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The obligated bystander: An analysis of factors which influence teacher intervention in school bullying

Jennifer Farley
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The obligated bystander: An analysis of factors which influence teacher intervention in school bullying

by

Jennifer Farley

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Education Leadership

Program of Study Committee:
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Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
2016

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ABSTRACT

The experience and role of teachers in school bullying incident identification and intervention has only just begun to be studied. The literature regarding the factors which influence a teacher’s intervention in school bullying have not focused on teachers’ understanding of bullying or the impact of administrators and other teachers on their intervention. In this study Latane and Darley’s (1970) framework for bystander intervention was applied to school bullying to better understand how teachers identify and intervene in school bullying incidents. An on-line survey of middle school teachers, which utilizes video scenarios, collected data specific to teacher accuracy in identifying bullying, intended responses to bullying incidents, administrator support, peer response, and self-efficacy. Quantitative methods were utilized in analysis.

Results indicate that 25.35% of teachers consistently identify bullying behavior across all five video scenarios. The assignment of grades to accuracy rates indicate that most teachers earn an A (25.35%) or a B (46.48%). Accuracy varied by type of bullying behavior, with teachers least likely to accurately identify social bullying. Training had a medium effect on accuracy ($d = 0.331$), as did years of teaching experience ($d = 0.4505$). Results indicate accuracy in identifying bullying behavior is correlated with direct intervention, $r = 0.293$, $p \leq .05$. Administrator Support and Peer Response variables were calculated. Chi-square analysis indicates that peer response scores are associated with teacher self-efficacy, $X^2 (36, N=61) = 52.561$, $p = 0.037$, and response-efficacy, $X^2 (21, N=37) = 44.412$, $p = 0.002$. Additionally, years of teaching experience has a large effect on peer response ($d = 0.762$). Results of analysis of variance indicate that peer response does have a significant impact on a teacher’s
direct intervention in incidents of school bullying $F(8, \ 58) = 6.067, p=0.014$. Administrator support also has a significant impact, $F(14, \ 58) = 6.515, p=0.009$. Finally, the effect of school building was also significant, $F(3, \ 58) = 8.014, p=0.012$. While the interaction between peer response and administrator support was significant, $F(4, \ 58) = 5.610, p=0.024$, other interactions between variables in the model were not.
CHAPTER 1

TEACHERS AS BYSTANDERS IN SCHOOL BULLYING

Bullying behavior first appears in the literature over one hundred years ago. Yet, the phenomena has only been covered by mainstream media in the last 15 years; likely, a result of numerous school shootings and student suicides attributed to bullying. Once considered a rite of passage, bullying behavior negatively affects all students involved; often well into adulthood. A school environment in which bullying exists limits students psychologically, socially, and academically. According to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Assistant Secretary, Russlynn Ali, “When students are bullied they cannot feel safe. If they do not feel safe they cannot learn. And if they do not learn, they cannot reach their full potential as students, citizens, and human beings” (Bully-Free Schools, 2012).

As the general understanding of the negative effects of school bullying has increased across broad audiences, so have efforts to curtail it. In recent years, school assemblies, newspaper headlines, town hall meetings, documentaries, and congressional hearings have been devoted to the prevention and reduction of school bullying. States have passed anti-bullying legislation, schools have adopted research-based programs, and communities have rallied to raise awareness about bullying. In the last 10 years, research on the topic has greatly expanded; encompassing multiple fields of study, stakeholders, and methods. Yet, students continue to experience bullying at school. As a result, more research is necessary to fully understand bullying behavior and eradicate it.
**Background to the Problem**

State policymakers have sought to address bullying, through the creation and adoption of state-level anti-bullying polices since the first such policy was passed in 1999 ([www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)). However, the literature indicates that there is little evidence that such policies are effective. While the policies typically outline prohibited behavior and protected classes, only 25 states require teacher training. This is problematic considering teachers are on the front lines in implementing such anti-bullying policies and addressing student behavior. Research demonstrates that a teacher’s ability to appropriately identify and intervene in bullying is influenced by a number of factors, such as; administrator support, seriousness of the incident, whether or not they witness the incident, student characteristics, efficacy, and teacher experience (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Bell, Raczynski, & Horne, 2010; Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O’Brennan, 2007; Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Hazler, Miller, Carney & Green, 2001; Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008; Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Weiner, 2005; Whitted & Dupper, 2005; Yoon & Kerber, 2003).

Compared to students, teachers underestimate incidents of school bullying (Holt, Keyes, & Koenig, 2011). Holt, Keyes, and Koenig (2011) attribute this to a number of factors, including recent media spotlight on school bullying, teachers’ dismissal of school bullying as a “’rite of passage,’” and teachers not witnessing bullying but finding out about it after it occurs (p. 120). While students are more likely to identify as targets, teachers are more likely to identify students as the bully or bully-victim (Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, de Bettencout, & Lemme, 2006; Wienke Totura, Green, Karver, & Gesten, 2009). This may be because it is easier to identify disruptive students or because teachers misunderstand peer relationships among students (Wienke Totura, Green, Karver, & Gesten, 2009). Teachers
also identify and intervene in bullying according to how serious they judge the incident (Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005). This may lead teachers to be more likely to intervene in physical or verbal bullying, compared to relational bullying (Craig, Henderson, Murphy, 2000; Ellis & Shute, 2007).

