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Gender Differences Associated To Style and Type of Bullying

by
Elizabeth A Benckert

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Department of Psychology
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
In partial fulfillment of the requirement
For the degree of
Master of Arts
at
Rowan University
May 2012

Thesis Chair: Roberta Dihoff, Ph.D.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents, brothers, and friends who have helped me accomplish everything I was able to do in the past year. This was a lot of hard work, but you helped me through it, and thank you.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude and sincere thanks to Dr. Dihoff and Dr. Allen for guiding me through this process and helping me succeed towards a brighter future.

Abstract

Elizabeth Benckert
GENDER DIFFERENCES ASSOCIATED TO STYLE
AND TYPE OF BULLYING

2011/2012

Roberta Dihoff, Ph.D.
Master of Arts in School Psychology

Research shows that girls show more indirect and relational aggression bullying behavior, while boys will show more direct and physically aggressive bullying behavior (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992). Girls prefer indirect aggression because they can manipulate others; while boys prefer direct aggression against others because it shows dominance and strength (Crick, Casas, & Mosher, 1997). The study was done to show a difference in gender and the style of aggressive bullying behavior they will act out in. Crick et al. (1997) explain that children tend to bully in ways that they know will inflict harm on others and damage their social environment. Discipline records from the 2010-2011 school year from two Middle Schools were collected and analyzed. There were 160 student records analyzed, (102 boys and 58 girls), some with multiple incidents of aggressive bullying behavior. The style of aggression, direct or indirect, was recorded as well as their gender and which school they were enrolled in. The present study found that there is no gender difference in the preferred aggressive style of bullying. However, there was significance between the type of school and style of bullying the student was involved in. Statistics show that indirect aggressive behavior incidents and type of school, $F(1,114)=39.641=.000$; statistics show that direct aggressive behavior incidents and type of school, $F(1,143)=27.569=.000$.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Need

Bullying problems are on an up rise and are opt to continue if children, parents, and school staff don't change the ways in which children are taught about the severities which may take place because of such behavior. Sassu, Elinoff, Bray, & Kehle (2004) report that 75% of children report being bullied at least once during the academic year. Sassu et al. (2004) states that 25% of all children will be affected by bullying at some point in their school years. Bjorkqvist et al. (1992) state that boys tend to use more direct means of aggression and girls tend to use more indirect means of aggression in order to cause pain on their enemies or victims. With this prior research already conducted, and bullying statistics on the rise, there is a need now more than ever to continue teaching ways of intervention and prevention among children and the adults around them.

Purpose

The current study examined the different bullying styles of each gender among children of a middle school age, typically 11-14 years old. The bullying styles discussed are those of overt/direct aggression and relational/indirect aggression. Sassu et al. (2004) state that boys will typically engage in direct, overt bullying behaviors whereas girls often behave in more indirect, discreet means of aggression.

Hypothesis

Girls will show more incidents of indirect aggression in their bullying styles; while boys will show more incidents of direct aggression in their bullying styles.

Operational Definitions

"HIB": the acronym used when referring to Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying which is defined as being any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14).

Bullying: an occurrence when a student is repeatedly harmed, psychologically and physically, by another student or a group of students (Olweus, 1993).

Relational/indirect aggression: the thought to harm others through the manipulation of a child's peer relationships within a group (Henington, Hughes, Cavell & Thompson, 1998).

Overt/direct aggression: the thought to harm others through physical means (Henington et al., 1998).

Assumptions

It was assumed that the discipline records were accurate and the data has been recorded appropriately by school officials.

Limitations

The discipline referral samples included more male incidents of HIB behavior than females. Physical harm is much easier to report than a "he said, she said" incident. There is also a limitation that the data being used from each school may have reported their discipline incidents differently, causing some confusion during statistical evaluation of the data collected. Both schools do not have a large enrollment which may show a smaller collection of data than that which could be collected from a school in a large district which more students.

