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Critical appraisal workshop on

**Parenting practices and bullying:  
Evidence from a cross-sectional survey**



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# Critical appraisal 101

**“Not all evidence is created equal”**

*Ben Djulbegovic*

Broadly, we can think of three possible explanations for the results of any research study:

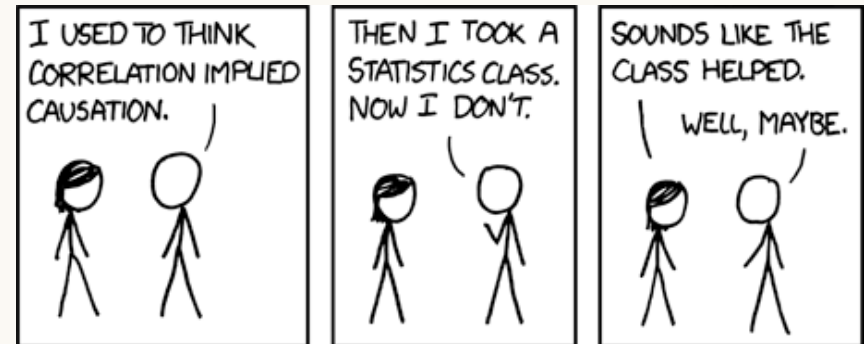
1. Bias
2. Chance
3. The truth

The more we can rule out 1 and 2, the more confident we can be that we're looking at 3.



# Reality Check No 1

Because they are observational studies, surveys can only identify correlations between things, and cannot prove that one causes the other.



Credit: XKCD

<https://xkcd.com/552/>



# Reality Check No 2

Because they are captured at a point in time, data from surveys can't tell us what comes before what.



Credit: grendelkhan, Flickr, CC BY-SA 2.0

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=327571>



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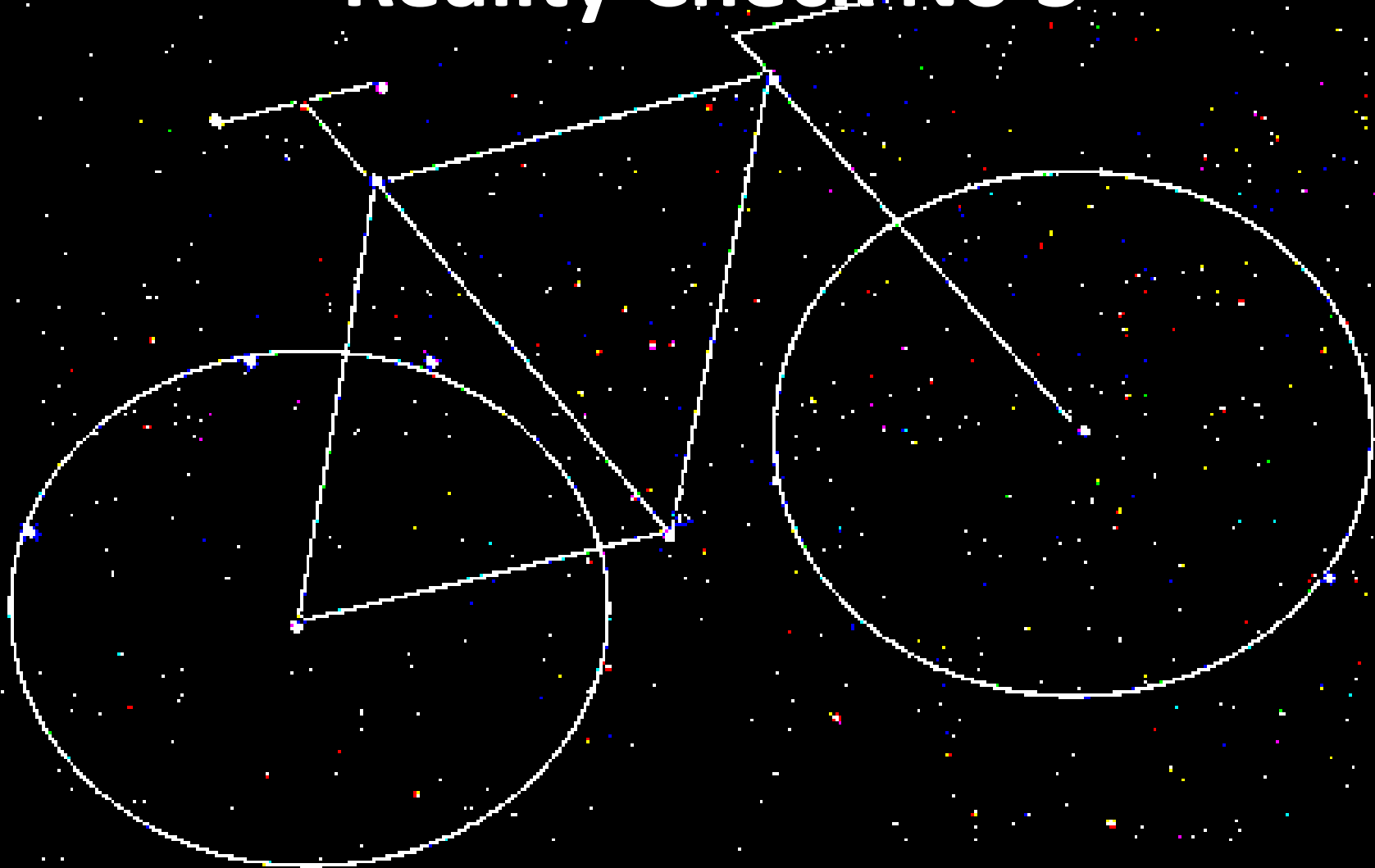
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# Reality Check No 3





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# Critical appraisal process

1. What is the research question?
2. Are the methods valid?
3. Are these valid results important?
4. Are these valid, important results applicable to my setting?



