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Bullying Behavior in Middle School: The Effects of
Gender, Grade Level, Family Relationships, and Vicarious
Victimization on Self-Esteem and Attitudes of Bullying

A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice and Criminology

by

Jennifer Leigh Mongold

May 2006

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Keywords: Vicarious Victimization, Bullying, Self-Esteem

ABSTRACT

Bullying Behavior in Middle School: The Effects of Gender, Grade Level, Family Relationships, and Vicarious Victimization on Self-Esteem and Attitudes of Bullying

by

Jennifer Leigh Mongold

This research was conducted to investigate the effects of gender, grade level, family relationships, and vicarious victimization on self-esteem and attitudes of bullying. A self-report questionnaire was administered to sixth and seventh graders at a middle school to 436 students of whom 209 were males and 224 were females. Each home base classroom was systematically sampled for a random sample. The survey consisted of several demographic questions as well as questions regarding the previously mentioned variables. The mean age was 11.8 with 80.7% indicating they were white and 19.3% indicating another race. In the overall regression equations, gender and family relationships were significantly related to attitudes of bullying and family relationships was the only variable significant in the self-esteem equation. Several correlations between variables were found to be significant.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The perceived rise in school violence that has become the major topic of many nightly newscasts has heightened the public's awareness about what is happening inside America's schools. In the seven school shootings that occurred from 1997 to 1999 (i.e., Paducah, Kentucky, Jonesboro, Arkansas, Littleton, Colorado, etc.), three of the seven perpetrators were found to have been bullied by their classmates (Holmes, 2000). This bullying, as well as other risk factors such as emotional problems and conduct disorders, may have contributed to these violent outbursts, because bullying has been found to create a school environment full of fear and intimidation (Carney, Hazler, & Higgins, 2002). A safe environment that is conducive to learning is not being achieved as long as hostile environments are being created through bullying (Cobia & Carney, 2002).

The Bureau of Justice Statistics annually reviews the rates of school violence and victimization. The last report reflects the school year ending in 2003. The victimization rate has decreased since 1995 where there was a reported 10% rate of victimization. It was found in 2003 that 5% of students ages 12 to 18 reported being victimized at school in the previous 6 months. Of those 5%, 80% of those incidents involved a theft of property and 20% involved violent victimization. The rate of children reporting to carry weapons on school grounds has also decreased since 1993. The rate dropped from 12% in 1993 to 6% in 2003 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2005).

The Bureau of Justice Statistics also reports the rates of bullying behavior among school children in America every year. In 2003, seven percent of students reported being bullied at least once in the past 6 months. This number had increased from 1999 to 2001, but there is currently

no difference in the rates of reported bullying from 2001 to 2003. In the 1999-2000 school year, more than 29% of public schools reported bullying taking place on a daily or weekly basis. Another fact to note is that middle schools reported more bullying than primary and secondary schools, with a 43%, 26%, and 25% rate reported respectively (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2005). This shows how age may play a role in bullying prevalence.

Current Study

The current study seeks to understand how bullying affects middle school students on a variety of different levels. Self-esteem and attitudes of bullying were studied in relationship to gender, grade level, family attitudes, and vicarious victimization. A self-report questionnaire was administered to sixth and seventh grade students in a large middle school in a small town in East Tennessee. The survey was designed to understand the differences between students in regard to their self-esteem and their attitudes toward bullying. The current research is an important addition to the previous bullying research because of its focus on vicarious victimization instead of actual victimization. While not all children are victimized at school, common sense would dictate that most children do witness victimization at some point throughout their school-age years. How viewing this victimization affects them is an important addition to the bullying literature.

Theoretical Perspective

The theory that drives the current research into vicarious victimization through viewing bullying is Blumer's theory of symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969). Symbolic interactionism provides a good basis for the understanding of vicarious victimization. There are three premises involved in symbolic interactionism. The first premise involves how an individual acts towards something based on the meaning that it has for the individual. The second premise deals with

how an individual learns meaning through interaction. The third premise states that an individual redefines or reinterprets the meaning of an event to fit themselves and their current situation (Blumer).

Vicarious victimization fits well with this theory. How an individual interprets the bullying behavior that he or she sees will determine how he or she emotionally react to it. If an individual views victimization and interprets that he or she may be next, then he or she may experience the same effects of that victimization that the actual victim experienced. These consequences, such as low self-esteem, would be as real to them as it was to the actual victim. This idea shows how vicarious victimization could be as damaging to children as actual victimization. Because many more children will see bullying than experience it, this theory demonstrates that vicarious victimization should be examined as much as actual victimization in bullying research. What follows is a brief description of what the current bullying research focuses on, which is identifying bullies and victims.

Bullying Defintion

One aspect of the bullying research that has not been completely settled is the definition of bullying. Definitions range from very explicit by defining all actions considered bullying down to open definitions that mainly hit on the key aspects of what bullying entails. Broadly defined by Farrington (1993), bullying must contain these items:

Physical, verbal, or psychological attack or intimidation that is intended to cause fear, distress, or harm to the victim; an imbalance of power, with the more powerful child oppressing the less powerful one; absence of provocation by the victim; and repeated incidents between the same children over a prolonged period (p. 382).

A more precise definition of bullying is presented in Olweus's research (1996). He defines bullying as follows by using specific acts to help aid in his subjects' understanding of what actually constitutes bullying:

We say a student is being bullied when another student or several other students say mean and hurtful things or make fun of him or her or call him or her mean and names; completely ignore or exclude him or her from their group of friends or leave him or her out of things on purpose; hit, kick, push, shove around, or threaten him or her; tell lies or spread false rumors about him or her or send mean notes and try to make other students dislike him or her; and do other hurtful things like that (Olweus, 1996, p. 1).

While these two definitions are helpful for the researcher in determining differences between common childhood fighting and teasing and the much more damaging acts of bullying, these definitions may not mean as much to the children involved in this research. In the current study, a definition of bullying was not provided to the participants. Different acts were listed and the children were asked to identify the frequency of their occurrence. These acts were consistent with the previously mentioned bullying definitions. They included name calling and insults, verbal threats, practical jokes, breaking of property, physical attacks (hitting, pushing, tripping, etc.), threats with a weapon, and people talking behind other's backs along with the option to list any other acts they felt need to be added. These questions were more for an easy way to measure frequencies of the occurrence of these acts than a way to actually operationalize the definition of bullying for the students. A listing of reasons why children were bullied was also provided and the students were asked to identify which ones were most often used as reasons for bullying.

Some of these choices included race, handicaps, speech, grades, clothing, etc. Not giving them a set definition of bullying would not limit them in their estimations of bullying on their campus.

The middle school involved in the current research has adopted its own definition of bullying that it presents to the students every year. They define bullying as “anything you say or anything you do that offends or disrespects another person, and they ask you to stop.” At the beginning of every school year, the counselors at this middle school give a “Bully-Proofing Lesson” to every class. At that time, a very basic bullying survey is administered to the students. This bullying survey provides the administration with a record of reported victimization and instances of bullying that have been observed by each student.

With these bullying problems very evident in the literature, some states are creating their own definitions of bullying by enacting laws to help protect students. For instance, Tennessee has a new statute that deals with bullying in its school districts. This new law defined harassment, intimidation, or bullying as “any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance, that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or at any official school bus stop, and that has the effect of: (1) physically harming a student or damaging a student's property; (2) knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property; or (3) creating a hostile educational environment” (T.C.A. §§ 49-6-1015).

By January 2006, every one of Tennessee’s 136 school districts was to submit an anti-bullying policy to the state that included these factors in Table 1 (T.C.A. 49-6-1016).

Table 1

Tennessee Bullying Statute

TENNESSEE BULLYING POLICY FACTORS (T.C.A. 49-6-1016)

- A statement prohibiting harassment, intimidation or bullying.
 - A statement of the manner in which a school district shall respond after an act is reported, investigated and confirmed.
 - A definition of harassment, intimidation or bullying.
 - A statement prohibiting retaliation against any person who reports an act.
 - A description of the type of behavior expected from each student;
 - A statement of the consequences for a person found to have falsely accused another of having committed an act.
 - Consequences for committing the prohibited acts.
 - A statement of how the policy is to be publicized within the district, including a notice that the policy applies to behavior at school-sponsored activities.
 - A reporting procedure (which can be anonymous).
 - The identification by job title of school officials responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.
 - A procedure for prompt investigation of a report of an act.
 - A procedure for discouraging and reporting conduct aimed at defining a student in a sexual manner or conduct impugning the character of a student based on allegations of sexual promiscuity.
-

Bully And Victim Characteristics

Another main topic in the bullying literature deals with determining the characteristics of the children who are involved in bullying behavior. Many differences and many similarities have emerged in this type of research. In a review of bullying literature, Bernstein and Watson (1997) give an informative breakdown of the types of children who are bullies and the types of children who are victims. Victims of bullying tend to be male, tend to have an insecure attachment with their parents, and tend to be insecure in regard to self-esteem.

Bullies on the other hand were also males, were typically older children, have uninvolved or hostile parents, and have high self-esteem. Bernstein and Watson (1997) added that race was not found to be a significant factor in most bullying research. These themes will again be elaborated throughout the literature review section.

Categorization Of Bullying

In discussing what types of children are or are not involved in bullying, different groupings of the children have emerged. While most people would define the participants in bullying behavior as only bully and victim, another grouping has emerged through this research. The bully/victim group has become an important part of determining differences between children and bullying distinctions. The bully/victim group includes children who have been bullied and also bully other children in return (Bowers, Smith, & Binney, 1992; Demaray & Malecki, 2003; Stevens, Bourdeaudhuij, & Oost, 2002). The review of the research will show that these students suffer from both of the adverse affects of bullying behavior because they are included in both groups of bully and victim.

These same studies that developed the bully/victim group have also incorporated another group of children who had neither been a victim nor a perpetrator of bullying. This group

became the basis for comparison in much of the bullying research. This control group helped to more fully understand the differences between bully, victim, and bully/victim. This group became very important for comparisons because most often bullies and victims both have many of the same types of emotional and familial problems.

Consequences Of Bullying

Involvement in bullying behavior has many side effects for the participants. Such effects include low grades in school, unhappiness in school, few friendships, and low self-esteem. The main consequence of bullying behavior that the current research will focus on is low self-esteem. Rosenberg (1965) described self-esteem as “a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the self” (p. 15). Research is not in complete agreement on how bullying affects self-esteem though. As mentioned before, in much research bullies tend to have high self-esteem (Bernstein & Watson, 1997). But in other research, low self-esteem has not only been found to exist in the victim of bullying, but it also exists in the actual bully him- or herself. Much research has been conducted showing that perpetrating as well as receiving bullying violence leads to low levels of self-esteem and overall unhappiness (Connolly & O’Moore, 2003; Kumpulainen et al., 1998; O’Moore & Kirkham, 2001; Rigby & Slee, 1993). Children who are in any way involved in bullying behavior (perpetrating it, being victimized by it, or even viewing it) may suffer from low self-esteem.

Hypotheses

The current study investigates how vicarious victimization and other demographic variables affect global self-esteem and attitudes of bullying. This study is different from much of the previous bullying research because it examines the effects of bullying in a different way. Most bullying research focuses on being a bully or victim and how the person’s self-esteem is

affected. This research seeks to understand the effects of viewing bullying. The first set of three hypotheses deals with attitudes of bullying. Hypothesis 1 is that females will report a more negative attitude toward bullying than males. Hypothesis 2 is that the children in the seventh grade would have a more positive attitude toward bullying than the sixth grade children. Hypothesis 3 maintains that children with an unhappy family life would have a positive view toward bullying.

The next set of five hypotheses deals with self-esteem. Hypothesis 4 is that females would have lower self-esteem than males. Hypothesis 5 is that there would be no difference in the self-esteem of sixth and seventh grade children. Hypothesis 6 is that children with an unhappy family life would have lower self-esteem than children with a more positive view of their families. Hypothesis 7 is that children with a positive attitude toward bullying would have lower self-esteem than children with a negative attitude toward bullying. Hypothesis 8 is that children who had experienced more vicarious victimization would have lower self-esteem than children who had experienced little or no vicarious victimization.

Limitations

There may be some limitations with the current study. Its external validity is the first weakness. The sample for this study was taken from a middle school in a small town in East Tennessee. This sample may not be generalizable to any other outside populations. The students at this school may be unique in their views on bullying behavior. As was previously discussed, the guidance counselors do conduct a “Bully-Proofing” lesson every year. These students may already be sensitive to the plight of the victim. In regard to generalizability, this study does have its strong points because a completely random sampling method was used to derive the sample, and every class that was selected was administered the survey.