Summary

This study is necessary due to the many different bullying styles among students; also with the New Jersey Bullying Amendment in effect as of the school year beginning September 2011 there will be many new approaches in intervention and prevention of bullying and victimization among schools. This study shows typical bullying behavior of each girls and boys which will lead towards a better understanding of how to handle separate incidents among the students of different genders.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The review of literature will first present a definition of bullying, the prevalence, and some brief information. The second section will examine the background of the HIB Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act. The third section will define the different styles of bullying, direct and indirect aggression. The fourth section will explain the negative impacts and effects that direct and indirect bullying styles have on both the victim and bully. Lastly, gender and social predispositions to becoming a victim or bully will be examined.

Definition

Olweus (1993) defines bullying as occurring when a student is repeatedly harmed, psychologically and/or physically, by another student or a group of students. Bullying tends to take place in a social context and is influenced by characteristics of both children and the setting (Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim, & Sadek, 2010). Bullying and other forms of aggression are a continuous increasing concern for students, parents, and schools with an estimated 30% of students involved in frequent bullying (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Sassu, Elinoff, Bray, & Kehle (2004) state that 75% of children report being bullied at least once during an academic year; and that at least 25% of all children will be affected by bullying at some point during their school years. Victims are individuals who indicate being bullied more than once per week (Seals & Young, 2003). Although prevalence rates vary depending on the age, gender and other demographics of the child, researchers have estimated that nearly 8-20% of all school-age children will be victims of bullying (Davidson & Demaray, 2007). In addition to visible physical harm on victims who have been the targets of bullying, victims are also subject to mental health problems

in their future. Chronic victims have reported depressive symptoms, low self-esteem, thoughts of suicide and thoughts of projection, harming others in redemption to those who hurt them, low social competence, poor school adjustment, and poor academic achievement (Sassu et al., 2004; Davidson & Demaray, 2007). There is also a not so pleasant future ahead for chronic bullies, in that they are more likely to become abusive spouses and parents, engage in criminal activities, and underachieve in their education (Sassu et al., 2004).

HIB

HIB, which is the acronym used to identify Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying, is a New Jersey state law enforced in 2011 which schools are required to enforce (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14). There are many incidents covered under the definition of HIB but the most important stated under the New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act is that of creating a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with a pupil's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14). The New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act covers many areas of one time offenses and habitual acts of bullying including those which take place in school or on school grounds, off school grounds, cyber-bullying, and any environment in which a witness could bring it to attention of a school administrator. Each school has an Anti-Bullying Specialist, a school Safety Team, as well as a district Anti-Bullying Coordinator. Consequences and appropriate actions for a pupil who is involved in an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to suspension or expulsion (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1). Appropriate consequences will be determined by a school official looking at all aspects of the circumstance including

the nature and severity, patterns of behavior, and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred (N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)2).

Styles of Bullying

Crick et al. (1997) explain that children tend to bully in ways that they know will inflict harm on others and damage their social environment. All styles of bullying occur along a continuum and the students involved assume roles as either the bully, the victim, or the bully/victim (Holt, Finklehor & Kantor, 2007). There are two main styles of bullying, direct and indirect; these styles are also referred to as physical and relational aggression (Cook et al., 2010; Galen & Underwood, 1997; Henington et al., 1998).

Direct aggression tends to be physical harm or threats in which a bully is directly attacking someone in particular; physical harm and pain is shown in victims of this bullying style (Cook et al., 2010; Craig, 1998; Galen & Underwood, 1997). Physically aggressive bullies are usually oppositional and hostile towards their peers while presenting academic difficulties and causing problems and challenges for their teachers (Leff, 2007). Many studies have shown that boys are typically bullies and victims of physical aggression (Cullerton & Crick, 2005; Crick & Nelson, 2002). Through childhood to adolescence boys tend to continue use of physical aggression and direct means of bullying (Galen & Underwood, 1997). In an Elementary School and Middle School setting, both boys and girls tend to rate physical aggression as more hurtful than relational aggression; however boys specifically view it more hurtful than relational aggression (Galen & Underwood, 1997).