To better understand how teachers identify and intervene in school bullying incidents, we can consider the framework of bystander intervention proposed by Latane and Darley (1970). It is important to note that unlike most bystanders, teachers are legally and ethically obligated to intervene in instances of school bullying due to state anti-bullying policies, school policies, and teacher codes of ethics.

Latane and Darley (1970) suggest that a bystander’s skills are critical to intervention. To utilize these skills the bystander must first be able to understand and identify the situation. In applying this to teachers as bystanders in school bullying, teachers would first need to understand and identify bullying and then be able to draw upon their individual skills to intervene. This is complex, given the number of factors which influence teacher identification of school bullying. Research also demonstrates that teachers intervene according to the method and perceived severity of bullying and teachers may not fully understand what bullying is, or have the skill set necessary to discern this (Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005; Ellis & Shute, 2007). This is further complicated by the fact that even pre-service teachers feel unprepared to handle bullying situations (Benítez, García-Berbén, & Fernández-Cabezas, 2009; Bauman & Del Rio, 2006).

When identifying factors that affect a bystander’s actions to intervene, Latane and Darley (1970) focused on the presence of other bystanders, who usually deter a bystander’s willingness to intervene. However, the influence of other bystanders, in the form of public
to what degree other teachers influence a teacher’s intervention in school bullying. In fact, little research exists which identifies the impact of the school administrator on teachers’ intervention in school bullying. This research does, however, suggest that teacher’s referral of bullying to the office may suggest to administrators that the teacher has poor classroom management skills (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006).

**Statement of the Problem**

The experience and role of teachers in school bullying incident identification and intervention has only just begun to be studied. The literature regarding the factors that influence a teacher’s intervention in school bullying have not focused on teachers’ understanding of bullying or the impact of administrators and other teachers (as bystanders) on their intervention. Both anti-bullying policies and codes of ethics require teachers to intervene in instances of bullying. However, the degree to which teachers act, as required, to identify bullying behaviors and intervene is unknown. Furthermore, it is unknown how administrators and other teachers as bystanders may influence this action.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of a teacher’s ability to identify bullying behavior, perceptions of administrators’ and other teachers’ actions in bullying on his/her ability to identify and directly intervene in incidents of school bullying.

**Research Questions**

1. How consistently are teachers able to identify bullying behavior?

2. How consistently do teachers feel supported by administrators to directly intervene in bullying?
3. How consistently do teachers feel their peers directly intervene in school bullying?

4. How is teacher self-efficacy in response to bullying incidents related to peer response and administrator support?

5. Is there a significant relationship between a teacher’s ability to correctly identify bullying behavior and a teacher’s likelihood to directly intervene?

6. Is there a significant relationship between a teacher’s likelihood to directly intervene in incidents of school bullying and the teacher’s perception of other bystanders, as measured by administrator support and peer response?

**Significance of the Problem**

The results of this study build upon the existing literature specific to teacher understanding of and intervention in school bullying. Given that the existing literature has “only recently” begun to address teachers’ understanding and response to bullying, and as a result “few studies” exist, this study can help fill an existing void in the literature (Holt, Keyes, and Keonig, 2011, p. 1999; Duong & Bradshaw, 2013, p. 422). Furthermore, researchers “have begun to examine how teachers’ beliefs about bullying relate to their willingness to intervene as well as how they intervene,” and few studies have been identified specific to how other adults may influence a teacher’s willingness to intervene. (Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008, p. 433). This study provides new application of Latane and Darley’s (1970) framework for bystander intervention to the role of the teacher in school bullying, in an effort to understand how bystanders, specifically administrators and other teachers, can influence a teacher’s actions. Data collected in this study can inform understanding of teachers’ ability to identify school bullying, and can also give insight
regarding how they negotiate their legal and ethical obligations to provide a safe learning environment given conditions and systems within the school that may hinder intervention.

This study serves as a pilot for a new survey instrument which assessed teacher understanding of bullying and factors which influence response. Furthermore, the initial results can be shared broadly and the study can be replicated in other settings, including elementary and high school settings, beyond the Midwest. Results of this analysis can be used in multiple ways to inform understanding, professional development, and policy specific to the role of teachers in bullying prevention.

Finally, teachers are one population of individuals within a school who contribute to the culture of that school. Further understanding of their perceptions regarding school bullying, and their skills and willingness to directly intervene, can help to build an understanding not only of their role in the prevention of school bullying but also in the building of a safe and positive school culture.