Another potential problem that the current research may suffer from is the fact that self-report questionnaires were used to collect the data. The researchers had to rely on the openness of the participants in providing accurate and consistent answers to the questions. Questions involving the witnessing of bullying behavior over the previous month also relied on the memory of the students. The researchers also had to trust that the participants completely understood the questions. If students had questions while taking the survey, a researcher was there to answer any questions they might have had. This hopefully helped to safeguard against misunderstandings, but not every student with a question raised his or her hand to ask. Because these types of problems are true of all self-report data, these shouldn't harm the validity of the current research.

Summary

In conclusion, the current research is seeking to understand if attitudes of bullying and self-esteem are affected by a number of factors. Specifically, how attitudes of bullying are affected by gender, grade level, and family attitudes and how self-esteem is affected by gender, grade level, family attitudes, attitudes of bullying, and vicarious victimization. Chapter 2 reviews the previous research findings and show support for the hypotheses listed above. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology of the current research. The results of the statistical analyses are in Chapter 4. A discussion of the findings and limitations of the current research are provided in Chapter 5 along with future research applications.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Violence among children has always been a topic of interest to many social scientists, and bullying behavior has grown out of this field. Bullying has been for many years a vastly researched area in other countries and is now a very quickly growing topic of interest in social research in the United States. Most bullying research shows the prevalence of bullying at school while comparing differences such as socioeconomic status, gender, race, age, self-esteem, and other personality characteristics between the bully and the victim. Another group of research has grown to include a third group called the bully/victim, or someone who has experienced bullying as well as victimization. Many studies have also focused on comparing the different types of bullying that are practiced among students.

This review will focus on the previous research that addresses the same variables that are associated with the current study such as gender, grade level, family attitudes, vicarious victimization, and self-esteem. Most of the research set forth here will be dealing with these variables as they relate to whether someone is a bully or a victim. The current research will compare these variables towards participants' attitudes of bullying behavior and self-esteem. This review will be separated into two distinct sections. In the first section, research will be discussed that includes the topic of bullying as it relates to gender, age, and family relationships. The second section will include research that discusses self-esteem and how it is related to gender, age, family relationships, and bullying.

Risk Factors for Bullying and Victimization

Gender

Differences between the genders are a very commonly researched topic. Bullying research is no exception. Most bullying research studies use gender as a comparison tool. In American culture, men are commonly seen as more violent and aggressive than women, so it seems a logical jump to believe that boys are more often bullies than girls. Salmivalli and Nieminen (2002) conducted research that found just that. They examined reactive and proactive aggression in bullies, victims, bully/victims, and a control group (those who had never been a bully or a victim) by administering a self-report questionnaire to 1,062 students in Finland ages 10 to 12 years old. There were 530 females and 532 males in grades four through six who participated. The first section of the survey was a Participant Role Questionnaire to measure what type of bullying participant they were. The second section was a peer-nomination activity in which a scenario describing a type of bullying was presented and the child was asked to nominate a classmate who fit that description. This measured reactive and proactive aggression among the children at this school. They found that the boys scored significantly higher ($p < .001$) on all the aggression variables (Salmivalli & Nieminen). Boys were found to be much more aggressive.

In a similar study, Mouttapa, Valente, Gallaher, Rohrbach, and Unger (2004) examined whether bullies, victims, and aggressive victims (similar to the bully/victim) differed on gender, ethnicity, and classroom social status. They administered a 160-item survey to 1,368 sixth grade students in Southern California. The mean age was 11.3 years old with a mostly Latino and Asian racial mix (53.8% and 22.8% respectively). They too found that males (45.6%) were reporting to have bullied more than females (31.9%). Other interesting differences were also

discovered. Male bullies did not differ from any other group on the central position variables (measured popularity among other students). They were no more liked or disliked than any other group. On the other hand, it was found that victims had fewer friends than bullies or aggressive victims and most of these were Asian. While this one racial difference was found, there were no significant differences between students in the racial majority and students in the racial minority (Mouittapa et al.). Gender again made a statistically significant difference in the frequency of bullying behavior.

There is a difference between rates of delinquency in children as well as differences between rates of bullying between the genders. During research that examined whether bullies are also juvenile delinquents, Andershed, Kerr, and Stattin (2001) discovered similar findings in regard to gender differences in bullying. A survey was administered to 2,561 eighth grade students in a mid-sized county in Sweden. The survey was designed to measure rates of bullying as well as rates of delinquency. Again, gender was found to be a significant factor in regard to bullying. Males were much more likely to engage in bullying behavior than females. The main topic of their research was also found to be true; those students who engage in bullying in school are also the children who engage in delinquent acts after school (Andershed et al.). This demonstrates the major implications that this type of bullying research has for criminal justice.

Research out of England has also led to similar results for gender. Mynard and Joseph (2000) developed a multidimensional peer-victimization scale and administered it to school children in England. Their participants were 812 students (402 males and 410 females) with ages ranging from 11 to 16 and an mean age of 13. The students were presented with a bullying definition and then were given the questionnaire. Their scale included these types of bullying: physical victimization, verbal victimization, social manipulation, and attacks on property. They

discovered that 43% of the students had been bullied in one form at least once during the school year. In comparing victimization rates, it was found that in physical victimization boys (mean 3.31) were victimized significantly more often than girls (mean 1.12). In the social manipulation scale, boys (mean 3.3) were also victimized significantly more often than girls (mean 2.55). There was no difference between the genders and the other two scales of verbal victimization and attacks on property (Mynard & Joseph). This research shows that there is a difference between boys and girls in things other than rates of aggression and bullying by showing that boys are also victimized more often than girls.

Other research has also proven the victimization differences between the genders. In a study to identify risk factors for victimization, Schreck, Miller, and Gibson (2003) also found results that support the previous research's claims that males are more involved in victimization as well as bullying. They conducted a telephone survey of all 50 states and the District of Columbia and had 6,418 participants. They measured the reporting of theft and physical attacks and related them to gender, grade level, and race. As in line with the current topic, being a male was positively correlated to overall victimization. Other interesting results were that grade level was negatively correlated with victimization. In other words, the higher the participants' grade level, then the lower their chances for victimization was. If the student was a minority, victimization had a negative correlation with minorities having higher rates of victimization (Schreck et al.).

There has been other research that goes against the prevailing belief that there is a difference between males and females in regard to their bullying behavior. Sutton, Smith, and Swettenham (1999) found just that in a study to compare ringleader bullies, follower bullies, victims, and defenders of victims in regard to social cognitions and emotions. To do this, they

created a survey to measure which type of person the participant was (bully, assistant, reinforcer, defender, outsider, or victim) and presented the participants with two stories to measure cognitive and emotional qualities. The surveys were given to 193 students in South-East London schools aged 7 to 10. There were 102 females and 91 males. It was found that there was no significant difference between gender and the participant roles. They did find one important difference between the bullies and victims. All the bully roles were significantly positively correlated with social cognition while the victims were negatively correlated with it (Sutton et al.). This showed that bullies are not the bad-mannered oafs that they are sometimes portrayed to be. This research showed that bullies seem to understand and manipulate social situations to their advantage.

Another study showing that there is no difference between gender and some aspects bullying is Boxer and Tisak's (2005) research on the continuity of aggression. They administered surveys to 139 third and fifth graders with a mean age of 9.74 in rural and suburban Midwestern schools. These surveys measured their beliefs about the continuity of aggression by giving the students two vignettes describing male and female peers who were being aggressive and asking them: would these children do this act again?, would these children be socially accepted?, and can these children and their aggressive tendencies be fixed? It was found that both males and females had a strong belief in the continuity of aggression because both genders reported feeling that the children described in the vignettes would not be able to change. One gender difference was found though. Females had greater expectations that aggression would happen again and showed less moral acceptance of the children who were aggressive. For males the correlation rate for those factors was effectively zero. Overall though, there were low levels of social

acceptance ($r = -.36, p < .05$) (Boxer & Tisak). Gender again made a difference in certain bullying situations.

While males may behave in more aggressive ways (Salmivalli & Nieminen, 2002), Phillips' (2003) study into the memories and lives of college girls shows the way females really feel about the "bitchy" attitude of most female bullying and that females can be physically aggressive also (p. 716). Phillips conducted semi-structured interviews of 31 young women in college in South London. They ranged in age from 16 to 22 years old. They were asked to recall incidents of violent and aggressive behavior from their school years. All the participants had a very good attitude towards their previous school years and had many friends then. Most of them recalled that the in-group of girls maintained their position by verbally and physically bullying others. Most agreed that these types of behaviors were reinforced because strength and dominance were desirable traits to have even among females. There was not, however, a consensus on the popularity of the in-group. The girls who reported being in the in-group or just outside it felt that the group was very popular with all students. On the other hand, the middle to lower level girls thought that the in-group girls were cowardly and pathetic and avoided them. This excerpt is representative of how that "bitchiness" and the physical aggression of females worked together:

we just surrounded her and were pushing her around... There was a few Bengali boys who backed us and just stood there so nobody else could sort of interfere or muck in and try and stop it. We weren't actually hurting her, we were pushing her around and taking her shoe, throwing it from place to place and throwing it over the road and that. We did it until we actually got her into tears and then we left her (Phillips, 2003, p. 717).

Age

In the social sciences, age is a key factor in determining many types of problems. It is commonly believed that young people are committing most crimes and that many of them will grow out of it. Moffitt (1993) demonstrated the difference between the two types of antisocial people with her adolescence-limited and life course-persistent models of antisocial behavior. She found that while antisocial behavior is generally continuous across time, it shows a spike during adolescence—it increases almost 10 times.

But in the world of juveniles, age is somewhat less predictable. There are differences in delinquency and behavior problems during the years of adolescence. Some studies found that more mature juveniles grow out of bullyish pranks and delinquency while sometimes the delinquency gets worse. In a longitudinal study in Dunedin, New Zealand, researchers found that males started out at a younger age with a higher rate of conduct disorder than females (3.5:1), then females closed the gap somewhat (1.9:1), and then males ended with an even higher rate (5.3:1) of conduct disorder than females (Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter, & Silva, 2001).

There is also conflicting information about age differences in the bullying research. They mainly differ in deciding who is doing more bullying—younger or older juveniles. In a survey research project, Espelage, Holt, and Henkel (2003) examined differences among bullying, fighting, and peer-group influence across gender and grade level. They surveyed 422 kids from a rural Midwestern town. There were 214 females and 208 males in the sixth through eighth grades who were surveyed. In this study, the survey was read to the participants and they were asked to write down their answers as opposed to most other surveys in the previous literature. They were given a bullying inventory and then a peer-group assessment that had the children to write down the names of one to eight of their friends. The results of the bullying inventory

showed that the seventh and eighth graders reported significantly more bullying in their classrooms than did the sixth graders. The peer-group inventory showed that children tend to be friends with people who bully or are victimized at the same rate as themselves (Espelage et al.).

Demaray and Malecki (2003) found similar results in accordance with age and grade level bullying frequencies. To examine frequency and social support for bullying, they surveyed 499 students in a predominantly Hispanic (78.6%) urban middle school. Of those six, seventh, and eighth graders, 237 were male and 257 were female. The students were administered a survey with two scales in it—the Child Adolescent Social Support Scale and a bullying questionnaire. They discovered that 60-75% of the children reported being a victim of bullying at least once in the past year. These data yielded four different types of students: victims, bullies, bully/victims, and a control group who had neither bullied nor been bullied. Victims, bullies, and bully/victims perceived less social support than the control group. There were also low levels of classmate support for victims and bully/victims compared to the bullies and the control group. As for any differences for age and grade level, there were two. There was no effect for grade level when comparing those who had been victims of bullying. There was an effect, however, for the actual bullying rates. There were lower rates of bullying among the sixth grade students than the seventh grade students (Demaray & Malecki). In other words, there were the same number of victims in the sixth and seventh grade, but there was more bullying going on for those seventh grade victims.

So far in the previous research it has been found that the older the student is the more likely he or she is to be involved in some type of bullying behavior. Espelage, Bosworth, and Simon (2001) found different results in another bullying behavior research project she conducted that examined whether or not bullying behavior remained stable over a 4-month period. A survey

was given to 516 students (54% female and 46% male) in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades from a large middle school. The survey was given two times during their second term. It was first given in January and then given in May. Besides testing the continuity of the bullying behavior, they also examined how bullying behavior can change in regard to gender, grade, ethnicity, and family type. It was discovered that bullying increased only in the sixth graders' classrooms. All of the other variables were not significant (Espelage, Bosworth et al., 2001). This increase in sixth grade bullying may be do to the sixth graders spending more time under the influence of the seventh and eighth graders who have statistically been found to bully more often than sixth graders in the previous research. These results may demonstrate social learning in the act.

