How can schools prevent bullying assignment

How Can Schools Prevent Bullying How Schools Can Prevent Bullying Estella Coleman University of St. Thomas Research Professor: Dr. Alice Ledford Research Advisor: Dr. Virginia Leiker September 14, 2011 Table of Contents Chapter 2 Literature Review Bullying with Adolescence Bullying and Behavior Externalities of Bullying The Bully- Victim Relationship References Chapter 2 Literature Review This part of the study will be discussing the relevant literature connected with the study of bullying in elementary schools. This part of the study accounts the works that has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers.

All this would allow the readers to the field and position your research within the context. Moreover, this part of the study justifies the reason for research. This is closely connected with demonstrating that is known in the field. It is the knowledge of the field that allows one to identify the gap, which the research could fill. Concurrently, it allows the researcher to establish the theoretical framework and methodological focus. Bullying With Adolescences Adolescence is an especially dangerous time of life. The onset of puberty produces biological changes that are certainly unprecedented, if not scary.

The adolescent's body changes visibly and while his appearance continues to change, his concept of self changes As well. The reception he receives from others changes, in addition to the way he responds to them. The boundaries once conceived of as permanent are uncertain and must be reconfigured. The adolescent will begin to see himself as having sexual drives and may feel great anxiety surrounding sexual matters. And in response to this myriad of intense feelings and changes, the adolescent presents himself as

omnipotent and totally in control, lest anyone misperceive him for weak, confused, and searching for an identity.

When their identities and body images are unclear, adolescents are especially sensitive to the way they are seen by others, especially their peer group. Here especially, the actual self is constantly being compared to the ideal self, a representation of what is important and valued by a particular group. The conglomeration of these factors makes adolescence highly susceptible to the development of shame. Additionally, adolescence is a period of time in which conflicts with parents are abundant.

These conflicts are developmentally appropriate, as the individual is torn between wanting to please his parents and wanting to separate and differentiate his identity from theirs. This experience of feeling such opposing emotions may add to an already overwhelming sense of shame. Adolescence is confusing, in part, because self-consciousness is increased and personal differences are muffled. The primary concern for adolescents is how a wide circle of significant people sees them. This is much more important than whom and what they themselves have come to feel they are (Erikson, 1985).

When individuals who are experiencing shame enter adolescence, these painful feelings are exaggerated. Shame alone is often debilitating and adolescence alone is often debilitating. Put together, the combination is intolerable and often combustible Furthermore, Erikson (1963) considers identity formation to be the cornerstone of adolescent psychosocial development. Josselson (1987) offers this definition, " Identity, then is a

dynamic fitting together of parts of the personality with the realities of the social world so that a person has a sense both of internal coherence and meaningful relatedness to the real world" (pp. 2-13). An alternative to identity achievement is identity diffusion, which occurs when adolescents are not able to commit to definite life choices. Erikson (1985) stresses that at least some role confusion is a " normative and necessary" experience for adolescents, but it can lead to a more dysfunctional state, such as an inability to fully experience intimacy, if an individual remains unable to move out of this period of indecision. Erikson notes several assumptions about the nature of identity.

First, although identity development is particularly salient during adolescence, changes can and do occur earlier, in childhood, and later, in adulthood. Second, successful identity development depends in part on how earlier tasks during the life span have been resolved. Third, optimal identity formation can occur only when adolescents take an active role in their identity search and experience a normative period of moratorium, when they actively try out different roles without making a definite commitment.

Fourth, identity development cannot be considered solely an individualistic process. Exploration and commitment are based in part on historical and contextual factors. Fifth, identity is neither static nor unidimensional. Erikson (1963) cites five facets of identity – sexual, religious, political, ideological, and occupational – and believes that individuals redefine these identities throughout the course of their lives. One of the strengths of adolescents, according to Erikson, is their capacity for fidelity to individuals or institutions.

Adolescents, as a result of their search for identity, may be eager to make a strong commitment, at least temporarily, to new belief systems. Even though the rationale behind these belief systems cannot always be articulated, it does not decrease the passion that adolescents are capable of expressing for individuals or ideas. This sense of commitment has been found to be an important part of ethnic (Phinney ; Tarver, 1988) and religious (Markstrom-Adams ; Hofstra, 1993) identity development, as well as global identity (Waterman, 1985).

Fidelity, similar to commitment in many ways, also includes a focus on expressing pride in being affiliated with persons or institutions, as well as placing high value on keeping promises and being faithful (Kitchener, 1983). It could also be argued that the development of a personal sense of fidelity serves as a protective factor for adolescents. Concurrently, Garbarino, Kostelny, and Dubrow (1991) argue that the formation of a strong ideological identity is an effective buffer against extreme stress, especially if that ideology is based on tolerance for others, even an enemy.

