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Teacher and Parent Perception of Cyberbullying in a Middle School Setting

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Abstract

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MSW, Adelphi University, (1992)

BA, Mount Saint Mary College, (1990)

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The purpose of this mixed method study was to evaluate differences in cyberbullying perception and self-efficacy between teachers and parents. The study aimed to determine how teachers and parents reacted to cyberbullying. The importance of examining teacher and parent perception and self-efficacy in addressing cyberbullying determined the significance of intervention. The theoretical framework for the study was Bandura's social learning theory. The purpose of this mixed method study was to examine the perceptions and self-efficacy of cyberbullying between teachers and parents as measured by the Peer Relations Assessment Questionnaire Revised and the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire. A sample that incorporated perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying was used to gather data from a middle school setting, and the number of participants was 81, including 20 teachers and 61 parents who completed an online survey through SurveyMonkey.com. Collected participant responses were entered using SPSS and independent *t* tests were performed. The results indicated that teachers and parents were similar in their perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying. The results failed to reject the null hypothesis. Although teachers and parents had similar perception and self-efficacy skills, they did not collaborate when cyberbullying occurred, and collaboration would have been more effective. Future research on teacher and parent perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying from a shared approach has the potential to provide significant insight and possible improvements in cyberbullying intervention. Implications for positive social change are possible by changing a fragmented teacher and parent cyberbullying approach into a cohesive one.

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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to my father, Salvatore Anthony Cracolici. I owe what I am today to you for your guidance, support, and especially the love you gave to me. Although I miss you, Dad, your belief in making a difference and helping others has been instilled in me. You taught me so much, and to never give up, no matter how difficult things may become. For you, someone who came to the United States from Italy as a child and worked hard so that I could achieve my greatest goals, I thank you with all my heart. I also dedicate my dissertation in loving memory of my husband, Thomas G. Gallo (the wind beneath my wings).

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

A growing body of contemporary research has affirmed that cyberbullying is a significant deterrent to the quality of educational experience in schools (Eden, Heiman, & Olenik-Shemesh, 2012). This problem has wide implications that can affect the emotional well-being and safety of all students. The aim of this study focused on gaining input from teachers and parents regarding how they view cyberbullying and ascertaining whether they would intervene in a cyberbullying school incident. Specifically, in my study, I focused on teacher and parent commonalities and differences in their perceptions of the problem, as well as their predisposing attitudes and beliefs. While the near-universal presence and growth of cyberbullying is well established, enhancing communication, and understanding between policymakers and practitioners in bringing about new intervention coping strategies has only just begun.

There is a pressing need to challenge the old beliefs that inhibit school personnel in their efforts to address the problem without team support and effective methods of bringing about positive changes by enhancing the commitment to intervene (Eden et al., 2012). The accumulation of new and creative approaches to removing the threat imposed by cyberbullying can only be accomplished by identifying and integrating personal, social, and organizational strategies for change. The middle school setting was selected for this study due to the advantages of understanding both early developmental and social causes, as well as providing an approach to the prevention and protection of vulnerable young students. The potential for positive social change can be gained by allowing teachers and parents to examine what capabilities or limitations they have in their school

so that improvements in cyberbullying intervention can be made. The study may serve as a springboard by improving the current school policy on cyberbullying prevention and intervention.

A recent study on teachers' perspectives of cyberbullying by Redmond, Lock, and Smart (2018) revealed that teachers exhibited a lack of self-efficacy when dealing with a cyberbullying incident. The study also indicated that teachers agreed that parents must be involved in addressing cyberbullying by speaking with their children about it and not targeting the cyberbullies themselves. They recommended that teachers, victims, and parents work with the cyberbully to inform them of their inappropriate behavior. Through this study, both teachers' and parents' perceptions of cyberbullying were incorporated, which encompasses their self-efficacy, to determine any cyberbullying intervention skills that are successful. The research was completed at one middle school to discover whether teachers had any prior training or if there was a lack of training, while also identifying their strengths or weaknesses. The current problems with cyberbullying intervention are related to a lack of ongoing teacher and parent cyberbullying training and successful cyberbullying intervention strategies. It would be advantageous to identify the strengths and weaknesses of both parents and teachers because this can be used as a foundation for future studies regarding cyberbullying interventions.

Background

Cyberbullying continues to increase, while traditional bullying is decreasing (Slonge, Smith, & Frison, 2012). The difference between cyberbullying and traditional bullying is that the cyberbully can attack by spreading rumors at any time of the day or

night (Niklova & Makuchova, 2019), and they can connect to a larger audience via the internet and social media. By reaching a larger audience, cyberbullies have the advantage of distributing insults from others on the internet and joining in verbally attacking defenseless victims. The repeated degrading personal attacks are often joined by other cyberbullies, which exacerbates the problem and is referred to as snowballing (Slonge et al., 2012). The emotional effects of cyberbullying include depression, social anxiety, low self-confidence, and suicidal ideation. Dredge, Gleeson, Garcia and de la Piedad (2014) found that cyberbullying affects victims less if they use coping strategies to deal with it. Victims of cyberbullying had fewer depressive symptoms when seeking support compared to those who did not seek assistance and internalized the abuse. Cyberbullying may also result in chronic and severe behavioral problems, which can negatively impact relationships with family and friends.

Teachers, students, and parents are likely to have different perceptions regarding the motivation behind youths becoming cyberbullies. Thornberg and Knutsen (2011) found a lack of operational definitions in understanding how cyberbullying is perceived among teachers, students, and parents in relation to their perception and shared understanding of it. There are still differing perceptions that compare the perspectives of teachers, parents, and students regarding the motivation of cyberbullies, who primarily engage in it for fun and to relieve boredom (Thornberg & Knutsen et al., 2011). To address differing perceptions from teachers and students, Compton, Campbell, and Mergler (2014) advocated for future anticyberbullying research that gathers separate

views from teachers, parents, and students. If cyberbullying intervention is not defined in a unified way, it is unlikely to be addressed in effective and lasting therapeutic outcomes.

The topic of this research was chosen to gain further insight regarding how teachers and parents in a middle school setting perceive cyberbullying and determine the course of action they might take to intervene in a cyberbullying incident. According to Bandura's (1997) social cognitive learning theory, a person builds upon their capabilities to accomplish a goal and act confidently when their efforts are successful. If a teacher or parent who serves as a role model exhibits low self-efficacy, this affects how children manage problematic classroom issues. Few studies regarding teacher intervention skills that have been found to be effective (Yoon & Bauman, 2014). One gap in my study addressed whether teachers are well equipped to deal with cyberbullying incidents or whether there is a need for additional cyberbullying training. This study was needed because there are limited studies on how teachers and parents perceive cyberbullying and lack the skills required to effectively address a cyberbullying incident.

Problem Statement

A basic working definition of cyberbullying is that it is the use of electronic devices to anonymously bully others by intimidation and threats, by denigration or embarrassment, or otherwise, by verbally attacking others in the presence of peers or in a public setting (Washington, 2014). To address the problem of cyberbullying, the aim of this research was to identify the cognitive perceptions of cyberbullying on the part of teachers and parents, as well as differences in the level of self-confidence and self-assurance when approaching a cyberbullying event in the middle school setting. A review

of the current literature suggested that parents and teachers are not always well-informed regarding the degree and breadth of the negative consequences suffered by the victim, and the social-educational environment that cyberbullying may create (Eden et al., 2012). Additionally, Tondeur, Aesacrt, Prestridge, and Consuegra (2018) found that teachers are not prepared and are limited to internet computer technology (ICT) use, primarily due to the ease of computer use, which is lacking in their training and understanding. A further gap in the literature relates to teacher limitations and their lack of knowledge regarding how innovative and increasingly popular forms of social media applications are used by cyberbullies, in addition to difficulties associated with the constant changes in technologies and implementing effective intervention strategies (Eden et al., 2012). As with all institutional and school settings, social and psychological events must be viewed both in terms of the cultural context and the solutions found in dealing with interactions and advances, including cooperation among the professional members of the educational team.

Gradinger (2017) found that lack of communication and cyberbullying intervention between teachers and parents is another problem that merits further study. It is important that schools invest in an anticyberbullying prevention and intervention program that involves teacher, parent, and student input regarding ways to improve communication whenever a cyberbullying event occurs. Bosworth and Judkins (2014) agreed that the main reason for creating an antibullying program is to generate a whole-school approach where teachers, parents, and students can create a bullying-resistant climate.

Regarding the immediate need to address the harmful aspects of cyberbullying and its prevalence rates, Caton and Chapman (2016) found that 84% of middle school and college students used Facebook. Even though 30% of middle school students in Caton's et al., (2016) study reported being cyberbullied, only 18% informed a parent or teacher about it. In addition, 75% of middle school Facebook users have experienced cyberbullying, which has been shown to result in students experiencing ongoing emotional torment, dropping out of school, and attempting or committing suicide. It is thus vital that parents and teachers learn about how social media is used to intimidate a student, which can lead to emotional problems and social isolation. Cyberbullying, if left unaddressed in elementary or secondary school, can continue into higher education and perhaps even the workplace (Misawa, 2011).

Examination of the literature regarding the negative effects of cyberbullying as they pertain to student and staff academic and emotional involvement in the problem indicates the need for further investigation of these problems. A recent study by Redmond et al., (2018) revealed that only 9.8% of 132 teachers identified cyberbullying as a threat that warranted intervention. Additionally, Williford and DePaolis (2016) found when self-efficacy and teacher attitudes toward cyberbullying were examined, self-efficacy was prominent in cyberbullying intervention compared to attitudes, which were not significant predictors of intervention. Compared to parent self-efficacy and positive parent and child relationships, Malm, Henrich, Varjas and Meyers (2017) found that when a parent provides consistent praise and support, a child's self-confidence is raised, which allows the child to make better choices. Even though some parents may have good

self-efficacy to build self-confidence in their children, there are limited studies regarding what builds parents' confidence to intervene in a cyberbullying incident (Lovegrove, Bellmore, Green, Jens, & Ostrov, 2013).

Another study to examine parents' and teachers' opinions regarding cyberbullying and their indirect involvement was conducted with 466 parents and 493 teachers (Gradinger et al., 2017). In the study, teachers and parents responded to a questionnaire formulated for each group. The results indicated that parents, as compared to teachers, considered physical bullying as a more serious matter, while teachers regarded relational bullying as more serious than physical bullying. Also, victims of cyberbullies reported more frequently to parents than to teachers (Gradinger et al., 2017). Thus, it appears that is a major discrepancy between how parents and teachers perceive bullying and how it is reported.

Additionally, the most common of parental responses to a cyberbullying event was to contact the school. The second most common responses were controlling their child's internet access and cell phone use, as well as talking to the cyberbullies parents. The least common responses were encouraging their child to defend themselves, ignoring the bully, and/or doing nothing about it. Regarding gender and response to a bully, parents of female children were more likely to direct their child to ignore the bully and do nothing about it (Gradinger et al., 2017). Yubero and Navarro (2012) advocated for future studies to address differences in defining and defending cyberbullying among parents, teachers, and children. The most recent research regarding favorable parent responses to intervening in a cyberbullying event involving their child is fostering a

serious stance against it and keeping open communication with their child so they can respond if an event occurs, whereas teachers did not estimate victimization as high, nor did they foster open communication with the student and the parent when a cyberbullying event occurred (Elsaesser, Russell, Ohannessian, & Patton, 2017).

Sevcikova, Machackova, Wright, Dedkova and Cerna (2015) found that teachers' perceptions of students' disruptive behavior varied according to their racial background. Sevcikova et al. (2015) examined if there were racial discipline differences between African American students and their Caucasian peers. The researchers found that when a student had teachers of the same racial background, they were less likely to have disciplinary problems than if they had different racial backgrounds. The researchers have presented future studies that examine the types of beliefs that a person has to either intervene or avoid a bullying situation. Differences in gender and how a person perceives a cyberbullying event are plays an important role in addressing it.

Purpose of the Study

A quantitative research design was used to address the research questions. The design accounted for teacher and parent perceptions and their confidence in addressing cyberbullying events. Further investigation can prompt teachers and parents to assess their general knowledge about cyberbullying in their school, which includes school climate and culture, curriculum and education, cyberbullying response, school policies on cyberbullying, technology, and other areas of concern.

According to Kennedy, Russom, and Kevorkian (2012) teachers and parents perceive cyberbullying interventions differently. They found that administrators tend to

focus more on communicating with the victims of bullies and their parents rather than dealing with the bully and their parents. Green (2018) researched a total of 888 school staff members to identify who was responsible in the school for addressing cyberbullying issues. This study included teachers, heads of departments, principals, and school managers. Green et al., (2018) found that principals and heads of departments directed teachers to deal with cyberbullying outside of the school. The problem was that fewer than 50% of the teachers had reportedly attended antibullying training and were uncertain in addressing a cyberbullying event. The researcher also found lack of teacher input related to a cohesive antibullying approach.

The specific purpose of the present study was to identify any cognitive and belief differences in the way that teachers and parents are motivated to address cyberbullying. To accomplish this, a quantitative approach was applied that assessed teacher and parent input related to their intervention strategies. The psychological concept of self-efficacy was a focus of the study because self-perceptions of teacher and parent competencies are thought to directly affect efficacious intervention strategies. Therefore, my intent was to explore how teachers and parents perceive cyberbullying and how they would intervene in the school setting when presented with a cyberbullying incident. In addition, I examined what has and has not been successful in response to a cyberbullying incident.

The independent variables that were measured were self-efficacy of teachers and parents, including two dependent variables related to perceived school response to cyberbullying and self-efficacy. The Peer Relations Assessment Questionnaire revised was used to assess how teachers and parents perceived cyberbullying in their school and

not a check on actual policies that the school had implemented to address cyberbullying. In addition to the knowledge base, measures of self-efficacy were taken for teachers (see Schwarzer and Jersusalem, 1995), and the general population, while the self-efficacy scale (Schwarzer, et al., 1995) was included to provide independent measures.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The null hypothesis was that there are no differences between the independent groups of teachers and parents as measured by knowledge, beliefs, and willingness to intervene effectively when encountering cyberbullying incidents. Specific research questions included the following:

Research Question (RQ)1: Is there a difference in perception to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?

H_01: There is no difference between teachers and parents in their perception to address cyberbullying.

H_a1: There is a difference between teachers and parents in relation to their perception to address cyberbullying.

RQ2: Is there a difference in self-efficacy to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?

H_02: There is no difference between teachers and parents in relation to their self-efficacy to address cyberbullying.

H_a2: There is a difference between teachers and parents in relation to their self-efficacy to address cyberbullying.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was based on the social learning theory by Bandura et al., 1977). Social learning theory defines cognitive development, which is acquired by learning from others. The acquired skills come from parents, teachers, and siblings. The social learning theory can be influenced by living in a positive or negative environment that also helps to build emotional stability and shape personality. Bandura, et al., (1997) first proposed a theory of learning by demonstrating that children learn from others, with or without obvious rewards.

The social learning theory posits those teachers will follow the style and behaviors of their models. Teachers and staff model some behaviors from their peers. If teachers and staff are frightened, unconcerned, or negligent, they are likely to avoid or fail to recognize cyberbullying intervention. If staff are confident and proactive (high self-esteem), teachers will show competent actions and early interventions in dealing with cyberbullying. Also, independent subjects, as well as teachers and parents with high self-efficacy scores, will show a higher count of interventions than those low in self-efficacy. Children also learn from both their teachers and peers in and outside of the classroom (Yoon, Sulkowski & Bauman, 2016). Consistent with social learning theory, Williford (2013) found that when teachers failed to intervene in a cyberbullying incident, the frequency of cyberbullying increased.

According to Bandura's et al., (1977) social learning theory, there are various components that encompass it. These components build upon a collaborative effort between children and knowledgeable adults, such as parents, teachers, or older siblings.

One of the main tenets of Bandura's theory is that a child's cognitive development does not occur in a vacuum, but rather, a child learns from others and everything around them. Bandura advocated for restructuring a child's learning experience so that they can reach their highest potential. Other ways to maximize a student's potential include understanding the student's strengths and weaknesses and nurturing their potential (Mitchell, 2007). The social learning theory examines all learning experiences that occur from within and outside of the child's environment. Learning experiences continue from home, school, and community, and even throughout adulthood. Children learn through their interactions with significant people around them. These people include parents, teachers, administrators, and peers.

According to Compton et al., (2014), no studies have compared the perspectives of teachers, parents, and students in terms of cyberbullying motivation. However, teachers' and parents' perceptions of cyberbullying have indicated that motivating factors that contribute to cyberbullying are related to power and status, avoiding punishment, retaliation, anonymity, fun, and boredom, and because it is considered easy to do (Compton et al., 2014). The study also revealed that teachers believed the primary motivation for students to cyberbully was ease of internet use. Compared to parents' and teachers' perception of student motivation to cyberbully, teachers omitted an imbalance of power and self-preservation, or in other words, to avoid retaliation or punishment.

Compton et al., (2014) suggested that future research regarding defining cyberbullying between teachers, students, and parents be studied in relation to their perception and shared understanding of the problem. The conceptual framework of this

study was social learning theory, as it relates to whether teachers have a positive connection to other teachers for support in a cyberbullying incident or lack self-efficacy skills and feel unsupported to address a cyberbullying incident, for example, whether teachers and parents support and assist each other in addressing a cyberbullying incident. If not, cyberbullying intervention is unlikely to be successful if its perception and motivation are not clearly defined. The results of my study provide insight related to the perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying from the perspective of teachers and parents to examine any differences or the lack of differences so that a clearer perspective can be gained, thus providing an opportunity for advancing cyberbullying prevention and intervention.