Other research has also shown that younger people bully more than older. A study of juvenile offenders versus young adult offenders was conducted in England by Ireland (2002). She compared the rates of bullying behavior among those juvenile offenders and the young adult offenders. Juvenile offenders were young males that were incapacitated and between the ages of 12 to 17 years old. Young adult offenders were in an English prison and were between the ages of 18 to 21. There were 291 male offenders studied. Of them, 95 were juvenile offenders while 196 were young adult offenders. There were two surveys administered. One listed the term *bully* and defined it while the other survey just listed different behaviors and had the inmates decide if they were bullying or not. This was to see if using the term *bully* would lead to over reporting of such behavior. In this case, it was found that juveniles reported more often than young adults to being directly bullied (42% victimization rate for juveniles versus 26% victimization rate for young adults) (Ireland, 2002).

Ma (2002) has also conducted research that demonstrates a higher rate of bullying in lower grade levels of schools. In survey research conducted in New Brunswick, a mainly rural province of Canada, Ma examined school differences between victims and bullies. Surveys were administered to 6,883 sixth graders at 148 different schools and 6,868 eighth graders at 92 different schools. Overall, there was significantly more bullying in the sixth grade compared to the eighth grade. It was also found that among the sixth grade classes that had the least amount of bullying, one school characteristic was shown to be significantly more effective than the rest—strong parental involvement. Among the eighth grade classes that had the least amount of bullying, the one school characteristic that statistically stood out was having a very high amount of emphasis on academics (Ma).

Other research also demonstrates that age affects the amount of bullying behavior encountered. Ireland (1999) examined bullying behavior among adult and young offenders. She surveyed 309 inmates (74 females and 235 males), 158 were adults and 77 were young offenders. A self-report checklist asking them to describe types of bullying encountered and the frequency of bullying was given to the inmates. Bullying was reported by 57.9% of the inmates while victimization was reported by 51.8%. In this study, the differences between indirect and direct bullying were taken into account. Direct bullying involves physical acts such as hitting and shoving. Indirect bullying involves things like gossiping and ostracizing. In the case of these inmates, direct bullying was found more among the young offenders than the adult offenders (62.2% versus 26.1%). Overall more adults were found to be victims (18.5% versus 6.1%), while more young offenders were found to be bullies (29.6% versus 16.6%) (Ireland, 1999).

Family Attitudes

Much violence is learned through what happens in the home. People with past or current experiences with violence in the home are likely to perpetuate that cycle of violence in other relationships (Langrichsen, Hankla, & Stromberg, 2004). Home life is a good predictor of future violent or bullying behavior. In research conducted to examine the cohesion and power relationships among children who are involved in bullying and victimization, researchers found just how important those familial relationships were for these types of behaviors (Bowers, Smith, & Binney, 1992). Their participants were chosen from a middle school through peer nominations. A sample of 20 bullies, 20 victims, 20 bully/victims, and 20 control students was selected. These children ranged in age from 8 to 11 years old. They were each given a version of the Family System Test to measure power and cohesion dimensions of each child's family. Bullies perceived their families as less cohesive and as having a strong power imbalance with the father being dominant. Bullies also felt a power imbalance between their siblings and themselves with their siblings being stronger. On the other hand, victims felt that their families had high levels of cohesion with only a slight power imbalance between siblings with themselves being the more powerful ones. Bully/victims had low cohesion scores, but they were not as low as the bullies. They also had a power imbalance between their parents with the father again being the dominant one. As far as power struggles between siblings, bully/victims felt that they had more power for themselves (Bowers et al., 1992).

Baldry and Farrington (2000), two prominent bullying researchers, also discovered the importance of family life in regard to bullying behavior and victimization. They studied the personal characteristics of bullies in relation to the parenting styles that they had grown up with. Students ranging from 11 to 14 years of age attending a middle school in Rome (113 females and

125 males) were asked to complete a survey measuring bullying behavior, parental style, personality characteristics, and delinquency. It was found that bullies had more authoritarian parents and disagreed with them more often than other students. The specific type of disagreement that was significant was a disagreement with the mother. It was the maternal relationship that seemed to be the most important to causing bullying behavior. Those students whose parents were classified as low supporting were more likely to engage in bullying behavior (Baldry & Farrington). Again, family life seemingly has played a part in the determination of the roles of bullying that are developed.

Another way to measure parental involvement in the creation of a bully or victim is to study adults. An adult has had more time to reflect on his or her past family life and may have a better understanding as to how his or her family worked together. Fosse and Holen studied adult psychiatric outpatients in Norway. Childhood environment of the patients was compared to the presence or absence of bullying behaviors in the patients as children. A questionnaire that contained a bullying frequency scale, Parental Bonding Instrument, and Childhood Trauma Questionnaire was administered to 160 adult outpatients (107 females and 53 males) with a mean age of 32.6. It was found that the male victims of bullying grew up without fathers more often than others. Female victims of bullying also had similar familial disruptions. They were more likely to have reported parental abuse and neglect than the other patients (Fosse & Holen, 2002).

Most bullying research that compares this type of behavior to family life only asks the participant about his or her family situation. In another type of research aimed at comparing the effects of family on bullying and victimization, Stevens, Bourdeaudhuij, & Oost (2002) included a step that involved having one parent of the child complete a survey also. At 38 different schools, there were 1,719 fifth and sixth graders surveyed. They ranged in age from 10

to 13 with a mean age of 11.5. Each student had one parent fill out a separate questionnaire that was mailed back to the school. Both the student and parent surveys contained a Family Environment Scale and a Child-Rearing Scale. Of the students participating, 17.5% of the students reported being a victim of bullying while 7.6% reported being a bully. It was found that bullies' families were less cohesive and more conflictual. They also were found to be less organized and controlled than other groups of students. The victims of bullying reported that there were more discipline and rules in their households. The bully/victims reported having more anger and aggression in the home. Bullying behavior seems to be related to having a disruptive family situation that involves more fighting and anger (Stevens et al.).

It seems that being a bully is correlated with problems at home, but there are some studies that show that victimization also is related to problems at home. In a review of the bullying literature, Dake, Price, and Telljohann (2003) found that bullies had very authoritarian and punitive parents while victims also had very demanding parents. Both of these could lead to problem behaviors and an unhappy childhood. A study by Haynie, Nansel, and Eitel (2001) goes to support this assumption from the previous literature. Haynie surveyed 4,263 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students to compare problem behaviors and psychosocial variables among bullies, victims, and bully/victims. His survey specifically measured bullying, victimization, problem behaviors, behavioral misconduct, self-control, deviant peer influences, deviance acceptance, social competence, school adjustment, school bonding, depressive symptoms, parental involvement, and parental support. In the previous year, 48.2% of the surveyed students reported having bullied someone while 89.2% of the students had been victimized. It was found that bullies had more problem behaviors to report and that victims had more self control and therefore less problem behaviors to report. In regard to their family lives, bullies and victims

were very similar. They were both found to have less parental support and involvement than the comparison group of children who had never been involved in bullying behavior or victimization (Haynie et al.). Parental support and involvement is obviously a very important part of a child's life and how he or she develops into a kind and considerate person.

Risk Factors for Low Self-Esteem

Gender

Gender differences in regard to self-esteem have always been on the forefront of self-esteem research. It is commonly believed that girls suffer from lower self-esteem than boys. Research among Flemish fifth grade students show just that (Van Houtte, 2005). A survey was administered to 3,720 students in 33 different secondary schools. Nineteen of the schools were technical/vocational schools, and 14 were general schools. Van Houtte wanted to discover if there were any differences in self-esteem between the genders in each type of school. It was found that girls have significantly lower self-esteem than boys. This gender effect actually suppressed any differences between the two different school tracks. When the researchers compared boys and girls separately, it was found that boys in the technical schools had significantly lower self-esteem than the boys in the general schools, but for girls there was no difference found (Van Houtte). This shows that girls generally have much lower self-esteem than boys, and that boys are much more sensitive to their social status (in this case type of school) than girls are.

Most of the self-esteem research is in agreement in the idea that females tend to have lower self-esteem than males especially in adolescence. Another research study that supports this idea is Quatman and Watson's (2001) research involving gender differences in self-esteem. They assessed 545 teens ages 12-18 in grades 8, 10, and 12. They examined eight domains of

adolescent self-esteem—personal security, home/parents, peer popularity, academic competence, attractiveness, personal mastery, psychological permeability, and athletic competence. They used questionnaires and many other methods in their study design to assess each of these themes. They discovered that females reported lower self-esteem in adolescence than males did (Quatman & Watson).

In a similar study, Martinez and Dukes (1991) used a longitudinal research design to assess gender differences and self-esteem. They conducted a cohort study of 7th through 12th grade students. They surveyed the students in 1983 and then again in 1986. They discovered that females reported lower self-esteem in their teen years than males did (Martinez & Dukes). This goes along with most of the other research that has been conducted in regard to gender and self-esteem.

Age

There is not much agreement in the literature about how age affects self-esteem Connor, Poyrazli, Ferrer-Wreder, and Grahame (2004) found age not to be correlated with self-esteem at all in her research on nonmainstream students. She set out to examine self-esteem, age, gender, ethnicity, and risk behaviors in the nonmainstream student population. Students in grades 6 through 12 (149) were surveyed using a demographic questionnaire and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem questionnaire. It was hypothesized that the younger students would have lower self-esteem, but that hypothesis was found to be untrue (Connor et al.).

Another study that agrees with the previous finding is the 2001 study by Bergman and Scott. They used the 1994-1997 Youth Surveys of the British Household Panel Study to examine teenagers and their levels of self-esteem across time. In this longitudinal study, they found that

age was not a significant predictor of self-esteem. The results showed that self-esteem levels remained constant across age (Bergman & Scott, 2001).

Some research has been found to uncover a relationship between age and self-esteem. Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Gosling, and Potter (2002) found a relationship in their study of global self-esteem across the life span. Cross-sectional data that included 326,641 people were surveyed via the internet. The age span of this data set was quite wide. It included people from age 9 to age 90. These data yielded that self-esteem decreases over time during the teenage years (Robins et al.).

On the other hand, Jones and Meredith (1996) found just the opposite effect in their study of personality patterns and changes across the life span. Their longitudinal design surveyed 211 people across a 30 or 40 year time span. It was found that there was a gradual increase in self-esteem throughout the teenage years (Jones & Meredith). This conflicts with all the research previously mentioned. There must be other factors that contribute to any increase or decrease in self-esteem over time that these studies are not taking into account.

Family Attitudes

The previous literature concerning family life and how it affects self-esteem is fairly consistent; family life and happiness do affect self-esteem. Roberts and Bengtson (1993) conducted research to support this hypothesis. Their panel study consisted of 293 parent and child dyads. Their research was conducted over a period of 14 years. At each meeting, self-esteem and parent/child affection were assessed. It was found that in late adolescence and early adulthood, parent/child affection did make a positive difference in the self-esteem of the children (Roberts & Bengtson).

Family cohesion and support were analyzed in a study by Cooper, Holman, and Braithwaite (1983). Their hypothesis stated that there was a relationship between self-esteem and perceptions of family cohesion. Questionnaires were administered to 467 fifth and sixth graders. The questionnaires consisted of scales measuring self-esteem, family happiness, and family support. As with the previous study, Cooper and colleagues found that low family support did correlate with low self-esteem values among the children questioned (Cooper et al.).

More proof for the idea that family life is an important factor in self-esteem levels was also found in a research study by Clark and Barber (1994). Self-esteem was assessed in two different family types—postdivorce, mother-headed households and always married, two-parent households. The 1,291 students surveyed were participants in the Michigan Study of Adolescent Life Transitions. They were questioned 1 month prior to their high school graduation and ranged in age from 16 to 19. Low self-esteem was reported in teens from two-parent households who felt that their father was not as interested in them as he was in their siblings. There was no difference between the self-esteem of children in two-parent and mother-headed households (Clark & Barber, 1994). Again it was found that family support or happiness plays a role in self-esteem levels.

Bullying and Victimization

How a person feels about him or herself makes an impact on the choices he or she makes and the way he or she feels about others. The same is true in the previous bullying research. Each type of bullying participant has a different type of self-esteem problem. In research by Folkman (1984), it was suggested that feelings of situational control help to measure secondary appraisals which are a product of how people feel about their ability to deal with a stressful situation. These feelings of being in control of a situation may help boost self-esteem because the children feel

they have power over these stressful bullying situations. Hunter and Boyle (2002) tested whether children who are bullied feel less in control of their lives and these particular bullying situations than others. They administered a questionnaire to 348 children (47% male and 53% female) with an age span of 9 to 11 years old who live in inner-city Glasgow. The questionnaire collected information regarding bullying behavior and perceptions of control. It was found that victims of long-term bullying felt less in control than others ($p < .05$). More male victims felt in control of bullying than the female victims ($p < .01$) (Hunter & Boyle). The perception of being in control of a situation may mean the difference between retaliating and becoming a bully because of victimization and coping and dealing with the victimization itself.