**Methodology**

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design and utilize quantitative methods. All data were collected through an on-line survey administered through Qualtrics and were analyzed in a number of ways. First, exploratory factor analysis was utilized to determine relationships between factors. Next, descriptive statistics were analyzed, calculated variables were graded, chi-square tests were conducted, and correlation between variables was analyzed. Analysis of variance tests were performed to understand the effect of each variable on direct intervention.

The survey instrument created for this study builds off existing survey research methods and instrumentation specific to the study of teachers and school buildings. This is
the second survey to utilize video scenarios and the first known to measure teacher accuracy in identifying bullying behavior. Results may inform the field, guide professional development, and ultimately, increase teacher efficacy in bullying intervention.

**Assumptions**

In this study, it was assumed that participants were familiar with the phenomenon of school bullying, and were able to identify school bullying incidents and intervene in such incidents. It was also assumed that participants were knowledgeable of the actions of other teachers and administrators in response to school bullying, as well as school policies and procedures for teacher response to incidents of school bullying. It is further assumed that participants understood and considered their ethical obligation to provide for students’ safety in school environments, and as a result, wanted to act to prevent and intervene in incidents of school bullying.

It was also assumed that the subjects who chose to participate in this survey were representative of middle school educators in the school district and state studied. These participants were also assumed to be similar to teachers in other states; just as the communities in which they work were assumed to be similar to other mid-sized urban settings. Finally, it was assumed that participants will complete the questionnaire, and provide honest responses.

**Limitations**

1. This study is limited to eight middle schools in two school district located in a Midwestern state.
2. This study is limited to subjects who are certified middle school teachers.
3. This study is limited by subjects’ understanding of school bullying.
4. This study is limited by subjects’ understanding of their obligation to respond to incidents of school bullying.

5. This study is limited to subjects who agree to participate voluntarily.

6. This study is limited to the number of subjects surveyed and the amount of time available to conduct the study.

7. Validity of this study is limited to the reliability of the instruments used.

**Delimitations**

This study is confined to surveying teachers at 8 middle schools located in two Midwestern school districts. This was a population level survey within each district, given that all middle school teachers were invited to participate. This study focused on teachers’ ability to identify school bullying incidents in scenarios, interventions employed in these scenarios, and teacher perceptions of administrative support and of other teachers’ responses to school bullying. Only certified middle school teachers currently teaching in these two districts were included in this study.

**Definition of Terms**

Audience Inhibition: The presences of others, who are not assisting the victim, cause the bystander to not act (van den Bos, Muller, & van Bussel, 2009).

Bullying: “An unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012).

Bully/Victim: an individual who both perpetrates bullying behavior on others and is targeted by bullying behavior.
Bystander: an individual who would seek to intervene by addressing the bully, getting the target away from the bully, or getting a teacher, who it is assumed will then intervene (Olweus, 2003).

Evaluation apprehension: a bystander’s fear that others may evaluate the bystander’s actions in a negative way (Fischer, Greitemeyer, Pollozek, & Frey, 2006).

Pluralistic Ignorance: The bystander’s assumption that they have misjudged an emergency because other bystanders are not responding (Prentice & Miller, 1996).

Response efficacy: a bystander’s access to effective intervention strategies (Latane & Darley, 1970).

Self-efficacy: one’s ability to implement the strategies they have (Latane & Darley, 1970).

Social/relational aggression: forms of social bullying, or bullying within peer relationships, which may be covert and hard for teachers to detect, such as exclusion or spreading rumors.

Stages of Intervention: Defined by Latane and Darley (1970) as five decisions made by bystanders when determining whether to intervene. These stages include: 1) Notice the event, 2) determine the event is an emergency which warrants intervention, 3) determine it is within their responsibility to act 4) determine a form of assistance, and 5) act.

Target/Victim: the individual at which the bullying behavior is directed.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 of the study has presented the introduction, the background of the problem, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the questions to be answered, the significance of the study, a brief description of the methodology, the assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and the definitions of terms.
Chapter 2 is a review of relevant literature. It addresses the following topics: bullying, student experience with bullying, teacher experience with bullying, and bystander intervention.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in the study, including the research design, population of interest, survey instrument design, and administration. The chapter goes on to describe the procedures for data collection and the data analysis.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the study and Chapter 5 discusses and analyzes the results, culminating in conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Research specific to school bullying has increased in recent years. While a general e-library search on the term “bullying” generates 24,265 results, only 22 are dated prior to 1980, while 16,015 were published in or after 2010. Study of school bullying is not limited to the field of education; it’s born from psychological research specific to the impact of bullying on perpetrators and targets. The phenomenon of bullying is studied across disciplines; including diverse fields such as public health and law (Duong and Bradshaw, 2013; Foxhoven, 2013). However, findings of this research are much more narrow. Much has been published regarding the prevalence of bullying and its impact and outcomes on targets and perpetrators (Hazler, Miller, Carney, & Green, 2001; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Crothers & Kolbert, 2008). While the depth and breadth of this work has framed bullying as a problem necessary of solution; few solutions have been identified. Espelage (2010) describes the lack of effectiveness as, “…67 bullying prevention programs, none of which are working in the United States.” Hektner and Swenson (2012) suggest this is due to a “disconnect” resulting in “relatively little” research regarding “how, exactly, cultural norms within a school could impact bullying,” (p. 517). Whereas Strohmeier and Noam (2012) state that “we are in the middle of a shift from viewing bullying as a painful but typical ‘kids’ thing’ to be solved by the peer group to a new understanding of bullying as a serious matter with long-term consequences needing adult intervention” (p. 8). Yet, little exploration into the role and function of those adults providing the necessary intervention has been conducted. Duong and Bradshaw (2013) recognize that, “only recently have researchers begun to examine teachers’ perceptions and responses to bullying,” (p. 422). Additionally, “few studies have addressed
attitudes toward bullying maintained by adult members of the school community,” (Holt, Keyes, & Koenig, 2011, p. 119). As a result, studies has just “begun to examine how teachers’ beliefs about bullying relate to their willingness to intervene as well as how they intervene,” (Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008, p. 433).

