



How Others Perceive Bullying: Some Effects of Gender and Bullying Tactics

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Link to information



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Abstract

The perceptions of college students on school bullying tactics employed by the aggressor was investigated. 146 students were given a questionnaire regarding bullying tactics and gender. Males were perceived to be involved in physical bullying more often, while females were perceived to be involved in sophisticated bullying tactics more often.

Introduction

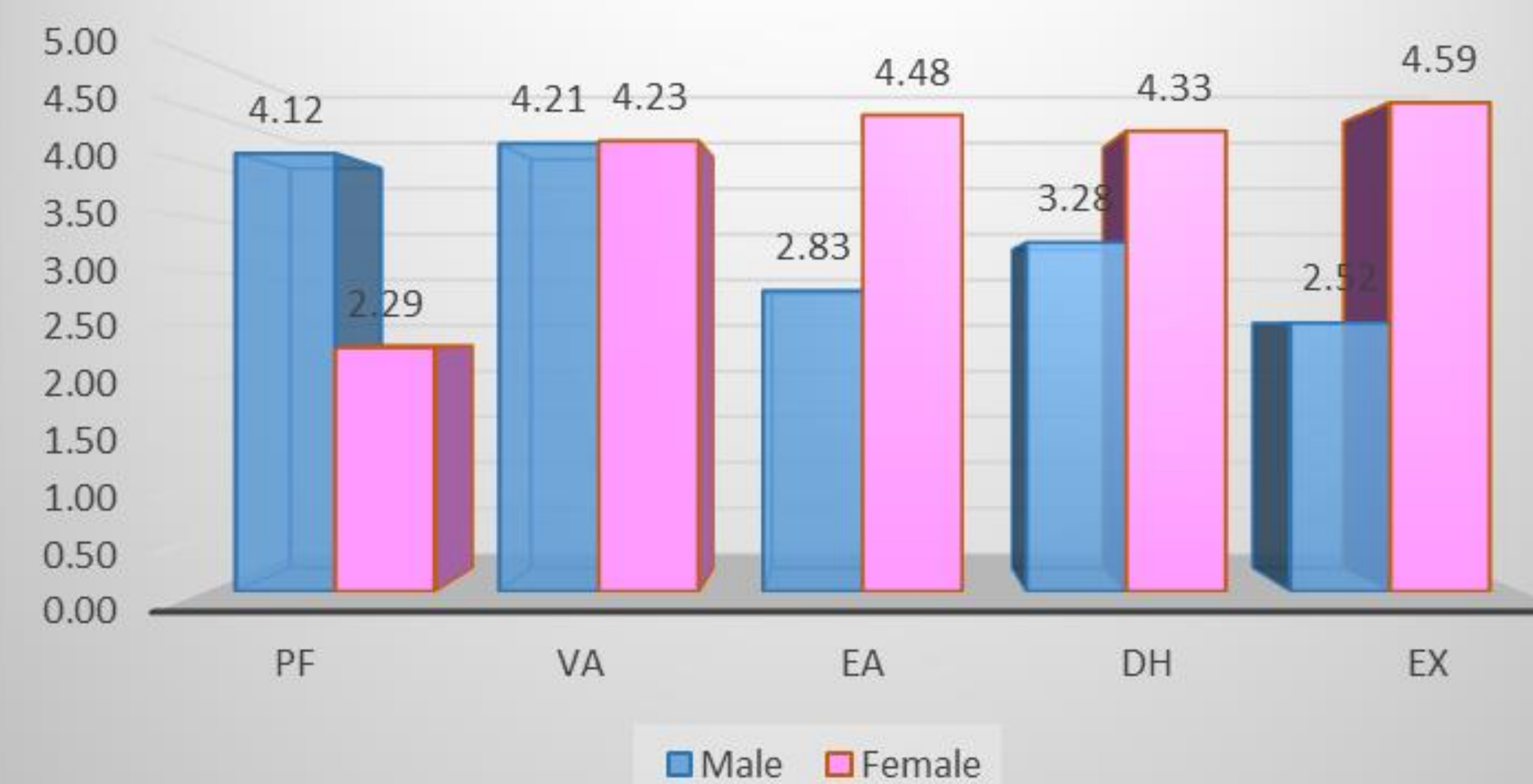
Bullying is a topic that has been investigated heavily for at least thirty years, whether it be school yard bullying all the way up to workplace bullying and everywhere in between. Everything from physical altercations to electronic communications fall under the general umbrella of the word bullying. A Great deal of research has been done on how students in grade school view bullying and how they view gender assignments to bullying in general, as well as, how adults perceive violence in their general age groups. I feel that it is important to shed some light on how others view the gender roles of bullying according to techniques employed.

Methods

- Participants volunteered from 4 separate semesters of online Psych 101 courses (N = 146: F = 82, M = 55), 9 participants were removed for failing to follow the provided directions, 6 participants failed to answer 1 question, their responses were addressed with simple mean imputation.
- The participants were provided with a 32 item questionnaire designed to explore their perceptions of various aspects of bullying.
- Accounting for gender of participants, gender of bully, gender of victim, and the 5 separate tactics (Physical Force, Verbal Aggression, Electronic Aggression, Exclusion, and Dishonesty).
- Aggressors & victims were not specific, well-defined characters; the participants were presented simply with the gender of the participants of the scenarios.