Indirect aggression is when a bully intentionally un-involves another individual for the reason of hurting their feelings and letting them feel left out; emotional harm and mental health well being is shown in victims of this bullying style

(Cook et al., 2010; Craig, 1998; Cullerton-Sen & Crick, 2005; Galen & Underwood, 1997). Relational aggression is a means to success and gaining control and can cause distress amongst the social world (Crick, Bigbee & Howes, 1996). Relational aggression is viewed as having direct control, in that you can socially exclude a peer, reject them, and alienate them completely (Yoon, Barton & Taiariol, 2004). Through many studies it has been shown that girls are typically victims of relational aggression (Cullerton & Crick, 2005; Crick & Nelson, 2002.) Through childhood to adolescence girls tend to increase their use of relational aggression and indirect means of bullying (Galen & Underwood, 1997). Although all children tend to view physical aggression as more hurtful, girls specifically view relational aggression as more hurtful than boys (Galen & Underwood, 1997).

Negative Effects of Bullying

Research has shown that childhood aggression is one of the best predictors of future maladjustments (Crick et al., 1997). Crick et al., (1997) state that both forms of aggression, direct and relational, show a relationship with social-maladjustment. Holt et al., (2007) also state that a child involved in any role of bullying show greater reports of internalizing problems. Symptoms shown through these negative effects experienced are defined as being either internalizing problems (e.g. fears of doing something bad, crying a lot, behaviors, cognitions, and affect that are inner directed such as anxiety and depression); or externalizing problems (e.g. arguing, no feelings of guilt, misbehaving, behaviors and affect that are outward directed such as anger and hostility) (Crick & Nelson, 2002; Davidson & Demaray, 2007). Studies have shown that chronic victimization can lead to social difficulties, internalizing problems, externalizing problems, poor academic achievement, and depression (Crick & Nelson, 2002; Seals & Young, 2003; Waasdorp & Bradshaw, 2011). Dijkstra,

Lindenberg & Veenstra, (2007) found that there is a same-gender rejection when children view their peers as bullies; these students are also at risk for experiencing negative effects like their counterparts such as depression and future criminal offenses (Cook et al., 2010; Seals & Young, 2003).

Physical victimization is defined as being an experience in which the victim is hit, kicked, threatened, called names, and teased (Seals & Young, 2003). When girls experience physical victimization internalized and externalized symptoms are apparent, while boys tend to only experience externalizing symptoms with physical victimization (Waasdorp & Bradshaw, 2011). Young children who are victims of direct aggression tend to show patterns of peer rejection and social-psychological maladjustment (Crick et al., 1997). Adolescents who are victims of direct aggression may also be targets of sexual harassment and physical and emotional abuse in dating relationships (Holt et al., 2007). Children who are chronic victims of direct aggression may in time respond to their bullies equally as aggressive; specifically boys who may feel the social pressure to respond in order to maintain their social status or to avoid the label of a victim (Waasdorp & Bradshaw, 2011).

Crick & Grotpeter (1995) found in a study of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students those who are perceived as being hurtful, mean, and aggressive show signs of higher loneliness, depression, and are very disliked by their peers compared to peers who are viewed as being nonsocial. Children who show direct aggressive behavior are significantly related to having low levels of pro-social behaviors such as sharing and helping others; this may lead to a lack of positive interpersonal skills and poor adjustment (Crick et al., 1997). Cook et al. (2010) state that bullies have a significantly higher chance as adults to be convicted of a criminal offense, experience

psychiatric problems, have difficulties in romantic relationships, and substance abuse problems.

Relational victimization is defined as being an experience in which the victim is directly or indirectly excluded by peers and manipulated within a relationship (Cullerton & Crick, 2005). Individuals who suffer from relational victimization are related to having higher levels of social avoidance, social anxiety, peer rejection, depression, school avoidance, and chancing of dropping out of school (Cook et al., 2010; Crick & Nelson, 2002; Cullerton & Crick, 2005). Girls will typically show internalizing symptoms with relational victimization (Waasdorp & Bradshaw, 2011). Social statuses are exclusively important to girls because when they are a victim of relational aggression the bully is attacking their reputation and social relationships, this could in turn "ruin" somebody and send them into a downward spiral of externalizing symptoms of victimization (Cook et al., 2010). Girls will usually have a harder time coping with relational victimization due to bonds they build with others that may be ruined due to manipulation from peers; therefore relational aggression is perceived much more hurtful for girls than it is for boys (Crick et al., 1996; Yoon et al., 2004).