Feelings of being in control can be associated with emotion-focused coping skills and the ability to seek help when victimization occurs (Kanetsuna & Smith, 2002). In Kanetsuna and Smith's study, they compared youths from a state school in Tokyo and a state school in London in regard to bullying behavior and coping skills and seeking help after victimization through a self-report questionnaire. They surveyed 207 students with 107 being from Tokyo and 100 being from London. Mainly open-ended questions were asked regarding coping strategies and why victims do not tell an adult after victimization occurs. Most children felt that there was no one who could help them with the problem of bullying and that there was no social support for their issue. Many also reported that they didn't want to make the dilemma worse (Kanetsuna & Smith). In short, they felt like they had no control over their situation and that no one else did either.

Suicide is an unfortunate side effect of low self-esteem. In a study by Blaauw, Winkel, and Kerkhof (2001), they examined the relationships between bullying and suicidal behavior among inmates in prisons in the Netherlands. The files of 95 suicide victims were examined for

instances of bullying while 221 nonsuicidal and 78 suicidal inmates were interviewed to find bullying behavior or victimization. The numbers are very similar between the inmates who committed suicide and the nonsuicidal inmates. Of the inmates who committed suicide, 34% of them had bullying reported in their files. Of the nonsuicidal inmates, 34% of them also reported being bullied in their interviews. The suicidal inmates reported a much higher rate of bullying victimization at 66%. The discrepancies in these numbers could be because the inmates who had committed suicide were being assessed through official records and that the others were being interviewed. It may be that in this prison, the rates of bullying are much higher than the official records indicate. There was one other marked difference between the groups of inmates in regard to bullying. The suicidal and nonsuicidal inmates reported in their interviews that their bullies were people outside of the prison and the correctional officers. The suicide victims' reports stated that other inmates were their bullies (Blaauw et al.). It may have been this factor that pushed them to complete the act of suicide.

There are other instances in the bullying research where self-esteem and mental health issues were related to different participants in bullying behavior. Craig (1998) studied children in five different middle schools in a middle class area in a small city. She gave Olweus' questionnaire to measure bullying along with other scales to 546 children (254 males and 292 females) in grades five through eight with a mean age of 11.24. Craig wanted to examine gender differences among bullies, victims, and control children on aggression and victimization, on depression and anxiety, and on the different types of aggression, victimization, depression, and anxiety. Her results included that victims reported more feelings of anxiety and depression than the bullies did. She also found that males more often reported acting out physical aggression than the females did (Craig).

Research conducted on students at a secondary school in England found similar results regarding victimization in relation to self-esteem and other mental health issues (Mynard, Joseph, & Alexander, 2000). These researchers examined peer victimization in regard to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and feelings of self-worth. An Impact of Event Scale, Global Self-Worth Scale, and victimization questionnaire were given to 331 students. There were 136 students who reported to have been victimized with 37% of the students showing signs of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. They found that victimization is associated with feelings of low self-worth and high rates of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. With $r = -.27$, $p < .0001$, higher rates of victimization meant less self-worth. Students who reported high rates of verbal victimization showed the lowest amounts of self-worth. There were no gender differences associated between victimization, self-worth, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Mynard et al.). Peer-victimization seems to easily lead into feelings of low self-worth.

Measures of overall self-esteem are a popular way to measure satisfaction with oneself. O'Moore and Kirkham (2001) found similar results in their research. Surveys were administered to 13,112 students (7,313 females and 5,799 males) ages 8 to 18. The surveys contained the Olweus self-report questionnaire and the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale that measures global self-esteem, behavior, intelligence, physical appearance, anxiety, popularity, and happiness and satisfaction. Victims reported a significantly lower global self-esteem number, were more anxious, were less popular, felt they were less physically attractive, and felt they had a lower intellect than other children. Bullies reportedly had significantly lower self-esteem than those children who had never been bullied. Bullies also had negative feelings towards their behavior, intellect, and happiness and satisfaction levels than nonbullies. The children who were categorized as bully/victims had the lowest feelings of global self-esteem (O'Moore &

Kirkham). These results indicate that any association with bullying behavior whether bully, victim, or both will lead to low feelings of low self-esteem.

In the bullying literature, it is the bully/victim group that seems to have the most emotional problems. Kumpulainen et al.'s research (1998) into bullying also found similar results with the bully/victim group scoring low in self-esteem factors. He studied 5,813 teenagers born in Finland in 1981. He administered questionnaires to them, their parents, and their teachers to examine the differences between bullying and psychological disturbances among children. He found 8.1% of the children to be bullies, 7.6% to be bully/victims, 11.3% to be victims, and 73.1% of the children to be in the control group of children not involved in bullying behavior. He found that overall males were five times more likely to be bullies or bully/victims than females. In regard to self-esteem issues, it was discovered that male victims reported more negative self-esteem than other groups. The victim category overall showed more feelings of ineffectiveness. As with the O'Moore and Kirkham (2001) study, Kumpulainen et al. found that the bully/victim group scored the highest on the negative mood factor (Kumpulainen et al.). Again the bully/victim group suffers with the negative affects of being both a bully and a victim and the problems associated with each.

There are many other personality factors besides self-esteem that can be hindered by bullying behavior. Psychoticism, neuroticism, and extraversion along with other family traits were examined in regard to bullying by Connolly and O'Moore (2003). Surveys measuring those specific variables were given to 228 children ages 6 to 16. The Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Junior was given to them to measure different aspects of their personality while a separate test was administered to measure family relationships as well as how they assigned traits to themselves. The family test consisted of a listing of traits that were to be assigned to

themselves, siblings, parents, and a “nobody” category if no one in their family had that certain personality trait. Of those 228 children, 115 were placed in the bully group while 113 were in the control group. It was discovered that bullies had high rates of emotional inhibition and were more likely to be extraverted. The bullies were also more likely to make negative statements about themselves and have negative feelings about themselves (Connolly & O’Moore). Again, this shows the tendency for bullies to have more emotional and self-esteem problems than other children.

Other emotional problems like overall happiness and satisfaction with one’s life can be affected by bullying behavior besides self-esteem. Rigby and Slee (1993) administered a survey to find if bullying or victimization really did affect feelings of self-esteem like much of the previous literature states. Their survey consisted of the Rosenberg 10-Item Self-Esteem Scale, which is also being used in the current study, along with a scale to measure the rates and types of bullying behavior and victimization. Their sample consisted of 1,162 students (604 males and 558 females) who were between the ages of 12 and 18. They found no significant relationship between self-esteem and the tendency to bully. They did however discover that bullying was negatively correlated with happiness and liking school (Rigby & Slee). While this doesn’t support the hypothesis that self-esteem is related to bullying behavior, it does show that bullying does affect parts of a person’s emotional and social life.

The previous research discussed here has shown that there seems to be a relationship between being a victim and the self-esteem of the person involved. On the other hand, some research has shown that victims have good opinions of themselves as people. Such is the case with research by Solberg and Olweus (2003). In this research, prevalence data for victims and bullies was examined through the Olweus bully/victim questionnaire. There were 5,171 students

involved in this study. They were in grades five through nine with 2,544 females and 2,627 males). Victims actually reported higher global self-evaluations than any other group in this sample (with a mean of 2.38 for the others and a mean of 3.05 for victims. This was significant at the .001 level. Just as noteworthy as the high levels of global self-evaluations were the victims' rates of depression. The victims reported statistically significantly higher ($p < .001$) rates of depressive tendencies (with a mean of 2.15 for the others and a mean of 2.84 for the victims) (Solberg & Olweus, 2003). Although the victims evaluated themselves well, the bullying still may have been having an effect on them as is revealed through their depressive tendencies scores.

Summary

Each of these research studies explains a very important aspect of the bullying literature. Many of these studies support the idea that males are most often the bully and the victim of bullying behavior (Moultapa et al., 2004; Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Schreck et al., 2003). The age of the person also affects bullying and victimization. In many of these studies, the bullies tend to be the older students (Espelage et al., 2003; Ma, 2002). Family life also is an important factor in bullying behavior. Bullies and victims both tend to have some type of problems within their family lives (Haynie et al., 2001).

Self-esteem is another aspect of a student's life that may be affected by bullying. Bullies and victims have lower self-esteem than children who are not included in either of those groups (Kumpulainen et al., 1998; O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001). Other research regarding self-esteem has also found that females have lower self-esteem than males throughout the adolescent years, and that family life and happiness positively affect self-esteem (Cooper et al., 1983). Age, on the

other hand, is not as cut and dry. There is evidence to support all aspects of this argument—no effect, positive correlation, or a negative correlation.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Participants

For the current study, 436 students from a large middle school were surveyed regarding their thoughts on bullying as well as several demographic variables. The middle school is located in a city in East Tennessee. The school has 1010 students in grades six and seven. Each student is assigned a “home base” where he or she starts each day and have a study hall at the end of each day. There are a total of 48 home base classrooms. Of these home bases, 23 were sixth grade classes and 25 were seventh grade classes. Twenty of these home bases were selected as the sample for the current research using a systematic random sample. Ten of each grade were selected. The 468 students in each of these 20 classes were administered the survey.

There were 436 students whose parents consented and who themselves assented to take the survey. Of those surveyed, 209 were males and 224 were females (48.3% males and 53.7% females). Three students did not provide their gender. A majority of the students were white with 80.7% of the students being white, 8.4% African American, 3.7% Hispanic, .9% Asian, and 6.3% other. The students ranged in age from 10 to 14 with a mean age of 11.8 years old and a standard deviation of .71. The students were in the 6th and 7th grades with most of them being in the 7th grade (217 in 7th, 202 in 6th).

Institutional Review Board

The protocol for this research was submitted for review from East Tennessee State University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) several months before surveys were to be administered. A few hurdles were encountered through this IRB review that were somewhat difficult to address. The main question that the members of the IRB had dealt with what kind of

effect some of these questions would have on the students. They were concerned that asking the children if they had ever been bullied or if they had ever bullied anyone else would upset them. It was explained to them that a resource sheet that included names and numbers of school counselors and other outside counseling services who could be called if these questions made the children feel like they needed to speak with someone about these types of problems that they may be encountering (see Appendix A). Some still felt that those types of direct questions may be harmful.

They were also concerned with the accuracy of the responses to such questions. It was questioned as to whether or not the participants would be fearful to report such victimization or bullying behavior. Members also brought up concerns that there would be too few reports of such behavior. Even though the surveys would be completed anonymously, they did not feel that a proper reporting of those behaviors would be found. The principle investigators were instructed to take out portions of the survey that dealt with self-reporting actual victimization and actual bullying behavior. The direction of the research then changed from examining actual victimization to vicarious victimization. The members of the IRB agreed to keep in the question dealing with how many instances of bullying each student had seen in the previous month, although one member did bring up accuracy concerns in regard to this case also by questioning the students' understanding of what "the previous month" entailed.

While strict on the survey itself, the IRB did give helpful guidelines with the informed consent document (ICD). In the original research protocol, the usual ICD wording and format were presented. An assent form for the children to sign was also created and submitted. In this instance the IRB provided a much easier alternative to the usual ICD format. Instead of requiring that each participant's legal guardian sign and turn in the ICD before the child could participate,

they asked that the principle investigators create a letter to send home instead of the usual format. This would not only help make the ICD easier to understand but it would also make the research study seem less strict and formal, hopefully easing the guardians' minds. The board also suggested that the investigators use a passive consent instead. By requiring that the guardians only sign and return it if they did not want their child to participate, the response rate for our survey was very high. The assent form that the investigators created was also rejected for a much easier alternative. The board did not want names collected for the protection of the children, so written record was not needed from the children involved in the survey. An assent script was created and subsequently read to the children before survey administration that asked if they wanted to participate or not. These changes to the consent guidelines not only helped our response rates but also helped to ensure complete anonymity of the participants instead of only providing confidentiality.

Procedure

School administrators were initially contacted before the IRB meetings to see if there would be any interest in our research topic. Of the three school systems contacted, only one gave us a favorable response. Principle investigators were then informed of the correct protocol to receive school board approval. Once IRB approval was given, the school administrators were again contacted and sent the research protocol. The research was discussed and voted on at a school board meeting. When the school board approved the research, the school principal was then contacted and a meeting set up. The investigators explained the benefits of this research to the principal and an understanding was met regarding the sharing of the results found. When a time frame was agreed upon, the actual survey process began.