Results

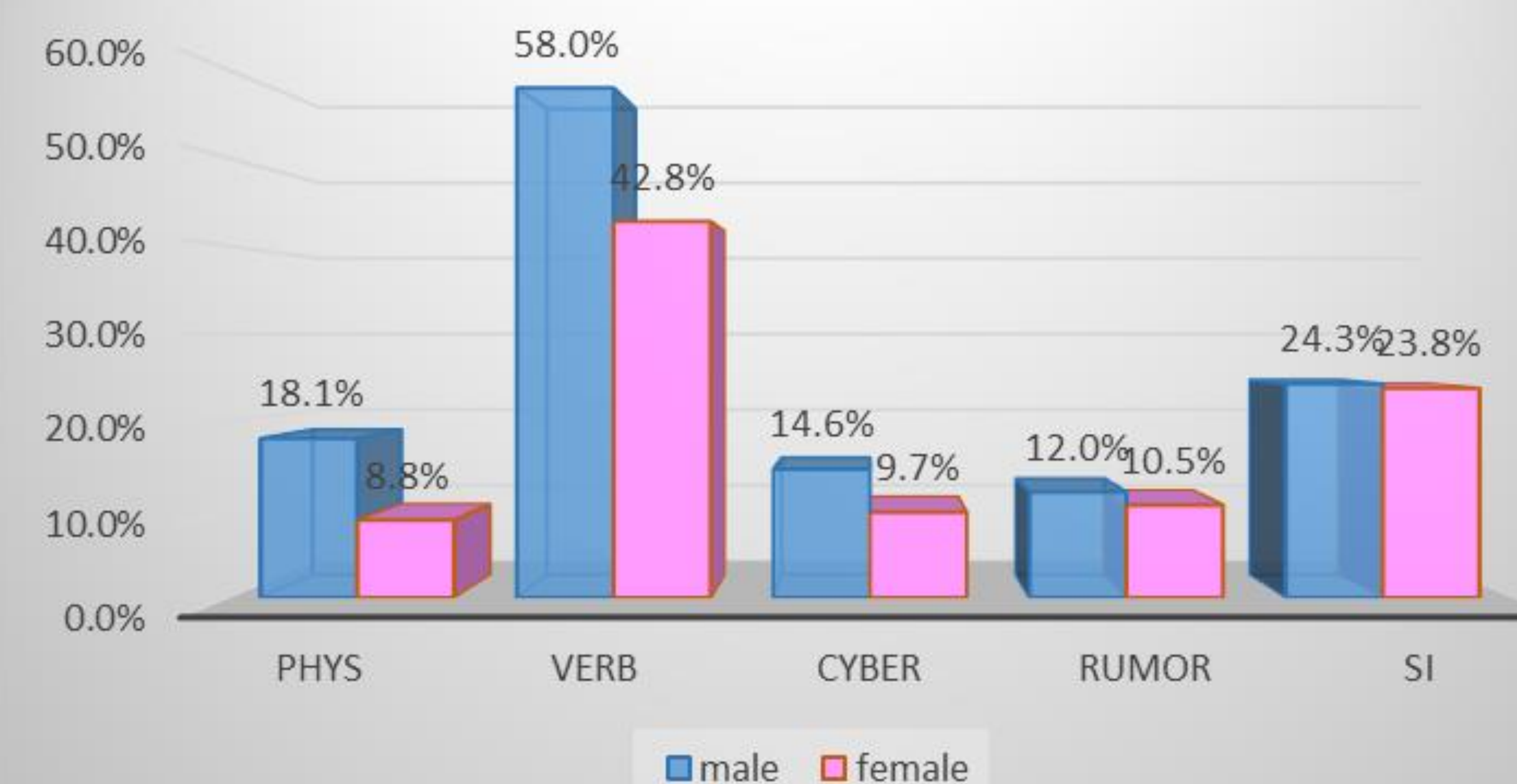
Perceptions



PF = Physical Force, VA = Verbal Aggression, EA = Electronic Aggression, DH = Dishonesty, EX = Exclusion

- Analysis of variance showed that there were interactions within the different bullying techniques.
 - Participants perceived almost no difference in the gender roles of verbal aggression.
 - We found that our participants indicated that females are perceived to be involved at a significantly higher rate in the more sophisticated types of aggression than males.
 - While males were perceived to be involved in far more physical force than their counterparts.

Existing Data



PHYS = Physical, VERB = Verbal, CYBER = cyber, RUMOR = Rumor spreading (equivalent to dishonesty), SI = Social Isolation (equivalent to Exclusion)

Discussion

- Past research into aggression has been done on adult perceptions of aggression on adults (Harris & Knight-Bohnhoff, 1996), but I did not find research on how non-involved adults perceive bullying of the youth.
- More recent research, with very interesting findings, has delved into the how school aged children perceive bullying as an observer (Fox et al 2014).
- Still, there is a lack of research on how adults perceive bullying, which brought me to this line of questioning.
- The perceptions of uninvolved adults on youth bullying situations is important to our future understanding of this dynamic topic. For various reasons, including:
 - Policy creation and management.
 - Punishment
 - Education
- The perception of the participants in my study do not conform with current research, which suggests males engage in cyberbullying more often (Ang & Goh 2010). Other research ("Existing Data" chart) has shown the males are the aggressor more often in all categories (Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel 2009).
- I hope the direction that this research is going will open doors for further research in the perceptions of bullying behavior and help mold the working definition of the various types of bullying.
- The participants' differences in perception of the more sophisticated bullying techniques and other available data shows that that there is more research to do on the subject. I hope the direction that this research is going will open doors for further research in the perceptions of bullying behavior and help mold the working definition of the various types of bullying.

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