Bullying

The act of bullying can be defined in many ways and includes a diverse set of behaviors. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, host of the website [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov), defines bullying as “unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012). The Centers for Disease Control goes on to clarify that the youth involved in bullying are not siblings (Gladden, Vivolo-Kantor, Hamburger, & Lumpkin, 2014). Bullying behavior includes physical and verbal acts, social manipulation, and attacks on property (Mynard & Joseph, 2000). Such behaviors can further be defined in terms of the level of interaction between the victim and the bully: direct and indirect. While direct aggressive behavior includes open confrontations, such as physical and verbal attacks, indirect aggressiveness is more covert and may include social harm to the victim which may impact them socially or in terms of belonging or social position, (Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Sahin, 2010). The behaviors associated with bullying typically include physical contact, verbal or written threats (including cyber-bullying), spreading rumors, making faces or gestures, intentional exclusion from a group or activity, and manipulation (Olweus, 2003).

However, teachers, students, and researchers define bullying in different ways. Teachers are found to have more comprehensive views of bullying than students. In a study
of UK secondary schools, students were more likely to report direct physical and verbal behaviors as bullying; while teachers were more likely to include “social exclusion, a power imbalance in the bully’s favor and the bully’s intention to cause the target hurt or harm,” in the definition of bullying (Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, De Bettencourt, & Lemme, 2006, p. 553). Furthermore, according to Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, De Bettencourt, and Lemme (2006), teachers define bullying in a way that is not as broad, or “inclusive,” as the definition used by researchers (p. 555).

**Anti-Bullying Policies**

A school’s response to bullying behavior may not be guided solely by local decision makers. The attention given to school bullying, including links between the behavior and school violence and suicide, “has increased interest in the problem of school bullying and moved the issue into the public policy realm,” (Winburn, Winburn, & Niemeyer, 2014, p. 515). While all 50 states and three US territories have anti-bullying laws, federal legislation addressing the issue has not be enacted (Stuart-Cassel, Bell, & Springer, 2011; [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)).

The first state anti-bullying law was passed in 1999 (Stuart-Cassel, Bell, & Springer, 2011). While each state’s policy is unique, all seek to address bullying in an effort to provide children a safe environment in which to learn. The process of policy making itself may increase awareness about bullying and “hold schools accountable for reporting and preventing bullying,” (Limber & Small, 2003; Cascardi, Brown, Iammarone, & Cardona, 2014, p. 254). However, there is little research regarding how schools meet the terms of anti-bullying laws and how such legislation impacts “practice and outcomes” in the school building (Cosgrove & Nickerson, 2015, p. 2). It may not be enough to simply comply with
anti-bullying policies (Kueny & Zirkel, 2012). Educators have a legal and moral obligation to provide a safe school environment. However, achieving this may require schools to go beyond the policy; allocating resources and creating procedures for bullying prevention and response (Kueny & Zirkel, 2012).

**Student Experience with Bullying**

Bullying has both a negative and long-lasting impact on students. Such impact may vary according to the student’s experience with bullying behavior. The literature defines three potential roles a student may have related to bullying: Victim, Bully and Bully-Victim.

**Student Role**

The victim, or target, of bullying behavior is subject to negative and aggressive behaviors that are not due to any threat that they pose to the bully (Olweus, 2003). The asymmetrical power relationship with the bully is a detriment to the victim, who is likely weaker in some way (physically, socially, etc.) and unable to defend him/herself (Olweus, 2003). However, despite the disadvantage of power, targets are not always passive. The term “provocative victim” has been applied to targets who have difficulty regulating their behavior, and may “present with provocative behaviors and set their immediate social environment ‘on edge’” (Grumpel & Sutherland, 2010, p. 352). This may encourage the perpetration of bullying behaviors against them; however, the aggressive nature of any behavior they may demonstrate is reactive in nature (Grumpel & Sutherland, 2010).

