

2018

Parent Aggression Level as a Predictor of Attitudes toward Bullying

John Bradley
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Counselor Education & Supervision

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John C. Bradley

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Walden University
2018

Abstract

Parent Aggression Level as a Predictor of Attitudes toward Bullying

By

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M.A., University of Oklahoma, 1992

B.A., University of Oklahoma, 1991

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Counselor Education & Supervision

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October 2018

Abstract

The focus of this study was on parents of elementary and middle school age children and how the variables of age, gender, and level of education influence their attitudes toward bullying. The gaps in literature support the notion that additional empirical research on the different sociological factors that influence, support, and encourage bullying is required. The purpose of this study was to determine if parental level of aggression, as measured by the Modified Overt Aggression Scale, can predict a parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the Parental Attitudes to Bullying (PAB) scale. In addition, this study investigated whether other factors such as age, gender and level of education influence parental attitudes toward bullying. A convenient sample of 84 parents from parents teachers organizations' of elementary and middle schools in a school district in Midwestern Oklahoma was used. A multiple regression analysis was used within a correlational survey design to determine if a predictive relationship between the four variables and the constant exist. No significant relationships were found. A *t* test analysis was run between the PAB scale and the gender variable and indicated a small mean difference. The recommendations for future research include (a) exploring the effect of the sociocultural environment of families on the development of aggressive behaviors of children, (b) identifying parental characteristics that contribute to low sympathy toward bullying and high anger profiles, and (c) comparing income levels of parents who participate in bullying studies. The implication for social change that this study supports is to create initiatives for educating the public regarding risk factors for parents that may lead them to contribute to aggressive behaviors in children.

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Dedication

This research study is dedicated to all the children and families that have been affected by bullying. The affects that are long carried after the incidents are over have not been overlooked. There are people who care; counselors, teachers, principals, neighbors, and pastors who are all striving to make sure no other child or family will ever have to deal with these painful experiences again. I hope that this study can be a catalyst to uncover better ways of coping and intervening.

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I first want to thank my family and committee members for helping me get through this tremendous journey. To my wife Diedre, my personal motivational speaker, without your love and support I would not have ever made it. You gave me strength and encouragement every single day which enabled me to keep going even when I felt like giving up. I want to thank my children, Megan and Madison, for their sacrifice of giving up time with dad so that he could realize his dream. Those times when I had stayed up all night doing homework, you both were always understanding and allowed dad to rest undisturbed after school. Thank you to my mom Margaret Bradley, my aunt Mary Nobles, and my wife's mother Deborah Draper, for always believing in me and my ability to accomplish this goal. I hope I have made you proud.

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To my committee members, Dr. Jason Patton and Dr. Wynn Dupkoski, thank you for helping me get over the finish line. You stayed with me on this course and provided me with insightful feedback and unwavering encouragement. It is also because of you both that I am able to enjoy this moment.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction to Bullying and Aggression

Waasdorp, Bradshaw, and Duong (2011) have defined bullying as repeated, intentional, aggressive behaviors that are marked by an imbalance of power that occurs in the context of interpersonal relationships including physical and nonphysical behaviors, such as teasing, calling names, rumor or gossip spreading, or social exclusion. Another team of researchers shared that the definitions of bullying have varied; however, to be considered bullying, it must include behaviors that are injurious to another person, occur repeatedly over time, and occur within a context in which the perpetrator has a distinct advantage over the victim (Renshaw, Hammons, & Roberson, 2016). Bullying is a health problem that is affecting children and adolescents worldwide and has caused researchers to take attention due to the long-term damaging effects. As much as 25% of school-age youth experiences childhood bullying and causes up to 160,000 missed school days per year (Hensley, 2013). The victims of bullying are affected long after the episode has ended. Powell and Ladd (2010) posited the effects bullying has on victims may include feelings of shame, depression, embarrassment, insecurity, low self-esteem, and school phobia. The amount of trauma suffered by both the bully and victim can lead to emotional problems well past the traumatic event (Lemstra et al, 2011; Powell & Ladd, 2010). Effects identified for the bully are poor school performance, use of drugs or alcohol, and perhaps involvement in gangs (Powell & Ladd, 2010). In Chapter 1, I introduced supporting evidence of a social problem, research questions and recommended hypotheses. Moreover, I introduced the conceptual framework of social learning theory to better understand this phenomenon. Lastly, I presented the research design, define the terms and variables, discuss limitations, delimitations assumptions, and the significance of the study.

Literature from international research proves that bullying between school-aged children is a compelling subject, which requires the attention of researchers and is a growing issue in countries around the world (Hymel & Swearer, 2015). Renshaw et al., (2016) identified that empirical research on the bullying of school-age children has increased and grown during the past 40 years. Furthermore, Koiv (2012) determined that bullying in school is a form of aggression that includes reoccurring events, a victim, and a perpetrator. The findings of the researchers show how the definition of bullying varies from study to study.

Bullying transcends cultural demographics and occurs across various early childhood settings and cultural contexts; incidents of bullying happen on a daily basis, and affect all children, whether they are a bully, victim, or bystander (Levine & Tamburrino, 2014). Chester et al. (2015) shared that bullying is a worldwide health issue with many countries such as Austria, France, Hungary, and Scotland seeing an increase in prevalence. From the research of Zhou et al. (2015), they indicated in their study involving high school students in China that out of 581,838 participants, 21.76% were involved in bullying as either perpetrators or victims.

Bullying is not limited to school in the digital age. With the advancement of technology, bullying can transcend beyond the school and has infiltrated the internet (Wade & Beran, 2011). Researchers found that technological advances such as social media sites, audio and video-sharing platforms, and electronic mail (e-mail) are also avenues that are being exploited by those who want to bully (Wade & Beran, 2011). Shea, Wang, Shi, Gonzalez, & Espelage (2016) shared that although bullying is prevalent in many schools and communities, it is the parents, teachers, and individuals in those communities who can eliminate the behavior. The findings of the researchers' showed that it is important for schools to implement bullying prevention plans that are culturally responsive to the population for which they serve (Shea et al., 2016). In

addition, prevention efforts will require the collaboration and support of parents, teachers, and administrators to create greater cultural sensitivity in the home and schools (Shea et al., 2016).

Childhood exposure to aggressive behaviors in families has long been associated with aggressive behaviors developing in children (Caldeira & Woodin, 2012). Research on bullying and victimization of school-age children seems to support a link between the aggressive behaviors of the youth and the family environment (Caldeira & Woodin, 2012). Furthermore, Caldeira and Woodin (2012) used social learning theory to support their position that children who learn aggression do so through the imitation of aggressive behaviors they are exposed to. Understanding social factors, such as the relationship between the parent's level of aggression and the parental attitudes toward bullying, could lead to improved antibullying programs, which up until now have demonstrated limited effectiveness in their current state (Bradshaw & Johnson, 2011). Shetgiri, Lin, Avila, and Flores (2012) identified several characteristics associated with child bullying and externalizing problems such as the amount of parental involvement with the child, whether the parent attends the child's events, and whether the parent has met all of the child's friends. They conducted a quantitative study that examined whether parenting at age 4-5 years was associated with changes in bullying over a period of 4 years with children who had been diagnosed with Attention-deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) with and without comorbid Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) relative to children without these disorders (Shetgiri et al., 2012). The study involved 162 children from preschool and 9 years of age from the New York metropolitan area (Shetgiri et al., 2012). Through laboratory observations, researchers studied subjects over six annual assessment points and assessed parent and child, teachers rated child bullying, and parents reports on children's diagnostic status

(Shetgiri et al., 2012). The researchers concluded that greater parent support for child autonomy at age 4-5 years is related to a reduction in bullying (Rajendran et al., 2016).

Much of the research that has been conducted thus far has focused on victims, perpetrators, and parental involvement. However, very little research has focused on the social contexts that contribute to levels of aggression and attitudes that are accepting of violence. Su et al. (2010) identified that further research should include more diverse parenting behaviors to provide a complete insight on the roles of parenting and violence exposure in children's aggressive behaviors. The background for which the study was based will now be reviewed.

Background of Study

Swearer et al (2014) noted that many studies have already demonstrated a link between observing bullying and other aggressive behaviors and perpetration of bullying behaviors among youth. In addition, Georgiou (2008) identified that a number of studies within social influence framework have shown that children learn to be aggressive towards the less powerful, by watching the daily interactions of their family members. A gap exists in that no study found in my research has explored whether social influences such as a parents aggression level can predict a parents attitudes toward bullying. Social learning theory was used with this study as it provided a useful approach to explain the link between the observance of aggression and the perpetration of aggressive behaviors. Bradshaw and Johnson (2011) identified that bullying often draws upon the social-ecological framework. That is to say, that bullying gathers its intensity, intent, and focus from the social and familial environment of the individuals. This focus on the social environment that allows bullying behaviors to exist has become an area of intense investigation. Researchers Bradshaw and Johnson have identified a set of social factors that contribute to a climate or culture of bullying which includes shared beliefs, attitudes

supporting bullying, and tolerance of bullying. Furthermore, Swearer et al. (2014) posited that research has consistently demonstrated that attitudes toward bullying explain and predict bullying behaviors. The work of Waasdorp et al. (2011) further demonstrated the parental influence on aggressive behaviors in children. This research focused on determining if the aggression level of parents can predict the attitudes of parents toward bullying and identify whether this as a possible contributor to the bullying perpetration of children. This research is important to further understanding the social influences of parental aggression and parental attitudes and how they contribute to the behaviors of children. The problem statement for this research is further determined next.

Problem Statement

Bullying is defined as a specific set of aggressive behaviors and form of aggression that involves intentional and repeated hurtful actions among peers and an imbalance of power (Farmer et al., 2010; Shetgiri et al., 2012). In consideration of the many definitions of bullying, the working definition of bullying used for this reading will be a reoccurring, aggressive, perpetration of violent behavior that is intent on causing harm and intimidation. Although the definitions may vary, it is universally understood that bullying is a set of repeated physical, verbal, or psychological aggression designed to harm, humiliate, isolate or intimidate a weaker person (Rajendran et al., 2016). Unfortunately, the effects of bullying are not limited to the acts experienced. The trauma that individuals experience from bullying or victimization may lead to numerous psychological and behavioral problems such as depression, anxiety, loneliness, and suicidal ideation (Wang & Iannotti, 2012).

Parental aggression and its effect on children is another important topic that researchers have increased in focus. Parenting practices can act as a model of learning for children and can

lead to the adoption of aggressive coping skills (Wang & Iannotti, 2012; Kuppens et al, 2009; Bandura, 1977). Kuppens et al (2009) posited that the aggressive behaviors of children might mirror that of their parent's disciplining practices. This evidence was supported by a research study that examined the associations between parental control and child aggression in a sample of 600 children ages 6 to 10 years (Kuppens et al., 2009). The assessment tool used multiple informants of children, mothers, fathers, peers, and teachers. The outcome of the study found parental physical punishment was positively associated with overt aggression, while parental psychological control was associated with relational aggression in both boys and girls (Kuppens et al., 2009).

Bacchini, Esposito, and Affuso (2009) shared that few studies have examined how young people's behavior at school is influenced by their experience outside the school and by the perceptions of the neighborhood where they live. Furthermore, without salient information, counselor educators and supervisors are ill-equipped to train therapists to work with families and individuals affected by the bullying phenomenon. Building on the findings of Wang and Iannotti (2012), the focus of this study was to identify whether a parents' level of aggression predicts their attitudes toward bullying. This is a quantitative study with a theoretical orientation involving social learning theory. The key concepts of this theoretical perspective are the approach to explaining human behavior in terms of continuous, interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental determinants (Bandura, 1977). Researchers who use social learning theory attempt to describe how a group of social and personal competencies evolves out of social conditions within which learning occurs. Furthermore, due to the behavioral nature of bullying, taking place within the context of several environmental factors, this theory is appropriate for analyzing literature and data related to this topic. Very little research has focused

on the social contexts that contribute to levels of aggression and attitudes that are accepting of bullying violence. In addition, Gelles (2010) shared the premise of social learning theory, which asserts that most of an individual's behavior including violence is learned from their observations and experiences. Purwati and Japar (2017) use social learning theory as a framework in their quantitative study of 100 children, ages 5-7 years and their parents in the aim of understanding the effects of parents' education and personality aspects on child disruptive behavior. The results Purwati and Japar indicated that parent's education and personality has a significant relationship to child disruptive behavior. A gap exists in that no studies have been identified that examine whether there is any predictive relationship between a parent's aggression levels and their attitude toward bullying. Further variables that was assessed in relation to the parent's attitude toward bullying were gender, age, and level of education and is further discussed in the purpose of the study.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to further examine the gap in literature in determining whether there is any predictive relationship between a parent's level of aggression as measured by the Modified Overt Aggression Scale (MOAS) and their attitudes toward bullying as measured by the Parental Attitudes to Bullying Scale (PAB). Furthermore, the theoretical framework of social learning theory was used to explain the influence of these experiences in the development of children who become bullies and victims. The independent variable was defined as the parents' attitude toward the issue of bullying. The dependent variables were defined as the parents' level of aggression, age, gender, and educational level. In this study, I examined the degree to which a relationship can be predicted between the parent's level of aggression as measured by the MOAS, age, gender, and educational level and the

parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB. The work estimated the presence of a parent's increased level of aggression, age, gender, and educational level to predict scores regarding the parent's attitude toward bullying.

From the literature review performed, it can be concluded that the growing issue of bullying has a detrimental effect on the lives of children. The effects of bullying are so detrimental that they sustain long after the children have graduated or left school Powell and Ladd (2010). The negative effects of bullying include trauma, depression, and anxiety Powell and Ladd (2010). The results of this study assisted in determining possible contributory influences that cause children to become bullies or victims. Some of the practical applications of this study were the use of it for the improvement of counselor education programs with the improved curriculum toward assessment of behaviors and consulting with primary schools to improve discipline interventions. In addition, the social change impact of this study added to the existing knowledge of the sociological effects on bullying, possibly assist in lowering the rate and impact of bullying and increase the awareness of the long-term effects. The research method chosen for this study is revealed further.

Quantitative Nature of Study

A research design is the system that leads the investigator as he or she collects, analyzes, and interprets observation (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). There are many research designs to choose from when considering a plan for dissertation. As Sousa, Driessnack, and Mendes (2007) indicated, a research design is the framework or guides used for the planning, implementation, and analysis of a study. A quantitative design was the best fit for this study. Quantitative research design reflects an earnest, decisive approach, and adopts objective, rigorous, and systematic strategies for generating and refining knowledge (Sousa et al., 2007).

The quantitative model allows the researcher to use a deductive explanation to how a phenomenon flows from established universally accepted findings; thereby, leading to predictive outcomes (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). Sousa et al. (2007) shared that quantitative research is most often about quantifying relationships between or among the identified independent and dependent variable. For this quantitative study, the survey method was the most appropriate process of collecting data since two different survey scales were used. The advantages of using this method include the ability to contact participants through email, the possibility of rapid surveying, and cheaper implementation (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The influence of the chosen research method is further promulgated within the design of the research questions and hypotheses.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions (RQ) and corresponding hypotheses guide this research:

RQ: To what extent, if any, does a parent's level of aggression as measured by the MOAS, age, gender, and education level predict the parents' attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale?

H_0 1: A parent's level of aggression as measure by the MOAS, age, gender, and education level does not predict the parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale.

H_a 1: A parent's level of aggression as measured by the MOAS, age, gender, and education level does predict the parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale.

Theoretical Framework

The quantitative research used to complete this work determined whether, and to what degree, the parent's level of aggression as measured by the MOAS, age, gender, and education level can predict the parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale. A

theoretical framework of social learning theory was used to inform this research. Chavis (2011) shared that social learning theory focuses on learning that occurs within a social context and that people acquire from one another. In addition, the theory proposes that people can learn new information and behaviors by observing other people (Chavis, 2011). As applied to this research proposal, the theory holds expectation the independent variable of parent's aggression levels as measured by the MOAS, to influence or predict the dependent variable of the parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale. The social learning theory provided an explanation of what type of learned influential behavior that may be received by children and adopted into aggressive behaviors. By focusing on the parents, the quantitative research design of this study was able to quantify the aggression levels and attitudes toward bullying and used social learning theory to assess the possible socio-cultural impact on children. In addition, the definition of the variables used to capture the characteristics of the parents brought greater clarity to this study.

Definition of Variables and Terms

Variables

The independent variables or predictor variables are:

Age – The age of the participant was represented in real numbers.

Educational Level – The level of education for the participant was represented by 1-12 for primary and secondary school. For every year attended above high school, the participant added an additional year to their total.

Parent's Aggression –The MOAS, is a scale that assesses aggression and is divided into four categories: verbal aggression, physical aggression against objects, physical aggression against self, and physical aggression against others (Oliver, Crawford, Rao, Reece, & Tyrer, 2007). The

scale was tested for interpreter reliability using 16 children involved in 54 episodes, 21 adults involved in 35 episodes, and eight adults involved in 70 episodes. Results indicate that the MOAS is an easy to complete and reliable for rating aggressive events. The MOAS was developed from the earlier work of Yudofsky, Silver, Jackson, Endicott, & Williams (1986) who developed the Overt Aggression Scale (OAS) as a measure of change in levels of aggression among people with mental disorders. It was later revised by Sorgi, Ratey, Knoedler, Markert, & Reichman (1991) who used the past version of the OAS in a multicenter drug trial for the treatment of aggressive behaviors among chronic psychiatric patients and it ultimately became the MOAS.