Humans are meaning-seeking organisms without meaning they tend to get lost and succumb to self-destructive or to antisocial behavior or to madness" (p. 22). Thus, self-construed ideologies may buffer against negative outcomes, both psychological and behavioral. Although identity development during adolescence has been the subject of considerable study, Waterman (1985) maintains that several of its dimensions have not been fully explored. This has resulted from a tendency, in both Erikson's writing and in the research on identity (Marcia, 1980), to treat identity as a global descriptive quality.

An. adolescent is said either to have a clear personal sense of identity or to lack one, with each state viewed as having distinct psychological concomitants. Grotevant (1986) suggests that the study of identity should examine specific content areas, in those different identity domains of an adolescent's life " come into focus" in different periods. Previous studies have reported that a strong sense of self- efficacy was associated with better coping with stressors (Bandura, 1997).

Thus, a high level of self efficacy may prevent a potential negative effect of stress experience on bullying behavior, in addition to having a direct effect. To explore whether perceived efficacy might have a modifying affect, however, the first step would be to examine whether there is any association between stress experience and bullying behavior. Similarly, perceived social support and influence on decisions that are made, may be of importance in how the pupils react to a stressful environment. (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). These factors may thus act as buffers in a potential association between tress experience and bullying behavior. However, they may also have a direct positively associated with psychosomatic health (Bru et al. , 1998; Natvig et al. , 1999) and may be related to behavior as well. Violence and Aggression Violence and undesirable behavior among school children have received increasing attention the last years. Different aspects of associations between aggression and self- perceptions have also been explored. Some studies (Olweus, 1997) have observed associations between high degree of self-esteem and bullying or aggressive behavior.

In contrast, one previous study (DuBois et al. , 1998) found that high levels of global self- esteem were associated with more favorable scores on

measures of adjustment, with fewer emotional and behavioral problems. Other aspects of associations between aggression and self-perceptions have been explored as well. Children with an aggressive attitude have been observed to rate their personal competence higher than their teachers and parents (Hughes et al. , 1997). This finding is consistent with conclusions in a previous review (Baumeister et al. 1996), stating that violent behavior is associated with unrealistic favorable self-views that is contradicted by other persons (Baumeister et al. , 1996). A personal factor that partly overlaps with that of self-esteem is covered by the concept of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy comprises both a general and a more specific measure. The scale of general self-efficacy covers aspects related to self-worth. In view of similarities with the concept of self-esteem, high levels of general self-efficacy among the bullies may be expected. As concepts, however, self-efficacy and self-esteem differ somewhat.

While self-esteem is viewed as a global concept with aspects of self-worth, perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments (Bandura, 1997). A general lack of such self-beliefs may negatively affect a person's reaction pattern or attitude. Thus, low scores on the self-efficacy scales may be related to aggressive or bullying behavior as well. We have not found any previous studies exploring whether self-efficacy beliefs are related to bullying behavior.

However, previous school related studies (Zimmerman et al. , 1992; Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons, 1990) have found that high self-efficacy beliefs for self-regulated learning and academic goals were associated with

better achievements. Bullying Behavior Bullying behavior is one part of the problem of school violence, covering both less and more severe types of violent behavior. Bullying is characterized by an aggressive behavior that is carried out repeatedly over time (Olweus, 1997). Typically, the bully is perceived as stronger than the victim.

Personality characteristics of the bullies seem to be an important factor in explaining the problem of bullying (Olweus, 1997). Pulkkinen and Tremblay (1992) found that the bullies were aggressive, non social, and hyperactive. On the other hand, Olweus (1997) has reported that some bullies may be insecure and anxious, as opposed to the typical aggressive bully, in particular those who do not usually take the initiative to bullying when acting in groups. It has been reported that some bullies are also victims of bullying themselves (Craig, 1998; Rigby, 1998).