The student perpetrating bullying behavior, sometimes referred to as the “bully,” inflicts pain or discomfort on the victim, by engaging in negative and aggressive behavior that is repeated (Olweus, 2003). The bully benefits from being more powerful than the victim.
While the roles of bully and victim are often thought of as opposing and even mutually exclusive, research indicates that one half of bullies also report being victimized (Haynie, et al., 2001; Felipe, Garcia, Babarro, & Arias, 2011). These students, who are sometimes the bully and sometimes the victim in incidents of bullying, are considered to be bully-victims.

**Impact**

Regardless of where a student experiences bullying, or what the student’s role is in bullying behavior – as target, perpetrator, or bully-victim – the associated impact is negative and is associated with outcomes affecting the student socially, psychologically, and academically.

**Social impact**

Haynie, et al. (2001) found that all students associated with bullying, regardless of role, report low social competence. Furthermore, bully-victims identify less positive friendships, more “friendships with deviant peers,” and are often not accepted (Harel-Fisch, et al., 2011; Haynie, et al., 2001, p. 44). These students have been described as “among the most disliked” students in the school (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Felipe, Garcia, Babarro, & Arias, 2011). Involvement in bullying, both as a target and as an aggressor, is associated with other negative behaviors “such as drinking, smoking, theft, damage to property, and violations of parents’ rules,” (Haynie, et al., 2001). Compared to bullies and victims, bully-victims have more negative feelings regarding school and classmates (Felipe, Garcia, Babarro, & Arias, 2011).

**Psychological impact**

Participation in bullying behavior is positively correlated with student reports of loneliness and anxiety (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). Students who bully also show less optimal
psychological functioning, compared to others (Haynie, et al., 2001). When compared, bully-victims are less aggressive than bullies, but more aggressive than victims (Holt & Espelage, 2007). Targets of bullying suffer from lower self-esteem and increased depression by age 23 (Olweus, 1995). Bully-victims report a lack of self-control, more symptoms of depression and anxiety, low self-esteem, are considered aggressive and report “the highest feelings of insecurity” when compared to others students (Berkowitz & Benbenishty, 2012; Felipe, Garcia, Babarro, & Arias, 2011; Haynie, et al., 2001; Holt & Espelage, 2007). Bully-victims have a greater probability of “being referred for psychiatric consultation,” (Holt & Espelage, 2007). However, among students involved in bullying (bullies, victims, and bully-victims), students who report moderate peer social support also reported less anxiety and depression (Holt & Espelage, 2007).

**Academic impact**

Bullying and peer victimization impact the victim’s perception of school; leading to negative views of school as well as school avoidance or absenteeism. Children who are the targets of bullying behavior are more likely to attain low levels of academic achievement; especially if they “do not enjoy school, are not conscientious in their work and their parents do not support them” (Beran, Hughes, & Lupart, 2008). Harel-Fisch, et al. (2011) found strong relationships (but not causation) between bullying others and low achievement, disliking school, and feelings of lack of belonging and safety. Students identified as bully-victims experienced the lowest rates of academic achievement. These students are more likely to receive failing grades, take courses for a second time, and also have fewer future goals specific to academics, when compared to victims (Felipe, Garcia, Babarro, & Arias, 2011). Bully-victims also report increased school absence due to “fear” of others (Berkowitz
& Benbenishty, 2012). These students also report the lowest levels of teacher support (Berkowitz & Benbenishty, 2012).

Students involved in bullying behavior (as bullies, victims, or bully-victims) also report being treated differently by school staff, compared to their peers uninvolved in bullying behaviors (Khoury-Kassabri, 2009). In a national survey of Israeli students in grades 7-11, students who were victims or bullies reported higher levels of “staff maltreatment” (both physical and emotional), with bully-victims reporting the highest levels of maltreatment (Khoury-Kassabri, 2009).

**Teacher Experience with Bullying**

Teachers both implement a school’s anti-bullying policy and provide supports to students involved in bullying incidents. The role of the teacher is paramount in bullying prevention. According to Veenstra et al. (2014), it is “important for students to have teachers whom they see as taking an active stand against bullying in terms of propagating anti-bullying norms and having an efficacious approach to decreasing bullying,” (p. 1135). However, teachers report difficulty in balancing the demands of their job with monitoring bullying; feeling unsupported and without the resources necessary to address the problem (Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005).

**Teacher identification of bullying**

While teachers define bullying different than students, they also are more likely to identify students as bullies or bully-victims, while students are more likely to identify themselves as targets (Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, de Bettencout, & Lemme, 2006; Wienke Totura, Gree, Karver, & Gesten, 2009). It is possible that it is easier for teachers to identify bullies because bullying may be disruptive to the school environment; however, teachers may
also be likely to misidentify targets (Wienke Totura, Green, Karver, & Gesten, 2009). Furthermore, students whom teachers identify as bullies or bully-victims, who self-identify as victims, report more concerning psychological, behavioral and academic outcomes. Some of these outcomes may be attributed to a teacher’s inaccurate understanding about a student’s relationships with his or her peers (Wienke Totura, Green, Karver, & Gesten, 2009).