Nature of the Study

The nature of my study examined whether there are differences in teachers' and parents' perceptions and self-efficacy regarding cyberbullying. The independent variable included the role of teachers' perceptions of and self-efficacy in cyberbullying, and the dependent variables were the perceived school response to cyberbullying and self-efficacy. The use of two questionnaires addressed teacher and parent self-efficacy, as well as teacher and parent perceptions of cyberbullying. The method I used for the data collection process was an online survey made available to the principal of the school, which was then made available for teachers and parents to complete. The participant's responded to the questionnaire and the data analyzed with SPSS software.

Definitions

Bullying: Bullying is defined by repeated badgering and ongoing negative actions toward the victim. Bullying is also an imbalance of power and strength between perpetrators directed at a specific target (Olweus & Brevik, 2014).

Covert bullying: Bullying that is hidden or out of sight and away from adults. This type of bullying is associated with cyberbullying, which can occur 24 hours per day (Waters & Mashburn, 2017).

Cyberbullying: The use of electronic devices, such as mobile phones, instant messenger contact, social networking sites, e-mails, and personal web pages to threaten and intimidate another person. Cyberbullying can also go viral, in which thousands of people can witness the event (Cassidy, Jackson & Brown, 2009).

Middle school population: Comprises adolescents aged 11 to 13 attending Grades 6 to 8. Middle school students are also defined as a separate organizational unit for young children between the ages of 11-13 who have completed elementary school and after completing middle school will be attending high school (Chadbourne, 2003).

Parents: Adults who are responsible for the child's physical and emotional well-being and reside with them. This also includes a custodial parent or guardian of a child, whether the child is biological, fostered, or adopted. Parents are not only partners who produce biological children. A parent is not limited to a marital relationship but can consist of single parent, and remarried parents which include half and stepchildren in the family unit (Aquilino, 1990).

Peer harassment: Can be accomplished in two ways. The first is use of direct aggression. Direct aggression takes a form that is aimed at physically hurting a person. Indirect bullying involves verbal assaults, which can lead to long term psychological harm (Olweus, 1993).

Perception and perceived response to cyberbullying: Defined by an individual's personal view and mental process on how to address situations. Perception and intervention in a cyberbullying incident, includes any action taken (Adzrieman et al., 2017).

Self-efficacy beliefs: How people think and how they overcome obstacles in difficult situations. If a person has learned how to handle difficult situations, they will have gained self-resilience (Bandura et al., 1997).

Teachers: Individuals who hold a degree in education and teach in school programs, such as special education, music, language, social studies, English as a second language, and art (Adzrieman et al., 2017).

Assumptions

This research was based on several assumptions. The first was that all participants who were invited to participate in the study would accept. Secondly, I assumed that the middle school superintendent would invite all teachers and parents to participate fully. Thirdly, I assumed that the participants would understand all the questions on the questionnaire and that they would answer them honestly. These assumptions were necessary because they could have negatively affected the outcome of the research if any false information were given.

Scope and Delimitations

To control the delimitations and ensure the manageability of the collected data, survey instruments using only Likert choice items were used to ensure the continuity of answers. The population involved in the study only included participants from a middle school where teachers are employed. Parents were given the online website by their child's school principal to complete the questionnaires. To account for generalizability, the questionnaires were formulated for teacher and parent input only.

Limitations

A limitation to the study that is related to external validity is sampling, which was specific only to parents who interacted with the student at home and teachers in one middle school. Internal validity was addressed through the elimination of selection bias by using a self-selected sample of convenience. A timeframe of 4 weeks was set for the questionnaires to be completed. To address research bias, leading questions were not used in the questionnaire. The following limitations were also important. The relatively small sample available for this study limits generalization beyond the specific population from which the sample was drawn. While the designated "middle school" focus limited the age of the population considered, many differences exist between these schools in accounting for socioeconomic differences in the community, as well as state, local, and educational differences in the policy, and the adjudication of bullying problems. To reduce generalization, the participants were not asked about their individual incomes.

Participants from the sample may not have answered survey questions for a few reasons. Potential errors generated from the participants' responses may have arisen, such

as inadvertently skipping or ignoring questions, and, although infrequent, may have distorted results. In addition, dishonesty, or the denial of answers to minimize or distort answers to controversial issues, might have contributed to not accurately reflecting the realistic opinions of all members of the included population. Biases that may have emerged ("faking good") were interpreted with respect to the possibility of either group showing a predominance of this distortion in responding. To reduce dishonest answers, a "prefer not to answer" choice was provided for questions in the questionnaire.

The dependent measures may have been poorly worded, confusing, or contradictory in the perception of any one subject, contributing to poor test reliability and/or validity. This effect was mitigated by the careful selection of measures that have been standardized on similar populations. Reliability and construct validity coefficients and basic statistical scores (mean) and confidence limits (standard deviations) were readily identifiable and available from the published test results. To minimize poor test reliability and validity, self-efficacy and perceived response to cyberbullying were clearly defined.

The results of the study may be time-dependent and reflect events and/or training and sensitivity at the time of the survey. Schools with high levels of cyberbullying events may differ from those with low frequencies, or those schools that choose to ignore or defer efforts at remediation. Interpretations of the findings therefore included a reference to the social and educational context at the time the study is conducted. To minimize time-dependent events, only cyberbullying events that occurred in the last month prior to administering the questionnaire were examined.

To reduce researcher bias, only specific questionnaires were used that addressed either perception or self-efficacy to cyberbullying. The questionnaires were also arranged separately for the input of either teacher or parent.

Significance of the Study

There is limited research on the role of teachers' and parents' perceptions of cyberbullying and their willingness to acquire and use intervention skills in a middle school setting. Early intervention in a developmentally sensitive problem may avert delayed efforts requiring more intense therapeutic programs (Patchin & Hinduja, 2009). The social and economic costs of the extended, unchecked growth of cyberbullying will only increase with the rapidly advancing technology in the field of social networking (Patchin & Hinduja et al., 2009).

If the attitudes and beliefs of teachers and parents are identified at all levels, a more effective and comprehensive team approach can be offered to overcome the broad social contagion associated with cyberbullying. Some potential contributions of the study that can advance cyberbullying intervention are related to the identification of the differing perceptions of teachers and parents and their self-efficacy regarding being either successful or unsuccessful in cyberbullying interventions. If a teacher identifies as having high self-efficacy, they are more inclined to address a cyberbullying incident as compared to a teacher that identifies as having low self-efficacy and who avoids a cyberbullying incident. Understanding cyberbullying from a parent and teacher perception of it and self-efficacy could assist with future anticyberbullying intervention skills. Implications for positive social change are aimed at increasing teacher training and

parent intervention of cyberbullying to include the examination of individual teacher and parent self-efficacy skills. Students need to tell a parent or teacher about being cyberbullied, as their main fear about telling others is related to losing their internet privileges, which thus defeats the purpose of putting an end to being cyberbullied (Hinduja & Patchin et al., 2009).

Summary

Rates of cyberbullying victimization have increased from 5% to 74% over the last eight years (Hamm, Newton, Chisholm, Shulhan, Milne, Sundar & Hartling, 2015). From 2007 to 2016, the percentage of individuals who have experienced cyberbullying in their lifetimes have almost doubled from 18% to 34% (Hinduja & Patchin et al., 2009). The purpose of this study was to explore how teachers and parents may differ in their perceptions of school responses to cyberbullying and self-efficacy. The research was based upon a social learning theory approach to cooperative and effective social intervention developed by a team of interdisciplinary educators. Teachers, who are the direct educational contacts on the frontlines, and parents were evaluated in the dimensions of perception and self-efficacy in a cyberbullying incident. Self-efficacy, in terms of expectations of positive outcome, was assumed to be one of many important factors in addressing the pervasive and destructive psychological and educational effects of children who engage in or are victimized by cyberbullying. Measures of knowledge, prevalence, and methods of intervention were considered, as well as empirical scales of teacher and parent self-efficacy as a dimension of personal effectiveness and skill. The outcome of the study is aimed at improving the communication and understanding of the

complementary roles of teachers and parents in preventive and/or effective skills in dealing with cyberbullying. Researching cyberbullying is relevant and important because it affects the victim in detrimental ways. It is also important that teachers and parents be prepared to address cyberbullying in their schools. This is because the internet, which is ever-changing, can affect a student's well-being. Cyberbullied adolescents are affected emotionally, academically, and physically. Recent research on cyberbullying revealed that teachers are not well equipped to handle the problem (Yoon & Bauman et al., 2014). One of the reasons why teachers are not prepared to address a cyberbullying incident is because of lack of cyberbullying training, self-efficacy (poor self-esteem), and poor school administrative support. Parent and community input and involvement is also lacking. Therefore, it is worth determining where these deficiencies lie so that improvements can be made regarding future anticyberbullying approaches. Furthermore, inconsistent themes that emerge from the literature regarding teacher and parent perception and self-efficacy related to cyberbullying intervention remain ambiguous. There are several inconsistencies related to how some teachers and parents employ strategies to address and intervene in cyberbullying incidents successfully compared to those who are not successful. It would be advantageous to determine which teacher and parent interventions can be used successfully in a cyberbullying incident, as a means of establishing a more unified approach to addressing it.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The problem of the study concerned cyberbullying and whether teachers and parents were prepared to address a cyberbullying incident in a middle school setting. The purpose of the study was to examine whether teachers and parents in a middle school setting had the necessary skills to address a cyberbullying event. The skills were aimed at intervention that included perception and self-efficacy. DeSmet, Aelterman, Bastiaensens, VanCleemput, Poels, Vandebosch, Cardon and De Bourdeaudhuij (2015) found that teachers do not feel confident in identifying or responding to cyberbullying. Additionally, Hinduja and Patchin et al., (2009) asserted that cyberbullying events have dramatically increased and there is a need for greater parental and community involvement. Compton et al. (2014) stated that it is worth promoting a universal definition of cyberbullying and increasing staff support during cyberbullying incidents.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search strategy focused on the following keywords: *teacher and parental perception* and *self-efficacy of cyberbullying*. Literature was obtained through the following search engines and databases: Google Scholar, PsycARTICLES, PsycEXTRA, PsycINFO, Sage Journals, Children and Youth Services, EBSCO, Journal of School Violence, Computers in Human Behavior, and Psych BOOKS. The literature search was not limited to peer-reviewed articles but included school websites that pertained to cyberbullying policies. Most of the current cyberbullying literature that was found only spanned from 2006 to 2018.

Cyberbullying and Its Effects on Students' Personal Lives

Cyberbullies affect students by causing serious emotional problems, such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, isolation, stress, and suicide ideation. Other findings focused on cyberbullying and how it affected students' personal lives were related to receiving texts in school about threats to hurt someone, telling lies about a person, exposing secrets to an audience, and sexual harassment (Kowalski, Giumetti, Schroeder & Lattanner, 2014). In relation to their view on addressing cyberbullying in their school, a sample of 587 students in Grades 5 and 6 yielded the following outcomes: 77% felt that schools should provide information to their parents, 84% felt that teachers need to discuss cyberbullying, and 83% felt that schools should inform their students about it (Strom, Strom, Wingate, Kraska & Beckert, 2012).

School climate is another factor that is closely related to cyberbullying. A negative school climate is one in which bullying is viewed as an individual problem. Cyberbullying continues because teachers and parents are not equipped to deal with it properly. A positive school climate could prevent bullying, whereby students are supported and treated with respect by their teachers. When students view their school climate as supportive rather than authoritative, they are more receptive to school discipline and engage in less teasing and bullying of their peers. Furthermore, students who view their teachers as caring and supportive about them may regard their enforcement of school rules as more protective than controlling (Strom et al., 2012). Also, a level of consistency and fairness of school discipline rather than high levels of supervision positively affects student behavior (Gerlinger & Wu, 2016).

Cyberbullying and Social Networking

In a recent study of cyberbullying and its associated factors, Chen, Ho, and Lwin (2017) studied the predictors of cyberbullying from a social, cognitive, and media effects approach. Cyberbullying is associated with frequent internet use coupled with risky behaviors (Chen et al., 2017). There also appears to be a commonality as to why adolescents do not tell a parent or other adult about being cyberbullied: because they are afraid their cellphone or computer will be taken away from them. Some adolescents resort to suicide to escape their embarrassment and emotional pain (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017). Other traits associated with cyberbullying include personality traits, moral disengagement, narcissism, depression, and poor self-efficacy (Bussey, Fitzpatrick, & Raman, 2015).

According to the social cognitive theory (Bandura et al., 1997), environmental factors are also determinants of individual factors, which either promote or inhibit violent behaviors. Chen et al. (2017) determined 14 factors and degrees of cyberbullying perpetration. The 14 factors examined were (a) frequency of ICT use, (b) risky ICT use, (c) moral disengagement, (d) narcissism, (e) depression, (f) self-efficacy, (g) self-esteem, (h) emotional management, (i) school commitment, (j) traditional bullying perpetration, (k) traditional bullying victimization, (l) social norms, (m) parental interaction, and (n) parental mediation associated with cyberbullying perpetration. The factors most associated with cyberbullying were moral disengagement, depression, social norms, and traditional bullying. Some suggestions to prevent cyberbullying are to remind students to refrain from adding strangers online and disclosing personal information. The parental

approach that appears to work best is to manage children's ICT use and be more involved in their lives.

Nakano, Suda, Okaie, and Moore (2016) examined whether there were any differences between anonymous and nonanonymous users in aggressive behavior related to cyberbullying. Their analysis of Ask.fm was used to determine their impact of anonymity on user behavior and social networking. Ask.fm also has many users (approximately 150 million as of February 2015), with an increasing number of cyberbullying incidents reported. Ask.fm offers a question-and-answer-based social networking service that allows its users to interact with each other. Questions and answers between two users are also posted and visible to the public. The data collected comprised 10,000 questions–answers per profile. The preprocessing of pairs of data excluded random question options, the removal of videos, emotions, and emojis in all question pairs.

To analyze the data, the researchers counted the number of negative words per contribution to measure aggressive user behavior (Nakano et al., 2016). The researchers sought to examine whether anonymity was linked to cyberbullying. The results indicated that 96% of Ask.fm users accept anonymous questions, and 4% prohibit anonymous users from leaving a question on their profile. Other outcomes from the study revealed that anonymous users exhibit a higher degree of aggressiveness than nonanonymous users. Additionally, Ask.fm users are more aggressive in responding to anonymous aggressive questions than to nonanonymous aggressive questions. Nakano et al., (2016) suggested that future research is necessary to identify and classify negative words used to determine

the degree of aggression and user behavior, which may lead to cyberbullying incidents. Students who hide behind anonymity and have often been victimized themselves have a higher likelihood of intimidating others and threatening them. This intimidation and use of abusive statements are referred to as trolling. Students who troll tend to have lower academic abilities, more health problems, and more narcissistic traits (Nicol, 2012).

Students who troll also enjoy intimidating others and find enjoyment in doing so. Kaur and Kaur (2016) examined the motivation behind social networking that provides the user with enjoyment, including total immersion in it to the point that nothing else seems to matter. This state of being totally immersed in an online activity is known as flow. Flow is defined as intrinsic enjoyment in which people repeat the same actions. An example of flow is similar for individuals who engage in sports activities and playing games. Flow is also described as experiencing pleasure when a person is intensively enjoying a task. An example of flow is when a person is intensely absorbed in an activity like painting a landscape (Kaur et al., 2016). Another example of flow is when an adolescent is intensively reading a post or texting or playing online games with others that they immensely enjoy (Meseguer-Artola & Rodriguez-Ardura, 2016).

Because cyberbullies enjoy intimidating others, cyberbullying encompasses many different avenues, skills, and applications, specifically, attacking others with ease of anonymity. In relation to adolescents who find it socially advantageous to connect with their peers, Beyens, Frison, and Eggermont (2016) examined the role of adolescents' need to belong on Facebook and their fear of missing out on social networking if they are

not connected. Facebook and Twitter are the new social media trends for cyberbullying (Bellmore, Calvin, & Zhu, 2015).

The ease at which adolescents can join Twitter and Facebook makes it convenient for them to find peers they want to cyberbully. Eighty-four percent of cyberbullies know their victims (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Cyber victims are bullied by means of mobile phones and emails (Solange & Smith, 2008). Sari and Camadan (2016) examined cyberbullying traits and found that cyberbullies are socially isolated, lack social skills, and have low problem-solving skills, as well as dissonance and problems with substance abuse (Ranney, Patena, Nuegent, Spirito, Boyer & Zatzick, 2015).

There are several psychological problems associated with cyberbullying, such as physical complaints, and poor functioning in school (Baly, Cornell & Lovegrove (2014). According to Bellmore et al., (2015), a public Twitter streaming application program interface called API was used to evaluate various keywords used by middle school student's descriptions who were cyberbullied. The keywords found were "ignored," "pushed," "shoved," "kicked," and "crying." The highest five tweet reports of bullying categories are as follows: (a) identity of the bullied person was known; (b) accusations; (c) posts revealing who the author is, such as the bully, victim, defender, bystander, assistant, or reinforcer; (d) posts where the author denied him or herself; and (e) direct attacks from a bully to a victim.

Motivation Behind Cyberbullying

Walrave and Heirman (2011) conducted research on the predictive factors connected to cyberbullying in Belgium with 1,318 adolescents aged 12 to 18, who were

questioned specifically about their involvement and behaviors related to victimization and perpetration. The variables applied in the study were gender, age, culture, educational level, past involvement, cyberbullying, attitude towards cyberbullying, online risk behaviors, ICT use, and expertise. The participants were asked about their personal experiences with cyberbullying and were instructed not to identify as either a bully or a victim so that underreporting could be eliminated. The researchers found that 34% of the participants were a target of cyberbullying, and 21.2% had cyberbullied others.