Two weeks prior to the survey administration, the teachers were instructed to hand out the passive parental consent form that the students should take home to their legal guardians that explained the research study and listed the contact information of the researchers. Again, it was a passive consent document meaning that the guardian should only sign the form and return it if he or she did not want the child to participate. The guardians were instructed that they had two weeks to return the forms. Of the 468 forms sent out, only 17 were returned signed. The children also gave verbal assent to participate in the research. At the time of the survey administration, the study and survey questionnaire were explained to them. They were told that they did not have to participate if they did not want to. It was also explained that refusing to take the survey would not affect their grades in that class. They were then asked if they wanted to participate in the study. Of the 468 children in the classes, 15 refused or were absent. The overall response rate was 93.2%.

The teachers were all present in the room while surveys were being administered, but they were not involved in the explanation or administration of the surveys. They remained mainly to help keep order in the classroom, although there were no behavior problems. It took the students approximately 15 to 20 minutes to fill out the survey. Upon completion, each child was given the resource to ensure that he or she knew the proper route to follow if further discussion was needed about the problems of bullying at school.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument in the current study was a self-report questionnaire. It consisted of three parts: a demographic section that included questions regarding themselves and their feelings about themselves; a family relationship section, and a bullying attitudes and

bullying witnessing section. The survey was six pages long and had 93 items to respond to (see Appendix B).

Demographics Section

Respondents were asked demographic questions that included age, race, gender, grade level, and other items. They were also asked questions involving their personality characteristics that included answering “yes” or “no” to whether or not a certain personality characteristic described them (i.e., shy, aggressive, happy, athletic, lonely, loyal, etc.).

Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale

To measure global self-esteem, Rosenberg’s Self-Esteem Scale (1965) was administered. The scale includes 10 questions: on the whole, I am satisfied with myself; at times I think I am no good at all; I feel that I have a number of good qualities; I am able to do things as well as most other people; I feel I do not have much to be proud of; I certainly feel useless at times; I feel that I’m a valuable person; I wish I could have more respect for myself; all in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure; and I take a positive attitude toward myself. The respondents were instructed to select one of four Likert responses (strongly agree=1, agree=2, disagree=3, or strongly disagree=4).

Five of these questions were presented in a positive way (i.e., “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.”) The other five were presented in a negative way (i.e., “I certainly feel useless at times.”). The positively presented questions were reverse coded before creating the global self-esteem score. The responses were then added together to get the global self-esteem score. The scores fall between 10 and 40. In the current study’s design, the higher the score of global self-esteem is, then the higher the self-esteem of the respondent is. Average self-esteem

scores fall between 25 and 35, while low self-esteem scores are below a score of 25 (Rosenberg, 1965).

A reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to determine the consistency of Rosenberg's self-esteem scale for the current study. Reliability could have been an issue in the current research because of the use of children. Participants of this age may not have completely understood the questions in this scale or may have quickly read and misunderstood the questions in this section. Reliability was not a problem in this instance. The Cronbach's alpha in this case was .833.

Family Attitudes

Family dynamics were measured using several different types of questions. Respondents were asked who their primary caregiver was after a definition of *primary caregiver* was supplied. *Primary caregiver* was defined as the person who cares for you most of the time. The respondent's relationship with his or her primary caregiver was measured by asking if he or she wanted a different primary caregiver and if he or she wanted to spend more time with the primary caregiver.

Other family relationships were measured in similar ways. Sibling relationships were analyzed by first asking how many brothers and sisters he or she had, and then asking if he or she had a good relationship with his or her siblings. Overall family relationships were measured by asking a similar question. The respondents were asked how close their family members were to each other, how happy their family made them, and whether things about their family ever made them feel sad. These questions were answered using a "yes" or "no" response set (yes=0 and no=1). These last questions were added together to create a family attitudes variable. This

scale ranged from zero to five points with zero indicating an unhappy relationship within the family and five indicating a happy relationship within the family.

Because these questions were created for use only in this survey and were not part of a previously created and studied scale, reliability may have been an issue. A reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha was conducted on the five questions that were added together to create the family attitudes variable. The Cronbach's alpha was .689 which indicates a moderately reliable scale.

Vicarious Victimization and Bullying Attitudes

Another section dealt with vicarious victimization. These questions asked for types of bullying that occur at school and where they are likely to occur. Types of bullying were listed (i.e., name calling, verbal threats, physical attacks, etc.), and the respondents were asked to choose the frequency of the event occurring (never, seldom, often, and always). Respondents were then asked to identify from a list the reasons that most kids are bullied. They were given the opportunity to list other reasons that they felt should be added to the list. Other questions were then presented that asked where bullying took place (in the hallways, playground, cafeteria, classroom, bus, or bathroom) and how many times in the previous month he or she had seen someone being bullied. This last question dealing with how many times the respondent had viewed bullying was used in the analyses as the vicarious victimization variable.

The next section dealt with the respondents' attitudes towards bullying, reasons why people bullied, how people were bullied, and characteristics of bullying at this middle school. The first set of questions concerned the attitudes of the respondent towards bullies, victims, and bullying behavior. Statements were listed and the answers were chosen from a Likert scale (strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, agree=3, and strongly agree=4). Some examples of these types

of questions are “The bullies at my school are cool.” “It is the victims’ own fault that they are bullied.” “Bullying is wrong.”

Of these questions some were positive toward bullying (i.e. “The bullies at my school are cool.”) and some were negative toward bullying (i.e. “Bullying is wrong.”) The questions that were negative toward bullying were reverse coded. Once the reverse coding was completed, these 16 questions were added together to create the bullying attitudes variable that was used in the statistical analyses. Because the response sets were Likert-type, as indicated above, the scores ranged from 16-64 with a lower score indicating disagreement with bullying and a higher score indicating agreement with bullying. Because this scale was created for use in the current research and not taken from a previously used and studied scale, reliability may be an issue in this instance as well. A reliability test using Cronbach’s alpha was conducted. In this instance, a Cronbach’s alpha of .817 was found for the bullying attitudes scale.

Using factor analysis, three factors emerged for this bullying attitudes scale. Each factor dealt with different aspect of attitudes towards bullying behavior. The first factor dealt with children who had positive attitudes towards bullies and bullying behavior. The second factor dealt with children who had negative attitudes towards bullies and bullying behavior. The third and final factor dealt with compassion for victims and their circumstances. The following questions loaded onto Factor 1: someone who laughs at others is cool; the bullies at my school are cool; people who are pushed around by others are weak; people who are pushed around by others deserve it because of the way they act; bullying may be fun sometimes; it is the victims’ own fault that they are bullied; it is not that bad if you laugh with others when someone is being bullied; one should report bullying to the teacher; and it is funny when someone ridicules a classmate over and over again. The following questions loaded on Factor 2: the bullies at my

school are mean; bullying is wrong; bullying is stupid; and joining in bullying is a wrong thing to do. The following questions loaded on Factor 3: one should try to help the bullied victims; making friends with the bullied victim is the right thing to do; and bullying makes the victim feel bad.

Variables

Dependent

The current study investigated how certain demographic variables, vicarious victimization, and attitudes of bullying influence self-esteem and how those demographic variables affect attitudes of bullying. There were two dependent variables in the current study—global self-esteem and attitudes of bullying. Global self-esteem was measured using the 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. This variable of global self-esteem was measured at the interval-ratio level. Attitudes of bullying were measured using a series of questions related to feelings towards bullies, victims, and bullying behavior. They were measured at the interval-ratio level.

Independent

There were many different independent variables in the current study. Many of them were demographic variables including gender and grade level. Grade level was measured at the interval-ratio level. Gender was a categorical variable that was then dummy coded with males=0 and females=1.

Another independent variable was the respondents' family relationships. The questions relating to family relationships were added together to form one variable. That family relationship variable was measured at the interval-ratio level.

Vicarious victimization was another independent variable that was used in the current study. This variable was measured in two separate parts. The first variable measured vicarious

victimization through how many times the respondent had seen someone being bullied in the previous month. This variable was measured at the interval-ratio level. The second variable measured vicarious victimization through how many times someone had seen each type of bullying taking place. This variable was also measured at the interval-ratio level.

The last independent variable is also one of the dependent variables used in the two overall models of research. The attitudes of bullying variable was measured the same way that it was described in the dependent variable section. It measured attitudes of bullying using a 16-item scale.

Analyses

Univariate

Descriptive statistics were completed on every variable involved in the current research. Demographic statistics were analyzed also to provide a picture of what the school studied in the current research was like. Univariate statistics were also completed on other variables of interest that dealt with bullying as it occurs in this school such as where children are bullied, how children are bullied, and why children are bullied. This will provide an interesting picture as to what the current state of bullying at this school looks like.

Bivariate

A series of bivariate analyses were conducted on the variables mentioned earlier to see if any relationships were found between variables. A t-test was generated to compare bullying attitudes between the genders. Another t-test was conducted to see if there were any differences between the genders in regard to their global self-esteem.

Several correlations were also conducted in the current research to see if any relationships emerged between several of the interval-ratio level variables. The correlations that

were generated included bullying attitudes and grade level, bullying attitudes and family attitudes, global self-esteem and grade level, global self-esteem and family attitudes, global self-esteem and bullying attitudes, and global self-esteem and vicarious victimization.

Chi-square statistics were computed to determine if there were any relationships between several variables of interest. The crosstabulations that were prepared were grade and bullying attitudes; family attitudes and bullying attitudes; grade and self-esteem; family attitudes and self-esteem; bullying attitudes and self-esteem; and vicarious victimization and self-esteem.

Multivariate

Two ordinary least squares regression tests were conducted to determine how the independent variables affected global self-esteem and bullying attitudes separately. The first model was designed to determine if a student's global self-esteem was affected by grade level, gender, family attitudes, bullying attitudes, and vicarious victimization. The second model was designed to determine if bullying attitudes were affected by the students' grade level, gender, and family attitudes.

Summary

The current study seeks to understand the relationship between self-esteem and vicarious victimization, attitudes of bullying, family attitudes, grade level, and gender, and also between attitudes of bullying and grade level, gender, and family attitudes. This study is similar to other studies relating to the effects of bullying behavior because of its use of a self-report questionnaire. Self-report questionnaires are the best way to uncover accurate information in regard to personal behaviors such as bullying as well as attitudes and beliefs. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is also widely used in much of the bullying literature to measure global self-

esteem. A systematic random sample to draw a sample also contributes to the reliability and validity of this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

To determine if there were relationships between any of the independent and dependent variables, several different analytical strategies were used. The first set of statistics is a listing of univariate statistics. These statistics demonstrate certain characteristics of the sample. These univariate statistics are descriptive in nature and included measures of central tendency and measures of dispersion. The measure of central tendency for each variable demonstrated the characteristics of what the average student from this school would look like. The measure of dispersion for each variable demonstrated how normally distributed that variable is. This helps to explain how different each individual person is from the average score for each variable.

Bivariate analyses were also conducted to demonstrate if any relationships existed between the variables. Correlations were performed for the interval-ratio level variables. Correlations do not show causality, they only show whether or not there is a significant relationship between variables. Independent t-tests were also conducted to compare the means of different variables. Multivariate statistics were conducted to determine how certain variables affect the independent variable when holding other variables constant. In the current study, two models or equations were created to test which variables had the most impact on each of the dependent variables and what the direction of each relationship was.

Univariate Statistics

Frequencies were conducted for the categorical variables that pertain to the current study (see Table 2). Frequencies were done on race, gender, and grade level. There were 436 students surveyed. There were 202 (48.2%) sixth graders surveyed and 217 (51.8%) seventh graders surveyed. Of those, 48.3% (209) were male and 51.7% (224) were female. Race was distributed

as follows: 80.7% (348) were white, 8.4% (36) were black, 3.7% (16) were Hispanic, .9% (4) were Asian, and 6.3% (27) indicated they were in the Other category.