It may be possible that children who are relationally aggressive behave in such ways because of peer rejection and dislike; they may be acting as such in order to retaliate against those who isolated them, to fit in and be accepted by peers; but because of these actions relationally aggressive children continue to feel unhappy and distressed about their lack of relationships with peers (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Yoon et al., 2004). Most bullies will often experience psychosocial problems and are more likely to engage in externalizing behaviors (Holt et al., 2007). Alongside externalizing symptoms, relationally aggressive girls are more likely to be associated

with oppositional defiant and conduct disorders (Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001; Yoon et al., 2004). Holt et al., (2007) discuss a study that explain youth who are identified as bullies in school had a 25% chance of having a criminal record by the age of 30.

Gender and Social Predispositions

There are many suspicions as to why particular children act as bullies and why others may become their victims. Bjorkqvist et al. (1992) states that the gender difference which is present among physical and relational aggression styles is an apparent phenomenon during adolescence. With development and maturation, boys frequency of bullying tends to decline and girls tend to increase (Galen & Underwood, 1997). Same-gender bullying is evident for those who bully individually, without help from other peers; bullies who work in groups tend to go after both male and female victims (Seals & Young, 2003). Social relationships among children show how young children and adolescents view each other and what may influence certain bullying behavior to some. A study by Bradshaw et al. (2007) explains that over 60% of Middle School and High School students perceive bullies as being "popular", while only 40% of Elementary School students thought this. Bullies target specific students and Cook et al. (2010) indicates that a typical victim is one who lacks social skills, comes from a negative community and family, is noticeably rejected and isolated by peers.

Sassu et al. (2004) explains that boys typically engage in direct, overt bullying behaviors which include threats and physical assault on others. Research shows that boys prefer physical means of aggression, specifically hitting, kicking, and threatening another peer (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick et al., 1996; Crick et al., 1997). Boys tend to use physical aggression against others because it shows

dominance and strength (Crick et al., 1997). Through elementary and middle school boys view physical aggression as the norm for boys to exhibit not girls (Crick et al., 1996). Aggressive children are shown to be perceived as part of the more "popular" groups, but are always the most disliked among peers (Coie & Dodge, 1998; Cook et al., 2010; Farmer, Estell, Bishop, O'Neal & Cairns, 2003). Male bullies are reported to act on physical and direct means of aggression more often than girls; this includes verbal aggression and any means of immediate harm to their victim (Craig, 1996). Typical developmental trends show that while physical aggression declines relational aggression increases in a transition from childhood to adolescence (Bradshaw et al., 2007).

It has been shown that both male and female students engage in equal distribution of relational aggression (Crick et al., 1997; Yoon et al., 2004). However, much research shows that girls prefer relational means of aggression, specifically attacking another peers social relationships and status (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick et al., 1996; Crick et al., 1997). Sassu et al. (2004) explains that girls tend to often use more indirect, discreet means which include starting rumors or leaving others out of activities intentionally. Girls tend to use relational aggression because they can manipulate others and they can harm intimate relationships through rumors and gossip (Crick et al., 1997). Just as physically aggressive bullies, the most popular children who exhibit relational aggression are typically the most disliked because they use their status to bully others and use socially aggressive tactics to maintain their power (Ader, Kless, & Adler, 1992; Evans & Eder, 1993; Lease, Kennedy, & Axlerod, 2002; Farmer et al., 2003). Since girls are shown to verbally mature faster than boys, relational means of aggression are what girls become accustomed to since boys don't develop the verbal skills necessary for relational aggression (Bjorkqvist et al., 1992).

Elementary and Middle School girls had a similar response as middle school boys viewing relational aggression as the norm for girls to exhibit (Crick et al., 1996)

Chapter 3

Methods

Discipline records of the 2010-2011 were obtained from two schools in different districts. The names of the students on the discipline records were kept confidential with no way of connecting information back to them or the school. Both schools are considered middle schools with students in grades six, seven, and eight; while one of the two schools also has students in grade five. The public middle school is located among many schools in a large district with families of many different socioeconomic statuses. The charter middle school is located in a lower socioeconomic status area with many of the students' families receiving government aid. Both schools have behavioral disorder classrooms and special education student mainstreaming.