In this study, bullies were slightly older than nonbullies (Walrave & Heirman, et al., 2011). The participants reported that they were strongly opposed to having their instant messaging accounts and emails hacked, as reflected by the respective percentages: 96.5% and 96.3%. When a cyberbully disclosed passwords of emails and instant messaging to others, including publishing personal information on a blog, they were found to be six times more likely to be victimized. In addition, boys are more likely than girls to be actively involved in bullying. Teens with internet expertise are those who have internet privacy, which constitutes having internet access in their bedrooms and being away from family computer access. Those who are frequent internet users showed a higher incidence of cyberbullying.

Even though some parents promote internet safety use for their child, some adolescents do not adhere to internet rules set by their parents and seek online activities that can be harmful. Symons, Ponnet, Emmery, Walgrave, & Heirman (2017) sought to determine parental knowledge of an adolescent's online risk behaviors associated with cyberbullying. The study revealed that parents generally have little knowledge about their

child's online activities. Mothers were more informed than fathers about their adolescent sharing personal information online. Also, adolescents had more open communication with their mother than their father related to online interaction restrictions, access restrictions, active tracking, and supervision. The awareness of cyberbullying differed between parents. Only one in four mothers and one of three fathers knew about their child being cyberbullied. Because of lack of parental internet monitoring that is not consistent, a parent will not know about events that lead to cyberbullying and ways to control the situation. It is also important to hold the cyberbully accountable for their inappropriate behavior and actions against their peers, and to help them learn how to develop empathy toward others (Venter, 2013).

In a study conducted by Pettalia, Levin and Dickinson (2013) cyberbullying and the perception of consequences was examined from a sample of 200 students with an average age of 12.88. Jolliffe and Farrington (2000) developed the basic empathy scale. This scale is still used to gather data regarding a student's cognitive and affective perspective regarding cyberbullying. The study proposed to examine whether students have empathy for those who are cyberbullied. The researchers found that students who were empathetic helped victims who were cyberbullied. In addition, Brewer and Kerslake (2015) discussed the importance of school cyberbullying prevention skills that focus on building self-esteem and empathy. Building self-esteem and empathy can be advantageous because adolescents who cyberbully have low self-esteem, are lonely, and lack empathy.

Pettalia et al., (2013) also sought to understand whether students are fully aware of the harm that they are causing to their peers when using the internet. The outcomes from this study indicated that 75% of participants agreed that cyberbullies would face the consequences of their actions, with there being no difference in the perceptions of girls and boys. However, both cyberbullies and cyberbully victims produced results that were lower in the likelihood of cyberbullies receiving consequences than victims. Regarding reporting cyberbullying, cyberbullying would be reported to friends, then to parents and guardians, and lastly, it would be reported to teachers or principals.

A prominent theme found in a study by Compton, et al., (2014) relating to the motives of cyberbullies are that the cyberbully does not think that they will be caught or punished, but rather, that they can hide behind anonymity. Teachers reported that a cyberbully can hide behind anonymity so that victims feel powerless to get help. This also occurs because victims cannot provide proof that they are being cyberbullied. Teachers do not view students engaging in cyberbullying for fun or to relieve boredom, though they did perceive cyberbullying as a traditional form of bullying (Thornberg & Knutsen, et al.,2011).

Additionally, of the three groups teachers, parents, and students, parents perceived anonymity as a motivating factor to cyberbullying. However, not all students viewed anonymity as a motivating factor, as some victims know their perpetrator's identity, and those who bully do not always hide behind technology but want to be known (Cross, Shaw, Hearn,Epstein, Monks, Lester, & Thomas, 2009). Pyzalski (2012) discussed

different types of electronic aggression that go beyond cyberbullying and involve a larger group in cyberspace.

Dowell, Burgess, and Cavanaugh (2009) found that a high percentage of young people use the internet to attack strangers. Olweus (2013) found that victims who are cyberbullied often experience fear and the inability to defend oneself. Moreover, continued emotional trauma resulting from victimization is also related to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Other traumas that can occur are related to sexual victimization, which produces shame, self-blame, and reduced self-esteem (Molner, Buka, & Keesler, 2001). Childhood emotional trauma was found to be the strongest predictor of sending sexual content to a victim (Turner, Finkelhor, & Ormrod, 2010). Adolescents who have been victimized and discriminated against by race, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation were found to have the worst outcomes related to emotional problems (Espelage & Swearer, 2008).

In a study conducted by Turner, Mitchell, Jones, and Shattuck (2015), males were found to be more likely to experience physical forms of peer harassment than girls, who experienced more relational aggression. In comparison, relational aggression was found to be longer in duration, had the greatest social power differences, and was most likely to involve a perpetrator who was either a friend or dating partner. One of the greatest predictors of missing school was related to injuries inflicted on a victim by a perpetrator. Longer duration and repeated harassment were also the most damaging factor, which caused ongoing physical health symptoms, such as stomach pains and headaches (Turner et al., 2015).

Ybarra and Mitchell (2008) found that youth who cyberbully are also involved in more detentions, suspensions, and skipping school, and are, alarmingly, eight times more likely to carry a weapon to school. There are four distinctive groups that are cyberbullied: close friends, young people known only from online groups, and former romantic partners, such as boyfriends or girlfriends. Future intervention strategies in addressing cyberbullying incidents could benefit from incorporating different typologies of victims specific to the four distinctive groups.

Pyzalski et al., (2012) suggested that instruments measuring cyberbullying should incorporate various victim profiles to obtain data that does not focus only on the victim attacking another student. An anti-cyberbullying intervention offered by Turner et al. (2015) is to approach peer harassment to make it a priority to assist the victim with the continued monitoring of outcomes related to the current lack of intervention strategies.

Perception of Adolescents' Online Risks to Cyberbullying

Adolescents perceived online risks to cyberbullying differently. Two important rules come into play regarding youth's perception of risky online behavior. Youth reject the authoritative roles used by parents and teachers in defining what risky online behaviors are. Secondly, peer rules replace authoritative rules by establishing what they perceive as risky, acceptable, or correct (Flores & James, 2014).

Bauwens (2012) adds that a specific set of rules created by youth for online behavior is established as "peer-driven morality" (p. 44). Peer-driven morality is different to the dominant morality created by parents and teachers. For example, parents and teachers view meeting strangers on the internet as dangerous. However, youth view

meeting strangers online as an opportunity to acquire new friendships, and sometimes, to develop romantic relationships (Barbovschi, Laszlo, Marinescu & Velicu, 2012).

According to Mascheroni, Jorge, and Farrugia (2014) cyber grooming and sexual solicitation, from a media-driven perspective, varies in different cultures and within different age groups. For example, stranger danger, which regards a child's fear of and interacting with strangers, was found to have little risk (Wolak, Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Ybarra, 2008).

Regarding different cultures and youth perceptions of cyberbullying, those of children aged 9–16 in the United Kingdom who communicated online with a stranger, showed only 30% less apprehension and anxiety (Livingston, Gorzig, & Olafsson, 2011). Mascheroni et al. (2014) surveyed 254 youth aged 9–16. Their study consisted of nine countries: Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Malta, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and the UK, with six focus groups: three groups of girls and three with boys, with two groups for each age. The first group consisted of youth aged 9–10 and 11–13, and the second group consisted of youth aged 14–16. Twelve interviews, six for each gender with the same age distribution, were conducted in each country.

The results of this study found that both boys and girls of all ages described stranger danger as a middle-aged man pretending to be someone else online. In terms of children's perception of cyberbullying, children have used the following terms to describe it: "horrible" from a 12-year-old girl from the Czech Republic; "pure evil" from a 12-year-old Portuguese girl; and "something that can crush you" from a 12-year-old Spanish girl. Several children have also described cyberbullying as being the worst thing

that could happen to them. Mascheroni et al. (2014) sought to determine whether there is a connection between children's perceptions of the risks associated with internet use and parental concerns. The study also focused on identifying whether there were age or gender patterns and cross-cultural variations in risk perception. There have been several prior studies on the dangerous experiences that children encounter online (Livingstone et al., 2011). However, less is known about risk awareness and perception among younger internet users. It is of utmost importance that children have a voice in the media coverage of online risks, as they are mainly represented as passive and are most often spoken for by social institutions (Ponte, Bauwens, & Mascheroni, 2009).

According to Livingston and Haddon (2012), the problem involved in defining youth online risk is that it is mostly defined by social institutions, such as the media. Hence, using a child-centered approach to define what constitutes a risky experience could clarify it and add to preventative online risks, strategies, and safety. The way in which children perceive risky behavior depends on individual characteristics in specific situations (Lupton, 1999). Online risk-taking also includes power between children, parents, and other adults (Livingstone, Kirwil, Ponte, & Staksrud, 2013).

Berriman and Thomson (2015) examined social media practices among youth to determine their moral reasoning behind engaging in risky online practices, including the consequences of visibility. In this study, the constructs of morality are twofold, by holding conduct in the use of social media either or acceptable unacceptable conduct. This study focused on creating a moral map focusing on how youth conceptualization of social media may be affected, as well as its relation to their privacy.

The study also found that youth are continuing to experiment with social media and are becoming more creative with it. Robards (2012) views social media use by youth and social conduct as seeking pleasures through praise and recognition and to avoid the anxiety and distress of being exposed to criticism by others. To conceptualize a social media user's position from a media user's perspective, Chase and Levenson (2000) devised a four-quadrant diagram to explain these positions and behaviors. The quadrant begins in a clockwise order, starting at quadrant three, which is defined as high participation and low visibility. Quadrant three is also referred to as the geek position. The geek position identifies internet users that play videos, animations, music videos, fan fiction, and fake identity channels. Quadrant number four is referred to as the e-celeb. E-celebs are social media users who enjoy daily Vlogging, YouTube, and Twitter. Quadrant four is also referred to as high participation and high visibility. Quadrant two is referred to as the fan or lurker. This quadrant is characterized by limiting online visibility due to a desire to avoid a larger audience. The fan or lurker and their participation in social media consists of commenting, following, liking, sharing, and lurking. Quadrant one is referred to as the incompetent; or, in other words, the victim. Social media participation in quadrant one is characterized as tagging, sharing, fraping, and sexting. Quadrant one is viewed as having high visibility and low participation. Frapping is defined as stealing a person's online identity without their permission. Sexting is defined as manipulation with an intimate gesture, which is shared and exposes a person to judgment and ridicule (Ringrose, Harvey & Livingstone, 2013).

Most cyberbullying incidents occur in quadrant one due to the social media users' lack of knowledge regarding their safety online, and those victims are persuaded or tricked into sharing information (Ringrose et al., 2013). Livingstone and Helsper (2013) found that most young people, in relation to all four quadrants, were located on the bottom left-hand side of the quadrant, specifically between quadrants two and three. Boyd (2014) found that young people can protect their privacy and have technologies available to manage digital content. The problem lies in the resurfacing of past conversations and the potential spread-ability of the content. Boyd et al. (2014) defined context collapse when networks involving people from other parts of a person's life can join in. Berriman and Thomson et al., (2015) advocate for the promotion of e-safety (electronic safety) for all. In addition, Hope (2014) asserts that young people are more concerned about their privacy, including their morality, particularly in their use of social media.

Adolescent and Parental Viewpoints on Cyberbullying

Nilan, Burgess, Hobbs, Threadgold, & Alexander (2015) sought to gain the perspective of students and how they viewed teacher interventions regarding cyberbullying. Students reported a lack of teacher intervention, with two examples of students disclosing cyberbully incidents stated below:

> Everyone knows that it has to happen in heaps for the teacher to be able to punish you. If you only, do it once, you probably won't even get in trouble, which I suppose must suck for the kid getting picked on, because heaps of different people

> can just do it once and nothing will get done, so they probably just don't tell the teachers anything. (p. 5)

Cyberbullying is fueled by social media, which amplifies the aggression during time spent between the school and online environments, which one student describes thus,

> It's like it never ends, and heaps more people see it and can even get involved as well. Then, if it's not enough on Facebook, they do it at school after, so it ends up being never-ending bullying online and at school, with heaps of people seeing it and knowing about it but not doing anything to stop it. (p. 6)

Lapidot-Lefler and Dolev-Cohen (2014) found that bullying is a process that typically occurs face-to-face and continues through social media networks, only to again be redirected into the physical realm. Some students find that cyberbullying is worse than face-to-face bullying.

> Cyberbullying is the worst type of bullying because it affects every part of you, not just your body. It makes me angry that one person can cause so much harm over something like a smartphone. People can say things online that makes someone more afraid and feel more worthless than if they were just being physically threatened. (p.7)

The more "friends" someone has, the more popular they feel they are. Though this statement may have been true three years ago, it does not stand nowadays. Most adolescents are leaving Facebook and using Instagram, Snapchat, and Twitter because it is more interactive. Up to 1 million adolescents a year are leaving Facebook ((Dillion &

Bushman, 2015). Once the cyberbully can do this, their online expertise in attacking vulnerable peers is achieved by their ability to hack, connect between devices, and adjusting the privacy settings of others by maintaining anonymity. Nilan et al. (2015) conclude that it is difficult for schools to devise effective cyberbullying interventions because cyberbullying needs to have a specific set of intervention strategies that are distinct and have clear definitions of acceptable behavior.

A study conducted by Demaray, Malecki Secord, and Lyell (2013) examined how students, teachers, and parents perceive bullying, and if there were any differences among them. The study consisted of 137 students from grades three to eight, which included their parents and teachers. Research outcomes found that students reported the highest levels of victimization and teachers had the lowest level of perceived victimization. Students and parents also had moderate agreement correlations on all levels of victimization. To reduce cyberbullying incidents, Barlett, Fennel, and Wygant (2013) identified some potential threats to cyberbullying perpetration with their adolescents. One of them is that parents were found not to monitor their adolescent's online use, parents did not limit the time spent on the internet, and parents did not teach appropriate online interaction with peers.

Waasdorp, O'Brennan, Pas and Bradshaw (2011) examined bullying discrepancies between teachers and students related to witnessing bullying. The study found that there were perceptual differences between staff, students, and parents. The study consisted of a sample of 11,674 students, 1,027 school staff, and 960 parents from 30 elementary, nine middle, and five high schools from a large Maryland public school

district. The study found that teachers and students have differing opinions on what witnessing bullying means. Teachers did not consider indirect bullying, which is exclusion and rumor spreading, to be of significance; however, they did consider repetitive bullying behavior to be problematic.

Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, and Wiener (2005) add that the problem, perception, and definition of bullying are different between teacher and student, thus making intervention strategies inefficient. Waasdorp et al. (2011) also found that teachers who were bullied in the past were more likely to report it than teachers who were not. Holt, Kantor, and Finkelhor et al., (2009) advocate for a multi-systematic approach to bullying prevention and intervention. The multi-systematic anti-bullying approach consists of school staff, parents, students, and community input. Most importantly, what is lacking is accurate assessment and interpretation by the student, teacher, and parent regarding reports of bullying which is essential for anti-bullying programs to be effective.

Misconceptions About Cyberbullying

According to Nilan et al. (2015), most research on cyberbullying has focused on a "top down" approach, which excludes cyberbullies' views and generally fails to grasp the complexity of the problem. Their study information was gathered from 10 students aged 15–18. A total of five males, five females, and a female and a male teacher were interviewed to establish individual viewpoints about cyberbullying. The data was analyzed for any similarities and differences. The findings were as follows: a female student, identified as Carly, reported that bullying is: "something that happens to someone once or many times for the same or different people" (p. 5).

In comparison to this and the official definition of bullying at school X, bullying is a pattern of repeated behavior of a power imbalance between two people. The aggressor can cause verbal insults and repeated psychological harm. The disconnect is between how the school defines bullying as a "pattern" or a one-time bullying incident. The main problem here is that there are loopholes that consist of fragmented definitions and incidents of what constitutes cyberbullying for some, and how the school can intervene.

Additionally, teachers were found to be unequipped to deal with the following characteristics: spread-ability, deniability, anonymity, and permanence. To address these characteristics, Nilan et al. (2015) suggested that cyberbullying not only be viewed as a subset of standard bullying definitions but rather as a "specific form of harassment with a different set of capacities and potentials that may not be readily managed within ordinary school discipline procedures" (p. 10).

There are also different misconceptions about how adolescents and parents view cyberbullying and bullying. Monks, Mahdavi and Rix (2016) found that parents thought that those who are cyberbullies were not traditional bullies. Additionally, the adolescents agreed that cyberbullies are different from bullies because they are not as harmful as a cyberbully.

Academic Performance Related to Cyberbullying

A study conducted by Konishi, Hymel, Zumbo and Li (2010) sought to determine whether the student–teacher relationship affected social and academic performance. In this study, researchers examined 27,217 students aged 15 years old and 1087 school

principals. To gather the large sample size, the researchers collected data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Canada. Data was collected using the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Four variables were measured: math and reading test scores, student perceptions of their connectedness with teachers, and principals' evaluations of school bullying. The results indicated that the gap in reading achievement was negatively related to school bullying for both males and females. Additionally, students who perceived positive relationships with their teachers achieved higher academically than students who did not have student–teacher connectedness. In conclusion, the researchers recommended conducting additional research on principals' perspectives and estimates of school bullying at their schools.

