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School of Psychology
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**The Bystander Effect among High School Students: The Role of Social Norms,
Empathy, and Religiosity in Predicting Intervention Behavior**

Mikias Kebede

June, 2026

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE STUDIES
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

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Norms, Empathy, and Religiosity in Predicting Intervention Behavior**

A Thesis Submitted to the School of Psychology in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Social Psychology

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Declaration

I Milkias Kebede declare that this thesis titled “The Bystander Effect among High School Students: The Role of Social Norms, Empathy, and Religiosity in Predicting Intervention Behavior” is my original work. I hereby confirm that this thesis has not been submitted previously, in part or in full, for any degree or diploma at this or any other university or institution. All sources of information used in this study have been duly acknowledged and properly cited.

Name: Milkias Kebede

Signature: _____

Date: June, 2026

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June, 2026

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Abstract

Bystander intervention to School bullying is still a poorly researched phenomenon in the Ethiopian setting where norms, religious obligation and peer influences are evident in the way students respond to victimization. The present study explores predictors of bystander intervention behavior among high school students in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In particular, it investigates the roles of social norm, empathy, and religiosity in bystander intervention. A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was employed (QUANTITATIVE + qualitative), combining a scenario-based quasi-experimental survey administered to 381 students with semi-structured interviews conducted with 16 participants. Quantitative data was collected with Scenario Based Bystander Intervention Scale (SBBIS), Social Norm Manipulation Vignettes, Perceived School Social Norms Scale, Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI), and Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS-5) and analyzed via descriptive statistics, correlation, ANOVA hierarchical multiple regression analysis. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically according to Braun and Clarke (2006). Bivariate correlations and regression analysis indicated that empathy ($\beta = .38, p < .001$) and social norms ($\beta = .29, p < .001$) exerted significant positive influences on intervention, while religiosity had no significant influence on intervention. The private school students showed higher intentions to intervene than government school students did, which can be explained qualitatively by differences in school culture and teacher support. Six themes emerged from thematic analysis of interview data: moral obligation related to group norms as determined by culture and religion; fear of retaliation and lack of support as the strongest barriers; trusting teacher advice as the greatest enabler; and differences between female and male prevention strategies. This study generalized bystander intervention to a secondary school setting in Ethiopia, and offers ideas for school-based interventions that promote empathy and positive peer norms to encourage bystander intervention.

Keywords: bystander intervention, bullying, empathy, religiosity, social norms, Ethiopian adolescents.

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents the introductory part of the study. It focuses on the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions, the objective of the study, and the significance of conducting this study, the operationalization of the variables that the study will address and the scope of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

Bullying, violence, harassment and interpersonal conflicts are prevalent in high-school. Students may witness hostile events but often do not take action, and this phenomena is called the bystander effect. The bystander effect is one of the most widely researched social-psychological concepts and it refers to the reluctance to take action and provide help when there are others present on the presumption that someone else will help (Latané & Darley, 1968). However, in the Ethiopian context, bystander intervention remains poorly researched, with limited empirical evidence on how local cultural factors influence students' responses to victimization. This passivity can have serious implications for student's psychosocial development, school safety and their emotional well-being.

A study on bullying prevalence found that 44% of students observed aggression but did not intervene due to fear, social forces or crowd ignorance (Meter & Card, 2016). This study clearly indicates the necessity to investigate the social and psychological dynamics that influence bystander behavior in Ethiopian educational systems. Similarly, research from other African nations such as Ghana, Kenya or South Africa shows a tendency for students to remain passive bystanders (Salmivalli, 2010; Rigby, 2017). For example, a research conducted in Ethiopian

secondary schools indicates that, although many students observed students being bullied, most of them were inactive because they felt scared, unsure or were under peer pressure (Eijigu & Teketel, 2021).

In this study, the term helping behavior refers specifically to prosocial intervention actions intended to reduce harm or support the victim, such as defending the victim, comforting them, or reporting the incident. This definition excludes forms of “helping” that encourage bullying, such as joining aggressor groups or reinforcing harmful actions. Whether students choose prosocial intervention or remain passive is strongly shaped by social norms. According to Cialdini and Trost (1998), such as subjective and descriptive norms play a main role in determining whether individuals feel expected or permitted to intervene in social situations.

Empathy is another psychological factor of defending responses. Empathy strengthens adolescent’s ability to recognize suffering and feel moral concern of victims. A three-level meta-analysis explained that adolescents with higher affective and cognitive empathy are significantly more likely to engage in defending behavior in bullying situations (Zhou et al., 2020). This study aligns with Davis’s (1983) multidimensional theory of empathy, which emphasizes a key motivator of prosocial behavior is empathy as emotional responsiveness.

Religiosity may also increase helping behavior. Literature reviews point to a positive relationship between religiousness and prosocial behaviors, moral cognition, and willingness to help others (Laird, Marks, & Marrero, 2011). Foubert et al. (2022) argue that spiritual values may increase moral responsibility to intervene in situations that others are being exploited. As

religious values are prevalent throughout Ethiopian social life, it is possible that religiosity may strengthen compassionate, moral, and prosocial tendencies (Pew Research Center, 2018).

Demographic information is another way to influence bystander response. Research from Ethiopia has shown sex differences as well. For instance, boys had higher rates of both bullying and bystander inaction in the town of Sekota, while girls exhibited higher rates of empathetic behaviors (fo, 2020). This may imply that sex differences in adolescents behaviors and responses to bullying have effect.

While many previous international studies have investigated the influence of social norms, empathy, and religiosity on bystander intervention patterns, most finds conclude similarly that these variables are imperative in predicting adolescent help-seeking behaviors. For example, research by Christina Salmivalli (2010), Mark Davis (1983), and Kenneth Pargament (2007) all conclude the same that adolescents are more likely to intervene in bullying incidents when they invoke empathy, hold prosocial social norms, or reflect their religious practices and values.

Given the prevalence of bullying and the high rate of passive bystander behavior in Ethiopian schools, it is critical to understand what psychological and social factors predict whether students will intervene. This study focuses on three such factors: social norms, empathy, and religiosity each of which has been identified in global research as a potential motivator of prosocial behavior.

However few studies have been conducted in Ethiopia that has examined the interaction of these variables within local school and cultural contexts. The few existing studies are based on Western samples and may not be generalizable to the Ethiopian context given its collectivistic

culture, robust religious identity, and distinctive school setting. Hence, this study seeks to assess the combined effects of social norms, empathy, and religiosity to predict high-school students' retrospective report of engagement in prosocial bystander intervention utilizing culturally sensitive vignette scenarios in Addis Ababa.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Bullying, interpersonal conflict, and harassment are still persistent issues in high schools across the globe. Though many students see harassment happen all the time, they may choose not to get involved (80–85% of adolescents in Craig & Pepler, 1997; Salmivalli et al., 1996 see bullying as a bystander and only few speak up to help the victims). In most cases, bystanders remain inactive due to fear, blind eye or peer pressure (Craig et al., 2009; Salmivalli, 2010). Similar findings have been recorded from several regions of in Africa where high level of bystanders observed while low levels of intervention observed. The study concludes that in many low and middle income settings passive bystanding is the norm that observed bystanders are inactive against harassment(Rigby, 2017). This ongoing absence of action results not only in emotional harm to victims and perpetrators, but also supports the escalation of aggressive behavior and the deterioration of school safety.

While a number of studies have identified various social and psychological correlates of bystander behavior, such as social norms, empathy and religiosity (Salmivalli et al., 1996; Thornberg et al., 2012; Eisenberg et al., 2006; Hardy & Carlo, 2011), these predictors received limited attention in the Ethiopian context. Other research also indicated that social norms were important in influencing students ' responses to bullying, because they based on what they think their friends would expect them to do (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Empathy found to be the most

consistent predictor of helping behavior, with adolescents with higher levels of empathic emotional response and empathic perspective taking being more likely to defend victims and resist negative peer pressure in bullying situations (Zhou et al., 2020).

While religiosity is another factor found to be related to moral reasoning, compassion, and prosociality, we do not know how religious content may relate to compassion in Ethiopian adolescents. Findings from other studies imply that religious beliefs and practices may, in fact, influence the way adolescents respond to conflicts in the direction of others (Laird, Marks, & Marrero, 2011; Foubert, et al., 2022). Nevertheless, the association between religion and compassion has not been investigated extensively among the Ethiopian context where religion plays a significant role in people's lives.

Thus, the gap is that there has been no empirical investigation of the interaction among social norms, empathy and religiosity in predicting bystander intervention among Ethiopian High School students. These concepts are well known in the psychological literature; however, their relative strength and the interaction among them in predicting bystander intervention in the Ethiopian society is not known. Moreover, past studies on bystander intervention in other nations have utilized the general self-report questionnaires which fail to take into consideration real life responses that students make to a situation. Scenario based vignette procedures allow students to interpret common school scenarios which can be observed in their school such as bullying at break time, harassment at the school gates, conflicts during team work (Salmivalli, 2010; Craig et al., 2009; Rigby, 2017). Nevertheless, no Ethiopian investigations have adopted vignette based measures which are context specific to the students' local school environment.

1.3. Research Question

1. What are the levels of bystander intervention behavior, adherence to social norms, empathy and religiosity among high school students in Addis Ababa?
2. What is the nature of relationship (i.e., form, direction, magnitude and statistical significance) among bystander intervention behavior, adherence to social norms, empathy and religiosity?
3. To what extent do adherence to social norms, empathy and religiosity explain variations in bystander intervention behavior independently and jointly?
4. Are there statistically significant differences in adherence to social norms, empathy, religiosity and bystander intervention behavior with respect to demographic variables (i.e., gender, grade level, family structure, parents' educational level and income)?
5. What are the lived experiences and views of the students regarding the influence of social norms, empathy and religiosity on bystander intervention behavior?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the role of social norms, empathy, and religiosity in explaining bystander intervention behavior among high school students in Addis Ababa using scenario-based vignettes.

Specifically, the study is intended to:

- Assess the level of bystander intervention behavior among high school students.
- Determine the influence of social norms on bystander intervention behavior.
- Examine the relationship between empathy and bystander intervention.
- Evaluate the role of religiosity in explaining intervention behavior.

- Investigate the combined contribution of social norms, empathy, and religiosity to bystander intervention behavior.

1.5. Research Hypotheses

Based on the research questions and existing literature, the following hypotheses were formulated to guide statistical testing:

H1: Higher adherence to social norms is positively associated with bystander intervention behavior among high school students.

H2: Higher levels of empathy are positively associated with bystander intervention behavior.

H3: Higher levels of religiosity are positively associated with bystander intervention behavior.

H4: Social norms, empathy, and religiosity jointly predict bystander intervention behavior.

Accordingly, each hypothesis is directly linked to a specific research question:

Research Question 2 is linked to Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 2, and Hypothesis 3

Research Question 3 is linked to Hypothesis 4

Research Question 1, Research Question 4, and Research Question 5 are not linked to formal hypotheses and are explored descriptively or qualitatively.

By aligning hypotheses with research questions, this study ensures a clear framework for statistical testing and facilitates the interpretation of results within the theoretical and empirical context of bystander intervention research.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study will contribute valuable information to the various stakeholders involved in the issues of school safety and pro-social behavior. For the educational organizations, the study findings can help guide and evaluate strategies for comprehensive anti-bullying program design,

conflict management programs, and intervention programs to promote peer supportive network. Teachers and school counselors can use the results to establish a successful empathy training program and to promote positive social norms that motivate bystander intervention. Policymakers can also use the evidence obtained by this study to formulate national or local initiatives that promote school safety and reduce passive bystander behavior in schools of Ethiopia.

The students will also benefit indirectly from this study as they will have safer, more protected, inclusive and supportive schools and through awareness raising efforts. Academically speaking, the study is a valuable contribution to a limited area of research. Future researchers can build on the current findings which provide first local evidence about bystander behavior, social norms, empathy and religiosity in schools of Ethiopia and similar cultural context. Additionally, by highlighting the important factors which promote prosocial behavior and by developing context-specific measures through scenario-based vignettes, the current study offers valuable information and a good base for future study which leads to effective intervention and wider use in the domain of school and social psychology.

1.7. Scope of the Study

This study examined high school students because the adolescent period (Grades 9–12) is an important developmental time period in which peer dynamics, social norms and identity hold the greatest influence over behavior. It is during this time period that students are most exposed to bullying, peer pressure and bystander interactions because they are becoming more aware of and sensitive to their peers but have yet to develop complete coping and intervention skills. High school students are also exposed to more advanced peer interactions than their younger

counterparts and thus this is an appropriate population in which to study the effects of social norms, empathy and religiosity on intervention behavior.

The research includes both government and non-religious private high schools in Addis Ababa to capture a variety of school environments while keeping them comparable. Non-religious private schools were chosen to ensure that religiosity reflects personal beliefs rather than institutional influence, while government schools add diversity and improve representativeness.

The three predictor variables of bystander interventions that were chosen to be included in the study are social norms, empathy, and religiosity. Research has demonstrated that these three variables are strong predictors of bystander intervention. Social norms are relative to group power and indicate how indeed the perception of peer influence is determined by decisions to either defend or stay passive. Empathy instructs toward victim welfare and elaborates defending behavior. Religiosity is relevant in Ethiopia as individual prosocial behaviors are motivated by individual religious and moral values.

It is relatively straightforward to determine the sample of data collected within the context of primary schools, universities, and religious-based schools. Schools for younger children are excluded because they lack the developmental maturity to respond accurately to hypothetical scenarios. University students are excluded because they are more autonomous social actors and their bystander behavior is less comparable to high school students. Religious schools have been excluded as it is necessary to eliminate institutional influences in order to accurately measure the constructs of religiosity. Therefore, data are collected from students in

high schools within both government and non-religious private schools. This developmental point, conceptual clarity, and definitional appropriateness is maintained.

1.8. Conceptual and Operational Definitions

- **Bystander Intervention Behavior:** refers how willing a student is to intervene when bullying, harassment, or conflict occurs amongst their fellow students (Latané & Darley, 1970). In this research it was measured using of the Scenario Based Bystander Intervention Scale, a tool which is inspired by Latané and Darley's (1970) Bystander Intervention model and vignette-based previous studies undertaken within schools (Thornberg et al., 2012; Meter & Card, 2015). Scenarios involved brief accounts depicting various instances of peer-related bullying and conflicts as they may take place in an Ethiopian high school context, varying in intensity and peer group dynamics.
- **Social Norms:** refers to students' perceptions of what peers, parents (religious authority included), teachers, and members of the school community generally believe is expected of them, approve of, or usually do in regards to intervention with regard to bullying, harassment, or peer conflicts. In this study, social norms were assessed through a modified version of Perceived School Social Norms Scale, grounded in the theory of social norms (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990) as well as prior school-based bystander literature (Perkins, 2003; Thornberg et al., 2012).
- **Empathy:** refers to a student's ability to understand, share, and emotionally respond to the feelings and experiences of others, especially peers who are facing distress, bullying, or unfair treatment (Davis, 1983; Batson, 1991; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). In this study, empathy was measured using an adapted version of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index

(IRI) developed by Davis (1983), which has been widely validated for adolescents. The scale includes items assessing both cognitive empathy (understanding others' perspectives) and affective empathy (emotional concern for others' suffering).

- **Religiosity:** The extent to which individuals internalize, value, and practice religious beliefs, allowing these beliefs to guide moral decisions and prosocial behavior. Religiosity often strengthens moral responsibility and compassion toward others (Koenig, 2012; Pargament, 2007). In this study, religiosity was measured using an adapted version of the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS-5) developed by Huber and Huber (2012). The scale assesses the importance of religious beliefs and practices in students' lives, covering ideological, ritualistic, and moral dimensions.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

This chapter deals with review of related literatures and conceptual definition, theoretical frameworks, and various empirical studies both local and international and an assessment of the relationship between the variables were reviewed in this chapter.

2.1. Basic Concepts, Assessment, and Theories of Bystander Intervention Behavior

2.1.1. Basic Concepts of Bystander Intervention Behavior

Bystander intervention behavior is the process of thought, emotion, and action in which a bystander to an emergency, dangerous, or morally troubling situation chooses whether to respond or passively ignore. This term was derived from a series of social psychology studies by Latané and Darley (1970). The experiment indicated that as the amount of bystanders increased, the frequency of helpful situations decreased, a result coined "the bystander effect." Their explanation of bystander behavior was a step-wise process that required the bystander to notice the event, interpret it as an emergency, assume responsibility for intervening, possess the appropriate skills to help, and ultimately help.

Bystander intervention in contemporary research is defined as a spectrum of behaviors, from non-intervention, to indirect forms of assistance, to direct action (Evans & Smokowski, 2015). In the high school literature, these behaviors can be observed in a number of situations, including bullying, aggressive behavior, social exclusion, cyberbullying, sexual harassment, and other peer conflicts. This bystander response typology has been extended in the literature to include four essential responses; defending, reporting, passive watching, and reinforcing the aggressor (Waasdorp et al., 2014). This multidimensional framework indicates that bystander

behaviors may be influenced by an individual's personality and the roles of others in the social context.

In adolescent populations especially high school students' bystander behavior is significantly affected by peer factors, social identity, developmental issues, moral culture and social consequences of behaviors (Pozzoli & Gini, 2010).

In Ethiopia, bystander intervention behaviour is often informed by cultural values and social institutions that are prevalent in the community. Factors such as *yilugnta* (fear of social judgment) and *andinet* (unity) are likely to have an impact on students' decision whether to intervene or remain passive in the face of bullying. Given that Ethiopian adolescents tend to be socialized to prioritize group harmony and avoid potentially embarrassing situations in the public domain, bystander failure to intervene may be more likely in Ethiopia even where students acknowledge the moral obligation to act (Eijigu & Teketel, 2021). Another factor that might influence bystander intervention in secondary schools in Ethiopia is the cultural value of *lelochen merdat* (helping others), exemplified by community-based organizations such as *Idir*, *Ekub*, and *Mahiber*, which could reinforce prosocial behaviour. The interplay between the fear of social judgment (*yilugnta*) and obligation to provide altruistic assistance (*lelochen merdat*) explains the highly contextual nature of bystander behaviour in Ethiopia.

2.1.2. Assessment of Bystander Intervention Behavior

The understanding of bystander behavior has improved dramatically during the last 20 years. Contemporary assessment methods combine various levels, such as helping intention, likelihood of helping in different situations, perceived responsibility and self-efficacy.

Commonly used psychometric measures are the Bystander Intervention Measure, the Bullying Bystander Behavior Scale, and the Bystander Attitudes and Intentions Scale.

A research, such as (Steinvik, H.R., Duffy, A.L. & Zimmer-Gembeck, M.J., 2024) is based on scenario-based vignettes, where students report whether and how they would react in a hypothetical bullying or cyberbullying situation. These types of vignettes tend to assess a range of response types including direct action (e.g., tell the bully to stop), indirect actions (e.g., get the attention of a figure of authority), and withdrawal actions (e.g., walk away) and are appropriate in a high school setting where researchers are more concerned with the influence of the reporting of responses by social desirability and peer pressure.

Assessment also utilizes variables of self-efficacy, moral disengagement, and perceived responsibility all of which are powerful predictors of intervention. Reports by Foubert, Mwavita, Hunger, Kao, and Pittman-Adkins (2022) demonstrate that both empathy and religiosity increase prosocial tendencies with increased chances of intervention which supports these predictors. Episodic measures yield ecological validity to high school context in Ethiopia.

These findings are in line the decision to use scenario-based vignettes, as they more closely resemble the real life reactions of Ethiopian teenagers in an educational environment. As social norms, empathy and religion all reliably predict prosocial intervention they are set as the predictors in this study. The evidence also supports concentrating on these factors.

2.1.3. Major Theories Explaining Bystander Intervention

2.1.3.1. Latané and Darley's Five-Step Cognitive Model

A helpful behavior can only occur if an individual moves through five steps of decision-making in, 'noticing an event, interpreting that event as an emergency, accepting personal responsibility for helping, knowing how to help, and actually helping, even at some risk to oneself' (Darley & Batson, 1973, p. 100). Failure at any stage results in failure to intervene. Understanding these decision-making stages can illuminate reasons why students might fail to intervene in order to stop harm.

Further, these stages become one of supporting framework for this study's, emphasis on social norms, empathy, and religiosity as factors contributing to high school students' ability to successfully pass through these stages.

2.1.3.2. The Theory of Planned Behavior

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, a person's actions are influenced by three main factors: attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). Attitudes reflect how someone evaluates helping or intervening, subjective norms are the perceived expectations of important others especially peers and perceived behavioral control (similar to self-efficacy) is the belief in one's ability to act effectively.