Sex – The sex of the participant was represented as being either male or female.

The dependent variable for this study is:

Parent's Attitude- One's feeling or emotion toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale. This scale includes 18 items with three subscales: attitudes towards victim, bully, and intervention (Eslea & Smith, 2012). It is scored on a 5-point rating scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with responses scored as 5 points for the most sympathetic and 1 for the least giving a possible range of 15- 75 for the scale with higher scores indicative of a more positive attitude toward bullying.

Terms

Bullying- a reoccurring, aggressive, perpetration of violent behavior that is intent on causing harm and intimidation (Waasdorp et al., 2011). The types of bullying that will be addressed in this work are verbal, physical, psychological, and cyber.

Females- Coded as 0 and refers to an individual who indicates herself to be such.

Males- Coded as 1 and refers to an individual who indicates himself to be such.

School-aged children- Children between the ages of 6 and 9.

Sex- a dichotomous variable that will be coded 1 for males and 0 for females.

Assumptions

The central assumptions connected with this research are as follows. Participants responded as honestly as possible when completing the two scales provided to them through the survey link, and they answered honestly when completing the demographic questionnaire. In addition, it is expected that the quantitative approach of this study led to accurate, general predictions for the population studied. Finally, it is assumed that the chosen statistical analysis of multiple regression provided data of predictability for all identified independent variables. Regardless of which statistical analysis is used, all have both strengths and limitations.

Limitations and Delimitations

There are strengths and limitations to every research approach. Some of the limitations that exist in this quantitative study included the use of the online survey method and the reliance of parent participants to self-report. The survey method has proven advantages in the areas of cost efficiency, reduction in bias, increased anonymity, applicability, and accessibility (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). However, Handscomb, Hall, Shorter, and Hoare (2016) shared that one limitation to using online surveys is that respondents often feel forced to respond to questions they may feel are meaningless or inaccurate. In regard to the quantitative approach, the advantages of this method are (a) the findings can be generalized to a specific population; (b) data sets are large and findings are representative of a population; (c) documentation regarding the research framework and methods can be shared and replicated; and (d) standardized approaches permit the study to be replicated over time (Goertzen, May/June 2017). Some of the limitations of a quantitative approach are (a) data does not provide

evidence for why populations think, feel, or act in certain ways; (b) specific demographic groups, particularly vulnerable disadvantaged groups, may be difficult to reach; and (c) studies can be time consuming and require data collection over long periods of time (Goertzen, May/Jun2017). An additional weakness for this design is that issues of sampling pose a major problem for researchers using the internet, due to the inability to specify the sampling frame (Rudestam & Newton, 2007).

In addition, reliability is identified by the accuracy or consistency of an instrument (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Regarding quantitative research, reliability is measured using three attributes: homogeneity, stability and equivalence (Heale & Twycross, 2015). Scales and tools used in quantitative study identify homogeneity by the extent to which all the items on a scale measure one construct; stability is identified by the consistency of results using an instrument with repeated testing; and equivalence is determined by the consistency among responses of multiple users of an instrument (Heale & Twycross, 2015). The reliability coefficients of the PAB scale used in my study measured at an $n = 25$ (Eslea & Smith, 2012). Whereas the MOAS tool to be used has an interrater reliability mean of 0.93. Therefore, research procedures must be carefully documented to demonstrate a clear accountable process. For quantitative research, determining how rigorously the issues of validity and reliability have been addressed in a study is vital to the effectiveness of that study (Heale & Twycross, 2015). It is essential the significance of the study be well established

Significance of Study

Literature has long associated the aggression and familial factors with increased aggressive behavior in youth (Caldeira & Woodin, 2012). Understanding the influence of parental attitudes toward bullying and parental aggression levels on children could lead to

increased awareness of the role of socio-cultural factors and their effects (Bradshaw & Johnson, 2011). This study provided further support regarding the consideration of parental aggression levels, along with age, sex, and education level as it pertains to parental attitudes toward bullying and how they influence bullying behaviors in children. Researchers completing more studies involving the examination of these factors can increase counselor education and supervision applications such as improved assessments used in master's programs and more effective antibullying programs.

Summary

A quantitative study involving a correlational survey research design was used to determine whether a parent's aggression level, age, sex, and education level can predict a parent's attitude toward bullying. As the evidence has identified, bullying is a growing phenomenon that affects a growing number of school-aged children. The effects of bullying remain well after the children have completed school and can affect their adult lives (Lemstra et al, 2011). In order to highlight the need for this study, a review of the literature related to bullying behavior, prevalence, and lasting effects will be discussed in Chapter 2. In addition, Chapter 2 includes an overview of bullying, parental attitudes, parental aggression, and social perspectives. In Chapter 3 the research design, analytic strategies, population sample are discussed and procedural account of how these strategies will be implemented in this work are provided.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Attention to bullying involving children has steadily increased over the last 2 decades. Bullying is a form of violence that affects as many as 30% of elementary and secondary schoolchildren in the United States (Kartal, 2008). However, it is not limited to just the United States; many other countries around the world have similar circumstances regarding the problem of bullying. Chester et al. (2015) shared that bullying is a worldwide health problem among children and adolescents. Bullying continues to be a disturbing, common, and pervasive phenomenon that occurs daily (Ali, Virani, & Alaman, 2017; Maji, Bhattacharya, & Ghosh, 2016; Perlus, Brooks-Russell, Wang, & Iannotti, 2014). Researchers have sought to uncover the causes of bullying and other determining factors by identifying the influential ecological characteristics such as family, friends and other social contacts (Espelage, 2014; Morcillo et al., 2015; Oriol et al., 2017; Shetgiri et al., 2012).

Due to the intensity and effects of this form of violence, empirical research has been devoted to identifying the long-term effects of bullying on victims, perpetrators, families, and schools (Eslea & Smith, 2012; Ortega-Ruiz & Nunez, 2012; Shujja, Atta, & Shujjat, 2014). Victims of bullying experience physical and mental health problems including headaches, stomach aches, anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation (Lemstra et al, 2011). Moreover, gender differences within bullying are one of the most commonly examined factors in research and continues to be widely studied (Nosworthy, Rinaldi, & Muth, 2011; Powell & Ladd, 2010). Furthermore, technological advances have had an influence on bullying through social media platforms (Wade & Beran, 2011). The authors, Wade and Beran (2011), also noted these advances exacerbate the problem because they allow 24-hour contact between bullies and those they victimize. The literature review established a foundation and background on the topic of

bullying and revealed the prevalence, significance, impacts, and effects of this phenomenon. Furthermore, the literature review revealed the commonality and focus of current researchers on the topic.

The most prevalent form of bullying that has developed from the advancement of technology is cyber bullying (Wade & Beran, 2011). Wade and Beran (2011) posited that cyber bullying has become a medium that has forced law enforcement and schools to create new protocols that protect victims from an endless onslaught of abuse. Due to the growing phenomena of cyber bullying, many initiatives have been created to thwart the progress of these harmful behaviors. For instance, there have been public service announcements, nonprofit antibullying organizations, and curriculum trainings developed to address this issue (Wade & Beran, 2011). Although, the data suggest clues to the prevalence of bullying, Blood (2014) suggested that the rates of bullying are likely much higher than reported, as research also shows that teachers see approximately one of every 25 episodes of bullying. This data suggests that there may be a large disparity between the rates of bullying reported and what may be occurring. In addition, the average bullying episode only lasts roughly 37 seconds and often occurs in unmonitored areas such as restrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and buses (Blood, 2014).

This study also addressed the role of parents and other factors that influence bullying behavior, which supports the idea of studying the potential predictive indicators between parental attitudes toward bullying and the parent's aggression level. In this review, the topics of bullying trends, definitions, characteristics, effects, attitudes and social perspectives were discussed. The preceding topics were used to support the research study of determining if a parent's level of aggression, gender, age and level of education can predict a parent's attitude toward bullying.

While conducting the literature research for the chosen topic, the Walden library databases were used to retrieve various journal articles. The databases that were used included Academic Search Complete, ERIC, Mental Measurements Yearbook, PsycARTICLES, PsycBOOKS, PsycINFO, SocINDEX with Full Text, and PsycTESTS. The previously identified databases were used to conduct all searches in order to gather all possible articles. The keywords and phrases used in the searches included: *bullying, school violence, aggression scale, cyber-bullying, bullying interventions, bullying rates, and parents' attitudes toward bullying*. In addition to the single search terms, the following combinations were added: *parents, parental, parents' attitudes toward bullying scale, overt aggression scale, gender roles, gender differences, and social context*. The research parameters used were set for the retrieval of peer-reviewed articles for the last 10 years. The inclusion of research articles outside of these parameters identified the importance of certain variables such as the change of context of bullying over time and the prevalence of bullying. The reference list created from the previously mentioned article searches were used to further identify additional books and resources. All contemporary resources and relevant materials related to bullying, parental attitudes toward bullying, and overt aggression scales were included.

An Overview of Bullying

Researchers have defined bullying in a variety of ways. This stratification in the definition has been partly due to the large amount of research conducted on the subject to date. Power-Elliott and Harris (2012) posited that bullying can be physical (e.g. pushing), verbal (e.g. name calling) or relational (e.g. exclusion). Bullying can be direct or indirect, which involves social aggression such as spreading rumors or social exclusion (Power-Elliott & Harris, 2012). Nevertheless, researchers have identified that from one child to the next, from one teacher to the

next, and from one parent to the next, there are contentions between what is, and is not, classified as bullying behavior. The trend for the definition of bullying is that it is ever evolving and changing, especially with new forms of bullying being identified over the years (Powell & Ladd, 2010). New forms of bullying that have developed include cyber bullying and workplace bullying. For the sake of this study, the active definition of bullying will be a reoccurring, aggressive, perpetration of violent behavior that is intent on causing harm and intimidation. Although a universal definition has not been applied, it is generally accepted that bullying is a prevalent, harmful pattern that affects far too many children. The included research studies helped to define bullying and create a context for which to categorize behaviors.

Studies have proven that there are specific bullying behaviors that are more common among elementary and middle school-aged students and slowly decrease as children progress through high school (Fitzpatrick, Dulin, & Piko, 2007; Powell & Ladd, 2010). These changes in bullying characteristics are due to differences in involvement of the youth as a bully or victim, gender, and parental influence. Some factors associated with adolescent bullying are that individuals who have been bullied in the past are more likely to bully others, have negative attitudes towards school, and engage in unhealthy behaviors such as tobacco and alcohol use (Barboza et al., 2009). In addition, physical bullying is more prevalent among boys compared to girls, who are typically involved with verbal or psychological bullying (Barboza et al., 2009). Also, the parents of bullies typically lack involvement and warmth, share characteristics that identify increased propensities for bullying behavior, tend to be more authoritarian, and model power assertive techniques of discipline and physical punishment (Barboza et al., 2009). Shetgiri et al. (2012) provided empirical support to theories that bullying may arise out of parents' lack of emotional support. In addition, in a study by Caldeira and Woodin (2012), the

researchers stated that bullies reported having lower family emotional support, which might be an indication of poor family functioning. The varying definitions of bullying led to the designation of reoccurring factors that are common among children who bully. The most frequent characteristic of lower family emotional support deserves greater investigation.

Prevalence of Bullying

The prevalence of bullying varies across studies with some reporting as little as 10% of students and other studies reporting as high as 33% of students report being victimized by peers (Hymel & Swearer, 2015). The variations in prevalence have been primarily identified as the result of different assessment approaches and individual factors such as sex, age, contexts, and cultures (Hymel & Swearer, 2015). Currie et al. (2012) indicated that most countries around the world have experienced an overall decline in peer victimization during recent years and the decline has been less than 10%. Finkelhor, Turner, Ormrod, and Hamby (2010) offered their explanation of why various forms of peer victimization has declined, which they linked to the adoption of antibullying and violence prevention policies and programs put into place after several high-profile school shooting episodes in the 1990s. While the prevalence of bullying indicates that violent behaviors among children has decreased it has, nevertheless, continued to be serious problem for many children ending with dire consequences. Shetgiri, Lin, and Flores (2013) reported that the prevalence of bullying in the United States changed during the 1990s and early 2000s. The researchers indicated that bullying prevalence in 1993 as high as 56% of students in Grades 8-12 reported bullying either at school, on the way to school, or coming home from school as compared to a 2005-2006 study showing 21% for students in Grades 6-12 were involved in physical bullying, 54%t in verbal bullying, 51% in relational bullying, and 14% in cyber bullying (citation). Studies identified by Shetgiri et al. (2013) used student self-report.

Perlus et al. (2014) indicates that in the United States, as of 2010, there remains a substantial population of 7.5% of students reporting bullying another person and 10.2% reporting being a victim of bullying. In their study, Shujja et al. (2014) examined the overall prevalence of bullying, victimization, and fighting behavior with 836 sixth graders in Pakistan. The sample participants were conveniently drawn from 16 private and public schools and resulted in a gender demographic of 335 boys and 501 girls (Shujja et al., 2014). The study specifically took into consideration factors such as socioeconomic status, type of schools (elementary), age, and gender (Shujja et al., 2014). The measuring tool used for this study was the Illinois Bullying Scale (Esplage & Holt, 2001) which has been identified as reliable and valid measure of bullying, victimization, and fight behavior among 6–16-year-old children. The statistical analyses of this study revealed that 23.2% of designated sample bullied others, 24.1% identified as being victimized, and 19.6% had engaged in fighting in the 30 days prior to the study (Shujja et al., 2014). What was of particular note was that the study was almost equal to the prevalence reported in a study conducted in the U.S., which reported 29.9% for the same demographic (Shujja et al., 2014). The study of Shujja et al. (2014) also identified that 19.6 - 24.1% prevalence among sixth graders with 20.9 - 21.8% among children of low socioeconomic status and 22.7 - 23.6% among students of average socioeconomic status. The prevalence of bullying among children of different socioeconomic statuses helps to understand the susceptibility of individuals of different economic values. In addition, boys were found to be involved in bullying, fighting, and victimizing others at 22 - 24.9% compared to that of girls at 22% (Shujja et al., 2014). This evidence led researchers to believe that boys engaged in bullying victimization and fighting more than girls and children of lower socioeconomic statuses are more likely to engage in these activities than any other group, $N = 835$, $t = 8.4$, $p < .001$ (Shujja et al., 2014).

The findings from the research performed by Shujja et al. (2014) supported two ideas. The first being the premise that violence taught within families influenced violence toward others (Shujja et al., 2014). The second finding was that there were sociocultural contexts that could further the understanding of bullying behavior (Shujja et al., 2014). These interpretations were further explored in my study by drawing comparisons from the theoretical lens of social learning theory.

Attitudes toward Bullying

There continues to be a large amount of data generated regarding bullying and the number of variables that influence how bullying is identified and reported (Barboza et al., 2009; Fitzpatrick et al., 2007). Yet, a recognition of the attitudes toward children who bully, the victims, and the phenomena of bullying itself still eludes researchers, parents, and educators (Hanif, Nadim, & Tariq, 2011; Nosworthy, Rinaldi, & Muth, 2011). Thornberg (2015) indicated that although children and adults are generally opposed to bullying, they might be unsympathetic toward a victim of bullying and rather feel more understanding toward the child who bullies. In general, students express positive, prosocial, and supportive thoughts, especially towards the victim of bullying, and overall, do not like bullying (Thornberg, 2015). In addition, some students indicated that they could understand why some children enjoy bullying and thought that victims should stand up for themselves (Thornberg, 2015). Also, student attitudes toward bullying can also be negative towards the victim and positive towards the bully, especially if students approve of the bullies because they are seen as tough, brave, and are admired by peers (Thornberg, 2015). As Thornberg explained, students may interpret that being a bully increases their social status and power (2015). Moreover, student attitudes toward bullying have identified a link between social positioning and peer harassment. The attitudes of peers toward the bullying victim are explained through the lens of social hierarchy. Peer attitudes toward victims

of bullying is a result of the victim being looked upon as different, deviant, or odd, which tends to lead toward beliefs that the victim is the to blame for their own maltreatment (Thornberg, 2015). Overall, exploring attitudes toward bullying may lead to discovering underlying influencing factors that contribute to the promotion of aggressive behaviors in children.