Newman-Carlson and Horne (2004) added that children are more likely to trust their teachers and believe that they will intervene and protect them from bullies if they believe that their teachers are fair and caring. Also, Espelage and Swearer et al., (2008) found that a lack of teacher classroom management that promotes a poor class climate, including a lack of teacher support for students who experience aggressive acts, makes bullying incidents worse.

Teacher Intervention in Overt and Covert Cyberbullying

Crick (1995) defined overt forms of bullying as those that are more easily witnessed and include physical forms such as hitting or kicking. Covert forms of bullying are acts that are not visible, such as social exclusion, gossiping, and negative body language (Rigby, 1994). Covert forms of bullying are also defined as an imbalance of power that is hidden from or unacknowledged from adults (Cross et al., 2009).

In a study conducted by Yoon (2004), teacher demographics, including six vignettes, asked responders to identify physical, verbal, cyber, or socially exclusive events. In addition, comparisons between overt and covert forms of bullying were made on a five-point scale ranging from (1) *not serious* to (5) *very serious*. Participants were 62 teachers from 26 Catholic schools with a mean age of 39.46 years, *SD* = 10.67, with ages ranging from 21 to 61. The sample consisted of more females than males, with 45 females and 17 males. The years of teaching experience were 14.01, *SD* = 10.54. Most teachers held bachelor's degrees (66.12%), while 24.20% had diplomas, and 9.67% had master's degrees. Over three-quarters of teachers (80.65%) had no training in bullying.

Additionally, The Bullying Attitude Questionnaire Yoon et al., (2004) also sought to measure the level of perceived self-efficacy of teachers in dealing with a bullying incident, which were rated on a five-item and seven-point Likert scale ranging from (1) *not true* to (7) *very true*. The following outcomes related to how teachers handled the bullying events across five sections: (a) ascribing responsibility to the victim (.37), (b) ascribing responsibility to the bully (.68), (c) ignoring the bullying (.45), (d) problem-solving (.58), and (e) a smoothing approach (.52). Further, teachers were more empathetic for victims of overt than covert bullying. Secondly, teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy intervened in overt but not covert bullying. In this study, the teachers showed high levels of empathy for students who were physically or verbally bullied and took such bullying incidents more seriously than covert bullying, in which cases teachers were more likely to lack empathy, not intervene, and not take bullying

incidents seriously. Li (2006) adds that cyberbullying can be regarded as a form of covert bullying, which is applied using cell phones or the internet.

Byers, Caltabiano, and Caltabiano (2011) agree that teachers' perceptions of overt bullying compared to covert bullying can also influence the way in which teachers intervene in a bullying incident. For example, some teachers thought that covert bullying was not as serious and responded to overt bullying incidents more frequently. They also believed that covert bullying is a normal part of adolescence. Some teachers believed that victims were responsible for being bullied by others related to their behavior (Mishna et al., 2005).

Yoon et al., (2004) found that lack of teacher empathy and intervention perpetuates the cycle of bullying because the perpetrator is able to maintain their power. With a lack of teacher intervention, victims often do not report bullying since they often doubt that teachers will do anything about it. Byers et al., (2011) suggest that teachers should get involved in making school anti-bullying policy and hold seminars on anti-bullying practices on a regular basis. The study also found that teachers did not receive undergraduate teacher training in addressing both covert and overt forms of bullying.

Teachers' Attitudes in Response to Cyberbullying

Grumm and Hein (2013) investigated teachers' strategies to address bullying in their classroom and their individual attitudes and personal characteristics. The authors hypothesized that if a teacher assumes the bullying is a stable trait disposition, they might be less motivated to intervene. The researchers sought to determine whether the teacher's normative beliefs toward aggression had any correlation with their attitudes and strategies

to handle bullying. The sample consisted of 107 participants from 85 different German schools, including an elementary school, a school for children with learning disabilities, and other school types. Participants consisted of 83 females and 13 males with a mean age of 43.97.

To measure teacher attitudes toward aggression, three bipolar pairs of adjectives were used: effective versus ineffective, heartless versus dangerous, and uncool versus cool. Teachers responded using a seven-point scale in which a higher value indicated a more negative attitude toward aggression (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957). To measure normative beliefs about aggression, Huesman and Guerra (1997) used a subscale consisting of eight items answered on a four-point Likert scale from *1 = no to 4 = yes*. All teachers completed the Handling Bullying Questionnaire (HBQ) developed by Rigby (2003). The questionnaire consisted of 20 items and assessed five different bullying strategies, including ascribing responsibility to the victim or the bully, ignoring the bully, and a smoothing approach in a problem-solving approach. The responses were answered on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (*I definitely would not*) to 5 (*I definitely would*).

The results showed that the teachers who hold a negative attitude towards aggression are more proactive in a bullying incident. Grumm and Hein et al., (2013) suggest that future research in relation to teacher characteristics be taken into consideration as one way to improve and intervene in bullying incidents. Other suggestions were for teachers to take bullying training prevention and assess how their own attitudes, normative beliefs, and other convictions may be either helping or hindering bullying interventions.

Research indicates that teacher bullying intervention strategies can be helpful (Kallestad & Olweus, 2003). In comparison, some reasons why teachers did not intervene in a bullying incident are related to a lack of effective training (Bradshaw & Johnson, 2011). In relation to teacher intervention in a bullying incident, a study conducted by Bradshaw et al., (2011) showed that, of 33,236 students, 62% of middle school students and 57% of high school students believe that teachers make bullying situations worse, and that 52% of middle school and high school students observed adults ignoring a bullying incident, while victims perceived a lack of teacher protection (Norvik & Isaacs, 2010).

Bullying intervention varies between cultures. Sairanen and Pfeffer (2011) found that Finnish teachers are the most willing to discipline bullies by enlisting help from other adults, working with bullies and victims, and lastly, by ignoring the incident. In comparison to American teachers, and according to Bauman, Toomey, and Walker, (2013), from a sample of 735 American teachers, which included teachers and school counselors, 6% of the respondents stated that they would ignore the incident, 75% got the school administrator involved, and 60%, including the parents, would ask for help from another adult. However, teachers' responses to working with the victim and bullying in relation to teaching pro-social behavior were highly variable. Thus, the findings indicate that teachers do not have effective bullying intervention skills (Bauman et al., 2013).

Other variables related to teacher responses to bullying incidents are that teachers view different forms of bullying in different ways. Yoon and Kerber (2003) found that non-physical forms of bullying such as social exclusion are thought by some teachers to

be less harmful and more difficult to detect. Research indicates that a positive school climate perceived by teachers has been associated with their ability to manage students who display problematic behaviors (Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2012).

Yoon et al., (2016) conducted research in relation to teachers' responses to bullies and victims about physical, verbal, and relational bullying. The sample consisted of 236 teachers. For their study, the researchers examined teacher gender, perceived school environment, their childhood experiences with bullying, ethnicity, age, and teacher attitudes towards bullying. The results indicated that 19% of teachers would discipline victims and reprimand students, while 96% of teachers would only respond to bullies. A further 24% would teach pro-social skills compared to 77% of the same. Fifty-one percent would involve adults in response to victimization compared to 94% responding to bullies. Additionally, 24% of teachers would involve classroom peers and other students in responding to victims, as compared to 20% of teachers who would respond to bullies. In summary, it appears that teachers responding to victims happens less frequently than responding to bullies (Yoon et al., 2016).

A transactional theory was applied to understand responses to bullying incidents and examination of teachers' coping skills (Hunter & Boyle, 2004; Lazarus & Folkman, 1987). Lazarus and Folkman et al., (1987) defined coping as "the way people manage life conditions that are stressful" (p. 102). According to Lazarus et al., (1987), there are two factors responsible for managing a stressful event and determining how teachers choose to intervene. In relation to this, Folkman and Moskowitz (2000) add that both individual

and situational factors determine which course of action a teacher will take to address a bullying incident.

Yoon et al., (2016) examined whether teachers' own beliefs, attitudes, and expectations are responsible for intervening in a bullying incident. This study sought to evaluate whether teachers' self-efficacy, and their childhood experiences, affected their responses to bullying intervention. The study found that the more self-efficacy a person has, the more likely they are to intervene in addressing negative behaviors as opposed to having low self-efficacy. Moreover, teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to become involved with bullies and victims and are less likely to ignore bullying incidents (Yoon et al., 2016).

In comparison to teacher's attitudes of cyberbullying, Burton, Florell, and Wegant (2013) examined attitudes shared by peers who cyberbully and found an association between shared attitudes, aggression, and group norms related to bullying. For example, youth who think that aggressive behavior will make them successful and popular with their peers are more likely to engage in aggressive acts, such as fighting and bullying (Steck & Perry, 2018).

Teacher, Parent, and Adolescent Self-Efficacy in Addressing a Cyberbullying Incident

Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura et al., (1994), is an individual's beliefs and abilities to manage difficult situations that have favorable outcomes. When a child is raised in a negative home environment without love or expectations, these individuals tend to develop poor self-efficacy and cope with life's situations negatively. Also, when

emotional bonds between parent and child are weak, an increase in risky behaviors and poor decision making occurs, such as in cyberbullying (Bingol, 2018). Bingol, et al., (2018) also found that adolescents who have healthy family relationships are more likely to have less risky behaviors and to cope with difficulties in positive ways.

Malm et al., (2017) advocate for future studies to incorporate specific variables, such as parental psychopathology monitoring and parental warmth to determine whether self-efficacy is linked to a cyberbullying intervention of ignoring peer victimization. Self-efficacy appears to decline for some parents, thus affecting the child–parent relationship. This can be related to an increase in the child's autonomy, but it is not clearly known as to why. There are also differences between cultures regarding self-efficacy that influence how a parent will teach their child to respond to a cyberbullying event. For example, in some African American cultures, parents are influenced more by their cultural emphasis as compared to some American cultures that are influenced by self-efficacy. Glatz and Buchanan (2015) advocate for future studies that seek to determine why some parents' self-efficacy in the child–parent relationship decreases during their child's adolescent years and if there are better ways of addressing a cyberbullying incident by taking cultural differences into account.

Cyberbullying Management in Middle School Settings

A review of the literature indicated that there is a lack of educator competence in addressing cyberbullying. A study conducted by DeSmet et al., (2015) surveyed 451 secondary school educators that included teachers, principals, and school counselors, all of which play an important role in addressing cyberbullying (Huang & Chou, 2013).

School educators have a role in protecting a child's well-being and safety; however, they are often uncertain as to whether they should intervene in activities outside of school, such as when cyberbullying occurs (McNamara & Moynihan, 2010). Very few studies have assessed educator perceptions and practices in handling cyberbullying (DeSmet et al., 2015). DeSmet et al., (2015) examined four specific clusters of a school educator's ways of handling cyberbullying. The four clusters were identified as: (a) referrers, (b) educators, (c) concerned educators, and (d) use all means educators. The first two clusters were less engaged in handling cyberbullying and mostly comprised teachers indicating a need for teacher training. Despite high problem awareness, few educators acted against cyberbullying and were unsure of what to do (Akbulut & Çuhadar, 2011). Regarding how educator competence is handled in cyberbullying incidents, Van Cleemput, DeSmet, and De Bourdeaudhuij (2014) suggested that cyberbullying programs in educator education training should be founded on educator practices that are effective, including theoretical models that can offer a baseline for effective practices, and that can be examined for improvements. Theoretical models, which can assist in professional development for teachers, are cyberbullying programs, such as the Reasoned Action Approach by Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) and the Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (2002). The Reasoned Action Approach is determined by three components: (a) behavior intention, (b) facilitating context, and (c) sufficient personal skills, which are synthesized to translate the intention into a behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, et al., 2010). Regarding cyberbullying and how it is conceptualized and addressed depends on everyone's personal moral norms (Pabian & Vandebosch, 2014). To improve professional development for educators and

increase cyberbullying prevention practices, it is important to tailor each educator's needs, which have been found to be more effective than non-tailored intervention strategies (Portney, Scott-Sheldon, Johnson, & Carey, 2008). Kreuter and Wray (2003) define tailoring as individualizing the program content to better fit the user's needs.

DeSmet et al., (2015) sought to examine the educator practices in handling cyberbullying. In this study, the following three research questions were asked: (a) Which recommended and non-recommended practices do school educators use in addressing cyberbullying? (b) What are their perceptions and context characteristics that may be associated with these practices? and (c) Do clusters of school educators exist which differ in their practices, perceptions, and context characteristics for handling bullying?

The study consisted of 451 participants from 147 schools who completed an online Handling Bullying Questionnaire (HBQ) developed by Bauman et al., (2013). The behavior change theory was incorporated into the questionnaire, which was rated on a five-point Likert scale. Six background variables in the study consisted of: (a) gender, (b) years of experience in education, (c) educators' age group, (d) position, (e) grades taught, and (f) what was taught. All variables consisted of their main location of appointment, which included where educators were for the most hours. Additional variables were (g) school size, (h) having an anti-cyberbullying school policy, and (I) perceived cyberbullying prevalence at their school. These variables were also arranged on a five-point Likert scale from *not at all* (a) *to definitely* (b).

Of participants, 66.2% were female. Participants formed three age groups: those between 18 and 35 years of age, which consisted of 160 participants, resulting in 35.6%

of the population; 36–45 years of age, of which there were 121 participants (26.9%); and 45 years of age and older, which consisted of 169 participants (37.6%).

Results of education background were related to 272 participants. Teachers made up 60.9% of the total, while 50 participants were school counselors, forming 1.2%. Some 57 participants were principals (12.8%), and 68 participants (15.2%) had a combination of roles. Regarding the work setting of teachers, 43.7% were found to work in general education, 61.6% taught in a technical education school, and 45.7% in vocational education. The schools ranged in size, the largest having 501 to 1000 students, with 203 participants (45.3%) incorporated into the study. The smallest school, which was less than or equal to 500 students, had 169 participants (37.7%) and a large school with more than 1000 students included 76 participants (17.0%) in the study.

In relation to teachers being aware of a written policy on cyberbullying at their school, I drew the following outcomes from 153 participants: 33.9% reported that their school had an implicit policy (115 participants), 25.5% reported no school policy, and 113 participants (25.1%) reported that they did not know of a cyberbullying policy. The first cluster analysis of referrers resulted in 138 participants (73.4%) identifying as teachers having 14 years of experience in teaching, of which 47.9% worked in general education schools. These educators responded to cyberbullying by referring students to other professionals, such as a school counselor. They talked to students less often and expected a less positive effect from showing concern to the bully. The teachers who referred to other professionals also had less parental involvement. They had also ignored

a bullying incident and their self-efficacy in addressing cyberbullying was lower than some other educators in cluster three.

The second largest cluster consisted of 75.6% of teachers, with 63.4% representing the male population. Teachers in this cluster analysis represented disengaged educators. Most of these teachers worked in medium to large-sized schools, making up 70.8% of the participants, and taught students aged 15–18. Educators unaware of their schools anti-cyberbullying policy comprised 63.4%. The way in which they managed cyberbullying was by telling the victim to stand up for themselves. These educators were also given less support and had the lowest problem perception of cyberbullying. Also, they did not involve other professionals for assistance and frequently ignored the incident. These educators held moral disengagement attitudes, blamed the victim, and did not view cyberbullying as their responsibility to act against it by ignoring it.

The third cluster analysis represented concerned educators who were older than 35 and comprised 82.9% of the study participants. They responded to cyberbullying by being more supportive to victims and included parents to address cyberbullying. Their perception of cyberbullying involvement was more prevalent than clusters one and two. In cluster three, self-efficacy in handling cyberbullying was higher. The fourth cluster analysis, entitled “use all means educators,” represented 40% of teachers and comprised various types of educator roles as follows: 20% were school counselors and 12% principals. In this cluster analysis, 56% worked in a small school and taught middle school students comprising 32%. Teachers who worked in middle schools or high schools comprised 36%. Fifty-six percent of the teachers reported having a written anti-

cyberbullying school policy while 36% reported their school did not have such a policy. Nearly half of the teachers in this cluster were younger than 36. Teachers in this cluster also responded to cyberbullying by giving support to victims and used other strategies, such as parental involvement. The study found that teachers were more reluctant to discipline the bully and less likely to report cyberbullying to school officials when this occurred outside of their school (Stauffer, Heath, Coyne, & Ferrin, 2012).

Future anti-cyberbullying practices should be aimed at classroom discussions, setting class rules, and talking with victims and bullies, which are necessary for prevention efforts. In this study, the largest cluster of educators referred to counselors and comprised of those with less experience and focused exclusively on maintaining class order (Dake, Price, Telljohann & Funk, 2003). De Bourdeaudhuij et al. (2015) suggested that referrers did not expect positive effects from showing concern for the bully and may require more training in understanding cyberbullying dynamics. Such engaged educators also need training and cyberbullying intervention. Disengaged educators blamed the victim and advised victims to stand up for themselves, which is not productive (Price & Dalgleish, 2010).

Referrers and disengaged educators comprised 91% of all teachers in this study, which indicated that most teachers do not handle cyberbullying effectively. The study also found that educators in combined roles, such as school counselors and principals, showed more concern for the victims who were cyberbullied. Therefore, it would be beneficial to tailor cyberbullying training for teachers and their specific needs (DeSmet et al., 2015). Concerned educators, who mainly comprised principals, school counselors,

and educators with combined roles, such as teachers and counselors, handled cyberbullying incidents more appropriately than subject teachers (Bauman et al., 2013).