Table 2

Frequencies for Demographic Variables

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	209	48.3
Female	224	51.7
Total	433	100
Race		
White	348	80.7
Black	36	8.4
Hispanic	16	3.7
Asian	4	.9
Other	27	6.3
Total	431	100
Grade Level		
Sixth	202	48.2
Seventh	217	51.8
Total	419	100

Descriptive statistics were generated on the interval/ratio variables of interest to the current study (see Table 3). The variables chosen for these statistics were grade, age, global self-esteem, bullying attitudes, family attitudes, and vicarious victimization. The minimum score, maximum score, mean, median, mode, and standard deviation were reported for each of the previously listed variables. The students were either in sixth or seventh grades with a mode of the seventh grade. The youngest participant was age 10 while the oldest was age 14. There was a

mean age of 11.8 and a mode and median of 12. The standard deviation that was calculated was .71. These numbers indicate that the age distribution was fairly normal. The lowest Global Self-Esteem score that was reported was 12 with the highest being 40. Again, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale goes from 10 to 40 points with a higher score indicating high self-esteem. The mean Global Self-Esteem score was 31.9 with a median of 33. This distribution happens to be bimodal with modes of 33 and 35. These scores fall in the “average” self-esteem range. The standard deviation of Global Self-Esteem was 5.24. These numbers indicate that this distribution is negatively skewed with most scores falling above the mean. The lowest bullying attitudes score that was reported was 16 and the highest a 58. Again, this scale runs from 16 to 64 with a higher number indicating agreement with bullying behaviors and practices. The mean bullying attitudes score was 24.9 with a mode of 19 and a median of 24. The standard deviation was 6.34. These numbers indicate that the bullying attitudes scores were positively skewed with most of the scores falling below the mean which indicates that most children are in disagreement with bullying behaviors. The family attitudes scores ranged from 0 to 5 and the higher the number the more happy family. The mean score was 4.2 with a mode and median of 5. The standard deviation of family attitudes was 1.22. These numbers indicate a very highly negatively skewed distribution with most of the scores falling at the top of the scale which indicates that most children are happy with their families. The vicarious victimization variable ranged from zero instances of bullying witnessed to 45 instances of bullying witnessed. The mean score was 3.7 with a mode of zero and a median of two. The standard deviation in this case is 5.59. These numbers indicate a very positively skewed distribution with most numbers falling below the mean and indicating that most children view very few instances of bullying per month.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Variables of Interest

Variable	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mode	Median
Grade	6	7	6.5	.5	7	7
Age	10	14	11.8	.71	12	12
Global Self-Esteem	12	40	31.9	5.24	33; 35	33
Bullying Attitudes	16	58	24.9	6.34	19	24
Family Attitudes	0	5	4.2	1.22	5	5
Vicarious Victimization	0	45	3.7	5.59	0	2

Other variables that were not indicated in any hypotheses for the current research were also analyzed using frequency statistics. These variables were collected to get a full picture of what the bullying at this middle school consisted of. The first set of frequencies involves where bullying is likely to take place (see Table 4). The location indicated by most students as where bullying takes place is on the bus. Many students, 46.1%, reported that they had seen bullying on the bus, while 53.9% had not. The playground was the next highest reported location with 33.7% saying they had witnessed bullying there and 66.3% saying that they had not witnessed it there. The least likely place for students to report bullying was in the classroom. Only 4% of students indicated that they had seen bullying inside the classroom.

Table 4

Frequencies of Places Where Bullying Often Occurs

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Hallway		
Yes	102	23.9
No	325	76.1
Playground		
Yes	144	33.7
No	283	66.3

Table 4 (continued)

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Cafeteria		
Yes	49	11.5
No	378	88.5
Classroom		
Yes	17	4.0
No	409	96.0
Bus		
Yes	197	46.1
No	230	53.9
Bathroom		
Yes	91	21.3
No	336	78.7

Descriptive statistics were also generated for the different types of bullying that occur at the middle school being studied (see Table 5). The variables included in this section were talked about someone behind his or her back, threaten with a weapon, physical attack, broken property, practical jokes, verbal threats, and name calling. These questions were asked with a Likert-type response set ranging from never=1, seldom=2, often=3, and always=4. Many acts were reported to “never” occur such as threatening with a weapon, physical attacks, and broken property. The bullying behavior that occurs with the most frequency is talking about others behind his or her back, which was reported to occur “always”. Name calling and practical jokes were next on the list occurring “often” with verbal threats following behind them occurring “seldom”.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of the Different Types of Bullying

Variable	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mode	Median
Talked about someone behind his or her back	1	4	2.99	.98	4	3
Threaten with a weapon	1	4	1.11	.41	1	1
Physical attack	1	4	1.99	.99	1	2

Table 5 (continued)

Variable	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mode	Median
Broken property	1	4	1.47	.71	1	1
Practical jokes	1	4	2.68	1.08	3	3
Verbal threats	1	4	1.90	.88	2	2
Name calling	1	4	2.79	.88	3	3

Another set of frequencies that were generated to show a picture of bullying behavior at this middle school were frequencies showing why children are bullied (see Table 6). The reason most cited by children for why people are bullied was because they didn't fit in. Approximately 87.9% of children indicated that they had seen someone be bullied for this reason. Another very high rate of bullying occurred because of the weight of the child. Of those responding to this question, 87.4% indicated that they had seen someone be bullied because of his or her weight. Many children (72.9%) said that they had seen children be bullied because they had no other friends. Having a poor family was another frequently cited reason with 71.5% of children indicating they had seen this. Another factor that ties closely with having a poor family is the type of clothing that the child wears. A large portion of the students, 77.9%, of children reported having seen someone be bullied because of the clothes they were wearing. Most often children see others being bullied because of factors that are beyond their control such as facial features (75.3%), physical weakness (72.2%), speech problems (72%), being in special education (62.2%), and race (60.8%).

Table 6

Frequencies of Reasons Why Children Are Bullied Most Often

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Don't fit in	370	
Yes	51	87.9

No	12.1
----	------

Table 6 (continued)

Variable	Frequency	Percent
New to area		
Yes	170	40.4
No	251	59.6
Who their friends are		
Yes	245	58.2
No	175	41.6
No friends or social skills		
Yes	307	72.9
No	114	27.1
Where they live		
Yes	182	43.2
No	239	56.8
Who parents are		
Yes	136	32.3
No	285	67.7
Who siblings are		
Yes	113	26.8
No	308	73.2
Family is poor		
Yes	301	71.5
No	120	28.5
Facial features		
Yes	317	75.3
No	104	24.7
Weight		
Yes	368	87.4
No	53	12.6
Speech problem		
Yes	303	72.0
No	118	28.0
Scars		
Yes	127	30.2
No	294	69.8
Physical weakness		
Yes	304	72.2
No	117	27.8
Handicap		
Yes	221	47.5
No	200	52.5
Handicapped family member		
Yes	120	28.5
No	301	71.5

Table 6 (continued)		
Variable	Frequency	Percent
Special education		
Yes	262	62.2
No	159	37.8
Height		
Yes	254	60.3
No	167	39.7
Race		
Yes	256	60.8
No	165	39.2
Ethnic Group		
Yes	139	33.0
No	282	67.0
Religion		
Yes	212	50.4
No	209	49.6
Grades		
Yes	223	53.0
No	198	47.0
Clothes		
Yes	328	77.9
No	93	22.1
Cried or was emotional		
Yes	279	66.3
No	142	33.7
Short-tempered		
Yes	132	31.4
No	289	68.6

Bivariate Statistics

Chi-Square

Cross-tab tables and Chi-square tests of independence were generated on several of the categorical variables involved in the current study. These tests are appropriate for variables that are measured at the nominal level. The first set of cross-tabs compared bullying attitudes to grade, family attitudes, and global self-esteem (see Table 7). The second set of cross-tabs that were generated compared global self-esteem to grade, family attitudes, and vicarious

victimization (see Table 9). Once the Chi-square test of independence is generated for each of those pairs and significance is found, the cross-tab table will show the relationship of the significant differences.

To perform these Chi-square tests of independence, the interval-ratio data collected had to be recoded into categorical data. To do this, the family attitudes variable was broken down into “happy” versus “unhappy”, the global self-esteem variable was broken down into “low”, “average”, and “high”, the bullying attitudes variable was broken down into “agree with bullying” and “disagree with bullying”, and the vicarious victimization variable was made into a dichotomous variable with “yes” meaning that they had experienced vicarious victimization and “no” meaning that they had not experienced it.

Table 7

Bullying Attitudes Cross-Tabs

	Bullying Attitudes	
	Agree with Bullying	Disagree with Bullying
Grade		
Sixth	1.2	98.8
Seventh	2.6	97.4
Family Attitudes		
Happy	2.2	97.8
Unhappy	3.9	96.1
Global Self-Esteem		
Low	6.9	93.1
Average	1.0	99.0
High	4.1	95.9

The Chi-Square test for independence was conducted for the bullying attitudes dependent variable (see Table 8). For the independent variables grade, family attitudes, and global self-esteem, no significant differences were found. By referring to the cross-tabs table, it is shown that most of the children surveyed disagreed with bullying (see Table 7). While it is not a

significant difference, it is interesting to note that those people categorized with low self-esteem had the largest percentage (6.9%) in agreement with bullying behavior. This may be evidence of some of what the previous literature states about people with low self-esteem being more involved than others in bullying behavior.

Table 8

Bullying Attitudes Chi-Square Tests for Independence

Variables	χ^2 value	df	Sig.
Bullying Attitudes*Grade	.888	1	.292
Bullying Attitudes*Family Attitudes	.669	1	.319
Bullying Attitudes*Global Self-Esteem	4.94	2	.084

Chi-square statistics and cross-tab tables were also conducted for the dependent variable global self-esteem. The independent variables for these tests were grade, family attitudes, and vicarious victimization. Once the Chi-square test for independence was generated for each variable, it was found that family attitudes did have a significant relationship with global self-esteem ($\chi^2=46.107$; $p=.000$) (see Table 10). By consulting the cross-tabs table, it is revealed that a majority of the children from happy homes had global self-esteem scores in the Average to High range (96.4%). Children from unhappy homes had their majority in the Low to Average global self-esteem range (88.5%). Grade and vicarious victimization had no significant differences between groups when comparing global self-esteem. Their significance levels were .867 and .091 respectively.

Table 9

Global Self-Esteem Cross-Tabs

	Global Self-Esteem		
	Low	Average	High
Grade			
Sixth	7.4	55.1	37.5
Seventh	8.6	55.8	35.5
Family Attitudes			
Happy	3.6	52.5	43.9
Unhappy	21.8	66.7	11.5
Vicarious Victimization			
Yes	10.4	52.9	36.7
No	3.1	56.3	40.6

Table 10

Global Self-Esteem Chi-Square Tests for Independence

Variables	χ^2 value	df	Sig.
Global Self-Esteem*Grade	.286	2	.867
Global Self-Esteem*Family Attitudes	46.107	2	.000*
Global Self-Esteem*Vicarious Victimization	4.801	2	.091

*p<.05

Correlations

Correlations were generated on each of the interval/ratio level variables involved in the current research. They were then organized into a correlation matrix (see Table 11). Correlations are the appropriate test to run when the variables being studied are interval or ratio level data. This test is used to determine if there is a significant linear relationship between two variables. The statistic that is calculated for a correlation is the Pearson r value. This statistic will be between negative one and positive one. The sign of the statistic will show the direction of the

relationship between the variables or whether it is positive (as one value goes up, the other goes up; or as one value goes down, the other goes down also) or negative (as one value goes up, the other value goes down). When the Pearson r value is squared, it shows the amount of explained variance. In other words, it shows how much one variable is explained by the other variable.

Table 11

Pearson Correlation Matrix

	Grade	Bullying Attitudes	Family Attitudes	Global Self-Esteem	Vicarious Victimization
Grade	--				
Bullying Attitudes	.058	---			
Family Attitudes	-.110**	-.256**	---		
Global Self-Esteem	-.027	-.110**	.441**	---	
Vicarious Victimization	-.054	.294**	-.196*	-.138*	---

*p<.05

**p<.01

The variables used in this correlation matrix were grade, bullying attitudes, family attitudes, global self-esteem, and vicarious victimization (see Table 11). There were several significant relationships found in this matrix. Family attitudes and grade level had a significant negative relationship ($r=-.110$; $p<.01$). As the grade level went up, the amount of family happiness went down. Family attitudes and bullying attitudes also had a significant negative relationship ($r=-.256$; $p<.01$). As family happiness went up, agreement with bullying behavior went down. Those children with a happy family life were the children who disagreed with bullying behaviors. Global self-esteem and bullying attitudes had a significant negative

relationship ($r=-.110$; $p<.01$). In this case, as self-esteem went up, agreement with bullying went down. Global self-esteem had a significant positive relationship with family attitudes ($r=.441$; $p<.01$). As global self-esteem goes up, so does the amount of happiness that the child experiences in his or her family. Vicarious victimization and bullying attitudes had a significant positive relationship ($r=.294$; $p<.01$). As the amount of vicarious victimization went up, so did the agreement with bullying behavior. Vicarious victimization and family attitudes had a significant negative relationship ($r= -.196$; $p<.05$). As the amount of vicarious victimization went up, the happiness experienced in the family decreased. Vicarious victimization and global self-esteem also had a significant negative relationship ($r=-.138$, $p<.05$). As the amount of vicarious victimization went up, the child's global self-esteem score got lower. There was no significant relationship found between bullying attitudes and grade, global self-esteem and grade, or vicarious victimization and grade.