Materials

Discipline records were reviewed for information relating to two styles of bullying: direct and indirect aggression. Physical harm towards others, assault, fighting, and sexual harassment were categorized as direct aggression incidents. Verbal harassment, verbal threats, and intimidation tactics were categorized as indirect aggression incidents. Descriptive statistics show that the total number of students' discipline records evaluated was $N=160$; male students were $N=102$ while female students were $N=58$.

Design

This study used a 2x2 between subjects ANOVA design. The independent variables were the student's gender and which school they were enrolled. The dependent variable is the number of incidents in which each type of bullying (indirect and direct incidents), took place for each student.

Procedure

Archival data, specifically discipline records of the 2010-2011 school year, were collected from two different schools of different districts and socioeconomic areas; one public middle school and one charter middle school. Incidents of indirect aggression and direct aggression were recorded for each student as well as their gender. Data reviewed from one school was returned to the school and its' administration after use so that there is no link back to any of the students and their information. Data from the second school was copied for my use, and after all necessary information was reviewed the discipline records were locked in a private filing cabinet. I am the only person able to access it at a later date if necessary. All of the students' identities remained confidential and unidentifiable throughout the research process and will remain confidential during the years of data holding.

Chapter 4

Results

It was hypothesized that girls would show to have more indirect behavior and relational aggression towards others; boys would show to have more direct behavior and physical aggression towards others. There were no significant findings to support the original hypothesis; boys and girls were found to have similar number of incidents involving direct and indirect aggression. There were however significant findings indicating a main effect among the type of school and number of direct and indirect incidents a student was involved in. The results show that when boys and girls have a combined total, there are more incidents of both direct and indirect aggression among the Charter School students than the Public School students.

A 2-way ANOVA Univariate Analysis of Variance was used to assess these findings through the number of incidents recorded from discipline records of each student.

When evaluating the results of direct incidents and type of school the test indicated that $F(1,143)=27.569=.000$. Looking at the number of direct incidents further there was a mean of 1.53 and $N=66$ for the Charter School while the Public School showed a mean of .7654 and $N=81$ (See Figure 1).

When evaluating the results of indirect incidents and type of school the test indicated that $F(1,114)=39.641=.000$. Looking at the number of indirect incidents further there was a mean of 1.7297 and $N=37$ for the Charter School while the Public School showed a mean of .6914 and $N=81$ (See Figure 2).