The last cluster, referred to as "use all means educators," consisted of young educators who worked in smaller schools. They viewed cyberbullying as prevalent and highly problematic at their school and used a range of measures against cyberbullying. They also spoke with students and parents and did not ignore the cyberbullying incident. The study conducted by DeSmet et al., (2015) found that a large majority of school educators do not handle cyberbullying appropriately. Suggestions to address cyberbullying could be highly beneficial by focusing on the specific difficulties' educators have and by tailoring their training.

Student Disclosure of Cyberbullying to Teachers and Parents

There are significant challenges in relation to cyberbullying prevention and intervention, many of which owe to the decline of children and youth withholding disclosure. Victims of cyberbullying think that informing teachers and parents may do more harm than good because they feel that nothing is going to be done about it (Hanish & Guera, 2000). In reference to students' disclosure about being cyberbullied, (Newman, Murray, Lussier, 2001) add that a victim will only disclose to a teacher or parent when they can no longer stand being bullied and can no longer suppress negative emotions.

Regarding the gender and age of adolescents, Stauffer et al., (2012) found that female adolescents aged 9–12 were the most likely to inform a parent, with males aged 13–15 being the least likely to inform an adult. The researchers also advocate for finding an alternative way of responding to adolescents who cyberbully, as eliminating internet

use is not the best avenue to take. Further, a working relationship that includes teacher, parent, and school is suggested to combat cyberbullying. This is because everyone involved can benefit from additional support and guidance in handling cyberbullying.

However, there are also ways that recent technological advances can address cyberbullying more readily. According to Roberto, Eden, Deiss, Savage and Ramos-Salazar (2017) the installation of software regarding a child's internet use and restricting computer access and assisting a cyberbullied victim to file a complaint is made possible. The study found that after showing parents a cyber safety presentation, it increased their motivation to speak more about cyberbullying to their child, instructed them to save the cyberbullying evidence, avoid retaliation, and tell an adult and teacher about it. The importance of educating children, teachers, and parents about cyberbullying safety cannot be underestimated.

Lack of Standardized Definitions of Cyberbullying and Measurement

Selkie, Kota, Chan, and Moreno (2015) researched various peer-reviewed studies to locate and define the definition of cyberbullying. Some of the peer-reviewed literature that was examined were PubMed, PsycInfo, CINAHL Plus, and Web of Science. The search consisted of the United States population with adolescents aged 10–19. The search results yielded a total of 1,447 manuscripts, with only 81 manuscripts (representing 58 studies) meeting the inclusion criteria for cyberbullying. A major challenge faced by researchers relates to conceptualizing and defining cyberbullying (Tokunaga, 2010).

A lack of consensus around the world on the definition of cyberbullying has also led to varying prevalence rates. Perren, Corcoran, Cowie, Dehue, McGuckin, Sercikova,

and Vollink (2012) found that other problems in researching cyberbullying arise when cyberbullying is considered as one behavior, such as a single repetitive act, without exploring the other factors that contribute to cyberbullying. Thus, excluding multiple factors and the use of a non-standardized cyberbullying instrument can cause variations in outcomes (Berne, Frisen, Schultze-Krumbholz, Scheithauer, Naruskov, Luik, & Zukauskiene, 2013).

Teacher and Parent Legal Obligations to Cyberbullying

Farbish (2011) discussed the legal consequences aimed at teachers and parents who do not respond to students being cyberbullied. Although it is difficult to extend intervention beyond school hours, school policies on anti-bullying practices need to incorporate stricter disciplinary measures to protect cyber victims and prevent suicide. Even though states have enacted anti-cyberbullying statutes, Farbish et al., (2011) argue that legislators need to hold school officials responsible for failing to prevent and stop bullying from occurring. This includes having school officials file a report with the police. The lack of holding a cyberbully accountable enables the cyberbully to continue to victimize others. Also, holding teachers and parents responsible for the mandatory reporting of cyberbullying would also help to safeguard students from further harm. Farbish et al., (2011) found that even though state anti-bullying statutes vary, most states have three elements in common: (a) a concrete definition of bullying, or an identification of who will define bullying; (b) methods of how to report bullying; and (c) the consequences of bullying. Additional ways in which teachers and parents can promote cyberbullying intervention include implementing a whole-school approach, where

teachers, parents, and students can discuss their concerns and work together on cyberbullying intervention. Ostrander, Melville, Bryan, & Letendre (2018) found that there is a lack of ongoing support both during and after a cyberbullying event. The need for ongoing teacher and parent training in assessment of the problem and intervention of cyberbullying is lacking because most cyberbullying events are not followed up consistently, which thus gives the cyberbully more room to do further harm.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation chosen for the study is Bandura's et al., (1977) theory of self-efficacy. Bandura et al., (1977) proposed that the way in which an individual executes a specific activity is related to having the confidence to exert control over their individual motivation, behavior, and social environment. The theoretical propositions, according to Bandura et al., (1977), are related to one's own effort to make a change and to control one's environment. If a teacher or parent has high self-efficacy, their abilities to address cyberbullying are higher than if their self-efficacy to intervene in one is limited. The theory of teacher self-efficacy and cyberbullying intervention has been applied previously in ways similar to in the current study. For example, Gorsek and Cunningham (2014) found that there is an inconsistency in relation to student and teacher perception of self-efficacy in effectively handling a cyberbullying incident, and hence, the researchers advocate for more training. The rationale for the choice of teacher's self-efficacy in cyberbullying intervention is linked to the identification of whether teachers are self-directed to intervene in one or lack self-efficacy skills.

The selected theory relates to the present study because it can shed some light on whether teachers and parents in a middle school setting either strong or weak self-efficacy skills have to address cyberbullying. The research questions are aimed at building upon the existing theory regarding what strengths or weaknesses a teacher or parent has related to self-efficacy skills and perceptions of cyberbullying in their school.

Conceptual Framework

Alfred Bandura et al., (1977), a key theorist, emphasized that the role of self-efficacy determines one's ability to affect change in the process of social learning. If people are self-regulating and can make decisions that are beneficial, then they have control of their environment and can exercise better judgment than a person who has low self-efficacy. According to Bandura et al., (2001), the Social Cognitive Theory helps to explain how personal factors, which include a person's self-efficacy, influence their thoughts and actions.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

Many researchers have approached the problems surrounding teacher intervention in cyberbullying by examining teacher capability with varied outcomes. Students who considered their teachers as incapable of intervening in a cyberbullying incident had higher mean levels of cyberbullying frequency (Williford et al., 2013). The reason behind selecting the chosen variables is to determine whether teachers and parents view themselves as having the knowledge to intervene in a cyberbullying incident. Williford et al., (2013) found that teachers who does not promote anti-cyberbullying and intervention skills have frequent cyberbullying problems with their students. Teachers who implement

cyberbullying interventions are found to have fewer cyberbullying problems with their students.

Prior studies by Choi, Syawal, and Narawi, (2016) related to teachers' self-efficacy found that teachers that had the highest self-efficacy were those that were teachers for longer periods in their careers and had the greatest experience of dealing with it. The study also found that when teachers kept a log for further development regarding addressing a cyberbullying incident, it was most helpful in sharing their successes or failures with other teachers for input and feedback. This approach is crucial to identifying teacher self-efficacy traits that may be beneficial or dysfunctional in addressing either deficient cyberbullying strategies or efficient strategies. What remains to be studied, according to Choi, et al., (2016), is future research that includes a teacher's personality traits, which can affect teacher self-efficacy in addressing cyberbullying incidents. Aliyev and Gengec (2019) found that there are some deficiencies that prevent teachers from fully addressing a cyberbullying incident. These deficiencies are specifically related to lack of knowledge about technology. This disparity is also related to teachers' attitudes toward cyberbullying, a lack of understanding of internet computer technology (ICT), and poor teacher training. Additionally, further study on teacher's perception of cyberbullying in a middle school setting is advantageous, according to Huang and Chou et al., (2013), because school-wide collaboration and parental involvement is lacking. Other gaps in the literature are related to whether there is a difference between teachers and parents regarding cyberbullying intervention.

Summary

Some major themes found in the literature are related to whether teachers have a low or high self-efficacy in addressing cyberbullying incidents. Addressing a cyberbullying incident depends on the following three factors: (a) the level of a teacher's or parent's individual perception of the problems and self-efficacy skills, (b) past experiences that were or were not effective in addressing a cyberbullying incident, and (c) ongoing training about how to intervene effectively in a cyberbullying incident. What is well known about cyberbullying is related to what schools can do when there is a cyberbullying incident. What is not well known relates to how teachers feel, think, and what they do when cyberbullying is going on in their school (Choi et al., 2016). The present study can fill in at least one gap in the literature to extend the body of knowledge regarding teacher self-monitoring of their strategies on the effective outcomes to cyberbullying incidents and sharing these strategies with other teachers. Cyberbullying intervention strategies are still inadequate and ineffective among teachers in the primary grades, as indicated by Adzrieman et al., (2017). A teacher is accountable for ensuring that a student feels safe in the classroom. It is also important that a teacher and a parent take a stand for a student who is cyberbullied. Adzrieman et al., (2017) sought to examine teachers' self-efficacy on three scales when dealing with a cyberbullying incident. In their research, Adzriemann et al., (2017) studied three subscales regarding teacher self-efficacy when addressing a bullying incident: (a) Behavioral Self-Efficacy, (b) Cognitive Self-Efficacy, and (c) Emotional Self-Efficacy. The results of this study found that teachers do not have the experience to deal with cyberbullying, even though their

cognitive and emotional self-efficacy were found to be at a high level. However, from a behavioral self-efficacy standpoint, teachers were found to be unwilling to get involved and were reluctant to provide cyberbullying intervention because of a lack of experience. Furthermore, the researchers suggested that teachers and parents should be able to work together and provide feedback to each other when dealing with a cyberbullying incident. Further suggestions included ongoing cyberbullying intervention training and a support system in the school with other teachers and parents, which is lacking (Adzrieman et al., 2017). In sum, there is still a lack of effective teacher preparation and training to intervene in a cyberbullying event.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

This aim of this mixed method study was to explore whether differences in general self-efficacy (self-esteem) and perception of cyberbullying exist between middle school teachers and parents. Cyberbullying has commonly been defined as repeatedly using an electronic means to cause victims harm and may include derogatory rumors and postings about the victim (Kiriakidis & Kavoura, 2010; Tokunaga, 2010). The issue of traditional bullying, which usually involves face-to-face encounters, has expanded considerably following advances in electronic communications, where anonymity and wide public exposure have exacerbated the problem (Kiriakidis & Kavoura, 2010; Tokunaga et al., 2010). Although the literature concerning cyberbullying is vast and growing, there is a need to develop more effective practices for schoolteachers and parents to handle cyberbullying (Eden et al., 2012).

Individual self-efficacy may be a defining characteristic in how bullying situations are addressed. Researchers have suggested that having high self-efficacy motivates a teacher to address a cyberbullying incident (Boulton, Hardcastle, Down, Fowles, & Simmonds, 2014). The level of individual self-efficacy is relevant to this research because it aids in understanding how teachers' or parents' self-efficacy helps or hinders intervention in cyberbullying incidents. The research questions for this study were developed to obtain a better understanding of both teacher and parent responses to cyberbullying. Yilmaz (2010) found that most teachers regard cyberbullying as a problem, and many teachers reported they have little confidence in dealing with a

cyberbullying incident. A comparison of the perception of cyberbullying as a problem and willingness to intervene in a cyberbullying incident requires at least two elements: (a) teacher and parent perception and intervention of a cyberbullying incident, and (b) self-efficacy and the confidence to intervene in a cyberbullying incident, which is a predicting factor in intervening. My study addressed teacher perception and self-efficacy, including confidence to address cyberbullying, to determine if intervention was successful. One main problem is the lack of knowledge parents have about the online sites that children use to cyberbully others (Yilmaz et al., 2010). Parents can benefit from becoming knowledgeable about these online sites, and they can also learn about the technological changes and advances that frequently occur.

According to Elsaesser et al., (2017), most children experience cyberbullying outside of the school setting. The perceptions of parents and school staff regarding cyber victimization agree that cyberbullying intervention should include restrictions and the supervision of mobile phone use. However, Monks et al., (2016) found that there is a generation gap between students and parents, including school staff, regarding internet computer technology skills. In terms of parent and teacher self-efficacy in addressing cyberbullying, Lovegrove et al., (2013) found that there is only limited data regarding parents' self-efficacy in handling a cyberbullying incident; hence, future studies are required.

Wang, Wang, Fang, Jiang, Yuan, Tao & Su (2015) found that 27% to 41% of children and adolescents are involved in bullying. Recent studies have suggested that the problem of cyberbullying is more pervasive than face-to-face bullying and may be related

to the lack of teacher and parent skills to effectively intervene, thereby perpetuating the abusive cycle (Yoon et al., 2016). Because teachers and parents play a vital role in school safety, there is cause for concern if they are not working as an effective team to deal with the problem (Wang et al., 2015). Furthermore, Yoon et al., (2016) revealed that while teachers may be concerned, not all teachers are equipped to handle incidents of cyberbullying. Another problem emerges when teachers and parents lack a unified and clear understanding of where to draw the line when it comes to reporting cyberbullying behavior (DeSemet et al., 2015).

Herrera, Kupezynski, & Mundy, (2016) examined the impact of training on faculty in a middle school setting to focus on whether teachers are equipped to address a cyberbullying incident. My study also included seventh grade students and their perception of how cyberbullying is addressed at their school. The student data were then compared to teachers' perceptions of how cyberbullying was handled. The results revealed significant differences in view of the teachers' perceptions of it and how best to report it. For example, the researchers found that seventh grade students' scores were higher around their perceptions of cyberbullying and ways to report it compared to their teachers because teachers did not perceive cyberbullying as a problem (Herrera et al., 2016). Based on these findings, the researchers have advocated for a combination of interventions involving cyberbullying software in the school, having a stricter policy against cyberbullying and psychological interventions, and ongoing student, parent, and teacher training (Herrera et al., 2016).

This chapter addresses the selection of screening questions and standardized measures of self-efficacy, as well as the perceptions of teachers and parents concerning cyberbullying. The chapter includes statistical findings that measure how teachers and parents address cyberbullying and whether additional training is needed to address cyberbullying is needed.

Research Design and Rationale

The independent variables included teachers and parents. Two questionnaires for teacher and parent input were used. The intended questionnaires were obtained from Rigby's (1997) Peer Relations Assessment Questionnaire, Revised PRAQ-R (Appendix E), and Schwarzer's (1995) General Self-Efficacy questionnaire (Appendix F). The questionnaires focus on specific challenges of individual strengths and weaknesses to make decisions and address cyberbullying among adolescents. The dependent variables selected, which vary with the two independent variables, included perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying.

A cross-sectional design was used to facilitate the collection of information about the ability of teachers and parents to handle a cyberbullying incident, as well as their perceptions of the incident and individual self-efficacy. The results included the mean and probability of teachers and parents' preparedness or lack of skills to address a cyberbullying incident. According to Redmond et al., (2018), teachers still struggle with addressing and managing cyberbullying, especially in the domain at school, which includes a lack of family involvement, a lack of community involvement, and a lack of peer involvement.

The purpose of this online survey was to gather input from teachers and parents to examine their perception and self-efficacy about cyberbullying in the children's school and how they would address a cyberbullying incident (Hinduja & Patchin, et al., 2009). The selected online questionnaires were chosen because they offer a faster return, are more economical, and allow the teachers and parents to provide input from the convenience of their computer. The research design is consistent with research designs needed to advance knowledge in the discipline because the use of online questionnaire enables participants to answer questions in their home and gives participants an opportunity to voice their concerns about cyberbullying. The research design was a questionnaire format like the PRAQ-R, developed by Rigby, et al., (1997) and the General Self-Efficacy Questionnaire, developed by Schwarzer, et al., (1995). The questionnaires were not longitudinal.

The population sample was in a rural middle school setting in Lagrangeville, New York. The sample was drawn by use of SurveyMonkey, where teachers and parents were given the website to take the questionnaires. The sample size incorporated approximately 81 participants, 20 teachers and 61 parents. The instrument used was an adapted version of the PRAQ-R for teachers and parents developed by Rigby, et al., (1997) and the General Self-Efficacy Scale developed by Schwarzer, et al., (1995). The content areas addressed in the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire included general assessment, response to a cyberbullying incident, and overall control of a cyberbullying incident. The General Self-Efficacy Questionnaire also assessed the ability to manage and solve difficult problems.

Demographic information was also collected, including gender, grade taught, grade taught, highest educational degree, employment status. and ethnic background. The time frame given to the staff in the middle school to complete the questionnaire was 1 month. To analyze returns, the number of respondents was checked daily via Survey Monkey. To avoid response bias, an option to respond with *strongly disagree* was added to all questions on the survey.

A cross-sectional analysis of each questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS software. The research design had a cross-sectional design that was connected to the research questions to compare any differences between teachers and parents in their self-efficacy and perceptions of intervening in cyberbullying incidents. A descriptive analysis incorporated correlation, means, and standard deviation. Additionally, Bandura, et al., (1997) established a prevailing psychological theory of self-efficacy, which was defined as the ability to have confidence that one is prepared to achieve success at a given challenge. As self-efficacy may contribute to the perception of the knowledge and skilled interventions related to cyberbullying, this was designed to validate this assumption. Information was collected by identifying the sample population according to age, gender, education, job title, years of service, and the degree to which the participants had contact or took formal action with the victim(s) and perpetrator(s).

Self-efficacy was measured using one independent standardized questionnaire. One questionnaire conforms to teacher perceptions (self-ratings) of general self-efficacy (Schwarzer, et al., 1995), while the same questionnaire was made available to the parents. Perceptions of cyberbullying were also on the same questionnaire for the input of both

teachers and parents by use of the PRAQ-R developed by Rigby, et al., (1997). To apply an empirical methodology to identify and examine the differences between teachers and parents, the guiding research questions for the present research included the following hypotheses:

Research Question RQ1: Is there a difference in perception to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?

