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Bullying and Resilience in Elementary School Children and Mitigating Pro-Social Behaviors

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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Suzette A. Bean

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2019

Abstract

Bullying and Resilience in Elementary School Children and Mitigating Pro-Social Behaviors

by

Suzette A. Bean

MA, Delaware State University, 2002

BS, Cambridge University, 2000

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Forensic Psychology

Walden University

May 2019

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between bullying behaviors, as measured by the Personal Experiences Checklist (PECK), and resilience, as measured by the Social Emotional Assets and Resilience Scales (SEARS), as well as whether the prosocial behaviors of controling anger, solving problems, and cooperating with others during activities mitigated the effects of bullying behaviors. A relationship between bullying behaviors and resiliency in children has been shown in past research. The theoretical framework for this study was social learning theory. The foundation of social learning theory is that children learned behaviors by imitating the behaviors of others. A sample of 8- to 11-year-old students from local primary schools in Bermuda completed the PECK and the SEARS. Simple regression, multiple regression, and ANOVA were used to analytically examine the relationship between variables. The findings of this study built on existing research, which suggested that children who were more resilient and exhibited more prosocial behaviors, experienced less victimization through bullying. In this study, it was found that the more children were bullied, the less resilient they were. The results of this study have the potential for positive social change through being used for the development and implementation of appropriate social and emotional learning programs. The long-term results of such programs include the reduction of bullying behavior during childhood, adolescent, and adult years, with children having more control over their behaviors, reducing their involvement with the justice system both in their childhood and adult years.

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Acknowledgments

First, I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Jana Price-Sharps and Dr. Jessica Hart. I would like to thank Dr. Price-Sharps for her constant support, kindness, and knowledge during this process. She made this journey bearable, and I am forever grateful for all her encouraging words along the way. I would also like to thank Dr. Jessica Hart for her prompt and constructive feedback that helped make me a better writer. I am also thankful to Dr. Tracy Mallett for taking the time to review my work.

Secondly, I would lke to thank my husband for his encouragement, patience, and understanding throughout this journey. He stood by me through the terars, frustration, late nights, excitements, and celebrations with unwavering love. For those things, I am eternally grateful.

I am also thankful to those persons in the Bermuda Education System that gave me permission to conduct my research in the school system as well as at individual school sites.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Children deserve to live and be educated in safe and healthy environments. Bullying is a complex, serious, international problem (Turner, Finkelhor, Shattuck, Hamby, & Mitchell, 2015). Some children are better able to withstand the setbacks associated with bullying, while others are more susceptible to this type of victimization (Zhou, Liu, Niu, Sun, & Fan, 2017). Several researchers have proposed definitions of bullying in an attempt to better understand the phenomenon (Bradshaw, Crous, Rees, & Turner, 2017; Gladden, Vivolo-Kantor, Hamburger, & Lumpkin, 2014; Moore & Woodcock, 2017; Olweus & Limber, 2018; Volk, Veenstra, & Espelage, 2017). Although bullying behaviors may have been present inside and outside school settings, systematic research conducted on this issue prior to the 1970s was rare (Koo, 2007). According to Koo (2007), this phenomenon may now be labeled bullying, yet in the past was labeled as harassment. In the 1950s, when a person was quarantined, coerced in school, or death occurred as a result of physical or verbal harassment, it was labeled as harassment rather than bullying. In a history of bullying and cyberbullying, Donegan (2012) gave an individual's survival instinct and their drive to perform better than their peers as explanations of how bullying is unintentionally instilled in young people. The term bullying has developed over a period of time and has now become universally accepted.

To date, there is no standard legal definition of the word bullying. However, Olweus (1994) generally defined the bullying of students, allowing the words bullying

and victimization to be interchangeable. Physical contact, negative words, and excluding persons from a group were all included in the list of negative actions that constitute bullying (Olweus, 1994). According to Margevičiūtė (2016), any action that has characteristics involved in the bullying framework (Olweus, 1994) and that has a linguistic term, may be considered bullying. Saracho (2017) referred to bullying as intruding on children's rights to a safe learning environment through instilling fear and deemed it an international problem.

Bullying is a childhood adversity that happens in different forms and contexts including physical, verbal, relational, and cyber methods. Turner et al. (2015) noted the public health issue of bullying as serious. Poor academic achievement emotional; behavioral, and health problems; and difficulties with social development have been associated with bullying. Jan and Husain (2015) referred to physical and mental injuries as known causes of being bullied.

Given the significant, long-term outcomes of bullying, researchers have attempted to provide relief to victims of bullying through studying factors surrounding resilience. Masten and Obradović (2006) suggested that when adverse experiences destroy or damage a child's ordinary adaptive systems, the results may be devastating. Self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-control have been considered to be internal characteristics that increase resilience (Ahlin & Antunes, 2015; Raskauskas & Huynh, 2015), while positive peer relationships, social supports, and supportive environments are external characteristics that have been suggested to increase resilience (Bozak, 2013). Hinduja and Patchin (2017) explored how resilience and bullying victimization experiences in

young people could be measured and suggested that alleviating the effects of bullying may materialize as a result of developing resilience in young children.

Situational factors influence resilience, and since young children are continually developing, events, such as bullying, that may occur throughout their lives can have an effect on them. Resilience must first infer an adverse childhood experience, such as bullying has occurred and secondly, that the child has adapted well (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). According to Masten and Coatsworth (1998), it is that unique quality in an individual that has enabled them to cope with the adversity that researchers must identify. This has prompted researchers to focus on identifying factors that may improve resiliency and mitigate risk factors (Griese, Buhs, & Lester, 2016).

Prosocial behaviors are behaviors that benefit others (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006) and include having the ability to control anger, solve problems, and cooperate during activities (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006). Prosocial skills, such as meeting developmental milestones of rule-following (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998), having social skills and friendships (Saracho, 2017), self-esteem (Moore & Woodcock, 2017), and supportive adult relationships (Tatlow-Golden, O'Farrelly, Booth, O'Rourke, & Doyle, 2016), appear to assist children with resiliency. According to Griese et al. (2016), prosocial young people are victimized less than those who are not prosocial. Griese et al. 2016 also noted the likelihood of victims to engage in less prosocial behaviors. Griese and Buhs (2014) linked prosocial behaviors and resiliency together by considering resiliency as a characteristic of resilience. Social skills, social connectedness, family relationships, cooperation, anger management, problem solving

(Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984), self-esteem, and communication skills (Werner & Smith, 1992), are some of the prosocial factors that have been associated with resilience.

Because there is a lack of understanding of the relationships between bullying, resilience, and prosocial behaviors, in this study, I sought to investigate the level of bullying victimization in Bermuda's primary schools. With this study, I also attempted to ascertain whether the prosocial factors of having the ability to solve problems, control anger, and cooperate during activities were linked to higher levels of resilience in young children. The results of this study have the potential for positive social change by being used to help fewer children be affected by bullying as a result of learning prosocial skills.

Background

Bullying has been studied by many throughout the years, with several researchers citing difficulties with defining the phenomenon (Gladden et al., 2014; Olweus & Limber, 2018; Volk et al., 2017). Bullying needed to be well defined in order to reduce research errors. The measurement scale used in this research study included the components of the definition used by me. The choice to specifically measure bullying victimization for this research study. Clarifying the connection between what was to be measured and how the items were to be measured assisted with improving the validity of the research on bullying (see Volk et al., 2017).

The importance of finding a uniform definition of bullying was highlighted when researchers attempted to measure this phenomenon (Gladden et al., 2014). Without one standard definition, other types of aggression may have been mistaken for bullying. When one definition of bullying is used throughout research, it provides an ability to

track the phenomenon over time and offers an opportunity to make comparisons regarding bullying rates. It also allows for comparisons among and between future intervention and prevention programs. Creating elements to be used within a uniform definition of bullying will need to be revised as more is understood about bullying (Gladden et al., 2014). When choosing a definition of bullying to use within this research study, it was important for me to use words that were specific to the variables of the phenomenon of bullying. With there being no standard definition of bullying, questions emerged regarding whether the definition chosen for a research were adequate (Moore & Woodcock, 2017).

Bullying is often associated with anxiety. Anxiety is experienced by many people at various levels and has been associated with victimization (Najafi, Kermani Mamazandi, & Akbari Balutbangan, 2017). Najafi et al. (2017) found that anxiety and victimization were directly related and anxiety had a direct effect on suicidal thoughts with victimization as a mediator. Anxiety may have a serious impact on those who suffer from it. Exposure to bullying during childhood is known to contribute to mental health problems such as anxiety (Singham et al., 2017). When a person is removed from the exposure to bullying, the mental health effects have been shown to be reduced (Singham et al., 2017). A reduction in adolescent anxiety levels have been seen after 2 years of being protected from bullying. Anxiety may completely disappear after 5 years of having no experiences of bullying. Individuals with paranoid thoughts and cognitive disorganization may realize lower levels of paranoid thoughts after 2 years, and even lower levels after 5 years of having no experiences with bullying. Being made aware that

the mental health problems of some adolescents may be reduced over time shows the potential of children to be resilient to bullying exposure (Singham et al., 2017).

Children with higher rates of resilience tend to have fewer bullying experiences at school (Hinduja & Patchin, 2017). Of the children reporting being bullied at school, that affected their learning and their feelings of being safe, resilient children were less likely to report being bullied. Being resilient has also been found to protect children from school disruption. Lessening the effects of bullying by developing resilient young people has been suggested by researchers (Hinduja & Patchin, 2017).

Resilience refers to an individual having an ability to adapt successfully after experiencing challenges (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). The assets or strengths used by an individual to survive have been the focus of previous research (Richardson, 2002). Two factors used to identify resilience are the existence of a significant threat to an individual and that the individual has adapted well to the threat. As children grow and develop, they face the challenge of negotiating adverse situations. Adverse or significant threats to young people include several factors, such as living with mentally ill parents, family violence, war, natural disasters, poverty, and being victimized by bullying. School-aged children have opportunities to show resilience after significant circumstances by showing social competence with peers, academic achievement, and following school rules. Supportive networks, connections to prosocial organizations, and socioeconomic advantages are characteristics known to be associated with resilience (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998).

Resiliency may impact prosocial behaviors. In turn, prosocial behaviors may have an impact on children's resilience to different challenges. Prosocial behaviors develop over time and begin at an early age (Griese & Buhs, 2014). Individual prosociality develops through a number of ways, including socializing with others. Parenting techniques also contribute to the development of prosocial behaviors. Other individuals throughout the neighborhood and school setting, including adults and peers, influence children's prosocial behaviors as well. Prosocial behaviors have a strong affiliation with social learning. As individuals move throughout society and interact with others, they may adopt behaviors of others, including prosocial behaviors such as helping others, cooperating, and volunteering (Griese & Buhs, 2014). When children see their parents modeling prosocial behaviors, such as doing chores, they tend to copy that prosocial behavior (Rheingold, 1982). Prosocial ideas and practices are expressed and adopted by others as habits (O'Brien, 2014).

A newer form of bullying is cyberbullying, also known as cybervictimization. Cyberbullying is when a person uses technology to bully another person (Gladden et al., 2014). As cybervictimization increases, there is a decrease in adolescents' positive perceptions of school climates (Simão et al., 2017). As adolescents report being victimized more through cyber methods, less positive perceptions of their environments have been noted. Adolescents confide in their friends regarding being cyberbullied before telling their parents. During the adolescent years, school teachers are often the last to be told about cyberbullying from the victim (Simão et al., 2017). High school students victimized through bullying neglect to disclose their experiences to teachers as a result of

preferring to remain independent, feeling weak, and/or preferring not to be condemned by their peers. The most widely held reason for not reporting bullying is fear of peer disapproval. There is a need to address the negative outcomes that students perceive will happen by reporting bullies. Two factors associated with whether children ask for assistance to deal with bullying are maturity and strength (Boulton, Boulton, Down, Sanders, & Craddock, 2017).

Different strategies are used to cyberbully. Cyberbullying may include being called offensive names, being physically threated, and embarrassed through online means (Brody & Vangelisti, 2017). Both public and private comments are the most reported cyberbullying strategies used by university students. The two characteristics of cyberbullying for this age range consists of the strategy used and the topic of the incident. University students who are bullying other students use bullying strategies that include identity theft and creating false profiles. Cyberbullying topics typically focused on by university students include romantic relationships, friendships, and appearance, such as a person's weight (Brody & Vangelisti, 2017).

Another group that is significantly impacted by cyberbullying are students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual. Transgendered, or queer (LGBTQ). LGBTQ students experience physical, verbal, relational, and cyberbullying to a higher degree than their straight counterparts. To cope with abuse from peers as a result of being LGBTQ, students engage in behavior that is dysfunctional (Crothers et al., 2017), such as attempting suicide (Goodenow, Szalacha, & Westheimer, 2006). Adolescents may feel unsafe at school as a result of being victimized because of their sexual orientation.

According to Okanlawon (2017), LGBTQ students feel unsafe on campus when others threaten to tell other students or school officials about their sexual orientation. Truancy is also related to the victimization of adolescents who identify as LGBTQ (Poteat, Berger, & Dantas, 2017). During a 10-year period ending in 2015, there was a decline in the overall victimization of adolescents who identify as LGBTQ. Students who identify as LGBTQ are more likely to be victimized than students who identify as heterosexual (Olsen, Vivolo-Kantor, Kann, & Milligan, 2017).

This study sought to address the gap in knowledge on which prosocial behaviors assist children become more resilient to the effects of being bullied. Furthering information on bullying, resilience, and prosocial behaviors provides an opportunity for policies to be adopted. Programs may then be developed and made available to school children to assist with the problem of bullying.

Problem Statement

Bullying is a serious yet common social problem that occurs among young people. Over 5 million young people or 20% of middle school students reported being bullied in school during the 2014–2015 school year alone (Lessne & Yanez, 2016). Kann (2016) noted over 20% of upper-grade students reported being bullied at school during the last school year. Ongoing bullying has been associated with consequences, including social, emotional, and physical stress, that obstructs successful school outcomes and is related to poor educational, health, and economic outcomes (Landstedt & Persson, 2014; Nelson, Kendall, & Shields, 2014; Takizawa, Maughan, & Arseneault, 2014). Additional negative health consequences of bullying include psychological and psychosomatic

distress (Takizawa et al., 2014), depression (Gámez-Guadix, Orue, Smith, & Calvete, 2013; Gini & Espelage, 2014), school failure through dropping out, shoplifting, vandalism, drug use, school violence, and fighting (Gámez-Guadix et al., 2013).

Bullying may also result in victims having low self-esteem and suicidal ideation (Gini & Espelage, 2014), school delinquency, and displays of violent behaviors (Nixon, 2014). Exposure to such adversity during youth may promote difficulties for individuals during transitions into adulthood (Rebbe, Nurius, Ahrens, & Courtney, 2017). Trip (2017) also suggested that repercussions from bullying may last through adulthood. Nelson et al. (2014) have indicated that bullying behavior may originate in both school settings as well as residential environments. Bullying may result in ongoing mental health problems such as depressive symptoms (Landstedt & Persson, 2014). Anxiety, depression, and stress were found to be associated with suicidal thoughts of victimized female adolescents (Najafi et al., 2017). According to Najafi et al. (2017), suicidal thoughts, self-harm, suicide attempts, depression, and other health problems are experienced at higher levels for bullies and their victims. Researchers have referenced the serious effects bullying has on individuals, such as lower self-esteem (Rose, Slaten, & Preast, 2017; Simon, Nail, Swindle, Bihm, & Joshi, 2017), symptoms of depression (Oriol et al., 2017; Williams, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Wornell, & Finnegan, 2017), and suicidal ideation (Kodish et al., 2016; Williams et al., 2017).

Several studies have made inferences regarding reasons certain young people become the targets of bullies (Chou, Liu, Yang, Yen, & Hu, 2018; Claudia, Yin, Kaigang, & Dong-Chul, 2018; Rosenthal et al., 2015; van Geel, Vedder, & Tanilon, 2014).

