europe, and there is a lack of specialized tools to effectively study bullying in this population (Falla et al., 2021). These findings emphasize the need for more comprehensive research and tailored interventions to better understand and address bullying among children with disabilities worldwide. Since there hasn't been a comprehensive review on bullying in kids with disabilities since 2011, this article aims to fill that gap. It will look at the size of the studies, the ages of the kids involved, and the methods used. The authors expect to find few studies, mostly from developed countries, with small sample sizes, mostly from primary or secondary grades. They also expect to see differences in the tools used in these studies (Falla et al., 2021b).

Experiences of Bullying Among Deaf Learners

Research by Admire and Ramírez (2017) explored the experiences of deaf individuals are scarce, particularly regarding violence against them. While existing studies acknowledge the heightened vulnerabilities of deaf people, there's a lack of research on how they perceive their victimization. Research on violence and victimization among deaf individuals, especially those from developing countries, remains limited outside the United States, where cultural norms and social perceptions of disability differ significantly. A study examining 60 deaf asylum seekers from developing countries residing in the U.S. revealed that these individuals frequently experience abuse and violence within various social institutions. Thematic analysis of their asylum depositions showed that many attributed their negative treatment to societal devaluation linked to their disability status, which profoundly shaped their experiences of violence and sometimes led to internalized feelings of worthlessness (Anderson & Leigh, 2017; Anderson et al., 2021). This research highlights the critical role of social perceptions of disability in understanding and addressing violence against deaf people.

Further, deaf refugees and asylum seekers face compounded vulnerabilities due to communication barriers and limited access to protective services, increasing their risk of exploitation, sexual and gender-based violence, and other forms of abuse (McAuliff, 2021; Tingle, 2021). Studies emphasize that deaf survivors often encounter obstacles in reporting abuse and accessing trauma-informed support, underscoring the need for accessible services tailored to their linguistic and cultural needs (Urban Institute, 2022; Heriot-Watt University, 2025). Collectively, these findings call for greater attention to the intersection of disability, cultural context, and violence to develop effective interventions and policies that protect deaf individuals from abuse and support their well-being.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological research approach to investigate the lived experiences of Deaf learners in bullying and investigate the contexts of the lived experience of Deaf learners in bullying. This study used a special way of looking at things to understand how bullying affects Deaf students. The central objective was to explore their experiences and uncover all the feelings and thoughts they have about bullying. Researchers wanted to know everything about what Deaf students go through when they are bulliedto understand all the different parts of their bullying experiences. They also wanted to know about the situations where bullying happens to Deaf students. Furthermore, qualitative research collects participants' experiences, perspectives, and activities. It describes the hows and whys rather than how many or how much. It might be designed as a separate study that only collects qualitative data, or it could be part of a mixed-methods study

that collects both qualitative and quantitative data. This review introduces readers to some of the fundamental concepts, definitions, terminology, and applications of qualitative research (Tenny et al., 2022).

Research Setting/ Research Particioants

This study was conducted in a certain government at Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental. The study participants were eight (8) deaf learners of a certain government school, Ozamiz City Misamis Occidental, who were selected through snowball sampling and shall be coded as PDL1 (Participant Deaf Learner 1), PDL2 (Participant Deaf Learner2), PDL3 (Participant Deaf Learner3), PDL4 (Participant Deaf Learner4), and PDL8 (Participant Deaf Learner8).