Ho1: There is no difference between teachers and parents in their perception to address cyberbullying.

Ha1: There is a difference between teachers and parents in relation to their perception to address cyberbullying.

RQ2: Is there a difference in self-efficacy to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents*?*

Ho2: There is no difference between teachers and parents in relation to their self-efficacy to address cyberbullying.

Ha2: There is a difference between teachers and parents in relation to their self-efficacy to address cyberbullying.

Methodology

The target population included teachers and parents of children in a middle school setting where students attend Grades 6 through 8. This developmental age group was chosen because there is a higher risk of relationship abuse among children who have not developed the necessary self-protective social skills (DeSemet et al., 2015). The sample consisted of 20 teachers and 61 parents. The power analysis was .80, and the effect size

was .30, which is small. Limitations on school personnel time and personal decisions to participate restricted the sample to a convenience sample. Encouraging school personnel to support and improve school policies for identifying and intervening in cyberbullying events contributed to empowering staff to intervene, as well as adding to a general scientific body of knowledge that is important to the psychological well-being of the middle school students.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The research strategy consisted of initially contacting a middle school principal who agreed to have his school participate in this study. Teachers and parents were asked by the principal to volunteer via email, school flyers, and verbal announcements at staff meetings. The school principal was provided with the website to distribute to the teachers and parents to complete the questionnaire online. Each teacher and parent were also asked to respond to two questionnaires, namely the PRAQ-R and the General Self-Efficacy Questionnaire.

The total number of teacher and parent items to be rated included 20 statements, and they were designed to take approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The questionnaires were administered from an online website, which were devised through Surveymonkey.com, and they were made available to the teachers and parents by the principal of the school. The inclusion criteria were limited only for the teachers' and parents' input. The exclusion criteria include teacher assistants, social workers, and school psychologists.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

1. The methodology flowchart consisted of four steps: An invitation was sent to the principal and selected administrators by email, asking them to participate in the study.
2. Participants were recruited for the study via e-mail, flyers, and school staff meetings. The flyer inviting staff to participate was given to the school principal. Written consent from all participants was presented online. The written consent was presented online before the participants could answer the questionnaires.
3. The school principal was contacted and given the website to distribute to his teachers and students' parents.

The following protocol was followed with respect to inviting the principal, teachers, and parents to participate. Personal contact was established with the principal of school at the study site. In face-to-face meetings with the principal, the rationale, purpose, implications, limitations, and benefits of conducting an objective, evidence-based study of cyberbullying were discussed. The principal was informed that the study did not involve students, but that it instead focused on how teachers and parents understood and were implementing interventions concerning student cyberbullying. The rating scales used to collect information about the qualifications and knowledge base of the teachers and parents concerning the control of cyberbullying in the school setting were shown to the principal. Time taken to complete the questionnaires, feedback after completion, and planned meetings and open discussion with teachers and parents were also carefully reviewed, with an agreement reached on feasibility, motivating teachers

and parents, and disseminating results and conclusions. In conversations with the principal, practical outcomes were emphasized to allow the school program to assess and improve the plan for effective and ethical methods of dealing with middle school student cyberbullying.

Data were collected by SurveyMonkey. The school principal distributed the online website through SurveyMonkey.com to the teachers and parents so there were fewer time constraints, thus making it more flexible for the teachers and parents. The informed consent was made available to the principal and was listed online prior to completing the questionnaire, detailing the focus of the research and future benefits gained from it. The principal of the school also distributed the consent form to teachers and parents who were interested in completing the online questionnaire. Where possible, some questionnaires were administered in group settings, such as scheduled school personnel meetings, special events, and teacher/staff breaks or lunch gatherings.

All participants were instructed to answer all questions independently. They were told that answers were not simply rated “right” or “wrong” but were instead subjected to summary and statistical methods and analysis. Time was allocated to answer any individual questions about the study. Participants were told how much time was allotted for completion of the questionnaires, and all forms were collected after a 1-month period of availability. The informed consent to participate in the study was listed before the participants took the online questionnaires.

The teachers and parents were administered the questionnaires, and informed consent was first obtained. The instruments used were from the PRAQ-R and the General

Self-Efficacy Questionnaires. Permission to use the instruments was obtained from the developers prior to using them.

Recruitment Via Email, Flyers, and School Staff Meetings

The researcher's contact information was available throughout the study in the event the principal, teachers, or parents had any questions about the study. In addition, a flyer announcing the study and details regarding the sign-up procedure was designed. The flyers and consent to participate in the study were placed in the teacher and administrative areas, as well as distributed in individual mailboxes at the school.

All responses were anonymous and coded without names or personal identification and were entered into an SPSS spreadsheet. The spreadsheet was statistically summarized (means and standard deviations), and tests of statistical significance between the two groups were applied. The SPSS software was used for analysis.

Written consent was obtained before the participants took the online questionnaires. The consent emphasized that the study was voluntary, and that names and personal information would not be required or recorded. All answers in the form of written and oral comments were noted and/or collected, with no identifying information other than the generalized study variables and basic professional background and roles of the teachers and parents. The standardized questionnaires were coded, but not matched with names or information not included in the study variable.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

The following psychometric tools have been selected to provide objective; empirical evidence of the research questions raised to address the problem of cyberbullying. Permission was obtained prior to use of the instrument. Each tool addresses reliability and validity.

PRAQ-R Peer Relations Assessment Questionnaire Revised for Teachers and Parents

For this study, Dr. Ken Rigby's et al., (1997) cyberbullying questionnaire was selected because it pertains to knowledge and awareness of school-based cyberbullying incidents, as well as teacher and parent responses, perceived school responses to cyberbullying, and the ability to take appropriate action. Use of the instrument was designed to gather data about how happy adolescents are at their school; how often, to the parent's knowledge, the adolescents have been cyberbullied or cyberbullied others; how the adolescents may have been affected by cyberbullying (for example, by avoiding the cyberbully and refusing to go to school); and a comments section at the end of the questionnaire that obtained suggestions about cyberbullying intervention. The instrument was specifically designed to measure whether a school is adequately prepared for cyberbully concerns. However, content or face validity was readily apparent, because the questions relate directly to the construct being measured, which included perceived responses to and self-efficacy regarding cyberbullying. For the purpose of my study, information obtained from the PRAQ-R and the General Self-Efficacy Questionnaire was made available to the administration at the conclusion of the study and may be repeated

following changes and improvements in policy, which were based upon initial or baseline findings.

The PRAQ-R served as one of the dependent variables of the study to provide an objective, measurable account of the teachers' and parents' perceptions in addressing the problem of cyberbullying. In addition, the total scores and all subscales were compared with the following measures of self-efficacy and perception to assess the relationship between the efforts of the parents and teachers in dealing with cyberbullying.

General Self-Efficacy Questionnaire

Self-efficacy was measured by a widely used and parsimonious 10-item scale that was developed for use in several cultures (Schwarzer, Babler, Kwiatek Schroder, & Zhang, 1997). Its purpose is to assess a general sense of perceived self-efficacy with the aim of predicting coping strategies with a variety of stressful events. The Self-Efficacy Questionnaire assessed the strength of an individual's beliefs in their ability to respond to a difficult situation. The scale consists of 10 items rated on a five-point Likert scale and took about 10–15 minutes to complete. The final score is a simple sum of responses with a range of 10 to 40. Each item was designed to reflect successful coping and the internal-stable attribution of success. A comparison of samples comprising 430 German, 959 Costa Rican, and 293 Chinese university students shows internal consistencies of .84, .81, and .91, respectively. In samples taken from 23 nations, Cronbach's alphas ranged from .76 to .90., with a majority in the high .80s (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). Concurrent and prognostic validity has been found with measures of depression, loneliness, anxiety, and a variety of personality traits. T-norms are also provided for high school students and

adult US populations (Schwarzer, 2009). An example of a question is as follows, "I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough." The response format included: 1 = *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *neither agree or disagree*, 4 = *disagree*, and 5 = *strongly disagree*.

The author granted permission to utilize and reproduce the scale in research, provided that appropriate recognition would be given regarding the source of the scale in the write-up of the scale.

Data Analysis Plan

The survey scales and the standardized scales will be scored for the total summation of the respective Likert ratings. These total scores were added, with the mean and standard deviations computed for each of the two experimental groups (teachers and parents). The SPSS software was used, and the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient was computed to assess internal consistency for all scales and subscales. The null hypotheses were: (a) There is no difference between teachers and parents in their perception to address cyberbullying, and (b) There is no difference between teachers and parents in relation to their self-efficacy to address cyberbullying. Independent t-tests were used to test the hypotheses and compare the two independent groups.

The way in which the data was screened by removing any errors found, and cross-checking data was accomplished by checking formatting for erroneous data and missing data on the SPSS spreadsheet from the descriptive output. The data plan proposed to address whether there were any perception differences, including self-efficacy, in the way teachers and parents respond to cyberbullying.

Research Question RQ1*:* Is there a difference in perception to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?

Ho1: There is no difference between teachers and parents in their perception to address cyberbullying.

Ha1: There is a difference between teachers and parents in relation to their perception to address cyberbullying.

RQ2: Is there a difference in self-efficacy to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?

Ho2: There is no difference between teachers and parents in relation to their self-efficacy to address cyberbullying.

Ha2: There is a difference between teachers and parents in relation to their self-efficacy to address cyberbullying.

To measure the collected data, the SPSS from an online questionnaire was employed by SurveyMonkey.com. The data output included measures of variance, mean, and standard deviation. Analyzing data and interpreting results were completed to test the hypotheses, which was used to determine whether the null hypotheses should be accepted or rejected.

Operationalization Definition for Each Variable

The operationalization definition of teacher and parent self-efficacy as it relates to the independent variable is defined as the belief in one's capabilities to achieve a goal by individual life experiences, self-direction, and self-esteem, and was measured by the General Self-Efficacy Questionnaire in the age range of 25–75. The operationalization

definition of perception to cyberbullying as it relates to the dependent variable is defined by how a teacher or parent perceives a cyberbullying incident and whether they choose to intervene or not. It also includes whether a teacher attempts to utilize their own expertise or training to address cyberbullying or seek additional assistance from other teachers. Each variable was measured by the teacher and parent Self-Efficacy Questionnaire and their perception of the problem by using the General Self-Efficacy and PRAQ-R questionnaires. The variables were calculated by the T-score. The outcome of the P-score analysis was used to determine whether to accept or reject the null hypothesis.

The variable score was calculated by descriptive statistics that included correlation, mean, and standard deviations. An example item is taken from Williford and DePaolis (2016), which included the recruitment of 252 school staff members, 91 noncertified and 161 certified staff, to determine which of the staff members would intervene in a cyberbullying incident. In doing so, Williford et al., (2016) used a seven-point Likert scale to measure the likelihood of intervention with cyberbullying from *very unlikely* to *highly likely.* Staff attitudes toward bullying were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from completely disagree to completely agree.

Self-efficacy beliefs of staff response to bullying on a five-point Likert scale with responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree were measured. Lastly, the perception of prevalence of teasing and bullying was measured using a five-point Likert scale with answers ranging from completely disagree to completely agree. Scores regarding the likelihood of intervention ranged from 13 to 49, with a mean of 39.99 (*SD* = 8.53). Additionally, the likelihood of intervention in cyberbullying incidents was

moderately correlated with staff status ($r = .43$, $p < .001$) and self-efficacy to intervene ($r = .60$, $p < .001$), while it was weakly correlated with attitudes toward victims ($r = .24$, $p < .001$).

Threats to Validity

In this study, some threats to internal validity may be predisposed to history, in which a time frame passes during the questionnaire and in which some participants do not complete the questionnaire. To address the social desirability bias, the questionnaires incorporated a response marked "prefer not to answer" and participants were made aware that answers collected would be anonymous and that there are no right or wrong answers. To address such internal validity, the participants were given a 1-month time frame to complete the survey. To address external validity, the outcome of the survey responses was specific to the chosen middle school without generalizing and comparisons to other middle schools. Additionally, only select teachers and parents from one Middle School were selected to participate in this study. A time frame of 4 weeks was given to complete the online questionnaires. There was no experimental variable or multiple treatment interferences.

Ethical Procedures

Because the community school setting is not a primary center for educational research, demands on teachers and parents time and appropriate practical incentives were considered. No names or personal identifying information were collected, to protect participant confidentiality. All information was collected using brief rating forms with a high-face validity. The final selection of subjects was voluntary, and feedback and

explanations of the rationale and questions asked was provided when requested. The survey does not require debriefing or any follow-up procedures.

My proposal was approved after being submitted to the Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB) on January 10, 2020, IRB number: 01-10-20-0229509. The study addressed ethical concerns in the following manner: by submitting the permission letter to the IRB given by the principal of the middle school, including an agreement from the principal, the teachers, and parents to participate in this study. The approved proposal was submitted with the IRB application. Together with the principal, all other ethical concerns that arose related to data collection, and intervention strategies were also addressed in the event a candidate refused to participate or withdrew from the study early, and only if the participant agreed to share their information.

There was no penalty for early withdrawal or refusal to participate in the study, and there was no monetary gain or compensation for participation in the study. All questionnaires were confidential, anonymous, and protected, by holding the information in a locked cabinet only accessible to the researcher. The administrative principal was also given access to the data, and the data will be destroyed within 5 years from the start date of the online survey.

Summary

My study examined the role of the psychological construct of self-efficacy as it relates to teachers' and parents' perceptions of cyberbullying. The research questions pertain to identifying how self-efficacy might enhance skills and attitudes in understanding and dealing effectively with cyberbullying. In addition, this study explored

the differences or marked contrasts between teachers and parents who are solely responsible for most daily interactions with children, as well as parents who set and enforce guidelines about appropriate internet use. The identification of discrepancies in either self-efficacy or perception about cyberbullying were particularly helpful in optimizing team efforts in addressing the unique and expanding problem of cyberbullying in schools. A quantitative research design was used to answer the hypotheses related to whether teachers' and parents' perceptions and self-efficacy contribute to intervention in a cyberbullying incident. The research site was a middle school located in the state of New York. An online questionnaire provided by SurveyMonkey.com allowed for the participants to answer Likert-type questions on the following two main domains: teacher and parent perception of cyberbullying in their school; and teacher and parent self-efficacy in addressing cyberbullying. Approximately 60 participants were invited to complete the survey, with the aim of 30 teachers' and 30 parents' input. There were discrepancies in the data collection regarding the number of participants. Outcome participation was 20 teachers and 61 parents. The data analysis tools used in this study included SPSS Statistical Software to generate findings. A descriptive analysis was used to generate tables along with other statistical indicators by using Likert scales. A quantitative approach was used to assess the significance between two or more variables of the study (Creswell, 2014). After collecting the data, it was analyzed, with the findings presented in full detail in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

I adopted a mixed method design. Data were obtained using an online questionnaire for teacher and parent input by use of a Likert format. The purpose of this mixed method study was to explore teachers' and parents' perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying in a middle school, in New York. I received approval to conduct my study from Walden University, on January 10, 2020 (Approval Number: 01-10-20-0229509). I began the study on February 3, 2020, and it ended on March 3, 2020. The recruitment for the study was offered only for teachers and parents. In this chapter, I present the research questions and explain the data collection process. I also present demographic and descriptive data gained from the sample population, as well as results and findings of the data analysis of the research questions, the study limitations, and the conclusion.

To test the first and second hypothesis, an independent *t* test was run assessing differences in cyberbullying perception and self-efficacy between teachers and parents. The results indicated that there was no difference between teachers and parents in perception or self-efficacy of cyberbullying, and the null hypothesis was not rejected.

I present data output for descriptive and demographic characteristics of the sample, which includes the number of teachers and parents who participated and the statistical findings to answer the hypothesis. I used SurveyMonkey.com to gather data from teachers and parents. The principal of the school invited teachers and parents to participate by sharing the website, which was placed in the teacher and parent school portals. I provided a 4-week period for parents and teachers to respond to the online

questionnaires. The recruitment and response rates were strong, owing to the flexibility for online participation. There were discrepancies in data collection from the plan that I presented in Chapter 3. These discrepancies are related to the number of participants who provided their input in the study. A total of 61 parents and 20 teachers participated in my study. There were more females than males, and the results lacked in inclusion of different ethnic backgrounds.

Data Collection

I recruited the sample from teachers and parents of students in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. The participants had 1 month to respond to the questionnaire. It was a self-selected sample of convenience, and response rates were stronger for parents (59%) than for teachers (27%). As soon as the school principal posted the questionnaire on the teacher and parent school portal, participants logged online. I used the questionnaire to determine teacher and parent perceptions and self-efficacy regarding a cyberbullying event. I used two questionnaires, one developed by Rigby, et al., (1997) and one by Schwarzer, et al., (1997). The two questionnaires are reproduced in Appendix I. There were discrepancies in data collection from the data collection plan as proposed in Chapter 3.

The sample demographics consisted of nine male teachers and 11 female teachers. There were eight male parents and 53 female parents who participated in the study. The highest teacher age group was 45 to 54 years, and the second highest age group was 35 to 44. The highest age group for parents was 35 to 54 and represented 47%. Caucasians represented the largest ethnic group amongst participants, with 85% for teachers and 87%

for parents. The lowest ethnic participation in the study was for African Americans, with only one parent, and three Hispanic parents. Sixty percent of teachers held graduate degrees, and 23% of parents held bachelor's degrees. The sample was not proportional to the larger population because it excluded additional middle schools. It was a convenience sample, and other school staff such as social workers and psychologists were also excluded.