The relevance of this theory to this study lies in the discussion of social norms as part of the theory. Research indicates that subjective norms are strong predictors of bystander intervention during adolescence (Salmivalli, 2010; Pozzoli & Gini, 2013; Evans & Smokowski, 2015). For instance, when students believe their peers are supportive of and expect intervention, students are more likely to intervene in situations of victimization (Salmivalli, 2010; Pozzoli & Gini, 2013; Evans & Smokowski, 2015). These three studies clearly show that the behavior of adolescents (bystander intervention) depends heavily upon what the group (peers) expects.

Therefore, drawing from these findings, social norms will be used as a predictor of bystander intervention behavior in this study. Specifically, the TPB gives a conceptual basis for explaining the decision to intervene based on influence from peers and group expectation in Ethiopian high schools.

Further research suggests that for bystander's intervention, not only is moral reasoning involved, but also other domain processes such as cognition, emotions, perceived peer norms, and situational contexts. For instance, fear of embarrassing oneself or getting retaliated can dampen intervention, but a supportive school climate and prosocial peer norms would motivate intervention (Salmivalli, 2010). Empathy is a strong predictor of bystander helping, with students who feel more empathy more likely to aid a victim (Zhou et al., 2020). Religiosity has been associated with greater moral responsibility and less passivity, especially in culturally religious communities (Laird et al., 2011). High school students are more likely to act if they feel peer presumed norms toward intervention.

2.2. Basic Concepts, Assessment, and Theories of Social norms

2.2.1. Basic Concepts of Social Norms

Social norms are shared attitudes, expectations and rules (formal and informal) that a group of people have about appropriate behavior (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). They dictate what is right and wrong or normal and abnormal within a community of people.

Two categories of norms exist: descriptive norms, beliefs about what most others are doing, e.g., high school students who believe "most students do nothing" to stop persecution are unlikely to intervene. Injunctive norms, on the other hand, are what people believe ought to

happen, e.g., students may participate in bystander action despite any social risks because they believe their peers want them to take that action.

The influence of social norms on the willingness of bystanders to take action has been widely documented. Social norms whether descriptive or injunctive are a significant predictor whether students will intervene or not (Nickerson et al., 2022). When thinking about intervening in a peer assault, one of the strongest influencing factors is the desire to gain approval from their peers

In high schools the need to ‘fit in’ is much greater than in adulthood because friendships, peer groups and group identifications direct people's most routine activities. In the Ethiopian setting, social norms are rooted in tight collectivist cultures and traditional cultural norms such as *yilugnta* (fear of social embarrassment), *acha guadegna* (peer friendship) and *andinet* (unity). Studies among Ethiopian adolescents show that the desire to preserve social harmony and to avoid social embarrassment in public is stronger than individual moral compasses (Eijigu & Teketel, 2021). Similar traditional institutions like *Idir*, *Ekub*, and *Mahiber* further enhances norms of reciprocity and group responsibility (Moges, 2019). The effect of these cultural norms could be a student intervening or just as a bystander in the school.

2.2.2. Assessment of Social Norms

Measures of social norms are often self-report questionnaires, vignettes or scenario analyses. Several studies have measured norms about peer performance or peer intervention (descriptive norms), peer approval (injunctive norms), adult/teacher expectations and norms about specific issues (e.g. bullying). An important measure used in this study is the Perceived Social Norms Questionnaire (perceived norms scale), which asks students to what extent they

think peers require intervention, approve help, support standing up for the victim and consider intervention a typical behavior. This scale measures descriptive and injunctive norms.

Similarly, research indicates that norms influence program effectiveness. For instance, Waasdorp et al. (2022) note that perceptions of "school climate, teacher expectations, and peer culture influence how likely students are to engage in prosocial behavior," (p. 16). Similarly, Barlińska, Szuster, and Winiewski (2018) employ situational vignettes to explore students' perceptions of the behaviors of most peers in online and offline scenarios. In Ethiopian high schools, where belongingness in groups is highly valued, assessment of both individual attitudes regarding norms and actual peer norm expectations is critical, and the use of a measure of peer expectations, norms and social acceptance has high construct validity for bystander interventions in the current context.

2.2.3. Theories Explaining Social Norms and Their Influence on Behavior

2.2.3.1. Social Norms Theory

Social Norm Theory (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990) proposes that individuals comply with a group's acceptable behavior standards for the sake of group acceptance and the avoidance of sanctions. This theory differentiates between descriptive normative beliefs, or perceptions of prevalent group behavior, and injunctive normative beliefs, or perceptions of socially approved behavior. As adolescents' peer group influences have a greater effect on their decision to intervene in situations of bullying, their beliefs about their friends' prevention action and what behaviors are socially-rewarded or sanctioned will affect their creation of a climate conducive for intervention. This perception of peer action may be used to motivate intervention and social norms misconception could be used to escalate the bystander effect.

2.2.3.2. Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) suggests norms are a result of observation, imitation, and reinforcement. In high schools students are more likely to intervene in bullying if they observe their peers or teachers engaging in positive intervention, promoting positive social norms. Conversely, an environment that is passivity sends cues that silence is an appropriate norm. Witnessing others intervene in favor of bystanders will increase normative self-efficacy resulting in a decreased fear of intervening (established in earlier section). Additionally, a school norm that promotes positive intervention will be maintained where a positive climate allows students to observe and learn positive intervening models.

Bystander intervention is affected by more than knowledge of right and wrong. Bystander intervention is mediated by a host of other factors ranging from peer norms, and school climate, to emotion, moral values, and cognition. The effect of peer influence and school climate demonstrate the importance of the social environment on pro- or anti- bystander behavior. Empathy, an emotional motivator, has direct influence on intervention, and religiosity can increase perceived moral obligation and decrease passivity. The likelihood of intervening is decreased when fear exists of negative evaluations, reprimanding, and/or embarrassment. However, students are more likely to intervene if they believe their peers and/or school authorities will do so.

These results imply that high school intervention programs need to do more than just promote awareness. They need to promote peer norms, reinforce prosocial norms, and promote a supporting school climate. Although high school research has been done, not many studies examine how various norms interact with the emotional and moral influences in different

populations, and in particular, in Ethiopian high schools. For this study to design measures aimed to promote active bystander behavior it will need to test both descriptive and injunctive norms, evaluate students' moral reasoning, and address their emotional motivation to help.

2.3. Basic Concepts, Assessment, and Theories of Empathy

2.3.1. Basic Concepts of Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand, feel, and respond to the emotions of others. It is one of the strongest emotional predictors of helping behavior and bystander intervention (Davis, 1983; Batson, 1991).

Empathy can be divided into a cognitive component, understanding another's needs and perspective, and an affective component, feeling what another is feeling (e.g., distressed, sad; Bandura, 1977; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). Both types of empathy positively influence prosocial behavior in bystanders; however, it is affective empathy feeling another's pain that appears to best predict bystander intervention in bullying (Gini, Pozzoli, & Hymel, 2014). Other research has found that experiencing distress in response to a victimized peer increases the bystanders' moral concern and others' suffering, thus motivating bystander action (Fida et al., 2015). Students that have a high level of empathy are most likely to comfort victims, intervene, report perpetrators of the harassment, and refuse to participate in the situation as passive bystanders, even in an online setting (Machackova, Pazlerová, & Smahel, 2013).

In adolescence, empathy has been highlighted as an important construct due to developmentally increased emotional and social shifts, especially with regard to sensitivity to the emotions of peers and perceptions of group norms (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987). Within Ethiopian culture, the development of empathy is further supported by consociation, essentially

living in close groups with interdependent social relationships. The emphasis of any community on the responsibility for the safety of members of the community extends to peers, who are often viewed as victims and those experiencing emotional distress. Institutions such as the *lelochen merdat* (helping others), or support system ensure social cohesion and the mutual responsibility for others' emotion through the maintenance of emotional attunement such as *Idir*, *Ekubs*, *Sergs*, *Hazens* and *Mahibers* (Moges, 2019). For this reason, Ethiopian adolescents may have a stronger motivation to act as bystanders, though this action is highly contextualized; it is likely that intervening with these peers will be hindered by social norms, both those that defer respect to older peers and display disciplined independence, and those that maintain the harmony between peers and social status groups (Eijigu & Teketel, 2021).

2.3.2. Assessment of Empathy

Empathy is assessed via standardized measures. Since this study will use a measure of empathy, Davis' (1983) Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) a commonly used, multidimensional measure may be appropriate. The tool assesses empathy using four subscales: Perspective Taking (ability to adopt others' perspectives), Empathic Concern (feeling experiences), Personal Distress, and the Fantasy scale; the first two are the strongest predictors of helping behavior. With respect to high school bullying, research has found that improved emotional awareness and regulation both facets of empathy helps adolescents to better respond with empathy to victims of bullying and other bullying perpetrators, and adolescents with heightened empathy and emotional competence are more likely to come to the aid of victims and to speak up against harmful acts (Mavroveli et al., 2007). Reports of empathy using standardized measures have predicted bystander responses in cases of cyberbullying, so an adapted measure should be relevant

for side-effects of in-school bullying too. However, since in Ethiopian high schools come from a collectivistic culture that emphasizes emotional restraint, students may report differently on the measure so its adaptation is crucial.

2.3.3. Theories and Models of Empathy

2.3.3.1. Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis

According to Batson's Empathy-Altruism Theory (Batson, 1991), Altruistic behavior driven by true concern for others and not selfish motives is due to sympathetic emotions. Empathy is a good predictor of defending and reporting behavior in bullying as well as being able to explain the relationship between spirituality and prosocial behavior (Batson, 1991; Fida, et al., 2015; Machackova, et al., 2013). Existing research supports this hypothesis and can explain why compassionate students are more likely to intervene in bullying. In this way, this theory is directly applicable to this study as empathy is in fact the best predictor of bystander intervention.

2.3.3.2. Perception–Action Model

(Preston & de Waal, 2002) describes empathy as an automatic reaction that if one sees another in pain then their neural network that is associated with pain is stimulated in the observer. Therefore, empathetic distress pressures the empathizer to act immediately. This is consistent with the research by Foubert, Mwavita, Hunger, Kao and Pittman-Adkins (2022) that an individual's emotional contagion plays a significant role in predicting the person's prosocial behavior.

2.3.3.3. Dual-Process Model of Empathy

The Dual-Process Model of Empathy (Decety & Lamm, 2006) suggests that empathy functions through two interrelated systems of sensation; a) cognitive perspective-taking, in which one can better comprehend the experience of others and b) emotional resonance, the capacity to experience others feelings. When both systems are activated there will be higher prosocial behaviors. Adolescent students that participate in bystander programs that develop both prospective and emotional empathy are shown to have higher moral judgments, more willingness to intervene in bullying situations, and higher lack of tolerance for aggression.

Empathy is one of the strongest predictors of defending behaviors. Students high in empathy are more likely to comfort victims, help to end the bullying, report the bullies, and stand up to aggression (Gini, Pozzoli, & Hymel, 2014; Fida et al., 2015). Students who lack empathy are more likely to be passive bystanders responding to the bullying with fear, emotional callousness, encouraging aggression, and even normalizing violence (Gini et al., 2014; Fida et al., 2014). Empathy counteracts the negative effects of nonintervention norms. Where effects of norms promote intervention, empathy increases likelihood of helping others; where norms do not promote intervention, empathy overcomes the social pressure to do nothing. Religiosity can increase empathy, which then influences the relationship between spiritual commitment and pro-social action (Fida et al., 2015). A climate of care in the school environment where teachers and students model concern for victims also helps teach and nurture empathy (Gini et al., 2014).

2.4. Basic Concepts, Assessment, and Theories of Religiosity

2.4.1. Basic Concepts of Religiosity

Religiosity is a measure of how religiously people practice, accept, and regard the teachings, practices, and behaviors of a religious tradition including belief, worship, and moral

commitment. (Koenig, 2012; Pargament, 2007). In adolescence, particularly within strongly religious societies, religiosity influences the formation of a moral identity, emotional development, and prosocial behavior. It provides a moral compass to remind individuals to regard self-control and to avoid harmful behaviors, and internalizes appropriate behaviors and desires. (Gao, Xu, & Cheung, 2017).

In high school, religious commitment has actually been found to be correlated with higher levels of moral reasoning, empathic concern, and helping others in need. Religiosity is defined as having an intrinsic faith, an extrinsic motive, engaging in religious practices (e.g. prayer, scripture, worship), and comfort in moral values (e.g. compassion, kindness, forgiveness) (Allport & Ross, 1967; Koenig, 2012). It has been found that students who report deeper religious values are less likely to engage in damage, more likely to feel concern for victims, and more likely to get involved to helping someone else (Fida, Pownah, Barry, & Schneeberger, 2015).

Within Ethiopia, multiple spiritual systems Orthodox Christianity, Islam, and Protestantism are practiced widely and influence the moral development of adolescents. For example, religious rituals such as *haymanotawi temhert* (religious learning), and *tsebel* (holy water healing ceremony) influence the internalization of egalitarian mores in the Christian, Muslim, and Protestant believers (Moges, 2019) by defining a distributive orientation rooted in compassion, forgiveness, concern for others, and community support. However, religiosity does not necessarily determine bystander actions in bullying scenarios. For instance, even though Ethiopian adolescents are likely to internalize religious messages of helping others, the processing of these norms in bullying contexts is shaped by deviant peer influences and the fear

of social judgment (*yilugnta*). Empirical data drawn from surveyed schools in Addis Ababa revealed that although students endorsed religiously-motivated prosocial principles, there was no significant connection between religiosity and intervention when faced with bystanders' fears of vengeance or condemnation (Tura, 2019).

2.4.2. Assessment of Religiosity

Religiosity is usually measured by validated self-report scales, such as the Religious Commitment Scale CRS-5, which measures beliefs, behaviors, and moral reliability, or by ways of rating them, such as frequency of attendance to religious services, prayer, and religious practices, or by particular (emotionally based) beliefs that influence ways of acting (e.g. compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, and prosocial responses). Foubert et al. (2022) found that adolescents with higher scores on measures of religiosity scored higher on moral motivation and lower on tolerance to evil and likelihood to intervene. Likewise, studies found that religiosity is a unique way of regulating morality, which bolsters internal controls to prevent negative effects (which in this study, specifically refers to non-intervention, also a form of moral inaction). In Ethiopian high schools religion is reinforced through prayer groups, youth fellowships, churches and mosques programs and religious holidays all functioning as positive reinforcements of moral codes. To this end, the questionnaire will include both items based on religious belief and behavior in order to increase validity and sufficiently capture the impact of religion on bystander behavior.

2.4.3. Theories Explaining Religiosity and Prosocial/Bystander Behavior

2.4.3.1. Moral Development Theory

Kohlberg (1984) believed that moral reasoning operates in stages, beginning with a focus on self-interest and obeying the rules of authority and culminating in a focus on justice and moral principles. Religious beliefs can guide adolescents into higher stages of moral development. Researchers found that religious adolescents value justice and charity, view bullying as wrong and believe it is their moral obligation to help weak victims of bullying (Fida et al., 2015; Koenig, 2012). Morally grounded in religious belief, the positive moral principles intrinsically encourage students to behave in ways that protect and promote others.

2.4.3.2. Empathy-Mediated Religiosity Model

The Empathy-Mediated Religiosity Model empirical evidence demonstrates that it is indeed through empathy that religiosity and prosocial behaviors are intertwined. Religions that preach kindness, acceptance, forgiveness, and compassion increase adolescent empathy for others' pain and suffering and subsequently, action to alleviate their suffering (Fida et al., 2015, Machackova et al., 2013). This model provides a precise explanation for the process of how religion's moral and emotional influences promote bystander intervention. This model illustrates how religious beliefs' emotional and moral influence work in tandem to motivate students to take action against bullying and help classmates in need.

Research collectively suggests that religiosity promotes bystander prosociality in adolescents. Religious students report more prosocial help-seeking, less aggression, and victim defending (Fida et al., 2015; Koenig, 2012). Religious scales of moral judgment discourage bystander silence. Empathy acts as a mediating mechanism through which religiosity influences intervention behaviors religious students report higher empathy and emotional distress upon hearing of violations, which motivates intervention (Fida et al., 2015).

Religiosity increases moral obligation to intervene, discouraging bullying and other antisocial behaviors, and decreases adolescent moral disengagement, decreasing adolescents' tendencies to justify bullying or ignore violence. Because adolescents in Ethiopia are highly religious in general, these results may carry even more weight for the children's behavior, though there is little knowledge about the interaction of religiosity with norms and peer group effects. Thus, this research explores the potential impact of religiosity in both the direct and mediated forms of the path from religiosity to intervention through empathy, and investigates the interaction of religiosity and social norms to inform culturally appropriate interventions for Ethiopian high schools.

2.5. Empirical Review on the Relationships among the Variables

2.5.1. Empirical Review on the Relationships between Social Norms and Bystander

Intervention Behavior

There is evidence that both injunctive and descriptive peer norms are strong predictors of bystander intervention among adolescents. Both injunctive peer norms and descriptive peer norms influence whether students step up or shut down for bullies (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990; Perkins & Berkowitz, 1986). When helping is seen as normative and socially desirable, intervention is more likely to occur than when helping is seen as deviant. When peer approval is high, injunctive norms tend to be stronger predictors, although the reverse is true in schools where students feel their peers judge their actions more harshly (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). Additionally, school climate influences bystander behavior; when students sense that teachers support intervention and their peer group disapproves of aggression, intervention increases whereas when school norms condone violence, interventional behavior is low (Cornell et al., 2016).

With regard to cyberbullying, adolescents who observe other students reaching out to online victims are more inclined to help offline (Machackova et al., 2013). In general, social norms are reliable predictors of bystander conduct. When other individuals condone the act, bystanders are less likely to intervene. Conversely, when other individuals condemn the act, bystanders are more likely to seek help. School climate, peer pressure, empathy, and religiosity all intensify the effects of social norms and exemplify their importance in adolescents' moral action.

2.5.2. Empirical Review on the Relationships between Empathy and Bystander

Intervention Behavior

Empathy is also associated with defending, comforting, and reporting; empathic adolescents show increased understanding of damaging situations and moral concern for victims through cognitive and affective empathy (Davis, 1983). Fida, et al. (2015) found empathy to be a predictor of prosocial defending when controlling for religiosity and gratitude; affective empathy of feeling the victim's pain has the strongest direct effect, while perspective taking allows the adolescent to understand the victim's point of view and perceive the urgency of the situation. In the case of cyberbullying, empathy is linked to prosocial online help, this including comforting the victim, reporting the harmful content, and discouraging the aggressor, and these behaviors can generalize to face to face contexts (Machackova, et al., 2013).

Similarly, emotional intelligence as awareness and regulation is also most efficacious in conjunction with empathy to further foster prosocial behavior (Mavroveli, Petrides, Rieffe & Bakker, 2007). In general, empathy decreases victim-blaming and enhances moral judgment, which in turn enhances adolescents' bystanderness to assume defender responsibilities. Therefore

empathy is one of the strongest emotion predictors in predicting high school students' bystander behavior.

2.5.3. Empirical Review on the Relationships between Religiosity and Bystander

Intervention Behavior

Research has shown that religiosity increases prosocial behavior, moral responsibility, and defending in adolescents, serving as a moral compass and a "caring guide" to prevent transgressions (Koenig, 2012, p. 649; Pargament, 2007). Religiosity enhances moral self-regulation, theoretically allowing adolescents to take up the cause of preventing harm and promoting helping (Gao et al., 2017). Such studies suggest that in a bullying context, conformity to moral values staves off inaction. Fida et al. (2015) found religiosity had a direct effect on prosocial behavior, and an indirect effect through empathy, which acted as a mediator of defending and comforting. Several other studies indicate that religiosity decreases aggression and delinquency, fosters concepts of justice, forgiveness, and helping those in need.

In a country such as Ethiopia, where religion is a big part of adolescents' lives, these effects are even more strengthened through moral messages from religious institutions, youth groups, through messages in sermons, and through lessons learned at home. In sum, religiosity is a positive moral predictor of bystander intervention that boosts empathy, discourages aggression, and motivates helping behavior.

2.6. Differences in Variables as a Function of Demographic Characteristics

Earlier studies have shown that adolescent's altruistic attitudes, socioemotional functioning, religiosity and prosocial behaviors differ by sociodemographic factors (i.e., gender, grade and age). Exploring gender, grade and age differences in these variables is important

because it aids in understanding which groups of students are more or less apt to help or intervene in instances of peer bullying and conflict. This will enable school-based interventions to be more tailored to students' developmental and social needs.