Rosenthal et al. (2015) and van Geel et al. (2014) found obesity as a reason bullies target certain victims. Claudia et al. (2018) suggested the heavier the female student, the more likelihood of being bullied. Chou et al. (2018) noted attention deficit hyperactive activity as another reason to be targeted for bullying and cited the more serious bullying victimization of young adolescents with attention deficit hyperactive activity. Physical disabilities (Chiu, Kao, Tou, & Lin, 2017) and race (Rosenthal et al., 2015) have also been noted as risk factors. Several recent studies were referenced by Gegenfurtner and Gebhardt (2017), suggesting the likelihood of sexual minority students suffering from cyberbullying more than heterosexual students.

More recent studies have attempted to assist with the understanding of different bullying roles including the bully, victim, and bully-victim roles of young children (Najafi et al., 2017; Saracho, 2017) as well as the bully, victim, follower, outsider, and defender roles, showing the complexity of bullying roles (Pouwels, Lansu, & Cillessen, 2017; Pronk et al, 2017). Researchers have also attempted to discover the level of support received for those involved in bullying (Boulton et al., 2017; Simão et al., 2017). Peer disapproval and feeling weak were two reasons cited by Boulton et al. (2017) as to why individuals do not disclose bullying. The findings of these studies confirm the serious nature of this problem and the urgency of understanding what makes some individuals more resilient to the effects of bullying than others. The problem is there is a lack of understanding of bullying experiences and resilience as well as which prosocial behaviors are required to lessen the effects of bullying on young, school-aged children.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quasi-experimental, quantitative study was to test the theory of social learning as it related to resilience from the effects of bullying, controlling for prosocial behaviors for primary level students in Bermuda's public schools. The independent variable, resilience, was defined as positive adaptation after experiencing adversity, as measured by the Social Emotional Assets and Resilience Scales (SEARS-C; Merrell, 2011). The dependent variable, bullying, was defined as when one young person or group of young people, other than siblings and dating partners, inflict unwanted aggression that involves either an observed or perceived power imbalance and that is repeated or likely to be repeated, as measured by the Personal Experiences Checklist (PECK; Hunt, Peters, & Rapee, 2012). The control and intervening variable of prosocial behaviors were defined as those behaviors that society accept and appreciate, including having the ability to control anger, solve problems, and cooperate during activities.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions and hypotheses were derived from the review of existing literature in the area of bullying, resilience, and prosocial behavior:

Research Question 1: Were children who experienced more bullying more resilient then children who experienced less bullying?

$H_0$1: There would be no significant difference between children's resilience levels.

$H_1$1: Children who were bullied more were more resilient than children who experienced less bullying.

Research Question 2: Do children who were bullied more have more anger management problems than children who experienced less bullying?

$H_0$2: There was no significant difference between the anger management problems of children who experience more bullying than those who experience less bullying.

$H_1$2: Children who are bullied more have more anger management problems than children who experience less bullying.

Research Question 3: Do school children experience more bullying victimization when they have less prosocial skills?

$H_0$3: There is no significant difference between bullying victimization of children with less prosocial skills.

$H_1$3: Children who endure higher levels of bullying victimization have less prosocial skills.

Research Question 4: Are younger children bullied more than older children?

$H_0$4: There is no significant difference between the ages of child bullies.

$H_1$4: Younger children are bullied more than older children.

This study included a variable-focused approach and used a simple regression, multiple regression, and an ANOVA to measure the relationship between bullying, resilience, and prosocial factors.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical base for this study was Bandura's (1961) theory of social learning. According to Bandura, observing others and imitating the behaviors was one way

learning takes place. When children learn attitudes and behaviors that were not directly taught to them, Bandura and Huston (1961) described their imitation of those behaviors as incidental learning. The focus of social learning theory was how individuals were influenced to engage in certain behaviors as a result of the way they process social experiences (Grusec, 1992). Bandura (1977) suggested that individuals consider the expected outcome of their behavior and the belief they will be successful in their actions. According to Bandura (1977), individuals engaged in behaviors they felt capable of achieving and avoided situations that exceeded their abilities. Observations and imitation are the theoretical base that has been used to explore bullying, resilience to the effects of bullying, and prosocial behaviors that mitigate the effects of bullying.

As expanded on by Akers (1998), the social learning theory has been used in recent research (i.e., Vogel & Keith, 2015) to describe attitudes of violence that were acquired through the imitation process. Akers (1977) described social learning through the variables of differential association, differential reinforcement, definitions, and imitation to explain how deviant behaviors may have been acquired and maintained. According to Akers, Krohn, Lanza-Kaduce, and Radosevich (1979), when an individual associates with a significant peer group they may likely be influenced by that group to engage in criminal behaviors. By defining the behavior as good and justifiable, an individual is able to maintain the learned behavior (Akers et al., 1979). Fox, Nobles, and Akers (2011) noted that when an individual admires a person or views them as more prestigious, they are more likely to imitate and model behaviors of that individual.

Fox et al. (2011) used social learning theory to explain how victims learn behaviors that put them in a position to become victimized. Experiences of vicarious peer victimization have also been explored by Vogel and Keith (2015), adding further understanding to how social learning theory may have a profound effect on adolescents as their behaviors changed to match that of their peers. Rauktis (2016) discussed learning theory and its association with prosocial behaviors, while O'Brien (2014) utilized this theory to discuss the development of prosociality. I conducted this study applying social learning theory to develop further insights into bullying, resilience, and prosocial behaviors.

Definition of Terms

Bullying: Aggressive behavior towards a person who is not a sibling or dating partner that is unwanted and involves an observed or perceived imbalance of power, either highly likely to be repeated, or repeated multiple times (Gladden et al., 2014).

Cyberbullying: When a person used technology to bully another person, making use of the same definition of bullying (Gladden et al., 2014).

Direct bullying: Aggressive behaviors that transpired in the presence of the youth that was being targeted (Gladden et al., 2014). Examples of direct bullying are hitting, pushing, and other aggressive face-to-face interactions, including aggressive verbal communication and harmful writings directed at the target.

Indirect bullying: Aggressive behaviors that were not communicated to the targeted youth directly (Gladden et al., 2014). Examples of indirect bullying include spreading harmful rumors either verbally or through electronic methods.

Prosocial behaviors: Those behaviors that society accept and appreciate, including having an ability to control anger, solve problems, and cooperate during activities (Sajjad, Hussain, Rana, & Ramzan, 2017).

Resilience: The capacity to adapt successfully after experiencing significant challenges (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998).

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was a quantitative approach. Quantitative research is consistent with researching children's bullying behaviors and resilience (Hinduja & Patchin, 2017), which was the focus of this study. This study used a cross-sectional research design and employed a survey method, which I administered individually to all students. This was not the most convenient way to have students answer survey questions because it was time consuming and provided students the ability to discuss responses with others prior to the surveys being completed by all participants. According to Bethlehem (1999), surveys are normally used in cross-sectional designs and are conducted within a short time frame. Bordens and Abbott (2008) noted a reduction of experimenter bias when making use of surveys, while Cohen and Swerdlik (2005) referenced the increase of validity and reliability of data as a result of using standardized tests that have been normalized previously, ensuring the tests actually measured the intended measures. Researching resilience (Masden, 2014) and exploring aspects of different prosocial behaviors (Newgent, Beck, Kress, & Watkins, 2016) continues to be of interest to researchers through quantitative research. This approach provided opportunities for further insights into children's bullying activities (see Hunt et al., 2012).

Challenges encountered during this research study included gaining an acceptable number of participants as a result of lack of parental consent, gaining student assent, and the time it took to administer all surveys to the students separately throughout the school day. The importance of having parental consent was paramount to this research. To combat this challenge, multiple primary schools were invited to participate in this study.

Possible Types and Sources of Data

1. Student surveys to gain perspectives into bullying activities.
2. Student surveys to measure individual student resilience.

Possible Analytic Strategies

I was granted permission to conduct a research study in the public schools by a ministry director. Parental consent letters were sent home for all students from Primary 4 (P4) through Primary 6 (P6) at three local public primary schools. Of the returned consent forms, students who had obtained parental permission to participate in the study were provided with assent forms, a verbal explanation of what the study was about, and an overview of their participants' rights, which included their right to decline participation or withdraw at any time.

The inclusion criteria for this research study were being enrolled as a student in the Bermuda Public School System (BPSS) and being between the age of 8 and 11 years old. Students who were in the targeted grade level, but who had not reached the age of 8 years old or had already turned 12 years old, were excluded from the study. Students who did not score an adequate score on the Language Fluency Measure would have had their data excluded from the analysis process; however, there were no students who

participated fitting this description. The target sample size was 100 participants, however the study only garnished 42 participants.

Data was gathered from the demographic forms and student surveys. Student participants between 8 and 11 years old completed the demographic form, which included the Language Fluency Measure (Kim & Chao, 2009) and two rating scales: the PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) and the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011).

The PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) was designed for children 8 years old and above to measure their individual experiences of a range of different types of bullying behaviors. The PECK appeared to fit well with this research study because it was developed for children in the same age range as I was focused on in the study. The SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) was designed to be completed by children between the ages of 8 and 12 years old to assess their perceptions of social-emotional functioning and resilience. The short form version of the SEARS-C contains 12 items and has been proven to have validity and reliability (Nese et al., 2012).

To assess whether participants were fluent in English sufficiently enough to read, write, speak, and understand the surveys, I gave the Language Fluency Measure (Kim & Chao, 2009) to each student as part of the demographic information collection. The language fluency measure was used to determine how well the participant understood the language when others spoke English, how well the participant spoke the language, and how well did the participant read and wrote the language. Participants answered the three questions on a 5-point scale (0 = Very Poor, 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good).

I used the IBM SPSS software to compare the relationship between bullying and resilience, controlling for covariates. This study included a variable-focused approach, and I used simple regression, multiple regression, and an ANOVA to measure the relationship between bullying, resilience, and prosocial factors.

Assumptions and Limitations

It was assumed that individuals that participated in the study would not intentionally bias the results. It was also assumed that all participants would have completed their surveys honestly and to the best of their abilities. The results of this study were not able to be generalized to other primary school populations that were dissimilar to those schools that participated in the study.

This was a correlational study, which was focused on finding the relationship between the variables of bullying, resilience, and prosocial behaviors. The nature of the study was cross-sectional; therefore, causation was not able to be determined. Due to the nature of this study, an experimental design was not possible. Because the surveys in this study required retrospective memory, this was considered a limitation of this study. Young children may have had difficulty recalling incidents that happened in the past. Bias recall or inaccurate reporting may have occurred as a result of the difficulty in remembering. In this study, I only asked students to remember incidents that occurred within the last year to address children's possible issues with recall. It is possible that young children that reported a greater or fewer number of bullying incidents viewed bullying differently. Although the use of a correlational design had limitations, with this study, I attempted to determine what relationship existed between the variables bullying,

resilience, and prosocial behaviors, which made the use of this design appropriate for the study.

Delimitations

The delimitations of the study included not gaining adequate parental consent to survey students. This study included only P4 through P6 students which did not reflect the entire school population.

Significance

The results of this study filled the gap in understanding concerning the relationship between bullying and resilience (see Hinduja & Patchin, 2017). This study was significant because it served to inform education officers, teachers, and policymakers in the Bermuda school system of the prevalence of bullying exposure among students aged 8 through 11 years old and how the rates of victimization differed by age and gender. The findings of this study are also important because they begin to help researchers and educators understand the relationship between resiliency, prosocial factors, and bullying.

This appeared to be the first research study that sought to determine whether prosocial behaviors increased resilience to adverse experiences of bullying in Bermuda. The results of this study provide support for professional practice by identifying problem behaviors required to be immediately addressed as well as appropriate prevention programs that target raising the prosocial behaviors of children at a young age. Hinduja and Patchin (2017) noted the need to make the teaching of socio-emotional skills intentional with Gibson, Polad, Flaspohler, and Watts (2016) and Low, Smolkowski, and

Cook (2016) supporting this concept by calling for the development of social and emotional skills. The results of this study filled the gap in understanding that prosocial assets are required to increase students' resilience to bullying.

Social Change

Positive social change can occur when young people's social and emotional skills develop sufficiently enough to become resilient to bullying. Social change happened when young school-aged children recognized prosocial behaviors that mitigated the effects of bullying (Moore & Woodcock, 2017), and when those children who bullied others realized the effect they had and discontinue their aggressive behaviors. When fewer children are effected by bullying as a result of learning prosocial skills (see Griese & Buhs, 2014), the findings of this study can be viewed as a successful positive social change project. The results of this study can be used to assist with the development and implementation of appropriate social and emotional learning programs. The long-term results of such programs include the reduction of bullying behavior during the childhood and adolescent years, leading to children being better able to control their behaviors and reducing their involvement with the juvenile justice system in their childhood years and the adult justice system in their latter years.

Summary

Researchers have long established bullying as a serious problem (Gámez-Guadix et al., 2013; Gini & Espelage, 2014; Lessne & Yanez, 2016; Landstedt & Persson, 2014; Takizawa et al., 2014). Recent researchers have highlighted the significance of the long-term detrimental effects of bullying (Chou et al., 2018; Najafi et al., 2017; Williams et

al., 2017). One important question asked by researchers was why some people are more resilient than others. Understanding how resilience was related to bullying (Singham et al., 2017; Tatlow-Golden et al., 2016) and how resilience was developed through gaining prosocial behaviors provided an opportunity to offer a way to lessen being victimized by bullies.

Social learning theory suggests that children learned behaviors by imitating and modeling others (Bandura, 1961). This holds true for both negative and positive behaviors. Prosocial behaviors are known to be a protective factor against bullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2017; Zhou et al., 2017). Providing further research into whether specific prosocial behaviors mitigate the effects of bullying can be used to assist with shaping interventions and prevention programs. Children have the ability to learn social skills at a young age, and determining whether specific prosocial skills mitigate bullying behaviors were part of this study. This study sought to determine the association between bullying and resilience, and whether prosocial skills mitigate the effects of bullying. In the following chapter, I will review the extant literature related to bullying behaviors and how prosocial behaviors are related to resiliency.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Through conducting this literature review, I established the need for continued research into bullying behaviors of children and how prosocial behaviors had a role in resiliency. The problem was there was a lack of understanding of bullying experiences and resilience as well as which prosocial behaviors were required to lessen the effects of bullying on young, school-aged children. The purpose of this quantitative, nonexperimental, survey study was to test the theory of social learning that related resilience to bullying, controlling for prosocial behaviors of primary level students in Bermuda's public schools. Prosocial behaviors measured in this study included anger management, problem solving skills, and cooperation.

The results of this study filled the gap in understanding the relationship between bullying and resilience, considering that alleviating the effects of bullying lies in developing resilient youth (see Hinduja & Patchin, 2017). Recent researchers have highlighted the significance of the long-term detrimental effects of bullying (Chou et al., 2018; Najafi et al., 2017; Williams et al., 2017). One important question asked by researchers was why some people are more resilient than others. Understanding how resilience was related to bullying (Singham et al., 2017; Tatlow-Golden et al., 2016) and how resilience was developed through gaining prosocial behaviors provided an opportunity to offer a way to lessen being victimized by bullies. This findings of this study filled the gap in understanding which prosocial assets are required to increase students' resilience to bullying.

This review of literature has been organized into four major sections to help understand the problem of bullying and prosocial behaviors of elementary school children and how prosocial behaviors may have had a mitigating effect: (a) social learning theory; (b) bullying and factors that contributed to definitions and victimization; (c) resilience; and (d) prosocial behaviors including anger, cooperation, and anger control.