Statistical Assumptions

The statistical assumption as it related to the research question "Is there a difference in perceptions to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?" was addressed with an independent *t* test. The assumptions were two independent groups that represented the independent variables (teachers and parents). The dependent variable (perceptions) was measured on a continuous Likert scale. There were no outliers for each group. Normality of the dependent variable was assessed with Shapiro-Wilke's test and was not violated for teachers (W (20) = 0.95, p = .393) or parents (W (60) = 0.07, p = .231). Homogeneity of variance was assessed with Levene's test, and there was no violation, F = 1.14, p = .289.

The second research question, "Is there a difference in self-efficacy to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?" was addressed using a *t* test. The assumptions were two independent groups that represented the independent variable (teachers and parents). The dependent variable (self-efficacy) was measured on a continuous Likert scale. There were no outliers for each group. Normality of the

dependent variable was assessed with Shapiro-Wilke's test and was not violated for teachers (W (20) = 0.97, p = .758) or parents (W (60) = 0.98, p = .537). Homogeneity of Variance was assessed with Levine's test and there was no violation, F = 0.39, p = .535. The results of the demographic outcomes are presented in tables one and two.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Teachers (n = 20)		Parents (n = 61)	
	N	%	N	%
Age				
25-34	2	10	3	5
35-44	5	25	28	47
45-54	9	45	28	47
55-64	4	20	1	2
	N	%	N	%
Gender				
Male	9	45	8	13
Female	11	55	52	87
	N	%	N	%
Ethnicity				
Hispanic or Latino/Latina	3	15	2	3
Caucasian	17	85	53	87
African American	0	0	1	2
	N	%	N	%
Education				
Less than HS	0	0	1	2
Some College	1	5	6	10
Associates	2	10	8	13
Bachelors	5	25	20	33
Graduate	12	60	26	43
	N	%	N	%
Employment				
Full time	17	85	38	62
Part time	3	15	11	18

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, and correlations of study variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
1. Age	3.53	0.71					
2. Gender	1.79	0.41	-.14				
3. Education	5.12	1.07	.26*	-.17			
4. Participant	1.75	0.43	-.18	.34**	-.15		
5. Perceptions of Cyberbullying	1.83	0.32	-.07	-.13	.02	-.19	
6. General Self-Efficacy	23.96	5.03	.03	.04	-.04	.15	.02

Note. M and *SD* are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively.
* Indicates $p < .05$. ** indicates $p < .01$.
Age: 1 = 18-24; 2 = 25-34; 3 = 35-44; 4 = 45-54; 5 = 55-64; 6 = 65-74; 7 = 75+
Gender: 1 = male; 2 = female
Education: 1 = Less than HS; 2 = HS Graduate; 3 = Some college no degree; 4 = Associates; 5 = Bachelors; 6 = Graduate; 7 = PhD
Participant: 1 = teacher; 2 = parent

The first questionnaire, known as the PRAQ-R questionnaire, was created by Rigby et al., (1997). The PRAQ-R is a 10-item Likert-type questionnaire that I used to measure the degree to which teachers' and parents perceive cyberbullying and how they would address it. The second questionnaire is the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire created by Schwarzer and Babler et al., (1997). The Self-Efficacy Questionnaire is a 10-item Likert-type questionnaire that measures self-efficacy to predict an individual's beliefs in their ability to respond to a cyberbullying incident. A total of 61 parents and 20 teachers provided their input. The sample population was 81. The participants included male and female classroom teachers who taught Grades 6 through 8. The student parents of the middle school also included male and female participants. More parents than teachers participated in the study. I used demographic information collected from the questionnaires to identify percentage of male vs female respondents, teacher and parent participation, grade taught, age between teacher and parent, highest degree of education between teacher, and parent, employment between teacher and parent, and ethnicity between teacher and parent**.** The sample was representative of the population of interest because my research was aimed primarily at teacher and parent input excluding other school staff and targeted at only one school**.**

I obtained survey information obtained from www.SurveyMonkey.com to analyze and determine the relationship between the independent variables (teachers and parents) and the dependent variable (self-efficacy and perception). Items on the Likert scale were coded as follows: 1 = *strongly agree*, 2 = *agree*, 3 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 4 =

disagree, and 5 = *strongly disagree*. See Appendix's E and F for parent and teacher questionnaires for perception and self-efficacy.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ1: Is there a difference in perception to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?

Ho1: There is no difference between teachers and parents in their perception to address cyberbullying.

Ha1: There is a difference between teachers and parents in relation to their perception to address cyberbullying.

RQ2: Is there a difference in self-efficacy to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?

Ho2: There is no difference between teachers and parents in relation to their self-efficacy to address cyberbullying.

Ha2: There is a difference between teachers and parents in relation to their self-efficacy to address cyberbullying.

Results

In regard to RQ1, "Is there a difference in perception to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?", there was not a difference between teachers and parents in their perception to address cyberbullying. For parents, (M = 17.9, *SD* = 3.31) and for teachers (M = 19.3, *SD* = 2.79), t (78), p = .094. In regard to research question 2, "Is there a difference in self-efficacy to address cyberbullying between teachers and parents?",

there was no difference in cyberbullying self-efficacy between parents (M = 24.38, *SD* = 4.92) and for teachers (M = 22.70, *SD* = 5.26), t (79) -1.30, p = .197.

The test for equality of variance showed that there was equal variance in the two groups, for perception, (F = 1.14, *p* = .289) and self-efficacy (F = 0.39, *p* = .535). Cronbach's alpha for perception was .56, and for self-efficacy was .75. The effect size was medium (.5). The Cronbach's alpha for perception was relatively low and could be related to the possibility of a questionnaire that was not robust or adequately measuring perception. There was no difference in cyberbullying perception between parents (M = 17.9, *SD* = 3.31) and for teachers (M = 19.3, *SD* = 2.79) t (78), *p* = .094. There was no difference in cyberbullying self-efficacy between parents (M = 24.38, *SD* = 4.92) and for teachers (M = 22.70, *SD* = 5.26), t (79) -1.30, p = .197. The results indicated that there is no difference between teachers and parents in perception and self-efficacy, and the null hypotheses are not rejected. Employment between teachers and parents was highest in full time work representing 67.90%. The highest percent of Caucasian teacher and parent participation was 90.12%. Hispanics represented 4.94% and African Americans represented 1.23% between teachers and parents. The sample was not representative of the population of interest, because it did not include enough participants from different ethnic groups, genders, educational backgrounds, employment, and age. A larger study that incorporates equal variables would be proportional to the larger population. The sample consisted of 81 participants. It is not proportional to the larger population because there were more females (80%) than males (20%), and more parents (88.89%) than teachers (12.35%). Input from other ethnic backgrounds were also limited.

Teachers with students in the seventh were the highest percentage at the middle school. The age range was highest between ages 45–54, with 46.25% of combined participants representing teachers and parents. A graduate degree was highest (48.15%), and 67.90% of participants worked full time. The sample was not representative of African Americans, Asian or Hispanic populations, with 90.12% of participants being Caucasian, the highest in my study.

I asked both teachers and parents to comment about their concerns related to cyberbullying and I collected 21 responses. The following responses are from teachers and parents who have identified cyberbullying as problematic and believed that they and the school are not certain of how to address it. Parents' and teachers' responses are coded as P = (parent) and T = (teacher) as follows:

P = "Boys will be boys; girls will be girls…I don't think we are addressing the issue as well as we could. I think we make excuses and not take enough action."

P = "I feel it is an important issue. I don't think my kids have faced it much yet, but I know it can happen at any time and come from any child even my own. Not sure all of the steps I would need to take if it does happen to my kids."

T = "Schools have to take a hard stance when kids are bullied and offer continuous year-round education."

P = "I guess I would look for a solution once I knew it was a problem, but I'm not sure I'd know if there was a problem."

T = "If a school is going to deal with cyberbullying, then it needs to be a zero-tolerance policy."

T = “Needs to be dealt with harshly so others think twice before attempting it.”

Although parents and teachers are aware of the societal problem of cyberbullying, they made valuable suggestions as follows

$ = “an anonymous way of reporting cyberbullying for both teachers and parents.”

P = “Bullying is rampant in our society today.”

T = “We need to know it when we see it, have an open and trusting dialogue with children so they do not feel that they have to hide everything that they are doing online. Many of us have read about this in the media and have seen the movies that depict cyberbullying. I would hope that both parents and students take it more seriously instead of saying, ‘Well that will never happen to me.’”

P = “There needs to be an anonymous way to report cyberbullying incidents both for students and parents. The kids often know about incidents but do not want to be a snitch. I think this would help end many cases. Often my children share stories of cyberbullying that they are not directly involved in but do not want me to report it because it would have extremely negative social implications. They should have an anonymous way to report it on their own.”

Parental awareness and limiting cell and computer time as well as keeping an open dialogue between parent and child is also beneficial in avoiding a cyberbullying event.

P = “My child is in the sixth grade, and she does not yet have a phone. She has a Chromebook for academics and has an iPod for some apps and texting friends. I read her

texts daily and my child is aware of this. I do not allow her to have Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, or Instagram accounts. Chromebook is allowed in her room, but her iPod is charged in the kitchen and use is restricted to the downstairs area of the house. I find these rules decrease issues exponentially. She may be getting a phone this year, but it will be monitored."

Some of the concerns both teachers and parents have about cyberbullying focus on poor communication between parent, teacher, and adolescent when cyberbullying occurs. Some adolescents are afraid to tell an adult and think they can handle it on their own.

P = "It's an issue that is affecting the society."

T = "Not all kids report when they are being bullied in fear others will take part, some kids feel it will go away or they can handle it. I think any type of bullying should be reported."

P = "I'm not always confident I will know when it is going on with my child."

T = "I am out of my comfort zone."

T = "As a parent and a teacher I believe that we are at a crucial time where limits for young people in their use of electronics is a job to teach as a parent. Many young people do not realize the power they have to influence, and possibly harm someone by issues like cyberbullying, and really do not know how what they can permanently affect someone. They need attention, are left to their own devices for too long and make many decisions about use and access to social media etc. without parent control because parents

don't really know how to deal with the issues because it is new enough to not have been an issue for them as young people."

A consistent theme found between teachers and parents is related to lack of ongoing cyberbullying training. Teachers and parents voiced an interest to work together when a cyberbullying event happens with a student. Working together would be beneficial in consistency and unity in addressing a cyberbullying event and eliminating pressure on the adolescent to try and deal with it on their own.

T = "My concerns would be the victim dealing with the bullying in silence and changes observed by others go unvoiced. Those children jump on the bullying bandwagon for peer acceptance and pressure."

T = "I do not feel the school is explaining how severe this is. Counseling is not the answer, parents have to monitor students on the internet and the school needs to punish students. Putting the two in the room to work isn't the answer."

T = "Cyberbullying happens so frequently. I am concerned about the lack of empathy many teens have toward one another. This type of bullying lends itself to lack of empathetic feelings because you can post anything (that may emotionally destroy someone) without ever having to look into that person's eyes."

$ = "I'm concerned that this is a much bigger issue than we are aware of."

$ = "I am overly concerned about cyberbullying but other than checking my kid's texts and emails, etc. I am unsure as to ALL the ways it can happen. Also, I am unsure how the administration handles cyberbullying because I have seen no examples of how they have handled any incidents, nor have I seen any reporting on any incidents."

P = “As a parent I think more education for both the teachers, parents and victims cyberbullying would be helpful.”

P = “I feel that it is not always addressed and that it is happening more and more.”

T = “I have yet to encounter it in my special education setting, but I am interested in learning more. I know it is an issue for our student’s age group.”

T = “Social media and cell phone use has gotten out of control AT SCHOOL. It is a huge distraction academically and socially. Awful. I respect that every home and family dynamic have different rules. School is in a powerful position to solve many of these issues with restrictions in the school setting and it is sad they do not.”

Summary

In determining whether teachers and parents differ or are similar in reference to perception and self-efficacy in addressing a cyberbullying event, the null hypotheses were supported by statistical analysis that proved there were no differences between teachers and parents in their perception and self-efficacy of a cyberbullying event. The similarity found in this middle school provides directions for future study in further understanding the elements that comprise perception and self-efficacy between teachers and parents and the possibility of combining the two for future cyberbullying intervention. One main component of this study found that there is a lack of communication between teachers and parents when a cyberbullying event occurs. Additionally, teachers and parents want to work together in a common goal of addressing a cyberbullying event and one that this school could benefit from. The second major theme found in this mixed methods study is the interest for both teachers and parents to

receive joint cyberbullying training, as both groups commented on deficiencies on how to successfully address one.

The sample consisted of 81 participants. Overall, there were more parents (88.89%) than teachers (12.35%). In this case, there was an unequal number of teachers. There also were more females (80%) than males (20%). The sample was not representative of different grades, because 47.50% of teachers taught in the seventh grade, eighth grade teachers representing only 35%.

The highest age range of teacher and parent participation was between 45 and 54 (46.25%) with the lowest age range of 25 to 34 and second highest age range of 35 to 44. Between teacher and parent education, a graduate degree was the highest with 48.15%, followed by a bachelor's degree, with 30.86%, and lastly an associate degree, with 11.11%. The lowest in education was some college but no degree (8.64%) and a high school degree or equivalent (1.23%). The employment status between teacher and parent was full time at 67.90% with part time and other at 16.05%. There was large number of Caucasian participants, at 90.12%, which included teachers and parents. The Hispanic population that represented teachers and parents was low at 4.94%, with 2.47% of participants preferring not to answer and 1.23% of African Americans. There were no Asian or American Indian representatives in my study. The study was unable to identify a relevant sample size of Hispanic, African American, and Asian teachers and parents. A larger sample size that includes these ethnic groups would provide additional information.

The following results were found: the null hypotheses were not rejected for both teacher and parent perception of a cyberbullying incident and for self-efficacy of a cyberbullying incident. In this study both teachers and parents had positive responses to a cyberbullying incident and felt comfortable in addressing one, asking for administrative help in their school, and felt that both teachers and parents should work together to address a cyberbullying incident. The comments from both teachers and parents reflected mixed reviews in that some parents are not sure how to handle a cyberbullying incident and are in line with teachers feeling that more training is needed to address a cyberbullying incident. Both teachers and parents agree that cyberbullying is harmful and needs to be better handled both at home and in school. Perception and self-efficacy are a quality that we all use when faced with any situation. It dictates how we react to any given problem. According to Bandura's et al., (1977) Social Cognitive Theory, a person either has low self-efficacy or high self-efficacy, which is also related to a person's self-esteem. The results of the study showed that both parents and teachers had high self-esteem, could perceive a cyberbullying incident as one that needed intervention, and were willing to work jointly with one another. In my study it would be advantageous if both teachers and parents worked together whenever a cyberbullying incident occurs at the Middle School. Chapter 5 will compare what my study has found and what is current in the literature about teacher and parent perception and self-efficacy in addressing a cyberbullying incident.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this mixed method study was to explore whether there were differences between teachers and parents in their perception and self-efficacy when addressing a cyberbullying incident. The study design was a mixed method. The nature of the study consisted of teachers who taught at a middle school for students in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades that included the parents of the students. The parents of the middle school students were invited to share their input about how they perceived cyberbullying and how they would intervene in one. This study was conducted because there continues to be discrepancies between teachers and parents and how they perceive and use self-efficacy to address a cyberbullying incident (Campbell, Whiteford, & Hooijer, 2019).

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings from the mixed method study revealed that there was equal variance in the two groups, for perception ($F = 1.14$, $p = .289$) and self-efficacy ($F = 0.39$, $p = .535$). The effect size was medium, at .5. Cronbach's alpha for perception was .56, and for self-efficacy .75. The Cronbach's alpha for perception was relatively low and could be related to the possibility of a questionnaire that was not robust or adequately measuring perception. There was no difference in cyberbullying perception between parents ($M = 17.9$, $SD = 3.31$) and for teachers ($M = 19.3$, $SD = 2.79$) t (78), $p = .094$. There was no difference in cyberbullying self-efficacy between parents ($M = 24.38$, $SD = 4.92$) and for teachers ($M = 22.70$, $SD = 5.26$), t (79) -1.30, $p = .197$. The results

indicated that there is no difference between teachers and parents in perception and self-efficacy, and the null hypotheses were not rejected.

The study confirmed two outcomes: (a) Teachers and parents agreed that working together to address a cyberbullying event would be the most beneficial, and (b) teachers and parents are interested in learning about cyberbullying intervention and training and felt that this was lacking, as well as a poor response in addressing cyberbullying in their middle school. One suggestion for improving cyberbullying training is gathering teacher and parent cyberbullying interventions that have been successful and sharing them in a cohesive effort at building upon successful cyberbullying interventions. Builis, Miedes & Oliver (2019) found that cyberbullying intervention was more effective when teachers and parents provide their concerns. Additionally, the researchers found that cyberbullying training for teachers and parents is essential because it provides a cohesive approach toward addressing it and can develop prevention programs. The cyberbullying intervention programs that are most effective are those that teachers and parents implement (Gradinger et al., 2017). Another area that was found to be deficient in effective cyberbullying intervention is lack of a uniform approach and an ongoing system of evaluating successful interventions. In support of this, Macaulay, Betts, Stiller, & Kellezi (2018) found that teachers who had cyberbullying training improved their perception of it and increased intervention strategies.

