

# The relationship between negative school experiences and the formation of antisocial personality disorder

Xiyuan Zhou \*

Experimental High School Attached to Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China

\* Corresponding author: djones79410@student.napavalley.edu

**Abstract.** The present study explored the factors in schools that have close relationships with the formation of antisocial personality disorder. By collecting and analyzing papers and data, this study found that classmates' misbehavior will make students be more aggressive because the model effect and the wise to be accepted by peers; Bullies, victims, and bully-victims(people who are both bullies and victims) have a higher rate of conducting illegal misbehavior and having bad relationships with others; being isolated by classmates makes people tend to have psychological deficits and makes people less socialized; bad teacher-student relationships make students more likely to have unstable emotions and callous-unemotional and part of this phenomena can be explained by the moral ideas that students should do what teachers required and teachers are the authority; low academic achievement and low effort on study can anticipate students' later antisocial behavior since low academic achievement, low effort on study, and antisocial behavior are highly related to the lack of self-control. Long term of misbehavior will lead to the formation of antisocial personality disorder; and the lack of caring culture in school also leads to more frequent antisocial behavior in school.

**Keywords:** Antisocial personality disorder, school experiences, the influencing factors.

## 1. Introduction

Doing antisocial behaviors means people conduct behaviors that harm others' rights, bring nuisance to others. Serious antisocial behavior might be illegal or even crime, and even the smallest antisocial behavior might cause the broken of interpersonal relationships. And long term of conducting antisocial behavior is classified as antisocial personality disorder. There are already many researchers finding that some people's antisocial personality disorder form acquired, some form in born, and some are formed by both. When experiencing negative matters, people tend to feel angry, sad, lonely, and many other negative emotions, and may form antisocial personalities in the long term. And antisocial personality disorder may lead to serious results, people may choose to rob, murder, and so on, which increases the criminal rate and harms the whole society. To prevent those things get happening, people have to know what kinds of experiences may cause the formation of antisocial personality disorder, and try their best to avoid these experiences get happening.

Since people spend most of their childhood in school and home, they are significantly influenced by others- sisters, brothers, parents, peers, and teachers- and their experience there. And it was suggested that negative parenting(including four styles: authoritarian style, authoritative style, permissive style, and neglectful style) and peer pressure lead to the formation of antisocial behavior. By collecting questionnaires and measurements, researchers found collected the related information from 177 university students to compare the influence of peer pressure and negative parenting. Finally, researchers found that both peer pressure and negative parenting will lead to antisocial personality disorder and peer pressure has a stronger effect, which means that peer pressure overshadows the effect of parenting after a certain age[1]. Thus, it's important to avoid people getting antisocial personality disorder from their school.

Schools provide people with opportunities to communicate and make friends with peers. Also, students gain knowledge from teachers. Students influence each other consciously and unconsciously. In addition, when students do something wrong, teachers are responsible for correcting their behavior and helping them form positive moral ideas. This study specifically focuses on the school experience in forming antisocial personality disorder formation. The present study divides the school negative

experiences into specific types, including classmates' misbehavior, bullying and being bullied, being isolated, having bad teacher-student relationships, having low academic achievement, making low efforts on study, and studying in schools that have bad school culture and discusses about each one separately. The conclusion of this study may provide comprehensive factors that lead students to conduct antisocial behaviors and give guidance for later school management.

## **2. School factors influencing antisocial personality disorder**

### **2.1. Classmates' Misbehavior**

Classmates play an important role in people's early years since people spend most of their time in school at this age. Thomas, Bierman, and Powers conducted research by tracing 4179 kids, from 27 schools and from various races and grades, for three years. By collecting their self-reports and recording the frequency of students' misbehavior, researchers gave scores based on class environment, the higher the score, the worse the class environment. And they found that class context plays an important role in students' socializing aggressive behavior (graph 1). It shows that students who study in a classroom where classmates there are aggressive tend to become aggressive as well [2]. Students in group 1 where classroom climate gain a higher score have a higher rate of classroom That is because of the model effect among the peer group, and also it is related to students' status in school and their level of being accepted by their peer groups. When their friends and others in their class overtly or covertly conduct antisocial behavior, wanting to be accepted by others, they will choose to engage in this behavior as well despite of whether they initially think others' behavior are right.