Parental attitudes can be similar in some ways to the attitudes of classroom children. Waasdorp et al. (2011) shared that parents may respond to their child's report of victimization in a number of ways, such as talking to the child, contacting the child's teacher, school counselor, or administrator, or contacting the bully or the bully's parent, or do nothing at all. Raskauskas, Cordon, and Goodman (2011) further indicated that in regard to parental attitudes, maternal attitudes about schools' responsibilities to address bullying were related to children's involvement in bullying behaviors, and the maternal attitudes about gender differences in sibling bullying were related to children's peer victimization status. Parents attitudes toward bullying depicted this behavior as "a normal part of growing up", a rite of passage, or as just something that kids do (Harcourt, Jasperse, & Green, 2014, p. 381). Another example of how attitudes of parents can shift regarding bulling is the child's gender. Waasdorp et al. (2011) shared that parents may expect their sons to be more emotionally tough in the face of victimization and not need parental intervention, or they may believe that the victimization is not as harmful to their sons as to their daughters. Furthermore, this explanation can have some cultural context regarding the differences in which Caucasian parents respond to bullying compared to the responses of non-Caucasian parents. Parents of non-Caucasian students tend to participate less in schools than Caucasian parents due to such issues as language barriers or a disconnect between the parents' cultural values in the home, which may differ from mainstream cultural values endorsed by the child's school (Waasdorp et al., 2011). This study referenced second

generation Hispanic children whose parents did not speak English well (Waasdorp et al., 2011). Due to any type of disconnect, communication between the parents and the school can be poor, which leads to the parents from ethnic minority backgrounds feeling isolated from their child's education and the school culture (Waasdorp et al., 2011).

Like the attitudes of parents, teachers provide an influential awareness and reaction to the phenomenon of bullying with schoolchildren. Although, teachers express concern regarding the prevalence of bullying, research suggests that they are less likely to notice and intervene during episodes of relational bullying rather than that of physical bullying (Shea et al., 2016). This supports the findings of Duy (2013), whose study suggested that teachers conceptualize bullying different from that of students in regards to the dimensions of social isolation, gender exclusion, and verbal bullying than for physical bullying. As Duy (2013) further posited, teachers are not fully aware of the nuances of bullying, with a majority of them perceiving only the physical type of bullying as problematic. By not acknowledging some of the other forms of bullying such as name calling, harassment, and social isolation, there leaves room for these behaviors to go unchecked and underreported. The attitudes of teachers are further influenced by the complexities of contexts such as poor parental support, lack of experience with minority populations, and burnout due to working in low-income, resource strapped schools (Shea et al., 2016). Greater assumptions may be drawn from research through the additional implications gained by understanding attitudes toward bullying (Harcourt et al., 2014).

Characteristics of Parents and Family

Further research such as Shetgiri, Lin, Avila, and Flores (2012) indicated that parent training and education are essential components of effective interventions to reduce bullying, which suggests that these parental characteristics and behaviors may influence child bullying.

While conducting this literature review, little information is available regarding parental characteristics and their influences in relationship to childhood bullying. The article by Shetgiri et al. (2012) identified bullying among school-aged children as an ongoing issue that is found in all of the industrialized nations around the world. The authors examined an existing dataset from the 2007 National Survey of Children's Health. The sample participants were secured through population based, random digit dial telephone survey conducted from April 2007 to July 2008 by the National Center for Health Statistics and sponsored by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau using the state and local area integrated telephone survey mechanism (Shetgiri et al., 2012). The study sample taken from the available data set ended up with an age group of children between 10 and 17 years totaling 44,848 ($n = 44848$) (Shetgiri et al., 2012). The article used a quantitative research approach and included bivariate and stepwise multivariable analyses to examine the data (Shetgiri et al., 2012). The results for this study showed that among children aged 10 to 17 years, the prevalence of bullying was 14.9%. This percent is lower than Kartal (2008) and Shujja et al. (2014) who reported percentages of 30% and 24.1% respectively for similar populations. However, the outcomes of bullying for both the perpetrator and victim are so egregious that the phenomenon of bullying continues to be seen as pervasive, aggressive, common, disturbing, violent, and one of the most distressing experiences a child or adolescent could have (Shea et al., 2016; Duy, 2013; Ali et al., 2017; Frisen, Jonsson, & Persson, 2007; Barlett, 2015). Shetgiri et al. (2012) identified that as much as 30% of the United States middle and high school students are involved in bullying including 13% as perpetrators of bullying (bullies), 11% as victims of bullying (victims), and 6% as both perpetrators and victims of bullying. The purpose identified in this article aimed to address the lack of research regarding the associations of multiple factors, including child, family, and community characteristics, with

bullying (Shetgiri et al., 2012). The findings for this study showed that several parental characteristics were associated with child bullying perpetration. These characteristics included negative parental perceptions of the child such as (a) the child bothers them; (b) the child frequently makes them angry; (c) the child is perceived as hard to care for), $N = 44,848$, $SE = 1.39$, $p < .001$, and suboptimal maternal mental health were associated with higher odds of child bullying perpetration, $N = 44,848$, $SE = 1.92$, $p < .001$ (Shetgiri et al., 2012). The research of Shetgiri et al. (2012) also indicated that parental involvement, such as parents ability to communicate well with their child and meet the child's friends, was associated with lower odds of bullying.

Other factors regarding the family environment that affect participation in bullying by children include the lack of warmth by the parent and parents who are uninvolved in the life of the child (Holt, Kantor, & Finkelhor, 2009; Purwati & Japar, 2017; Rajendran et al., 2016). The earlier work of Olweus (1993) also identified a possible causal relationship in which male bullies are influenced into developing an aggressive reaction pattern. This behavior pattern characterizes bullies due to parents not showing affection or interest in them. Further research by Olweus (1993) found that children with parents who lack warmth, such as showing affection and concern, and who are uninvolved are at an increased risk of becoming aggressive and hostile later in life. In addition, parents who are permissive and allow the child to act out aggressively increase the chances of the child becoming a bully (Olweus, 1993). These findings raise suspicion that the characteristics and behaviors of parents can be a viable way of understanding the development of aggressive behaviors in children who bully. Powell and Ladd (2010) identified evidence that showed low parental involvement was also found to be a risk factor in bullying adolescents for both male and females and that a child without limits can learn that

aggressive behaviors are tolerated and will continue to be used as a method to relate to others, both other students and adults.

Physical discipline methods of parents teach children about physical violence as well. Purwati and Japar (2017) shared that patterns of parents with disruptive children share the characteristics of inconsistent discipline, harder punishments, rejection to children and less supervision and direction for children. Cenkseven and Yurtal, (2008) stated that families of bullies or violent students have some characteristics such as using physical discipline, repudiations or hostile actions against children, poor problem-solving skills, and permission for hostile acts.

Education level, family income, and family structure were associated with being a bully, whereas the primary language spoken at home was not (Shetgiri et al., 2012). Although research is detailed earlier in the chapter, compared with non-bullies, a higher proportion of bullies lived in households that were low income, without two parents, and without parents who were high school graduates, $N = 44,848$, bullies = 5031, low income $SE = 1.25$, without two parents $SE = 1.63$, high school graduates $SE = 1.66$, $p < .001$, (Shetgiri et al., 2012).

Holt, Kantor, and Finkelhor (2009) examined parent perspectives on bullying, parent/child concordance about bullying involvement, and family characteristics associated with bullying perpetration in a study that involved 205 fifth-grade participants and their parents. The children completed self-report assessments about bullying involvement, attitudes toward and responses to bullying, and victimization in the home (Holt et al., 2009). Parents of the children completed self-report surveys about attitudes toward and responses to bullying, perceptions of their child's involvement in bullying, and family characteristics (Holt et al., 2009). The students who participated in this study came from a large Northeastern city and from approximately 22

elementary schools (Holt et al., 2009). Of the 205 student participants, 54.1% (n=111) were girls and 43.4% were boys (n=89). The parent population consisted of 91% female and 9% male. Concerning the first variable of parent attitudes towards bullying, Holt et al. (2009) discovered that 88% of parents believed that teasing hurt kids and 81% indicated that schools should pay more attention to bullying. Of the children surveyed, 86% affirmed that they had been teased or picked on at school and told someone about it, while 61 percent of those students told their parents (Holt et al., 2009). The means and standard deviations for children who reported being teased had families that tended to be characterized as more supportive ($M=3.87$, $SD = 0.37$ vs. $M=3.70$, $SD=.60$), and having family members who get along well ($M = 3.63$, $SD = .76$ vs. $M=3.29$, $SD=0.81$), families in which the child got in trouble tended to be characterized as more supportive than families in which the child did not get in trouble ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 0.17$ vs. $M=3.77$, $SD=0.55$). Other interesting findings from the authors included 59% of youth indicated they had been teased or picked on at school whereas 41% of parents thought that their child had been teased or picked on at school (Holt et al., 2009). Finally, 33% of the parents identified in their responses that they believe that if children are bullied they should fight back against their perpetrator (Holt et al., 2009). This outcome is consistent with other research that indicates parental characteristics that support the use of physical discipline to solve problems (Cenkseven & Yurtal, 2008; Purwati & Japar, 2017). Understanding the characteristics of parents and families may assist researchers in identifying possible social setting contexts that produces violent, aggressive behaviors in children. Not only could this type of research be valuable in understanding the family setting itself, but may also assist with intervention efforts to teach children and their families more positive ways of problem solving. In addition, schools and

social service programs will be able to benefit by adapting approaches and services that accounts for the values and beliefs of these parents and families.

Parental Aggression

Parental aggression has been proven to be an influencing factor in the development of children, both in the social and cognitive development (Liu & Wang, 2014; Guajardo, Snyder, & Petersen, 2009; Huth-Bocks & Hughes, 2008). Most research regarding parental aggression has focused more on the physical aggression of parents towards children (Liu & Wang, 2014). In addition, Liu and Wang (2014) posited that little has been discussed regarding the psychological aggression of parents, in which they defined as the employment of symbolic and verbal acts with the purpose of causing the child to experience psychological pain or fear. In their study, Liu and Wang (2014) examined 311 two parent Chinese families with preschoolers in order to observe the mediating effect of parent's psychological aggression in the relationships between parenting stress and children's internalization of emotional reactions such as anxiety, depression and withdrawal. The researchers also examined the children's externalizing behaviors of aggression and delinquency over a period of one year. The results indicated that mothers scored significantly higher than fathers on parental distress and slightly higher on parental aggression. In this study, fathers scored higher on levels of parent-child dysfunctional interaction. Moreover, Liu and Wang (2014) revealed that while the mother's psychological aggression and parenting stress could be attributed to the children's behavior problems, the effect of the father's psychological aggression and parental stress could not be verified. However, some of the cultural factors that may have influenced this study involve the facts that Chinese mothers experience a significantly higher level of parental distress than fathers because they are typically the primary caregiver (Liu & Wang, 2014). In addition, Liu & Wang (2014) identified that

Chinese fathers reported a significantly higher level of parent-child dysfunctional interaction than mothers.

Another aspect of parental aggression that has been proven to lead to negative outcomes in children is exposure to intimate partner violence (IPV) (Huth-Bocks & Hughes, 2008). In their study, Huth-Bocks and Hughes (2008) observed 190 battered women and their children ages 4 to 12 years of age using Abidin's model and working from a hypothesis that parenting mediates the relationship between parenting stress and child behavioral and emotional problems. Research has identified that violence against women is the most common form of IPV and it occurs approximately 20% to 38% to this U.S. population (Huth, Bocks & Hughes, 2008). The researchers, Huth-Bocks and Hughes (2008) shared that millions of children witness these acts of violence in their homes. This exposure can lead to more intense behavior problems, internalized symptoms, maladaptive coping skills, and decrease in cognitive functioning (Huth-Bocks & Hughes, 2008). The results indicated that parenting stress was positively related to maladaptive/ineffective parenting and increase behavioral problems in children, $R^2 = .24$, $F(1) = 54.43$, $p < .001$ (Huth-Bocks & Hughes, 2008).

Identifying the role and effect of parental aggression better equips researchers to deal with dysfunctional families. These families continue to need the most assistance and often are experiencing multiple challenges affecting their outcomes. Unfortunately, the outcomes of most families produce generations of children affected by these negative influences and increasing their propensity to continue this legacy of aggression. Recognizing the influence of families from a social perspective will bring researchers closer to understanding the origin and development of aggressive behaviors in children.

Social Perspectives

Researchers are now looking to explore the social perspectives associated with bullying to understand how this phenomenon begins. Power-Elliott and Harris (2012) shared that bullying is best understood in the context of a social dynamic system in which the bully and victim are only two parts of a larger social system. Morcillo et al. (2015) shared that children who were exposed to negative environments within the family and school contexts in ways such as exposure to harsh parenting, violence, negative school climate, and association with deviant peers was significantly related with bullying behaviors. In addition, victims of violence showed limited abilities to manage their emotions and socio-cognitive biases within social situations, resulting in an increase in the likelihood of becoming victims of their classmate's behavior (Morcillo et al., 2015). Yahn (2012) indicated that children change their behaviors to adapt to what is socially reinforced and what is socially unacceptable. Therefore, it is important that the social environment of individuals involved in bullying be considered not only for etiological gain but also for the possibility to predict outcomes. Morcillo et al. (2015) posited that their research has further supported accepted views that beyond the individual characteristics of bullies, there lies other distant contextual factors related to family, peers, schools, and neighborhoods that have been related to bullying (Bacchini et al., 2009; Holt et al., 2009; Su et al., 2010). Power-Elliott and Harris (2012) suggested that a systems perspective be used in order to conceptualize bullying as a behavior that is influenced by a variety of systemic factors. The study of Power-Elliott and Harris (2012) further supports the gap that exists regarding no research addressing how the parental aggression as measured by the MOAS scale predict parents attitudes toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale. Additional systems to consider when exploring bullying are peer influence, parenting and the home environment, neighborhood, social-economic status, school

climate, cultural norms, media, and gender (Power-Elliott & Harris, 2012). Moreover, focusing on social systems such as parenting support the theoretical lens of social learning theory to possibly explain the influences of parental behaviors and attitudes on children.

Social perspectives have continued to be fertile ground for significant research to be done in an effort to understand context of shared experiences within a given environment.

Understanding context has provided a depth to identifying the relationships between behavior and social systems. Recognizing the presence of social perspectives, with regards to aggressive behaviors, will lead to improved social interventions.

Prevailing Trends

Bullying continues to be one of the most pervasive social problems of the new millennium. It has proven to cut across all demographics such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, and gender. This section reviewed prevailing trends of bullying in the areas of the bullies themselves, social and cultural influences, and the victims of bullying.

People Who Bully

Several characteristics that people who bully share have been identified in literature. Specifically, risk factors for bullying have been found to include hyperactivity, involvement with gangs, bringing weapons to school, fighting at school, and cutting class or getting suspended (Barboza et al., 2009). A research study by Farmer et al. (2010) aimed at examining the social relations of people who bully, victims, and bully-victims in second-grade classrooms. The longitudinal study consisted of 537 (247 boys, 290 girls) ethnically diverse second-grade students from 37 classrooms across participating schools which focused on evaluating a comprehensive intervention program aimed at promoting the social adjustment of elementary students (Farmer et al., 2010). The research took place in three non-metropolitan counties in a

southeastern state and consisted of a consent rate for second-grade students in the participating schools of 70%. The researchers used two-level hierarchical generalized linear models to analyze data, with the Level 1 portion focused on students and Level 2 focused on the classrooms (Farmer et al., 2010). The results indicated that the bullies and bully-victims were similar to each other with respect to aggression, with girl bully-victims being slightly more aggressive than girl bullies (Farmer et al., 2010). Specifically, the descriptive statistics stated the key dependent variable along with the cross-classification of socio-metric status by bullying-involvement showed 42% of boys and 54% of girls were not identified as being involved in bullying, 13% of boys and 10% of girls were identified as bullies, 20% of boys and 18% of girls were identified as victims, and 25% of boys and 18% of girls were identified as bully-victims (Farmer et al., 2010). The preceding research further supports the influence of social characteristics on bullying behaviors in children.

Research on people who bully has consistently demonstrated that there are three distinct types of youth who are directly involved in bullying: children characterized as bullies but not as victims; children characterized as victims but not as bullies; and children who are simultaneously identified as bullies and victims (Farmer et al., 2010). Other characteristics regarding bullies include physical bullying being more prevalent among males, whereas females are typically involved with verbal or psychological bullying (Barboza et al., 2009). However, in regards to race, empirical evidence has been non-conclusive as the relationship between ethnicity and bullying has not been widely studied. Therefore, findings pertaining to the prevalence of bullying among ethnic minority students have not been proven. Some researchers have found no significant differences in bullying behaviors among different racial and or ethnic groups (Barboza et al., 2009). Barboza et al. (2009) conducted a quantitative study in which they used

and ecological perspective to explore the risk factors associated with bullying behaviors among a representative sample of adolescents aged 11-14 from an existing data set from the Health Behavior in School Children: WHO Cross-National Survey. The representative sample consisted of 15,686 students in grades 6 - 10 in public and private school in the United States (Barboza et al., 2009). The researchers identified that the large sample size has positive implication for power assessments in statistical analyses. The results of the study suggested that bullying increases among children who watch television frequently ($Z = 7.84, p = 0.000$), lack teacher support, have themselves been bullied ($Z = 12.82, p = 0.000$), attend schools with unfavorable environments ($Z = 3.38, p = 0.001$), have emotional support from their peers ($Z = -6.56, p = 0.000$), and have teachers and parents who do not place high expectations on their school performance ($Z = 1.97, p = 0.048$) (Barboza et al., 2009). Also, the study suggested that although bullying is conceptually different from aggression, there is a strong relationship between aggressiveness, as operationalized by number of fights the child has fought, and bullying among these school-aged children ($\chi^2_{16} = 765.12, p = 0.00$) (Barboza et al., 2009). Moreover, Cenkseven and Yurtal (2008) identified students who bully as more aggressive, antisocial, and impulsive. In addition, children who often bully have parents who have poor problem-solving skills and inconsistent relationship with their own parents and siblings. Finally, people who bully experience family conflict with their parents and less emotional reactions such as poor dependence, poor human touch, and poor control and discipline strategies are evident in this group (Cenkseven & Yurtal, 2008).