Research examining bystander behavior and attitudes repeatedly finds gender effects among the adolescent sample, with female adolescents being more empathetic and more likely to engage in prosocial, defending bystander behaviors than males. Males may be less motivated to intervene, partly because boys are often socialized not to show their feelings or help others (Eisenberg et al., 2015; Thornberg & Jungert, 2013). In addition, studies find sex differences in social normative perceptions and religiosity, indicating boys and girls may experience different distributive base guidelines and feeling rules for intervention.

Age and grade level are positively correlated during adolescence and are clearly important in the development of cognitive skills, moral development, and social awareness. Older participants, and those in higher grade levels, may possess a higher cognitive level of perspective-taking and social awareness such that they are more likely to recognize when bullying intervention is necessary. However, such adolescents might also be more sensitive to peer evaluations and social reputation and therefore less likely to intervene.

Likewise, family background and socioeconomic status may also impact adolescents' internal work related to attitudes, answers, and reactions. Parental education, family income, and membership in different combinations of successful arrangements of parental involvement may influence the students' levels of moral reasoning, sensitivity toward others, and religious participation. Students who come from wealthier, more resourceful homes and/or who have close

parental involvement are probably given more explicit moral direction, encouragement to help others, and opportunities to be more empathetic.

In the existing literature, the present study examined whether social norms, empathy, religiosity, and bystander intervention behaviors differ across key demographic variables, including sex, age, income and grade level. These analyses are intended to provide descriptive and comparative insights that complement the study's primary focus on identifying predictors of prosocial bystander intervention among Ethiopian high school students.

2.7. Summary and Implications of the Reviewed Literature

Empirical evidence exists for high school bystanders and their intervening behaviors with regards to social norms, empathy, and religion, which predicts prosocial defending behaviors at school). There is a significant influence of social norms (descriptive norms: what most peers do, injunctive norms: what most peers think they should do) on adolescent's intervention intentions. An affirming campus climate and positive peer ap-proval promote intervention while uncertainty and peer disapproval promote silence (Cialdini, 1990; Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). Empathy offers the emotional motivation to act, affective empathy helps students feel moved to aid victims, cognitive empathy enables one to understand experiences that others have, and empathetic adolescents are better able to resist peer pressure and intervention bystanders (Fida et al., 2015; Machackova et al., 2013). Religiosity enhances the moral obligation, compassion and prosocial behavior originating from religious commitment, often using empathy as an intermediary, demonstrating the motivation for defending behavior arising from moral and emotional processes of religiousness (Koenig, 2012; Gao et al., 2017).

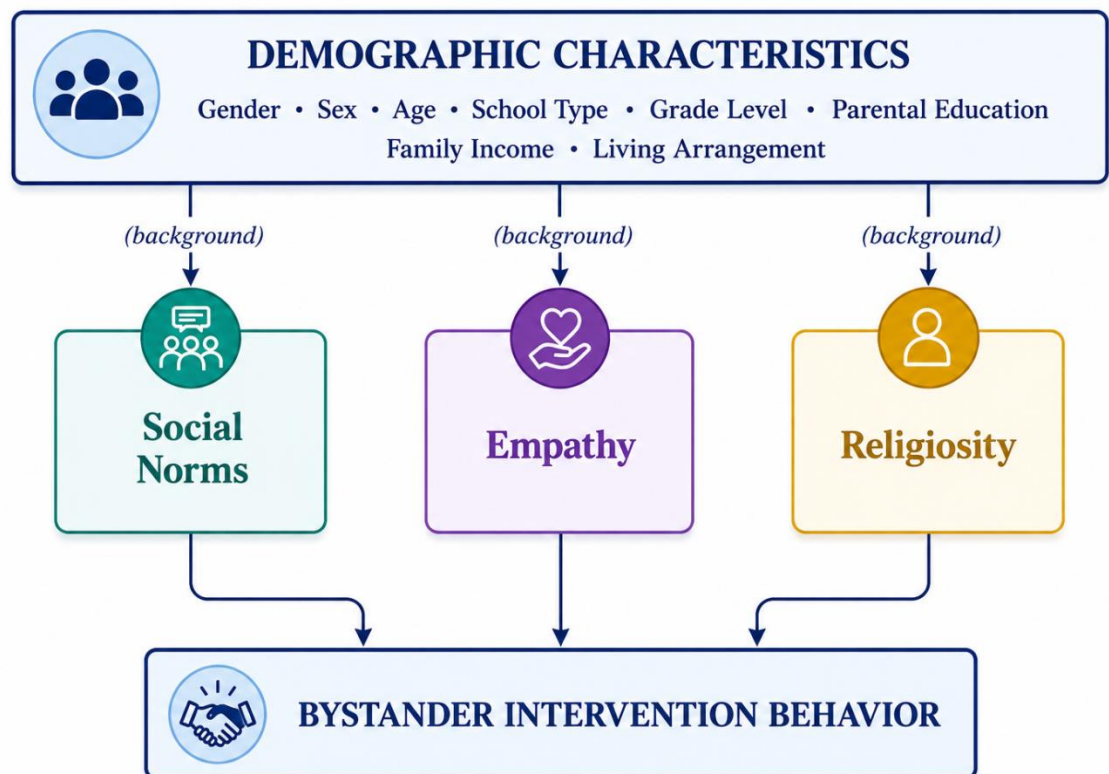
These three factors offer a rather simple picture of the social situation: empathic students, guided by religion to intervene, and members of prosocial peer groups, will intervene. Negative norms may deter even empathic students from intervening unless moral or religious values motivate them. Despite abundant evidence that all three factors influence bystander intervention several gaps in the literature that this study intends to close. First, no research has been conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa, and few have examined all three variables at once. Second, at the high school level there is minimal evidence from Ethiopia, but given the predominance of collectivism, religion, and leader-peer combinations that can influence intervention uniquely in this cultural context, different patterns of results may emerge.

The literature reviewed has a number of important implications for theory, practice and research in Ethiopia. Theoretically, this study (and future research) can draw upon Social Norms Theory, the Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis, Moral Development Theory and Social Identity Theory to provide an empirically grounded theoretical explanation of what motivates adolescents to help others, weaving social norms, empathy and religiosity into a culturally pertinent bystander framework (Norms $\times$ Empathy $\times$ Religiosity). Intellectually, educators can accentuate prosocial values through the social inculturation of behaviors (such as helping) that are introduced to normalize the practice, while at the same time encouraging or strengthening in-group empathy and helping behavior and religious morals in the reinforcement of character education. These efforts should be a culturally specific and appropriate combination of Ethiopian values of community, religious morals, and social expectations of helping others.

From a research perspective, the lack of local studies highlights the need for culturally sensitive investigations into adolescent bystander behavior. This study provides a foundation for

understanding how religious values and communal norms shape helping behavior in Ethiopian schools, while future research could examine other factors such as ethnicity, school disciplinary systems, and digital environments to better understand bystander intervention in the Ethiopian context.

Conceptual model of the study



The conceptual model focuses on the three psychological predictors (social norms, empathy, and religiosity). Demographic variables were examined separately using t-tests and ANOVA to identify group differences, and are not included in the core predictive model.

Context-specific social norms, empathy, and religiosity all impact how high school students respond to aggressive/harmful situations and these factors interact with each other.

Social norms the extent to which the situation is controlled externally in terms of peer and school expectations guide responses by sending signals to intervene or passivity (eg, sit back and watch). Empathy the extent to which students internally experience concern for others - promote responses involving help and caring. Religiosity primes responses of comfort, as it discourages aggression, and feeds into the more interventionist responses of help and caring.

Chapter Three

Methods

This chapter is focuses on how the study was conducted. It includes the research design, study area, population, sampling procedures, instruments, data collection steps, validity and reliability issues, ethical considerations, and data analysis techniques.

3.1. Research Approach and Design

This research employed a mixed methods approach, combining a quantitative scenario based quasi experimental design, with brief qualitative questions. This approach was chosen as it would help to investigate trends in bystander intervention behavior as well as provide room for students' reasoning as to why they acted in a certain way. Creswell and Creswell (2018) justify the use of mixed methods research by stating that where variables can be identified numerically, as well as by participants, then a mixed methods approach would be appropriate. This was necessary for bystander behavior since students' reactions to bullying did not just encompass that which could be measured but also personal, interpretation and cultural factors.

Specifically, the study employed a convergent parallel mixed methods design with a primary secondary weighting (QUANT + qual). Quantitative data were collected and analyzed as the main source of evidence, while qualitative data served a supportive, illustrative function to deepen the interpretation of quantitative findings. Both types of data were collected during the same phase (concurrent) and integrated during the interpretation stage.

In the quantitative part of the study, the study employed scenarios that varied in risk and normative cues in which to frame bystander decisions. High risk scenarios showed a situation where it was difficult for the bystander to intervene (e.g., confronting a high status or aggressive

peer) but low risk to the bystander (e.g., safely providing emotional support, or providing information about the incident to an authority figure). Normative cues varied by the presence of peers encouraging intervention (high normative cues), versus peers disengaging or discouraging intervention (low normative cues). Such inclusion of normative cues and differentiation of risk levels in scenarios has been popular in bystander research investigating the role of social norms in decision making (e.g., Salmivalli, 2010; Pozzoli & Gini, 2013).

This design allowed the study to assess the relationships among social norms, empathy, religiosity, and intervention behavior using realistic, culturally appropriate situations. The qualitative questions complemented the quantitative data by capturing students' reasoning and cultural considerations, including factors like Yilugnta (concern for social judgment). Collecting both data types at one point in time provided a clear and contextually grounded understanding of bystander intervention among Ethiopian high school students.

3.2. Study Site and Population

The research was undertaken in two sub-cities of Addis Ababa Arada and Yeka. These sub-cities were chosen to reflect different social, economic and educational contexts of the capital as a city of immense diversity. Arada is one of the oldest, most established sub-cities with haphazardly arranged cramped residential dwellings and old and newly established government schools. Yeka is the fastest growing subcity with new private schools and widely ranging student bodies. Limiting the study to a variety of contexts ensured that we would observe differences in school climates, peer dynamics and socio-cultural influences.

One government and private high school was selected from each sub-city using purposive sampling. Having a public and private school membership in the analysis served to one hand to

give heterogeneity in the composition of student school environments in terms of student composition, academic culture and peer group interaction, variables which may have confounded bystander intervention behavior; and, on the other hand, private schools of the same, non-religious nature enabled religiosity to be examined as an individual-level characteristic and therefore again remove confounding of religiosity by institutional religion instruction through the school.

The total student population from all four schools was 3,354, based on a data gain official statistics from the Addis Ababa City Government Education Bureau and confirmed through administrative records from each selected school for the 2018 E.C (2025/2026 G.C) academic year and a targeted consisted of grades 9–12. Below table 1 show that selected schools and their student populations.

Table 1: *Selected Schools and Student Population by Sub-City and School Type*

Sub-City	School Name	School Type	Male	Female	Total
Arada	Belay Zeleke Secondary School	Government	325	436	761
Arada	Radical Secondary School	Private	264	262	526
Yeka	Tesifa Birhan Secondary School	Government	610	778	1,388
Yeka	Magic Carpet Secondary School	Private	322	357	679

3.3. Sample and Sampling Techniques

The procedure used for sampling was a two-stage stratified random sampling. The whole sample of students was first stratified into school types (public or private school) in order to get

representation from both the groups. The second stratum was done by stratifying students from within each school into Grades 9, 10, 11, 12. Since the above two strata is based on a population, simple random sampling was used within each of the strata.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula (1977):

$$n = \frac{Z^2 p(1-p)}{d^2}$$

Where:

- $Z=1.96$ is the critical value corresponding to a 95% confidence level,
- $p=0.5$ represents the estimated proportion with maximum variability (used here due to lack of prior data),
- $d=0.05$ is the desired margin of error.

= 384

Using this as a guide this study required a minimum sample of 384 students. Due to the possibility that questionnaires may be returned incomplete, an addition of 10% was added to the sample in accordance with Bartlett, Kotrlik and Higgins (2001), so wanted sample is 422 students, and sampled the same proportion of students from the identified four schools in terms of school type and grade.

Following data cleaning, 381 complete and valid responses were available for analysis. The number of complete responses was sufficient for multiple linear regression with three predictor variables. For the detection of a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), power= 0.80 and $\alpha =$

0.05, the minimum sample size (Green, 1991) was $50 + 8k$ (where k = number of predictors in the model), i.e. 74.1 Using a more conservative estimate, Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) suggested that for multiple linear regression N should be greater than $104 + k$, i.e. 107.1 The number of complete responses ($N = 381$) was comfortably above both suggested minimums. A post hoc power calculation in G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2007) identified that, with $N = 381$, $k = 3$, and $\alpha = 0.05$, the statistical power of the analysis to detect a small-to-moderate effect size was > 0.99 ($f^2 = 0.10$), comfortably sufficient for the planned analysis.

3.4. Data Gathering Tools

All instruments were adapted from previous validated scales and translated into Amharic following standard forward-backward translation procedures. The final versions were pilot-tested before the main data collection.

3.4.1. Scenario-Based Bystander Intervention Scale (SBBIS)

The Scenario Based Bystander Intervention Scale (SBBIS) was modified after the theoretical perspective about bystander intervention that had been put forward by Latané and Darley in 1968 and recent vignette-based investigations on students' intentions of helping within the peer and school contexts (Fischer et al., 2011; Thornberg et al., 2012; Pozzoli & Gini, 2013). In this study a total of 10 items in the SBBIS scale: eight of them were positive while two were negative in their direction. The participants rated their agreement using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5).. In the main study, the SBBIS demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .710$).

3.4.2. Social Norm Manipulation Vignettes

The study used researcher-created vignettes to manipulate social norms, derived from the bystander theory and Social Norms Theory (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990). The vignette set consisted of 10 items: 8 positive; 2 negative. Vignettes were developed to be ethically appropriate and age appropriate for adolescents using five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). The scale had an α of .605 in the main study.

3.4.3. Perceived School Social Norms Scale

The Perceived School Social Norms Scale was based on research on social norms (Cialdini et al., 1990; Perkins, 1997) and recent vignettes and school-based investigations demonstrating its applicability to adolescents (Polanin et al., 2012; Thornberg et al., 2012). There were 8 items included in the scale: 6 positively stated and 2 negatively stated. Respondents rated their perceptions using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). In the main study, the scale had $\alpha = .575$, which was moderate but acceptable for an exploratory study due to the situational specificity of social norms.

3.4.4. Empathy Scale – Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI)

Empathy was assessed via an adapted form of the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1983), a reliable measurement tool that is used to measure empathy. Validity of the tool for adolescent and school settings had been confirmed in studies conducted by Jolliffe and Farrington (2006). There were 10 questions on the scale, which consisted of eight positively phrased questions and two negatively phrased questions. Response scale using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1 - strongly disagree; 5 – strongly agree). In the main study, the scale demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .705$)

3.4.5. Religious Commitment Scale

Religiousness was assessed by way of an adapted and expanded version of the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS-5; Huber & Huber, 2012). Apart from the original core items measuring religion's significance for one's life and level of beliefs in God/religious doctrines, new items were included measuring the moral and behavioral relevance of religiosity in a school setting. The CRS thus consisted of 9 items, including 7 positive and 2 negative ones. using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (1 - strongly disagree; 5 – strongly agree). In the main study, reliability of the measure was satisfactory ($\alpha = .607$).

3.4.6. Interviews

The qualitative data was obtained from 16 participants through an interview guide that was developed based on the research questions of this study as well as past studies on the issue of bystander behavior in school settings (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Thornberg, 2015). The interview guide consisted of seven open-ended questions aimed at exploring participants' opinions and perceptions related to the topic of interest.

3.5. Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected by the researcher with the assistance of school coordinators. Data collection took place after obtaining ethical clearance from the relevant institution and official cooperation letters from the concerned education offices and participating schools. These letters were used to secure permission from school administrators and teachers before entering the schools.

Quantitative data were gathered through the use of a standardized, self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to selected high school students during class

hours within the school's premise to ensure easy access and supervision. The process of answering the questionnaire required approximately 25-30 minutes. The data gathering process took two weeks based on the schedule of the schools. The researcher made the purpose of the study known to the respondents and gave proper instruction. It was a voluntary response and respondents can discontinue the process anytime.

The qualitative data were gathered by conducting semi-structured interviews involving a purposeful sampling method on 16 participants who were the students of the participating institutions. These interviews took place in private settings inside the institution, including counseling rooms and empty classrooms, to guarantee the privacy of the interviewees. These interviews typically lasted around 20–30 minutes, to concluding within a week. The purpose of the study was introduced and secured informed consent from each participant prior to initiating the interview process.

3.6. Tool Translation and Validation

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the study variables in both the pilot and main study (see Table 2).

On the whole, the results showed that there is relatively inconsistent yet an acceptable level of reliability. The Bystander Intervention Behavior (BIB) measure in the main study yielded acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .710$), showing a marked improvement from $\alpha = .625$ during the pilot study. In addition, the Empathy (EMP) scale also had improved reliability compared to $\alpha = .539$ in the pilot study with $\alpha = .705$ for the main study. These improvements suggest that item refinement following the pilot study enhanced the internal consistency of these measures.

In addition, the Religiosity (REL) scale exhibited improvement, rising from $\alpha = .389$ in the pilot study to $\alpha = .607$ in the main study. While there was a considerable improvement, however, reliability is still moderate, and only slightly lower than the standard value of .70. This could be due to the limited number of questions in the test and variations in how young people perceive religion.

On the other hand, the internal consistency of the Scenario-Based Social Norms (SBSN) and Perceived School Social Norms (PSSN) measures revealed a decline, showing an alpha score going down from $\alpha = .703$ to $\alpha = .605$ and $\alpha = .715$ to $\alpha = .575$, respectively. This reduction can be explained by methodological and theoretical considerations.

First, the pilot study involved a smaller sample that was more similar in nature compared to the sample used for the main study, and this might have resulted in high internal consistency due to common social and environmental factors among individuals in the sample. However, a large sample with greater variation in terms of social norms was involved in the main study, and previous studies have established that a greater variation in samples causes lower inter-item correlation.

Second, the construct of social norms is inherently a multidimensional one that takes into account both descriptive norms (what people do) and injunctive norms (what people approve of). Specifically, scenario-based questions are likely to be measuring different dimensions of the variable, which will affect the way participants respond to the questions, particularly if there is variation in terms of riskiness, seriousness, or the social implications associated with the scenarios presented.

Third, adolescents' responses to social norm items are often situationally sensitive and influenced by peer dynamics. Evidence from the qualitative findings of this study supports this explanation. Participants reported both discouraging and supportive peer influences:

"They influence me by telling me this is not our business."

This variation suggests that social norms perception is not constant but rather variable, based on what other people around expect and what the situation demands. It is this variance in social norm perception that could make responses inconsistent.

Lastly, one must consider that the assumption of Cronbach's alpha is unidimensionality, and this is less relevant when measuring a complicated social concept like norms. Thus, low alpha does not imply problems with the measures, as it just captures the essence of an ever-changing construct.

Even though there is a notable reduction, the alpha coefficients of .605 and .575 obtained for SBSN and PSSN, respectively, are well within the acceptable threshold for use in exploratory research in the field of social sciences, especially studies on adolescents (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Nevertheless, this could be taken as a hint that more items can make the scales more reliable in future research.

In summary, although the Bystander Intervention Behavior and Empathy subscales exhibited acceptable reliability scores, and the Religiosity subscale had moderate improvement, the Social Norms subscales had lower internal consistency levels as a result of the complexity, multivariate aspects, and contextual variability of the construct itself. This shows that the

interpretation of reliability scores should not only be based on statistical cut-off scores but also on construct considerations and sample diversity.

Table 2: *Cronbach's Alpha Values of Reliability test for Pilot and Main Study*

Scale	Initial Items	Pilot Study Alpha	Main Study Alpha
Bystander Intervention Behavior (BIB)	10	.625	.710
Scenario Based Social Norms (SBSN)	10	.703	.605
Perceived School Social Norms PSSN	8	.715	.575
Empathy (EMP)	10	.539	.705
Religiosity (REL)	9	.389	.607

3.7. Data Analysis Techniques

SPSS version 26 was used to analyze the quantitative data, and thematic analysis was used for the qualitative data. The data were checked for outliers and missing values before analysis.

3.7.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, & standard deviations) were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the study participants and to report the main variables of the study. This allowed for a general understanding of the student's levels of empathy, religiosity, perceived social norms, and bystander helping behavior.

3.7.2. T-tests and OneWay ANOVA

To compare bystander intervention behavior, social norms, empathy, and religiosity across demographic variables, two independent-sample t-tests were conducted for sex and school type (two groups). A one-way ANOVA was conducted for all other demographic variables, as they had more than two values (age, grade, living conditions, parental education, religious identity, and family income). When assumptions of ANOVA of equality of variances were overruled (Levene's test), the more conservative Welch's F was reported. If significant differences were found in the ANOVA, Tukey HSD post-hoc tests were used. Reported effect sizes for t-tests were Cohen's d, and partial η^2 were used for ANOVA.