Moreover, studying in such an aggressive class atmosphere, aggressive behavior will be more intense: peers who are already aggressive become more invasive. The reason for this phenomenon is that among friendships in people's school age, they have more opportunity to conduct antisocial behavior and reinforce this behavior. Wanting to be socially accepted, students tend to do what other peers do, including antisocial behavior [3].

This association is developed because students who observe people conducting misbehavior or being the victim of their classmates' misbehavior tend to become more aggressive later. In the research conducted by Paul Boxer, Edwards-Leeper, Goldstein, Musher-Eizenman, and Dubow, researchers surveyed 771 pupils who come from different areas of the cities and have witnessed aggressive behavior or been the victims of aggressive behavior, finding that those students tend to have a higher rate in engaging in aggressive behaviors [4]. All forms of antisocial behavior occurring in schools, whether overt (including reactive forms of aggression) or covert (including other peers and intentionally keeping away from adults when conducting antisocial behaviors), may eventually become delinquent behavior. Overt aggression is highly linked to peer dislike. Researchers found that as students grow up, students conduct more covert antisocial behavior and conduct less overt antisocial behavior to avoid being criticized by their parents and teachers. They have a higher rate of robbery, theft, burglary, and vandalism after growing up [3].

### **2.2. Bullying and being bullied**

Bully can be divided into direct and relational. Specifically, direct bullying behavior includes beating and calling names; relational bullying includes intentionally making others feel depressed and spreading rumors.

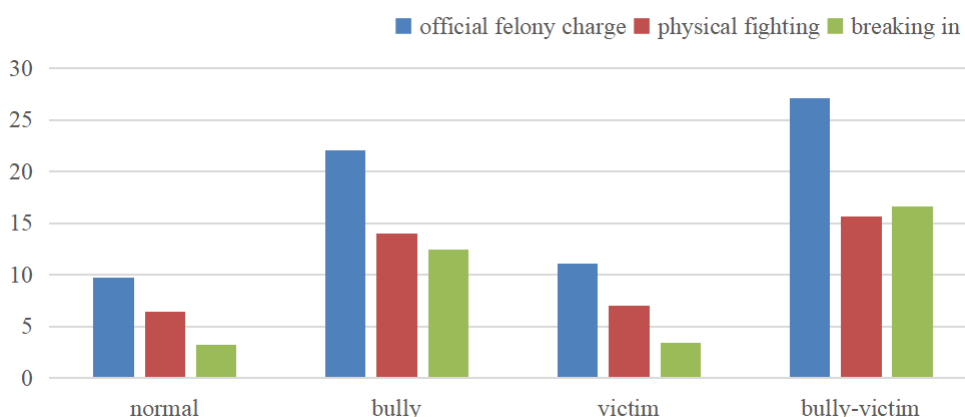
Students who engaged in bully can also be divided into three types. The first type, people who participate in bully; second, people be bullied; and third, people who have bullied others and also have been the victims of bullies, who, people call, bully-victims [5].

Bullying at school age also tremendously contributes to antisocial behavior later. In the research conducted by Bender and Lösel, researchers used questionnaires to gain related information about 63 males who were bullies or the victims of bullies. To avoid other factors that may lead to antisocial behavior, such as bad family environments, they used the hierarchical regressions method. As a result,

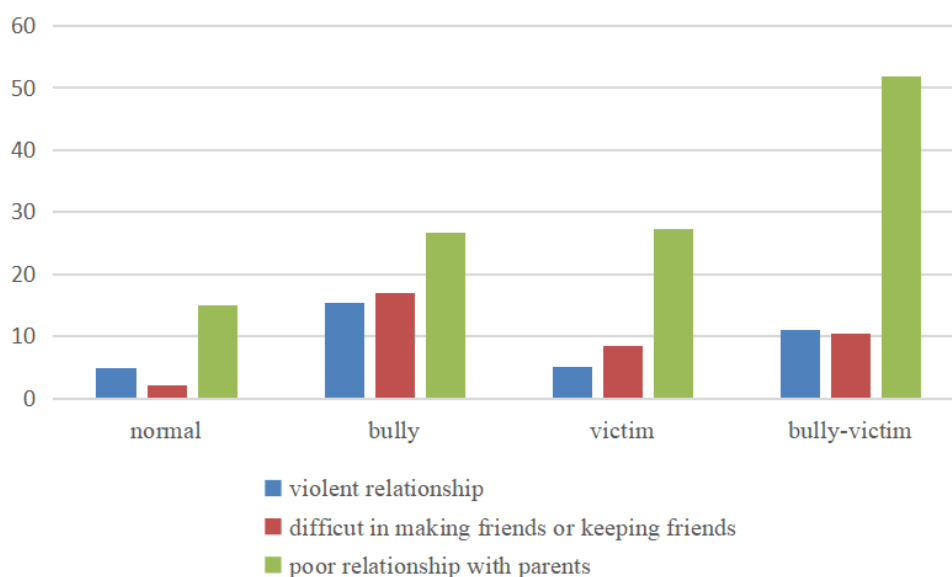
researchers find that people who have bullied others are more likely to have antisocial behavior later [6].