Some studies have focused on environmental factors at school in explaining the problem of bullying behavior. Typical factors have been school size and class size (Batsche and Knoff, 1994) as well as competition at school (Olweus, 1997). However, no significant relationships between these factors and bullying have been observed. Few previous studies have focused on the pupils' perception of different aspects of the school environment as potential risk factors for bullying behavior. Stress experience has been focused on in relation to the health of the pupils (Natvig et al. 1999), but less in relation to undesirable behavior. There are different ways of coping with stressful environments. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have distinguished two types of coping functions as ways of responding to stressful events. One form of coping is problem focused or through direct action. This aims at confronting

problem events directly by trying to solve them. The other type of coping is in tended to deal with the emotions aroused by the stressful situations (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

Finding adequate ways of coping might be difficult for school adolescents. While some pupils can find acceptable ways of reacting, other pupils may have bullying as a way of reacting to an environment that they perceive as stressful. Bullies are children who start fights with, tease, pick on, and dominate other children (Pellegrini, 1998). Large-scale investigations of bully/victim problems have been conducted in Scandinavia, Great Britain, Italy, and Australia (Olweus, 1994; Menesini et al. 1997; Rigby, 1996; Whitney & Smith, 1993). These investigations, especially the Scandinavian and British studies, have sought to define bullying, determine the prevalence of bully/victim problems, examine the effects of bullying on children, describe the family relationships among bullies and victims, and finally, identify effective components of school-based bully/victim intervention programs (Olweus, 1994). The purpose of this study was to further examine the family relationships of school-age bullies.

Previous studies have found that the family relationships of bullies tend to be troubled (Olweus, 1994). In particular, parents of bullies are hostile, rejecting, and indifferent. Oftentimes, parents of bullies use inconsistent discipline by combining hostility with laxness. When parents of bullies do punish for child misbehavior, their punishment of choice is usually some form of harsh power assertion combined with violent emotional outbursts (Olweus, 1994). Finally, most bullies have weak to nonexistent father figures (Berdondini & Smith, 1996). Externalities of Bullying

Previous research examining family influences on the development of children's aggression, which includes more generally deviant behaviors such as cheating, lying, and destroying property in addition to bullying of peers, supports the conclusion that poor parenting skills play a causal role (Kandel & Wu, 1995). More research, however, is needed to identify the precise mechanisms by which family members and family processes influence children's aggression, and especially children's bullying or aggression with peers (Ladd, 1992). This study draws on three bodies of literature: The literature regarding children's bulling and ictimization; the literature regarding family influences on the development of children's aggression; and the literature regarding family influences on children's peer relationships. Putallaz and Heflin (1990) proposed a model that accounts for direct and indirect parental influences on the development of children's peer relationships. Direct parental influences are those, which influence children's acquisition of social skills and social behaviors. Direct parental influences include parental modeling, conditioning, and coaching of children's social interactions.

Parental modeling refers to behaviors that parents engage in to form and maintain interpersonal relationships with other adults; namely their spouses, relatives, and friends. Parental modeling also refers to behaviors that parents use to guide or control their children. Behaviors modeled by parents are observed by children and then imitated within the context of peers. The literature regarding the development of children's aggression and the literature regarding children's competence with peers are replete with

findings that support a modeling theory for parental influences on children's peer relationships.

Specifically, in comparison to parents of non-aggressive children, parents of aggressive children model incompetence in relationships because they are more likely to experience angry, emotional disagreements with their children, spouses, and other adults (Elder, Caspi, & Downey, 1986); they are more likely to solve parent-child conflicts by using physical punishment (Eron & Huesmann, 1990; Kandel & Wu, 1995); and finally, they, especially mothers, tend to be isolated and have few friends. A second type of direct parental influence on children's peer relationships involves conditioning.

Specifically, children develop positive or negative associations with social interactions based upon the affective quality of their relationships with parents (Putallaz & Heflin, 1990). Previous studies demonstrate that children, whose parents are agreeable, warm, and affectionate, tend to develop competence with peers (Brody & Flor, 1998). In contrast, children whose parents are disagreeable, hostile, cold, or rejecting tend to be at risk for the development of aggression, including bullying peers, and delinquency (Sutton, Cowen, Crean & Wyman, 1999).

Similarly, parent-child involvement, which refers to the amount of time and activities that parents and children share together, influences how children view social interactions. Children who spend considerable time with their parents, especially in activities that are perceived as fun and pleasurable, have more opportunities to experience parental warmth and affection than children who spend little time with their parents in shared activities. Children

generalize the positive feelings that arise from shared activities with parents to social interactions with non-family members.

In support of this notion, children's lack of involvement with parents has been related to children's aggression and deviancy (Loeber et al. , 1998). Finally, a third type of direct parental influence on children's peer relationships is parents' coaching of children's interactional strategies with peers. A previous investigation of young children and their mothers found that the frequency of conversations between mothers and their children about peer relationships is related to children's social preference, or likeability (Laird, Pettit, Mize, Brown, & Lindsey, 1994).