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering for this research was initiated by asking for approval from the school division superintendent to conduct the study. Informed consent was secured from the participants, ensuring they understood the study's purpose and nature. Then, using validated semi-structured interviews with the selected parents with open-ended questions, the researcher explored the lived experiences of Deaf learners in bullying and investigated the contexts of the lived experience of Deaf learners in bullying. Additionally, focus group discussions are organized to encourage group interaction and gather shared experiences. Audio and video recording devices were used with participants' consent, and detailed field notes were taken during interviews. Relevant documents like school reports were also collected for additional context. Once all the gathered data were complete, the responses were encoded, transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis.
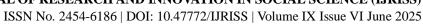
Data Analysis

Athematic analysis was utilized to analyze the data gathered through interviews. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method used to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns or themes within qualitative data. It involves systematically coding and categorizing data to uncover recurring patterns of meaning or concepts that emerge from the data. In thematic analysis, researchers immerse themselves in the data by repeatedly reading or listening to it to deeply understand its content. They then systematically code the data by identifying meaningful segments or passages, assigning descriptive labels or codes to them, and grouping related codes to identify broader patterns or themes that capture key aspects of the data. They then review and refine the identified themes, ensuring they accurately reflect the data and are internally coherent. They then name the codes into themes and write up the thematic analysis, presenting the findings in a coherent and organized manner, often using quotes or excerpts from the data to support each theme.

Ethical Considerations

When exploring the silent struggles of bullying experienced by Deaf learners, several ethical considerations came to the forefront. First and foremost was the need for sensitivity and respect towards the participants' experiences. It was crucial to recognize that discussing experiences of bullying could be emotionally challenging, and researchers had to prioritize the well-being of the Deaf learners throughout the study. Informed consent was another essential ethical consideration. Deaf learners needed to fully understand the purpose of the study, what participating entailed, and any potential risks involved. Researchers had to ensure that participants could provide informed consent and had the option to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

Confidentiality and anonymity were paramount to protect the privacy of Deaf learners. Researchers had to carefully handle all data collected during the study, ensuring that participants could not be identified from published results or reports. This included using pseudonyms or identifiers to anonymize participants' responses.

Moreover, researchers had to consider the power dynamics inherent in the researcher-participant relationship. Deaf learners might have perceived researchers as authority figures, potentially influencing their willingness to

share their experiences openly. Establishing trust and rapport with participants was crucial, as was maintaining a non-coercive environment where participants felt comfortable expressing themselves freely.

Cultural competence was also essential when working with Deaf learners. Researchers had to be aware of and respect Deaf culture, language, and communication preferences. This included accommodations such as sign language interpreters or visual aids to ensure effective communication throughout the study.

Further, researchers had to consider the broader implications of their findings and ensure that the results were used ethically and responsibly. This included advocating for policies and interventions that addressed bullying among Deaf learners while respecting their autonomy and agency.

RESULTS

Based on the data gathered from the study on the lived experiences of Deaf learners in bullying and investigating the contexts of the lived experience of Deaf learners in bullying.

This presented the findings of the study based on the research objectives:

The first research objective that this study sought to answer was, What are the living

Experiences of Deaf learners in bullying?

Table 2. Tabulation on the lived experiences of Deaf learners in bullying

Emergent Themes	Evidence
Verbal Bullying	"They say bad words." PDL2 "They bully me, and the teacher is out" PDL4
Social Bullying	They do not let me join activities" PDL1 "They talked about me and mocked me with other students." PDL3
Emotional Impact	"When they bully me, I feel really sad, and sometimes I cry." PDL5 "It makes me angry, and I feel alone." PDL2
Physical and Health Impact of Bullying	"I get stomachaches when they say bad words to me." PDL1 "It affects my sleep. I can't sleep well when I'm worried about being bullied." PDL4

The lived experiences of Deaf learners in bullying have emerged four themes, namely Verbal Bullying, Social Bullying, Emotional Impact, and Physical and Health Impact of bullying. Verbal bullying emerges as a prominent theme, with Deaf learners recounting instances of being subjected to derogatory language and hurtful remarks related to their disability. They describe feeling targeted and isolated when peers engage in verbal harassment, as highlighted by statements such as:

"They say bad words" and "They bully me and the teacher is out."