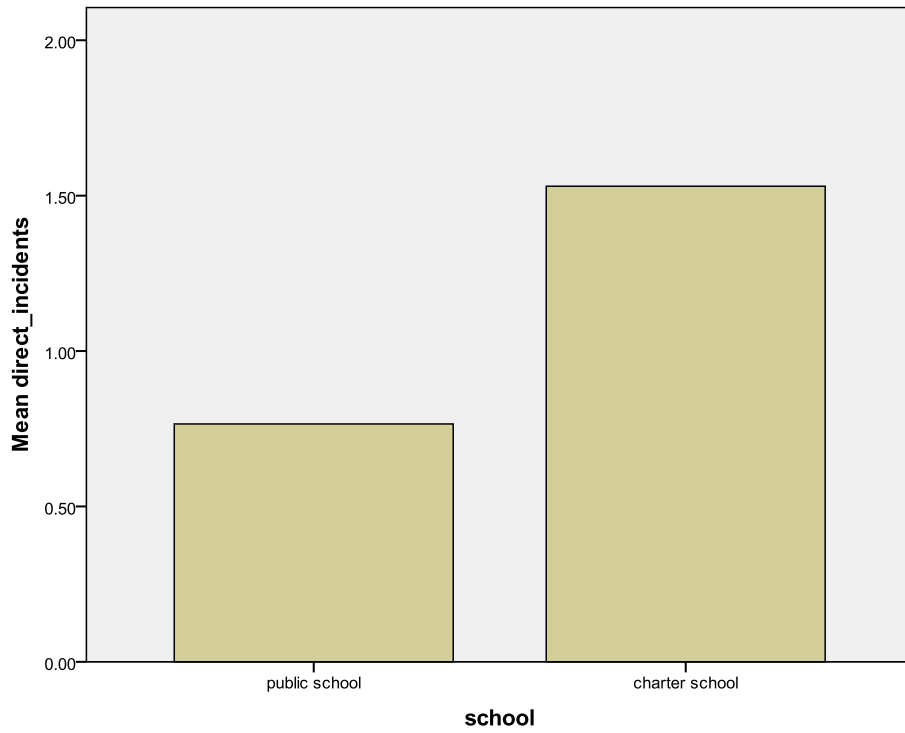


Figure 1: School Type by Direct Incidents

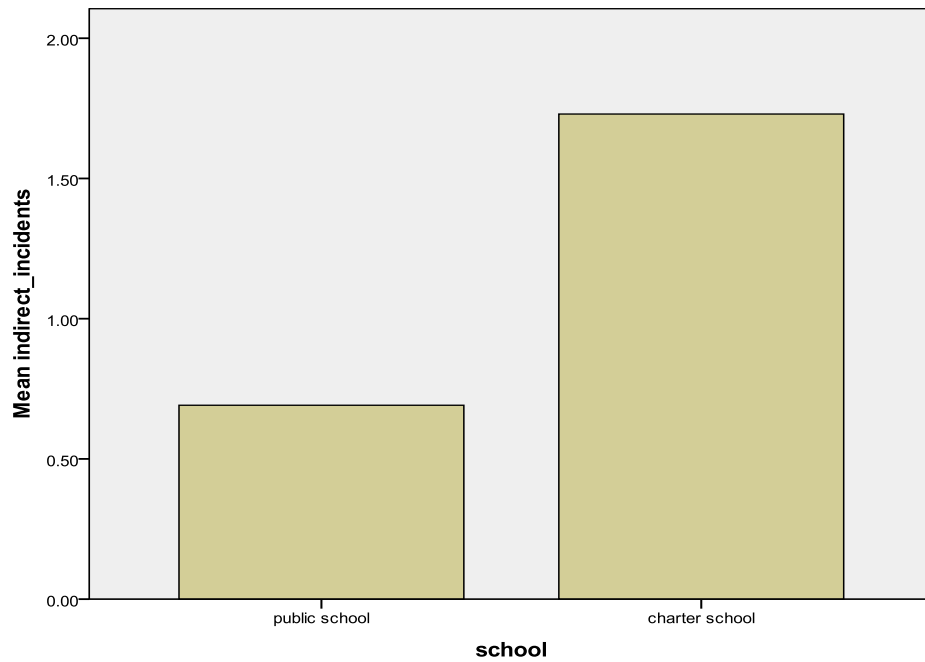


Figure 2: School Type by Indirect Incidents

Chapter 5

Discussion

The present study was conducted to provide support that girls tend to be involved in more indirect/relational aggressive bullying behavior while boys tend to be involved in direct/physically aggressive bullying behavior. Discipline records of the 2010-2011 school year from two middle schools, both from different socioeconomic statuses and population size, were obtained to identify incidents of both indirect and direct behavior. Students gender as well as how many incidents of each type of aggression they were involved in was recorded. The school they were enrolled in for the 2010-2011 school year was also included as a variable in order to distinguish the students. The students' gender and school were calculated as the independent variables while the number of incidents they were involved in, either indirect or direct, were calculated as the dependent variable.

The data produced showed that there is no significance relating gender and type of aggressive bullying behavior style. This means that no matter whether the student is a boy or girl, there is no indication that they will either use indirect or direct aggressive means to bully a peer. Both boys and girls are equally as able to act in either aggressive manner. There was however significance between the type of aggressive behavior and the school the student was enrolled in. The data showed that students who were enrolled in the Charter School for the 2010-2011 school year had more incidents of both indirect and direct aggressive bullying behavior than the students recorded from the Public School. This means that although there were more students recorded with direct and indirect aggressive bullying incidents at the Public School, the Charter School showed fewer students with a higher number of incidents of both types of aggressive bullying behavior.