In addition, mothers in the same study reported that common topics of mother-child conversations involved giving advice to their children about how to initiate a friendship or deal with bullying. Other studies have found that the quality of advice that parents give to their children is related to children's peer competence. For example, mothers who suggest prosocial strategies for how to deal with hypothetical peer provocations and rebuffs tend to have children who are rated as less aggressive by teachers than mothers who suggest neutral or unfriendly strategies (Mize & Pettit, 1997).

Indirect parental influences on children's peer relationships deal with how parents influence children's opportunities for social interaction. Rubin and Sloman (1983) describe indirect influences as ways parents set the stage for children's social interactions. Indirect influences reflect how parents determine contexts within which children's peer interactions occur. These contexts include neighborhoods, day care programs and schools.

Indirect influences also reflect how parents arrange children's social contacts by scheduling parties, allowing for visits with friends, and encouraging participation in organized extracurricular activities such as youth sports, scouts, and music lessons. The Bully-Victim Relationship In the context of bullying and peer victimization, empirical findings have uncovered different factors that may explain the occurrence of bully/victim problems at school.

Alongside children's psychosocial functioning (Olweus, 1994), it was observed that social environmental factors, such as the peers (Smith et al. , 1993), the school (Mooij, 1998), and the home environment (Smith et al. , 1993), contribute to the risk of peer aggression and victimization at school. Outcomes studies of anti-bullying intervention programs, focusing on the school environment, revealed a diverse pattern of positive (Olweus and Alsaker, 1991), moderate (Smith and Sharp, 1994; Stevens et al. , 2000), and low (Pepler et al. 1994) effects. Besides other factors, it was argued that the limited focus on the relationship of the family environment to children's involvement in bully/victim problems at school contributes to the maintenance of the problem behavior (Stevens et al. , 2001). Furthermore, previous family studies on bully/victim problems primarily focused on children's perceptions of family dimensions. This research revealed significant differences between bullies, victims, and bully/victims. Bullies perceive their family as less cohesive (Bowers et al. 1992) and experience more hostility (Oliver et al. , 1994). Peer aggression was found to be associated with an avoidant attachment history (Smith et al. , 1993). Moreover, bullies perceive a strong power imbalance between father and mother, the fathers being more powerful. A power imbalance was also

observed between siblings and themselves, the siblings being more powerful (Bowers et al. , 1992). According to the bullies, their family encourages less autonomy (Rican et al. , 1993), lacks structure, and primarily adopts rules that reinforce aggressive behavior (Oliver et al. 1994). For boys in particular, an association was found between bullying and inadequate communication structures in the family (Rigby, 1994). Victims perceive their families as characterized by high levels of cohesion (Bowers et al. , 1992) and low scores on negotiation (Oliver et al. , 1994; Rican et al. , 1993). An association was found between victimization and ambivalent attachment relationships. Compared with a group of controls, victims of bullying reported that their fathers had more power than did their mothers.

They perceived siblings as being slightly less powerful compared to themselves (Bowers et al. , 1992). Furthermore, it was found that victims perceive small differences on parental monitoring compared to control children, thus revealing a less accurate monitoring style (Bowers et al. , 1994). Clear differences were found between boys and girls. For boys, it was found that victimization is associated with a negative relationship with the absent father in single-parent families. Victimized girls reported more negativism and hostility (Rican et al. 1993) and a negative relationship with the mother (Rigby, 1993). It was found that the family encourages less autonomy in girls (Rican et al 1993). Bowers et al. (1994) identified a distinct family profile for the bully/victim group. The bully/victim group included children that have bullied others and themselves have been bullied as well. These families have low scores on cohesion, although these scores were not as low as the cohesion scores of bullies. Bully/victim children perceive a

power-imbalance between father and mother, again showing fathers to be more powerful than mothers.

However, compared to bullies, victims, or control children, bully/victim children reported having more power for themselves. Furthermore, bully/victim children perceive less accurate monitoring and warmth, but more overprotection and neglect. It was concluded that these families are distinguished by inconsistent discipline and monitoring (Schwartz et al. , 1997;). Empirical work that investigated the perception of parents on bully/victim problems is limited. Olweus (1980) carried out in-depth interviews with parents of victims and bullies.

Research questions were related to parenting style and parental interaction with their children. For the fathers and mothers of bullies (only boys), Olweus (1980) found high permissiveness toward aggression, harsher discipline, and power-assertive child- rearing methods. In bullies' families, he also observerd more negativism toward the child. For parents of victimized children (only boys), the interview outcomes revealed close contacts with and overprotection by the mother. Moreover, there was more negativism and a weak identification between son and father.