Literary Search Strategy

I undertook a thorough review of existing scholarly literature on the subject of bullying through the Walden University library to understand this phenomenon. The academic databases reviewed were PsycINFO, SocINDEX, Academic Search Complete, CINAHL Plus, Education Source, MEDLINE, and LGBT Life. Google Scholar was also used to find literature related to this research. Key search terms used to search the database included *bullying, school bullying, bullying prevention, resilience, prosocial behaviors, bullying and problem solving skills, bullying and anger management,* and *bullying and cooperation*. Although early seminal works were included in this dissertation, the vast majority of sources used were published between 2014 and 2018. Peer-reviewed journals and online books accessed through the Walden University library were the two main types of literature used for this study.

Social Learning Theory

The theoretical base for this study was Bandura's (1961) theory of social learning. According to Bandura , observing others and imitating the behaviors is one way learning takes place. When children learn attitudes and behaviors that were not directly taught to

them, Bandura and Huston (1961) described their imitation of those behaviors as incidental learning. The focus of social learning theory is how individuals are influenced to engage in certain behaviors as a result of the way they process social experiences (Grusec, 1992). According to Bandura (1977), individuals engage in behaviors they feel capable of achieving and avoid situations which exceed their abilities. Adequate incentives are also required for an individual to choose to carry out a task. Within the framework of social learning, Bandura (1977) suggested that individuals consider the expected outcome of their behavior and the belief they will be successful in their actions. The expectation of successful completion of a task has a direct influence on the amount of effort and the level of persistence an individual is willing to put into the chosen activity. More effort is exerted into those activities where the individual perceives they will have success (Bandura, 1977). Each time an individual successfully completes the desired task, their expectations of efficacy become stronger and are further developed until they are masters at the task. Sustaining their efforts through slight obstacles and occasional failures strengthen self-motivation and persistence of the task (Bandura, 1977).

Akers (1977) described social learning through the variables of differential association, differential reinforcement, definitions, and imitation to explain how deviant behaviors may be acquired and maintained. According to Akers et al. (1979), when an individual associates with a significant peer group they may likely be influenced by that group to engage in criminal behaviors. As expanded upon by Akers (1998), the social learning theory has been used in recent research (i.e., Vogel & Keith, 2015) to describe

attitudes of violence that are acquired through the imitation process. These researchers noted that those with friends who had been victimized were more likely to engage in violence than those whose friends were not victimized. Vogel and Keith (2015) described the significant increase in violent behaviors of individuals of the peer group as a result of violent victimization of peers within the network of friendship. Vogel and Keith also explored experiences of vicarious peer victimization, adding further understanding to how social learning theory may have a profound effect on adolescents because their behaviors change to match that of their peers.

When others see behaviors being performed without consequences, it is an indicator that the observer can persist in similar behaviors without receiving consequences as well (Bandura, 1977). Reinforcement may be considered as altering preexisting behavior by providing an immediate consequence (Bandura, 1977). Bandura and McDonald (1963) noted that according to the social learning theory, developmental changes happen as a result of changes in incidences of reinforcement along with other factors. Baum (1973) suggested that an aggregate of consequences may be required to influence behavior change rather than one instance. Once behavior has been positively reinforced, the behavior does not increase if the individual does not believe there will be further rewards in the future for engaging in the same actions (Estes, 1972). Mahrer (1956) noted that when reinforcement of a behavior is provided immediately after the behavior occurs, it is more effective than if it is delayed. Bandura (1977) suggested that reinforcement is primarily a motivational device. These researchers showed that when bullying behaviors occur, it is important for consistent and immediate consequences to

take place in order for observers to know they cannot engage in inappropriate behaviors without consequences.

By defining the behavior as good and justifiable, an individual is able to maintain the learned behavior (Akers et al., 1979). According to Akers et al. (1979), different forms of deviant behavior have the ability to be tested through social learning theory. Fox et al. (2011) used social learning theory to explore stalking behavior. These authors explained how victims learn behaviors that place them in a position to become victimized. Through differential association, victims seek out other victims with the intention of gaining support for their victimization; however, they learn to become more victimized through modeling the behavior of the other victims (Fox et al., 2011). Fox et al. noted that when an individual admires a person or views them as more prestigious, they are more likely to imitate and model behaviors of that individual. The goal of Fox et al.'s quantitative research study was to determine whether social learning theory could be used to explain stalking behaviors. Learned, modified, or reinforced behaviors of stalking perpetration and victimization have been suggested as results of the attitudes, behaviors, and responses reinforced through peer interactions. There were indications that stalking may be justified as a result of associations found between definitions, stalking perpetrators, and differential peer association. Fox et al. suggested testing social learning theory on both offenders and victims of other types of behaviors while utilizing different populations. To this end, social learning theory was appropriate to investigate the research questions in the current study. Because this theory was found by these

researchers to be ideal for the reduction and prevention of perpetration and victimization, policy makers may design cognitive behavioral programs using social learning variables.

Social learning theory has been used to discuss different behaviors. O'Brien (2014) used the social learning theory to discuss the development of prosociality. According to O'Brien, when prosocial ideas and practices are generated throughout a neighborhood or culture, they are transmitted to others who conform to the social habits. Trip et al. (2015) investigated the effectiveness of a program based on Bandura's (1973) social learning theory over the course of a school year. Their goal was to ascertain whether there would be a reduction in bullying behavior, anger, and dysfunctional cognitions. They found that children were able to accurately evaluate the situations and consequences of their decisions at the end of the year and were also able to calm down after they recognized they were angry. There were no changes in the levels of bullying. These studies demonstrated the importance of utilizing social learning theory to investigate criminal behavior, including bullying.

Bullying

Defining Bullying

The initial intention of the word bully was to describe highly aggressive individuals who were habitually cruel and at risk of becoming future violent adults (Olweus, 1977). The term bullying has been used to describe both child and adult aggressive behaviors against others. Thornberg (2015) noted the difficulty in standardizing the definition of bullying. Olweus (1993) first conceptualized bullying to include intentionality, repetition, and power imbalance when carrying out aggressive acts.

Volk et al. (2017) challenged Olweus' (1993, 2013) conceptualization of bullying, stating that it made it difficult for researchers to clarify what was and what was not being measured. Gladden et al. (2014) noted the importance of distinguishing between bullying and other aggressive behaviors. Olweus and Limber (2018) opined that there were problems with conceptualizing cyberbullying as a subcategory of traditional bullying for purposes of replicating research and coming to consensus on research data. In an attempt to improve the comparability and consistency of bullying data, Gladden et al. assisted stakeholders by providing them with a common definition of bullying. According to Volk et al. (2017), using a standardized and theoretically sound bullying definition was useful when seeking reliability and validity of research measures. Volk et al. (2017) provided information regarding the issues researchers face when measuring and defining bullying for intervention, research, and policy purposes. The aim of their research review was to present recommendations to encourage higher levels of reliability and validity of measures as they relate to bullying research (Volk et al., 2017). Volk et al. (2017) recommended that researchers make informed decisions when choosing a definition while also ensuring to state what that definition is prior to measuring the constructs.

The importance of finding a uniform definition of bullying was highlighted when researchers attempted to measure this phenomenon. Without one standard definition, other types of aggression may have been mistaken for bullying. When one definition of bullying was used throughout a study, it provided an ability to track the phenomenon over time and offered an opportunity to make comparisons regarding bullying rates (Gladden et al., 2014). It also allowed for comparisons among and between future

intervention and prevention programs. Creating elements to be used within a uniform definition of bullying will need to be revised as more is understood about bullying (Gladden et al., 2014). When choosing a definition of bullying to use within this research study, it was important for me to use words that were specific to the variables of bullying. Without a standardized definition of bullying, the adequacy of the definition chosen for the research study may have been questioned (see Moore & Woodcock, 2017).

Olweus (1993, 2013) stressed four components of bullying: aggression, a repetitive occurrence, intentionality, and the perpetrator having power over the victim. Volk, Dane, and Marini's (2014) definition of bullying included power imbalance, a range of harm, and the ability to identify bullying goals clearly. Volk et al. (2017) agreed that these variables formed a theoretically grounded definition of bullying. Gladden et al. (2014) defined bullying using the components unwanted aggression by one or more youths not including siblings or dating partners, power imbalance, repetition or the likelihood to be repeated. This definition took into account the likelihood of aggressive acts being repeated rather than waiting for acts to be repeated prior to considering the act as bullying and discounts sibling relationships. In Nelson, Kendall, Burns, and Schonert-Reichl's (2017) investigation to identify self-report validated instruments that measure aggression and bullying among eight to twelve year olds, they identified the PECK as an adequate instrument. The PECK bullying survey most closely met the criteria of including in-person bullying and cyberbullying. It was observed by Hunt et al. (2012) that power imbalance, intent to harm, and the frequency of bullying behaviors may not be adequately addressed in any current bullying measures. The PECK survey did not

mention the word bullying. Instead it described behaviors that constitute bullying for students to decide whether they had experienced the behaviors.

Pouwels et al. (2017) examined three levels of bullying which included: general bullying, hypothetical, and actual peers in participant roles. General concept of bullying, explicit hypothetical peers, explicit actual peers, and implicit hypothetical peers were measured against bully, follower, defender, outsider, victim, and assistant roles. The general concepts of bullying were found not to be dependent on their own roles, however all adolescents evaluated bullying equally negative. The more individuals were engaged in bullying, the more negatively they were evaluated. Hypothetical defenders were then positively evaluated. Classmates who were defenders and in outsider roles were more liked than classmates in bully, follower, and victim roles. All adolescents disliked hypothetical bullies and followers, while actual bullies and followers were not disliked as much. Hypothetical victims were found to be liked more than actual victims, but less than defenders. A profound finding was that actual victims were just as much bullies. According to Pouwels et al. (2017), adolescents may have approved of and tolerated certain victims being bullied.

When researchers provided a description of the key elements of the phenomenon under investigation prior to giving the survey, it was considered priming. Canty, Stubbe, Steers, and Collings (2016) noted the benefit of priming as a way of establishing consistency between studies and participants. Consistency with the definition, enabled researchers to make comparisons between studies. Priming may also be detrimental to research as it may have downgraded the participant's competence, making it appear that

the child's explanation of what they had experienced was less valid. Hinduja and Patchin (2017) noted in their study that when they asked if students had been bullied, only 23% responded in the affirmative, however, when asked about different behaviors which constituted bullying, approximately 70% of students reported experiencing certain bullying behaviors. These authors showed that there are differences in what a student perceives as bullying experiences and that although they may have been victims of certain behaviors, they may not view themselves of victims of bullying or cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying

A more recent form of bullying was cyberbullying, also known as cyber victimization. Cyberbullying was when a person uses technology to bully another person (Gladden et al., 2014). Olweus and Limber (2018) asserted that in order to gain comprehensive data on bullying, cyberbullying should hold the similar definition and be used in similar context for the purposes of research. Cyberbullying was known to effect students who identified as LGBTQ as well as other populations of students. LGBTQ students experienced physical, verbal, relational, and cyberbullying to a higher degree than their straight counterparts (Crothers et al., 2017). As cyber victimization increased, there was a decrease in adolescents' positive perceptions of school climates (Simão et al., 2017). As adolescents report being victimized more through cyber methods, less positive perceptions of their environments were noted. Adolescents confided in their friends regarding being cyberbullied before telling their parents. During the adolescent years, school teachers were the last to be told about cyberbullying from the victim (Simão et al., 2017).

Risk Factors for Being Bullied

There have been several studies that focused on risks for being bullied. van Geel et al. (2014) conducted a meta-analysis to analyze whether overweight and obese children become victims of bullying more than their counterparts who are of normal weight. The researchers found that significantly more bullying was experienced by both overweight and obese children than normal weight children. According to van Geel et al. (2014), more studies needed to be conducted in order for meaningful comparisons of weight differences between age groups to be made. Rosenthal et al. (2015) investigated the relationships between race and weight and how they were attached to stigma-based bullying. They found both weight-based and race-based bullying to be significantly related to greater emotional symptoms. Rosenthal et al. (2015) indicated that weight-based and race-based bullying was detrimentally related to all four health outcomes and suggested that stigma-based bullying may be experienced by younger age groups.

In a more recent study, Claudia et al. (2018) used a secondary data analysis of public datasets to study the status of all levels of body weight including: underweight, slightly underweight, normal weight, overweight, and obesity in children, and how they were related to bullying victimization. Claudia et al. (2018) found underweight and obese boys more likely to be bullied. Underweight boys were more likely to be bullied than obese boys. Bullying prevalence among girls were seen to increase slightly from underweight to normal weight to obesity (Claudia et al., 2018). The heavier the girl, the more likely she was to be bullied. According to Claudia et al. (2018), younger boys were found to be victimized more than older boys. This finding was in line with Janssen,

Craig, Boyce, and Pickett (2004), who found that older children were the perpetrators of bullying more than younger children. Claudia et al. (2018) recommended further investigations into bullying victimization risk factors.

LGBTQ students were more likely to be victimized than students who identified as heterosexual (Crothers et al., 2017). To cope with abuse from peers as a result of being LGBTQ, students engaged in behavior which was dysfunctional (Crothers et al., 2017) such as attempting suicide (Williams et al., 2017). Adolescents may have felt unsafe at school as a result of being victimized because of their sexual orientation. According to Okanlawon (2017), LGBTQ students felt unsafe on campus when others threatened to tell other students, or school officials about them being LGBTQ. Truancy was related to the victimization of adolescents who identified as LGBTQ (Poteat et al., 2017). During a 10 year period ending in 2015, there was a decline in overall school related victimization of adolescents who identified as LGB (Olsen, Vivolo-Kantor, Kann, & Milligan, 2017). Olsen et al. (2017) noted the prevalence of some forms of school victimization to be higher among students who identified as LGB than heterosexual students.

Children with intellectual challenges have also been victims of bullying behaviors. Chiu et al. (2017) investigated bullying of adolescents with intellectual disabilities and their mental health experiences. This quantitative study utilized the Special Needs Education Longitudinal Study to randomly select a sample of adolescents with intellectual disabilities. Chiu et al. (2017) found at least one type of victimization had been experienced by 69% of adolescents, 72% were verbally victimized, 50% of the

adolescents experienced being excluded, 22 % reported sexual harassment, and 10% had been extorted during the current semester. Adolescents with intellectual disabilities were found to have higher psychological distress after experiencing exclusion and verbal bullying (Chiu et al., 2017). According to these authors, older adolescents in this study were found to experience less verbal bullying and less exclusion. Chiu et al. (2017) suggested that psychiatric symptoms of adolescents with intellectual disabilities may be increased by being bullied through exclusion and verbal methods.

Chou et al. (2018) examined gender, age, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) characteristics, behavioral inhibition system (BIS), behavioral approach system (BAS), psychiatric comorbidity, and family factors and the prevalence of a variety of types of bullying that adolescents experience. Young age, comorbidity of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), high BIS scores, and some family factors were found to be significantly associated with severe bullying victimization (Chou et al., 2018). Adolescents with ASD along with ADHD were found to be more seriously bullied than those with ADHD without ASD. Characteristics of ADHD and family factors were found to be significantly associated with severe bullying perpetration. Younger adolescents with ADHD were more seriously victimized through bullying. Chou et al. (2018) suggested that characteristics of ADHD in adolescents be the focus of intervention and bullying prevention programs.

Kelly, Newton, Stapinski, and Teesson (2018) conducted an investigation to ascertain whether individuals who were more impulsive, more hopeless, and more sensitive to anxiety were more susceptible to bullying victimization and perpetration.

These authors found significant connections between bullying victimization, bullying perpetration, and all three personality variables. Highly impulsive individuals were found by Kelly et al. (2018) to be associated with bullying perpetration. Individuals found to be high on impulsivity and high on hopelessness were found to be associated with victimization. Kelly et al. (2018) also found that male adolescents with low anxiety sensitivity had an association with bully victimization. Pabian and Vandebosch (2015) also examined traditional bullying, cyberbullying, and social anxiety. Pabian and Vandebosch (2015) found social anxiety to be a risk factor for being victimized through cyberbullying.