When examining the characteristics of bullying, gender is a fundamental topic. The gender concept seeks to distinguish between the social and historical construction of male and female identify roles, explain the power relationship between the two sexes, and how they relate

in and with society. Silva et al. (2013) conducted a quantitative study in which they sought to explore the prevalence of bullying in a group of students and analyze the data regarding the gender of those involved in the violence. The sample included 387 students between the ages of 7 and 14 years old, and indicated that although both boys and girls are both victims and aggressors, there are significant differences in the involvement in bullying between genders and the roles played (Silva et al., 2013). The instrument used for this research was an adapted Olweus' questionnaire, which had been validated for a Portuguese population in a previous study and organized in sections. The results indicated that out of the 387 sample participants, 53.2% had never been bullied, 46.8% children indicated they had been bullied during the school period analyzed with 22.8% once or twice and 24.1% three or more times. The researchers analysis of victimization levels according to gender reveals a statistically significant difference in behavior patterns ($X^2 = 14.35, p = 0.002$) (Silva et al., 2013). The study found that boys are victims more often when considering different types of bullying, especially about physical aggression and insults (name-calling) (Silva et al., 2013). Girls accounted for higher rates of indirect forms of aggression, which included talking about the other person, spreading rumors, and teasing (Silva et al., 2013; Navarro, Larranaga, & Yubero, 2011). Overall, boys engage in both forms of bullying (direct and indirect) and they have a higher involvement in physical violence; whereas, girls participate in the indirect expression of violence in its verbal form most frequently (Silva et al., 2013).

Due to a greater participation in indirect bullying, some researchers seem to indicate that girls are at greater risk for psychological distress and poor self-esteem. Farrow and Fox (2011) shared that females experience higher levels of body dissatisfaction, dietary restraint, and unhealthy attitudes towards eating, weight and shape. Females who are being bullied can

negatively influence the development of these attitudes. Farrow and Fox (2011) continued to identify those relationships between body esteem and involvement in bullying has been positively correlated, whereas, bullied girls have poorer body esteem than bullied boys. However, little study has been attributed to unhealthy eating habits and bullying. Most of the research on bullying has been focused on the need to understand the root causes of aggression and in the context of its multidimensional factors. Biological sex differences are among the most commonly studied factors. Navarro et al. (2011) indicated that extensive research has revealed that male are most frequently implicated in expressing aggression in school, particularly through the phenomenon of bullying, both as a perpetrator, aggressor and or as a victim. The reasons for the gender differences in the participation of particular types of bullying is posited by Navarro et al. (2011) who shared that males learn that aggression is useful for the maintenance of the masculine role, while females learn that inhibition of aggression, or the display of more covert aggression strategies fits the feminine role better. Along with gender differences, social and cultural influences play a significant role in bullying behaviors.

Social and Cultural Influences on Bullying

Jankauskiene et al. (2008) indicated that teasing about appearance was positively related to engaging in bullying behaviors and led to outcomes of children becoming victims in some cases and bullies in others. This is particularly important from a sociological perspective because Powell and Ladd (2010) found that children who were teased about their appearance by their family were more likely to be victims of bullying, while those teased by teachers were more likely to be in the bully category. Another factor regarding how the family contributes children participation rates in bullying is parental discord. Research suggests that parental discord can affect children's self-concept because children internalize both positive and negative aspects of

parental behavior and this internalization affects future behavior (Powell & Ladd, 2010). The work of Powell and Ladd (2010) was supported by the findings of other researchers regarding the effect of family environments on child behavior (Guajardo et al., 2009; Huth-Bocks & Hughes, 2008).

Baruth and Manning (2012) defined culture as a combination of institutions, communication, values, religions, genders, sexual orientations, disabilities, thinking, artistic expressions, and social and interpersonal relationships. Coyle (2008) reported the emerging research on school violence prevention program implementation, which indicated that school culture plays a critical role in school change and program implementation success rates. Particularly, Coyle (2008) identified that school cultures characterized by students' perceptions of alienation, lack of academic and emotional support from teachers, and general lack of concern for student well-being contribute to higher levels of violence exhibited by students in schools (Evans & Smokowski, 2016). These beliefs result in behaviors that directly or inadvertently support bullying behavior. In other words, the culture of bullying emerges from an environment that supports these behaviors through values, beliefs, and attitudes. Furthermore, Evans and Smokowski (2016) shared that school culture and climate significantly impact rates of youth involvement in risky behaviors in the school setting and the school climate significantly affected the variance in youth risk behaviors. Similarly, a positive school culture and climate creates a feeling of safety and the presence of support, enhances teachers awareness of student needs, helps teachers intervene in social disputes such a bullying, and encourages students to stand up for one another (Evans & Smokowski, 2016). School culture plays a significant role in the influence of bullying behavior with a strong correlation indicating positive school climates with less bullying behavior, whereas increased rates of bullying are associated with negative school

climates (Evans & Smokowski, 2016). In addition to the social and cultural influences on bullying, social media and the internet have provided avenues for bullying to thrive in new and innovative ways.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is a social problem of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and unjustified aggressiveness, using digital devices, which one person or group inflicts upon another person (the victim), either protracted over time or in the short-term, but whose harassment effects remain and are diffused exponentially, and the victim cannot defend himself-or herself alone, quickly or effectively (Ortega-Ruiz & Nunez, 2012). Unlike other forms of physical aggression that are committed face-to-face, the nature of technology may help explain overlap and non-shared risk factors for cyber bullying with other forms of aggression (Low & Espelage, 2013). An additional risk factor is how individuals can choose to interact with others anonymously and therefore avoid the repercussions that might accompany the bad behavior if the individuals were identifiable. An additional form of aggression is a greatly diminished internal censorship mechanism when communicating in cyberspace. In addition, adolescents may be encouraged to say or do things online that they are unlikely to do in their face-to-face interactions (Low & Espelage, 2013). Schneider, O'Donnell, Stueve, and Coulter (2012) shared that 93 percent of teens are active users of the Internet and 75 percent own a cell phone, thus there is great potential for cyber-bullying among youths. However, the rates of cyber-bullying have been difficult to acquire. Schneider et al. (2012) note that studies have found anywhere from 9 percent to 40 percent of students are victims of cyber-bullying and most studies suggest that online victimization is less prevalent than are school bullying and other forms of offline victimization. Bauman and Newman (2013) performed a study that involved 588 participants, aged range of 17

- 25 years old with a mean of 19.8 (SD = 1.41). The researchers used a questionnaire that was developed with the goal of capturing a broad range of behaviors that represented familiar forms of bullying for this age group and could be delivered through conventional or cyber means (Bauman & Newman, 2013). The participants were students in psychology classes at a large urban southwestern university and were recruited via an online subject pool system which provided several options for fulfilling student's course research requirement. The method of measurement used was an analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare the distress scores on three scales. The results of the study showed that the distress associated with an incident of bullying is related to the nature of the bullying incident rather than the form, Wilks' $\lambda = .28$, $F(2, 559) = 707.35$, $p < .0005$, multivariate partial eta squared = .72. (Bauman & Newman, 2013). Many victims of cyber bullying in this sample of online adolescents reported reactions such as frustration, anger, and sadness, although 35% indicated that they were not affected by their experience (Bauman & Newman, 2013). Low and Espelage (2013) posited that because cyber bullying is a newly recognized form of bullying, the ability to identify mechanisms or pathways unique to cyber-bullying are relatively immature and often thwarted by methodological weaknesses such as a reliance on cross-sectional study designs.

Survivors of bullying

Survivors of bullying share their own set of identifying features and have been characterized as children who are weak and easily taken advantage (Cenkseven & Yurtal, 2008). The researchers, Cenkseven and Yurtal (2008), indicated that mothers and fathers of both the survivors of bullying and the people who bully have a power imbalance and their children perceive fathers as having more power than mothers. Powell and Ladd (2010) shared that survivors of bullying are more likely to react by crying or withdrawal when attacked by another

student. Identified as passive survivors of bullying, Olweus (1993) posited that they are usually more anxious, insecure, cautious, and quiet than other students. In addition, there is evidence that survivors of bullying suffer from low self-esteem and think of themselves as failures, which makes them feel stupid, ashamed, and unattractive (Olweus, 1993). These psychological effects can diminish school performance, social interaction, and self-confidence levels (Jankauskiene et al., 2008). In a study of 1,162 pupils from sixth, eighth, and eleventh grades, Jankauskiene et al. (2008) sought to determine the relationship of bullying behavior at school with indicators of psychosocial health (self-esteem, happiness, relationships in family and with teachers, smoking and alcohol use) and with social-demographical factors (age, gender, socioeconomic status). The researchers used an independent random sample representing the population of pupils of the sixth, eighth, and eleventh grades from a secondary co-ed denominational schools (Jankauskiene et al., 2008). The measurement used to collect the data was a questionnaire containing 69 questions allowing 332 options to be filled in by students participating in the study. The data for this study was analyzed using bivariate associations that were calculated with chi-square (X^2) CRITERION ($\alpha = .05$). The study included the calculations of Odds ratios (OR) as an effect measure for data with binary outcomes. A correlation between variables was analyzed to determine the opportunity ration (OR) with confidence interval (CI) of 95 percent The results indicated that children from poor families tended to be more victimized, and students from single parent homes were victimized more (Jankauskiene et al., 2008). In addition, unhappiness and lower self-esteem were among the strongest determinants of victimization, with children who identified as unhappy being 3.8 times more among victims and children with lower self-esteem became victims even 3 times more (Jankauskiene et al., 2008). Of the 1,162 children who participated in the study, 657 (56.5% students in total were involved in bullying. With 148

(12.7% of the participants reported being victims, while 189 (16.3% of them reported being bullies (Jankauskiene et al., 2008). The previous research indicated that victimization is most associated with secondary classes ($\chi^2 = 5.69$; $df = 2$; $p < .05$), lower self-esteem, OR = 3.87; CI 95% [2.34; 6.42]), unhappiness (OR = 3.78; CI 95% [2.49; 5.75]), and teasing about appearance in the family ($\chi^2 = 20.8$; $df = 1$; $p < .001$). Furthermore, research has indicated that male bullying victims are usually physically weaker and more vulnerable than the bully, and are often rejected by the class (Jankauskiene et al., 2008). This study identified key variables that help to support the sociological influence that should be researched regarding the relationships with parents and its correlation to bullying behaviors (Jankauskiene et al., 2008).

As identified by Jankauskiene et al. (2008), weight issues may also have to do with victimization, as obese students are twice as likely to be bullied as their average-sized peers. Powell and Ladd (2010) posited that the passive survivor of bullying is characterized by anxious or submissive reaction patterns and somehow seems to signal to other students that they are insecure individuals who will not fight back if attacked. Survivors of bullying will often exhibit signs of their victimization include: a loss of interest in school, drop in grades, development of excuses to avoid school, or a child becomes quieter at home and withdraws from family interactions (Powell & Ladd, 2010). Additional signs of children who are survivors of bullying are an unusual high intensity of emotion, loss of appetite, or has difficulty sleeping, comes home from school with bruises or torn clothing, has little interaction with friends at school, does not eat lunch at school, and seems to be developing social and behavioral problems (Powell & Ladd, 2010). However, one of the most influential studies that have helped define the survivors of bullying is the study performed by Green et al. (2013) who examined the responses of 435 students reporting peer victimization. The researchers compared the responses from the

Bully/Victimization Questionnaire (BVQ) with responses to a behavioral measure that did not use the term bullying but, instead, included items that asked about its defining characteristics (repetition, intentionality, power imbalance) (Green et al., 2013). The BVQ uses a definitional method to measure bullying which is designed to distinguish acts of bullying from other forms of peer victimization (e.g., one-time aggression, disputes between friends) and provides population estimates of the incidence of bullying victimization and perpetration (Green et al., 2013). The results indicated that the BVQ is a valid measure of repeated victimization and a broad range of victimization experiences. In addition, the study used the California Bully Victimization Scale (CBVS) to gather from respondents if they experienced each of eight forms of victimization at school in the past month “in a mean and hurtful way.” The eight forms of bullying being examined by this study included (a) being teased or called names by another student; (b) rumors or gossip spread behind our back; (c) left out of a group or ignored on purpose; (d) hit, pushed, or physically hurt; (e) threatened; (f) been the target of sexual comments, jokes, or gestures; (g) had possessions stolen or damaged; (h) been teased, had rumors spread, or threatened through the Internet (Green et al., 2013). The researchers built a series of multivariate models to identify factors most strongly associated with BVQ response. The results of this study indicated victimization was more often seen in grades seventh and ninth, ($\chi^2(2,990) = 11.7, p < .05$), victims were more likely to be Black and or African American or Latino and less likely to be Asian and or Asian American ($\chi^2(4,990) = 30.0, p < .05$) (Green et al., 2013). Although the results were favorable, it also indicated that the BVQ may not detect the more subtle and complex power imbalances that distinguish bullying from other forms of peer victimization (Green et al., 2013).

Effects of Bullying

The effects of bullying are so detrimental that they last long after the children have left school. Victims of bullying experience physical and mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation that can last long after the incidents have ceased (Lemstra, Rogers, Redgate, Garner, & Moraros, 2011). In addition, individual of different genders experience different effects from bullying as well.

Mental Health Effects

Powell and Ladd (2010) reports that some of the more serious psychological issues that are experienced due to being bullied can cause severe daily life disruption. Such psychological effects can include social phobia as an adult, depression, anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and loneliness (Powell & Ladd, 2010). Ttofi and Farrington (2008) identified in their quantitative study how both the victims and perpetrators of bullying tend to have high numbers of physical and psychological symptoms. The study consisted of questionnaires, which were completed by 182 children aged 11 - 12 in ten primary schools (Ttofi & Farrington, 2008). The survey also included a parental bonding instrument to measure and assesses the relationship between child and parent (Ttofi & Farrington, 2008). The results of the study showed that physical and psychological scores for sibling bullying ($r = .75, p < .001$) and peer bullying ($r = .73, p < .001$) were highly correlated and justified the use of total bullying scores in subsequent analyses (Ttofi & Farrington, 2008). Mayes et al. (2014) shared that although the contribution of bullying per se to suicide behavior independent of sadness and conduct problems is small, bullying has an obvious negative psychological consequence that makes interventions imperative. The aforementioned research study consisted of analyzing the maternal rating of bullying and suicide ideation and attempts of 1,291 children with psychiatric disorders and 658 children in the general

population 6-18 years old using the Pediatric Behavior Scale (PBS) (Mayes et al., 2014). The instrument is a 165 questionnaire that allows mothers to rate their children on a 4-point scale that includes four suicide behavior items and four bullying items (Mayes et al., 2014). The results shown for both the psychiatric and community samples, suicide ideation and attempt scores for bullies and or victims were significantly higher than for victims only and for neither bullies nor victims, ($\chi^2 > 31.0$, $p < .0001$) (Mayes et al., 2014). These results lend themselves to the growing information regarding the effects of bullying. Many of the studies researched concluded that being a victim of bullying has a negative effect on mental health, including depressive symptoms, low self-esteem, and suicide ideation (Scaglione & Scaglione, 2006; Powell & Ladd, 2010; Lemstra, Rogers, Redgate, Garner, & Moraros, 2011). In addition to mental health effects, bullying also causes physical health effects in victims as well (Powell & Ladd, 2010).

Physical Health Effects

Powell and Ladd (2010) indicated that victims of bullying constantly worry about going to school, and the thought of being attacked again can produce psychosomatic symptoms like headaches or stomachaches because of prolonged stress and anxiety. Arslan, Hallett, Akkas, and Akkas (2012) shared that other long-term effects of bullying can include future violence, as children may get so fed up with being bullied that they one day explode and hurt someone, as well as severe depression and anxiety disorders that may continue into adulthood. Lemstra et al. (2011) stated that youth who were bullied were at least twice as likely to suffer from depressed mood and bullying had a significant impact on their mental health. Furthermore, physical symptoms of being bullied can include headaches and migraines, panic attacks, irritable bowel syndrome, and frequent illness (Nosworthy, Rinaldi, & Muth, 2011).

The victims are not the only individuals affected by the phenomenon of bullying. Bullies are also affected in a negative fashion. Powell and Ladd (2010) shared that bullying also has an effect on the bullies themselves, such as short-term effects that include poor school performance, use of drugs or alcohol, and perhaps involvement with gangs. Due to bullies victimizing other students, they themselves can experience somatic symptoms, anxiety, depression and difficulties in social situations (Arslan et al., 2012). These behaviors can lead to feelings of loneliness, anger, or rejection over time. The serious long-term effect of habitual bullying is that it can lead to criminal behaviors (Powell & Ladd, 2010). Turner, Exum, Brame, and Holt (2013) determined that additional effects of bullying included deficiencies in academic success, poor school attendance, low emotional well-being, attention-deficit disorder diagnoses, associations with deviant behaviors, involvement in violence, psychiatric symptoms, levels of depression and chronic suicidal ideations.