Independent Samples *t*-test

To compare the means between groups, independent samples *t*-tests were generated on interval/ratio level dependent and nominal level independent variables. These tests are appropriate to run when the independent variable is a dichotomous categorical variable. The dependent variables must also be measured at the interval or ratio level of measurement. A *t*-test compares the means of each grouping that comes from the independent variable. This will show whether there is a significant difference between the mean scores from each group of the independent variable. The current research conducted *t*-tests on the variable gender with the variables bullying attitudes and global self-esteem to see if there was a difference between males and females in regard to those two variables.

Table 12

Bullying Attitudes and Global Self-Esteem t-tests

Bullying Attitudes				
Variable	Mean	<i>t</i>	df	sig.
Gender		3.783	368	.000
Male	26.21			
Female	23.75			
Global Self-Esteem				
Variable	Mean	<i>t</i>	df	sig.
Gender		.077	382	.938
Male	31.91			
Female	31.95			

Mean scores were calculated for bullying attitudes and global self-esteem and compared across the genders (see Table 12). There was a significant difference between the means of males and the means of females concerning bullying attitudes ($t=3.783$; $p=.000$). Males had a mean of 26.21 and females had a mean of 23.75. While these numbers are very close together and both near the disagreement end of the bullying behavior scale, there is enough of a difference for them to be significant with the males more in agreement with bullying behavior than females. There was no significant difference between males and females concerning global self-esteem ($t=.077$, $p=.938$). Males and females average scores on the global self-esteem scale were

virtually identical with the male mean being 31.91 and the female mean being 31.95. These numbers were in the average self-esteem range on Rosenberg's scale.

Multivariate Statistics

Ordinary least squares regression was completed on two separate equations to end the statistical analyses. The first equation dealt with the effects of family attitudes, grade, and gender on bullying attitudes (see Table 13). The second equation dealt with the effects of family attitudes, grade, gender, bullying attitudes, and vicarious victimization on global self-esteem (see Table 14). To compute an ordinary least squares regression, all variables involved must be interval/ratio level data or dummy-coded categorical variables. In the current research, all variables were interval/ratio except for gender which was dummy coded (0=males, 1=females) so that it could be added into these equations and controlled for. This type of regression is used to find significance in overall equations and in individual relationships. Once the overall significance is calculated, an adjusted r-squared statistic is used to determine the amount of the variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variables. If the equation is found to be significant, the relationships between each independent variable and the dependent variable can be compared. The strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables can be determined by absolute value of the standardized regression coefficient. The higher the number is, then the stronger the relationship is. The sign of the standardized regression coefficient indicates whether the relationship between the variables is positive or negative.

Bullying Attitudes

The first equation involved the independent variables family attitudes, grade, and gender and their effects on the dependent variable bullying attitudes (see Table 13). This overall

equation was significant ($F=12.757$; $p=.000$). The adjusted r-square was .096 which means that 9.6% of the children’s bullying attitudes are explained by the variables family attitudes, grade and gender. The independent variable family attitudes had the strongest effect on bully attitudes and was significant ($\beta=-.240$; $p=.000$). This was a negative relationship indicating that the higher the family happiness the lower the agreement with bullying behavior. Gender was also significant in this equation ($\beta=-.223$; $p=.000$). This negative relationship between gender and bullying attitudes indicated that males agreed more with bullying behavior than did females. There was no significant relationship between grade and bullying attitudes ($p=.542$).

Table 13

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Bullying Attitudes

Variable	B	β
Constant	28.633	
Family Attitudes	-1.185	-.240**
Grade	.393	.032
Gender	-2.739	-.223**

** $p<.01$ Note. $R^2=.096$ ($p<.01$).

Global Self-Esteem

The second equation involved the independent variables family attitudes, grade, gender, bullying attitudes, and vicarious victimization and their effects on the dependent variable global self-esteem (see Table 14). This overall equation was significant ($F=15.016$; $p=.000$). The adjusted r-square was .205 which indicated that 20.5% of the children’s self esteem was explained by the variables family attitudes, grade, gender, bullying attitudes, and vicarious victimization. The only independent variable that was significant was the family attitudes

variable ($\beta=.422$; $p=.000$). This relationship was positive meaning that as the happiness a child experienced inside the family increased so did the global self-esteem of the child. None of the other independent variables (grade, gender, bullying attitudes, or vicarious victimization) were significantly related to global self-esteem.

Table 14

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Global Self-Esteem

Variable	B	β
Constant	22.633	
Family Attitudes	1.680	.422**
Grade	.665	.066
Gender	-.166	-.017
Bullying Attitudes	-.063	-.077
Vicarious Victimization	-.072	-.081

** $p<.01$

Note. $R^2=.205$ ($p<.01$).

Summary

Many of the hypotheses set forth in Chapter 1 were supported by the previous statistical analyses. While several correlations between variables were found, fewer causal relationships were discovered. There were causal relationships found to support the hypotheses dealing with self-esteem in comparison to vicarious victimization, bullying attitudes, and family attitudes. There were also causal relationships found to support the hypotheses dealing with bullying attitudes in comparison to family attitudes and global self-esteem. Family attitudes and gender both held significant relationships with bullying attitudes in that regression equation. Family attitudes held the only significant relationship with global self-esteem in the regression equation.

No significant relationships were found for grade level in regard to global self-esteem or bullying attitudes which confirmed the current research's hypothesis. There was no effect for gender in regard to global self-esteem that goes against the current hypothesis, but there was a significant relationship with gender and bullying attitudes that confirmed the current hypothesis. The results are explored more thoroughly in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The current research set out to determine how self-esteem and attitudes toward bullying behavior are influenced by several factors including grade, gender, family attitudes, and vicarious victimization. A self-report survey was administered to sixth and seventh graders at a middle school in a relatively small community to determine the answers to these questions. The survey consisted of Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale, several demographic questions, questions to measure the happiness of the child's home life, questions to measure the child's attitudes toward bullying behavior, and questions to measure vicarious victimization. Once statistical analyses were generated on the data collected, several of the hypotheses set forth in the current research were supported and several were refuted.

Self-Esteem

In the literature, most researchers are in agreement that males tend to have higher self-esteem than females (Quatman & Watson, 2001; Van Houtte, 2005). It was hypothesized that males would have higher self-esteem than females as was indicated by the literature review. In the current research, by comparing global self-esteem between the genders, no difference between males and females emerged. Males and females scored virtually the same on their measures of global self-esteem with an average of 31.91 for females and 31.95 for males on a scale of 10 to 40. These numbers indicate that males and females in this sample both have "average" self-esteem scores on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Finding no difference between the genders is a positive sign for the achievement of the children and the school system in keeping males and females on an even field. Hopefully, this indicates a change in the way females are viewing themselves and those around them.

The previous research is not as clear on the difference between age groups and self-esteem. Some research supports the idea that self-esteem is constant throughout the lifespan and does not change between different ages (Bergman & Scott, 2001). Others have found that there is an interaction between age and the amount of self-esteem an individual has (Jones & Meredith, 1996; Robins et al., 2002). The current research compared the grade level and global self-esteem scores through correlation and a cross-tabs and chi-square calculation. It was hypothesized that there would be no difference between grade level and global self-esteem. These tests did not find a significant relationship between the two variables grade level and global self-esteem. This may have been because of the nature of the sample. Only sixth and seventh graders were surveyed. They ranged in age from 11 to 14 years old. Most of the previous literature dealing with self-esteem differences across age groups is comparing two or more groups that are at different points in their lives (i.e., comparing pre-teens to teenagers or teenagers to young adults). The students involved in the current research are all in middle school and at the exact same point in their lives. In one school year, they may not have had the chance to have a self-esteem raising experience yet, so their global self-esteem scores might be very similar as was found.

Family life and how it affects self-esteem is another issue that was discussed in the current research. Most research indicates that the family does affect the self-esteem of the children in it (Cooper et al., 1983; Roberts & Bengtson, 1993). The current research hypothesized that children from families that were reported to cause “unhappiness” were more likely to have low global self-esteem than other children. A correlation and crosstab tables with chi-square statistic were calculated to determine if a relationship between the two existed. Both

of these tests indicated that there was a significant relationship between family life and global self-esteem.

The current study deals with vicarious victimization and attitudes toward bullying behavior, while most of the previous literature deals with comparing actual victimization and actual bullying behavior and how they relate to self-esteem. Most research indicates that some bullies and victims both have self-esteem problems (Kumpulainen et al., 1998; O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001). To compare how attitudes toward bullying and vicarious victimization affects self-esteem, a correlation and crosstabs table with chi-square statistic were calculated in the current research. It was hypothesized that agreement with bullying behavior and more experienced acts of vicarious victimization would lead to lower self-esteem. The crosstab table and chi-square statistic found no significant relationship between either bullying attitudes or vicarious victimization in regard to global self-esteem scores. The correlation indicated that both of those sets of variables (bullying attitudes with global self-esteem and vicarious victimization and self-esteem) were in fact linearly related. In other words, there was a relationship between bullying attitudes and global self-esteem as well as between vicarious victimization and global self-esteem. The difference between the results may lie in the actual statistical processes themselves. A correlation is a much stronger statistic than the chi-square test for independence because of the types of variables used. Correlations are generated with interval or ratio level data which make the results stronger than the chi-square which is run with only categorical data. In the current research, to run the chi-square test the interval/ratio data had to be broken down into categorical groupings (bullying attitudes=agreement vs. disagreement and vicarious victimization=yes or no). This weakened the data. The findings with the correlation are much more accurate than the findings with the chi-square test for independence.

Global self-esteem was predicted using an ordinary least squares regression. Gender, grade level, family attitudes, bullying attitudes, and vicarious victimization were assessed as to how they affected global self-esteem. The overall model was significant. It was found that 20.5% of the children's self-esteem was explained by the previously mentioned variables. The best indicator of global self-esteem was the family attitudes variable. This variable had the strongest effect on the global self-esteem score.

Attitudes toward Bullying Behavior

As previously mentioned, most research in bullying has dealt with differences between bullies and victims. The current research has taken a different path in the field of bullying research. Instead of measuring actual victimization, vicarious victimization was measured by asking how many times in the previous month the child had seen someone being bullied. Vicarious victimization is a very important addition to the bullying literature because it measures an aspect of each child's life that was never measured before in the bullying research. More children are exposed to violence than they are actual victims of it. Once more research is conducted to understand how vicarious victimization affects children, help in preventing these problems can be reached for children as well as for adults in the future.

Most of the previous research has found evidence to support the notion that males are involved in more bullying behavior than females (Moultapa et al., 2004; Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Schreck et al., 2003). It was hypothesized that males would have a more favorable or agreeable attitude towards bullying than females would as seems to be indicated by the previous literature. A *t*-test was computed to test this hypothesis. It was found that males did have a significantly more agreeable attitude toward bullying behavior than females. The mean score for males on the bullying attitudes scale was 23.75, and the mean score for females was 26.21. On

the bullying attitudes scale, the higher the score, then the more disagreement the respondent felt towards bullying. These results were not surprising given that almost all of the previous research on bullying behavior points towards males as being the bully and the victim most often. It is this idea that Sommers (2000) contends what makes a boy a boy. She feels that feminist tries at making boys more androgynous are only hurting them and their abilities. It is the bullying behavior that keeps boys from fading into the background and keeps them on par with girls and their classroom abilities (Hoff Sommers).

Age or grade level as is the case in this study is another possible indicator of attitudes towards bullying behavior. Much of the previous research has found evidence to support the idea that older students tend to engage in bullying behavior more often than the younger students (Espelage et al., 2003; Ma, 2002). In this same vein, the current research hypothesized that the seventh grade students would have a more positive attitude towards bullying behavior than the sixth grade students. A correlation and crosstab with chi-square statistic were calculated to determine if any relationship would be found between the two variables. Both of these tests indicated that there was no relationship between the grade level of the child and his or her attitudes towards bullying behavior. The children at the middle school in the current study are mainly kept separated during most of their school day with each grade down separate hallways. This probably keeps interaction between the grades at a minimum and does not give the opportunity for the older children to influence the younger children.

Family attitudes are another aspect of a child's life that may affect his or her views and attitudes towards bullying behavior. Much of the previous literature discusses how bullies and victims both tend to have problems within their households that might have an affect on whether or not they are involved in bullying behavior (Bowers et al., 1992; Haynie et al., 2001). While

the individual problems within the households are different, they are all problems that create an unhappy home atmosphere for the children involved. It was hypothesized in the current research that children with unhappy families would have a more favorable or agreeable attitude toward bullying behavior. Correlation and crosstab tables with chi-square statistic were conducted to test this idea. It was found that there was no relationship between these two variables with the chi-square test for independence, but a significant relationship was found between them with the correlation. As with the findings in the self-esteem section regarding bullying attitudes and vicarious victimization, the correlation is a much stronger statistic and a much more accurate judge of relationships than the chi-square because of the nature of the analysis.