Social, emotional, and cognitive predictors of bullying were studied by Jenkins, Demaray, and Tennant (2017) with a sample of 246 adolescents and 14 teachers. One hundred and thirty six boys and 110 girls between six and eighth grade completed rating scales to assist with finding a relationship between executive functioning, emotional difficulties, and social skills and the bullying roles of victim, bully, and defender. Having lower social skills and higher difficulties with executive functioning were related to higher emotional problems. Bullying behaviors were not significantly related to emotional difficulties, yet emotional difficulties for boys and girls were significantly and positively related to victimization. According to Jenkins et al. (2017), the more emotional problems a person had, the more they were victimized. Similarly, the more defending behaviors the girls had, the more emotional problems they had. Higher executive functioning in boys showed lower levels of defending behavior. Social skills and bullying were found to have a significant negative relationship. Jenkins et al. (2017)

noted the limited amount of information about how bullying, cooperation, self-control, and assertiveness were related, and suggested further research with a diverse population.

A study conducted by Fink, Patalay, Sharpe, and Wolpert (2018) explored school size, the balance between school gender, proportions of minority ethnic groups, school climates, and school deprivation as predictors of bullying behavior. This study included 23,215 students from 648 public primary schools, all in years 4 and 5. Of the total number of participants, 51% were males. Fink et al. (2018) found that boys, children who received free lunch, and children with special educational needs were more like to report bullying other children. According to Fink et al. (2018) children from Black ethnic groups as well as children in the younger year level were also more likely to report bullying others. Although school climate was cited as a predictor of bullying behavior, Fink et al. (2018) could not determine whether children bullied as a result of the school climate, or whether bullying caused the state of the school climate. Bringing clarity to bullying and different predictors was recommended for future research (Fink et al., 2018).

Risk Factors for Perpetrating Bullying

Researchers have attempted to find risk factors for perpetrating bullying. Mohebbi, Mirnasab, and Wiener (2016) investigated paternal bonding and school bonding as variables of bullying perpetration as part of a broader study of other forms of bully involvement. They found that lower levels of paternal care, higher levels of authoritarianism, and overprotectiveness were reported by perpetrators of bullying. Bully perpetrators were also found to have lower attachment levels to teachers and school.

According to Mohebbi et al. (2016) bully perpetrators were less committed to academic success, getting school work and homework completed, and following school rules. Thus, having low attachment to parents, school, and teachers, feeling less teacher support, and feeling alienated from school may have been risk factors for bully perpetration (Mohebbi et al., 2016). Student's perceptions of bully perpetrators and victims were examined by Al Ali, Gharaibeh, and Masadeh (2017). This study included 913 eighth grade students from 16 different schools in Jordan. Students described perpetrators of bullying as those who wanted to show they were powerful, were envious of their victim, lacked respect for others, were seeking feelings of superiority, and to feel better about themselves (Al Ali et al., 2017).

Rose et al. (2017) examined the relationship between bully perpetration and self-esteem with a sample of 971 middle school students from two separate schools. This longitudinal, quantitative study found no direct association between self-esteem and bully perpetration. Rose et al. (2017) noted that to fully understand bully perpetration, the usefulness of the behavior as well as the social reinforcers that maintain the behavior must be examined. Rose, Simpson, and Preast (2016) examined predictors of bullying for 1,183 students with disabilities which they extracted from a larger study. The sample population included 17 middle schools, six high schools, and two alternative schools. Respondents had a wide range of disabilities including: learning disabilities, health impairments, intellectual, sensory, emotional, and behavioral disorders. These authors hypothesized that hostility, self-esteem, and depression would be predictors of bully perpetration. Rose et al. (2016) found that self-esteem and depression were not risk

factors for perpetrating bullying. Hostility was found to be associated with bullying perpetration in students with disabilities (Rose et al., 2016). Rose and Espelage (2012) noted that some of the characteristics associated with certain disabilities are anger and hostility which may explain why students with disabilities engage in higher rates of perpetration. Rose et al. (2017) recommended that bully perpetrator profiles should continue to be examined.

Merrin, Espelage, and Hong (2018) used a sample of 12,185 students in grades nine through 12 to examine the link between bullying perpetration and family and school variables. This quantitative study found boys to be perpetrators of bullying more than girls. Younger students reported being perpetrators of bullying at higher rates than older students (Merrin et al., 2018). Significantly more bullying perpetration was reported by students receiving free/reduced-cost lunch, and students using alcohol and marijuana. Merrin et al. (2018) assessed school risk by asking participants how often they witnessed students using alcohol or drugs, gang activity, weapons, and the selling of drugs. Students that reported higher levels of school risk reported higher rates of bullying perpetration as well. Five items were used to assess dysfunctional family environment including: physically fighting with parents, parents physically fight, parents use illegal drugs, parents get drunk weekly, and child wanting to run away because things were so bad at home. According to Merrin et al. (2018) a significant predictor of bullying perpetration was having a dysfunctional family. Merrin et al. (2018) recommended that relevant stakeholders work as a team to create a school environment where students feel safe and supported which would in turn assist with the reduction of bullying behaviors.

Lucas, Jernbro, Tindberg, and Janson (2016) examined the severity of violence in the home and its effect on bullying. These researchers used a survey study with 3,197 adolescents, between the ages of 14 and 15 years old, and from 225 schools in Sweden. Several variables which included being hit at home, witnessing violence at home, being locked in a small space, and experiencing psychological abuse were used in this study. Victimization, perpetration, age, and gender were examined to determine whether there was an association with the variables. Lucas et al. (2016) found all forms of home violence were associated with bullying victimization. Other than intimate personal violence, all other violence in the home were associated with bullying perpetration. According to Lucas et al. (2016), children with higher rates of bullying perpetration and victimization had been exposed to multiple forms of abuse. A significant association was found between living in a single parent household and financial worries. Lucus et al. (2016) noted risk factors for perpetrating bullying as witnessing home violence, being locked in a small space, being psychologically abused, and being physically hit at home. These authors did not ascertain the age at which children were exposed to violence in the home. This was viewed as a limitation of the study. Lucas et al. (2016) suggested that including the age of exposure to violence would be useful for future research. Using several detailed questions for the research was seen as a strength of the study.

Pabian and Vandebosch (2016) examined how social intelligence was associated with perpetrating bullying. These authors used Thorndike's (1920) definition of social intelligence; a person's ability to understand and manage others, as well as acting wisely in relationships. Pabian and Vandebosch's (2016) study focused on capturing changes in

bullying perpetration and social intelligence in 10 through 14 year olds over a two-year period. Both traditional and cyberbullying were examined simultaneously. According to Pabian and Vandebosch (2016), perpetrators of both traditional and cyberbullying had higher levels of social intelligence. Those adolescents with lower levels of social intelligence engaged only in traditional bullying, while those with average social intelligence did not involve themselves in bullying behaviors (Pabian & Vandebosch, 2016). There were changes in bullying perpetration over the two-year period and the increases and decreases in bullying perpetration were explained through theories. Pabian and Vandebosch (2016) recommended that schools should develop adolescent's social skills. These studies showed several possible risk factors for bullying perpetration.

Effects of Bullying

Bullying has often been associated with anxiety. Anxiety has been experienced by many people and at various levels. Anxiety has been associated with victimization (Najafi et al., 2017). Najafi et al. (2017) found that anxiety and victimization were directly related, and anxiety had a direct effect on suicidal thoughts with victimization as a mediator. Anxiety may have had a serious impact on those who suffered from it. Exposure to bullying during childhood was known to contribute to mental health problems such as anxiety (Singham et al., 2017). When a person was removed from the exposure to bullying, the mental health effects were reduced (Singham et al., 2017). Singham et al. (2017) stated that a reduction in adolescent anxiety levels had been seen after two years of being protected from bullying. Anxiety completely disappeared after five years of having no experiences of bullying. Individuals with paranoid thoughts and

cognitive disorganization realized lower levels of paranoid thoughts after two years, and even lower levels after five years of having no experiences with bullying (Singham et al., 2017). Being made aware that the mental health problems of some adolescents were reduced over time, showed the potential of children to be resilient to bullying exposure (Singham et al., 2017).

Turner et al. (2015) conducted research to find features of peer victimization which aggravated negative outcomes in children. A total of 3,165 phone interviews were conducted to determine the different amount of peer victimization children and adolescents were exposed to across a broad range of areas, including: neighborhoods, homes, schools, or through cyber methods. Variables included in this study were physical assault and intimidation, verbal and relational aggression, sexual assault and harassment, and property and internet victimization. Turner et al. (2015) sought also to find the implications of including power imbalance in the measurement of bullying. Features of peer victimization of injury, weapon involvement, internet involvement, sexual content, and bias content were also included in the comparisons to determine the prevalence and impact on victimization. The authors compared each variable of victimization to reports of power imbalance, no power imbalance, and non-victims to distinguish between peer victimizations and bullying. Turner et al. (2015) found that almost half the sample had experienced peer victimization. The most common victimization was relational aggression followed by peer physical assault, and verbal aggression. Boys were physically assaulted more than girls. According to Turner et al. (2015), girls were found to experience more verbal aggression, relational aggression,

sexual harassment, sexual assault, and internet victimization than boys. Older teen girls experienced sexual harassment and sexual assault to a substantially higher degree than boys. Younger students received the highest amount of verbal aggression than the older group (Turner et al., 2015). Older aged groups received more relational aggression. Older students also received higher internet victimization than younger groups. Turner et al. (2015) noted that elementary school students were less likely to report a power imbalance while middle school-aged group were likely to report verbal aggression with a power imbalance. After analyzing the impact the characteristics had on the variables, it was recommended by Turner et al. (2015), that research may benefit from moving away from bullying and focus more on different peer victimizations. That shift may address the problems associated with the definition of bullying. One of the limitations of this study was using parent reports for the 6-9 year-old group. Turner et al. (2015) commented that parents may not be aware of the childhood experiences outside of the home.

Resilience

Resilience was defined as the capacity to adapt successfully after experiencing significant challenges (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). Resilience research has focused on identifying individual strengths or assets that assist individuals to survive adversity (Richardson, 2002). According to Richardson (2002), characteristics of resilience have been referred to in research as developmental assets or protective factors. Werner and Smith (1992), Garmezy, Masten, and Tellegen (1984), and Benson (1997) conducted extensive research which included several years, thousands of children, and several

communities. Each study found several characteristics of resiliency that enables individuals to be competent.

An individual is said to be competent when they have demonstrated they are successful with major age appropriate developmental tasks (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). Competence is to be viewed in several different contexts including the person's age, gender, culture, and achievement domains (Masten & Coatsworth, 1995). A preschooler is not expected to be competent in following societal rules as an adolescent would be as the expectations of competence change as a child develops and changes. It is expected that during early childhood, parental directives are followed and children begin to control their behavior. Learning to follow rules and handle disagreements appropriately during school years is appropriate for school aged children. Demonstrating the ability to follow rules at home, school, and throughout society shows competence during the adolescent years (Masten et al., 1998).

Resilience has been studied in the context of competence and exposure to stress for decades. Children were deemed resilient when they were able to become or remain competent after experiencing adversity both immediately and well into the future (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). Resilient qualities or characteristics included being socially responsible, female, adaptable, having good communication skills and self-esteem, being tolerant and achievement oriented (Werner & Smith, 1992), having high expectancies, self-esteem, positive outlook, internal locus of control, self-discipline, good problem solving and critical thinking skills, and humor (Garmezy et al., 1984), being female, having self-mastery and self-efficacy, planning skills, positive school climate, and

personal relationships with adults (Benson, 1997). In order to study resilience in a person, it must first be inferred that the person had experienced some type of adversity and then judged that they have adapted well (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). According to Masten and Coatsworth (1998), identifying the unique attribute of a resilient individual that enabled them to rebound after adversity is said to be one of the most important findings to be made.

There has been debate regarding defining the risk portion of resilience (Masten, 2001). Variables likely to have caused negative outcomes have been considered as risks and the absence of risk have been known as protection (Jessor, Van Den Bos, Vanderryn, Costa, & Turbin, 1995). Some studies measured social economic status, traumatic community events, a combination of events that may have occurred during a limited timeline, or just a cumulative effect of different risk factors one individual has endured (Masten, 2001). According to Masten (2001), there was a wide variety of risks which, when measured, the gradient of those were extensive enough to form an inverse association with an asset. Thus, low risk on a risk gradient was known to be a predictor of high assets at times, and high risk predicted low assets at times (Jessor et al., 1995).

Resilience scales measure several different aspects of resilience. Connor Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003) measured personal competences and tenacity, tolerance of negative affect and strengthening effects of stress, positive acceptance of change, sense of control, and spiritual morale. The Resilience Scale for Children and Adolescents (Prince-Embury, 2007) measured mastery (optimism of competence, self-efficacy, and adaptability), relatedness (trust, support, comfort with

others, and tolerance), and emotional reactivity (sensitivity, recovery from emotional arousal, and impairment). The SEARS-C measured self-regulation, problem-solving skills, empathy, competence, and social and emotional knowledge of 8-11 year old children. The current research utilized the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) as it measured the variables which were used in this study.

Resilient individuals were more likely to adapt to negative situations (Shoss, Jiang, & Probst, 2018). In an attempt to better understand why some children were able to endure different types of trauma, including bullying, researchers investigated how resilience had been used to protect children from harm they had experienced (Hinduja & Patchin, 2017; Zhou et al., 2017). Hinduja and Patchin (2017) conducted a quantitative study into 1,204 middle and high school students, ages 12 years and 17 years, and their resilience to bullying. Bullying, cyberbullying, and resilience were examined as variables and the results of logistic regression analysis found higher resilience at school to be associated with lower bullying experiences. They also found older children were less likely to experience bullying while at school. Hinduja and Patchin (2017) suggested that developing resilient youth may mitigate detrimental effects of bullying and called for further understanding into bullying experiences and resilience. Developing prevention programs in schools which build resilience was noted by Hinduja and Patchin (2017) as a way to intentionally prepare young people to deal with more complex adversities.

Zhou et al., (2017) recruited 448 children between 9 years and 13 years old and examined whether bullying victimization and depressive symptoms in children would be mediated by resilience, and whether mindfulness would moderate the effect of bullying

victimization on depressive symptoms after being moderated by resilience. Resilience was found to mediate bullying victimization and depression in children. Bullying victimization was also found to have a negative effect on resilience and mindfulness was found to mediate the effects of bullying victimization on depression (Zhou et al., 2017). Early interventions to lessen the effects of bullying that involve resilience and mindfulness were recommended by Zhou et al. (2017).

Moore and Woodcock (2017) investigated bullying and resilience relationships to consider whether an alternative resilience-based approach to bullying could be developed. Using a quantitative research study with a cross-sectional design, anonymous surveys and standardized tests were used to collect data from 105 high school participants. Utilizing a convenience sample approach, 49 male and 56 female primary school students, ages 10 years through 14 years of age, were used to examine three protective factors. Sense of mastery, sense of relatedness, emotional reactivity, and resiliency were variables examined in this research. According to these authors, using personal protective factors rather than a mixture of personal and environmental factors simplify the research. According to Moore and Woodcock (2017), younger children were found to exhibit higher levels of resilience than older children.

Jessor et al. (1995) proposed circumstances where high risk and high protective factors exist together. According to these authors, protective factors or assets are used to reduce the likelihood of problem behaviors. When protective factors were used as moderators, they changed the strength of the relationship between the risk and the problem behavior (Jessor et al., 1995). Zhou et al. (2017) found this correlation when

they used resilience to mediate the relationship between bullying victimization and depression in children. Bradshaw et al. (2017) suggested that children exposed to higher numbers of bullying experiences and more severe incidences of bullying have been associated with worse outcomes than those with less.