**Method and Seriousness** According to Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, and Wiener (2005) a teacher’s ability to intervene in bullying is dependent on whether they “viewed the incident as serious,” (p. 718). Teachers consider overt incidents of bullying to be more serious than covert ones (Byers, Caltabiano, & Caltabiano, 2011). According to Ellis and Shute (2007), a teacher’s “perception of seriousness of a bullying incident” is a factor which “teachers consider to be pertinent when deciding whether or not to intervene in a bullying incident” (p. 659). Research has found that teachers consider physical bullying to be more serious than verbal bullying, which, in turn, was found to be more serious than social bullying (Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Ellis & Shute, 2007). In acts of physical bullying, teachers are more likely to discipline the perpetrator (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016). Sometimes such willingness may lead to overreaction and mis-identification of “physical confrontations as bullying when they are not” (Hazler, Miller, Carney, & Green, 2001, p. 141). Teachers are less likely to “show concern, attempt to prevent or act to intervene” in verbal and relational bullying, and are found to be “less sympathetic to the victim” of these types of bullying behavior (Hazler, Miller, Carney, & Green, 2001, p. 141; Yoon & Kerber, 2003, p. 32). As a result, teachers found relational bullying to be “too minor” for them to intervene, allowing either students to “sort it out for themselves” or encouraging discussion between the perpetrator and the target (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 660; Yoon & Kerber, 2003).
However, the ability of the teacher to intervene is difficult when the bullying behavior is ambiguous. Bauman and Del Rio (2006) found that teachers may face “uncertainty” regarding the degree to which they should intervene in verbal bullying; whereas, duty to intervene in physical altercations is clear, regardless of whether or not the incident is attributed to bullying. Anagnostopoulos, Buchanan, Pereira, and Lichty (2009) found that school staff have difficulty distinguishing “between jokes and teasing between friends and those statements that were meant to be offensive and malicious,” (p. 530). Furthermore, forms of social bullying, such as social exclusion, can be covert; making it difficult for the teacher to detect and intervene (Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000). Sometimes such incidents may only come to the attention of the teacher along with other forms of bullying or related to “more overt forms of body language used to exclude others,” (Shute, Owens, & Slee, 2002, p. 365).

**Student reports.** Not all incidents of bullying are seen by teachers. In fact, research estimates that students notify teachers of approximately 40% of all incidents of bullying (Robers, Kemp, Rathbun, Morgan, & Snyder, 2014). Rigby and Bagshaw (2003) find that students are reluctant to report bullying to teachers because they do not think teachers can resolve conflict. As a result, a teacher’s ability to intervene in incidents of school bullying is often dependent on students reporting bullying behavior.

Research indicates that student perceptions of teachers’ efficacy and fairness can impact students’ willingness to report incidents of bullying (Aceves, Hinshaw, Mendoza-Denton, & Page-Gould, 2012; Veenstra, Lindenberg, Huitsing, Sainio, & Salmivalli, 2014). When teachers are perceived to be “effective and fair,” students are “less likely to consider physical aggression as a response” to victimization and conflict (Aceves, Hinshaw,
Mendoza-Denton, & Page-Gould, 2012). Cortes and Kochenderfer-Ladd (2014) studied five strategies, called “teacher responses to bullying schemas (TRBSs)” to understand how teacher response to bullying affects student reporting of bullying behaviors. These five strategies include, “advocate ignoring… (e.g., tell the kid getting picked on to ignore it)… b) encourage assertion… (e.g., encourage the kid getting picked on to stand up for themselves)…c) separate students…(e.g., make the kids stay away from each other)… d) punish the bullying…and e) involve parents,” (Cortes & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2014, p. 339). Results indicated that when teachers utilized separating students and involving parents, students were more likely to tell teachers if they were bullied. Girls also were more likely to report bullying when teachers utilized passive responses, such as encourage assertion and advocate ignoring. This study also finds that student willingness to report bullying is influenced by the classroom environment; with students more willing to report bullying behavior when teachers are successful “in creating a positive, supportive classroom environment where bullying is taken seriously,” (Cortes & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2014, p. 343).

**Teacher response to bullying.** A “crucial factor” in the reduction of school bullying is effective teacher intervention in bullying incidents (Burger, Strohmeier, Sprober, Bauman, & Rigby, 2015, p. 196). As classroom-based adults, teachers have both the authority to address inappropriate behavior and the moral obligation to keep students safe (Cortes & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2014). Research has shown a number of factors to influence and support the response of the teacher to incidents of school bullying. Such factors are individual and contextual, and influence the teacher’s response, which is both “cognitive and emotional” (Yoon & Bauman, 2014). To properly address the variety of behaviors, contexts, and
situations which make up school bullying, a “large repertoire of difference strategy types” is needed to allow teachers to intervene accordingly (Burger, Strohmeier, Sprober, Bauman, & Rigby, 2015).