Effects Between Genders

The manifestations of serious psychological issues are different according to gender (Powell & Ladd, 2010). Girls are more likely to experience indirect bullying, such as ridicule and intimidation, sexual harassment, being touched inappropriately, writing sexual remarks where others can view it, or pressure to go on dates (Powell & Ladd, 2010). The psychological effects often experienced by girls included a decrease in self-esteem, mental and physical health, and life satisfaction, and an increase in substance abuse (Powell & Ladd, 2010). Sentse, Kretschmer, and Salmivalli (2015) shared that boys were more likely to be involved in physical bullying than girls. In addition, in this particular study boys scored higher than girls on the variable of victimization (Sentse, Kretschmer, & Salmivalli, 2015). Also, male bullies were

found to be accepted less favorably than female bullies, whereas female victims were rejected more than male victims (Sentse, Kretschmer, & Salmivalli, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this research was social learning theory. The principles of learned behavior that occurs within a social context is addressed by behavioral therapy which focuses upon the principles of classical conditioning developed by Ivan Pavlov and operant conditioning developed by B. F. Skinner. Therefore, this theory was used to explain if a predictive outcome exist between a parents aggression levels and their attitudes toward bullying, then the parental influence and modeling of their behaviors toward children could be better supported as a factor of how bullying is taught. Social learning theory offers a foundation from which to explain the causes and processes of how violent behavior is learned. Furthermore, this theory posits that children learn behaviors from their environment and the behaviors can then be reinforced in different ways (Bandura, 1977). Powell and Ladd (2010) shared that once a child learns negative behaviors and finds that he or she can reap rewards from the behavior, they are more likely to repeat it. The researchers asserted that the child would choose to act in these negative ways as long as there are foreseen benefits (Powell & Ladd, 2010). This study built upon the outcomes of Powell and Ladd (2010) to further explore whether parental aggression and attitudes are influencing factors to children.

While the focus and definition of social learning theory is more than an acceptable and appropriate way to interpret the influences of bullying, it is ethically appropriate as well. Chavis (2012) identified that social learning theory not only offered a structured and learned approach to dealing with a variety of behavioral concerns across many different disciplines, the theory also has been proven to be effective with marginalized groups such as women, African Americans,

and other diverse groups. This broad effectiveness across demographics makes this form of theory more ethically sound to use when examining different cultural groups. Morcillo et al. (2015) identified that social learning theory was relatable to the subjects of their study, Puerto Rican children, possibly due to the attempts of acculturation with other cultures. Traditional theories were developed using the values and attitudes of the majority culture, which inadvertently undermined its applications to minority cultures.

There remains an incredible need for research conducted to be multi-culturally applicable. Bemak et al. (2011) identified that “within the past two decades social justice and multicultural initiatives have been at the forefront of the counseling and psychology professions due to the increasing need for counselors and psychologists to become competent in multicultural and social justice competencies” (p. 30). Society is becoming more diverse and in order for professionals to be more effective with the new demographic, it will require them to become knowledgeable and aware when addressing individuals from varying cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as using materials that have been proven effective with diverse groups.

To understand this phenomenon, the context of bullying must be seen as a specific set of violent and destructive behaviors that exist within a system that either promotes or accepts that violence. In a society, both individuals and groups (families) exist within specific social contexts. This model fits with the social learning theory chosen for this research because it seeks to target the same influencing factors within the socio-context environment of children and adolescents. Social learning theory was used in this study to examine the attitudes of parents toward bullying and their aggression levels. From this examination, it was helpful to determine to what degree such socio-cultural factors influence children who become bullies. Power-Elliott

and Harris (2012) shared that additional research is needed to address gaps in literature regarding parental and cultural influences on bullying.

Summary

Bullying is a continuing devastating phenomenon that affects a significant number of school age children. The incidents of bullying continue to be high among school aged youth in the United States, where 77percent of surveyed students report being a victim of bullying (Ttofi & Farrington, 2010). This study assisted with further understanding this phenomenon of violence within its social context of parental attitudes and aggression will assist in gaining a more in depth understanding regarding the indirect factors that contribute to the bullying of children. Identifying bullying trends can lend itself to improving the accuracy of proposed solution programs. The method of research used was quantitative as informed and determined the validity and reliability of the assessment tools to be used (Heale & Twycross, 2015). For this study, the approach that was most appropriate was the survey method. The current quantitative study attempted to fill existing gaps regarding whether a predictive relationship exists between the aggression levels of parents and the parents attitudes toward bullying. Literature has long associated the aggression and familial factors with increased aggressive behavior in youth (Caldeira & Woodin, 2012; Shetgiri et al., 2012; Holt et al., 2009; Rajendran et al., 2016). As applied to this research study, social learning theory dictated how the data was interpreted and provided an explanation of learned influential behavior. The independent variable of the parent's aggression levels as measured by the MOAS scale was measured regarding how it influenced or explained the dependent variable of the parent's attitudes toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale.

This literature review explored the topic of bullying and the social context of parental attitudes toward bullying (Barboza et al., 2009; Bishop, 2003; Powell & Ladd, 2010; Power-Elliott & Harris, 2012; Raskauskas et al., 2011; Waasdorp et al., 2011). In general, the literature review found that bullying research has identified that other sociological factors may explain the increase in aggressive behaviors of school aged children.

In chapter three, the research design for this study was identified, along with the research questions. Supporting evidence was shared as to the value this study would add to the topic of bullying. Finally, the structure of the study was shared, including the instruments used, data analysis, internal and external validity, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 3: Research Design

In this chapter, the purpose of the chosen study was restated, rationale was provided regarding the choice of research design, and the research questions were reintroduced with more detail. In addition, I examined the identified instrumentation used in the study, its relevancy and creation, plan for data analysis, internal and external validity, ethical considerations, and evidence to why other instruments were not as applicable. Information regarding each area has been provided in order to support the chosen design make-up.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to elaborate on the effects of parents' attitudes toward bullying and their level of aggression. Furthermore, I used the theoretical framework of social learning theory to explain the influence of these experiences in the development of children who become bullies and victims. The independent variable was defined as the parents' attitude toward the issue of bullying. The dependent variables was defined as the parents' level of aggression, age, gender, and educational level. I estimated the presence of a parent's increased level of aggression; age, gender, and educational level to all predict scores regarding the parent's attitude toward bullying. The study examined the following question: To what extent, if any, does a parent's level of aggression, age, gender, and education level predict the parents' attitude toward bullying?

Research Design

The post investigation examined the degree a relationship can be predicted between the parent's level of aggression as measured by the MOAS, age, gender, and educational level and the parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB. The quantitative research design for this study was applicable for the predictive comparison approach with the research question

identified in Chapter 1. The employable definitions for the dependent and independent variables are listed in Chapter 1.

The MOAS, demographic sheet, and PAB scale was given only once to each participant. Participants was supplied a web link requesting them to participate in the study. The link took the participant to a protected site in order to complete the online survey. Once the participants submitted their answers, their information was be stored in a secure password protected server in PsychData and on a secure computer. Once the data was collected in PsychData an individual participant code was created for each participant, thus creating anonymity. The participants were not required to submit any personal identifying information.

Setting and Sample

The target sample sought for this study were parents of elementary and middle school children that were currently enrolled in a school district in Midwestern Oklahoma. I chose this school district because it allowed access to parents from various schools thus yielding results that can be generalized to a larger population. In addition, this school district was chosen because of the district's superintendent required the researcher to submit a summary of the literature on the subject, the research questions, and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Upon receiving the approval of the superintendent, I was given permission to have a copy of the survey link attached to a flyer that will be given out at the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings at the elementary and middle schools. By not providing me direct access to the parent's emails, it prevented the possibility of the school sharing parent information with a third party. In addition to having a flyer, the survey link was also included on the PTO's social media sites. Both processes assured for total anonymity to the parents' identification. The demographic sheet included in the survey link allowed the participant to identify age, education level and gender.

Moreover, I took additional steps to increase participant response rates. I attended and presented at scheduled PTO meetings prior to disseminating the flyer that included the survey link. In addition, I attended three other additional PTO meetings to remind the participants of the impending survey link. A total of four presentations were done at PTO meetings to engage participants. The initial presentation was done to provide details regarding the length of time for both surveys and the required password to participate in the study. A convenience sample procedure was used because of the ready availability of the parents at the elementary and middle schools. In addition, this research design was an inexpensive way to assist with determining whether parent's aggression levels, age, gender, and education levels can predict the parent's attitude toward bullying. The use of the internet was chosen due to the affordability and accessibility. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2008) shared that the internet has removed barriers for researchers from acquiring the required sources of information for study. In addition, Dowdell (2013) posited that parents use the Internet as a medium for communication with their children along with communicating with teachers, school administration, after-school activities, sports, music, and parent-teacher organizations. I felt the Internet was a medium that parents were familiar with already regarding accessing available websites and it would lead to increased participation in the study. In addition, the chosen instruments for this study are suited for use with being completed over the Internet.

Sample Size

The software I used to calculate the required sample size for this study is G*Power. Furthermore, for this study, I chose to use the alpha size of 0.05 and the power size of 0.80, as these are acceptable measure for research. The computed measures yielded a sample size of $N=84$.

Instrumentation

The measurement instrument I chose to use with my research study is the survey design method. A survey design method provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2009, p. 145). The survey method involved using a consent form, two instruments, and a demographic questionnaire. I developed the consent form for this study. The first instrument I chose to use is the PAB scale, which was developed and created by Eslea and Smith (1995). The second instrument is the MOAS scale (Oliver, Crawford, Rao, Reece, & Tyrer, 2007). The demographic questionnaire collected information regarding participant's age, gender, and educational levels.

Parental Attitudes to Bullying (PAB)

The PAB questionnaire is a 15-item scale that is designed to measure sympathy based on three subscales (Eslea & Smith, 2012). These three subscales include attitudes towards victim, bully, and intervention. It is scored on a five-point rating using a Likert scale which ranged from (1) agree, (2) slightly agree, (3) not sure, (4) slightly disagree, and (5) disagree. The participants responses are scored as five points for the most sympathetic and one for the least giving a possible range of 15- 75 for the scale (Hanif., Nadim, & Tariq, 2011). The scale's reliability coefficients were measured from the pilot study at an $n = 25$ (Eslea & Smith, 2012). The overall scale alpha was 0.73 with the subscales alpha at 0.57 for the victim statements, 0.64 for the bully statements and 0.47 for the intervention statements (Eslea & Smith, 2012). Some sample statements from the victim subscale include: "It can be funny to see people being teased"; "It is not surprising that wimps are often unpopular"; and "When somebody gets punched or kicked, they should not hit back". The makeup of the PAB survey scale was thought to be a more than adequate fit to the population of parents being sought to participate in this research. .

Eslea and Smith (2012) shared that the PAB was developed as a result from performing a number of pilot studies in an attempt to adapt earlier Provictim scale to an adult version. This previous scale was constructed to investigate age trends in self-reports of victimization and accomplished this by summing scored responses to four victimizations questions (Eslea & Smith, 2012).

Modified Overt Aggression Scale

The MOAS is a tool designed to measure four types of aggression: verbal, against objects, against self, and against others (Oliver, et al., 2007). Each aggression type is rated from zero to five with zero representing an absence of aggression and five representing the highest level of severity. Its predecessor, the OAS has been shown to have a good interrater reliability with a Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.87 (Oliver et al., 2007). However, the MOAS has proven to have an improved interrater reliability mean of 0.93. Some of the sample items from the MOAS verbal aggression category include: "No verbal aggression"; "Shouts angrily, curses mildly, or makes personal insults"; "Curses viciously, is severely insulting, has temper outburst"; and "impulsively threatens violence toward others or self". The MOAS scale was chosen because of its ability to quantify an individual's aggression level and it represented a reliable survey that was be easily integrated into my study.

Oliver et al. (2007) performed a study to determine the reliability of MOAS with people who suffer from intellectual disability and aggressive challenging behaviors. The researchers used 14 adult participants, which included nine men and five women (Oliver et al., 2007). The participants were monitored for 5 months during which they completed repeated MOAS tests during over 60 separate weekly observation periods with 23 different informants or primary caregivers (Oliver et al., 2007). The data analysis used for Oliver et al.'s (2007) study was a

comparison of the total score from rater one to the scores from rater two using a correlation coefficient with 95% confidence intervals (CI). The results of this study identified that the MOAS provide a reliable measure of aggressive challenging behavior among people with intellectual disability (ID) and is suitable for measuring aggression in intervention studies (Oliver et al., 2007).

Data Collection Procedures

The plan implemented involved the recruitment of participants by seeking parents from middle and elementary schools within a school district in Midwestern Oklahoma. The superintendent of this district approved the research presentation of my study to principals and to PTO within the district. Once approval from the superintendent was received, I worked with the principals to present to parents at PTO meeting my research proposal and hand out flyers. In addition, I coordinated with the principal and PTO organizers to post my research flyer information on the schools' and organizations' social media pages. Within the research flyer, social media posts, and subsequent PTO presentations, I provided parents with a survey link, additional research explanation, criterion for participation in the study, and a demographic data collection form. Upon the accessing the survey link, parents viewed the confidentiality statement, explanation of benefits and risks, compensation statement, information about the study, voluntary consent to participate in the study, and the researchers contact information. Once the participants reviewed and agreed with to the implied consent, they were able to begin the completion of the survey, which included the PAB, MOAS, and demographic sheet.

For those participants who completed the survey, they were lead to a debriefing form which included a statement of gratitude for participating in the study, a statement regarding voluntary participation as defined by the informed assent disclosure, researcher contact

information, further actions required by the participants for the study, and resources regarding depression and trauma. The participant's responses were captured and stored in PsychData, which is an internet-based social science research tool that securely gathers data from participants. The data was collected anonymously by allowing a new code to be assigned for each participant. The data was stored in PsychData until it was downloaded to a password-protected computer and analyzed in SPSS.

Data Analysis

The form of data analysis chosen for this study is multiple regression. This type of analysis provided the description of the predictive relationship between a parent's level of aggression and their attitude toward bullying, while also accounting for age, gender and education level. In addition, the study reported on the calculation of descriptive statistics involving standard deviations, frequency, mean and percent for the chosen variables.

Research Question: Multiple Regression Analysis

The research question and hypotheses is: How does a parent's level of aggression (based on scores on the MAOS), age, gender, and education level predict the parents' attitude toward bullying (based on scores on the PAB)?

H_01 ($p=0$): A parent's level of aggression, age, gender, and education level does not have a predictive relationship to the parent's attitude toward bullying.

H_{a1} ($p \neq 0$): A parent's level of aggression, age, gender, and education level does have a predictive relationship to the parent's attitude toward bullying.

The alternative hypothesis suggests that the four independent variables will have a predictive effect on the score of the criterion variable, which will indicate and reveal a predictive relationship between these four independent variables and the predicted criterion variable. The

independent variables were represented by the score of the parent's level of aggression as measured by the MOAS, age, gender, and education level. The criterion variable was the parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB. The MOAS had been tested by other researchers (Oliver et al., 2007) and found to be a reliable method of measuring aggressive behaviors.

The type of data analysis used to answer the research question and hypotheses for this study was a multiple regression. This type of analysis allows for the assessment of predictive relationships between two variables while controlling for the effect of others (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). Multiple regressions allow for the analysis of association between multiple independent (predictor) variables on a single dependent (criterion) variable (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The calculation of the simultaneous effect of several independent variables allows multiple regressions to better predict or estimate the degree of fit of the prediction with empirical data (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). This correlative effect is important to research as there is no previous study determining the impact of the chosen predictor variables from a parent's perspective and comparing it to their attitudes toward bullying. The significance threshold was set at .01.

Assumptions

The assumptions of multiple linear regression include that (a) the dependent variable should be normally distributed in the population for each level of the independent variable, (b) the population variances of the dependent variable are the same for all levels of the independent variable, (c) the cases represent a random sample from the population, (d) the variables are multivariate normally distributed in the population, (e) the cases represent a random sample from the population, and (f) the scores on variables are independent of other scores on the same

variables (Green & Salkind, 2011). If any of the above assumptions are violated, the F test for regression analyses will yield a p value that is inaccurate, and this would be a limitation to my study.