Tatlow-Golden et al. (2016) explored risk and resilience processes in early school experiences of 41 students in their first year of school. They found that although children knew the school rules and routines, there were some who found it difficult to restrain from bullying behaviors. Only a minority of children felt that the bullies would be stopped. Resilience building includes experiencing fair treatment. Tatlow-Golden et al. (2016) provided recommendations that social and emotional learning be provided to children during their early school years. Limitations of this study were using five and six year old children in a qualitative study as they became fatigued during the interviews. Although qualitative methods of research have strengths, it would not have been appropriate for this research study. These studies illustrated that there are several characteristics that have assisted children with becoming resilient to bullying.

Prosocial Behaviors

Prosocial behaviors are those behaviors which society accept and appreciate (Sajjad et al., 2017). Having an ability to control anger, solve problems, and cooperate during activities were all considered prosocial behaviors. Griese and Buhs (2014) examined prosocial behaviors as a moderator in the relationship between relational and overt victimization in early adolescents and whether there were changes in their loneliness after one year. This quantitative study used a sample drawn from data of the

first two years of a four-year longitudinal study. Students' self-reported loneliness was measured through questions such as was school a lonely place. According to Griese and Buhs (2014), relational victimization was peer-reported and referred to being left out of games, conversations, or activities, and being the victim of gossip or unpleasant talks. Overt victimization was also peer-reported and included nominating peers who got hit, kicked, or pushed, or got called names, teased, or insulted by others. Perceived peer social support was measured by self-reports of student's perceptions of their classmate's supportiveness towards them, and prosocial behavior included being nominated as being friendly towards lots of other kids and those who helped others the most (Griese & Buhs, 2014). According to Griese and Buhs (2014), prosocial behavior and relational victimization were associated with a decrease in loneliness. Prosocial behavior and relational victimization were also significant for boys and not girls (Griese & Buhs, 2014). Peer support predicted lower levels of loneliness. Griese and Buhs (2014) found prosocial behaviors as an aspect of resiliency and an opportunity to design interventions.

Sugimura, Berry, Troop-Gordon, and Rudolph (2017) examined how aggressive behavior (hitting, kicking, gossiping, or spreading rumors about others); anxious solitude (mostly played alone, feeling tense, nervous, or high strung around other children); and prosocial behavior (inviting children who had been left out to join in) contributed to victimization between Grades 2 and 8. Prosocial behaviors were found to protect students from being victimized (Sugimura et al., 2017). As students progressed through the school years, the overall level of victimization declined. Sugimura et al. (2017) found that during the middle school years, the decline in victimization slowed down, but did not

increase. There were differences in the trajectories of victimization between boys and girls during elementary school. Boys were found to be similar in their levels of victimization during eighth grade although they began with both high and low levels of each social behavior and followed different trajectories of victimization during elementary school (Sugimura et al., 2017). Girls had different levels of victimization in eighth grade regardless of the high and low levels of each social behavior and similar trajectories of victimization during elementary school. Boys appeared to benefit from prosocial behavior more than girls. According to Sugimura et al. (2017), higher levels of prosocial behaviors were a predictor of lower levels of victimization in boys. This was not true for girls. Prosocial behavior did not contribute to eighth grade girls' or boys' different levels of victimization (Sugimura et al., 2017). During elementary school, prosocial behaviors were found to remain as a protective factor for boys. Prosocial behaviors failed as a protective factor for girls in the eighth grade. These authors cited a limitation of this study as the extended time period the research covered. Sugimura et al. (2017) recommended investigating other individual differences that contribute to victimization beyond students' early social behaviors.

Problem Solving Skills

Problem solving skills may be viewed as a prosocial behavior. Smith and Low (2013) noted that problem solving skills assist students to get along with others and make friends. Being able to problem solve may assist students when dealing with bullying experiences. Brooks and Goldstein (2001) noted that children with the capacity to define problems, consider solutions, act upon the most appropriate solution, and evaluate the

outcome, may be more resilient. According to Brooks and Goldstein (2001), resilient children seek solutions to problems. Students that learn to use problem solving strategies effectively during bullying situations may be better able to deescalate conflict (Mahady-Wilton, Craig, & Pepler, 2000). Students with inadequate problem solving skills are predicted to be more involved in bullying behavior (Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim, & Sadek, 2010). According to Smith and Low (2013) having children cooperate with others, while working on a task, is one way to assist children learn to apply problem solving skills.

Farrell, Mehari, Mays, Sullivan, and Le (2015) recruited 102 middle school students for their study on the relevance and usefulness of a violence prevention program. Students participated in 15 lessons of the Second Step Middle School Violence Prevention curriculum (Committee for Children, 1997b), which included conflict, empathy, anger management, problem solving, and perspective taking. Eighty seven percent of the participants reported using something they learned during the intervention. Participants indicated being helped by learning problem solving skills, which assisted them in staying out of trouble, and preventing, or reducing their involvement in fights. Farrell et al. (2015) reported that approximately 48% of students reported negative outcomes when using skills to prevent bullying. By using a qualitative design for this study, the authors were able to understand why the violence prevention skills were not more positive. Students reported that when they used the bully prevention skills, other students continued to provoke them.

Offrey and Rinaldi (2017) examined whether the types of solutions parents provide to their children during hypothetical bullying situations were effective, whether students generated solutions which were effective on their own, and compared the types and effectiveness of both parent and student strategies. They then determined whether the communication between the parent and the child played a role in the effectiveness of their strategies. Parents in this study were found to depend on teachers to deal with bullying and encouraged their children to get assistance from the adults during bullying situations (Offrey & Rinaldi, 2017). Students also attempted to problem solve bullying situations through seeking solutions to physical and verbal bullying more than relational bullying. Offrey and Rinaldi (2017) reported that non-confrontational solutions to verbal and relational bullying were more likely, while physical and cyberbullying situations were more likely to be responded to with confrontational solutions. Adolescents were more likely to use assertive solutions in response to physical bullying situations. Offrey and Rinaldi's (2017) overall findings were that both parents and students produced solutions to bullying which were below effective, and showed that they both require education surrounding types of problem solving strategies to use during bullying situations. The findings of these studies on problem solving demonstrate the need for further investigation into prosocial skills necessary to assist children mitigate the effects of bullying behavior.

Cooperation

Children demonstrated prosocial skills when they cooperated during classroom and school activities (Smith & Low, 2013). Cooperation skills included helping others

and sharing (Gresham & Elliott, 1990). Sharing in groups, and working with a partner to accomplish a task, required cooperation skills (Jenkins, Demaray, Fredrick & Summers, 2016). Children demonstrated socially responsible behavior such as cooperation when they identified and understood how another person felt (Smith & Low, 2013). Perren and Alsaker (2006) investigated bullies in kindergarten and their social behavior, peer relationships, and peer affiliations. They found bullies were both physically and verbally aggressive. Perren and Alsaker (2006) also found that younger bullies were more physically aggressive than older bullies. Bullies who were also victims were found to be less cooperative than victims and children not involved in bullying. Perren and Alsaker (2006) suggested examining the association between bullies and cooperation in older children and adolescents.

Jenkins et al. (2016) examined cooperation, assertion, self-control, and empathy against five bullying roles in 636 middle school students. Students were in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade, and 84% were White. Girls with higher levels of assertion engaged in higher levels of bullying. Girls also had higher empathy than boys. Higher empathy was found in girls with lower levels of victimization. According to van Noorden, Haselager, Cillessen, and Bukowski (2015) higher rates of empathy may be associated with lower rates of bullying perpetration. Jenkins et al. (2016) found girls had higher levels of self-control than boys. Children with lower bullying behaviors were also found to have higher levels of cooperation. Cooperation was found to be higher in those with higher levels of defending. Girls were found to have higher levels of cooperation than boys. Jenkins et al. (2016) found students with lower bullying behaviors cooperated

more than others. It was recommended that research should be furthered in the area of violence and cooperation.

Choi, Johnson, and Johnson (2011) utilized 10 teachers, one principal, and 217 students between 7 and 11 years of age to examine social dominance in elementary school children. Children's self-reports noted girls to be more cooperative and show more prosocial behaviors than boys. Choi et al. (2011) noted that boys were found to show more physical, relational, verbal bullying, and physical victimization than girls. Teacher reports found girls to show more prosocial behaviors, however, girls also showed more relational bullying and victimization. Boys showed more physical bullying and physical victimization than girls. Choi et al. (2011) also found cooperative students tended to be highly prosocial with little aggression intended to harm others. Competitive students were very seldom involved in prosocial behaviors however, they were more likely to be involved in physical relational, and verbal aggression (Choi et al., 2011). The results of these studies on cooperation establish a basis for further investigation into how cooperation may be associated with reducing bullying.

Anger

Bullying has been associated with expressions of anger (Golmaryami et al., 2016). Although students in the Golmaryami et al. (2016) study showed outward expressions of anger, they reported having no problems regulating their anger. Hubbard et al. (2002) suggested students may show an angry look to dominate or intimidate others rather than actually having an inability to regulate anger. Managing anger may be viewed as a prosocial behavior. Anger is a normal human emotion which, if uncontrolled, has lead to

problems both personally and professionally (Hussian & Sharma, 2014). According to Hussian and Sharma (2014) resilient children are likely to express anger in a constructive manner. When anger is expressed appropriately, boundaries were acknowledged without intentionally threatening another individual (Hussian & Sharma, 2014). Children may need assistance learning to manage anger appropriately. Twenty two percent of students who participated in the Second Step curriculum (Committee for Children, 1997b), reported being better able to control their anger (Farrell, et al., 2015). Modeling behaviors for children has been found to be an effective component during interventions for managing anger (Candelaria, Fedewa, & Ahn, 2012). According to Sukhodolsky, Kassinove, and Gorman (2004), anger management interventions showed positive outcomes when modeling was used.

Lonigro et al. (2015) used a quantitative study to confirm which component of anger had a stronger relationship to physical and cyberbullying and victimization. Seven hundred and sixteen students between 11 and 19 years old participated in this study. Of the participants, 216 students were between ages 11 and 14. Trait anger was described as reacting to anger towards all negative events, while reacting to specific events with anger was considered state anger (Spielberger, Reheiser, & Sydeman, 1995). Trait anger was found to be related to physical bullying (Lonigro et al., 2015). Anger was found to be a part of bullying and victimization. Adolescent bullies were found to have greater trait anger than others their age who experience anger in general. Physical bullies were found to be more likely to express anger outwardly and less likely to control anger than other participants. Anger was not found to be a strong predictor for physical bully victims.

Further research was recommended by Lonigro et al. (2015) into the foundation of bullying.

Ak, Özdemir, and Kuzucu (2015) used self-reports of 687 undergraduate students to analyze whether anger expressions style was a mediator between cyber victimization and cyberbullying. Anger in was described as denying and suppressing any outward expression of anger. Anger out was described as making noises, saying words, or using physical gestures, aggressive movements, or facial expressions. Cyber victimization was found to be directly related to cyberbullying through keeping anger in and letting anger out. Ak et al. (2015) found that cyber victimization was indirectly related to cyberbullying through keeping anger in. Anger out was not found to be a mediator between cyber victimization and cyberbullying. Further research was recommended to further understand connections between cyber victimization, cyberbullying, and anger by (Ak et al., 2015).

Roberts, Strayer, and Denham (2014) examined the relationship between empathy, guilt, and anger and the association with prosocial behaviors and ego control. Ninety nine families participated in the study. Anger was found to have a strong, negative relationship with friendly behavior, cooperation, and bullying. Roberts et al. (2014) found higher levels of anger predicted more bullying behavior. Walters and Espelage (2017) found different results when they examined the relationship between bullying and delinquency with anger as a mediator. In that study, anger was not found to mediate the relationship between bullying and later delinquency. A limitation of this study was that a large amount of survey data was missing. Walters and Espelage (2017)

recommended the continued study of behavior control and delinquent behaviors. These studies on anger and their relationship with bullying showed the importance of managing anger to curtail bullying behavior.

Summary

This literature review revealed an abundance of studies that examined risk and protective factors for bullying, effects of bullying, and problems researchers encountered when attempting to study bullying. What was missing was an official definition for bullying. All stakeholders recognized the problem of bullying, however, there was no consensus on one standard definition of bullying. Central to the debate on bullying was the extent to which resilience and prosocial behaviors mitigate the effects of bullying. It had been established that resilience had an ability to lower rates of bullying victimization. What was not fully established and what required further investigation was which prosocial behaviors were required to enable children the ability to mitigate the effects of bullying. The quantitative research design had the ability to extend the existing literature by including three prosocial behaviors in the investigation of bullying and resilience in a country which had not been previously studied.

The following chapter provides a synopsis of the methodology which was used to conduct this research. A description of the research location, sample population, and surveys are described. Approval and data collection methods and analysis will be presented. There will also be a discussion of the limitations, delimitations, and assumptions.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this quasi-experimental, quantitative research study was to test the theory of social learning as it related to resilience from the effects of bullying, controlling for prosocial behaviors for primary level students in Bermuda's public schools. The independent variable, resilience, was defined as positive adaptation after experiencing adversity, as measured by the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011). The dependent variable, bullying, was defined as when one young person or group of young people, other than siblings and dating partners, inflict unwanted aggression that involves either an observed or perceived power imbalance and that is repeated or likely to be repeated, as measured by the PECK (Hunt et al., 2012). The control and intervening variable of prosocial behaviors was defined as those behaviors that society accept and appreciate, including having the ability to control anger, solve problems, and cooperate during activities.

This chapter was organized into five major sections: (a) research design and rationale, (b) methodology, (c) measurement instruments, (d) issues of validity, and (e) ethical considerations.

Research Design and Justification

This research study employed a quasi-experimental, quantitative research approach with a cross-sectional design. Quantitative research is consistent with researching children's bullying behaviors and resilience (see Hinduja & Patchin, 2017), which was the focus of this study. In this study, I used a survey method. According to Bethlehem (1999), surveys are normally used in cross-sectional designs and are

conducted within a short time frame. Bordens and Abbott (2008) noted the reduction of experimenter bias when making use of surveys. Cohen and Swerdlik (2005) referenced the increase of validity and reliability of data as a result of using standardized tests, that had been normalized previously, ensuring they had actually measured the intended measures. Researching resilience (Masden, 2014) and exploring aspects of different prosocial behaviors (Newgent et al., 2016) continues to be of interest to researchers through quantitative research. This approach has provided opportunities for further insights into children's bullying activities (Hunt et al., 2012).

The moderating variables of prosocial behaviors were those behaviors that society accept and appreciate, including having an ability to control anger, solve problems, and cooperate during activities. Anger control referred to children staying in control when they were angry. To ascertain whether students controlled their anger, participants answered the question, "I stay in control when I'm angry" on the SEARS-C. Solving problems referred to when children thought about the problem in ways that were helpful. To measure problem solving, participants answered the following question on the SEARS-C: "I think about my problems in ways that help." Cooperating during activities referred to children working well with other children during school activities. Participants answered the question "I work well with other kids on school projects" on the SEARS-C to assist with measuring cooperation.

Measures

Personal Experiences Checklist (PECK)

The dependent variable in this study was bullying, which was measured by the PECK (Hunt et al., 2012). The PECK was designed for children 8 years old and above to measure their individual experiences of a range of different types of bullying behaviors. The PECK appeared to align with this study because it was developed for children eight years old and above, the age range that was the focus in this study. According to Hunt et al. (2012), the PECK is a self-report instrument that does not mention the word bullying; however, it describes 32 behaviors that constitute bullying. Nelson et al. (2017) described the PECK as a four-factor model that measured victimization through verbal, cyber, physical, and cultural means. This instrument was designed to be a comprehensive measure and has been shown to reduce interpretation bias (Hunt et al., 2012), that made it appear to be the most suitable option for this research study. The simplicity of the language for preadolescent children as well as the relevance of survey items for the 8 to 11-year-old population were considered strengths of the PECK according to Nelson et al. (2017). The results of this checklist provide information on the level and severity of bullying experiences within the sample population (Hunt et al., 2012).