Actually, bullying only, victim only, and Bully-victims will all have a higher rate of illegal behavior later (Fig 2) [4]. In the Figure 1 below, bully-victims are most likely to be official felony charge, specifically about 27.1% of them are be officially felony charged after growing up, next is bully only which is at the rate of 22%, then victim only which is at the rate of 11.1%, and all of their official felony charge rates are higher than normal. Bully-victims are more likely to conduct physical fighting; bullies and victims are elevated in this indicator as well when compared to normal people but not at that high rate of bully-victims. These three types of people have a higher rate of breaking in behavior, especially among bully-victims which generally 16.6% of them conduct breaking in behavior after growing up. The thing that worth to be notice is that in all three measurement, bully-victims have the highest rate of conducting these three types of antisocial behaviors.

Also, all these behaviors related to bully lead to poor social relationships (Figure 3) [5]. Bullies, victims of bullying, and bully-victims are elevated in the indication of violent relationships, difficulties in making friends and maintaining friendships, and poor relationships with parents [5]. In specific, bullies have 15.3% rate of having violent relationships, bully-victims have the rate of 11.1%, and victims have the rate of 5%; Bullies have 16.9% rate of having difficulties in making friends, bully-victims have the rate of 10.4%, and victims have the rate of 8.4%; Bully-victims have 51.9% rate of having a poor relationship with parents, victims 27.3%, and bullies 26.6%.



**Figure 1.** Relationship between bully, bully-victims, and victims and their future antisocial behavior



**Figure 2.** Relationship between bully, bully-victims, and victims and their future interpersonal relationship with others