3.7.3. Correlation and Regression Analysis

A multiple linear regression was performed to determine the variables predicting bystander helping behavior. Bystander intervention was entered as the dependent variable; empathy, religiosity, and perceived social norms were entered as the independent variables. Regression assumptions were checked prior to interpretation, and all analyses were performed with $p < 0.05$.

To examine the relationships among the study variables, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed for bystander intervention behavior, scenario-based social norms, perceived school social norms, empathy, and religiosity. This analysis was conducted to determine the direction, magnitude, and statistical significance of bivariate relationships prior to regression modeling, and to check for potential multicollinearity among predictors.

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was then conducted to investigate whether or not social norms, empathy and religiosity could predict bystander intervention behavior.

Bystander intervention was put into the model as the dependent variable. The independent variables were entered in 3 steps according to their theoretical relevance. Social norms were entered in Model 1. Empathy was added into Model 2 and religiosity was added into Model 3. The assumptions of multiple regressions (normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity, independent of residuals) were checked and all met prior to the analysis. The criterion for significance was $p < .05$. SPSS version 26 was utilized for all statistical analyses.

3.7.4. Thematic Analysis

Semi-structured interview qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, according to the steps proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Interviews were recorded and transcribed. Transcripts were repeatedly read to familiarize with the data. Meaningful units of text were coded and sorted together in themes, under the general topic of students' feelings, experiences, peer influence and decision-making towards helping others. The qualitative results served to support and expand upon the quantitative data to deepen the finding.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

The researcher explained to the participants about the aim of the research and that the research was purely academic. Informed consent was gained and the experiment was voluntary. Responses of the participants have been kept anonymous and confidential and no personal data, which reveals their identity, was given. Participants were explained about the data collection process and they were also made aware that they could withdraw from the investigation without penalty at any time.

Chapter Four

Results

This chapter presents the quantitative and qualitative results of this research study in the following sequence: demographic characteristics of the participants, descriptive statistics showing the level bystander intervention behavior, social norms, empathy, and religiosity, Pearson correlations among the study variables, hierarchical multiple regression analysis for predicting bystander intervention behavior and qualitative themes obtained from semi-structured interviews which support and elaborate on the quantitative results.

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

The sample included all grades of high school that means from grade 9-12, this indicate representation across different level of adolescent. In terms of school type, the majority (64.0%) was from public school while minority (35.7%) was from private school, allow variation of school type. Regarding to religious affiliation, most student identified as Orthodox Christian (75.9%) while smaller portion are Muslim and Protestant and Catholic groups (24.1%).

Also the majority student are reported that living with family that means 91.9% and a very minority (8.1%) of the participants are living with relatives and alone, Regarding to parental education level 33.6 % fathers and 29.1% mothers attained degree and higher qualifications while the rest of the population did not received degree and higher qualifications.

Next to this most respondents monthly family income is reported between 20,000 - 30,000 ETB (38.8%), followed by those family earning 30,000 ETB (34.6%), and the rest 26.6%

family earns below 20,000. Finally the average age of participants was 16.54 years ($SD = 1.50$), indicating that the sample mainly consisted of mid-adolescents.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of participants (N = 381)

Variable		Category		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Sex		Male		177	46.5
		Female		204	53.5
Grade Level		Grade 9		103	27.0
		Grade 10		99	26.0
		Grade 11		92	24.1
		Grade 12		87	22.8
Type of School		Public		244	64.0
		Private		136	35.7
		Other		1	0.3
Religious Affiliation		Orthodox		289	75.9
		Protestant		35	9.2
		Muslim		45	11.8
		Catholic		11	2.9
		Other		1	0.3
Living Arrangement		With Parents		350	91.9
		With Relatives		23	6.0
		Alone		7	1.8
		Other		1	0.3
Father/Male	Guardian	No	Formal	29	7.6
Education		Education			

	Primary Education	55	14.4
	Secondary Education	79	20.7
	Diploma	90	23.6
	Degree and Above	128	33.6
	No Formal Education	38	10.0
	Guardian Education		
	Primary Education	59	15.5
	Secondary Education	90	23.6
	Diploma	83	21.8
	Degree and Above	111	29.1
	Family Monthly Income (ETB)		
	< 10,000	23	6.0
	10,000–20,000	78	20.5
	20,000–30,000	148	38.8
	> 30,000	132	34.6

4.2. Levels of Bystander Intervention Behavior, Social Norms, Empathy and Religiosity

The first research question of the present study focuses on the levels of bystander intervention behavior, adherence to social norms, empathy, and religiosity among high school students in Addis Ababa. This section presents descriptive statistics (See Table 2) that describe the extent to which students engage in helping behavior and how they perceive social norms, empathic tendencies, and religious influence in their daily school life.

4.2.1. Level of Bystander Intervention Behavior

The findings revealed that the mean bystander intervention behavior score was ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.66$). Since the variable was measured on a five-point Likert scale, the mean scores were delimited using the equal interval classification of 1.00–2.33(low), 2.34–3.67(moderate), 3.68–5.00(high), which indicates that the students took a moderate level of bystander intervention behavior.

This illustrates that although participants may be relatively willing to contribute to intervening in cases of bullying or victimization, the intensity of their responses is not clear cut. This is also reflected qualitatively through Theme 3: Fear and barriers to intervention, which discusses the effect of perceived risk as a barrier to action. Participants consistently express fear of negative ramifications

Participant 13 (P13) expressed fear of retaliation, stating that "I was afraid they might attack me"

The above response is indicative of the existence of situational barriers to intervening where students do feel a responsibility to intervene. Overall, the merging of findings indicates

that students have a moderate propensity to intervene which is, however, hindered by the fear of reprisal and the worry of being the next victim.

4.2.2. Level of Social Norms

Students' social norms perceptions were measured with the scenario and perceived school norm measures. The mean for scenario-based social norms was ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.59$) and for perceived school social norms was ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.61$). At the same equal interval interpretation, these results both fall into the moderate range, showing a moderate level of perceived social norms supporting intervention. It would appear that, even though students think that there is some social support for intervention, this support is neither very strong nor consistent. The qualitative results support this impression, in particular Theme 1: Peer Influence and Social Norms which emphasizes both aspects of peer influence.

One participant demonstrated independence from peer pressure, stating that "If I have to help, I don't listen to my friend's opinion" Participant 3 (P3).

Others emphasized the discouraging effect of peers: Participant 12 explained:

“Most of the time my friends tell me not to get involved. They say it is not our business and that we might create problems for ourselves. Even if I feel bad for the person, I just stay quiet because I don't want to go against them.”

However, these different reactions suggest that the peer environment itself does not support helping. Some environments make classmates more willing to intervene, but others discourage it. This variability among classmates accounts for the moderate level in the quantitative findings.

4.2.3. Level of Empathy

Empathy was assessed using the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). The participants' mean for the scale was ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 0.65$) and being of an equal interval scale, suggested that the overall participants had a moderate level of empathic concern. This demonstrates that students generally had the capacity to see a situation from another person's perspective and feel for their pain, especially in circumstances of distress or unfair treatment. The qualitative data given gave strong backing for this finding by the inclusion of Theme 2: Empathy as a Motivating Factor giving insight into empathy acting as another important emotional drive for helping in the lives of the students. Participants often related feelings of guilt and unpleasant feelings when they chose not to act, Participant 5 (P5) described:

“When I see someone being bullied, I feel really bad and uncomfortable. I start thinking about how I would feel in that situation. If I don't help, I feel guilty the whole day, so I try to do something, even if it is small.”

This indicates that empathy contributes to an internal sense of moral responsibility. However, despite this emotional awareness, the overall moderate level suggests that empathy may not always be sufficient to translate into consistent helping behavior, particularly when other situational barriers are present.

4.2.4. Level of Religiosity

Religiosity was assessed via the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) and had an average score of ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.61$). According to the guidelines provided in the measure's manual

(see 'Introduction' section), this is considered moderate religiosity, closer to the upper end of the moderate range. This is also perhaps unsurprising given the importance of religious beliefs and practices in students' lives in the Ethiopian context and is confirmed by the qualitative data, with most interestingly in Theme 5: The Limited Role of Religiosity, which suggests that religious texts advocate helping behavior but that its translation into behavior is variable.

Participants 8 (P8) emphasized: “My religion teaches me to help others and to stand for what is right. But in real situations, it is difficult because I worry about what others will say or do, so sometimes I just leave without doing anything.”

Implying that students felt helping to be acceptable to God and valued by their religion. Nevertheless, for the other themes (fear and peer influence), this belief is not necessarily carried out. Overall, although some evidence suggests that religiosity makes students more aware of morality, the manner in which it influences individual behaviors (i.e., bystander action) remains unclear.

The minimum and maximum values displayed in Table 4 represent the observed range of composite means for the variables. For all constructs, item responses collected on a five-point Likert scale were averaged into a single mean score for each participant. The minimum and maximum values are the lowest and highest observed participant means.

Table 4: *Levels of Bystander Intervention Behavior, Social Norms, Empathy and Religiosity (N= 381)*

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
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Bystander Intervention	1.90	5.00	3.5171	.65690
Social Norm	1.70	4.90	3.3320	.58672
Perceived School Social Norms	1.50	4.63	3.2192	.60782
Empathy	1.40	5.00	3.5365	.64588
Religious Commitment	1.89	4.89	3.6253	.60791

4.3. Relationships among of Bystander Intervention Behavior, Social Norms, Empathy and Religiosity

The second research question in this study examines the nature of relationships form, direction, magnitude, and statistical significance among bystander intervention behavior, adherence to social norms, empathy, and religiosity. This section presents the results of correlation analysis. (See Table 5).

4.3.1. Relationship between Social Norms and Bystander Intervention Behavior

The correlation found between scenario-based social norms and bystander intervention behavior was high and positive ($r = .645$, $p < .01$) suggesting that students will more likely intervene when helping behavior is socially normative. This finding was reinforced and expanded by the qualitative findings of Theme 1: Peer Influence and Social Norms, which found peer pressure to be a very influential factor in how students respond. Many participants described how peer discouragement prevents them from intervening, for example Participant 12 responded:

“Most of the time my friends tell me not to get involved. They say it is not our business and that we might create problems for ourselves. Even if I feel bad for the person, I just stay quiet because I don’t want to go against them.”

This reflects how negative peer norms can inhibit intervention despite personal moral concern. On the other hand, the same theme also revealed that supportive peer and school environments can encourage action as Participant 2 (P2) said:

“In our school, teachers encourage us to report problems, and some of my friends also support helping others. That makes it easier to do something, like informing a teacher.”

The findings illustrate the role of social norms working as positive or negative reinforcers. When being helpful is considered a social norm, then the tendency for intervention would be higher among the participants; otherwise, if the social norms were negatively regulating, the bystanders would be expected to show inactivity. The use of the qualitative data further strengthens the findings.

4.3.2. Relationship between Empathy and Bystander Intervention Behavior

From the correlation results, it was evident that there is a positive strong correlation between empathy and the case of bystander intervention behavior ($r = .581, p < .01$). This shows that empathic individuals are prone to act as interveners when instances of bullying happen.

This research finding is highly corroborated by the data collected qualitatively, specifically, Theme Two: Empathy as a Motivator. In many cases, the participants reported that they had emotional reactions when faced with an act of harm, thus motivating them to assist. For example, Participant 5 (P5) described:

“When I see someone being bullied, I feel really bad and uncomfortable. I start thinking about how I would feel in that situation. If I don’t help, I feel guilty the whole day, so I try to do something, even if it is small.”

This shows that empathy creates a feeling of personal responsibility and a moral duty to help people. The uncomfortable feelings and possible feelings of guilt if no action is taken seem to serve as the internal motivators for helping behavior.

Nevertheless, qualitative data show that sometimes empathy alone is not enough to encourage people to take action. This is seen in Theme 3: “Fear and Barriers to Intervention”, where situational factors prove to be more influential than the motivation arising from empathy. Participant 7 (P7) responded:

“Sometimes I want to help, but I am afraid they might turn on me or attack me. Because of that fear, I just stay away even though I know it is wrong.”

In other words, while empathy tends to increase the probability of intervention, the impact could be reduced by external risks, including the threat of retaliation and social sanctions.

Overall, the synthesis of the results reveals that empathy plays an essential role as an internal incentive for the intervention process of bystanders. Nevertheless, empathy is not always sufficient in influencing the decision of bystanders due to external obstacles.

4.3.3. Relationship between Religiosity and Bystander Intervention Behavior

The results of the correlation analysis showed that there is no statistical significance between religiosity and the behavior of intervening in bullying cases ($r = .087$, $p > .05$), implying that religiosity has no direct impact on whether students intervene or not in bullying cases.

The above findings can be explained even more using the qualitative findings in Theme 5: Role of Religiosity is Limited. Many of the interviewees admitted that their religious belief in helping others was something they valued highly, but it was not always shown through their actions. The following quote was expressed by Participant 8 (P8):

“My religion teaches me to help others and to stand for what is right. But in real situations, it is difficult because I worry about what others will say or do, so sometimes I just leave without doing anything.”

As an example, this demonstrates how religiosity leads to moral awareness but does not guarantee a behavioral reaction in complicated social situations.

In addition, Themes 3 and 4, namely Fear and Barriers to Intervention and Passive Bystander Behavior, shed more light on this insignificant correlation. They indicate that situational elements, including fear of repercussions and confusion regarding how to react, play a more crucial role than internalized religiosity. This can be exemplified by the following respondent's statement:

“Even though I know helping is the right thing, I just left and did nothing because I didn't want to get into trouble.”

This implies that students can give priority to their own safety and social acceptance rather than morality or religion when they are confronted with such situations in real life.

On the whole, the qualitative results assist in understanding why religiosity was not a significant variable in the quantitative results. Even though religion affects moral values, its effect on helping others is tends to be overcome by situational factors.

4.3.4. Interrelationships among Independent Variables

In additional, empathy was significantly positively correlated with social norms ($r = .487$, $p < .01$), which may have an effect on students' empathy. Religiosity showed relatively weak, non-significant correlations with most variables, indicating a limited effect on these processes.

Table 5: Relationships among Bystander Intervention Behavior, Social Norms, Empathy and Religiosity $N= 381$)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Bystander Intervention	1.00				
2. Social Norms	.645**	1.00			
3. Perceived School Norms	.068	.092	1.00		
4. Empathy	.581**	.487**	.052	1.00	
5. Religiosity	.087	.140**	-.021	.174**	1.00

4.4. Variance Explained in Bystander Intervention Behavior

The third research question examined the extent to which social norms, empathy, and religiosity explain variations in bystander intervention behavior, both independently and jointly.

To address this, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted, with variables entered in three steps based on theoretical relevance. (See Table 6)

In Model 1, the scenario based social norms and perceived school norms were entered. The model was able to explain 41.6% of the variance in level of bystander intervention ($R^2 = .416$, Adjusted $R^2 = .413$). Compared to scenario-based social norms, perceived school social norms was not a significant predictor of bystander intervention ($\beta = .009$, $p > .05$), while social norm in emergency situations was a significant predictor ($\beta = .644$, $p < .001$).

Empathy was then entered into Model 2, and greatly increased the variance accounted for, ($\Delta R^2 = .093$, $p < .001$). The amount of variance accounted for when the outcome was intervention was 50.9% ($R^2 = .509$, Adjusted $R^2 = .506$). Empathy was a significant positive predictor ($\beta = .350$, $p < .001$).

Religiosity was entered in Model 3; however, it did not add to the prediction significantly ($\Delta R^2 = .002$, $p > .05$), so religiosity was not included in the model. The final model accounted for 51.1% of the variance (Adjusted R^2 of .506) with regards to bystander intervention. In the Final Model, social norms ($\beta = .477$, $p < .001$) and empathy ($\beta = .355$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors while perceived school social norms ($\beta = .005$, $p > .05$) and religiosity ($\beta = -.042$, $p > .05$) were not.

Contribution of each variable: In Model 1, social norms significantly predicted bystander intervention ($\beta = .644$, $p < .001$), while perceived school norms did not ($\beta = .009$, $p > .05$). In Model 2, both social norms ($\beta = .474$, $p < .001$) and empathy ($\beta = .350$, $p < .001$) were

significant predictors. In Model 3, social norms ($\beta = .477$, $p < .001$) and empathy ($\beta = .355$, $p < .001$) remained significant, while religiosity was not significant ($\beta = -.042$, $p > .05$)

Overall, the results indicate that peer-related social norms and empathy are the strongest predictors of bystander intervention behavior, while perceived school social norms and religiosity did not significantly contribute to the prediction.

Table 6: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Bystander Intervention Behavior

Variables	Model 1 β	Model 2 β	Model 3 β
Social Norm	.644***	.474***	.477***
Perceived School Social Norms	.009	.007	.005
Empathy	—	.350***	.355***
Religiosity	—	—	-.042
R ²	.416	.509	.511
Adjusted R ²	.413	.506	.506
ΔR^2	—	.093***	.002
F Change	134.77***	71.61***	1.30

4.5. Differences in Variables by Demographics

The fourth research question examines whether bystander intervention behavior, social norms, empathy, and religiosity differ across demographic groups.

Gender, grade level, family structure, parental education, and family income were examined in relation to bystander intervention behavior, social norms, empathy, and religiosity. The results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences across all demographic variables.

Sex didn't make a difference on any of the five outcomes. Males and females scored about the same on everything (p values from .15 to .91). Effect sizes were tiny.

School type, though, mattered a lot. Private school students scored higher than public school students on four out of five measures. For bystander intervention, private school students averaged 3.86 versus 3.32 for public school students, $t(378) = -8.36$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = -0.90$. Private school students also reported higher scenario-based social norms (3.55 vs. 3.21, $t(378) = -5.68$, $p < .001$, $d = -0.61$), much higher empathy (3.91 vs. 3.33, $t(378) = -9.34$, $p < .001$, $d = -1.00$), and higher religious commitment (3.75 vs. 3.56, $t(378) = -2.92$, $p = .004$, $d = -0.31$). The only thing that didn't differ was perceived school social norms ($p = .25$). So private school kids looked better on almost everything except how they thought their school's norms worked.

Age made a small difference on bystander intervention and scenario-based norms, but not on the other three. For bystander intervention, the overall ANOVA was significant, $F(7, 373) = 2.17$, $p = .036$. Twenty-year-olds scored lower (2.87) than 14-, 17-, and 18-year-olds (3.66, 3.57, 3.63). For scenario-based norms, $F(7, 373) = 2.92$, $p = .006$, 15-year-olds (3.17) scored lower than 14-year-olds (3.65) and 18-year-olds (3.48). No other age differences popped up. Empathy, perceived school norms, and religious commitment didn't change with age.

Grade level (9 through 12) didn't matter at all. All ANOVAs had p values above .24. So being in a higher grade didn't mean higher or lower scores.

Living arrangement whether students lived with parents, relatives, alone, or other – also didn't produce any significant differences. The closest was empathy ($p = .08$), but still not significant. The “other” group had only one person, and “alone” had only seven, so those results are shaky anyway.

Father's education made a clear difference. Bystander intervention, $F(4, 376) = 8.68$, $p < .001$, showed that students whose fathers had a degree or above scored higher than those whose fathers had no formal education or only primary school. The same pattern showed up for scenario-based social norms, $F(4, 376) = 9.03$, $p < .001$, and for empathy, $F(4, 376) = 4.95$, $p = .001$. Religious commitment also varied by father's education, $F(4, 376) = 3.03$, $p = .018$, but none of the pairwise comparisons reached significance. Perceived school norms didn't differ by father's education ($p = .69$). Basically, the more educated the father, the higher the kid scored on most things.

Mother's education mattered for two outcomes. Bystander intervention, $F(4, 376) = 5.36$, $p < .001$, was lower for students whose mothers had no formal education compared to all other groups. Empathy, $F(4, 376) = 3.64$, $p = .006$, was higher if the mother had a degree or above compared to no formal education. Scenario-based norms came close but didn't quite reach significance ($p = .065$). Perceived school norms and religious commitment didn't differ by mother's education ($p > .30$).

Religious affiliation only affected bystander intervention, $F(4, 376) = 2.77, p = .027$. Catholics had the lowest mean (3.05) and Orthodox the highest (3.57), but we couldn't run proper post-hoc tests because one group (Other) had only one person. No other outcomes differed by religion ($p > .24$).