The significance shown in the type of school the student was enrolled in and the number of incidents (both direct and indirect aggression), they were involved in could lead way to future research explaining the socioeconomic status and the impact it has on middle school age students. This independent variable (school type) was originally recorded as demographic information; when the tests were ran and significance was shown between the school and type of aggressive behavior it led to thoughts of why the original hypothesis was proven insignificant. Insignificance brought upon thoughts that there may no longer be any indication that girls will act out in more indirect aggressive behavior while boys act in more direct aggressive behavior explicitly. Also, that the type of school a student is enrolled in could be used as an important variable in future research since many charter schools are located among lower socioeconomic status areas. The student's gender may no longer show importance in bullying research as much the area and environment the student is enrolled in does.

Although prior research has shown significance in the styles of aggression and gender of students (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Bjorkqvist et al., 1992), the present study did not show significance therefore prior research does not support the present hypothesis. Crick & Grotpeter (1995) had shown that although boys and girls exhibit aggressive behavior they tend to act in distinctly different ways, girls more indirect while boys more direct. Bjorkqvist et al. (1992) had also shown that girls used indirect aggressive bullying styles more frequently than boys who show more direct aggressive bullying styles. Taking the present study into consideration and that majority of significant prior research findings were examined in the 1990's, there is a possibility that boys and girls have both become equally involved in the different types of aggression and bullying styles.

The present study did however show significance involving the type of aggression and the school in which the children were enrolled at. Prior research was not examined to support this finding since this was not the focus of the study. However, it has been briefly discussed in prior research (Farmer et. al, 2003) that the area and socioeconomic status in which the children are living in may have something to do with their aggressive behavior. Farmer et. al (2003) discusses that socioeconomic status research has demonstrated that youths with aggressive and disruptive behavior tend to have poor social skills with higher chances of being rejected by peers. The findings of the present study show that the students involved in a higher number of incidents for both direct and indirect aggressive behavior were enrolled at the Charter School. Charter schools are typically located among lower socioeconomic areas and are funded by both government, local, and private financial support. This may lead to future studies further examining a link between lower socioeconomic schools and the number of reported aggressive incidents. Further examination of how aggressive behavior is perceived by students and teachers would provide more information as to why the number of incidents are higher in a school of this socioeconomic status as opposed to a public school.

Limitations

Limitations of the present study include the recorded number of incidents available for the study. There were many more boys recorded in the discipline records used than there were females; although that is typical of discipline issues it may have been a limitation factor because the study was comparing genders. Although the public school had many more students recorded with separate bullying incidents, the charter school had many students who were repeat offenders. There was an uneven number of students between the two schools which could account for

the uneven number of incidents. If there were more repeat offenders in the public school than the charter school the data may have shown up differently. Another limitation of the study may be that the charter school had more repeat offenders than the public school because of discipline procedures. The public school may have more severe consequences on their students while the charter school is a little more relaxed. While HIB policies are being enforced in the current school year, discipline records should be more consistently recorded throughout different schools than the procedures used in the past.

Future Directions

The present study leads to many possible future studies. The present study showed no gender difference in aggressive bullying styles, which may lead to future studies involving why students behave in certain aggressive styles towards others. Do they prefer direct or indirect and if so specific behaviors of those styles. This future study may include examining the link between social media (Facebook, Twitter, texting) and relational aggression. Perhaps lower SES families have less computer access which has an impact on the use of direct aggression vs. relational aggression. Future studies may also examine variables including the area and environment in which a school is located, the average SES of the area, parents' income, and the highest level of schooling of the parents and older siblings of the student; all of these variables play a possible role in why students act out in particular aggressive styles. The environment and culture in which a school plays a significant role in the aggressive style of the enrolled students; what may be perceived as bullying in a public school may be perceived as a fight in a charter school. Definitions may differ between students of different school environments offering subjective and biased views of bullying and aggression.

Conclusion

To conclude, though the present study was not proven significant according to the testing hypothesis, implementation of bullying prevention and intervention is imperative. The current study shown that girls and boys may no longer be bullying their peers differently according to gender. Though they may prefer one method to another, boys and girls may be equally aggressive in both direct and indirect bullying styles. This study was necessary to provide groundwork for future studies involving the aggressive bullying styles and why students do so towards others.

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