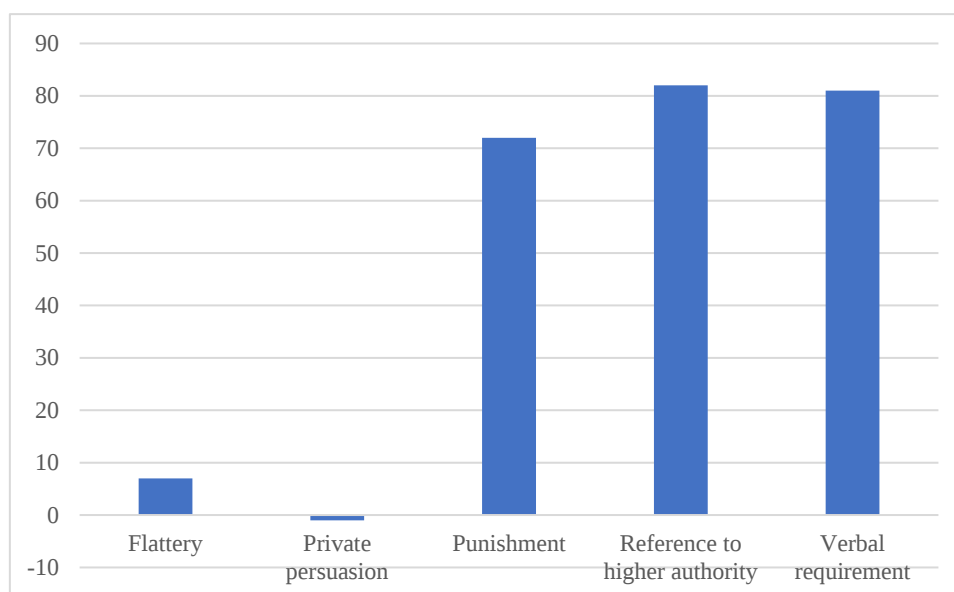
### 2.3. Being Isolated

Students spend most of their time at school every day. Students are likely to be isolated for their disabilities, poor grades, appearance, and so on. Different from bullying and being bullied, being socially isolated means being ignored intentionally. When being isolated among their peer groups in school, they tend to communicate with others less and have difficulties about socialization. Middle school students are especially likely to feel lonely and have low self-esteem. Being isolated in school leads to less engagement in class, declination in class attendance rate, less motivated, poor study grades, and so on. Researchers have suggested that there is a link between students' feelings of isolation and later feelings of depression and anxiety, which have been proven in investigations among 419 students ages from 7 to 14 in Norwegian and among 200 British students ages from 8 to 11 by asking them to make self-report. Thus, being isolated in school may lead to social or behavioral difficulties [7].

### 2.4. Bad teacher-student relationship

Research s have shown that poor teacher-student relationship is highly related to students' antisocial behavior. And students with antisocial personality disorder commonly have emotional-related deficits, including callous-unemotional. Wilkinson and Barrtoli investigated 12 teachers to collect 108 students who are studying in primary school. And they found that unstable emotional feelings and callous-unemotional are highly related to teacher-student conflicts and unrelated to teacher-student closeness [8].

In the research conducted by Sultan and Jufri, they supposed that teachers' behavior in class, such as criticism, interrupting students, and ignoring students' questions will lead to students' antisocial thoughts and behaviors. They used interviews, video recordings, and observation to test their ideas. They found that their suppose is true, and actually teacher's control of classrooms is a natural behavior. And they attribute their conclusion to the moral context that students must conform to teachers no matter whether students' thoughts are in line with their teachers [9].



**Figure 3.** The relationship between BATs and students' antisocial feelings

In a study conducted by Claus, he investigated the relationship between rotated factor loadings for perceived effectiveness of student BATS and students' tendency to antisocial thoughts and behaviors toward their teachers. Specifically, BATs are defined as the methods teachers apply to make their students conform to teachers' requirements in the classroom. BAMs are the messages teachers send (including verbal and nonverbal types) when using BATs. BATs mainly include flattery, private persuasion, punishment, reference to high authority, verbal requirements, and so on. By investigating 294 undergraduate students (including multiple races, grades, and majors) in two universities,

researchers found that punishment, reference to higher authority, and verbal requirement have a high possibility of leading to antisocial thoughts and behaviors and private persuasion, on the other hand, has a prosocial effect (Fig 3) [10].

### **2.5. Low academic achievement & low effort on study**

In the study conducted by Felson and Staff, they suppose that low academic performance may lead to performance-delinquency. There are two theories, one suggests that some students with poor grades tend to conduct delinquent behavior to feel enjoyment, to gain money, and to promote their self-esteem, and the other one suggests that it's just a negative factor that may lead to crime. To prove their supposition of the link between academic performance and performance delinquency, they used various sources of data (including their exam scores, self-reports of relationships with others, teachers' reports, and students' self-reports of criminal behavior), more than tens of thousands of samples of students who are different in race, grades, gender, nation, and so on, to analyze. As a result, they discovered that there is a link between low academic performance and performance delinquency- students who conducted delinquent behavior in grade 10 tend to have lower academic performance when they are in grade 12- but the relationship is weak. However, they found that the effort students make is strongly related to student's delinquent behavior. They account for this link to students' low self-control. Also, students' low self-control has a positive relationship with their low academic performance, which could account for the link between academic performance, self-control, and the effort students make on study [11].

### **2.6. Lack of caring school culture**

A lack of caring school culture can also lead to the formation of individual antisocial personality disorder. Shann investigated 4 urban middle schools by measuring the frequency of four schools' teachers and students' total prosocial and antisocial behavior to study the relationship between school culture and people's antisocial behavior in schools. And it was found that school with caring culture and combined caring culture with academic study is more likely to have a higher rate of prosocial behavior and a lower rate of antisocial behavior. On the contrary, the lack of caring culture makes students have a higher rate of conducting antisocial behaviors [12].