Family income was a strong predictor. Higher income meant higher scores on bystander intervention, $F(3, 377) = 12.52, p < .001$; scenario-based social norms, $F(3, 377) = 7.46, p < .001$; and empathy, $F(3, 377) = 13.76, p < .001$. For bystander intervention and empathy, the top income group (>30,000) scored above everyone else, and the 20,000-30,000 group scored above the 10,000-20,000 group. For scenario-based norms, the top group beat the two lowest ones. Perceived school norms and religious commitment didn't change with income ($p > .10$).

What stands out is this: school type, father's education, and family income were the most consistent predictors. Sex, grade, and living arrangement made no difference. Age and religion had only a few small effects. And perceived school social norms were the one measure that didn't budge across any demographic it stayed flat.

When the assumption of equality of variances was violated (as indicated by Levene's test), the more conservative Welch's F was reported to account for unequal group sizes. Additionally, Tukey HSD post-hoc tests were used only when group sizes were sufficiently

Variable	Demographic characteristic	Test statistic	p	Effect size (Cohen's d / η^2)	Direction of difference
balanced and variances were homogeneous.					

Bystander intervention	School type	378) = −8.36	< .001	−0.90	Private > Public
Father’s education	F(4, 376) = 8.68	< .001	$\eta^2 = .08$	Degree+ > No formal, Primary; Secondary > No formal	
Mother’s education	F(4, 376) = 5.36	< .001	$\eta^2 = .05$	No formal < all others	
Family income	F(3, 377) = 12.52	< .001	$\eta^2 = .09$	>30,000 > all; 20-30,000 > 10-20,000	
Age	F(7, 373) = 2.17	.036	$\eta^2 = .04$	20-year-olds < 14, 17, 18 y/o	
Religious affiliation	F(4, 376) = 2.77	.027	$\eta^2 = .03$	Orthodox highest, Catholic lowest (no post-hoc)	

Scenario-based social norms	School type	(378) = – 5.68	< .001	–0.61	Private > Public
Father's education	F(4, 376) = 9.03	< .001	$\eta^2 = .09$	Degree+, Secondary, Diploma > No formal, Primary	
Family income	F(3, 377) = 7.46	< .001	$\eta^2 = .06$	>30,000 > 10-20,000 & 20-30,000	
Age	F(7, 373) = 2.92	.006	$\eta^2 = .05$	15-y/o < 14 and 18 y/o	
Empathy	School type	(378) = – 9.34	< .001	–1.00	Private > Public
Father's education	F(4, 376) = 4.95	.001	$\eta^2 = .05$	Degree+ > No formal, Primary	
Mother's education	F(4, 376) = 3.64	.006	$\eta^2 = .04$	Degree+ > No formal	

Family income	F(3, 377) = 13.76	< .001	$\eta^2 = .10$	>30,000 > all; 20-30,000 > 10-20,000	
Religious commitment	School type	378) = -2.92	.004	-0.31	Private > Public
Father's education	F(4, 376) = 3.03	.018	$\eta^2 = .03$	No pairwise significant	
Perceived school social norms	(none)	—	—	—	No significant differences for any demographic

Table 7: Differences across Variables by Demographics

The final regression model explained 51.1% of the variance in bystander intervention behavior.

The effect size (Cohen's f^2) for the full model was 1.04, indicating a large effect (Cohen, 1988).

Chapter Five

Discussions

This chapter discusses how the study's results relate to the research questions, existing literature, and relevant theoretical frameworks. The discussion synthesizes quantitative and qualitative findings to enhance understanding of the factors affecting bystander intervention behavior among high school students in Addis Ababa. The chapter is structured based on the research questions.

5.1. Levels of Bystander Intervention Behavior, Social Norms, Empathy, and Religiosity

The first research question examined the levels of bystander intervention behavior, social norms, empathy, and religiosity among high school students in Addis Ababa. The findings show that all variables were at moderate levels, with religiosity showing a relatively higher mean compared to the other variables.

5.1.1. Levels of Bystander Intervention Behavior

An intermediate amount of bystander intervention behavior was observed in high school students ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.66$). High school students did exhibit a tendency to intervene in instances of bullying and mistreatment, but not to the same extent in all situations. This is an indication that although helping would be selected as the most appropriate, the scenarios would ultimately affect the decision of the high school students.

This is consistent with the Bystander Effect Theory put forward by Darley and Latané (1968) which suggests that people fail to act in the company of other people due to diffusion of responsibility and potential social embarrassment. Likewise, the decision tree model of helping

behavior (Latané & Darley, 1970) that suggests that individuals have to proceed through numerous mental stages before helping behavior occurs and one of these may not be moved onto.

This result echoes the findings of international research; for instance, previous findings have shown that many students take on a bystander role on witnessing bullying even though they think intervention is called for (Salmivalli, 2010), and indeed fear of repercussions and peer pressure are identified by Thornberg et al. (2012) as important factors in reducing intervention.

In Ethiopia, due to limited research exclusively on bystander intervention some relevant studies on school bullying and adolescent behavior can shed light to the research. Studies conducted in Ethiopian schools stated that bullying is a common phenomenon and most of the students tend to become bystanders (Wolke et al., 2015).

This interpretation is also supported by the qualitative results from this study. As described in Chapter 4, several participants encountered peer pressure and fears of retribution as the largest obstacles to intervening. These responses imply that situational and social factors inhibit students' sense of moral obligation to intervene a tendency consistent with the stages of the Latané and Darley's (1970) decision tree.

This moderately high result of bystander intervention suggests that students in general are aware of the need and feel the moral obligation to help others, but their prosocial behaviors are largely enacted by environment and social influences such as fear and peer influence. This finding is in line with the existing literature which argues that prosocial behaviors in adolescence are the outcomes of the interplay between personal values and context constraints (Eisenberg, 2010; Meter & Card, 2015).

From a global and local perspective, these results reinforce that intervention efforts must include more than just creating moral awareness. Interventions should include implementation of efforts to reduce barriers to action through attempts to lessen fear, increase student efficacy beliefs, and establish normative peer norms. Findings from recent studies advocate for school-based intervention efforts that foster assertiveness skills, and establish a sense of collective responsibility and safe environments for disclosure and intervention (Polanin et al., 2012; UNESCO, 2019). For Ethiopia, approaches in this vein may be successful if combined with culturally-sensitive strategies that foster a sense of collective responsibility and interdependence among peers.

5.1.2. Levels of Social Norms

Results for this study show that students' ratings of social norms were somewhat moderate. The mean score for scenario-based social norms was ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.59$), and perceived school social norms was ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.61$) both of these results are in the moderate range. This implies that students view that there is some social support for help-accepting behavior, but the norms themselves are not reinforced across the situation.

A moderate strength of social norms suggests that the violation of peer group and school norms in promoting altruistic behaviour is not extreme. Students may sometimes be under social pressure to help others and at other times be under social pressure not to help others. This inconsistency may lead to ambiguity about whether intervening is appropriate in some cases and not in others. Accordingly, intervention is least likely when peer approval is emphasized as most desirable.

This result can be accounted for by Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior. This suggests that subjective norms, the perceived social pressure from important others on whether an individual should perform the behavior, are an important factor in the prediction of behavior. Where the norms are ambiguous or conflicting, an individual is less likely to perform the behavior. Likewise, the social norms approach (Cialdini et al., 1990) suggests that people follow group norms when they are aware of them, especially under social circumstances where group acceptance is desirable.

The current finding aligns with previous studies. Pozzoli and Gini (2010) have argued that normative influences can affect bystanders' responses in bullying situations; they can support different norms which promote intervention. Following the same idea, Perkins (2003) argued that people are observed to be greatly influenced in their behaving by how they think peers would like them to respond. According to Swartz et al. (2012), peers have been identified as an influencing factor in adolescent behavior in schools in Africa.

Social relationships in Ethiopian society are shaped by people's adherence to collectivist cultural values that are based on the importance of group membership, social cohesion and peer acceptance. Students from such a society may feel highly motivated to intervene when their peers expect them to do so and when they consider social approval as matter of concern. Guided by their social obligation, students may not act in moments when there is little peer encouragement towards prosocial acts; nevertheless, they may believe they should intervene on those situations.

This explanation is clearly substantiated by the qualitative results in this study, which found that peer impact functions both in a prosocial and an antisocial manner. While participants

noted that group disapproval and pressure would inhibit intervention despite empathic concern (presented in Chapter 4), others described how a social climate with prosocial peers and teachers would promote a willingness to intervene. Such mixed findings reflect the contextual nature of social norms and, in doing so, accounts for the moderate intervention behavior displayed by participants in the quantitative analysis.

Taken together, the results point to a significant moderating role that social norms have on whether or not bystander behavior is activated, depending on the extent of social support given to a behavior. This is congruent with the larger body of work showing that adolescent behavior is particularly sensitive to peer approval and contextual influences (Perkins, 2003; Pozzoli & Gini, 2010).

From a global and community standpoint, these findings underscore the need to reinforce positive social norms in the school context. Interventions should be designed to reinforce reinforcing clear expectations and codify unsupportive and passive social norms that are ambiguous and promote individual responsibility. School-based programs that incorporate peer-led bystander intervention, positive role modeling, and a group norm approach have proven to be successful at encouraging bystander intervention (Polanin et al., 2012; UNESCO, 2019). In Ethiopia, a program that is culturally relevant and considers the values of community support and helping one another will be successful.

5.1.3. Levels of Empathy

Results of the study revealed that overall the level of empathic concern in high school students was moderate ($M = 3.54$, $SD = .65$). This indicates that high school students are generally capable of understanding and feeling the emotional experiences of others, but the

strength of this empathic understanding is not sufficiently high to drive action in all circumstances.

By moderate empathy here mean that students feel concern about the suffering of others, but that having this form of empathy will not automatically result in the helping behavior or altruistic behavior. For instance, students may sympathize with victims of peer harassment or other misfortunes, but do not subsequently walk over to defend or seek to help them due to a number of social and environmental factors.

This result is consistent with the empathy–altruism hypothesis of Daniel Batson (1991), which argues that empathic concern increases helping. Nevertheless, the outcome observed in this study implies that empathy by itself is ineffective at overcoming contextually inhibiting variables, like fear, group pressure, or lack of clear actions.

Participant reported experiencing empathic concern, for example, guilt and sadness over witnessing bullying, as was discussed in chapter 4. This emotional experience demonstrates how empathy evokes a moral obligation to help, however, as the qualitative findings demonstrated, its limited by external influences such as fear of retribution. This implies that empathy is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for bystander intervention.

The results are consistent with those found on a global level. For example, empathy was identified as a strong predictor of prosocial behavior in adolescents by Eisenberg et al., (2015), however its influence was often moderated by context and social factors. Van Noorden et al., (2015) corroborated these results in studies examining defending, with empathic concern forming part of the model predicting defending behavior, however significance was diminished

in the face of perceived risks. More recent research (e.g., Zych et al, 2018) highlights the importance of empathy in preventing bullying and facilitating defending, however its influence depends on contextual support.

In African culture, empathy is promoted through collective residency and interpersonal relationship. Nsamenang (2006) pointed out that the emotional growth in children stems from social relationships between parents and children, and community value systems lead to concern for the others. Though there has been limited empirical researches in Ethiopia on empathy and bystander behavior, the research on adolescent social behaviors (ethnic groups of adolescents; not national representative results) indicated that Ethiopian adolescents socialized in the collectivist cultural frame of reference (respect for older, social harmony and interpersonal responsibility).

In the context of Ethiopia, cultural norms like *mahiberawi nuro*, respect of others and moral responsibility could be affordance to develop empathic tendencies. But, the theory of strong peer pressure and social acceptance could constrain the behavior of empathy. Students might show failure of behavior out fear of being negatively judged, exempted or threatened.

Taken together, the results suggest that empathy is an important internal affective motivator of helping behavior, but its influence is context-dependent and moderated by social factors. It is necessary to continue encouraging and facilitating bystander intervention, but to do so by addressing the social and school "barriers" to such action. Efforts to foster supportive peer norms and build safe schools might further convert students' felt empathy into behavioral actualization.

5.1.4. Levels of Religiosity

Religiosity demonstrated a comparatively higher mean score ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.61$) than the other variables.. That shows that religious beliefs and practices are pretty strong in these students' lives. In Ethiopia, religion really shapes people's moral values things like compassion, kindness, and feeling responsible for others. But here's the thing: even with that strong moral base, this study found that being religious doesn't automatically mean someone will actually step in and help when something happens in real life.

This disconnects actually fits with Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development from 1984. He argued that just because someone has moral values or can reason about right and wrong doesn't mean they'll act on them. You can know what's right and still freeze up because of the situation you're in. Similarly, the value-belief-behavior framework suggests that values affect behavior indirectly what really matters are the social and contextual factors in the middle.

The qualitative results of this study further demonstrate this dichotomy of religious value and helping behavior. As shown in Chapter 4, participants recalled a lot of different prosocial values that were reinforced by their religious socialization, and this indicated that religiosity had been largely internalized as a form of moral compass; yet the qualitative data also revealed that internalized moral values were not necessarily sufficient to activate helping behavior given the presence of an intervening obstacle, such as fear of retribution, or social evaluation threat, or even hypothetical retribution. These findings provide more evidence for hypothesis 3 that religiosity acts as a distal moral guide for bystander intervention. This finding is consistent with McCullough and Willoughby's (2009) idea that religious morality offers individuals an

overarching motivation to behave in accordance with their values, rather than providing specific cues for actual behavior.

This matches what other researchers have found. Norenzayan and Shariff (2008) said religion tends to promote prosocial values in a general sense, but how it affects real behavior is indirect and really depends on the situation. Saroglou (2013) found that religiosity links more to moral attitudes than to consistent helpful actions. And in African, Ellis and ter Haar (2004) pointed out that even though religion is woven into everyday life and moral systems, how it influences behavior changes depending on social dynamics and what's happening around you.

In the specific context of the Ethiopian school, peer pressures and the fear of social sanctions appeared to further negate the direct effect of religiosity on students' helping behavior. Students may recognize helping as a religious and moral mandate, but fear social sanctions, revenge and conflict, thus neglecting the opportunity to turn this moral belief into a behavioral response. Thus, based on the data, religiosity was not a strong predictor of bystander behavior as a variable relative to social and scenario-based factors. However, the study provides important suggestions for intervention approaches in this context, focusing not only on religious morality but also on contextual reasons for failing to help.

5.2. Relationships among Bystander Intervention Behavior, Social Norm, Empathy, and Religiosity

The second research question examined the relationships among bystander intervention behavior, social norms, empathy, and religiosity. The findings revealed that social norms and empathy had strong positive relationships with bystander intervention behavior, whereas religiosity did not show a statistically significant relationship.

5.2.1. Social Norms & Bystander Behavior

The findings of this study revealed a strong positive relationship between social norms and bystander intervention behavior ($r = .645, p < .01$). This indicates that students who perceive helping behavior as socially supported by their peers are significantly more likely to intervene in situations of bullying or mistreatment.

This association can be further understood through Icek Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior that states that subjective norms, i.e. the perception of what significant others think one should do, are an important factor when shaping intentions to engage in such behaviors and following through with those intentions. As students reach the subjective norm of enabling society, they comply to helping behavior as well. The social norms theory theorized by Robert Cialdini et al. (1990) also underscores this need for group affiliation.

The present finding is strongly supported by global empirical research. Pozzoli and Gini (2010) found that perceived peer norms are among the strongest predictors of defending behavior in bullying contexts. Similarly, Thornberg et al. (2012) demonstrated that adolescents' decisions to intervene are heavily influenced by their interpretations of peer expectations and group norms. More recent research by Meter and Card (2015), further confirms that peer group norms significantly shape bystander responses, either promoting or inhibiting intervention depending on whether helping behavior is socially endorsed.

While there is not much research on bystander behavior in Ethiopia, findings from the African context are likely to be relevant given similar socio-cultural values of collectivism, increased importance of peer groups and their influence on individual choice. In fact, studies on

peer effects, such as Swartz et al. (2012), suggest that peer effects are quite central to adolescent pathways in schools, where group cohesion, group inclusion and acceptance are emphasized.

The qualitative findings of this study strongly reinforce and deepen this interpretation. Participants consistently described how peer expectations directly influence their decisions to intervene. For example, one participant explained:

“Most of the time my friends tell me not to get involved. They say it is not our business and that we might create problems for ourselves. Even if I feel bad for the person, I just stay quiet because I don’t want to go against them.”

Such an account exemplifies how negative peer norms work to inhibit intervention, despite the fact that students are aware that intervention is the "good" choice and of the further benefit to the victims that support provides. Conversely, other participants discussed the buffering effect of a supportive social climate:

“In our school, teachers encourage us to report problems, and some of my friends also support helping others. That makes it easier to do something, like informing a teacher.”

The above accounts illustrate two different ways in which social norms may influence bystander intervention. It is when helping others is the social norm that students are motivated to step in, but when it is not, students are more likely to choose the bystander apathy option.

In Ethiopia, where interpersonal relations and the maintenance of group membership and acceptance are very important, students may be especially concerned with social approval of

their actions, and thus the preference to conform to peer norms may overshadow the desire for one's actions to reflect personal morals. This dynamic might account for the fact that social norms were the strongest predictor of bystander intervention behavior in this study.

Generally, results demonstrate that social norms are one of the strongest predictors of students' reactions to bullying and related issues. Although the quantitative and qualitative findings are somewhat different, they support a conclusion that bystander behavior is heavily influenced by social normative considerations as much as by personal values. Given these results, effective programs to increase bystander intervention need to focus on reinforcing positive peer norms about defending victims of bullying as well as developing school climates where in helping is acceptable behavior.

5.2.2. Empathy & Bystander Behavior

The findings of the present study showed a positive correlation between the variables of empathy and bystander intervention behavior ($r = .581$, $p < .01$). This suggests that students capable of identifying with and sharing the emotional states of other individuals are more likely to take action when witnessing bullying/mistreatment.

This effect is clearly mediated by the empathy–altruism hypothesis discussed by Daniel Batson (1991), where empathic concern elicits a true motivation to help the in-need-other. Empathic engagement with a victim increases the chance one will act prosocially to reduce his or her suffering.

This current result is in line with the cross-cultural evidence as well. Eisenberg (2010) discovered empathy as an important factor for prosocial behavior among adolescent. Van

Noorden et al. (2015) confirmed that empathic concern predicted defending victims of bullying. Zych et al. (2018) indicated that the relation between empathic concern and defending was moderated by situations, which meant only in unbiased conditions, empathic concern could decrease aggressive behavior and enhance defending.

These qualitative findings lend additional evidence and insight to this interpretation. Participants more often described emotional states of guilt, sadness, and identification with the victim as motivators to intervene. One participant noted:

“When I see someone being bullied, I feel really bad and uncomfortable. I start thinking about how I would feel in that situation. If I don’t help, I feel guilty the whole day, so I try to do something, even if it is small.”

This answer shows how empathy can invoke an inner moral obligation towards helping. But qualitative research also indicates that empathy is by no means always enough to motivate action, as another participant pointed out:

“Sometimes I want to help, but I am afraid they might turn on me or attack me. Because of that fear, I just stay away even though I know it is wrong.”

This is an example of how emotional and situational variables can interact. Although the feeling of empathy often provides the motivation for actor intervention, situational variables are likely to serve as inhibiting influences on behavior such as fear, peer pressure and perceived risk. Hence, although empathy appears to be a predictor of bystander intervention, it may be a necessary but insufficient one.

In the African context, research shown that empathy is fostered by communal living, sharing and inter-personal bonding. Children and adolescents learn to respect other people's needs and wishes through their daily social and interpersonal interactions. Similar characteristics of culture and society (respect of others, interdependence and responsibility for social harmony) of Ethiopia, where government programs are attempting to foster empathic dispositions, may also facilitate the development of empathic tendencies. Unfortunately, the influence of peers and fear of social rejection in schools may inhibit behavioral display of empathy.

Taken together, these findings illustrate the importance of empathy as an internal motivation for bystander intervention behavior, but also highlight the importance of relevant social contextual factors in determining whether this internal motivation translates into intervention behavior. When examining both the quantitative and the qualitative results, it showed that students can and do feel empathy for the victims of dating violence; however, whether they intervene depends on the social context in which they find themselves (e.g., whether they have friends nearby who are willing to intervene or not). Based on these findings, we can concluded that effective strategies for promoting bystander intervention need to include an emphasis on reducing situational barriers to intervention as well as an emphasis on reducing peer norms against intervention.

5.2.3. Religiosity & Bystander Behavior

The correlations also demonstrated that religiousness was not significantly related to helping behavior of a bystander ($r = .087, p > .05$). While students are reporting fairly high levels of religiosity, their religiosity does not necessarily predict whether they will get involved and help a peer.