Nonetheless, no studies are known on family characteristics of bully/victim problems using data from multiple reporters within 1 family (parents and children). Previous studies showed that reports of family interactions primarily show the perception of each respondent (Langhinrichsen et al. , 1990). Consequently, it would be fruitful to involve parents' and child's perception directly in the study. Differences between family members in

their perceptions of family characteristics were found in several earlier studies.

They reveal only moderate congruence between parents and children (De Bourdeaudhuij and Van Oost, 1998). It also has to be taken into account that questionnaires have to be completed independently by family members. Questionnaires are often completed at home and sent to the researchers afterwards. This procedure undoubtedly leads to congruence scores between family members, which are unrealistically high (De Bourdeaudhuij and Van Oost, 2000). From this it could be argued that more research is needed to investigate characteristics of bullies' and victims' families including both the viewpoint of parents and the child.

An important question is whether and how parents and children's perceptions on family characteristics are related. The family dimensions included in this study were derived from the previous perception studies on family correlates of bully/victim problems. It focused on general dimensions of family functioning and general child-rearing practices. In addition, problem-solving strategies of children and their parents in hypothetical bully/victim conflicts were included as a more specific measure of family interactions, In a previous study, Barrett et al. 1996) asked anxious, oppositional, and non-clinical children and their parents to interpret and provide plans of action for ambiguous scenarios. They found evidence of family enhancement of avoidant and aggressive responses in children. Although dramatic acts of school violence are relatively rare, ongoing aggression and victimization are serious problems that arise in schools on a daily basis. For instance, research has found that 10-20% of kindergarten

and elementary age children are repeatedly teased, threatened, or attacked by their peers (Leff, Kupersmidt, Patterson, & Power, 1999).

A pattern of perpetuating milder forms of aggression or being the victim of such aggression in the preschool and elementary age years is associated with a number of difficulties in the elementary and middle school years (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996). Even more striking is the finding that early aggressive behavior is highly correlated with later aggressive behavior (Huesmann, Eron, Lefkowitz, & Walder, 1984) and is predictive of later antisocial behavior, including physical aggression, criminal behavior, and spouse abuse (Huesmann et al. 1984). Further, there is strong evidence that many severely antisocial youth exhibit a " life-course" development of aggression in which their childhood acts of aggression progress from being somewhat mild (bullying, teasing, and annoying others), to more serious (repeated physical fighting, gang membership), to extremely serious (assault, robbery, rape) (Moffitt, Caspi, Dickson, Silva, & Stanton, 1996).

Thus, it is imperative to direct prevention and early intervention efforts to lessen the milder forms of aggression that occur frequently in the elementary schools and that can lead to more serious acts of aggression and outbreaks of school violence among middle school and high school students. Even though school aggression has become one of the most pressing societal concerns, aggression statistics, research, and prevention/intervention efforts are difficult to evaluate due to a host of methodological difficulties (Tolan & Guerra, 1996).

For instance, many prevention/intervention programs do not employ sound research designs such as a group design including a random assignment procedure, adequate sample size, and sufficient follow-up assessment. Second, many programs do not utilize a multi- method outcome evaluation protocol (Weisz & Hawley, 1998) or adequate procedures to assess treatment integrity and acceptability (Moncher & Prinz, 1991). Further, very few programs provide structured and user-friendly manuals and handouts (Moncher & Prinz, 1991), which may greatly affect the integrity and generalizability of the program.

Thus, methodological considerations have limited the usefulness of many initiatives within the schools. References: Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy, The exercise of Control. Freeman, New York Batsche, G. M. , and Knoff. H. M. (1994). Bullies and their victims: Understanding a pervasive problem in the sch. Sch Psychol. Rev. 23(2): 165-174 Baumeister, R. F. , Smart, L. , and Boden, J. M. (1996). Relation of threatened egotism to violence and and aggression. The dark side of high self-esteem. Psychol. Rev. 103(1): 5-33 Berdondini, L. & Smith, P. K. (1996). Cohesion and power in the families of children involved in bully/victim problems at school: An Italian replication. Journal of family therapy, 18, 99-102 Bowers, L. , Smith, P. K. , and Binney, V. (1992). Cohesion and power in the families of children involved in bully/victim problems at school. J. Fam. Ther. 14: 371-387 Brody, G. H. & Flor, D. L. (1998) Maternal resources, parenting practices, and child competence In rural, single-parent African American families. Child Development, 69, 803-816

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