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# How are parenting practices associated with bullying in adolescents? A cross-sectional study

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# Parenting “practices” vs “styles”

In young people, what is the association between their assessment of parenting practices and their involvement in bullying?

1. Low scores in effective parenting practices will be associated with both cyberbullying and traditional bullying involvement.
2. High scores in ineffective parenting practices will be associated with both cyberbullying and traditional bullying perpetration.





# Methods

This was a cross-sectional survey of adolescents in secondary schools in London

- Sample
  - 2,764 pupils from four schools
- Outcome measures
  - Bullying roles:
    - “Victims”, “Bullies”, “Bully+victims”
  - Parenting practices:
    - *Positive Parenting*
    - *Parenting Involvement*
    - *Poor Monitoring*
    - *Inconsistent Discipline*



# Olweus Bully-Victim Questionnaire

**Have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months in one or more of the following ways? Please answer all questions.**

- |                                                                        |                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 I was called mean names, was made fun of, or teased in a hurtful way | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> it hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months |
|                                                                        | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> only once or twice                                    |
|                                                                        | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a month                                  |
|                                                                        | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> about once a week                                     |
|                                                                        | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> several times a week                                  |

- |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 Other students left me out of things on purpose, excluded me from their group of friends, or completely ignored me | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> it hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months |
|                                                                                                                      | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> only once or twice                                    |
|                                                                                                                      | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a month                                  |
|                                                                                                                      | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> about once a week                                     |
|                                                                                                                      | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> several times a week                                  |

- |                                                               |                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7 I was hit, kicked, pushed, shoved around, or locked indoors | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> it hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months |
|                                                               | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> only once or twice                                    |
|                                                               | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 or 3 times a month                                  |
|                                                               | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> about once a week                                     |
|                                                               | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> several times a week                                  |



# Alabama Parenting Questionnaire

	Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. You have a friendly talk with your mom.	1	2	3	4	5
A. How about your dad?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Your parents tell you that you are doing a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Your parents threaten to punish you and then do not do it.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Your mom helps with some of your special activities (such as sports, boy/girl scouts, church youth groups).	1	2	3	4	5
A. How about your dad?	1	2	3	4	5



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# The Results

Bullying role →	Being a victim		Being a bully		Being a bully+victim	
	Cyber	Traditional	Cyber	Traditional	Cyber	Traditional
was strongly associated with	Gender Ethnicity*	Gender, Ethnicity*	Ethnicity*	Ethnicity*, Gender School		Ethnicity*
was weakly associated with	<i>Positive parenting</i>		<i>Positive parenting, Inconsistent discipline, Poor monitoring</i>	<i>Age Poor monitoring</i>	<i>Poor monitoring Positive parenting</i>	<i>Poor monitoring</i>



# Critical appraisal checklist

	Yes	Not sure	No
1 Were the aims/objectives of the study clear?	X		
2 Was the study design appropriate for the stated aim(s)?		X	
3 Was the sample size justified?	X		
4 Was the sample population clearly defined?	X		
5 Was the sample taken from a representative population?	X		
6 Was the selection process likely to be representative?	X		
7 Were measures undertaken to address non-responders?	X		
8 Were the variables measured appropriate to the aims of the study?	X		
9 Were they measured using validated instruments?	X		
10 Is it clear what how statistical significance was estimated?	X		
11 Were the methods sufficiently described to enable them to be repeated?		X	



# Evidence in context

	Cyber bullying			Traditional bullying		
	Bully	Victim	Bully-victim	Bully	Victim	Bully-victim
Positive parenting	Protective (Gomez-Ortiz)			None (Zych)	None (Navarro, Zych)	None (Zych)
Parental involvement	None			None		
Parental support	Lowers (Kowalski)					
Parental communication	Protective (Gomez-Ortiz)					
Poor monitoring	Predicts (Ybarra)		Predicts			
Parental monitoring	Protects (Kowalski)			Protects (Zych)		Protects (Zych)
Inconsistent discipline	Predicts					



# Conclusions

- Some parenting practices were associated with bullying involvement:
  - *Positive parenting* may protect against all types of cyberbullying
  - *Poor monitoring* was associated with traditional bully roles
- Consistent with other evidence
- Work needed to test “practice-based” interventions



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# Questions for the researchers

- How reliable are these self-reports?
- Any comment on the different patterns wrt traditional bullying vs cyberbullying?
- What specific parenting strategies are important?
- Why was the ethnicity data was adjusted for socioeconomic status?