This parallels research from literature proposing that religiosity influences moral principles more so than behavior or actions. For instance, studies by Norenzayan and Shariff (2008) have made the case that religion instigates generalized prosocial principles which, however, are time and context dependent when it comes to actual behavior. Likewise, Saroglou (2013) found that a strong relation between religiosity and moral attitude and intention was established while the next link to salient moral behavior was absent. Daniel Batson and colleagues (1993) demonstrated that religious attendance alone does not reliably predict helping behavior in real-life situations.

The qualitative findings of this study strongly support this interpretation. Many participants acknowledged that their religion encourages helping others, as reflected in the statement:

“My religion teaches me to help others.”

However, other responses reveal that these values are not consistently enacted in practice. For instance, one participant stated:

“Even though I know helping is the right thing, I just left and did nothing because I didn’t want to get into trouble.”

This demonstrates that although religiosity theoretically should increase moral consciousness, in the presence of pressing immediate consequences (social and physical) individuals are more likely to succumb to those intense immediate pressures rather than adhere to internalized religious moral imperatives. Ethics then are cast aside in favor of making choices that ensure one's own safety and inclusion: for students to weigh their personal ethics against

peer pressure, the peering eyes of the college environment and possible health risks, ethics will not prevail. In the Ethiopian setting, religious values serve as a moral compass, perhaps more strongly than in Western contexts, given the highly religious nature of society (Ellis & ter Haar, 2004).

Overall, these findings suggest that religion functions as a cosmically significant influence on students' moral structure as a background phenomenon; however, religion is not predictive of bystander intervention. Instead, behavior is predominantly explained by social and emotional factors, such as peer norms and empathy.

The combined quantitative and qualitative findings reveal that while students "know" what to do from a moral and religious perspective, they often have difficulty "doing" it in practice because of the realities of the situation. This is significant in terms of designing programs and interventions to encourage intervention. Rather than relying on moral and religious axioms to motivate intervention behavior, programs should work toward promoting positive peer norms, increasing empathy, and decreasing fear and other social risks associated with helping behaviors. In the school contexts in which bystander intervention tends to occur, creating environments that foster a culture of helping may be the best change agent.

5.3. Predictive Role of Social Norms, Empathy, and Religiosity in Bystander

Intervention Behavior

The third research question sought to determine whether social norms, empathy, and religiosity could predict high school students' behavior towards intervening as a bystander. Findings indicated that the regression analysis was statistically significant and accounted for 51.1% of the variability in the bystander intervention behavior of the participants. Out of all the

independent variables used in predicting, social norms and empathy were found to be significant positive predictors, while religiosity and school level social norms were not found to be significant. Therefore, it can be inferred that the actions taken by the students depend more on social expectations and empathy than religiosity.

Given the high predictability power of social norms, it is clear that the actions of students are directly related to their perception of the expectations of their peers. Indeed, such an interpretation is in agreement with Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior, which posits that subjective norms are one of the determinants of both behavioral intention and behavior itself (Ajzen, 1991). If the students perceive helping as being socially accepted among peers, they will be more inclined to help others. Such a finding is also in line with the seminal work of Cialdini et al. (1990), who posited that humans tend to conform to the social norms of groups. As acceptance is crucial at the stage of adolescence, peer pressure is strong at that stage.

This finding is further supported by evidence from other African research, particularly in the Ethiopian context. For instance, Eijigu and Teketel (2021) found that 55% of Ethiopian student bystanders remained passive, but the presence of close social relationships being close friends, relatives, or classmates with the victim was significantly associated with a higher likelihood of the student stepping in to defend them. This suggests that in Ethiopia, as in your study, the feeling of belonging and the expectations of one's immediate group are among the most critical drivers of action. The qualitative data from the current study provide supporting information. For instance, some of the respondents indicated that peer disapproval kept them from intervening.

“Most of the time my friends tell me not to get involved. They say it is not our business and that we might create problems for ourselves. Even if I feel bad for the person, I just stay quiet because I don’t want to go against them.”

This indicates that there exist negative peer norms that may discourage individuals from intervening even if they themselves think it’s the right course of action. On the contrary, other participants talked about the positive influence of supportive environments:

“In our school, teachers encourage us to report problems, and some of my friends also support helping others. That makes it easier to do something.”

These results indicate that social norms may influence individuals to act or not act according to the type of peer context the students experience. In summary, the study has shown that social norms are one of the most significant predictors of bystander intervention behavior.

It can therefore be said that the lack of significance for the perception of social norms at the school level implies that the role played by broader messages from institutions is not as critical as the influence of the immediate peers' attitudes. Even as schools are known to encourage policies of behavior that foster helpful actions, the reality is that the reaction to the social norms of people around them seems to be stronger on the part of the learners. What this means is that what will determine whether an individual student will intervene in any situation will depend largely on whether he or she feels that those close to him or her believe that such actions are appropriate.

In addition, the variable empathy was positively correlated with interventions as well. This implies that those who have the ability to empathize well, to perceive the emotions of

another, are more inclined to intervene when confronted with situations where there is some form of bullying or abuse going on. Such a finding is in line with the empathy-altruism hypothesis that states that empathy leads to a real desire to assist others in need (Batson, 1991). This study finding corroborates prior researches conducted in this field. Those who are capable of empathizing well with the victim are more inclined to help.

The correlation between empathy and the defending behavior is reinforced by several studies carried out within the African context. According to Eijigu and Teketel (2022), affective empathy predicted the defending behavior among the students in North-Western Ethiopia quite well ($\beta = .173$, $p = .000$). As can be seen from the results of the current research, this finding correlates well with the results of current research. Empathy does not always lead to intervention as it is quite difficult for the students to act on their impulses when they are afraid of any form of retaliation or do not know how to help the victim. The following qualitative data from the current research can serve as proof of the interpretation.

“When I see someone being bullied, I feel really bad and uncomfortable. I start thinking about how I would feel in that situation. If I don’t help, I feel guilty the whole day, so I try to do something, even if it is small.”

This response shows that empathy can create a strong inner sense of responsibility. However, another participant explained that fear could still prevent action:

“Sometimes I want to help, but I am afraid they might turn on me or attack me. Because of that fear, I just stay away even though I know it is wrong.”

It implies that empathy is significant; however, it is more effective when coupled with a sense of security for intervening. It means that while empathy can promote help, it cannot necessarily overcome the hindrances such as fear and peer influence.

However, religiosity did not play a major role as a predictor of intervention. The reason why this is so is that while religiosity may contribute to forming moral attitudes, it does not necessarily imply that religious individuals will take action in case of necessity. Quite often, individuals who know what their faith tells them about the importance of help refrain from taking actions due to possible negative social or physical reactions.

This conclusion confirms the broader research that religion tends to affect moral values rather than behaviors. Religion may shape one's moral belief, but it does not have such a direct impact on their actions in high-pressure social situations. Under certain conditions, like the stressful moment of making a choice for students, social influence becomes much more important than religion.

The qualitative findings from the present study help explain this gap between belief and behavior. Some students clearly recognized helping as a religious value:

“My religion teaches me to help others.”

At the same time, others admitted that this belief did not always lead to action:

“Even though I know helping is the right thing, I just left and did nothing because I didn't want to get into trouble.”

This shows that religiosity functions more as a background moral framework than as a direct predictor of intervention behavior. Students may value helping in principle, but still remain passive when the social situation feels threatening.

In summary, the results demonstrate that the behavior of bystanders during intervention is influenced mainly by social and emotional variables. Social norms offer external motivation or pressure on whether helping behavior is socially accepted, whereas empathy offers internal motivation for such behavior. Religiosity, though an important determinant of the moral values of students, seems to influence this process indirectly.

The findings above can inform the implementation of such interventions. Bystander intervention programs must target changing positive peer norms, reducing fear, and motivating students to convert their empathic emotions to help those in need. Messages based on religion and morality might prove effective, but are unlikely to suffice alone unless accompanied by a positive school environment and supportive peer culture.

5.4. Differences across Demographic Characteristics

The fourth research question tested for statistically significant differences in bystander intervention, social norms, empathy, and religiosity by demographic variables (age, gender, school type, grade, religious affiliation, family structure, parental education, and family income).

The answer is mixed some demographics matter a lot, others don't, and the ones that do are not the ones people usually assume. Starting with gender, males and female scored about the same on every outcome. That goes against studies like Eisenberg (2010), which typically report higher empathy in girls. But an Ethiopian study from East Gojjam found that gender was only a

weak predictor of passive bystanding and not significant for defending behavior (Eijigu & Teketel, 2022). So in this context, gender differences are small or washed out by other factors. Grade level (9 to 12) also showed no differences nothing changed from freshman to senior year in high school, where grade level didn't predict bystander behavior either. It seems these patterns settle in earlier and then stay stable.

Family structure whether students lived with both parents, relatives, or alone made no real difference. In collectivist cultures like Ethiopia, extended family often steps in, so living with a single parent doesn't necessarily mean less support (Eijigu & Teketel 202)¹ so the lack of a family structure effect makes sense. However, parental education and family income did matter and quite a bit. Students whose fathers had a degree or above scored higher on bystander intervention, social norms, empathy, and religiosity than those whose fathers had no formal education or only primary school. Mother's education also helped, especially for bystander intervention and empathy. Family income was even stronger: the highest income group outscored everyone else on bystander intervention, social norms, and empathy, and even the middle group beat the lower group on some measures. So socioeconomic background is not irrelevant it shapes resources, school quality, and home environment, which in turn affect prosocial development.

But here's the important twist. Even though those demographics mattered, the regression results from Section 5.3 ($R^2 = .511$) showed that social norms and empathy explained much more of the variance in bystander intervention than any demographic variable. The East Gojjam study backs that up self-efficacy for defending and affective empathy were much stronger predictors

than age or gender (Eijigu & Teketel, 2022). So while father's education and income have real effects, the main drivers are still what happen in the immediate peer environment peer norms, school climate, empathy. That's exactly what Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory would predict: the microsystem (friends, classmates) overrides distal structural factors. Also worth noting, perceived school social norms was the only outcome that didn't differ across any demographic. That means students see their school's norms pretty uniformly, regardless of background. So if want to change norms, it have to shift the whole school culture, not just target certain groups.

Generally, school type private, father's education, and family income are real predictors. Gender, grade, and family structure are not. But even the strongest demographics are weaker than empathy and peer norms. So the practical thing to do is to focus on universal strategies building empathy, strengthening positive peer norms, creating supportive school climates and culture rather than slicing and dicing by demographic subgroups.

Chapter Six

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

6.1. Summary

In this study the role of social norms, empathy and religiosity were studied as predictors of bystander intervention behavior among high school students in Addis Ababa using a mixed-methods convergent design with a sample of 381 students from two government and two private high schools supplemented by semi-structured interviews conducted with 16 students. The mean bystander intervention score was 3.52 (SD = 0.66) on a 5point Likert scale indicating moderate helping intention. The means for social norms, rated using scenario based vignettes, was 3.33 (SD = 0.59), perceived school social norms was 3.22 (SD = 0.61) both indicating moderate level, mean empathy was 3.54 (SD = 0.65) and mean religiosity was 3.63 (SD = 0.61).

Correlation analyses showed that both social norms ($r = 0.645$, $p < .01$) and empathy ($r = 0.581$, $p < .01$) had strong positive relationships with bystander intervention, whereas religiosity showed no significant correlation ($r = 0.087$, $p > .05$). Hierarchical regression indicated that social norms and empathy together explained 51.1% of the variance in bystander intervention ($R^2 = .511$, Adjusted $R^2 = .506$). In the final model, social norms remained the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.477$, $p < .001$), followed by empathy ($\beta = 0.355$, $p < .001$); religiosity ($\beta = -0.042$, $p > .05$) and perceived school social norms ($\beta = 0.005$, $p > .05$) were not significant.

The results from the demographic analysis indicated that private school students had significantly better compared to public school students in terms of their scores in bystander intervention (3.86 vs. 3.32; $t = -8.36$, $p < .001$, $d = -0.90$), empathy (3.91 vs. 3.33; $d = -1.00$), and scenario-based social norms (3.55 vs. 3.21; $d = -0.61$). Those participants whose fathers have

university degree or beyond were found to score better than others regarding bystander intervention ($\eta^2 = .08$) and empathy ($\eta^2 = .05$). The third variable showing large effect sizes included family income where participants from the highest income bracket (>30,000 ETB) had a significantly higher score in intervention ($\eta^2 = .09$) and empathy ($\eta^2 = .10$).

Qualitative themes peer influence as a double-edged sword, empathy as a motivating but insufficient factor, fear and *yilugnta* (fear of social judgment), passive bystander rationalizations, and the limited role of religiosity strongly supported the quantitative patterns. For example, 55% of passive bystanders in a related Ethiopian study (Eijigu & Teketel, 2021) mirrored our finding that fear of retaliation and peer disapproval override both empathic concern and religious values.

6.2. Conclusions

Based on the quantitative and qualitative evidence, this study concluded the following;

First, the levels of bystander intervention on the part of high school students in Addis Ababa are moderate ($M = 3.52$) and strongly situational. This moderate mean score implies that while students recognize that they have to help due to morally its acceptable, they rarely do it. The results showing that 42% of variation was left unexplained ($R^2 = .511$) reveal that although social norms and empathy are strong motivators, there is also fear, peer pressure, and *yilugnta*(fear of judgment) that prevent individuals from acting.

Second, social norms are the strongest predictor variable, showing a correlation of $r = 0.645$ and a standardized beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.477$ in the final regression model. If students perceive that their fellow students approve of helping out in such scenarios, then it increases the likelihood that they will defend the victim. If, on the other hand, students perceive the attitude of their peers as saying "this is not our problem," then students do not respond, even if they are

empathetic. This is consistent with the theory of planned behavior, as well as studies done by Eijigu and Teketel (2021).

Thirdly, empathy acts as a strong factor ($r = 0.581$, $\beta = 0.355$) although it alone cannot motivate individuals. Adding empathy to the regression model increased the amount of variance explained ($\Delta R^2 = .093$, $p < .001$), thus validating the independent contribution of empathy; however, fear of getting back from their peers usually deters people from following empathy. In Ethiopia, the cultural value of *metegagez* (mutual help) can create empathy in students, but the hierarchical structures of the peer group inhibit any actions based on it.

Fourth, religiosity does not directly predict bystander intervention ($r = 0.087$, $p > .05$; $\beta = -0.042$), even though students strongly endorse religious teachings about helping others (mean religiosity = 3.63). This apparent paradox reflects a gap between moral values and behavioral execution under pressure. In a highly religious society like Ethiopia, where Orthodox Christianity (75.9% of the sample), Islam (11.8%), and Protestantism (9.2%) emphasize compassion, students internalize those values, but in the heat of a bullying incident, peer dynamics and personal safety concerns take precedence. This conclusion is consistent with Tura's (2019) finding in Addis Ababa that religious endorsement did not translate into actual intervention.

Fifth, school type produces shows a differences: private school students scored nearly two-thirds of a standard deviation higher on bystander intervention (Cohen's $d = 0.90$) and a full standard deviation higher on empathy ($d = 1.00$) than public school students. Father's education ($\eta^2 = .08$ for intervention) and family income ($\eta^2 = .09$ for intervention) also matter, with students from degree-holder families and those earning >30,000 ETB showing significantly

higher prosocial scores. Finally, the combination of social norms and empathy explains 51.1% of the variance, confirming that both external normative pressure and internal affective response are necessary to move a student from passive witness to active defender.

6.3. Implications

Theoretical Implications

These results make an important contribution to the theoretical knowledge about bystander intervention behavior in at least three respects. Firstly, the importance of both empathy ($\beta = .38, p < .001$) and social norms ($\beta = .29, p < .001$) to predicting this behavior is consistent with the five-stage cognitive process outlined by Latane and Darley (1970), as well as the Theory of Planned Behavior described by Ajzen (1991). The current findings expand the scope of application of both models to collectivist and religiously oriented African society.

Secondly, the finding about religiosity affecting bystander intervention only when it works through empathy can be viewed as a refinement of the theory. Instead of contributing to bystander intervention directly, religiosity can be conceptualized as a distal moral motivation in the present model that induces prosocial behavior via empathy. Such model can develop future theory of bystander intervention in Ethiopia and other cultures.

Third, the differences observed between government and private school students highlight the theoretical importance of institutional context and school culture as situational variables that moderate bystander behavior a dimension that existing international models have not sufficiently addressed in low- and middle-income country settings.

Practical Implications

The findings carry important implications for schools, counselors, and policymakers in Ethiopia.

For school counselors and psychologists, the predictive power of empathy makes it important to have empathy training as an essential part of school-based bullying prevention strategies. The guidance programs conducted by counselors in Addis Ababa secondary schools should include elements such as perspective-taking skills training, victim-oriented discussions, and emotion recognition exercises – especially at Grades 9 and 10, when peer influence is strongest.

For teachers and school administrators, the important role of social norms highlights the importance of the school setting as an influence on the decision to help. It is critical for schools to deliberately promote prosocial norms through recognition of help, the creation of peer support networks, and the establishment of a context in which intervening is not only expected but also safe. The identification of teacher encouragement as an important motivator in the qualitative study emphasizes this particular function of teachers.

For policymakers at the Ethiopian Ministry of Education, this research gives rise to the first empirical evidence based on local realities that empathy and social norms, rather than religiosity, are the main forces behind intervention behaviors among bystanders in secondary schools in Ethiopia. Thus, national policies on bullying and school safety should take into consideration skill development and norm establishment approaches instead of moral and religious appeals only.

6.4. Recommendations

- **Reframe Perceived Peer Norms**

Peer norm clarification programs must be put into place in schools where the peers make the students realize that most of their peers think that helping is the right thing to do. Pledge programs in classes and in clubs run by peers are some practical steps towards achieving this objective.

- **Safe Reporting Environments**

Many students fear revenge or embarrassment. Schools must set up anonymous ways to report bullying like a box or an online form. Students need to know that helping will not get them in trouble.

- **Teach empathy regularly**

Empathy can be learned. Short exercises like discussing how someone feels or role-playing a real school situation can raise empathy. Teachers should do this often, not just once.

- **Teach Practical Intervention Skills**

Telling students to “be good” may not be enough so that programs must also teach practical skills how to stop a bully safely, how to get help from an adult, and how to support a victim without getting hurt.

- **Learn from others good schools**

Private school students scored higher on helping and empathy. Government schools can copy what private schools do like smaller classes, more counseling, and positive school climate activities.

- **Active Bystandership into the National Curriculum**

The Ministry of Education should introduce and schools should create a short course that teaches: How to notice bullying, what peers really think, how to feel empathy, how to step in safely and how to ask a teacher for help.

- **Design Policies that Reward Helping Behavior**

The government should require schools to have programs that reward students who help others. Punishing bullies is not enough. Schools also need posters, assemblies, and class pledges that make helping seem normal.

- **Design and test a program called “*LeHulum*”(For Everyone)**

A simple program “For Everyone” the program could include talking about what peers expect, practicing empathy, role-playing school bullying scenes, having older students model helping, and practicing what to do when afraid. Researchers should test this program to see if it raises helping scores from 3.52 to above 4.00.

6.5. Limitations of the Study and Future Direction of Research

6.5.1. Limitations of the Study

- **Cross-sectional design**

Data were collected at only one time. So that cannot say for sure that social norms caused students to help. It could be that helping changed how students saw the norms. So that

- **Self-report measurement**

Students reported their own intentions, not real actions. They may have said they would help more than they actually would. The mean score of 3.52 might be too high. Also, the social norms scales had only moderate reliability ($\alpha = .605$ and $.575$). This makes the results less precise.

- **Limited generalizability**

The study was done in only two sub-cities of Addis Ababa (Arada and Yeka) and in only four schools (two governments, two private). Rural areas, , and other Ethiopian regions (like Amhara, Oromia, or SNNPR) may have different results. Peer dynamics, school resources, and culture vary across Ethiopia.

- **Narrow view of religiosity**

Religiosity was measured only as general commitment using the CRS-5 scale. The scale did not separate intrinsic from extrinsic religiosity. It also missed religious coping, moral obligation, or involvement in church or mosque youth groups.

- **Small qualitative sample**

Only 16 students were interviewed. Even though themes were repeated, a larger and more diverse group (different grades, schools, religions, and income levels) could have given richer data and more themes.

- **No direct observation of behavior**

The study used written scenarios and hypothetical situations. What students say they will do may not match what they actually do in a real bullying incident. Ethical rules prevent staging real bullying, but future research could use peer reports or teacher reports instead.

- **Missing parent and teacher views**

The study only looked at students. The study did not measure what parents or teachers think, or how school rules affect bystander behavior. These factors may also be important.