Sobol (1991) identified that equations used in multiple regression analysis should be validated to test predictive validity. The type of technique I used to improve the predictability, eliminate unstable variables, limit Type I errors, and increase the effectiveness of the original equation is cross-validation (Sobol, 1991). In addition, this technique ensured that I did not input variables that have a chance relationship and thereby distort my study results. The use of the coefficient of determination (R^2) is an effective measure of validation and identifies how well the regression equation works (Sobol, 1991). Using the stepwise regression procedure, I input the variables that would seem to have the most effect on attitudes toward bullying, which includes level of aggression, age, gender, and education level. By collecting several R^2 values, I determined which variable leads to a negligible increase in R^2 and has the greatest impact on the dependent variable. In addition, I used beta weights (β) to further assess the effectiveness of my regression model. Nathans, Oswald, and Nimon (2012) identified that beta weights are relied upon in research to assess variable importance and indicated the expected increase or decrease in the dependent variable, in standard deviation units, given a one standard deviation increase in independent variable with all other independent variables held constant. However, beta weights are limited in their ability to determine suppression in a regression equation; therefore, additional measures will be taken to account for variability (Nathans, Oswald, & Nimon, 2012). I used the square of semipartial correlation (sr^2) to account for variability in the dependent variable (Huck, 2012).

Limitations

One limitation of my study involved obtaining enough participants from the identified population of parents of elementary and middle school children. I believe that identifying subjects that are as close to being representative of the real population would increase the integrity of my study. In addition, researchers Mason and Perreault (1991) have identified potential threats to using multiple regression analysis and suggest that the design of the study manage threats so that they will not arise or are minimized. Mason and Perreault (1991) shared that problems of collinearity could arise when two or more predictor variables are correlated. In addition, though the overall prediction is not affected, the interpretation of the conclusions based on the size of the regression coefficients, their standard errors, or the associated *t*-tests may be misleading because of collinearity effects (Mason & Perreault, 1991). Furthermore, Jaccard and Wan (1995) identified that multiple regression analysis can be susceptible to Type II errors due to unreliability of measures, small sample sizes, and or the use of ordinal measures. In my research design, I attempted to manage the external events and attempt for a timely sample collection period and an adequate sample size. Moreover, I recognized that two of the threats to external validity my research faced were interaction of selection and treatment and interaction of setting and treatment.

Delimitations

Addressing delimitations from my study involved the parents who participated all from the same schools and school district. One delimitation was that the parents had to have children attending the elementary and or middle schools from which I was drawing my sample of participants. As the designer of this study, I recognized that this would limit my ability in drawing inferences regarding the chosen population. Future studies should involve parents from

different school districts, different grades, and include sample participants from both rural and urban schools.

Protection of Human Participants

One of the most important responsibilities of my study was the protection of the human participants and their confidential information. McDonald and Cox (2009) posited that there is near universal recognition regarding the protection of human participants, which is morally essential for all forms of human involved research. In addition, when participants give their consent to participate in a research study, they must be thoroughly informed regarding the study's limitations, purpose, and risks. The intent of my study was provided to participants via research flyer to leave no room for misunderstanding the information. The targeted populations were not considered vulnerable; therefore, no further concessions were made.

In order for participants to take part in the study, they followed a link that was given out on a flyer at the PTO meeting and posted on the individual schools social media page. Upon accessing the link parents were taken to the survey in PsychData. The documents that were reviewed upon accessing the link was the consent form.

All information received from participants were kept anonymous and confidential. No identifying information such as participant names was required. Upon the participant's completion of the survey, all data was downloaded and collected from PsychData to a password-protected computer. The data was then analyzed through the SPSS program. At the conclusion of the study, all remaining data was saved to a CD-ROM (CD-R) and kept for a minimum of seven years. Custody of the data will remain with me for the entire duration of the period for which it is saved.

Reliability

As mentioned earlier, both of the instruments used in my study have acceptable reliability with the PAB scale having a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.73 (Eslea & Smith, 2012). As for the MOAS, it has a Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.93, which is an improvement from the previous OAS, which had a coefficient of 0.87 (Oliver et al., 2007). Houser (2008) identified that the internal reliability of an instrument is measured with the alpha coefficient and referred to by either Cronbach's alpha, coefficient alpha or internal reliability, and should have a value of .7 or greater.

Threats to Validity

The validity of an instrument is determined if it accurately represents the underlying characteristics of interest (Houser, 2008). Therefore, identifying threats to validity assist in improving the soundness of arguments and providing the best approximation to the truth (LaCoursiere, 2003). One threat to validity pertains to the use of the internet in order to complete questionnaires. LaCoursiere, (2003) shared that a possible threat to internal validity regarding time is due to the pace of time on the Internet has been characterized as occurring faster than real time. This phenomenon is explained by the stimulation of technology in which events seem to happen faster and the person feels that more time has elapsed than what has actually occurred (LaCoursiere, 2003). Some individuals may have believed taking two questionnaires on the internet may take too long. This may have affected the number of participants who participated in this study. I had planned to use a convenient sample of elementary and middle school parents who would volunteer to participate from formal presentations and social media postings.

A threat to the external validity may be impacted by the interaction of maturation and X (LaCoursiere, 2003). LaCoursiere (2003) identified those psychological processes, such as boredom or gaining experience, that systematically change over time, may become evident in participants. This phenomenon can be in participants who have some experience with taking internet questionnaires and will ultimately affect the overall generalizability of the study (LaCoursiere, 2003).

Summary

As I have identified, bullying is a growing phenomenon that affects a growing number of school age children (Ali, Virani, & Alaman, 2017; Maji, Bhattacharya, & Ghosh, 2016; Perlus, Brooks-Russell, Wang, & Iannotti, 2014). The effects of bullying last long after the children have completed school and rolls over into their adult lives (Lemstra, Rogers, Redgate, Garner, & Moraros, 2011). I believe the purpose of this study was to discover data that could lead to further inquiries, additional assessments, and instruments to capture sociological factors that contribute to bullying; to provide data that will lead to improved training of school staff; and additional research could lead to improved policy changes regarding bullying.

Furthermore, I believe this study will be extremely important to administrators, teachers, parents, community leaders, counselors, counselor educators and social workers. Finally, the implications for social change in relation to this experimental study would be in the areas of decreased incidence of bullying among school age children, increased awareness of the long-term effects of bullying, and greater attention by the research community to generate more research studies in this field.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to examine whether there was a predictive relationship between a parent's aggression level, including gender, age and level of education and the parent's attitude toward bullying. Previous researchers have determined that childhood exposures to aggressive behaviors in families have been associated with aggressive behaviors developing in children (Caldeira & Woodin, 2012). In addition, Caldeira and Woodin (2012) identified in their research on bullying of school-age children that there is a link between aggressive behaviors of youth and the family environment. Multiple linear regression analysis was the chosen form of data analysis used to examine the data for this study. Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2013) shared that multiple regression is a highly general and therefore very flexible data analytic system. The scores on the MOAS as well as the gender, age, and education level were utilized as the predictor variables. The PAB scale served as the criterion variable. The gap in research that I chose to examine was the sociocultural aspects of the bullying phenomenon. Specifically, this study examined whether the aggression level of parents could predict their attitudes toward bullying and if these attitudes are correlated to the parents' age, gender, and education level.

Once IRB approval was obtained (IRB #: 11-30-17-0268704, Expires on 11-29-2018), data collection was implemented and occurred over 65 days. In this chapter, I will summarize the results of the data analysis and compare how these results were used to answer the hypothesis and research question. This chapter will also include descriptions of the data collection process, response rates, and participant characteristics. In addition, the data results will be discussed beginning with data screening and then as the data was examined through multiple regression

analysis. Finally, the results of the analysis will be used to answer the research hypothesis and question.

Data Collection

The surveys used for this study included the PAB Scale, the MOAS, and a demographic sheet consisting of the participant's age, gender, and education level. Upon IRB approval, I scheduled with the principal from one of the elementary schools in the school district in Midwestern Oklahoma and presented my study at the PTO meeting. While at this meeting, I passed out participant recruitment flyers that included a web link address to the surveys in Psychdata. During this PTO meeting, the school counselor presented the option of placing my flyer on their social media sites. I then amended my IRB application and submitted a change of procedures request to include the use of social media sites for one of the elementary and middle school within the district. After my IRB amendment was approved, I sought to have my recruitment flyers and survey web links posted on both schools' social media sites. During the months of December 2017 and January 2018 the parent participants grew from 14 in December 2017 to 47 in January 2018. Recognizing that participation was slowing, in February 2018 I had my recruitment flyer reposted on the elementary school's social media page and sought to amend my IRB procedures once again to include an additional elementary school. I was able to attend and present my research participation opportunity at a PTO meeting in February 2018 at this elementary school and have my flyer listed on their social media site as well. The participant total rose from 47 to 89 by including this third school. Upon each parent participant accessing the survey link, they were taken to a consent page which provided a description of the study background, procedures and sample questions. The initial page also included a statement of consent and confirmation button, whereas if the participant chose *yes* to participate the link

would take them to the first survey. If the participant chose *no*, the link would take them to a page thanking them for their consideration. Of the possible 450 parents who are members of the PTO at all three schools, I received a total of 112 responses (24.8%) with 89 (19.7%) completing all of the required surveys of this study. There were 23 responses removed due to incomplete instruments, resulting in a total of 89 ($N=89$) surveys included for data analysis.

Participant Characteristics

The participants of this study were composed of volunteer parents from two elementary schools and one middle school within a school district in Midwestern Oklahoma. The criteria for the participants included they had to be at least 18 years of age and a parent of a current elementary and or middle school student from the schools. The parent volunteers were recruited from the PTO at each school. The identities of the participants were kept confidential as there was no sharing of any identifiable information. Kilinc and Firat (2017) shared that in research in which the revealing of participant identities is a concern, online surveys may provide more flexible and positive results than face-to-face surveys. Of the 89 parents that met criteria for participating in this study and completed all of the surveys, 82 were female (92.1%) and 7 were male (7.9%). Also, the participants were asked to self-identify an age range that they identify with rather than reveal their specific age. Of the available ranges provided 12 (13.5%) were in the 25-34 age range, 65 (73%) were in the 35-44 age range, 10 (11.2%) were in the 45-54 age range, and two (2.2%) were in the 55+ age range. Finally, the parents who participated in this study came from a variety of educational backgrounds. The parents' educational level showed that one (1.1%) with 2 years, one (1.1%) with 3 years, one (1.1%) with 4 years, four (4.5%) with 12 years, two (2.2%) with 13 years, eight (9.0%) with 14 years, five (5.6%) with 15 years, 21

(23.6%) with 16 years, 11 (12.4%) with 17 years, 14 (15.7%) with 18 years, and 21 (23.6%) with 19 years of education. Participant demographics can be found in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographics

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	7	7.9	7.9	7.9
Female	82	92.1	92.1	100.0
Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Age (actual age in years)	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
25-34	12	13.5	13.5	13.5
35-44	65	73.0	73.0	86.5
45-54	10	11.2	11.2	97.8
55+	2	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Educ Level (in Years)	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2	1	1.1	1.1	1.1
3	1	1.1	1.1	2.2
4	1	1.1	1.1	3.4
12	4	4.5	4.5	7.9
13	2	2.2	2.2	10.1
14	8	9.0	9.0	19.1
15	5	5.6	5.6	24.7
16	21	23.6	23.6	48.3
17	11	12.4	12.4	60.7
18	14	15.7	15.7	76.4
19	21	23.6	23.6	100.0
Total	89	100.0	100.0	

Data Screening and Preparation

Prior to processing my data in multiple regression analysis, several steps were taken to ensure all variables were ready to be analyzed. First, the data was reviewed and screened for any incomplete surveys. As a result, I deleted all 23 cases that were incomplete. Second, I reversed the scored answers for Questions 1, 7, 10, 11, and 13 of the PAB scale. Eslea and Smith (2012) indicated that these five listed questions were written as reversed items and would require reverse scoring. Furthermore, I coded the responses for the gender variable with 0 for males and 1 for females. After I finalized the scores for both the PAB scale and the MOAS scale, I prepared the outcomes for data entry into SPSS. Once the data was screened and reviewed for accuracy, a multiple linear regression model analysis was performed to determine if the parent's level of aggression as measured by the MOAS, age, gender and education level (independent variables) could predict the parent's attitudes toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale (dependent variable).

In addition, I have recognized that one of the variables used in this study is gender and is measured as being either male or female. By limiting the results of the gender variable to two categories it caused it to be calculated as a categorical variable. Therefore, I ran a *t* test to check this variable for statistical significance and check the difference in the mean of this continuous variable across the two groups, male and female. The test variable used to compare against the grouping variable is the PAB scale score.

Data Analysis Results

Upon reviewing the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, in particular the relationship between a participant's scores on the MOAS instrument and the PAB scale, it revealed the MOAS scores correlate negatively with the PAB scores ($r = -.019, p < .01$). These results

showed a weak negative correlation and an inverse relationship: as MOAS scores increase, PAB scores decrease. In addition, the gender predictor variable showed a weak negative correlation with the PAB scale ($r = -.046, p < .01$). However, both the age and education level predictor variables displayed positive correlations with the PAB scale, albeit they were weak relationships, with ($r = .145, p > .01$) and ($r = .163, p > .01$) respectively. See Table 2. To check for errors, I reviewed the histogram which revealed the PAB scale (dependent variable) showing normality in its distribution as well as the normal P-P plot of regression. See Figures 1 and 2. In addition, the Durbin-Watson statistic was calculated at a 2.175 which is slightly above the optimal of 2.0 and is considered acceptable and an indication of independence of errors. See Table 5. In regard to the collinearity statistics, the tolerance was at .883 which is above the error indicator of .10 and the VIF is 1.132 which indicates when less than 10 that multicollinearity was not an issue. See Table 8.

The results of the independent samples t test to evaluate the PAB scores for the gender variable, which involved men as compared to women showed a slight significance, $t(87) = .432, p = .67$. The difference in the mean across the two groups was .92 which is small. Finally, the 95% confidence interval for the difference in means was small, ranging from -5.73 to 7.57. See Tables 3 and 4.

Table 2

Correlations

		PAB Score	MOAS Score	Age	Gender	Education Lvl
Pearson Correlation	PAB Score	1.000	-.019	.145	-.046	.163
	MOAS Score	-.019	1.000	-.117	-.008	.126
	Age	.145	-.117	1.000	-.276	.151
	Gender	-.046	-.008	-.276	1.000	-.019
	Education Lvl	.163	.126	.151	-.019	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	PAB Score	.	.429	.087	.333	.063
	MOAS Score	.429	.	.138	.470	.119
	Age	.087	.138	.	.004	.079
	Gender	.333	.470	.004	.	.430
	Education Lvl	.063	.119	.079	.430	.
N	PAB Score	89	89	89	89	89
	MOAS Score	89	89	89	89	89
	Age	89	89	89	89	89
	Gender	89	89	89	89	89
	Education Lvl	89	89	89	89	89

Table 3

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PABscore	1	7	52.29	7.181	2.714
	2	82	51.37	5.251	.580

Table 4

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Std. Error Diff	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
PABscore	Equal variances assumed	.623	.432	.432	87	.667	.920	2.129	-3.311	5.151
	Equal variances not assumed			.331	6.559	.751	.920	2.776	-5.734	7.573

Figure 1

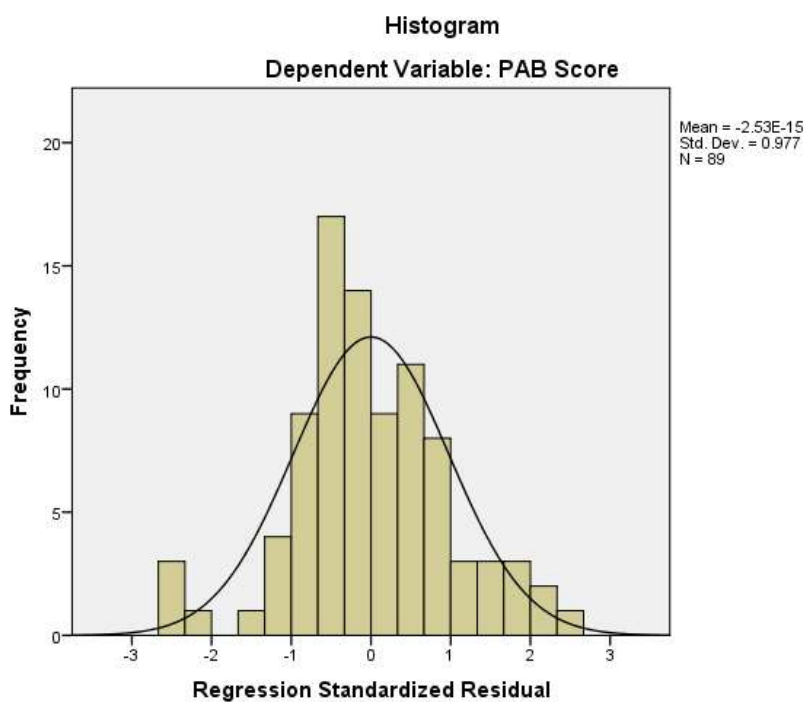
Histogram

Figure 2

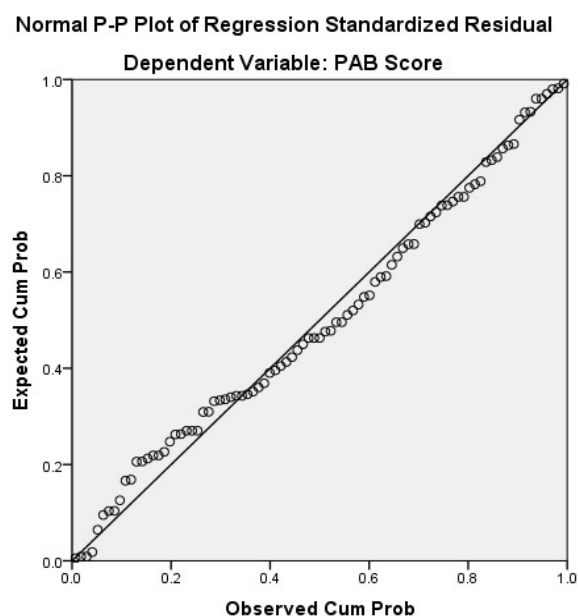
Normal P-P Plot of Regression

Table 5

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Durbin-Watson
1	.205a	.042	2.175

a Predictors: (Constant), Education Level in Years, Gender, MOAS Score, Age (actual age in years)

b Dependent Variable: PAB Score

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics in Table 2 display the five variables that were used in the multiple regression analysis. The Parental Attitudes to Bullying (PAB) scale was created to measure attitudes of sympathy toward bullying within three subscales, the victim, the bully, and the intervention (Hanif et al., 2011). In their study, the average score for the 100 participants who participated was 36.39 with a standard deviation of 5.64. Compared to this study with 89 participants, the mean score was higher at 51.44, however, the standard deviation was 5.38 and

similar to what was reported by Hanif et al., (2011). The Modified Overt Aggression Scale (MOAS) is a scale that measures four types of aggression: verbal, against objects, against self, and against others (Oliver et al., 2007). In the study performed by Oliver et al. (2007), the mean score obtained from 14 participants was and Interquartile range of 0-8.5. In this study the MOAS mean was .69 and a standard deviation of 1.062. The age of the participants were coded into five levels: 1=18-24, 2=25-34, 3=35-44, 4=45-54, and 5=55 plus. The mean age of the participants were coded as a 3 with a standard deviation of .583. The gender mean was 1.92 with the males coded as a 0 and the females coded as a 1. The ratio of females to males was 82 to 7. Finally, the education level was recorded as the number of years for the participants and had a mean of 16.22 with a standard deviation of 3.161. See Table 6.