## **3. Conclusion**

From the forward discussion, the conclusion could be drawn that negative experiences in school- classmates' misbehavior, bullying, being bullied, being isolated, having bad teacher-student relationships, having low academic achievement, making low efforts on study and lack of caring school culture- will lead to antisocial behavior and even the formation of antisocial personality disorder. Specifically, viewing classmates' misbehavior will lead to other students' increasingly aggressive tendency, and the students who are already aggressive will be more aggressive. The bad class climate effect is because peers have a model effect, and also people have a tendency to want to be accepted by others, so they do what others do no matter whether it's right. Bullying others, being bullied, and being the bully-victims will lead to the formation of antisocial behavior, people with these kinds of experiences at their school age have a higher rate of conducting illegal behavior-breaking in and physical fighting- after growing up and have a higher rate of having bad relationships with others. Being isolated at school is a factor that leads to antisocial behavior, isolated does not equate to being bullied since being bullied means others deposit a negative attitude toward someone and being isolated means others consciously or unconsciously neglect someone. Being isolated makes students lose many opportunities to communicate with others and make friends, so students who are isolated commonly have difficulties in socialization. And students who are isolated at their school have a higher rate of feeling depression and anxiety later. Having bad teacher-student relationships contributes to antisocial behavior as well. Students who have a bad teacher-student relationship tend to be callous-unemotional and have unstable emotions, and researchers contribute this result to the

moral context that students must obey their teachers. Teachers who use punishment, reference to higher authority, and verbal requirement make their students have a higher rate of having antisocial feelings. Low academic achievement and low effort on study are also a factor that can anticipate students' antisocial behavior in the future. That is because students who get low academic achievement or make low efforts on study are often having low self-control. And people with low self-control tend to conduct more serious behavior compared to common people as they have to make a stronger effort to stop their misbehaviors. Culture in school also strongly influences students' behavior: students who study in school without caring culture have a higher rate of antisocial behavior frequency.

## References

- [1] Johnson, Erinisha L. Parenting Styles, Peer Pressure, and the Formation of Antisocial Behavior. Honors Theses. 2012, 101.
- [2] Thomas, D. E., Bierman, K. L., Powers, C. J. & The Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group. The influence of classroom aggression and classroom climate on aggressive-disruptive behavior. *Child Development*, 2011, 82: 751 - 757.
- [3] Boxer, P., Edwards-Leeper, L. Goldstein, S. E., Musher-Eizenman, D. & Dubow, E. F. Exposure to "low-level" aggression in school: Associations with aggressive behavior, future expectations, and perceived safety. *Violence and Victims*, 2003, 18: 691 - 705.
- [4] Dishion, Thomas J., and Gerald R. Patterson. "The development and ecology of antisocial behavior in children and adolescents." *Developmental psychopathology: Volume three: Risk, disorder, and adaptation*, 2015: 503 - 541.
- [5] Wolke D, Copeland WE, Angold A, Costello EJ. Impact of bullying in childhood on adult health, wealth, crime, and social outcomes. *Psychol Sci*. 2013.
- [6] Bender D, Lösel F. Bullying at school as a predictor of delinquency, violence and other anti-social behaviour in adulthood. *Crim Behav Ment Health*. 2011.
- [7] London, R., & Ingram, D. Social isolation in middle school. *School Community Journal*, 2018, 28 (1), 107 - 127.
- [8] Roslyne Wilkinson, Hannah, and Alice Jones Bartoli. "Antisocial behaviour and teacher-student relationship quality: The role of emotion-related abilities and callous-unemotional traits." *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 2021, 91 (1): 482 - 499.
- [9] Sultan, S., & Jufri, J. Teachers Control on Students: Representation of Antisocial Communication in an Indonesian Language Learning Context. *Jurnal Humaniora*, 2019, 10 (2), 145 - 152.
- [10] Claus, Christopher J. "The effects of student behavior alteration techniques on student motives to communicate, student talk, and student learning." 2013.
- [11] Felson, R. B., & Staff, J. Explaining the academic performance-delinquency relationship. *Criminology*, 2006, 44 (2), 299 - 320.
- [12] Shann, Mary H. "Academics and a Culture of Caring: The Relationship Between School Achievement and Prosocial and Antisocial Behaviors in Four Urban Middle Schools." *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*. 1999, 10: 390 - 413.