6.5.2. Future Directions for Research

- **Follow students over time by using longitudinal studies.**

Researchers should track the same students for one or two years. This will show whether changes in social norms and empathy really lead to more helping.

- **Run small experiments**

Researchers could set up safe, staged bullying scenarios (with ethical approval). This would measure real helping behavior, not just what students say they would do.

- **Build better scales for Ethiopian culture**

The social norms scales used in this study had low reliability ($\alpha = .575-.605$). Future research should create new scales that include Ethiopian ideas like yilugnta (fear of social judgment), and andinet (unity). These scales should be reliable (α above .80) and tested in many regions.

- **Compare different settings**

Future studies should compare: Urban vs. rural schools Public vs. private vs. religious schools (Orthodox, Islam, Protestant) Religious schools may show different results because of daily religious teaching.

- **Design and test an intervention program**

The most urgent next step is to create a school program that changes peer norms and builds empathy at the same time. A program called “*LeHulum*” (For Everyone) should be tested with a randomized controlled trial. The study should measure real outcomes, such as fewer bullying reports, peer nominations of defenders, and teacher reports.

- **Study cyberbullying**

Ethiopian teenagers use Telegram, TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook a lot. Future research should see if the same factors (social norms, empathy, and religiosity) predict online helping. Physical fear is gone online, but digital shaming and public exposure are still strong.

- **Include parents and teachers**

So far, only students were studied. Future work should ask: How do parents' norms and religiosity affect students? Do teachers who step in become role models? School policies and administrator support also matter.

- **Explore other demographic variables**

This study found no gender or grade differences. But future research should look at ethnicity, disability, and past victimization. These may interact with social norms and empathy in ways not captured here.

- **Repeat the study in other Ethiopian regions**

To make the findings more general, the study should be done again in other regional states (Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, Sidama) and in emerging regions (Afar, Somali). Cross-cultural comparisons will show whether the results are only true for Addis Ababa or apply to all of Ethiopia.

By following these directions, Ethiopian research can build a local, practical understanding of bystander behavior. This will help reduce bullying and promote *meredadat* (helping each other), *fiker* (love), *andinet* (unity), and prosocial action in schools.

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Appendices

Appendix I: English version questionnaire

Addis Ababa University

College of Educational and Language studies

School of Psychology

My name is Milkias Kebede, and I am a master's student in Social Psychology at Addis Ababa University. I am currently conducting a research study on bystander effect among high school students; the role of social norms, empathy, and religiosity in predicting intervention behavior. The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess factors that influence students' willingness to intervene in situations of bullying or peer conflict.

Please complete this questionnaire honestly and voluntarily. All responses will be used for academic purposes and will be treated with strict confidentiality and anonymity. Participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any point without any negative consequences.

Kindly follow the instructions provided and respond to all questions.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Scenario-Based Bystander Intervention Scale (SBBIS)

Part I: Instruction: The following scenarios describe situations that may occur among students at school. Please read each scenario carefully and indicate how likely you would be to respond in

the ways listed. Put a mark (✓) in the box that best represents your opinion using the options:

Very Unlikely, Unlikely, Neutral, Likely, and Very Likely.

Scenario 1: High-Norm (Supportive Peers Present)

During a school break, you see a group of students teasing and pushing a classmate because of their accent and appearance. The student looks distressed and tries to walk away.

Two nearby students say, *“This is not okay,”* and *“We should stop this and tell a teacher.”* One of them moves closer to the victim and asks if they are alright.

No	Items	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely
1	I would speak up and tell the students to stop the bullying.					
2	I would stand next to the victim to show support.					
3	I would ask other students to help stop the situation.					
4	I would report the incident to a teacher or school authority.					
5	I would ignore the situation and walk away.					

Please describe situation similar to the above scenario and what you actually did.

Scenario 2: Low-Norm (Discouraging Peers Present)

During a class break, you notice a student being mocked and laughed at by several classmates. The victim looks embarrassed and remains silent.

Other students nearby are watching but doing nothing. Some are laughing, while others say, *“It’s not*

<i>our problem,” or “If you interfere, you might get into trouble.”</i>					
	Items				
1	I will tell the students to stop the bullying				
2	I would clearly tell the students that what they are doing is wrong and should stop immediately.				
3	I will seek help from a teacher or school staff				
4	I would stay with the victim after the incident to make sure they feel supported and safe.				
5	I will Ignore the situation and walk away				

Scenario-Based Social Norm Manipulation (Vignette)

Part II: Instruction: The following items are about your opinions regarding how students in your school usually think and behave when someone is being mistreated. Please read each scenario carefully and indicate how likely you would be to respond in the ways listed. Put a mark (✓) in the box that best represents your opinion using the options: Very Unlikely, Unlikely, Neutral, Likely, and Very Likely.

	High-Norm Scenario: Assume that It is break time at your school. You are walking past the Grade 10 corridor when you see two students from your class pushing and mocking a quiet
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	boy who is known to be shy. One of them grabs his exercise book and throws it on the floor, laughing loudly. A few other students standing nearby are watching but not saying anything. The boy looks scared and embarrassed. He is not able to defend himself.					
No	Items	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely
1	I would speak up and tell the students to stop what they are doing.					
2	I would stand next to the boy to show support and protect him.					
3	I would ask other students nearby to help stop the situation.					
4	I would report the incident to a teacher or school authority.					
5	I would ignore the situation and walk away.					
	Low-Norm Scenario: During lunchtime, you see two close friends arguing loudly near the school cafeteria. One of them seems upset and raises their voice, but no physical fight has occurred. You are not sure if it is a serious conflict or just a normal disagreement between friends. Other students are walking by and not paying much attention.					
1	I would ask the students if they need help.					
2	I would try to calm the situation by speaking to them.					
3	I would stay nearby in case the argument becomes serious.					
4	I would inform a teacher or school staff if the argument escalates.					

5	I would ignore the situation and continue walking.					
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Perceived School Social Norms Scale

Part III: Instruction: The following items are about your opinions regarding how students in your school usually think and behave when someone is being mistreated. Please read each statement carefully and put a mark (✓) in the box that aligns with your opinion the most using the options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

No	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Perceived School Social Norms Scale						
1	Most students in my school believe that helping a student who is being bullied is the right thing to do.					
2	Teachers at my school expect students to take action when someone is being bullied.					
3	Most students in my school try to help when they see someone being treated unfairly.					
4	In my school, students usually speak up when someone is treated unfairly.					

5	Students in my school usually ignore bullying when it happens.					
6	Many students think it is better not to get involved when someone is mistreated.					
7	I feel that students in my school expect me to help if I see someone in trouble.					
8	In my school, students who stand up against bullying are respected by their peers.					

Empathy Scale Interpersonal Reactivity Index

Part IV: Instruction: The following items are about how you usually feel and think when you see other students experiencing difficulties or unfair treatment. Please read each statement carefully and put a mark (✓) in the box that aligns with your opinion the most using the options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

No	Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Empathy Scale Interpersonal Reactivity Index						
1	I often feel concerned for people who are less fortunate than me.					
2	I get upset when I see someone (student) being treated unfairly.					
3	I feel compassion for people who experience hardships.					

4	I am often touched by things I see happen to others.					
5	I try to understand how other students see a situation before I judge them.					
6	I can usually imagine what another student might be thinking in a difficult situation.					
7	Before criticizing someone, I try to imagine how I would feel in their place.					
8	I sometimes find it easy to predict what others will do.					
9	I rarely care about what happens to other students.					
10	I often struggle to understand how other students are feeling.					

Religious Commitment Scale CRS–5

Part V: Instruction: The following items are about the importance of religious beliefs and practices in your daily life. Please read each statement carefully and put a mark (✓) in the box that aligns with your opinion the most using the options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

No	Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Religious Commitment Scale CRS–5						

1	My religious beliefs are important in my daily life.					
2	I try to follow my religious teachings when I interact with others at school.					
3	Prayer or other religious practices are meaningful to me.					
4	My religious beliefs do not affect how I treat others.					
5	I do not think about religion when deciding what is right or wrong.					
6	My religious beliefs guide how I treat other students at school.					
7	I think about my religious values when deciding what is right or wrong.					
8	Because of my faith, I feel responsible to help students who are treated unfairly.					
9	My religious beliefs encourage me to stand up for someone who is being mistreated.					

Part VI: Demographic characteristics

Instruction: Please read all the statements carefully, tick (✓) and fill the appropriate response.

1. Age: _____ years
2. Gender: Male ☐, Female ☐
3. Grade Level: Grade 9 ☐ ,Grade 10 ☐, Grade 11 ☐, Grade 12 ☐
4. School Type: ☐ Public ☐ Private
5. Religious Affliction: Orthodox ☐, Protestant ☐, Muslim ☐, Catholic ☐, Other ☐
6. With whom are you living now? Both parents ☐, One parent ☐, Relatives ☐, Alone ☐
7. Father/Male guardians Education level: _____
8. Mother/Female guardians Education level: _____
9. Family's Overall Monthly Income: _____

Appendix II: English Version Interview Questions

Semi-Structured Interview Questions (Qualitative)

Part VI: Instruction: The following questions are open-ended and focus on your experiences and views regarding situations where students are mistreated at school. Please answer each question honestly and freely based on your personal experiences and opinions.

Related to bystander behavior

1. Can you describe a real situation you have witnessed at school where a student was bullied or mistreated? What did you and others do in that situation?

Related to social norms

2. How do your friends or classmates influence your decision to intervene or not intervene in such situations?

Related to empathy

3. How do your feelings, such as concern or compassion for others, affect whether you decide to help someone who is being treated unfairly?

Related to religiosity

4. In what ways, if any, do your religious beliefs or values influence how you respond when you see someone in distress at school?

Views and decision-making during bystander

5. What usually goes through your mind when you decide whether to help someone who is being mistreated or to stay silent?

Reflection / Opinion

6. What do you think would encourage students in your school to help others when they are being hurt, instead of remaining silent?

Demographic characteristics

Instruction: Please read all the statements carefully, tick (✓) and fill the appropriate response.

1. Age: _____ years
2. Gender: Male ☐, Female ☐
3. Grade Level: Grade 9 ☐ ,Grade 10 ☐, Grade 11 ☐, Grade 12 ☐
4. School Type: ☐ Public ☐ Private
5. Religious Affiliation: Orthodox ☐, Protestant ☐, Muslim ☐, Catholic ☐, Other ☐
6. With whom are you living now? Both parents ☐, One parent ☐,Relatives ☐,Alone ☐
7. Father/Male guardians Education level: _____
8. Mother/Female guardians Education level: _____

9. Family's Overall Monthly Income: _____

Appendices III: Amharic version questionnaire

አዲስአበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

የሰነድ ባህሪ እና ትምህርት ጥናት ኮሌጅ

የ ሰነድ ባህሪ ትምህርት ክፍል

በአማርኛ የተዘጋጀ መጠይቅ

ይህ መጠየቅ የተመልካች ተሳትፎ ባህሪን ለመተንበይ ማህበራዊ ደንቦች፣ የግለሰቦች ርህራሄ እና ሃይማኖታዊነት ሚና ምን እንደሆነ ምርምር ለማድረግ ሲሆን የዚህ መጠይቅ አላማ የተማሪዎችን የጉልበተኝነት ወይም ግጭት ሲፈጠር ተመልካቾች ለተሳትፎ ያላቸውን ፍላጎት የሚመለከቱ ሁኔታዎችን መገምገም ነው፡፡

በዚህ ጥናት ላይ በፈቃደኝነት ለመሳተፍ ተስማምተሃል/ሻል

አዎ እስማማለሁ ☐

አይደለም ☐

እባክዎን ይህንን መጠይቅ በቅንነት እና በፈቃደኝነት ይሙሉ፡፡ ሁሉም ምላሾች ለትምህርት ዓላማ ጥቅም ላይ ይሚውሉ ሲሆን ሚስጥራዊነታቸው አጅጉን የተጠበቀ ነው፡፡ ለዚህ መጠይቅ መልስ የሚሰጡ ግለሰቦች ማንነት ለሌሎች አይገለጽም፡፡ ተሳትፎው ሙሉ በሙሉ በፈቃደኝነት ላይ የተመሰረተ ሲሆን በማንኛውም ጊዜ ያለ ምንም አሉታዊ ተጽኖ ከጥናቱ መውጣት ይችላሉ፡፡

የተሰጡትን መመሪያዎች በአግባቡ በመከተል ለሁሉም ጥያቄዎች መላሽ ይሰጡ፡፡

ክፍል 1: በሁኔታዎች ላይ የተመሰረተ የተመልካች ተሳትፎ መለኪያ

መመሪያ፤ የሚከተሉት ሁኔታዎች በትምህርት ቤት በተማሪዎች መካከል ሊከሰቱ የሚችሉ ሁኔታዎችን ይገልጻሉ፡፡ እባክትን እያንዳንዱን መጠይቆች በጥንቃቄ ያንብቡ እና ለተዘረዘሩት መጠይቆች ምን ዓይነት ምላሽ እንደሚሰጡ ያመልክቱ፡፡ ሀሳብን

በተሻለ ሁኔታ በሚወክል ምርጫ ስር ባለው ሳጥን ውስጥ የ(✓) ምልክት ያድርጉ። የተሰጡት ምርጫዎችም በጣም

አልሰማማም፣ አልሰማማም ፣ ገለልተኛ ነኝ ፣ እስማማለሁ እና በጣም እስማማለሁ የሚሉ ኛቸው።

ሁኔታ 1: ትምህርት ቤት በዕረፍት ሰዓት ተማሪዎች በቡድን በመሆን የክፍላቸውን ተማሪ በአነጋገሩ እና በቁመናው መነሻነት ሲሳለቁበት እና ሲገፉት ታያለህ/ሽ። ተማሪውም የተጨነቀ ይመስላል እናም ለመሄድ ይሞክራል።

በአቅራቢያው ያሉ ሁለት ተማሪዎች ይህ ጥሩ አይደለም ስለዚህ አስቁመናቸው ድርጊታቸውን ለአስተማሪ ልንናገር ይገባል ይላሉ። ከመካከላቸው አንዱ ወደ ተጎጂው ጠጋ በማለት ደህንነቱን ይጠይቀዋል።

ተ.ቁ	መጠይቆች	በጣም አልሰማማም	አልሰማማም	ገለልተኛ ነኝ	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ
1	ተማሪዎቹ ስላቃቸውን እንዲያቆሙ በንግግር እገልጽላቸዋለሁ					
2	ድጋፍ ለማሳየት ከተጠቂው ጎን እቆማለሁ					
3	ሌሎች ተማሪዎች ድርጊቱን እንዲያስቆሙ እጠይቃቸዋለሁ					
4	ክስተቱን ለአስተማሪ ወይም ለትምህርት ቤቱ የበላይ ሃላፊዎች አሳውቃለሁ					
5	ክስተቱን በዝምታ አልፌ እሄዳለሁ					

እባክዎን ከላይ ካለው ከተገለጸው ክስተት ጋር ተመሳሳይ ሁኔታ የሚያቁ ከሆነ እርሶ ምን እንዳደረጉ

ያብራሩ፡ _____

ሁኔታ 2: በትምህርት ቤት የአረፍት ሰዓት በአንድ ተማሪ ላይ በርካታ የክፍል ጓደኞቹ ሲሳለቁበት እና ሲስቁበት ታስተውላለክ/ያለሽ።

ተጠቂው የተሸማቀቀ ይመስላል እናም ዝም ይላል።					
በአቅራቢያ ያሉ ሌሎች ተማሪዎች እየተመለከቱ ቢሆንም ምንም ነገር አያደርጉም። አንዳንዶቹ እየሳቁ ነው፤ ሌሎች ደግሞ አይመለከተንም ይላሉ በጉዳዩ ጣልቃ ብንገባ ችግር ሊያጋጥመን ይችላል ይላሉ።					
ተ.ቁ	መጠይቆች				
6	ተማሪዎቹ ድርጊታቸውን እንዲያቆሙ እነግራቸዋለሁ				
7	ተማሪዎቹ የሚያደርጉት ነገር ትክክል እንዳልሆነ ግልጽ በሆነ መንገድ እነግራቸዋለሁ፤ እናም ወዲያውኑ እንዲቆሙ እጠይቃቸዋለሁ				
8	በትምህርት ቤቱ መምህራን ወይም አባላት መፍትሄ እንዲያገኝ አደርጋለሁ				
9	ክስተቱ ከተከሰተ በኋላ ተጎጂው ድጋፍ እንደሚሰማው ለማረጋገጥ ከተጎጂው ጋር እቆያለሁ				
10	ክስተቱ እንዳልተፈጠረ በመቁጠር አልፎ እሄዳለሁ።				

እባክዎን ከላይ ካለው ከተገለጸው ክስተት ጋር ተመሳሳይ ሁኔታ የሚያቁ ከሆነ እርሶ ምን እንዳደረጉ

ያብራሩ፡ _____

ክፍል 2፡ በሁኔታዎች ላይ የተመሰረተ ማህበራዊ ስረአት

መመሪያ፡ የሚከተሉት መጠይቆች በትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ያሉ ተማሪዎች አንድ ሰው ላይ በደል ሲደርስ አይተው ምን አይነት ምላሽ ሊሰጡ እንደሚችሉ የእርሶን መረዳት የሚመለከት ነው። እባኩን እያንዳንዱን መጠይቅ በአግባቡ በማንበብ እና በተዘረዘሩት መጠይቆች ላይ ምን አይነት ምላሽ እንደሚሰጡ ያመልክቱ። ሀሳቦን በተሻለ ሁኔታ በሚወክል ምርጫ ስር ባለው ሳጥን ውስጥ የ(✓) ምልክት ያድርጉ። የተሰጡት ምርጫዎችም በጣም አልስማማም፣ አልስማማም ፣ ገለልተኛ ነኝ ፣ እስማማለሁ እና በጣም እስማማለሁ የሚሉ ኛቸው።

ተ.ቁ	ሁኔታ 1፡ በትምህርት ቤት የዕረፍት ጊዜ እንደሆነ ያስቡ። በ10ኛ ክፍል አካባቢ ሲታልፍ ሁለት ተማሪዎች ከክፍል ውስጥ አንድ ዓይናፋር እና ዝምተኛ የሆነ ተማሪ ሲገፉት እና ሲሳለቁበት ታያለህ/ሽ። ከመካከላቸው አንዱ በከፍተኛ ድምጽ በመሳቅ
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	ድብተሩን ነጥቆች ወለሉ ላይ ይጥልበታል። በአቅራቢያው የቆሙ ጥቂት ተማሪዎች ያዩ ቢሆንም ምንም አልረዱትም። ተማሪው የፈራ እና የተሸማቀቀ ይመስላል። ራሱንም ለመከላከል አልቻለም።					
	መጠይቅ	በጣም አልሰማማም	አልሰማማም	ገሰፈተኛ ነኝ	አሰማማለሁ	በጣም አሰማማለሁ
1.	ድርጊታቸውን እንዲተው ለተማሪዎቹ አነግራቸዋለሁ					
2.	ከተጠቂው ጎን በመሆን እንደምደግፈው እና እንደምከላከልለት አሳያለሁ					
3.	በአካባቢው ያሉ ሌሎች ተማሪዎች ድርጊቱን ለማስቆም እንዲረዱኝ እጠይቃለሁ					
4.	ከስተቱን ለመምህራን ወይም ለትምህት ቤቱ ሀላፊዎች አሳውቃለሁ					
5	ምንም እንዳልተፈጠረ በዝምታ አልፎ እሄዳለሁ					
	ሁኔታ 2: በምሳ ሰአት፣ ሁለት የቅርብ ጓደኞቻች ከትምህርት ቤቱ ካፍቴሪያ አጠገብ ጮክ ብለው ሲጨቃጨቁ ታያለህ/ሽ። ከመካከላቸው አንዱ የተናደደ ይመስላል እና ድምፃቸውን ከፍ አድርገው ነበር፤ ነገር ግን ምንም አይነት አካላዊ ግጭት አልተፈጠረም። ከባድ ግጭት ወይም በጓደኞች መካከል የተለመደ አለመግባባት ስለመሆኑ እርግጠኛ አይደለህም/ሽ። ሌሎች ተማሪዎች እየሄዱ ሲሆን ብዙም ትኩረት አልሰጡላቸውም።					
6	ተማሪዎች እርዳታ የሚፈልጉ ከሆኑን እጠይቃቸዋለሁ					
7	ከስተቱ እንዲረጋጋ በንግግር እጠይቃቸዋለሁ					

8	በአካባቢው በመቆየት ንግግሩ ሊከር ከቻለ እጡብቃለሁ					
9	ክርክሩ ከተባባሰ ለአስተማሪ ወይም ለትምህርት ቤት ሰራተኞች አሳውቃለሁ					
10	ሁኔታውን ችላ ብዬ አልፌ እሄዳለሁ					