The PECK was developed to provide a multidimensional assessment of young children's bullying experiences (Hunt et al., 2012). To establish validity and reliability for the PECK, Hunt et al. (2012) measured it against several other measures including; the Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders (Birmaher et al., 1997), the revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (Olweus, 1996), the Self-Perception Profile

for Children (Harter, 1985), and the Children's Automatic Thoughts Scale (Schniering & Rapee, 2002). The PECK was developed by using 647 school children in the first sample: 301 male and 346 female students between the ages 8 and 15 years old from nine schools completed the first version of the 57-item PECK and a series of measures, which included bullying, anxiety, self-esteem, and depression measures in an effort to seek evidence of validity (Hunt et al., 2012). Low frequency, low severity items, redundant items, or items found to have no unique clinical relevance by independent judges were removed from the PECK (Hunt et al., 2012). The 41 items remaining on the PECK were thought to be both theoretically and practical when assessing bullying. After nine further items on the PECK were determined to not to make conceptual sense, they were removed. According to Hunt et al. (2012), this left the PECK as a 32-item, four-factor model that could be better interpreted. Confirmatory factor analysis was used with a sample of 432 children to confirm the four factors of relational-verbal bullying, cyber bullying, physical bullying, and bullying based on culture. Of the sample, 50.2% were boys and 49.8% were girls, and the mean age of the sample was 12.4 years of age. Good to excellent internal consistency (with a Cronbach's range of .78–.91) was shown on all PECK scales (Hunt et al., 2012).

Another sample of 218 children and adolescents completed the series of measures,that included the PECK, to determine the relation of the PECK to the other measures and to find supportive evidence of the PECK as a measure of bullying experiences (Hunt et al., 2012). The relationship between the factors from the confirmatory factor analysis ranged between .70 and .83. The total sample of 865

children were used to assess the characteristics of the PECK scale, and Cronbach's alpha was used to measure each scale. According to Hunt at al. (2012), verbal-relational bullying was .91, cyberbullying .90, physical bullying .91, and cultural bullying .78, which showed good to excellent internal consistency. Total correlations for all items were over .40 within each of the scales. Seventy-eight children between 10 years and 13 years completed the PECK on two separate occasions, and Hunt at al. (2012) reported the Pearson product-moment correlations for the PECK scales ranged between .61–.86, showing adequate test-retest reliability. According to Hunt et al. (2012) the PECK was considered to be a comprehensive and behaviorally focused dimensional bullying measure. Based on these findings, the PECK proved to be a sufficient instrument to answer the research questions in this study surrounding bullying behaviors. Hunt et al., (2012) provided permission to use the PECK for this research study through e-mail correspondence.

Social Emotional Assets and Resilience Scales (SEARS-C)

The independent variable in this study was resilience, which was measured by the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011). The SEARS-C was designed to be completed by children ages 8 through 12 years old and assess their perceptions of social-emotional functioning and resilience. The SEARS was designed as a strength-based assessment with the ability to measure the positive attributes and skills of children's social and emotional functioning, which included self-regulation, problem-solving skills, empathy, competence, and social and emotional knowledge (Romer & Merrell, 2013). The strengths of the SEARS include being a multiinformant system and having child self-

reports (SEARCH-C), adolescent self-reports (SEARS-A), as well as parent (SEARS-P) and teacher (SEARS-T) surveys (Romer & Merrell, 2013). According to Merrell (2011) and Merrell, Cohn, and Tom (2011), the four-factor structures of the SEARS have been validated.

The SEARS-C was developed to address the need for more strength-based measurement tools (Cohn, Merrell, Felver-Grant, Tom, & Endrulat, 2009) that could assess the social-emotional assets and resilience of children and adolescents (Merrell, 2011). The SEARS-C is comprised of 35 items designed to measure the individual's self-regulation (e.g., "I stay in control when I get angry"), social and emotional knowledge and competence (e.g., "I make friends easily"), problem solving skills (e.g., "I think of my problems in ways that help"), empathy (e.g., "I try to understand how my friends feel when they are upset or sad"), peer acceptance and relationships, coping skills, and resilience (Cohn et al., 2009). The SEARS-C allows respondents to rate themselves on a 4-point ratings scale from never (0 points), sometimes (1 point), often (2 points), or always (3 points) (Merrell, 2011).

According to Merrell (2011), the foundation of psychological assessment is test reliability. Merrell (2011) reported that the SEARS-C internal consistency was found to be very strong at .92. Salvia, Ysseldyke, and Bolt (2007) proposed .80 as the minimum standard of reliability for internal consistency to be used to make decisions when recommending screenings, and .90 for making important decisions regarding individuals. According to Merrell, (2011) the SEARS-C exceeds the minimum threshold for making important decisions, such as program eligibility. Test-retest reliability was used to

measure the temporal stability of the SEARS-C by using 83 students in sixth grade. Of the students who were administered the SEARS, 45 were boys and 38 were girls. The test-retest reliability ranged between .67 and .81, showing the SEARS-C to be moderate to strong (Merrell, 2011).

Validity was established with a sample of 1,628 elementary school students in Grades 3–6 (Merrell, 2011). Although the SEARS-C was found to have no traditional scale structure, it was still proven to be a useful assessment tool with a single total score (Merrell, 2011). The SEARS-C correlated with measures relating to social skills, cooperation, assertion, self-control, and empathy (Social Skills Ratings System; Gresham & Elliott, 1990); positive and negative affect (Internalizing Symptoms Scale for Children; Merrell & Walters, 1995); as well as emotional and behavioral strengths (Behavior and Emotional Rating Scale [BERS] Epstein & Sharma, 1998). The SEARS-C was compared with the Social Skills Ratings System using 137 students in Grades 3–6 and found to have a moderate to high relationship which ranged between .62 and .78 (Merrell, 2011). The comparison between the SEARS-C and Internalizing Symptoms Scale for Children was made using 153 students in Grades 3–6 (48% male and 52% female) (Merrell, 2011). Bivariate Pearson product-moment correlations were used to find moderate, negative, and somewhat inverse relationship between constructs (Merrell, 2011). Merrell (2008b) noted that it would be expected that social emotional assets and resilience would be negatively related to internalizing symptoms. A comparison between the SEARS-C and BERS used 137 sixth grade students, and of the sample, 43% were male and 57% were females. According to Merrell (2011), moderate to strong correlates ranging from .53 to

.80 were found to exist between the SEARS-C and BERS. These three studies were useful in determining the validity of the SEARS-C as an overall strengths-based, social-emotional construct. Based on the results of these studies, the SEARS-C appeared to be an appropriate measurement tool for use with this study. The SEARS-C is copyrighted by Par Inc. Par Inc. provided me with a written document authorizing the use of the SEARS-C for this research study.

The Language Fluency Measure

To assess whether participants were fluent in English sufficiently enough to read, write, speak, and understand the surveys, the Language Fluency Measure (Kim & Chao, 2009) was given to each student as part of the demographic information collection. The language fluency measure was used to determine how well the participants understood the English language when others spoke it to them, how well the participants spoke the language, and how well the participants read and wrote the language. Participants answered the three questions on a 5-point scale (0 = Very Poor, 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good). According to Portes and Hao (2002), language fluency levels that were self-reported are valid and reliable and have been used by the U.S. Census as a standard method of assessing language abilities.

Methodology

The Bermuda Public School system was interested in this research study as a result of the behaviors of students. Letters of Cooperation were obtained from the school principals. Parents were sent a letter outlining the purpose of the study and a letter of consent. The consent forms included information regarding the research topic, and an

outline of the surveys to be used. Parents were informed through the parent consent form that all surveys and demographic forms had a number so that no one knew their child's answers. Parents were informed that any questions or issues occurring in school with their child had to be answered by the school because I was only able to use the answers on the surveys for the purpose of this study. The form also included a request for parental consent to survey their children. Parental consent forms were returned directly to me through a locked drop box in each participating school.

Children with parental consent forms were provided a separate room within their school and an option of separate days to visit the room on their lunch break to participate in the study. The room was utilized for one student at a time. Participants were provided with an explanation of what the study was about. They were informed that they did not have to participate and if they decided to participate with the surveys, they may have chosen to stop at any time. For the students who decided to participate, they were provided with a packet which contained a demographic form, the PECK survey, and the SEARS-C survey. Participants were not asked to sign an assent form, they were asked to assent verbally. The demographic form, PECK and the SEARS-C surveys were administered to the participants. On completion of the surveys, the participants were read a statement regarding where they may seek assistance for dealing with behaviors that are inappropriate or if completion of the survey caused any emotional distress. A summary of the results of the study are to be provided to participating schools and made available to parents.

Sample and Setting

The target population was school children between the ages of 8 and 11 years, in the Bermuda Public School System. Inclusion criteria for this research study included being enrolled as a student in Bermuda Public School System and being between the age of eight and eleven years. Students who were in the targeted grade level, but who had not reached the age of 8, or had already turned 12, were excluded from the study. To assess whether participants were fluent in English sufficiently enough to read, write, speak, and understand the surveys, the Language Fluency Measure (Kim & Chao, 2009) was given to each student as part of the demographic information collection. All students met the language proficiency standards. The target population size was 100 students.

The target sample size for this study was derived from an analysis of G*Power 3 (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). According to Cohen (1988), the sample size *N* was computed by providing the required power level (0.95), specifying the significance level (0.05), and the population effect size (0.3). This was known as a priori analyses which has been recommended for use prior to the study as an efficient method of controlling statistical power (Cohen, 1988). Using a priori analyses 111 students would have been appropriate for a statistically significant study. As this was the first research study addressing this issue in the Bermuda Public School System, 100 students were deemed appropriate for the sample. This study had to take place between September and June. Those are the months children attend school in Bermuda and the surveys were only able to take place during the school day when students were on breaks.

Data Analysis Plan

The IBM SPSS software was used to compare the relationship between bullying and resilience controlling for covariates.

$H_0$1: There would be no significant difference between children's resilience levels.

$H_1$1: Children who were bullied more were more resilient than children who experienced less bullying.

Research Question 2: Do children who were bullied more have more anger management problems than children who experienced less bullying?

$H_0$2: There was no significant difference between the anger management problems of children who experience more bullying than those who experience less bullying.

$H_1$2: Children who are bullied more have more anger management problems than children who experience less bullying.

Research Question 3: Do school children experience more bullying victimization when they have less prosocial skills?

$H_0$3: There is no significant difference between bullying victimization of children with less prosocial skills.

$H_1$3: Children who endure higher levels of bullying victimization have less prosocial skills.

Research Question 4: Are younger children bullied more than older children?

$H_0$4: There is no significant difference between the ages of child bullies.

$H_1$4: Younger children are bullied more than older children.

This study included a variable-focused approach and used a simple regression, multiple regression, and an ANOVA to measure the relationship between bullying, resilience, and pro-social factors. The PECK and the SEARS-C used total raw scores for the purpose of measuring. The higher the score on the PECK, the higher the incidences of bully experiences. The higher the score on the SEARS-C, the higher level of social skills. Question 1 as measured on the PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) was measured with simple regression analysis. It was expected that children with higher scores on the PECK would also have higher scores on the SEARS-C. Multiple regression analysis was used for questions 2 and 3 after being measured with the SEARS (Merrell, 2011). Children who scored higher on the PECK were expected to have lower scores on SEARS-C questions regarding staying in control when angry and knowing how to stay calm when upset. Children with higher scores on the PECK were expected to have lower scores on the SEARS-C questions surrounding working well with others, thinking about problems in helpful ways, and having good problem solving skills. Question 4 utilized an ANOVA to answer the question as a result of the PECK survey results. An ANOVA was expected to show which age category scored higher on the PECK.

Statistical significance testing, confidence intervals, and effect sizes were used to interpret the results of each analysis. Statistical significance (0.05) was considered to mean the results were not likely to have occurred by chance (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), confidence intervals are a range of values which indicate the amount of times out of 100 a score fell in the range of values (0.95), and the effect size showed

the practical significance of results (0.3). Children who were able to control their anger, cooperate with others, as well as problem solve, were likely to be more able to avoid being victimized by bullies. Sugimura et al. (2017) noted that children with prosocial behaviors were more likely to be protected from being victimized.

Threats to Validity

External validity concerns involved generalizing to and across particular persons, settings, and times (Cook, Campbell, & Day, 1979). This study utilized primary school children from several different primary schools, therefore, the results of this study may only generalize to participating primary schools. Heppner, Kivlighan, and Wampold (2008) referred to validity as the degree to which the researcher's data conclusions actually reflected reality. Socially desirable and inattentive response patterns were two threats to validity which may have been problematic for this research. Social desirability was presenting one's self in an overly positive way (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964). This study utilized self-report assessments. According to Krumpal (2013), socially desirable responding is particularly noted in self-report measures and in areas of personality and behavior. Krumpal (2013) noted that rather than answer the questions honestly, participants may react to the content of the items.

Meade and Craig (2012) defined inattentive responding as answering the survey questions without regard for the content of the item. Johnson (2005) suggested that when individuals skip instructions, misread, or answer the questions without reading them, they are responding inattentively. McKibben and Silvia (2016) suggested different methods to address social desirability and inattentiveness. To address these two threats to internal

validity in this study, participants completing the surveys were informed that the answers they supply will be confidential. Participants were also informed that no one will know how they answered as there were no names attached to any of the surveys. Inattentive responding was addressed by having the instructions and the questions read aloud to all students. According to Carmines and Zeller (1979), construct validity refers to the extent to which measures accurately reflected their intended measures. The PECK and SEARS-C had the ability to accurately measure bullying behaviors and prosocial behaviors.

Ethical Procedures

As a result of the current, ongoing bullying behaviors of students, the Bermuda Public School system was interested in this research study. The Ministry of Education provided permission for this study to be conducted in Bermuda's primary schools. The principals of three primary schools gave consent to have their students participate in this study. Parents of P4-P6 students in the consenting primary schools were sent a letter outlining the research study and a consent form (IRB approval number: 11-05-18-0527761). The parental consent form included information regarding the research topic, an outline of the surveys, and a statement informing them that they may change their mind about allowing their child to participate at any time. Parents were informed through the parent consent form that all surveys and demographic forms were numbered so that no one will know their child's answers. Parents were informed that any questions or issues occurring in school with their child would have to be answered by the school. The researcher was only be able to use the answers on the surveys for the purpose of this study. All consent forms were returned directly to the researcher through a locked drop

box in each school. Only students with signed parental consent forms were allowed to participate in the study. Children with parental consent forms were provided a separate room within their school and an option of several separate days when they could visit the room on their lunch break to participate in the study if they chose. The room was utilized for one student at a time. Participants that attended were provided with an explanation of what the study was about. They were informed that although they had been invited to participate, they do not have to participate. For those students who assented to participate, they were informed that they may choose to stop at any time. Participants were then provided with a numbered packet containing a demographic form, the PECK survey, and the SEARS-C survey. Participants were asked to verbally assent prior to the surveys being administered. A summary of the results of the study are to be provided to all participating schools and made available to parents.

Bullying has been noted as a sensitive topic, however, the word bullying was not mentioned on any survey. The PECK survey asked questions which constituted bullying behaviors only. On completion of the surveys, the participants were read a statement regarding where they could seek assistance for dealing with behaviors that are inappropriate or if completion of the surveys caused any emotional distress. There was a school counselor assigned to every primary school in Bermuda and the counselor remained on the school site as each student participated.

To address confidentiality, each student received a numbered survey packet which included a demographic form, PECK survey, and SEARS-C survey. Each form in the packet was numbered. The demographic form included age, gender, school of

attendance, and year level. It also included the three Language Fluency Measure (Kim & Chao, 2009) questions of how well the student understands English, speaks English, and reads and writes English.

All data from the demographic form and two surveys were entered into the SPSS program. On completion of data entry, all demographic forms surveys were placed into a locked file cabinet. All data are stored for the next 5 years as the study is now completed. All paper demographic information, surveys, and data will be destroyed by shredding after the 5 year period. The electronic data will be stored on hard drive which is password protected and locked away for the same 5 year period as the paper demographic information and surveys, after which, the hard drive will be destroyed. No incentives were offered to any participants during this research. Study participants were limited to school children attending schools other than the school where I was employed.