Social bullying also features prominently, with Deaf learners expressing feelings of exclusion and alienation from social activities and groups. They recount instances where they were deliberately left out or mocked by their peers, leading to feelings of loneliness and social rejection. The emotional impact of bullying is palpable, with participants describing feelings of sadness, anger, and isolation in response to being bullied. They express how bullying affects their mental well-being with statements like :

"When they bully me, I feel really sad and sometimes I cry" and "It makes me angry and I feel alone." Moreover, bullying takes a toll on the physical health of Deaf learners, manifesting in symptoms such as stomachaches and sleep disturbances. They describe experiencing physical discomfort and sleep disturbances due to the stress and anxiety caused by bullying, highlighting the interconnectedness of physical and emotional well-being. Overall, these narratives shed light on the multifaceted nature of bullying experienced by Deaf learners, underscoring the importance of addressing both the visible and invisible impacts of bullying on their lives.

Deaf individuals, as it reinforces negative stereotypes and can lead to feelings of shame or inadequacy. Verbal bullying, whether overt or subtle, can have a significant impact on the mental and emotional well-being of Deaf individuals, highlighting the importance of addressing and preventing such behavior. Social bullying can be especially damaging as it undermines a person's sense of belonging and can lead to feelings of isolation and alienation.

In summary, the study aimed to understand the lived experiences of Deaf learners in bullying, identifying four main themes, namely Verbal Bullying, Social Bullying, Emotional Impact, and Physical and Health Impact of bullying. Verbal bullying was prominent, with Deaf learners reporting derogatory language and hurtful remarks related to their disability. Social bullying also featured prominently, with instances of exclusion and mockery leading to feelings of loneliness. Emotionally, participants described sadness, anger, and isolation in response to bullying. Physically, bullying manifested in symptoms like stomachaches and sleep disturbances. These findings underscore the complex and interconnected nature of bullying experienced by Deaf learners, emphasizing the need for comprehensive support and intervention.

The second research objective that this study sought to answer was, what are the contexts of the lived experience of Deaf learners in bullying?

Table 2. Tabulation on the contexts of the lived experience of Deaf learners in bullying

Emergent Themes	Evidence
Classroom Bullying	Bullying with Deaf friends and sometimes classmates." PDL2 "Experience of verbal bullying, such as being called bad words." PDL 3
School Bullying	"Occasional bullying incidents involving both Deaf and hearing individuals." PDL1 "Experiences of bullying by classmates, leading to feelings of sadness and isolation." PDL3
Childhood Bullying	"Bullying experiences with small kids and classmates during childhood." PDL5 "Instances of being bullied for being Deaf or being told they have a bad smell."PDL2
Peer Bullying	Bullying experiences with high school classmates, resulting in feelings of shyness and sadness." PDL1 "Feeling neglected and sad due to being called ugly and facing verbal bullying." PDL4 Bullying incidents with friends and hearing peers." PDL3 "Responses include feeling sad, crying, and becoming quiet." PDL2
Teacher Intervention	"Teachers intervening to stop bullying and dividing hearing and Deaf learners." PDL5 "Organizing activities to foster understanding between Deaf and hearing students." PDL3

The first theme is Classroom Bullying, which refers to bullying that occurs within the classroom environment, involving interactions with both Deaf friends and classmates. Verbal bullying, such as name-calling and derogatory remarks, is common. Evidence from transcripts:

"Bullying with Deaf friends and sometimes classmates."

"Experience of verbal bullying, such as being called bad words."

The next theme is School Bullying, which refers to incidents that occur occasionally and involve both Deaf and hearing individuals. Classmates are often the perpetrators, leading to feelings of sadness and isolation among Deaf learners. Evidence from transcripts:

"Occasional bullying incidents involving both Deaf and hearing individuals."

"Experiences of bullying by classmates, leading to sadness and

isolation."

The themes of Childhood Bullying were bullying experiences that occurred during childhood, involving interactions with small kids and classmates. Deaf learners may be targeted for their hearing impairment, leading to hurtful remarks and feelings of inadequacy.