Additionally, the findings disconfirmed the lack of teacher and parent perception and self-efficacy in a cyberbullying event. In fact, I found that teachers and parents perceived and used self-efficacy skills that were similar in addressing cyberbullying.

Regarding teacher and parent views about cyberbullying intervention at the middle school, 74% wanted to help the victim and 69% strongly agreed that teachers and parents should work together, and a cohesive approach can improve cyberbullying intervention. The social learning theory defined by Bandura et al., (1979) is a theoretical model that can teach others and share experiences in which people can effectively help each other in times of trouble. The study confirmed that teachers and parents want to support each other and learn more about cyberbullying interventions that are effective. To incorporate a social learning theory and cyberbullying intervention strategy, teachers and parents can collaborate on what they have found to be successful as well as what was unsuccessful and implement a cohesive anticyberbullying approach. In addition, teachers and parents felt that fostering a positive rather than a negative school environment is also important. A positive school climate and teachers and parents who nurture children produce fewer cyberbullying events. Students who feel that their teachers and parents care about them and support them display more positive behaviors and peer interaction than those who do not (Geringer & Wu, 2014).

One of the questions asked of teachers and parents in the study was the following: "Do you feel a nurturing and supportive stance is more effective than a punitive one when addressing a cyberbullying event?" Seventy-three percent agreed and 22% strongly agreed, 4% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 1% disagreed. Regarding how teachers and parents viewed helping a cyberbully and avoiding punishment, 57% strongly agreed that helping a cyberbully and avoiding punishment is the right thing to do. One comment provided by a teacher in my study was:

> "Cyberbullying happens so frequently. I am concerned about the lack of empathy many teens have toward one another. This type of bullying lends itself to lack of empathetic feelings because you can post anything (that may destroy someone) without ever having to look into that person's eyes."

Regarding building empathy with others, Venter et al., (2013) suggested that a cyberbully should be held accountable for their actions and learn how to develop empathy toward others. Other areas that were found to be deficient in cyberbullying intervention were reported to be lack of training. The study disconfirmed effective cyberbullying intervention strategies. Although teachers and parents had strong perception and self-efficacy skills in identifying cyberbullying events, they did not identify an effective way of addressing one. Regarding successful intervention at the middle school, 62% of teachers and parents neither agreed nor disagreed that the school had successful interventions for student cyberbullying. This confirms that more than half of the teachers and parents were neutral regarding how their school addressed cyberbullying. Other findings regarding things that were lacking for successful cyberbullying intervention at the middle school were related to poor communication between teacher and parent when such an event does occur. In fact, 69% of teachers and parents communicated the need for making improvements in working together on one. One specific deficit is the lack of incorporating a whole-school approach where teachers, parents, students, and community work together to improve intervention, which is the most effective approach (Espelage & Hong, 2017). A recent study by Aizenkot and Kashy-Rosenbaum (2018) found that school-based anticyberbullying programs work and

reduce cyberbullying. One program that was found to be effective in preventing cyberbullying is called the Safe Surfing anticyberbullying program. The focus of the Safe Surfing program is to empower students and teach appropriate social network use and build self-esteem. Cyberbullies are mostly students who have low self-esteem (Ranney & Troop-Gordon, 2020).

When students have low self-esteem and lack empathy toward others, teaching prevention skills at school and in the home helps to build self-esteem and empathy (Brewer & Kerslake, 2015). My study extended knowledge in the discipline by identifying differences between parents and teachers on perception and self-efficacy. Future studies in perception and self-efficacy about individual capabilities could be beneficial when people share individual strengths or weaknesses so that additional knowledge and improvements can be made.

Another concern that teachers and parents had at the middle school was related to how the school addresses a cyberbullying event, with both agreeing that the school should have a stricter anticyberbullying policy. In support of cyberbullying intervention policy, Zavoianu and Panisoara (2020) found for schools to develop rules and strict policies on cyberbullying and consequences for students who do not comply with informative workshops that parents could attend and structure as a team effort. One anticyberbullying approach could be structured with teachers', parents' and students' input and follow-up of an event. One of the biggest problems when a student is cyberbullied is a lack of follow-up to see if the situation was addressed and if it was resolved. A suggestion from a teacher at the middle school was to offer students an

anonymous online platform for victims, perpetrators, teachers, and parents who need support and assistance in a cyberbullying event.

From a societal standpoint, teachers and parents thought that cyberbullying continues to be problematic. They suggested that an open dialogue can offer a unified cyberbullying approach and intervention strategy. The teachers and parents at the middle school disconfirmed that there is a lack of perception and self-efficacy skills in addressing a cyberbullying incident. This may be because ongoing media awareness of cyberbullying continues to exist, and schools are required to have cyberbullying policies.

This study extended knowledge in the discipline in the following ways: (a) Teachers and parents agreed that working together and improving communication is important, (b) Hinduja and Patchin (2016) suggested that improvements are needed with teacher and parent involvement when addressing cyberbullying event, and (c) providing anonymous student reporting of a cyberbullying event promoted by teachers and parents can be more effective. A collaborative effort between teachers and parents is lacking and corresponded with Chen et al.'s (2017) associated factors related to schools that do not encourage cyberbullying involvement between teachers and parents. Promoting and offering anonymous cyberbullying reporting could also decrease emotional pressure for the student to get help and avoid dealing with it themselves. Chen et al., (2017) found that there were no differences between teachers' and parents' perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying. The findings confirmed that there is a common understanding about the serious nature of cyberbullying at the middle school. However, teachers and parents identified a weakness in collaborating intervention strategies. Teachers and parents

agreed that collaboration of cyberbullying intervention would be beneficial if ongoing communication were consistent. The teachers were not consistent in contacting a parent when a student was cyberbullied. This finding is especially important because it excludes the student, parent, and teacher from fully collaborating in cyberbullying intervention and perpetuates fragmentation of effective intervention. The most effective cyberbullying intervention incorporates teacher, parent, and student collaboration (Larranaga, Yubero, & Navarro et al., 2018).

Overall, teachers' and parents' perception and self-efficacy were similar and held good standards in intervening in a cyberbullying event and had good perception and self-efficacy in cyberbullying intervention. Having good perception and self-efficacy is also a starting point for building a foundation in effectively addressing such an event at the middle school. Self-efficacy is unique to every individual. Self-efficacy is defined as the ability to make decisions with certainty that would offer beneficial outcomes in assisting others (Bandura, et al., 1997). Having high rather than low self-efficacy offers increased success for an individual to address a challenge (Bandura, et al., 1977). Future research aimed at specific abilities a teacher, parent, and student can use for effective cyberbullying intervention can offer valuable insight (Malm et al., 2017). The conceptual framework used to interpret the findings in this study was the social learning theory conceptualized by Bandura, et al., (1977). This theory is applicable to how individuals learn and think from others. It also posits those individuals who learn from each other will react to situations in similar ways. The teachers and parents in my study displayed similar reactions and approaches to a cyberbullying event.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations to the study were related to sampling bias, as only a selection of teachers and parents were invited to participate in the study, excluding other school staff. The selection bias in the study limits generalizability. The low reliability related to perception and Cronbach's alpha of .56 can be accounted for due to items that were found to be duplicated and removed, which affected statistical outcomes. The sample contained more parents than teachers that participated in my study. There were also more females than males, which significantly affected gender input. Secondly, other ethnic backgrounds lacked sufficient participation, which did not represent the larger population compared to Caucasian participants. Hispanic, African American, Asian, and American Indians were not equally represented in the study. Most participants had graduate degrees. Limitations to generalizations were also related to teacher and parent perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying in one middle school excluding additional middle schools. Thirdly, input was collected only from teachers and parents, excluding other staff such as social workers, psychologists, nursing staff, and guidance counselors, who could have provided additional input.

Recommendations

The strength of the study offered an avenue for teachers and parents to express their perception and self-efficacy related to cyberbullying and insight gained from it to compare similarities or differences. Future research is encouraged on a larger representative sample of middle schools in different states and countries, about teacher and parent perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying. Some weaknesses of the study

were that it did not incorporate additional school staff, and student input. Teachers, parents, and students should share and collaborate recommendations for cyberbullying interventions without lapsing in follow-up and outcomes of intervention. Incorporating consistent cyberbullying training and collaborative intervention for teachers and parents would be highly beneficial and should be a requirement in schools. Avoiding outreach and communication about a cyberbullying incident between parents and teachers is a major issue and can only be improved if teachers and parents work together. Parents should be held accountable for monitoring their child's internet use, with specific fines set at the state level that can be automatically reported to officials. A school curriculum for students about cyberbullying awareness, legal implications and reporting should be a mandate for all schools. Internet filters are constantly developed to alert and stop threatening messages from being sent or accepted to an internet user. Deep talk and Rethink which are the most current of these filters. These filters alert, stop and discard messages that are offensive. Rethink app alerts the user and gives them time to rethink sending or posting offensive words (Source: www.discoverdatascreens.org).

Teachers and parents need ongoing cyberbullying education and training. Teachers, parents, and students can work together and provide cyberbullying intervention, and can develop and create training to address it. Another approach to cyberbullying training should be offered by the school district, which should be mandated and on a continuum. The training is important because social media platforms are constantly changing, and teachers and parents need to keep updated on current trends.

Implications

The implications of my study for positive social change at the individual level is awareness and concern for effective cyberbullying intervention gained from teachers and parents. The theoretical implication of the study identified similarities between teachers and parents related to perception and self-efficacy aligned with Bandura's et al., (1977) social learning theory. The teachers and parents displayed a strong interest to work together, shared how they would address a cyberbullying evet, and support the student. The teachers and parents were also concerned for the student's emotional well-being and realized how damaging cyberbullying is. Teachers and parents should be encouraged to collaborate a systematic approach to intervene in a cyberbullying event and should not address one in isolation. Reaching out to one another to address a cyberbullying incident is one key component of social change. At the individual level, the teacher and the parent need to join forces and intervene for a student who has been cyberbullied. Anti-cyberbullying education would be most effective when it is a required part of a student's school curriculum.

The implications for positive social change at the family level were related to interest from parents to collaborate intervention strategies with teachers. A student who has been cyberbullied can best be assisted when the parents are involved. When guardians are not involved in their child's well-being and education, the chances of cybervictimization increases. As a social change agent, I will encourage the superintendent at the middle school to enhance their cyberbullying intervention policy to

incorporate parental inclusion with ongoing assessment of the intervention for effectiveness.

The implication for positive social change at the organizational level is directed at making changes in cyberbullying school policies and the need to increase teacher and parent responsibility and commitment in helping a student who has been cyberbullied. Some suggestions on making improvements and acquiring new intervention approaches are to have a school-based mentoring program; open forums that give students, teachers, and parents a place they can come together to voice their concerns and offer suggestions for making improvements; and teach problem-solving strategies so students, teachers and parents can learn how to navigate through difficult situations.

Further implications of this study for positive social change are related to the teachers and the parents who were interested and motivated to collaborate and make improvements in cyberbullying intervention at their school. The teachers and parents were similar in their perception and self-efficacy skills of a cyberbullying event and demonstrated concern for the well-being of the individual. The teachers and parents felt that incorporating cyberbullying intervention input from the individual, family and community could have a potential impact for positive social change. The second suggestion that teachers and parents offered to advance cyberbullying intervention skills was the need for ongoing training. The ongoing training was related to having both a teacher and parent present. Cyberbullying intervention lacks a cohesive and collaborative approach. Often teachers, parents, students, and the community do not know how to intervene and need training and direction to collaborate with others.

Without an effort from teachers, parents, students, and the community to learn about effective intervention in a cyberbullying event, cyberbullying intervention will remain unsuccessful (Yang, Chen, Lin, & Chan, 2021). Future studies are required that examine how negative cyberspace interactions influence a perpetrator and a victim cognitively and coping skills in response to cyberbullying. The teachers and parents in the study voiced an interest to acquire cyberbullying training because they were not sure about how to handle such events. This is unfortunate because it shows a lack of training and education that is needed to prevent and intervene in a cyberbullying event.

The potential impact for positive social change can occur when each affected family, school, and community becomes a cohesive unit that is dedicated to searching for an effective cyberbullying approach. The main problem with effective cyberbullying intervention is that it remains fragmented. It is fragmented because there is no one approach to it and because each cyberbullying situation is different and ever-changing, with new and rapid technology for the upgraded cell phone and computer. The designers of the new technology need to consider the damaging effects that cyberbullying causes and find ways to stop it. If future technology does not find ways to stop cyberbullying, this can make the situation worse and perpetuate cyberbullying events (Yang et al., 2021). Other theories that can be applied to study cyberbullying are the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Theory of Reasoned Action. The Theory of Planned behavior as it relates to cyberbullying predicts that a cyberbully has planned who he or she will victimize. What components entail the planning would give some information on

preventing it. The Theory of Reasoned action postulates that the relationship between attitude and behaviors are shared between others.

Conclusions

Cyberbullying continues to be a major problem around the world. Although research continues, it is still addressing ways to find effective intervention. This study offered insight for future research to focus on why there is fragmentation between teacher and parent regarding communicating when a student is cyberbullied and the lack of continued assessment of the cyberbullying intervention made. The positive outcome from the study about teacher and parent perception and self-efficacy of cyberbullying in a middle school setting is awareness of the problem and requests from teachers and parents to collaborate and communicate about the event when it occurs. The middle School provided good insight on teachers' and parents' perception and self-efficacy about cyberbullying with an interest to learn more about intervention practices. The study outcomes were promising, because this school appeared to have the motivation to do something about it.

Additionally, the study was encouraging because it found that teachers and parents do care about the well-being of students and desire to help them. This middle school can develop programs and invite other local middle schools to share what they know and have learned about cyberbullying intervention. They can also obtain insight from other schools that also have cyberbullying issues and discuss collaborative intervention strategies that are a part of their school meetings. This study offered valuable insights between teachers and parents related to promising interests in collaborating

cyberbullying intervention. The impetus for a unified and collaborative approach to cyberbullying intervention between teachers and parents showed a positive outcome to moving forward in the future contributing to social change.

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Appendix A: School Flyer: Stop Cyberbullying

An online questionnaire is offered for Teachers and Parents for your input at your school. The study is entitled: “Teacher and Parent Perception of Cyberbullying in a Middle School Setting.” Who can participate in the online Questionnaire? Only Teachers and Parents. If you are interested in providing your input in this valuable study, please contact the researcher directly at XXX or e-mail me at XXX@waldenu.edu

WHY is it beneficial to participate in the Cyberbullying study?

By providing your input and your concerns about cyberbullying, improvements in cyberbullying prevention and response can be obtained. This study allows for an opportunity to voice your concerns, extend future research on cyberbullying and improve communication between teachers, parents, and students for a cohesive approach to cyberbullying intervention.

NOTE: There is no penalty for not participating in the study as it is voluntary

The website to take the questionnaires is: www.surveymonkey.com/r/381D6Q7

Offered through Survey Monkey

Appendix B: Permission to use the PRAQ-R from Dr. Rigby

Kenneth Rigby <XXX@unisa.edu.au>

Dear Jacqueline:

Sorry to hear of your difficulties in contacting me. I think there may be some error needing fixing on the site. Will try to get it fixed.

Please feel free to use the PRAQ-R for your dissertation. If you need a more formal letter, please let me know. I hope the statement above will be adequate

Appendix C: Letter to Dr. Schwarzer for use of the General Self-Efficacy Questionnaire

From: [xxx@waldenu.edu]

Sent: Tuesday, September 26, 2017, 18:49

To: Schwarzer, Ralf

Subject: General Self-Efficacy Questionnaire

Good afternoon:

I am a Graduate student at Walden University.

My research is about teacher and parent perception and self-efficacy on cyberbullying. I am writing to get permission on using the questionnaire from you and would need permission in writing. Please let me know as soon as possible.

Thank you so much. xxx@waldenu.edu

Appendix D: Permission from Dr. Schwarzer to use the General Self-Efficacy Questionnaire

Schwarzer, Ralf xxx@fu-berlin.de

Yes

Prof. Dr. Ralf Schwarzer

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Appendix E: Questions about Perception

10 questions about perception, for teacher and parent input:

1. Cyberbullies enjoy upsetting other people.
2. Helping a cyberbully and avoiding punishment is the right thing to do.
3. Students who are cyberbullied should deal with it themselves.
4. Victims of cyberbullies should be helped by adults.
5. Both teachers and parents can better address cyberbullying incidents together.
6. I perceive cyberbullying to be a serious problem and I would intervene.
7. I would try to stop a cyberbully when I am aware of it.
8. I am aware of the legal implications of cyberbullying.
9. I think my school has been successful in addressing student incidents of cyberbullying.
10. I think training on cyberbullying intervention skills is needed for both teachers and parents.

Appendix F: Questions about Self-Efficacy

10 questions about self-efficacy for teacher and parent input.

1. I am sure I know the difference between cyberbullying and teasing.
2. I am confident I can deal effectively with a cyberbullying event.
3. If I perceive a cyberbullying event, I feel I have the necessary skills to address it.
4. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
5. I feel a nurturing and supportive stance is more effective than a punitive one
6. when addressing a cyberbullying event. I feel enhancing a child's self-efficacy can help in reducing a cyberbullying incident.
7. I think having positive self-efficacy skills is important in addressing a cyberbullying incident.
8. I feel I have the necessary skills to navigate through the school administration to receive support when a cyberbullying incident occurs.
9. I feel confident in collaborating with a school meeting to address a cyberbully incident.
10. I feel I am resourceful and know how to work with outside agencies such as With law enforcement.

Appendix G: Cyberbullying Website

Source: Cyberbullying.com