Summary

This research was a quasi-experimental, quantitative study, that utilized a cross sectional design. Surveys were used to test the theory of social learning as it related to resilience from the effects of bullying. The sample population recruited was initially to be 100 primary school students, however, that number fell short. The PECK and the SEARS-C were administered to the sample population and the data was analyzed using SPSS. Chapter 4 discussed the recruitment and data collection process as well as the study results.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In Chapter 4, I review the research problem, the purpose of the study, and the research questions and hypotheses. An explanation for the quantitative, cross-sectional survey study design is also included in this chapter. Specific data collection procedures, including protection of participants, are presented. The results of the descriptive statistics and a full analysis of the data are also included in this chapter.

To examine the relationship between bullying and resilience in young school children andas well as whether prosocial skills of problem solving, anger management, and cooperation had an impact on children's levels of bullying behaviors, I employed a quasi-experimental, quantitative, cross-sectional survey design in this study. In this study, I explored whether young children in primary schools in Bermuda were more resilient to the effects of bullying victimization and experienced less bullying victimization if they had higher levels of prosocial skills. I also examined whether age had an impact on the levels of bullying victimization in young children.

The purpose of this quasi-experimental, quantitative study was to test the theory of social learning on children's resilience from the effects of bullying, controlling for prosocial behaviors for primary level students in Bermuda's public schools. Use of the PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) and the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) provided me with an opportunity to analyze data from the participants to find whether children were more resilient and had more anger management problems when they experienced higher levels

of bullying. Analysis of the data from the surveys also provided information on the age level of children that experienced the most bullying.

The central questions to be answered in this study were as follows:

Research Question 1: Are children who experience more bullying more resilient than children who experience less bullying?

Research Question 2: Do children who are bullied more have more anger management problems than children who experience less bullying?

Research Question 3: Do school children experience more bullying victimization when they have less pro-social skills?

Research Question 4: Are younger children bullied more than older children?

I hypothesized that:

- Children who are bullied more are more resilient than children who experience less bullying.
- Children who are bullied more have more anger management problems than children who experience less bullying.
- Children who endure higher levels of bullying victimization have less prosocial skills.
- Younger children are bullied more than older children.

This chapter will provide a review of the collected data, statistical analysis, and demographic characteristics of the participants. The findings of the study will be summarized as they relate to the research questions. I will then present the results of the descriptive statistics for participants as well as descriptive statistics (i.e., means and

standard deviations) for the variables that were used in this study: bullying, problem solving, anger management, and cooperating in groups.

Data Collection

Data were collected at three different primary schools, over a 9-week period beginning in November 2018. A total of 265 parent invitations were sent out with a total of 42 signed and returned. Schools 1, 2, and 3 returned nine, 27, and six consent forms, which represented a total of 21%, 64%, and 14% of students, respectively.

During the 2018–2019 school year, there was a total of 1,206 students enrolled in the (BPSS) P4 through P6 year levels. The total number of students enrolled in the P4, P5, and P6 year levels totaled 400, 404, and 406, respectively. There were 354 eight year olds, 403 nine year olds, 403 ten year olds, and 46 eleven year olds. Of the total enrollment in these year levels, there were 636 male and 574 female students.

Participants in the study totaled 42 ($N = 42$) students in the P4, P5, and P6 levels of three different public primary schools in Bermuda. Twenty-eight students (66.7%) were male and 14 students (33.3%) were female. The P4, P5, and P6 levels were evenly represented with 14 participants in each year level. Of the total amount of participants, 16 (38%) were 8 years old, 11 (26%) were 9 years old, 13 (31%) were 10 years old, and two (5%) were 11 years old. I made a strong attempt to gain more participants; however, parents did not consent to their children participating in the study.

Invitations to parents of all P4, P5, and P6 students of the three participating schools were taken to schools in November 2018 and distributed through the school principals. A total of 103 invitations were went to School 1 with five parental consent

forms returned, representing a return rate of approximately 5%. A total of 94 invitations went to School 2 with 14 parental consent forms returned, representing a return rate of approximately 15%. A total of 68 invitations were went to School 3 with one parental consent form returned, representing a return rate of approximately 1%.

I collected parental consent forms as they were returned to each school. School principals gave me open access to attend the schools each lunch hour to survey children with parental consent. Students were informed that they should report to the assigned room during their lunch break if they decided to participate in the research study. During school lunch breaks, I attended one school per day. As each student entered the interview room individually, I introduced myself to them and confirmed their parental consent form had been collected. An explanation of the study was then provided to the student, and each student was then asked if they assent to participate in the study. Once verbal assent was provided, participants were given the demographic form, the PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) survey, and the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) survey. I read each question on each form to the participant, which took about 15 minutes per participant. Only one participant at a time was allowed to enter the interview room to ensure each participant had privacy. On completion of each interview, the participant was read a script informing them of where they could seek assistance should the need arise. The school counselors remained on the school property during all interviews.

As a result of not having enough participants, I sent a second invitation for principals to distribute 3 weeks later. School 1 and School 3 returned zero parental consent forms, while School 2 returned 10 signed parental consent forms. The total

number of signed consent forms after the second invitation was 30. I continued to use the same procedures with each participant.

As a result of still not having enough participants, I sent a third invitation for principals to distribute 2 weeks later. This time, School 1 returned four signed parental consent forms and School 2 returned three new signed parental consent forms. The remainder of the forms returned by School 2 were repeat parental consent forms with the same parents signing a second time. School 3 returned five signed parental consent forms. There was a total of 42 signed parental consent forms returned to the schools after the third invitation. I continued to use the same procedures with each participant, which included making introductions; providing an explanation of the study; requesting student assent; reading each question on the demographic form, PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) survey, and SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) survey; and reading the safety script. I also thanked each participant for completing the surveys prior to them leaving the interview room.

I had deemed that 100 students would be appropriate for a statistically significant study in Bermuda as a result of using a priori analyses. After significant recruitment, only 42 students ended up participating in this research study. All other forms of the data collection process remained the same.

From November 2018 and January 2019 students, I invited 42 students from the three participating schools that had parental consent to a private room during their lunch break. They were each individually provided an explanation of the study. Those willing to participate verbally assented to participate and completed the demographic form as well as the PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) and the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) surveys.

Of the total number of participants ($N = 42$), there were no students excluded from the study as a result of not meeting criteria on the Language Fluency Measure. Descriptive statistics also included the means and standard deviations for the following variables: bullying victimization (PECK: $M = 20.42$, $SD = 16.35$), resilience SEARS-C ($M = 66.40$, $SD = 19.77$), problem solving ($M = 1.81$, $SD = .92$), anger management ($M = 1.40$, $SD = 1.01$), making good decisions ($M = 1.74$, $SD = .86$), and cooperation ($M = 1.90$, $SD = 1.06$).

In this study, I used a probability sample of 265 students, which was 21.9% of all P4–P6 students in the BPSS. A total of 42 (3.46%) of the total sample population were surveyed during this study. This sample resulted in a good representation of the upper school levels (P4, P5, and P6) of three primary schools, which was the population of interest. Each year level was equally represented (33.3%). This group of participants also represented P4 = 16.80%, P5 = 17.14%, and P6 = 17.44% of the total number of P4, P5, and P6 students in the BPSS, which are close to equally represented as well.

Results

Data was collected for this study using three self-report rating scales. The PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) was used to collect data on the experiences and extent of bully victimization, while the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) was used to collect data on the participants' social skills. To assess whether participants were sufficiently fluent in English enough to read, write, speak, and understand the surveys, the Language Fluency Measure (Kim & Chao, 2009) was given to each student as part of the demographic

information collection. I used the Language Fluency Measure to determine how well the participants understood the language when others spoke it, how well did the participant speak the language, and how well did the participant read and write the language. In the measure, participants answered three questions on a 5-point scale (0 = Very Poor, 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Good, 4 = Very Good). According to Portes and Hao (2002), language fluency levels that are self-reported are valid and reliable and have been used by the U.S. Census as a standard method of assessing language abilities. No student data were excluded from the study as a result of insufficient understanding of English. Only 2.4% of participants rated being Fair on sufficiently reading and writing in English, while all other participants rated being Good or Very Good on all Language Fluency Measures.

The PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) is a 32-item rating scale intended to assess a broad range of young children's bullying experiences, including physical, verbal, relational, cultural, and cyber forms of bullying. The bullying rating scale assesses the frequency of bully victimization by providing behavioral statements that students rate on a 5-point rating scale (0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = most days, 4 = every day; Hunt et al., 2012). Scores are totaled for a raw score, which can range from zero to 128. The higher the score, the more victimization a student has experienced. The mean score on the PECK was 20.45 and the standard deviation was 16.35.

The SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) is a 35 item rating scale intended to assess children's social and emotional knowledge and competence, self-regulation, empathy, and problem solving skills. The SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) measured positive social emotional attributes and skills on a 4-point rating scale (0 = never, 1= sometimes, 2 =

often, 3 = Always). The SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) used a total score which ranged from zero to 105. The higher the score, the more prosocial attributes and skills a student was deemed to have. The mean score on the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011) was 66.40 while the standard deviation was 19.77.

This study utilized a variable-focused approach and used a simple regression, multiple regression analysis, and an ANOVA to measure the relationship between bullying, resilience, and prosocial factors (problem solving, anger management, and cooperation). The PECK and the SEARS-C were both totaled and the total raw score was used for the purpose of measuring the level of bullying victimization and resilience levels. Higher levels on the PECK would have suggested higher levels of bullying victimization while higher levels on the SEARS-C would have suggested higher levels of social skills.

Research Question 1 was measured on the PECK and analyzed using a simple regression. It was expected that participants with higher scores on the PECK would also have had higher scores on the SEARS-C. Research Questions 2 and 3 were both measured on the SEARS-C and utilized a multiple regression analysis. It was expected that participants who scored higher on the PECK would score lower on specific SEARS-C questions regarding staying in control when angry and knowing how to stay calm when upset. Participants with higher scores on the PECK were expected to have lower scores on the SEARS-C questions regarding working well with others, making good decisions, thinking about problems in helpful ways, and having good problem solving skills. Question four was measured on the PECK and analyzed using an ANOVA. The

ANOVA was expected to show which age category of participants scored higher on the PECK.

Prior to testing hypotheses, Pearson correlation coeffficients analyses were used to examine the correlations among six variables (See Table 1). The results indicate a significant relationship ($p = 0.05$) to exist between the PECK (dependent variable bullying) and the SEARS-C ($p = -.310$).

Table 1

Pearson Correlation Coefficients

		Total Score on PECK	Total Score on SEARS-C	I am good at solving problems	I stay in control when I am angry	I make good decisions	I know how to calm down	I work will with other kids on school projects
Total Score on PECK	Pearson Correlation	1	-.310*	-.103	-.204	-.084	-.248	.014
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.046	.516	.195	.599	.114	.931
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
	Pearson Correlation	-.310*	1	.495**	.720**	.595**	.629**	.597**

Total Score on SEARS-C	Sig. (2-tailed)	.046		.001	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
I am good at solving problems	Pearson Correlation	-.103	.495**	1	.374*	.276	.328*	.409**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.516	.001		.015	.076	.034	.007
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
I stay in control when I am angry	Pearson Correlation	-.204	.720**	.374*	1	.406**	.585**	.288
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.195	.000	.015		.008	.000	.064
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
I make good decisions	Pearson Correlation	-.084	.595**	.276	.406**	1	.446**	.565**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.599	.000	.076	.008		.003	.000
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
	Pearson Correlation	-.248	.629**	.328*	.585**	.446**	1	.167

I know how to calm down	Sig. (2-tailed)	.114	.000	.034	.000	.003		.291
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
I work will with other kids on school projects	Pearson Correlation	.014	.597**	.409**	.288	.565**	.167	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.931	.000	.007	.064	.000	.291	
	N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Quantitative data were obtained through the PECK and SEARS-C surveys. The raw data, total scores from the surveys were imported into the IBM SPSS program to be analyzed. Descriptive statistics, multiple regression analysis, and ANOVA were used to analyze the data.

This study included a variable-focused approach and used simple regression analysis, multiple regression, and an ANOVA to measure the relationship between bullying, resilience, and prosocial factors. Question 1 was measured using the PECK (raw score) and SEARS-C (raw score).

RQ1 - Are children who experience more bullying more resilient than children who experience less bullying?

A simple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the prediction that children who experienced more bullying were more resilient than children who experienced less bullying. The scatterplot for the two variables indicated that the two

variables are linearly related such that as overall bullying victimization scores increased (PECK = Y) resilience scores decreased (y37.48 - 0.26x; See Figure 1.). This goes against the hypothesis that children who are bullied more are more resilient than children who experienced less bullying. According to the results of this regression analysis, the more children are bullied, the less resilient they are, or children who were less resilient were bullied more.

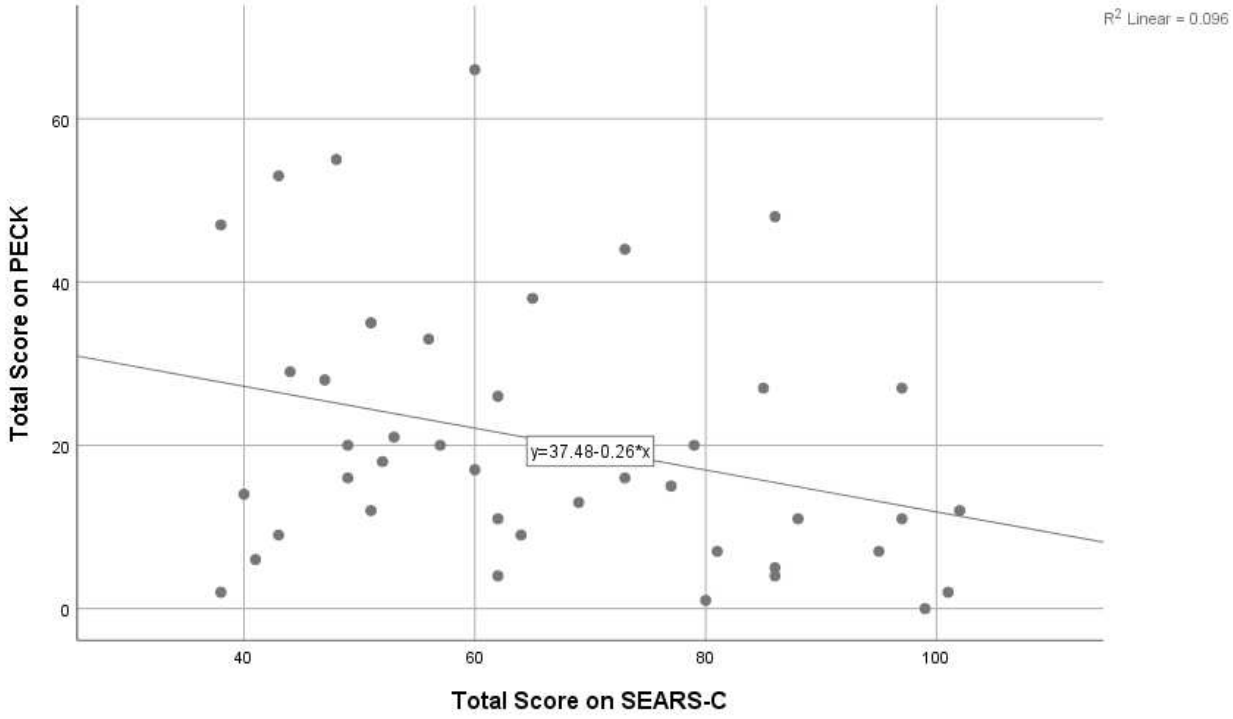

Figure 1. Scatterplot between total scores on the PECK and total scores on the SEARS-C.