Table 6

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>								
	N	Range	Min	Maxi	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
PAB Score	89	27	38	65	51.44	.570	5.381	28.954
MOAS Score	89	5	0	5	.69	.113	1.062	1.127
Age (actual age in years)	89	3	2	5	3.02	.062	.583	.340
Gender	89	1	1	2	1.92	.029	.271	.073
Education Level in Years	89	17	2	19	16.22	.335	3.161	9.994

Research Question

Multiple regression analysis was used in order to answer the following research question: To what extent, if any, does a parent's level of aggression as measured by the MOAS, age, gender, and education level predict the parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB scale? The independent variables that were used in the analysis were the MOAS, age, gender, and education level. The dependent variable used was the PAB scale. The analysis showed no

significant relationship, $F = (4, 84) = .925$, $p = .454$, $R = .205$, $R^2 = .042$, between the four independent variables and the dependent variable (PAB). See Table 5 and Table 7. The data results indicated a failure to reject the null hypothesis, which states that a parent's level of aggression as measured by the MOAS, age, gender, and education level does not predict the parent's attitude toward bullying as measured by the PAB score. In addition, the MOAS, age, gender, and educational level accounted for 4.2% of the variance in the PAB score and was negatively related to the PAB score ($\beta = -.025$, $sr^2 = .042$). This evidence further supports the acceptance of the null hypothesis. See Table 8.

Table 7

Model		Sum of Squares	df	ANOVA ^a		
				Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	107.445	4	26.861	.925	.454 ^b
	Residual	2440.466	84	29.053		
	Total	2547.910	88			

a Dependent Variable: PAB Score

b Predictors: (Constant), Education Level in Years, Gender, MOAS Score, Age (actual age in years)

Table 8

Model	Coefficients ^a											
	Unstand B	Coeff Std. Error	Stand Beta	t	Sig.	95.0% Con Inter for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
						Low Bound	Up Bound	Zero-ordr	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1(Constant)	44.605	6.429		6.938	.000	31.821	57.390					
MOAS	-.124	.551	-.025	-.225	.822	-1.221	.972	-.019	-.025	-.024	.963	1.038
Age	1.077	1.048	.117	1.028	.307	-1.007	3.161	.145	.111	.110	.883	1.132
Gender	-.226	2.212	-.011	-.102	.919	-4.624	4.172	-.046	-.011	-.011	.921	1.086
Education	.253	.186	.148	1.358	.178	-.117	.622	.163	.147	.145	.955	1.047

a Dependent Variable: PAB Score

Summary

The result of this analysis indicated that there was not a significant relationship between the independent variables consisting of MOAS, age, gender, and education level and the dependent variable PAB score. The inclusion of the gender variable, though it yielded no significance to the PAB score, was worth seeking whether gender plays a role in how bullying is viewed. Chapter 5 includes a further discussion of the results of the study in relation to the literature review and how studies like these can impact future interventions. In addition, the findings, their limitations, impact on social change, and recommendations are discussed in relation to the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The effect of bullying on school age children is undeniable. The sociocultural aspects behind the phenomenon of bullying continue to influence the behaviors of victimizing those seen as weak through the use of fear, violence, and intimidation (Power-Elliott & Harris, 2012). The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore whether the aggression level of parents as well as their gender, age, and level of education can predict the parents' attitude toward bullying. As the knowledge and awareness of the phenomena of bullying continues to grow, it is important for researchers, counselors, and teachers understand the sociocultural influence of parents toward bullying behavior. For this study, I used multiple regression analysis to measure whether there was a predictive relationship between four independent variables which consisted of the MOAS of parents, their age, gender, education level and the dependent variable the PAB. I initially believed, based on my literature review, that there would exist a correlation between a parent's level of aggression and their attitudes toward bullying based on the evidence of the literature review. However, my results indicated there is no significant relationship, $F(4, 84) = .925$, $p = .454$, $R = .205$, $R^2 = .042$, which failed to reject the null hypothesis.

In this chapter, I will discuss the results of Chapter 4. The presentation of this chapter will begin with the interpretation of the findings as it relates to the study's theoretical framework. Next, the study's limitations and recommendations for future research will be discussed. Finally, the study's implications regarding its research design and social change will be explored.

Interpretation

The completed study was designed to measure whether a predictive relationship existed between the aggression level of parents along with their gender, age, and education level, and the parent's attitude toward bullying. The results of the study warranted a failure to reject the null

hypothesis with a significance level of $p = .454$. All variables including the MOAS, age, gender, and educational level accounted for 4.2% of the variance in the PAB score and was negatively related to the PAB score ($\beta = -.025$, $sr^2 = .042$). My analysis provided the speculation that participant sample was taken from a predominantly middle-class population and provided a majority of female participants as compared to males. These female majority participants provided responses regarding the PAB and MOAS surveys that may or may not been influenced through gender and economic status. My assumption is that the results of this study would differ if the study took place in a different school district and or with participants of lower socioeconomic status. When compared to a previous study that measured parental attitudes, my study was similar in standard deviation score involving 89 participants compared to the study by Hanif et al. (2011) involving 100 participants.

Parental Attitudes to Bullying Scale

After a review of the data from my study, it was determined that the PAB scale, which measures the sympathy toward bullying of individuals over three subscales, had a weak, negative correlation to the MOAS. In addition, the PAB scale revealed an analysis score for both the predictor variables age ($r = .145$, $p > .01$) and education level ($r = .163$, $p > .01$), both correlation coefficients yielded too little evidence to support a significant correlation and represented a weak effect (see Field, 2009). To better understand the influence of these variables, Shetgiri et al. (2012) indicated that education level, family income, and family structure were associated with being a bully. It was suggested in my study, with a very weak correlation, that as the level of sympathy toward bullying increased for parents so did their education levels. Insight into the parents' attitudes regarding bullying will help researchers understand the influences that may contribute to the development of bullying behaviors in children. Researchers need further

information such as sociocultural characteristics to determine if any may correlate to parental attitudes toward bullying. These characteristics can be keys to understanding the environments that contribute to aggressive behaviors in children as well as the impact of such home environments. Attitudes, particularly parental attitudes, remain one of the most influential characteristics of the social environment of the family. Continued development of recognizable social environment factors and tendencies will allow social scientist as well as professionals such as counselors, social workers, teachers, community specialists, and other educational personnel to have better insight and recognition into the aggressiveness of children or their potential to display such behaviors.

Modified Overt Aggression Scale

The data from my research showed that there was a negative correlation between the PAB and the MOAS ($r = -.019, p < .01$), which indicates a small and weak negative effect (Field, 2009). The interpretation of this weak correlation showed that when the scores of sympathy towards bullying increased on the PAB scale, the scores on the MOAS decreased, which indicated a lower aggression level in parents. Furthermore, the explanation of this correlation indicates that the rejection of the null hypothesis only runs the risk of being wrong one out of 100 times. Previous research by Guajardo et al. (2009) has shown that parental aggression is a strong influencer of social and cognitive development of children. In addition, the development of aggressive behaviors in children have been positively identified as the result of exposure to the aggressive behaviors in their families of origin (Caldeira & Woodin, 2012). These findings can help assist with understanding the effect of aggressive behaviors within the social context of families as well as their outcomes in the behaviors of children. Aggression, like other

characteristics and factors, must be continued to be explored so as to understand their association with the phenomena of bullying (Shetgiri et al., 2012).

Age

In this study, age had a small, but greater correlation to PAB than MOAS did at ($r = .145$). However, the correlation coefficient indicated a weak effect between the variables age and PAB (see Field, 2009). The median age found in my study was 35-44 which was slightly higher than the study by Brendgen, Girard, Vitaro, Dionne, and Boivin, (2016) that sought familial predictors for peer victimization in which a majority of their parent participants fell within the 25-34 age range. It was important to identify the age range of parents who participated in this study so as to better understand the demographic as a whole and how the age of the parent could be a predictor of their attitude toward bullying. This study revealed that as the age of the parent increased so did their sympathy score on the PAB scale. Insight such as this could be used by school administration and intervention specialists to tailor bullying intervention programs so as to create partnerships with parents. The more insight researchers gather about parental influences regarding bullying attitudes, the better the understanding of what causes increased aggressiveness amongst children (Shetgiri et al., 2012).

Gender

The gender independent variable for this study had a negative correlation to the PAB score at ($r = -.046$). The effect size of this correlation coefficient indicates a negative weak effect (Field, 2009). The gender variable being used in this study had only two outcomes, so it took on the characteristic of a categorical variable; a t test analysis was run and indicated men ($M = 52.29, SD = 7.18$) and women ($M = 51.37, SD = 5.25$), with a mean difference of .92. This variable characteristic is commonly identified by most research studies involving parental

subjects to complete the description of the participants. Furthermore, Johnson, Greaves, and Repta (2009) shared that researchers have sought to promote more use of gender as a variable in health research to critically examine its influence on health behaviors and outcomes. For this study, the gender profile of the parent participants included 7.9% were males, while 92.1% were female. These participation rates are similar to the study by Holt et al. (2009) whose research sought to identify the family characteristics related to bullying and had a 91% female parent participation rate compared to a 9% male parent participation rate. For researchers, determining to what degree the effect of parental influence by gender can be helpful toward understanding sociocultural influences on bullying behavior in children. Johnson et al. further supported this assertion by stating that gender has been a prominent concept in social science for decades and fundamentally refers to social and cultural influences than the biological difference which is often identified as sex. Overlooking the influence of social and cultural aspects of people can lead to missed opportunities for policy changes and outcomes. Specifically, using gender as a variable in social science research can assist in understanding the perception of bullying according to gender and examine how these views shape attitudes. In addition, understanding gender may lend itself to narrowing the focus of anti-bullying efforts and increasing effectiveness.

Education Level

In regard to education level, this independent variable for this study had the highest positive correlation coefficient score with the PAB scale at ($r = .163$), yet, the size of the effect is weak (see Field, 2009). The effect of the education level of parents is further supported by Purwati and Japar (2017) who posited that parents' education has effects on and a relationship with child disruptive behavior. Furthermore, Dou, Wei, Jin, Wang, Wang, and Peng (2015) also

identified that there is a correlation between aggression in youth and the parents' level of education. Therefore, the results of this study which found that as the education level of parents increased so did their sympathy toward bullying still support past research. As the research grows of how family environments effect how children engage in bullying behaviors, new interventions can be developed to inform, teach, and train professionals engaged with these families.

Additional Considerations

This study was created out of a concern for the lack of research that has examined the sociocultural effects of parents and the overall family environment has on children and their involvement in bullying behaviors. As a result, there were other considerations that was revealed in relation to this study's findings. I had identified in my research design for this study that I had planned to recruit parents from the PTO's of elementary and middle schools within a nearby school district. I had anticipated that the recruitment of parents would not be a challenge and that I would end up recruiting considerably more participants than I needed. The first additional consideration was that the response rate results for this study, although adequate for research, could have elicited different findings should there have been a higher response. Baruch and Holtom (2008) indicated that higher response rates are crucial in assessing the value of research findings, lead to larger data samples and power, and lead studies to have greater credibility among stakeholders.

The second additional consideration involved the ability to generalize about the participants taken from regional area. The participants for this study where taken from a suburb of a large metropolitan city in the Midwestern United States. The chosen recruitment area may have limited the ability to generalize specifically about this population. Polit and Beck (2010)

shared that most quantitative studies start with notions about a target population that are narrow and are only focused on accessing the sample, not defining the population.

The third consideration identified for this study was the way in which the surveys were made available to the sample participants. For this study, parents of the PTO's from the elementary and middle schools accessed the surveys through the Internet using a web link. I recognized that due to the distribution method of the surveys, participants may have not understood the survey questions or the process of accessing the link. Fan and Yan (2010) posited that the way in which survey questions are worded can reduce the motivation of participants and cause them to not complete the survey. Additionally, Fan and Yan indicated that by using the Internet to provide access to surveys carries with it the implication of a biased population due to not everyone can have access to the world-wide-web.

The final consideration for this study was the concern of how gender influenced the scores of one of the surveys. I recognized that the results of the PAB scale scores may be due to the number of female participants compared to male participants who participated in the study. In Correa, Hinsley, and Zuniga (2010) study they noted their own research included a subsample of 959 cases which included 67% women and 33% men of which they concluded that the disparity in gender may have introduced some bias into their findings. Correa, et al. continued by stating that it is common that women tend to have higher response rates on pencil and web-based surveys. These considerations were derived from the events experienced while conducting this study. Though the exploration of sociocultural aspects of bullying behavior can be difficult to derive from the parent population, it is both valuable and necessary. This study sought to identify if a characteristic of parents, their aggression level, could predict their attitudes toward bullying. I further realized additional forethought may have provided a more insightful study

had the applications of parent recruitment, generalizability, survey design, and the influence of gender had been contemplated more carefully.

This study, overall, was supported by previous research that identified the importance of understanding the role family environment plays in the developing of aggressive behaviors in children (Holt et al., 2009; Purwati & Japar, 2017; Rajendran et al., 2016; Shetgiri et al., 2012). This study highlighted the contributions of aggression, age, gender, and level of education plays on a parent's attitude toward bullying. Researchers seeking to further expand the knowledge base of bullying will require further inquiries into the sociocultural environment of families and the attitudes that are produced.

Limitations to the Study

During the initial stages of data gathering, there were some limitation concerns with data recruitment, the use of a convenience sample, the generalizability of the findings, and the sampling method. In order to try and reach as many parent participants as I could, I initially presented my research study to the PTO at two separate schools that I had identified for recruitment. I had approximated from each schools website that approximately 550 students were enrolled at each school. In addition, I had been informed from each principal that the number of parents signed up for the PTO at each school was about 150 parents. The parents received an email from the principals which contained a copy of my recruitment flyer which explained my study. This process did not elicit a lot of responses from parents. Eventually, I had to add a third school to my original list of recruitment sites. In addition, I had to modify my IRB application to include listing my recruitment flyer on the social media pages for each school. The recruitment of parent participants may have been hindered by not having enough targeted schools identified in the beginning. Furthermore, recruitment may have been hindered by not

accessing the schools social media sites sooner before the Christmas holidays when parents were more active with scheduled events.

The type of sample I chose to use for my study was a convenience sample because the parental involvement with the targeted schools were very high, the PTO's were active and functioning, and the administrative faculty were eager to be involved. However, the results could be skewed due to an overwhelmingly majority of the parent population being white and a low number of minority parents as compared to the nearby larger metropolitan city of Oklahoma City. The population of Piedmont, Ok is currently 83.8% white, 4.2% two or more races, and 4.4% Hispanic whereas the racial makeup of Oklahoma City is 54.9% white, 18.5% Hispanic, and 14.2% Black. I focused my recruitment on schools that had a strong parental involvement in their schools' PTO. However, this focus may have unwittingly excluded more diverse parent populations that ultimately affected the results of my study. The response rate for my study was 19.7% which limits its generalizability with other populations. The low response rate may have been affected by the sampling method used and the time in which the study was conducted. The study began collecting data during December 2017 just before Christmas and lasted until February 2018. Conducting my study during the holidays may have affected the response rates. For this study, I chose to use an online survey method for which Baruch and Holtom (2008) stated that web, email, and phone based data collection methods can achieve response rates that are nearly good if not better than traditional mail surveys. Additionally, Baruch and Holtom (2008) shared that response rates are important and a crucial factor in assessing the value of research findings and increases credibility among stakeholders.

