

**BULLYING AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SHAH ALAM: A  
STUDY OF THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE CAUSES OF BULLY AND  
THE POSSIBLE LEGAL SANCTIONS THAT CAN BE ADOPTED**

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## ABSTRACT

School bullying is one of the major problems faced by most of the schools in Malaysia, whereby the case on bullying had increased from year to year. So far, there is no specific law or statute to punish the bullies. When bullying takes place, usually the bullies will be punished by their respective schools either by way of giving warning or detention class. Sometimes, the parents' of the bullies will be required to attend to school to discuss with the teachers about the behaviour of their child. These measures seem to be ineffective as there are still a large number of cases on bullying reported currently.

In order to reduce the number of cases on bullying, effective sanction must be adopted to punish the bullies. Thus this research is conducted for the purpose of giving awareness to the public about the problem of school bullying and trying to find a solution to this matter.

This study is conducted to gain the public perceptions relating to the problem of school bullying. The various opinions regarding the causes of school bullying and their suggestion on possible legal sanctions that can be adopted to punish the bullies are gathered by interviews and answering questionnaires. The causes of bullying are being asked because we believe that the solution to every problem can be found by examining the root of the problem. The opinions relating to possible legal sanctions are gathered during the field work as we believe that public opinions are very important to be taken into consideration as the school bullying is the problem relating to the community itself.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

Bullying can be defined as a general way of “repeated negative, ill-intentioned behaviour by one or more students directed against a student who has difficulty defending himself or herself”. Most bullying occurs without any apparent provocation on the part of the students who is exposed<sup>1</sup>. The legal system is rarely involved in dealing with school bullying. It is important to know that by working together, parents, teachers and pupils and other numbers of the wider community can develop effective reactive strategies which can be implemented quickly to curb this problem. It is most important that bullying is resolved as quickly as possible before any serious damage is done to the personal development or education of the young people involved<sup>2</sup>.

A bully is an individual who tends to torment others, either through verbal harassment and/or physical assaults, or through more subtle methods of coercion<sup>3</sup>. Bullying is persistent unwelcome behaviour, mostly using unwarranted or invalid criticism, nit picking, fault-finding, exclusion, isolation being singled out and treated differently, being shouted at, humiliated, excessive monitoring, having verbal and written warnings imposed, and much more<sup>4</sup>. Some of the ways the bullies bully other people are by calling names, saying or writing nasty things about them, leaving them out of activities, not talking to them, threatening them, making them feeling uncomfortable or scared, taking or damaging their things, hitting or kicking them<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Anon, “School Bullying is Nothing New, but Psychologists New Ways to Prevent It”, <<http://www.apa.org/>> 19 Jan 2006

<sup>2</sup> Anon, “Information on School Bullying and The Law”, <<http://www.antibullying.net/index.html>> 13 Oct 2005

<sup>3</sup> Anon, “Bully”, <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/bully>> 20 Jan 2006

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*