

Positive psychology  
theory and core  
concepts psychology  
essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

School bullying is a growing public concern as it can have detrimental effect on subjective well-being of children and adolescents worldwide. Bullying can be defined and referred to as “ intentional , oppressive behavior against another person that causes physical and/psychological harm” and can be classified into four categories:

Physical bullying such as; hitting, pushing, kicking, spiting and punching.

Verbal bullying such as; name-calling, teasing, insultting and verbal threats.

Social exclusion behaviors behaviors such as; ignoring victims, spreading rumours about victims, excluding from social groups by indirect threats to friends of victims.

Acts of extortion such as; asking for money or other material objects.

(Olweus, 1994).

Bullying can have a negative effect on victims, bullies and bystanders and impact psychosocial and physical health as well as academic aspiration(Hui, Tsang & Law, 2011). Several research studies show that students with poor interpersonal relationships to family, peers and teachers are more prone to be involved in peer victimization(Wong et al., 2008). Many of the victims of bullying suffer negative affects such as; anger, anxiety, decreased self-esteem or depression(Ng & Tsang,. 2008; Fung & Wong,. 2007). Some victims of bullying may as a result turn into bullies themselves(Lam & Liu,. 2007) and contribute to the comlex social interactions that involve schools, homes, parents, peers, adults, victims and bullies(Vreeman & Carroll,. 2007).

Many of the most common types of classroom and/or school antibullying

<https://assignbuster.com/positive-psychology-theory-and-core-concepts-psychology-essay/>

interventions target three key areas; training social skills, changing group norms and increasing self-efficacy((Hui, Tsang & Law, 2011). . Egan & Todorov (2009) found that implementing interventions across entire schools lead to higher rates of succes and implementing it into the regular curriculum would be most effective(Misha, 2008). Smith & colleagues(2004) found that several factors that affected the school climate such as interpersonal relationships and the quality of communication were not usually implemented in the school-wide interventions. The social context play a key role in promoting bullying behavior (Espelage & Swearer,. 2003) and in creating a negative school climate. Implementing a positive psychology intervention might prove usefull as a positive school climate promote positive development in children and adolescents and reduce aggression.(Mlshna,. 2008; Smith et al,. 2004; Whitted & Dupper,. 2005; Orpinas & Horne,. 2006)

### **Positive Psychology Theory and Core Concepts should be applied to facilitate long-term well-being in School bullying**

Positive psychology is the scientific study to understand , test, discover and promote factors (e. g strengths and virtues) (Sheldon et. al. , 2000) that enable individuals and environments such as institutions and communities to thrive and flourish(Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). To Flourish means to live with an optimal range of human functioning which is characterized by four key components; Goodness, Generativity, Growth and Resilience(Frederickson & Losada,. 2005).

Studies supports the adaptive effects of positive affects(for a review, see Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, in press) such as having a positive affect on <https://assignbuster.com/positive-psychology-theory-and-core-concepts-psychology-essay/>

attention(Frederickson & Branigan,. 2005; Rowe , Hirsch & Anderson,. 2005), increased intuition(Bolte, Goschkey, & Kuhl ,. 2003), creativity and broaden behavioral repertoires(Frederickson & Branigan,. 2005). Fredericksons (Frederickson, 2004). Positive emotions is a key component in intervention. The Broaden-and-build theory describes how positive emotions can broaden an individuals thought action patterns, and that although feeling good is a temporary experience, it can lead to a build up of enduring personal resources (social, intellectual, psychological and physical over time and this can produce an upward spiral towards increased subjective well-being(Frederikson, 2004). Hefferson & Boniwell(2011) found that “ positive emotions not only mark or signal health and well-being, but also produce health and well-being” this notion implies that the positive emotions transform individuals for the better and can make them more knowledgeable, effective, resilient and socially integrated()Frederickson, 2004). Isen’s (1990, p. 89) research also supports the broaden-and-build theory that positive emotions produces “ broad , flexible cognitive organization and ability to integrate diverse material”. Negative emotions such as anxiety and depression can lead to a more narrow attention(Frederickson, 2004). An important question that arises when implementing the broaden-and-build theory is, how much positivity is needed to flourish(Frederickson, 2004). Negative emotions have always been the focus of traditional psychology and Baumeister, et al(2001) concluded that “ Bad is stronger than good” and to be able to overcome the overwhelming effect of negative emotions, Fredericks needed to found out how much positivity was enough to make a difference. With the help of Losada (1999) and other researchers (Losada & Heaphy, 2004) Frederickson <https://assignbuster.com/positive-psychology-theory-and-core-concepts-psychology-essay/>

found the positivity ratio, stating that three positive emotions or more would negate one negative. This positivity ratio also has an upper limit where the effect decreases. It can be difficult to cultivate positivity as an individual, but there are several methods that Fredrickson & Kurtz suggest might help, such as changing ones outlook from being “ positive” to “ being open, appreciative.., curious... and... kind”(2011. p. 44) but also that creating high quality relationships can prove valuable to increasing positive emotions.

### **An evidence based intervention plan tailored to case.**

The first part of my intervention(Gratitude Intervention) will focus on positive emotions in the PERMA model of well-being and the intervention method used will be to make the students keep a journal to count blessings for 2 weeks time. Froh, Sefick & Emmons(2008) found that making students count blessings were associated with higher levels of optimism, life-satisfaction and lowered negative emotions.

The second part of my intervention will focus on building positive relationships by using the VIA-test from [www. Viacharacter. org](http://www.Viacharacter.org). VIA stands for values in action and is a self-report test that consist of 240 questions that will help individuals to identify their top character strengths out of the 24 strenghts in the VIA Classification. They will then form groups of in class based on the indentified strengths. Character strengths can then be implemented in a positive psychology intervention where the students are asked to apply one of their top character strengths in a new way, every day for one week. This is also congruent with the three pillars of positive psychology wich consist of positive experiences, strength based character and positive institutions. The PERMA model is a model of well-being and <https://assignbuster.com/positive-psychology-theory-and-core-concepts-psychology-essay/>

consist of five important elements: positive emotions, engagement, meaning, accomplishment and positive relationships. The 24 character strengths underpin all 5 elements in the PERMA model of well-being and using your highest strengths can lead to more positive emotions, more engagement, more accomplishment and to better relationships (Seligman, 2011 ; Hefferson & Boniwell, 2011). The character strengths are divided up into 6 virtues.

Wisdom and Knowledge: creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, perspective, innovation  
Courage: bravery, persistence, integrity, vitality

Humanity: love, kindness, social intelligence

Justice: citizenship, fairness, leadership  
Temperance: forgiveness and mercy, humility, prudence, self control

Transcendence: appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, spirituality

### **Critical reflections about your intervention plan: What might the pitfalls be?**

One of the main pitfalls of my intervention plan is positive psychology relies heavily on the notion that there are only negative or positive emotions, but Larsen et al. (2001, 2004) concluded that this view is too simplistic as feelings are often mixed. Hefferon & Boniwell (2011, p22-223) also argues that hope on one hand can be positive, but also lead to negative emotions like anxiety. Other researchers criticize that positive psychology focuses to

much on positivity and thus negating the potential of benefits of negative moods, such as bonding over negative complaints and events (Kowalski, 2002). Positive psychology interventions does not come with a one-size fits all as individuals, institutions and countries might have similar values or strengths but different ways of expressing them. Defensive pessimism might be another way of expressing this for certain individuals. The body of research being conducted on children and adolescents is growing. The interventions might also come of as being some kind of overt mind control when we try to make individuals focus on only the positive aspects of life.