እባክዎን ከላይ ካለው ከተገለጸው ክስተት ጋር ተመሳሳይ ሁኔታ የሚያቁ ከሆነ እርሶ ምን እንዳደረጉ

ያብራሩ፡ _____

ክፍል 3: የትምህርት ቤት መሀበራዊ ደንቦች ልኬት

መመሪያ: የሚከተሉት ሁኔታዎች በትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ያሉ ተማሪዎች አንድ ሰው በደል ወይም ጥቃት ሲደርስበት ምን እንደሚያሰቡ እና የሚያሳዩትን ባህሪ በተመለከተ የእርሶን አስተያየት እንዲሰጡ ነው። እባኩን እያንዳንዱን መጠይቅ በአግባቡ በማንበብ እና በተዘረዘሩት መጠይቆች ላይ ምን አይነት ምላሽ እንደሚሰጡ ያመልክቱ። ሀሳቡን በተሻለ ሁኔታ በሚወክል ምርጫ ስር ባለው ሳጥን ውስጥ የ(✓) ምልክት ያድርጉ። የተሰጡት ምርጫዎችም በጣም አልስማማም፣ አልስማማም ፣ ገለልተኛ ነኝ ፣ እስማማለሁ እና በጣም እስማማለሁ የሚሉ ኛቸው።

ተ.ቁ	መጠይቆች	በጣም አልስማማም	አልስማማም	ገለልተኛ ነኝ	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ
1	በእኔ ትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ያሉ አብዛኞቹ ተማሪዎች ጥቃት የሚደርስበትን ተማሪ መርዳት ትክክል ነው ብለው ያምናሉ					
2	በትምህርት ቤቴ ውስጥ አስተማሪዎች አንድ ተማሪ ጉዳት ወይም ጥቃት					

	ሲያጋጥመው ሌሎች ተማሪዎች እንዲረዱት ይጠብቃሉ					
3	በእኔ ትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ያሉ አብዛኞቹ ተማሪዎች አንድ ሰው ኢፍትሃዊነት(ጥቃት) ሲደርስበት ለመርዳት ይሞክራሉ					
4	በትምህርት ቤቴ ውስጥ ተማሪዎች ብዙውን ጊዜ የሚናገሩት አንድ ሰው ኢፍትሃዊነት(ጥቃት) ሲደርስበት ነው					
5	በትምህርት ቤቴ ውስጥ ያሉ ተማሪዎች ብዙውን ጊዜ ጥቃት ሲደርስ አይተው ችላ ይላሉ					
6	ብዙ ተማሪዎች አንድ ሰው ሲበደል(ጥቃት ሲደርስበት) ጣልቃ ገብቶ አለመርዳት የተሻለ ነው ብለው ያስባሉ					
7	ትምህርት ቤቴ ውስጥ ያሉ ተማሪዎች ችግር ውስጥ ያለ ሰው ሳይ እኔ እንድረዳው/ት ይጠብቃሉ					
8	በትምህርት ቤቴ ውስጥ ጥቃት በሚደርስት/ባት ተማሪ ጎን የሚቆሙ ተማሪዎች በሌሎች ዘንድ ይከበራሉ					

ክፍል 4: የርህራሄ መለኪያ

መመሪያ: የሚከተሉት መጠየቆች ሌሎች ተማሪዎች ችግር ሲገጥማቸው ወይም ፍትሃዊ ያልሆነ ሁኔታ ሲያጋጥማቸው ስለሚሰማዎት እና ስለሚያስቡት ነገር ነው። እባኩትን እያንዳንዱን ጥያቄ በጥንቃቄ አንብበው ሀሳቦን የሚገልጽ ምላሽ ስር (✓) ምልክት ያድርጉ አማራጮቹም በጣም አልስማማም ፣አልስማማም ፣ገለልተኛ ነኝ፣ እስማማለሁ እና በጣም እስማማለሁ የሚሉ ናቸው።

ተ.ቁ	መተየቆች	በጣም አልስማማም	አልስማማም	ገለልተኛ ነኝ	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ

1	ብዙ ጊዜ ከእኔ በታች አኗኗር ላላቸው ሰዎች እጨነቃለሁ					
2	በሆነ ሰው ወይም በተማሪ ላይ በደል(ጥቃት) ሲደርስ ሳይ አዝናለሁ					
3	በችግር ውስጥ ላሉ ሰዎች ርህራሄ አለኝ					
4	በሌሎች ላይ የሚደርስ በደል ብዙ ጊዜ ያሳዝነኛል					
5	በሌሎች ተማሪዎች ከመፍረዴ በፊት ሁኔታውን እነርሱ እንዴት እንደሚመለከቱት ለመረዳት እሞክራለሁ					
6	በአስቸጋሪ ሁኔታዎች ውስጥ ሌሎች ተማሪዎች ምን ሊያስቡ እንደሚችሉ ብዙ ጊዜ መገመት እችላለሁ					
7	አንድን ሰው ከመተቸቱ በፊት በእርሱ ቦታ ብሆን ምን እንደሚሰማኝ ለመገመት እሞክራለሁ					
8	አንዳንድ ጊዜ ሌሎች ምን እንደሚያደርጉ መገመት ቀላል ሆኖ አገኘዋለሁ					
9	በሌሎች ተማሪዎች ላይ ስለሚሆነው ነገር ግድ የለኝም					
10	ሌሎች ተማሪዎች ምን እንደሚሰማቸው ለመረዳት ብዙ ጊዜ እችላለሁ					

ክፍል 5: የሃይማኖተኝነት ቁርጠኝነት መለኪያ

መመሪያ: የሚከተሉት ሀሳቦች በአለት ከአለት ውሳኔዎ ላይ ሀይማኖታዊ አመለካከቶች አስፈላጊነትን የሚመለከቱ ናቸው።

እባኩን እያንዳንዱን ጥያቄ በጥንቃቄ አንበበው ሀሳቦን የሚገልጽ ምላሽ ስር የ(✓) ምልክት ያድርጉ አማራጮቹም በጣም

አልሰማማም ፣አልሰማማም ፣ገለልተኛ ነኝ፣ እስማማለሁ እና በጣም እስማማለሁ የሚሉ ናቸው።

ተ.ቁ	መጠይቆች	በጣም እልስማም	አልስማም	ገለልተኛ	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ
1	በአለት ከአለት ሂወቴ ላይ ሀይማኖታዊ አመለካከቱ ተጽኖ ያሳድራል					

2	በትምህርት ቤት ወይም በሌላ ቦታ ከሌሎች ሰዎች ጋር በምግናኝበት ጊዜ ሃይማኖታዊ ትምህርቶችን እና አመለካከቶችን ልጠቀም እሞክራለሁ					
3	ጸሎት ወይም ሌሎች ሃይማኖታዊ ልምዶች ለእኔ አስፈላጊ ናቸው					
4	የእኔ የሃይማኖት አመለካከቶች ሌሎችን እንዴት ማክበር እንዳለብኝ ተጽዕኖ አያሳድርብኝም					
5	ትክክል ወይም ስህተት የሆነውን ለመወሰን የሃይማኖትን አመለካከቶች አላስብም					
6	የእኔ የሃይማኖት አመለካከቶች በትምህርት ቤት ሌሎች ተማሪዎችን እንዴት ማክበር እንዳለብኝ ይነግረኛል					
7	ትክክል ወይም ስህተት የሆነውን ስወስን የሃይማኖትን አመለካከቶች አስባለው					
8	በእምነቴ ምክንያት ኢፍትሃዊነት(ጥቃት) የሚያጋጥማቸውን ተማሪዎች ለመርዳት ኃላፊነት ይሰማኛል					
9	የእኔ የሃይማኖት አመለካከቶች አንድ ሰው ሲበደል ወይም ሲጎዳ እንድረዳው ያበረታቱኛል					

ክፍል 6፡ አጠቃላይ ግላዊ መረጃ

ሁሉንም ጥያቄዎች በአግባቡ አንብበው ተገቢውን ምላሽ የስጡ፡፡

1. ዕድሜ፡ _____ ዓመት

2. ፆታ፡ ወንድ ☐ ሴት ☐

3. የትምህርት ደረጃ፡

9ኛ ክፍል ☐ 10ኛ ክፍል ☐

11ኛ ክፍል ☐ 12ኛ ክፍል ☐

4. የትምህርት ቤት አይነት፡ የመንግስት ☐ የግል ☐

5. የሚከተሉት ሃይማኖት፡

ኦርቶዶክስ ☐ ፕሮቴስታንት ☐

ሙስሊም ☐ ካቶሊክ ☐ ሌላ ☐

6. አሁን ከማን ጋር ነው የምትኖሩት፡

ወላጅ ☐ ዘመዶች ☐

ለብቻዬ ☐ ሌላ ☐

7. የአባት/የወንድ አሳዳጊዎ የትምህርት ደረጃ፡

ምንም መደበኛ ትምህርት የለም ☐ የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ትምህርት ☐

የሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ☐ ዲፕሎማ ☐ ዲግሪ እና ከዚያ በላይ ☐

8. እናት/ሴት አሳዳጊዎ የትምህርት ደረጃ፡

ምንም መደበኛ ትምህርት የለም ☐ የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ትምህርት ☐

የሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ☐ ዲፕሎማ ☐ ዲግሪ እና ከዚያ በላይ ☐

9. የቤተሰብ አጠቃላይ ወርሃዊ ገቢ፡

ከ10,000 ብር በታች ☐ 10,000 – 20,000 ብር ☐,

20,000 – 30,000 ብር ☐ 30,000 ብር እና በላይ ☐

Appendix IV: Amharic version Interview Questions

ቃለ መጠይቅ

መመሪያ: የሚከተሉት ጥያቄዎች ሀሳብ ተማሪዎች በት/ቤት ውስጥ የሚንገላቱበትን ሁኔታ በተመለከተ ባላችሁ ልምድ እና አመለካከት ላይ ያተኮሩ ናቸው። እባኩን በግል ልምዶችዎ እና አስተያየቶችዎ መሰረት እያንዳንዱን ጥያቄ በቅንነት እና በግልፅነት ይመልሱ።

A. የተመልካች ተሳትፎ

1. በትምህርተ ቤትዎ ውስጥ አንድ ተማሪ በሌሎች ተማሪዎች እንግልት ወይም ጥቃት ሲደርስበት አይተው ያውቃሉ;
አይተው ከሆነ ያዩትን ትክክለኛ ሁኔታ መግለጽ ይችላሉ; በዚህ ክስተት እርስዎ ምን አደረጉ; ለምን?

B. የማህበራዊ ውሳኔዎች ተጽእኖ

2. ዳደሮችዎ ወይም የክፍል ዳደሮችዎ እንደዚህ ባሉ ሁኔታዎች ውስጥ ጣልቃ ለመግባት ወይም ላለመግባት ስትወስን/ኚ የሚያሳድሩብህ/ሽ ተጽኖ ምንድነው?

C. ስሜታዊ ርህራሄ

3. ለሌሎች አሳቢነት ወይም ርህራሄ ያለው ስሜትህ/ሽ ኢፍትሐዊ በሆነ መንገድ የሚስተናገድን ሰው ለመርዳት በመወሰንህ ላይ ምን ተጽዕኖ ያሳድራል?

D. ሃይማኖት ተጽዕኖ

4. ሀይማኖታዊ አመለካከትህ/ሽ ወይም አምነትህ በትምህርት ቤት ውስጥ ጥቃት ወይም ኢፍትሐዊነት የደረሰበትን ሰው ለመርዳት በምን አይነት መንገድ ተጽኖ ሊያሳድርብህ/ሽ ይችላል?

E. አመለካከት እና የውሳኔ አሰጣጥ ሂደት

5. በደል የደረሰበትን ሰው ለመርዳት ወይም ዝም ለማለት ስትወስን/ኚ ብዙውን ጊዜ በአእምሮህ/ሽ ውስጥ ምን ታስባለህ/ሽ?

F. አስተያየት

6. በትምህርት ቤትዎ ተማሪዎች ሌሎችን ሲጎዱ በዝምታ ከመቆየት ይልቅ እንዲረዱ ምን ነገሮች ይበረታታቸዋል ብለው ያስባሉ?

አጠቃላይ ግላዊ መረጃ

ሁሉንም ጥያቄዎች በአግባቡ አንብበው ተገቢውን ምላሽ በሚሰጡት ምላሽ ላይ (✓) ምልክት ያድርጉ፡፡

1. ዕድሜ፡ _____ ዓመት

2. ፆታ፡ ወንድ ☐ ሴት ☐

3. የትምህርት ደረጃ፡

9ኛ ክፍል ☐, 10ኛ ክፍል ☐

11ኛ ክፍል ☐, 12ኛ ክፍል ☐

4. የትምህርት ቤት አይነት፡ የመንግስት ☐ የግል ☐

5. የሚከተሉት ሃይማኖት፡

ኦርቶዶክስ ☐, ፕሮቴስታንት ☐

ሙስሊም ☐, ካቶሊክ ☐, ሌላ ☐

6. አሁን ከማን ጋር ነው የምትኖሩት፡

ወላጅ ☐, ዘመዶች ☐

ለብቻዬ ☐, ሌላ ☐

7. የአባት/የወንድ አሳዳጊዎ የትምህርት ደረጃ፡

ምንም መደበኛ ትምህርት የለም ☐, የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ትምህርት ☐,

የሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ☐, ዲፕሎማ ☐, ዲግሪ እና ከዚያ በላይ ☐

8. እናት/ሴት አሳዳጊዎ የትምህርት ደረጃ፡

ምንም መደበኛ ትምህርት የለም ☐, የመጀመሪያ ደረጃ ትምህርት ☐,

የሁለተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት ☐, ዲፕሎማ ☐, ዲግሪ እና ከዚያ በላይ ☐

9. የቤተሰብ አጠቃላይ ወርሃዊ ገቢ፡

ከ10,000 ብር በታች ☐, 10,000 – 20,000 ብር ☐,

20,000 – 30,000 ብር ☐, 30,000 ብር እና በላይ ☐

Appendix V: Pilot Study Report

1. Introduction

The bystander effect (also known as diffusion of responsibility) is defined as 'the tendency for individuals to be less likely to help or take action in an emergency, or problematic situation, when others are present' (Darley & Latané, 1968). The bystander effect has been extensively explored in social psychology and has continued to be an issue in schools with regard to episodes of bullying, peer victimization and other negative responses.

An understanding of the psychological predictors of intervention behavior among adolescents is important to the development of effective prevention and intervention strategies. This study investigates three important predictors of bystander intervention in teenage high school students: social norms, empathy, and religiosity. Social norms affect behavior by influencing perceptions of others' expectations and social approval of that behavior. Empathy facilitates emotional reactivity and compassion for victims, which may call for helping behaviors. Religiosity can influence moral responsibility, ethical judgment, and prosociality.

A pilot study was conducted prior to the full-scale multi-school study in order to test the reliability of the instruments, determine feasibility and to highlight potential methodological difficulties.

2. Purpose of the Pilot Study

The pilot study had many different related aims. Firstly it was to test the internal consistency reliability, Cronbach's alpha for the measurement scales. The second aim was to determine potential problematic items through the use of corrected item total correlations. The third aim

was to determine whether removal of any items improved scale reliability. The fourth was to determine whether the items were understandable to adolescents. The fifth aim was to evaluate the practicality of a classroom-based paper-and-pencil data collection. Lastly the pilot study was to identify any practical difficulties for addressing prior to the main data collection.

3. Relation of the Pilot and Main Study Sites and Participants

The pilot study was done in Kokebe Tsibah secondary school, a secondary school in Yeka subcity, in Addis Ababa. The main study, on the other hand, was done in four secondary schools, Belay Zeleke secondary school and Radical secondary school in Arada sub city, Tesifa Birhan secondary school and Magic carpet secondary school in Yeka sub city. The schools are similar in terms of grade levels (9–12), students' age distribution, school structure, and urban setting, but are different institutions. The students who participated in the pilot study did not participate in the main study. The use of different institutions ensured that there were independent samples, and minimized the possibility of response contamination.

4. Characteristics of the Pilot Study Participants

40 students were chosen using simple random sampling. But, seven students withdraw from participate, and got a sample of 33 students. Related to sex, 14 participants (42.4%) were male and 19 (57.6%) were female. In terms of grade level, 7 students (21.2%) were Grade 9, 9 student (27.3%) were Grade 10, 9students (27.3%) were Grade 11, and 8students (24.2%) were Grade 12, showing a relatively balanced distribution across grade proportional to their respective population sizes. The ages of participants ranged from 14 to 18 years, with a mean age of 16.79 years ($SD = 1.11$), suggesting that the sample primarily consisted of mid-to-late adolescents.

With respect to religious affiliation, 57.6% identified as Orthodox, 24.2% as Muslim, 12.1% as Protestant, 3.0% as Catholic, and 3.0% as other religions. The majority of students (78.8%) reported living with both parents. Regarding parental education, most mothers had primary education (45.5%), while most fathers had secondary education or higher (66.6%).

5. Techniques of Pilot Study Data Analysis

Data were entered and analysed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were computed to summarise demographic characteristics. Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis was conducted for each scale.

6. Results of the Pilot Study

6.1. Internal Consistency Reliability

Table 1 presents the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each scale as administered in the pilot study.

Table 1: Pilot Study Cronbach's Alpha (N=33)

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's α
Bystander Intervention (BI)	10	.625
Scenario-Based Social Norms (SBSN)	10	.703
Perceived School Social Norms (PSSN)	8	.715
Empathy (EMP)	10	.539
Religiosity (REL)	5	.389

Bystander Intervention had an alpha of .625, which is reliable. The Scenario-Based Social Norms subscale generated an alpha of .703, while the Perceived School Social Norms subscale generated an alpha of .715. Low internal consistency was observed from the Empathy scale (.539) and the Religiosity scale (.389).

6.2. Identification of Problematic Items

Item total correlation was calculated for each scale. Any item that had a correlation below .30 or was even negative was regarded as a troublesome one. The items which were marked as such for the Empathy scale were EMP5, EMP6, and EMP10R. Two reverse-scored items from the Religiosity scale were found to have negative correlations; REL4R and REL5R.

6.3. Practical Challenges Observed

Two specific problems came up in relation to the pilot study. Firstly, out of the forty students, seven refused to take part. Secondly, quite a few students showed reluctance in answering questions concerning the monthly family income level. Some of them stated that they simply didn't know the exact figure, while for some of them it seemed embarrassing to reveal the information.

7. Implications of the Pilot Study for the Main Study

Pilot testing proved that the research methodology can be applied effectively among the participants. The questionnaire could take around 30 minutes to complete, therefore proving its suitability for conducting the research in an educational institution. The methodology of simple random sampling was found to be quite practical in this regard.

Based on the pilot results, the following revisions were made before the main study:

1. Rewording of problematic items: Items with low corrected itemtotal correlations were reworded for clarity, with particular attention to simplifying reverse-coded items.
2. Expansion of the Religiosity scale: The original 5-item Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS-5) was expanded to 9 items by adding four new items measuring religious practices (e.g., prayer attendance, religious holiday importance) and moral influence (e.g., “My religion teaches me to help others even if it is inconvenient”). This expansion aimed to better capture the multidimensional nature of religiosity in the Ethiopian context.
3. Income question: A “Do not know” response option and income brackets (e.g., <10,000 ETB, 10,000–20,000 ETB, etc.) were added.
4. Consent procedure: The informed consent form was revised to more clearly emphasise voluntary participation and confidentiality.

The main study was then conducted with the revised instruments. The reliability coefficients obtained in the main study (N=381) are reported in Chapter Three (Table 2). For ease of reference, they are reproduced below:

Table 2: Main Study Cronbach’s Alpha (N=381) – from Chapter Three

Scale	Number of Items	Main Study α
Bystander Intervention (BIB)	10	.710
Scenario-Based Social Norms (SBSN)	10	.605
Perceived School Social	8	.575

Norms (PSSN)		
Empathy (EMP)	10	.705
Religiosity (REL)	9	.607

As shown on the above table, the Bystander Intervention Behavior scale demonstrated improvement from .625 to .710, and also Empathy scale improved from .539 to .705. The Religiosity scale improved from .389 to .607, after items are expanded from 5(five) to 9(nine). On the other hand The social norms scales (SBSN and PSSN) showed lower alphas in the main study than in the pilot, this finding is discussed in detail in Chapter Three (Section 3.6) and is attributed to the larger and more diverse sample, the multidimensional nature of social norms, and the situational sensitivity of adolescent responses. Generally, the pilot study assessed the reliability, feasibility and clarity of the instruments.