Evidence from transcripts:

"Bullying experiences with small kids and classmates during childhood."

"Instances of being bullied for being Deaf or being told they have a bad smell."

The next theme is Peer Bullying, where incidents involve interactions with friends and hearing peers. Responses to bullying may include feeling sad, crying, and withdrawing from social interactions. Evidence from transcripts:

"Bullying incidents with friends and hearing peers."

"Responses include feeling sad, crying, and becoming quiet."

The tabulation offers a detailed description of the varied contexts in which Deaf learners encounter bullying, each theme shedding light on distinct aspects of their experiences. Within the classroom environment, bullying unfolds among both Deaf friends and classmates, often manifesting through verbal harassment such as derogatory remarks and name-calling. These interactions can create an atmosphere of negativity and hostility within the academic setting. Moving beyond the classroom, instances of bullying within the broader school environment involve occasional encounters with both Deaf and hearing individuals, particularly classmates. Here, bullying incidents contribute to feelings of sadness and isolation among Deaf learners, underscoring the emotional toll of such experiences. Reflecting on childhood memories, bullying emerges as a prevalent issue encountered during early developmental stages, involving interactions with small kids and classmates. Deaf learners may find themselves targeted for their hearing impairment, enduring hurtful remarks and feelings of inadequacy that linger into adulthood. Additionally, peer interactions present another avenue for bullying, as incidents involving friends and hearing peers evoke emotional responses such as sadness and withdrawal. These themes collectively illuminate the multifaceted nature of bullying experienced by Deaf learners, emphasizing the pervasive impact of such experiences across different social contexts.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that bullying, especially through hurtful words and social exclusion, deeply impacts their emotions and physical health. The research identified different bullying situations, like in classrooms, schools, and among peers, underscoring the widespread nature of the issue. To address this, schools and communities must prioritize prevention efforts and support systems that create safe and inclusive environments for Deaf learners. By working together, we can ensure that Deaf students feel valued and protected from the harmful effects of bullying. The findings revealed that bullying takes various forms, from verbal taunts to social exclusion, and occurs across different settings such as classrooms, schools, and peer groups. These experiences have profound emotional and physical impacts on Deaf students, leading to feelings of sadness, anger, and loneliness, as well as physical symptoms like stomachaches and sleep disturbances. This study has also highlighted the importance of addressing bullying within the classroom and within the broader school environment and peer interactions. It emphasized the need for proactive interventions and supportive measures to create safe and inclusive spaces for Deaf learners. This includes teacher interventions, fostering understanding between Deaf and hearing students and providing family support and friendship dynamics that promote resilience and coping strategies.

Further, addressing bullying among Deaf learners and calls for collaborative efforts from educators, parents, policymakers, and communities. By prioritizing prevention and support mechanisms tailored to the unique needs of Deaf students, we can cultivate environments that nurture their well-being and foster positive social interactions. In doing so, we can work towards a future where all students, regardless of their hearing status, can thrive and reach their full potential.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, several practical recommendations can be implemented to address bullying experienced by Deaf learners. The first is a recommendation that schools, parents, and the broader community should be educated about the harmful impacts of bullying on Deaf students, fostering empathy and understanding. Another is that clear and concrete anti-bullying policies aligned to the needs of Deaf learners should be developed and enforced consistently. Training programs for teachers, staff, and students can help recognize, prevent, and respond to bullying effectively. Further, creating support systems within schools, such as counseling services and peer support groups, can provide much-needed assistance to Deaf students facing bullying. Encouraging peer advocacy and involving families in discussions about bullying prevention are also important steps. Moreover, promoting inclusive activities and monitoring bullying incidents regularly can contribute to creating safer and more supportive environments for Deaf learners to thrive both academically and socially. Through these measures, we can work towards ensuring that Deaf students feel respected, valued, and included in their educational communities, free from the harm of bullying.

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