**Interventions.** Teachers are identified as the “central figure for intervening in school bullying,” (Cortes & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2014, p. 347). Teachers may implement a number of different types of interventions in instances of school bullying. Building individual relationships with students allows teachers to “readily learn about, intervene in, and prevent” bullying behaviors (Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009, p. 528). Teachers are more likely to intervene when they witnessed bullying directly, as compared to when students reported it to them (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Teachers also may also choose interventions based on their moral orientation (Ellis & Shute, 2007). Teachers with a justice orientation are more apt to respond with a “rules-sanctions” response, while teachers with a care orientation are more likely to respond using a “problem-solving approach” (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 656).

Teachers’ primary objective in intervention is to stop the behavior and get students “back on track” (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 659). Teachers have found separating students to be an effective means of reducing peer victimization (Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008). However, suggestion that the target of bullying simply avoid the student perpetrating the bullying behavior resulted in “increased peer victimization and revenge seeking” (Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008, p. 449). In serious incidents, teachers are also concerned with “rescuing the victim and punishing the bullying” however, in less serious incidents teachers become concerned that intervention will “make it worse” and may instead choose to let students “sort it out for themselves,” (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 659).
Multiple studies measure teachers’ use of four intervention strategies: authority-based, working with the victim, working with the bully, enlisting other adults, (Bauman, Rigby, & Hoppa, 2008; Burger, Strohmeier, Sprober, Bauman, & Rigby, 2015; Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016). Burger et al. (2015) found that teachers are not likely to use a combination of strategies (3 or more) to address bullying and that teachers prefer an authority-based intervention, such as verbal reprimands, and usually directed such intervention at the student perpetrating bullying. Teachers were less likely to directly intervene with the bully in a non-punitive way or seek assistance from other adults, such as school counselors (Burger, Strohmeier, Sprober, Bauman, & Rigby, 2015). This may be because teachers are “less familiar with non-punitive strategies” (Bauman, Rigby, & Hoppa, 2008, p. 847). According to Burger et al. (2015) teachers seldom indicate they would provide support to the target, either as their exclusive strategy or in combination with other strategies, however this conflicts with Yoon, Sulkowski, and Bauman’s (2016) findings that the majority of teachers would provide emotional support to the victim. It is possible that differences in the populations of interest in each study led to different results.

**School Factors.** Teacher response to, and intervention in, incidents of school bullying may be affected by contextual factors related to their school building. Research shows that middle school teachers have more experience with school bullying when compared to their elementary and secondary peers. However, factors such as school policy, implementation of a school wide anti-bullying program, curriculum, training, school climate, and administrator support influence a teacher’s intervention regardless of grade level.

**Grade Level.** Research suggests that students in middle school may experience bullying at greater rates than students in elementary school or high school (Nansel, et al.,
Teachers are able to more accurately identify bullying behavior in elementary school, compared to middle school; however this may be attributed to different methods of bullying perpetrated in middle school compared to elementary school, particularly social aggression and sexual harassment (Leff, Kupersmidt, Patterson, & Power, 1999; Craig and Pepler, 2003). According to Bradshaw, Sawyer and O’Brennan (2007) “middle school is a particularly challenging time for students and the staff who work with them” and “middle school staff need specialized training on how to best work with middle school students and meet their unique needs,” (p. 379).

Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O’Brennan (2007) found that both middle school students and staff were more concerned about bullying in their school, compared to students and staff at elementary and high schools. However, middle school staff and students differed in regard to perception of current prevention efforts. While middle school staff believed school bullying prevention efforts to be adequate, middle school students’ “felt their school was not doing enough to prevent bullying” (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O’Brennan, 2007, p. 375).

The concern of middle school students and staff, in regard to school bullying may be driven by experience with both bullying and reporting at school. When student and staff experiences with bullying was compared by school level, Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O’Brennan (2007) found middle school staff to be significantly more likely than elementary and high school staff to witness school bullying. Middle school staff were also more likely to have been bullied at school, by teachers, students’ parents, or students (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Middle school staff were also as likely as elementary school staff to have had students report bullying to them; however, the study found middle school students were less likely than elementary students to report to an adult (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan,
The study also found discrepancy between student and staff perception of the action which followed a report of bullying. Over one third of middle school students report that staff members did not follow up after a report (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Furthermore, secondary students were significantly more likely than school staff to agree with “having seen adults in the school watching bullying and doing nothing,” and majority of these students felt adult intervention “made the situation worse” (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007, p. 375). Such observation and experience may lead students to determine that telling an adult does not lead to intervention in incidents of bullying. Rigby and Barnes (2002) found that as students get older, it become “increasingly ineffective” to tell an adult about bullying (p. 34).