Finally, the bullying attitudes variable was predicted using an ordinary least squares regression. This equation was created to determine how grade level, gender, and family attitudes affected bullying attitudes. The overall model was significant with 9.6% of the children's bullying attitudes being explained by these variables. Gender and family attitudes were the only variables that had a significant impact in this model with family attitudes being the strongest predictor.

Limitations

One of the major limitations involved in this study is its use of measures. Only one previously used and tested scale was used as a measurement, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. The bullying attitudes scale, family attitudes scale, and vicarious victimization variable were all created for this particular research. The fact that these measures' reliability and validity have not been extensively tested is a major pitfall of the current research. These scales have face validity for the fact that they make sense to ask those particular questions to get those measures, but they may be lacking in other ways. Reliability analyses were generated, and each scale was found to

have adequate results. Having a previously used and tested scale to compare these new scales to would have produced more reliable results. By using a previously tested scale, the concurrent validity of the research is enhanced.

The generalizability of this research may also be a problem. This school had a fairly extensive anti-bullying campaign and intervention strategy that involved starting every school year off with a “Bully-Proofing” lesson. This may color the results of the research. This is evident in the fact that the results regarding attitudes towards bullying were nearly all on the side of disagreeing with bullying behavior. Using this intervention strategy as proof, this school’s counselors seem to be very adept at finding problems within the student body and taking all appropriate actions to fix the problem. This fact may make it difficult to generalize these bullying behavior findings from this school to other schools in the area or especially in other parts of the country. The current research did, however, use a systematic random sample to pick participants for administration of the survey. This randomness goes a long way in ensuring the external validity of the results.

Another limitation that is present in all survey research is the use of the self-report survey. The current research was reliant on the participants to answer questions candidly and honestly. It also relied on the participants’ memories of such things as how many people they had seen being bullied in the previous month. Because the participants in this research are children, some of the children had trouble understanding and answering the questions that were presented on the survey. The principle investigators helped the children understand any questions that they had to the best of their abilities. These questions and misunderstandings may have had an effect on these results. Some of the children may not have asked for a clarification if they had a question. This reliance on the participant is another pitfall of the research, but most

research of this type face the same problems. These problems inherent in self-reported survey research should not hurt the reliability of the results.

Implications

The implications of this research are quite simple. Children who view violence may be just as prone to emotional problems as those children who actually experience it. Most of school administrators' focus is on finding the problem children and the victims and helping them, while the other students who view this violence are left out. Children are much more likely to view student on student violence and bullying than they are to actually be victimized by it. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reported that only five percent of the nation's children reported victimization at school in 2003 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2005). While in the current study, 71% of the children reported viewing a child being bullied in the previous month. Viewing bullying affects many more children than the actual bullying itself.

This viewing of victimization may result in lowered self-esteem and even a heightened fear of the school environment. As previously stated, schools should be a safe-haven where children can go and be unafraid of the others around them so they can focus on learning and growing socially (Cobia & Carney, 2002). Schools do not need to be a place of fear where learning takes second place to self-preservation and anxiety. An environment of bullies and bullying behavior will only result in damage to children and their cognitive abilities, social growth, and development. By understanding the affects of vicarious victimization, school and educational policies could be created to help with this problem. Punishments that are swift and certain need to be implemented. Children should be certain that their bullies are being punished so they can regain a sense of safety at school.

More of the school administrators' and school teachers' time needs to be spent on dealing with victimization from all angles. The results of this research should be taken and used to help push better intervention programs not only for bullies and victims but for entire school environments. Bullying is a crime that is punished behind the closed doors of detention hall where both bully and victim know that something has been done. Those children who witness the bullying action and not the consequence are not experiencing that sense of closure that comes through punishment. They may continue to live in fear that this act of violence could happen to them and there is nothing that can be done about it. Programs instituting a zero-tolerance policy regarding bullying should be put into place to help the peace of mind of the victims as well as those who view the victimization.

Future Research

The results of this research were mixed. The correlations showed that there was a relationship between the amount of vicarious victimization experienced and self-esteem (i.e., as the amount of vicarious victimization goes up, the global self-esteem score goes down.) But the overall model predicting self-esteem did not show a significant relationship between vicarious victimization and self-esteem. In other words, as we controlled for other variables, the influence of vicarious victimization on self-esteem became weaker. More research needs to be undertaken about vicarious victimization and its effects. The correlation shows that there is a relationship between the two, but it does not seem to be causal in nature. The topic of vicarious victimization and bullying has not been studied with enough depth or breadth yet.

A better measurement for vicarious victimization in regard to bullying needs to be created and tested to see if there really is a relationship between it and self-esteem or any other problem influenced by bullying. To fully understand this topic of vicarious victimization, a

qualitative study would help to define exactly what this term entails. Interviews with open-ended questions dealing with how and what types of bullying have been seen will give a more tangible definition to vicarious victimization. This is such an abstract term, interviews and open-ended questions would give a deeper understanding to this problem and how it affects people on many different levels.

Another avenue this research could take involves interviewing parents and teachers as well as the children. Parents' responses coupled with the students' will draw a much fuller picture of what type of impact vicarious victimization has on a child's life. The parents could provide a description of what the child is like at home and with family. Teacher interviews would also add an interesting insight into vicarious victimization. The information from teachers could provide an accurate description of a child's learning ability as well as social status. Teachers also have the ability to see what goes on in a child's day to day life at school. This view could be very helpful in understanding how vicarious victimization can be better understood and even corrected.

Since actual rates of victimization and bullying were not collected for the current study, the inclusion of those variables would add a deeper understanding to the effects of vicarious victimization. By being able to control for actual victimization, it could be determined whether it was the vicarious victimization that was causing the emotional problems or the actual victimization. Each of these ideas would provide a better understanding of the vicarious victimization problem.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Resources Sheet

Resources for Bullies and/or Victims of Bullies

Contacts

Guidance Counselor

[enter name and number]

Frontier Health Counseling Services

Local: 423-232-2600

24 Hour Helpline: 877-928-9062

Bully Police USA, Inc.

www.bullypolice.org

Tennessee office: 931-424-1795

General Suggestions

Keep listening and communicating with your child. Ask them questions about how they are doing in school, like, “Did you play with anyone on the playground today?” or “Did you sit with anyone at lunch today?”. You are checking to see if your child is spending any time with friends. A lonely child is at great risk for depression. Continue to ask your child about the bullying and whether the situation has improved.

Consider getting your child in to see a Counselor or Therapist. Check with the school district to see if they have any qualified counselors, who have dealt with bullying and the conditions it may cause, like depression, anxiety and post traumatic stress disorders. Follow up frequently with the school

See who else in your area has children going through bullying or have children who have dealt with bullying. A positive and proactive approach would be to work with your school district to get a quality anti bullying program into your local schools. This can also be a “healing” activity, to take away the anger that victims of bullying harbor inside. Get creative - Bullying decreases when students, parents and child activists show their numbers, demanding positive changes inside their schools.

Find a healing extracurricular activity. There are Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, self-defense classes, volunteer organizations in the community, church activities, or community events. Do something as a family or perhaps develop a hobby. -From Bully Police USA, Inc.

Appendix B

Data Collection Instrument

PART ONE

Please answer the following questions:

1. Age _____

2. Grade in school _____

Please circle the answer that best describes you:

3. Gender: Boy or Girl

4. Race: Black White Hispanic Asian Other

5. How do you feel you compare with other students?

Below Average Average Above Average Don't Know

6. Who do you prefer to hang out with? (circle one)

Boys Girls Both

7. *Do the following adjectives or statements describe the way you see yourself most of the time. Please circle yes or no.*

Athletic	Yes	No
Happy	Yes	No
Outgoing	Yes	No
Nervous	Yes	No
Aggressive	Yes	No
Funny	Yes	No
Shy	Yes	No
Friendly	Yes	No
Angry	Yes	No
Lonely	Yes	No
Quiet	Yes	No
I make good grades	Yes	No
Other students trust me.	Yes	No
I don't like a lot of other students.	Yes	No
I am popular with other students	Yes	No
I am loyal.	Yes	No
I try hard to get along with other students	Yes	No
I try hard to get good grades	Yes	No
I have a best friend.	Yes	No
I like to make new friends.	Yes	No

I have a lot of friends at school.	Yes	No
I like most other students.	Yes	No
There are students I don't like to be around.	Yes	No
I respect myself.	Yes	No
I am no good at anything.	Yes	No

8. Circle the appropriate number for each statement depending on whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4
At times I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4
I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4
I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4
I feel that I'm a valuable person.	1	2	3	4
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4
I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4

PART TWO

There are many different types of families today. Please answer these questions that describe your family.

1. The person who cares for you most of the time is your primary caregiver. Who is your primary caregiver? (circle one)
Mother Father Grandparent Aunt Uncle Other
2. How well are you supervised at home?
Always Sometimes Rarely Never
3. How many hours per day does your caregiver spend with you when you are not at school or sleeping? _____
4. Do you wish you spent more time with your caregiver?
Yes No Don't care
5. How would you describe your relationship with your primary care giver?
Bad Good Great Don't Care
6. Would you prefer to have a different primary caregiver?
Yes No Don't care
7. How many brothers and sisters do you have? (put a zero "0" if you do not have any)
Brothers _____
Sisters _____

8. *The following statements describe family relationships. The word "siblings" refers to your brothers and/or sisters. Do these statements describe your family? Please circle yes or no.*

I have a good relationship with my siblings.	Yes	No
Members of my family are close to one another.	Yes	No
My family makes me happy most of the time.	Yes	No
I have a good relationship with my parent(s).	Yes	No
Many things about my family make me sad.	Yes	No

PART THREE

1. Please indicate how you feel about the following things by circling the answer that best describes your feelings.

The bullies at my school are mean.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Someone who laughs at others is cool.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The bullies at my school are cool.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
People who are pushed around by others are weak.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
People who are pushed around by others deserve it because of the way they act.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bullying is wrong.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. Please indicate how you feel about the following things by circling the answer that best describes your feelings.

One should try to help the bullied victims.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bullying may be fun sometimes.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
It is the victims' own fault that they are bullied.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bullying is stupid.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Joining in bullying is a wrong thing to do.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
It is not that bad if you laugh with others when someone is being bullied.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
One should report bullying to the teacher.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Making friends with the bullied victim is the right thing to do.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
It is funny when someone ridicules a classmate over and over again.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bullying makes the victim feel bad.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. Please indicate with a check mark how often you have seen the following activities occur at school during the past month:

	Never	Seldom	Often	Always
Name calling and insults				
Verbal threats				
Practical jokes				
Broken property				
Physical attack (hitting, pushing, tripping, etc.)				
Threaten with a weapon				
Talked about someone behind his/her back				
Other:				

4. Why are most kids bullied? Check all that apply. Fill in other items that you feel are appropriate.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facial appearance/features | <input type="checkbox"/> race | <input type="checkbox"/> who their friends are |
| <input type="checkbox"/> overweight/underweight | <input type="checkbox"/> ethnic group | <input type="checkbox"/> no friends or social skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> speech problem | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | <input type="checkbox"/> where they live |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a scar or mark | <input type="checkbox"/> good/bad grades | <input type="checkbox"/> who parents are |
| <input type="checkbox"/> physical weakness | <input type="checkbox"/> clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> who brothers/sisters are |
| <input type="checkbox"/> illness or handicap | <input type="checkbox"/> cried or was emotional | <input type="checkbox"/> family is poor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> handicapped family member | <input type="checkbox"/> short-tempered | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> are in special education | <input type="checkbox"/> don't fit in | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> too tall or too short | <input type="checkbox"/> new to the neighborhood or area | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

5. How often are kids bullied at school?

Never Seldom Often Always

6. How often do adults at school try to stop it when a kid is being bullied?

Never Seldom Often Always

7. How often do other kids try to stop bullying at school?

Never Seldom Often Always

8. How often is an adult present when someone is being bullied?

Never Seldom Often Always

9. Have you tried to stop bullying when you see someone your age being bullied at school?

Yes or No

10. Where is bullying most likely to take place at school? (circle one)

Hallways Playground Cafeteria Classroom Bus Bathroom

11. How many kids have you seen being bullied at school in the past month? _____

VITA

JENNIFER LEIGH MONGOLD

Personal Information

Date of Birth: July 8, 1982

Place of Birth: Johnson City, Tennessee

Marital Status: Married

Educational Information

Public Schools, Washington County, Tennessee

East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN

B.S. Criminal Justice/Psychology May 2004

East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN

M.A. Criminal Justice/Criminology May 2006

Experience

Graduate Assistant

Department of Criminal Justice/Criminology, 2004-2006

Honors and Awards

Dean's List

Outstanding Undergraduate Student in Criminal Justice and Criminology

Outstanding Graduate Student in Criminal Justice and Criminology