

Institution: Kingston University
Unit of Assessment: 4, Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience
Title of case study: Establishing the first anti-bullying policies in the Arab sector of Israel
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The impacts are: (1) Introduction of anti-bullying policies by thirteen schools in Tira City in the Arab sector of Israel; (2) Policy changes by the Islamic (Sharia) Religious Courts in the Arab sector to ensure that bullying issues are routinely taken into consideration (for the first time) when making child custody decisions; (3) Changes in programme delivery by two charities that aim to reduce violence between children in the Arab sector. This work builds directly upon research conducted at Kingston University and during several visits to Israel supported by the university since 2010.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>From his appointment to Kingston University in 2010, Dr Samara and his colleagues worked on two particular research articles that would have implications for policy: a six-year follow-up study of how school anti-bullying policies in the UK changed between 2002-2008 (published as Smith et al., 2012) and a major meta-analysis of the link between parenting behaviour and the risks of becoming a bully/victim or a victim of bullying (published as Lereyra et al., 2013). Recommendations for policy were recognised early in the research process and used to inform relevant agencies from 2010 to the present.</p> <p>A key finding from the meta-analysis that specifically informed changes in practice in the Arab sector of Israel was that both victims and bully/victims were more likely to have been exposed to negative parenting behaviour, including abuse and neglect as well as maladaptive and overprotective parenting. Conversely, overall, protective factors against victimisation included positive parenting behaviours, including authoritative parents, good parent–child communication, involved and supportive parents, parents providing supervision, and warm and affectionate parents.</p> <p>The meta-analysis concluded that intervention programs against bullying should extend their focus beyond schools to include families, and they should start before children enter school. Also, parental training programs may be necessary to strengthen supportive involvement and to encourage warm and affectionate parenting.</p> <p>The follow-up study found that, using a 34-item scoring scheme for the important items that should be included in anti-bullying policies, schools had incorporated on average around half of the items into their policies, only a modest increase over the previous study. Most included (for example) definitions of bullying, some coverage of sanctions and an account of the responsibilities of teaching staff, parents and bystanders, as well as advice on what bully-victims should do. However, many schools provided poor coverage of other forms of bullying (e.g., cyberbullying, disabilities, teacher/pupil bullying, bullying to-and-from school) and routinely omitted other important aspects, including the following up of incidents and sanctions and specific preventative measures (e.g., playground work, peer support, inclusiveness issues). Schools with high policy scores in strategies for preventing bullying had fewer pupils bullying others. These findings provided clear implications for strengthening policies.</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

Lereya, S., **Samara, M.**, & Wolke, D. (2013) Meta analysis on parenting behaviour and victimisation at school. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2013.03.001> [Journal 5-year impact factor 2.909]

Smith, P., Kupferburg, A., Mora-Merchan, J. A., **Samara, M.**, Bosley S., & Osborn, R. (2012). A content analysis of school anti-bullying policies: a follow-up after six years. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 28 (1), 47-70.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Dr Samara's research since 2010 involved four extended visits to the Arab sector in Israel, where he shared his ongoing research and emerging results with a range of organizations that were interested in the applications of research on bullying. These included presentations and meetings with the Alhikma Association in Tira (a registered charity that implements projects to tackle violence) in July 2010; head teachers of primary and secondary schools (August 2011, August 2012); the head of the Islamic Courts and the Head of the Islamic High Court in Israel (August 2010); school inspectors; school parents' committees (August 2010); the Head of Tira City Council and the Head of the Tira City Educational Department (August 2010); and the head of Atid (a company that manages schools in the region) in August 2012.

After these meetings, Dr Samara worked with the education department and with two large schools: Ibrahim Qasim Secondary School (850 students and 100 members of staff) and Al-Ghazali Primary School (500 students and 100 members of staff) in Tira City in the central district of Israel (population: around 25,000) to set up their anti-bullying policies on the basis of the recommendations published later in Smith et al. (2012) and Lereya et al. (2013). The anti-bullying procedures were then introduced in the remaining 11 schools in the city of Tira during 2012-13. Work in the schools was facilitated by a close working relationship with the Inspector of the Education Ministry in the Arab Sector in Israel (20% of the Israeli population). Unlike in England, in Israel there is no regulation requiring schools to have specific policies for bullying. Dr Samara therefore introduced the first anti-bullying policies for these schools, based on a culture-relevant interpretation of the outcomes of Smith et al. (2012) and Lereya et al. (2013).

Dr Samara then worked with the Head of Atid in 2012 to extend the anti-bullying policies across the region: Atid is the largest, privately-owned, educational network in Israel and specializes in management of advanced technological schools and colleges (25,000 students). Atid owns 9 colleges, 20 high schools and 5 youth institutions, employing 1500 professional instructors.

The anti-bullying policies that were introduced spanned the 34 items that were identified as core to a successful anti-bullying policy and also took account of the importance of parenting and the involvement of parents in school policies, as highlighted by the research. The anti-bullying strategies include specific preventative measures, such as: playground work; peer support; clear instructions for sanctions based on the severity of the bullying action (with follow-up to assess the effectiveness of sanctions); and complaint boxes for students to write notes about bullying. Schools drew up specific regulations to deal with bullying, stated in explicit anti-bullying policies, and based on the stage and severity of the incidents. The responsibilities of each member of staff (teaching and non teaching), parents and bystanders are made clear in the policy. Staff, parents and bystanders now have access to advice on exactly how to support victims and how to help pupils who bully to change. Schools were instructed on the importance of record keeping and checking

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for bullying to and from school.

Impact has also been achieved outside of the schools domain: the Islamic (Sharia) Religious Courts of the Arab sector changed their way of dealing with family violence and victimisation related to abuse and neglect. These courts typically make child custody decisions in cases of divorce. The area of coverage of these courts is the entire Arab sector, around 1.5 million people (20% of the Israeli population). The Head of the Islamic (Sharia) Religious Courts instructed judges on how to deal with incidents of bullying and victimisation based on Dr Samara's research. These instructions were introduced via a seminar and an internal memorandum where the definition of bullying and its forms and subgroups, and the effect of parenting styles and the relationship to bullying subgroups were explained. Judges were not previously aware of how different forms of bullying and victimisation relate to different parenting styles, domestic violence and child abuse. This has helped them to make better decisions in child custody cases, for instance.

A third domain of impact was achieved through changes implemented by the Tira City Council via the project "City without Violence" (covering around 25000 people). The project includes sports activities which emphasise tolerance between pupils in schools, as well as the implementation of anti-bullying interventions that include talks for students, staff and volunteers on how to deal with bullying and victimisation. Talks were provided (in cooperation with the social work department of the city council) for parents on spotting risk factors related to victimisation (2010-2013). These have directly incorporated proposals from Dr Samara's research. The relationship was established through extensive communication between Dr Samara and the head of the city council, who was keen to introduce new initiatives following a wave of violence in the city of Tira over the last decade.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Head of Islamic (Sharia) Religious Courts: Changes to the way the Islamic and Family Courts of the Arab sector deal with family violence and victimisation related to abuse and neglect.
2. Head of "Atid" Company: Anti-bullying policies extended to schools across the Arab Sector of Israel
3. Mayor of Tira City Council: Implementation of anti-bullying interventions by Tira City Council, including talks for students, staff and volunteers on how to deal with bullying and victimisation.
4. Head Teacher of key Secondary School, Ibrahim Qasim Secondary School: Introduction and implementation of anti-bullying policies.
5. Head Teacher of key Primary School, Al-Ghazali Primary School: Introduction and implementation of anti-bullying policies.