Of the total number of participants $N = 42$, 12 (28.57%) reported never or rarely being victimized (PECK = 0-10), while only three (7.14%) reported higher scores (PECK = <50).

RQ2 - Do children who are bullied more, have more anger management problems than children who experience less bullying? A multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate how well having more anger management problems predicted levels of bullying. The predictors were I stay in control when I am angry and I know how to calm down, while the criterion variable was the overall PECK score. The linear combination of staying in control during anger and knowing how to calm down was not significant $F(2,39) = .261$, p = <.05, $R^2 = .067$. The two predictors staying in control during anger (.63) and knowing how to calm down (.31) were not able to predict the total PECK score. Of the total number of participants, eight (19%) reported Always staying in control when angry while the same amount reported Never staying in control when angry. Seventeen participants (40.5%) Sometimes stayed in control of their anger with nine (21.4%) Often stayed in control of their anger. Four participants (9.5%) were never able to calm down when angry, while the remainder of participants were approximately evenly distributed between Sometimes, Often, and Always.

RQ3 - Do school children experience more bullying victimization when they have less pro-social skills? A multiple regression analysis was conducted to analyze how well prosocial skills of being good at solving problems, making good decisions, and working well with others predicted levels of bullying. Being good at solving problems, making good choices, and working well with others were the predictors, while the criterion

variable was the overall PECK score. The linear combination of the three predictor variables found $F(3,38) = .805$, $p = <.05$, $R^2 = .025$. This showed that the predictor variables, being good at solving problems (.485), making good choices (.520), and working well with others (.511) were not significant in predicting the total PECK score. This multiple linear regression determined that bullying victimization did not significantly determine that children had less prosocial skills as hypothesized.

Multiple linear regression was used to determine if a set of predictor variables were able to predict the total PECK score. The six predictors were (Total SEARS-C score, I am good at solving problems, I stay in control when I am angry, I make good decisions, I know how to calm down, I work well with other kids on school projects). The assumption of multicollinearity was examined with no violations found. The results of the regression analysis were not significant $F(6, 35) = .337$, $p = <.05$, $R^2 = .169$. The six predictors were not able to predict the total PECK score. This means that having good problem solving skills, staying in control when angry, making good decisions, knowing how to calm down when angry, and working well with others was not shown to be as a result of having experienced more bullying (See Table 2).

Table 2

ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1848.898	6	308.150	1.184	.337[b]
	Residual	9107.506	35	260.214		

Total	10956.405	41

a. Dependent Variable: Total Score on PECK
b. Predictors: (Constant), I work will with other kids on school projects, I know how to calm down, I am good at solving problems, I stay in control when I am angry, I make good decisions, Total Score on SEARS-C

RQ4 - Are younger children bullied more than older children?

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if student age impacted the total PECK score. The independent variable was student age, with four levels, 8yrs, 9yrs, 10yrs and 11 yrs. The dependent variable was the total PECK score. The assumption of equal variances was not violated (Levene's statistic = .221). The results of the one-way ANOVA was not significant, $F(3, 38) = .653$, $p = .586$, partial eta-squared =.049. Age did not impact PECK scores.

Summary

In this chapter, I examined children's resilience from the effects of bullying, controlling for pro-social behaviors for primary level students in Bermuda's public schools. The PECK survey and the SEARS-C survey provided an opportunity to analyze data from 42 participants to find whether children were more resilient and had more anger management problems when they experienced higher levels of bullying. Data from the surveys were also analyzed to provide information on the age level of children that experienced the most bullying.

Results of a simple regression used to predict whether participants that experienced more bullying were more resilient using the total PECK score and the total SEARS-C score found that higher levels of bullying resulted in lower levels of resilience. This result was against the hypothesis that children who are bullied more were more

resilient than children who experienced less bullying. The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between children's resilience levels was not rejected. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate how well having more anger management problems predicted levels of bullying. The predictors were I stay in control when I am angry and I know how to calm down, while the criterion variable was the overall PECK score. The null hypothesis was unable to be rejected as there was no significant difference between the anger management problems of children who experience more bullying than those who experience less bullying.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to analyze how well being good at solving problems, making good decisions, and working well with others predicted levels of bullying. The null hypothesis could not be rejected as the findings were not significant. This multiple linear regression determined that bullying victimization did not significantly determine that children had less prosocial skills as hypothesized. Age was also not found to have any significant impact on bully levels with no significant differences between the ages of child bullies being found.

The results of this quantitative research study were contained in this chapter. A small number of participants took part in this study. The research aimed to answer the questions of whether children who were bullied more were more resilient and had more anger management problems than children who experienced less bullying, whether children who endured higher levels of bullying victimization had less prosocial skills, and whether younger children are bullied more than older children. It was found that bullying victimization levels had no significant effect on resilience, anger management, prosocial

skills, or age. Limitations of this research study, recommendations for further research, implications for social change, and conclusions of this study will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this quasi-experimental, quantitative study was to examine the relationship between bullying and resilience in young school students and ascertain whether prosocial skills of problem solving, anger management, and cooperation had an impact on children's levels of bullying behaviors. Additionally, it was my intention to explore whether young children in Bermuda's primary schools were more resilient to the effects of bullying victimization and experienced less bullying victimization if they had higher levels of prosocial skills. In this study, I also sought to examine whether a child's age had an impact on the levels of bullying victimization in young children. Based on the results from the PECK (Hunt et al., 2012) and the SEARS-C (Merrell, 2011), I confirmed a relationship between bullying and resilience and found that children with lower levels of resilience experienced more bullying victimization.

Interpretation of the Findings

I undertook this study in an effort to fill the gap in understanding the relationship between bullying and resilience, while also considering the impact of prosocial skills. In this study, children that experienced more bullying were less resilient than those that experienced less bullying, which was consistent with the findings of Hinduja and Patchin (2017). The results of this study showed resilience may be used as a protective factor and, therefore, may have the ability to insulate children from the effects of victimization (Sugimura et al., 2017). The findings of this study confirmed that alleviating the effects of bullying lies in developing resilient youth (see Hinduja & Patchin, 2017).

With this study, I was unable to determine whether children experienced more bullying victimization when they had less prosocial skills of cooperating, solving problems, and managing anger. This was similar to that of Lonigro et al.'s (2015) in that it also focused on anger. In this study, I found anger to be a part of bully victimization; however, anger was not found to be a strong predictor for bully victimization. Although I did not find a link between anger and bullying, it would be important to manage anger to curtail bullying behavior because prosocial behaviors may protect children from bullying victimization (see Griese et al., 2016; Sugimura et al., 2017). Children with the ability to cooperate more tend to be highly prosocial (Choi et al., 2011), while bully victims have a tendency to have lower levels of cooperation skills (Perren & Alsaker, 2006). Children with more problem-solving skills have reduced involvements in fights (Farrell et al., 2015) and may be able to deescalate conflict more effectively (Mahady-Wilton et al., 2000). In this study, I was not able to confirm any of the findings from the abovementioned studies. It is possible that children did not fully understand the questions being asked. Although the surveys were designed for 8-year-olds and above, some children that age may have been cognitively delayed. Children may also have possessed different problem-solving skills and coping styles that they did not see listed on the surveys. If this was the case, it may explain why many answered never or hardly ever for several survey questions. Understanding specific skills that are associated with bully victimization are significant when planning interventions.

Additionally, I was not able to determine children's levels of victimization across age levels in this study. Hinduja and Patchin (2017) suggested that older children were

less likely to experience bullying while at school. This could explain the lack of significant findings with upper age levels of school children in the current study. This results of this study were not able to confirm the findings of Sugimura et al. (2017) and Turner et al. (2015) that victimization declined as children got older. Children in the upper primary school levels begin positioning themselves for leadership roles once they reach P4. The three year levels that participated in the study (i.e., P4–P6) model the behaviors of the school leaders as they await the opportunity to be chosen as replacement leaders. It is feasible that the participants engage equally in prosocial behaviors that make them more resilient to being victimized. It may have been that participants in this study did not experience the specific behaviors that were listed on the surveys. Children may also have viewed that any harmful acts towards them had not been meant to intentionally hurt them. The results of this study confirmed that a significant relationship between bullying and resilience assists with understanding the importance of developing resiliency in young children.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

One strength of this research study was its survey design, which reduced experimenter bias and expectancy effects (see Bordens & Abbott, 2008). The validity and reliability of the data were increased by using instruments that had been developed and normed with large samples (see Cohen & Swerdlik, 2005). The PECK and SEARS-C surveys contained questions that were worded in a way that the 8-year-olds easily understood, which was also a strength of the study. The surveys used descriptions of

different victimizations rather than the word bullying, which I also viewed as a strength of this study, since not all children use the same definition of bullying.

I identified several limitations in the study. The first limitation was the generalizability. This study was conducted in three primary schools with P4 through P6 students, and therefore, may only be generalized to those schools with similar settings. Another limitation was gaining an acceptable number of participants as a result of lack of parental consent. The importance of having parental consent was paramount to this research. In an attempt to combat this challenge, I invited multiple primary schools to participate in this study; however, even with inviting multiple schools, parental consent remained weak and participation was lower than anticipated. It is possible that not all parents received the information and consent forms. Only one parent decided against consent as a result of the child having possible adverse effects. It is also possible that other parents did not consent for the same reason. Some parents may be under more pressure than they can manage, resulting in not being fully engaged with school-related activities. It is also possible that as children move into the upper primary levels, parents become less involved with their school lives.

Once children at the participating schools were interviewed separately, it provided them the opportunity to discuss the questions that were asked with their peers. Children that may have initially been willing to participate may have changed their minds after talking with their peers. It is possible that the children that may have been more involved in bullying activities decided they did not prefer to answer the questions and, therefore, chose not to participate. It is also possible that children with more prosocial behaviors

may have decided the type of questions being asked were only for those children with behavior problems rather than for them. The surveys were only available to participants during their lunch hours, and this may have caused children to answer questions quickly rather than think about how they were responding. This sample may not reflect the children experiencing the most bullying victimization as a result of parents that did not respond due to lack of parental consent.

Another limitation was my use of one of the many definitions of bullying in the study. With there being no standard definition of bullying, questions may emerge regarding whether the chosen definition for this research was adequate (Gladden et al., 2014; Moore & Woodcock, 2017). The nature of the study was cross-sectional; therefore, causation could not be determined, which could also be considered a limitation of this study. An additional limitation was that the surveys in this study required retrospective memory. Young children may have had difficulty recalling incidents that happened in the past, and bias recall or inaccurate reporting may have occurred as a result of their difficulty in remembering. Another possible limitation was the possibility that young children reporting greater or fewer bullying incidents viewed bullying differently. The extended time period the research took was another limitation. This duration may have allowed for participants to discuss the questions with others who had not yet had an opportunity to answer the survey questions, which could have also biased other children's decision to participate in the study.

Socially desirable and inattentive response patterns were two threats to validity that may have been problematic for this research. Children may have presented

themselves in an overly positive way (Kulas, Klahr, & Knights, 2018). In this study, I used self-report assessments that Krumpal (2013) noted as highly susceptible to socially desirable responding, which may have factored into the results of this study. Participants in this study may have reacted to the content of the items rather than answered honestly.

Despite the limitations, some valuable information may still have been gained from the findings of this study. The recognition that children that are more resilient are victimized by bullying less provides the BPSS with an immediate starting point for daily in-school interventions that may grow resilient children.

Recommendations

Bullying remains a complex, serious, international problem affecting millions of children around the world. Much of the focus of recent researchers has been an attempt to alleviate the detrimental effects of bullying victimization. Some children are resilient and better able to withstand the setbacks, while others are more susceptible to being bullied. Given the findings of this study, prevention efforts must not be ignored. Interventions to enhance children's resilience levels so they are better able to cope with being bullied must be implemented for young children. Understanding that specific social skills, such as being cooperative in groups, an individual managing their anger, and being able to effectively problem solve are associated with reduced bully victimization (Sugimura et al., 2017) along with resilience, and therefore, are important to consider when implementing solutions to this problem.

It is recommended that the BPSS engage students at every year level with prosocial learning activities to allow for maximum practice. Mistakes at the younger

levels may be helpful in students making adjustments as they move into the upper levels of schools. When viewing these adjustments through a social learning theory lens, children begin to imitate the positive behaviors of other students that manage their anger, solve problems effectively, and behave cooperatively with others. Early intervention assists with redirecting young children to healthier trajectories (Sugimura et al., 2017). Because all schools have a segment of parents that do not engage with the school community, it is further recommended that the school system take the initiative to include victimization surveys into their current schoolwide surveys to gain better insight into the extent to which children are being victimized while on school properties.

Further Research

Further research is recommended with additional schools in the BPSS, including more students per year level. This study only included the upper levels of elementary school students. Future research should include children from both lower and upper levels of schools. A larger sample may produce different results in future studies. I used only students' self-reported surveys in this study; consequently, future research studies may gain a better understanding of children's prosocial skills by collecting data from other sources, such as teachers and parents. There may also be some benefit in distancing the research focus away from the term bullying and using a broader range of peer victimization terms in future research (Turner et al., 2015). That shift may address the problems associated with defining the word bullying in future studies.

Implications for Positive Social Change

Positive social change can occur when young people's social and emotional skills develop sufficiently enough to become resilient to bullying. Social change can also happen when young, school-aged children are able to recognize that effectively managing their anger and being able to problem solve, cooperate with others, and engage in prosocial behaviors may mitigate the effects of bullying. When those children who bully others realize the effect they have on others and discontinue their aggressive behaviors, a positive social change will occur in the schools and wider community. Understanding bullying and resilience may better assist schools in developing programs that result in fewer children being effected by bullying. As a result, school children can learn how to effectively manage their anger, problem solve, and cooperate with others. This understanding has the potential to lead to positive social change. The results of this study may assist with the development and implementation of appropriate social and emotional learning programs. The long-term results of such programs include the reduction of bullying behavior during childhood, adolescent, and adult years, with children being better able to control their behaviors, leading to reduced involvement with the juvenile justice system in their childhood and the adult justice system in latter years.

Conclusion

This study arose out of my desire to better understand the extent to which children were experiencing bullying victimization in the BPSS and whether children with more prosocial skills mitigated the effects of bullying. When children are equipped with resilience skills, such as how to effectively cope with bullying behaviors through learning

anger management skills, problem solving skills, and cooperation skills, they have an opportunity to tackle this serious international childhood adversity of bullying.

While it may appear on the surface that many students may not be experiencing bullying victimization to a large degree, the serious repercussions of those who are has reared its head on this island one time too many. The fact remains that education, knowledge, and research are paramount to effecting social change at the school, community, and policy levels. Community members can assist, whether it is listening to children, conducting further research, or creating and changing policies that keep children safe from being victimized. It is only when everyone works together, putting the best interest of children in the forefront, that the entire community will see better outcomes as a whole.

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Appendix A: Permission - Social Emotional Assets and Resilience Scales

May 8, 2018

Suzette Bean
Walden University
#3 Kiskadee Lane
Sandys MA06
Bermuda

Dear Ms. Bean:

In response to your recent request, permission is hereby granted to you to include up to a total of three (3) sample items from the Social Emotional Assets and Resilience Scales (SEARS) in your dissertation entitled, *Bullying and Resilience in Elementary School Children and Mitigating Pro-Social Behaviors.*

This Agreement also verifies that you have our permission to use the published SEARS in your dissertation project based on your purchase of the SEARS-C and SEARS-T materials from us on January 24, 2018 (order 882459). Based on our records, you purchased enough materials to administer the test to as many as 100 Children and 25 Teachers utilizing the SEARS. Purchase of the forms for use in your study is permission to use them as printed by PAR.

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ACCEPTED AND AGREED:

BY: _____
SUZETTE BEAN
DATE: 8th May, 2018

ACCEPTED AND AGREED:

BY: _____
VICKI M. MCFADDEN
DATE: May 8, 2018

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