Recommendations for Future Research

The PAB scale was shown to have a weak positive relation to the parent's age and educational level. These findings suggest that variables such as the parent's age and educational level could possibly help predict the parent's attitude toward bullying with additional research. Recommendations for future research will be further discussed regarding the areas related to this study.

The effect of the sociocultural environment of families on the development of aggressive behaviors of children is an area that I recommend for future research. Researchers have long established the link between parental aggression and the development of aggressive behaviors in children (Liu & Wang, 2014). Additional research should focus on parental characteristics of those individuals who have a low sympathy for bullying and high anger profiles. In my literature review, I found parental aggression has been proven to be an influencing factor in the development of children, both in the social and cognitive development (Liu & Wang, 2014; Guajardo, Snyder, & Petersen, 2009; Huth-Bocks & Hughes, 2008). This is what led me to become initially interested in uncovering if any predictive abilities exist between the aggression level of parents and their attitudes toward bullying.

Another recommendation for possible future research is to further dissect parental demographics based on age, gender, education level, history involved in bullying, history of aggressive behavior episodes in the home, and occupation title. As part of my literature review, I discovered that education level, family income, and family structure were associated with being a bully (Shetgiri et al., 2012). By having additional research completed in these areas, this could lead to more predictive, reliable, and valid assessment tools to identify sociocultural characteristics and family environments that increase the development of aggressive behaviors in

children. In addition, recommendations for future research should include the implementation and training of developed assessment tools with educational and counseling professionals to effectively confront bullying and other forms of aggressive behaviors in children. Finally, family income level and how it relates to parent's attitudes toward bullying may be an important factor to compare participant populations between studies. Shetgiri et al. (2012) shared education level, family income, and family structure were all associated with being a bully. My study acquired its data from parents of children who attended parents in Piedmont, Oklahoma which has a mean household income of \$76,727 as compared to the nearby metropolitan city of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma which has a mean household income of \$55,065 (United States Department of Commerce, 2018). Further research should examine whether the variable of household income could be a factor in predicting parent's attitudes toward bullying.

The participants for this study were taken from the PTO's in elementary and middle schools in Piedmont, Oklahoma. I believe that future research efforts that attempt to recreate this study should closely examine the sampling strategy in order to enhance the attraction of a larger participant sample. Wherein, my study sought to engage participants who were members of PTO's, this may have led to an inequitable recruitment of women in compared to men, while it definitely influenced the number of participants that had access to the study. Including additional avenues for sampling may increase the number of participants and provide a larger sample of gender representatives, which could create for a better study and lead to greater generalizability. Furthermore, using random assignment as a sampling strategy could also help toward providing a more balanced recruitment of both men and women.

Gender was used in this study as a categorical variable that only measured two outcomes, male and female. This can be an issue when using regression models to predict relationships

because gender is dichotomous and being used as a predictor variable which requires it to be quantitative or categorical (Field, 2009). My study sample obtained 92.1% females and 7.9% males. I assigned a 0 for males and 1 for females in order to quantify and enter the data for analysis. I would suggest for future research additional analyses such as an analysis of variance or factor analysis be used to determine the significance of either gender's (male or female) influence within this study. This will call for more information to be gathered on the views of men and the use of the PAB scale as compared to women. The differences in how messages are received for both men and women in the context of statements used on bullying surveys needs to be examined. Although, using gender as a variable can involve more complexity, the information that can be gathered regarding genders influence socially and culturally can be invaluable in the field of counseling. The use of gender in future research can lead to more accurate, rigorous, and valid results (Johnson, Greaves, & Repta, 2009).

Implications for Social Change

The need to continue identifying the sociocultural influences of families and how they contribute to the development of aggressive behaviors in children is important to the families and schools at greater risk for these behaviors. Previous literature, has shown that parental aggression had a direct correlation and influence on the development of children (Liu & Wang, 2014; Guajardo, Snyder, & Petersen, 2009; Huth-Bocks & Hughes, 2008). Research has long provided a deeper perspective of the connection between environment and behavior (Caldeira & Woodin, 2012). Now, simultaneously, research must identify how new knowledge can create new tools of intervention and assistance. The information uncovered in research can be used in society to make positive social change efforts that will lead to a greater impact in the lives of high risk families. The knowledge from research can change the focus of childhood behavior

development and identify the influences as well as the degree of effects caused by these influences. I recognize that one of the limitations of my study was that it was performed within a population that was not as diverse as other inner city schools would be. Therefore, I hope that by applying my study to varying school demographic populations more effective community interventions could be developed.

Researching the sociocultural influence of parent's attitudes toward bullying can further identify risks that lead to negative outcomes for children that may can be avoided through intervention and education. As indicated in my literature review, research on the subject of bullying has been addressed primarily through the focus of the perpetrator (bully), the victim (those bullied) and the families (Lemstra, et al, 2011; Powell & Ladd, 2010). This focus created education and intervention programs that addressed the bullying phenomena after the children involved in the perpetration had already developed these behaviors. There has not been a match in intensity and promotion of research to uncover the causes and influencers of aggressive behavior in children. Specifically, Bacchini, Esposito, and Affuso (2009) identified that few studies have examined how young people's behavior at school is influenced by their experience outside the school and by the perceptions of the neighborhood where they live. In particular, the variables regarding parents, their attitudes, and how these contribute to the home environments that children live in needs to be a primary focus of researchers which will lead to more effective initiatives. Such initiatives can be valuable in bringing social change by educating the public regarding risk factors for parents. The public can be educated, specifically by counselors, counselor supervisors, and counselor educators through free seminars, curriculums used to train educational staff, and public service announcements on the negative outcomes of bullying, the conditions of which these type of behaviors are fostered, and interventions that can put in place

to counteract these effects. All of these streams of information can be disseminated to increase the public awareness of the deeper roots of bullying and some of the attitudes that ultimately encourage this form of behavior. Ultimately, the social change outcome that will be most anticipated is the shift from seeing bullying as an isolated set of events that happen within the culture of children and into a much larger perspective that includes the parents' home environment, attitudes, age, gender, education level, household income and other variables. This shift in perspective will allow for the development of intervention plans, tools, and materials that would have otherwise been much narrower in scope.

With the increase in scope from a much broader perspective of researching parental attitudes and their influences on children behavior, professionals within Counseling Education and Supervision (CES) programs will be required to adjust their approaches as well. CES professionals will be thrust to the forefront of disseminating findings through workshops and developing assessments that effectively identify variables that can be linked to influencing aggressive behaviors in children. These efforts by CES professionals can lead to the improvement and validity of the counseling profession. If my study can cause counselors, counselor supervisors, and counseling education and supervision professionals to consider the influence of sociocultural influences on children in their work, that will be considered a great contribution.

Summary

In conclusion, this study determined the existence of a relationship between parents' attitudes toward bullying as indicated from the PAB and their level of aggression as determined by the MOAS, as well as their gender, age and education level. With the increase in study of the topic of bullying, it became increasingly important that further inquiry be given to the

sociocultural influences of family environments such as parent attitudes and other variables that influence aggression in youth. Out of the four independent variables used in this study, only age and education level showed a positive relationship with the PAB scores. The independent variables of MOAS scores and gender had negative relationships with the PAB scores.

Understanding the correlation of parental attitudes toward bullying and other variables can lead to more accurate assessments of parental factors that influence aggressive behaviors in children. Continued work by researchers and CES professionals can further the expansion of knowledge gained from studies such as this one to increase the understanding of the parental attitude dynamic and its contribution to the sociocultural environment of families. Family environment as well as parental attitudes continues to be burgeoning topics for continued research which will hopefully change the paradigm of how bullying behavior in children is viewed and how interventions are developed. Additionally, CES professionals will be provided opportunities to add validation to the counseling profession. In closing, it is the hope that studies such as these help to lead other researchers to address the problem of bullying from fresh perspectives and increase the awareness of the influential power of the sociocultural environments of families and the attitudes of parents.

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Appendix A: Invitation to Participate

Dear Sir or Madam,

Participants are invited to participate in a research study examining parent's attitudes toward bullying and how these attitudes are influenced by the parent's level of aggression, age, gender, and level of education. Previous research has focused on the dynamics of bullying in regards to the violence and effects on both victims and bullies. Research has not addressed many of the sociological factors that influencing bullying behavior such as parental attitudes toward bullying, parent's level of aggression, age, gender and educational level. The purpose of this research is to provide investigate whether a parent's level of aggression, age, gender and educational level can predict their attitudes toward bullying. This research does not seek to identify any children of parents who are involved in bullying behavior.

This research study is totally anonymous and confidential. It will be performed as a one-time survey. No identifying information will be requested or asked and there is no release of information for any school staff employees. This is an independent study done by the researcher and has no professional involvement with Piedmont Public Schools.

The total duration to complete the necessary information will take no longer than 20 minutes. If you are a parent of a middle school child and are willing to volunteer for this study, please click on the following link, _____, which will take you to the survey. For any questions or concerns, please email me John Bradley at or call. This study has been approved by the Walden University Institutional Review Board. Walden University's approval number for this study is _____ and it expires on _____.

Thank you for participating in this study.

Regards,
John Bradley, LPC

Subject: First Reminder of Participation Request in Bullying Survey

Date

Dear Sir or Madam,

I sent a request a few days ago for parents of middle school children who would be interested in participating in my study. Your participation will assist in providing additional data regarding the phenomenon of bullying. Please take a moment to complete this survey. I appreciate your time. If you require additional information please contact me at the number below.

Participants are invited to participate in a research study examining parent's attitudes toward bullying and how these attitudes are influenced by the parent's level of aggression, age, gender, and level of education. Previous research has focused on the dynamic of bullying in regards to the violence and effects on both victims and bullies. Research has not addressed many of the sociological factors that influencing bullying behavior such as parental attitudes toward bullying, parent's level of aggression, age, gender and educational level. The purpose of this research is to provide investigate whether a parent's level of aggression, age, gender and educational level can predict their attitudes toward bullying. This research does not seek to identify any children of parents who are involved in bullying behavior.

This research study is totally anonymous and confidential. It will be performed as a one-time survey. No identifying information will be requested or asked and there is no release of information for any school staff employees. This is an independent study done by the researcher and has no professional involvement with Piedmont Public Schools.

The total duration to complete the necessary information will take no longer than 20 minutes. If you are a parent of a middle school child and are willing to volunteer for this study, please click on the following link, _____, which will take you to the survey. For any questions or concerns, please email me John Bradley at or call. This study has been approved by the Walden University Institutional Review Board. Walden University's approval number for this study is _____ and it expires on _____.

Thank you for your participation in advance.

Regards,

John Bradley, LPC

Subject: Second Reminder of Participation Request in Bullying Survey

Date

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am following up on a request previously sent about 10 days ago. I know your time is valuable. However, I am requesting your participation in an important study regarding bullying. If you have completed the study already, please forgive this additional email. If you have not participated, I hope you will take a moment to do so. The study has a defined time limit and will not be available for participation much longer.

Participants are invited to participate in a research study examining parent's attitudes toward bullying and how these attitudes are influenced by the parent's level of aggression, age, gender, and level of education. Previous research has focused on the dynamic of bullying in regards to the violence and effects on both victims and bullies. Research has not addressed many of the sociological factors that influencing bullying behavior such as parental attitudes toward bullying, parent's level of aggression, age, gender and educational level. The purpose of this research is to provide investigate whether a parent's level of aggression, age, gender and educational level can predict their attitudes toward bullying. This research does not seek to identify any children of parents who are involved in bullying behavior.

This research study is totally anonymous and confidential. It will be performed as a one-time survey. No identifying information will be requested or asked and there is no release of information for any school staff employees. This is an independent study done by the researcher and has no professional involvement with Piedmont Public Schools.

The total duration to complete the necessary information will take no longer than 20 minutes. If you are a parent of a middle school child and are willing to volunteer for this study, please click on the following link, _____, which will take you to the survey. For any questions or concerns, please email me John Bradley at or call. This study has been approved by the Walden University Institutional Review Board. Walden University's approval number for this study is _____ and it expires on _____.

Thank you for your participation in advance.

Regards,

John Bradley, LPC

Subject: Third Reminder of Participation Request in Bullying Survey

Date

Dear Sir or Madam,

I apologize for bombarding your inbox with emails. However, I am requesting just a moment of your valuable time to participate in a valuable research study regarding bullying. Please, if you haven't accessed the link to the survey, please do so now. Your time will be greatly appreciated. If you have participated, I thank you for your contribution as a participant.

Participants are invited to participate in a research study examining parent's attitudes toward bullying and how these attitudes are influenced by the parent's level of aggression, age, gender, and level of education. Previous research has focused on the dynamic of bullying in regards to the violence and effects on both victims and bullies. Research has not addressed many of the sociological factors that influencing bullying behavior such as parental attitudes toward bullying, parent's level of aggression, age, gender and educational level. The purpose of this research is to provide investigate whether a parent's level of aggression, age, gender and educational level can predict their attitudes toward bullying. This research does not seek to identify any children of parents who are involved in bullying behavior.

This research study is totally anonymous and confidential. It will be performed as a one-time survey. No identifying information will be requested or asked and there is no release of information for any school staff employees. This is an independent study done by the researcher and has no professional involvement with Piedmont Public Schools.

The total duration to complete the necessary information will take no longer than 20 minutes. If you are a parent of a middle school child and are willing to volunteer for this study, please click on the following link, _____, which will take you to the survey. For any questions or concerns, please email me John Bradley at or call. This study has been approved by the Walden University Institutional Review Board. Walden University's approval number for this study is _____ and it expires on _____.

Thank you for your participation in advance.

Regards,

John Bradley, LPC

Appendix B: Demographic Sheet

Participants are invited to participate in a research study examining parent's attitudes toward bullying and how these attitudes are influenced by the parent's level of aggression, age, gender, and level of education. Please be aware that all information is kept completely confidential and anonymous. In addition, all forms are kept electronically in a password secure file.

This survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, please contact John Bradley at or call.

Please Answer the Following Questions:

1. Age (actual age in years)
2. Gender (male, female) Male-0 Female-1

Educational Level

3. Please indicate your current level of education in years. The level of education for the participant will be represented by 1-12 for primary and secondary school. For every year attended above high school, the participant will add an additional year to their total.

Is there anything you would like to add that I have not yet asked?

Appendix C: Debriefing Form

Thank you for your participation in this research study. I am very much appreciative of your desire to contribute to such an important subject like bullying. The sociological factors of parent's attitudes toward bullying, their level of aggression and their possible link makes this a worthwhile study. Please be reminded this study is completely anonymous and confidential. No personal identifying information will be gathered or released from this study. In addition, no information will be released to Piedmont Public Schools.

Finally, there will be no further contact from me regarding your participation in this study. If you feel any residual effects from your participation in this study, please contact your local mental health professional in your area. You may print or save this form for your records. If you have any other questions not answered in this form, feel free to contact me, John Bradley at or by email at.

Thank you again for your participation.

Appendix D: Permission to use the PAB Scale

RE: Letter Seeking Permission to Use Parental Attitudes to Bullying (PAB) Scale

Hi John, Yes that's fine. Feel free to use the scale.
Best wishes
Mike

From: John Bradley
Sent: 02 November 2017 17:29
To: Mike J Eslea <MJEslea@uclan.ac.uk>
Subject: Letter Seeking Permission to Use Parental Attitudes to Bullying (PAB) Scale

November 2, 2017

Dr. Mike Eslea
Senior Lecturer
University of Central Lancashire, U.K.

RE: Letter Seeking Permission to Use Parental Attitudes to Bullying (PAB) Scale

Dear Sir:

I am a doctoral student from Walden University writing my dissertation titled *Identifying Whether the Aggression Level of Parents Can Predict the Parent's Attitudes toward Bullying* under the direction of my dissertation committee chaired by Dr. Jayce Patton, who can be reached at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. I am currently submitting my IRB application but must secure permission first for the use of proposed scales. I would like your permission to use the Parental Attitudes to Bullying (PAB) Scale instrument in my research study. I would like to use and print your survey under the following conditions: I will use the survey only for my research study and will not sell or use it with any compensated or curriculum development activities. I will include the copyright statement on all copies of the instrument. I will send a copy of my completed research study to your attention upon completion of the study. If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by replying to me through e-mail:

[REDACTED]

Respectfully,
John Bradley
Doctoral Candidate
Mike J Eslea <MJEslea@uclan.ac.uk>
Mon 11/6/2017 4:49 AM
To: John Bradley [REDACTED]

Appendix E: Permission to use the MOAS Scale

Title: Use of a modified version of the Overt Aggression Scale in the measurement and assessment of aggressive behaviours following brain injury

Author: NICK ALDERMAN, CAROLINE KNIGHT, COLLETTE MORGAN

Publication: BRAIN INJURY

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