While Kochenderfer-Ladd and Pelletier (2008) did not find that teachers views regarding bullying and strategies for addressing bullying behavior were dependent upon student grade level, Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O’Brennan (2007) found that middle school staff reported their interventions differed from their elementary and high school colleagues in a few ways. Middle school staff were more likely to intervene than high school staff; whereas high school staff were more likely to ignore bullying behavior (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Middle school staff were also more likely to intervene than elementary staff overall, except that elementary school staff were more likely to talk with the parents of either the target or perpetrator (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Middle school staff were also more likely to consult with school administrators regarding a situation of school bullying, and were more likely to refer bullying to the guidance counselor or school psychologist (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007).
Guidance of school policy. It may be assumed that school policy provides teachers with guidance regarding response to school bullying. However, such policies may not address all types of bullying behavior; especially covert and relational bullying. According to Bauman and Del Rio (2006), relational bullying behaviors are not as likely to be included in school policy. Nishina (2004) suggests that school-based disciplinary actions focused on aggressive bullying behaviors may not be effective, because they fail to address the social context of bullying. According to Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, and Lichty (2009) “school policy provided staff members little assistance in responding to…gender-based bullying,” especially in regard to differentiating sexual harassment and gender-based bullying and intervening (p. 522). O’Brennan, Waasdorp, and Bradshaw (2014) found that the presence of anti-bullying policies, and the “ease of implementation” of these policies did not increase the comfort of school staff in bullying intervention. However, comfort in response and actual response are different. Results indicated that receiving training on the anti-bullying policy increased the likelihood of intervention in bullying incidents which involved special populations (bullying based on race, sex, religion, disability, physical features, sexual orientation, or gender identity) but not the general population (O’Brennan, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2014). Furthermore, the presence of school-based anti-bullying policies may increase teacher response (decreased ignoring the behavior) and teacher involvement of other adults (Bauman, Rigby, & Hoppa, 2008).

Program Implementation. School buildings and districts may implement school-wide programming to address bullying behaviors. Such measures will ensure that expectations of student behavior, related to bullying and potentially beyond, stay consistent across multiple school spaces (classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and playgrounds). The success of such
programs rests on school personnel, and their “time, commitment, and philosophical compatibility” (Studer & Mynatt, 2015, p. 28). According to Payne, Gottfredson and Gottfredson (2006), schools may experience high quality program implementation when a local decision making process is used, administration is supportive, staff participate in high quality training, and implementation is organized and integrated into the everyday activities of the school.

Teacher response to bullying is critical to the success of school-based programs (Novick & Isaacs, 2010). Research indicates that school staff who are involved in bullying prevention, specifically schoolwide programs, are more likely to intervene in instances of school bullying (O’Brennan, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2014). This is important considering school wide anti bullying programs “often emphasize the importance of reporting bullying to adults,” (Cortes & Kochenderfer-Ladd, 2014, p. 343).

School-wide bullying prevention programs, however, may be unsuccessful if all the stakeholders in the school cannot work together to resolve bullying. In a study of Australian students, Rigby and Bagshaw (2003) found that 40% of students were unsure about or actively against collaborating with teachers to stop bullying. Students also held negative opinions of teachers’ ability to resolve conflict, leading to what the authors describe as “a credibility problem” (Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003, p. 543). This problem must be addressed in order for students to seek help from teachers by reporting bullying (Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003).

**Training.** To accurately identify bullying, teachers must be well trained and confident in their ability to recognize bullying and intervene. Teachers with high levels of “preparedness” are more likely to intervene in bullying, whether reported or directly
observed (Novick & Isaacs, 2010). It is difficult to know how teachers are able to effectively identify, intervene, and make reports of bullying behavior if they do not receive training. Nicolaides, Toda, and Smith (2002) found that teacher trainees are not confident in their ability to deal with students who demonstrate bullying behaviors, and would like more training specific to talking with bullies and their targets, as well as with other teachers regarding strategies to prevent and intervene in bullying.

**Curriculum.** There may also be opportunities for a school curriculum to address bullying behavior. According to Whitted and Dupper (2005), bullying prevention programs are successful when “the program is integrated into the school curriculum,” (p. 169). In the case of sexualized and gender-based bullying, teachers found the school health course curriculum to be a logical place to address such behavior (Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009). Finally, embedding effective strategies for the identification and intervention in bullying in college course curriculum had significant results on the self-efficacy of pre-service teachers (Benítez, García-Berbén, & Fernández-Cabezas, 2009).

**School Climate.** According to Yoon and Bauman (2014) teachers’ response to bullying “reflect the larger context of classroom management and climate, and serve as socialization experiences for potential perpetrators, victims, and other students, determining students’ future behaviors and thus social and emotional adjustment,” (p. 310). When teachers perceive the school climate to be hostile, or one in which students may be considered disrespectful or intolerant, they are more likely to directly intervene and discipline students perpetrating bullying behavior (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016). Teachers in hostile school environments are also less likely to involve other adults in
intervention efforts, and instead handle incidents of school bullying alone (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016).

**Administrator Support.** The support of administration is key to the success of any bullying prevention program (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Such support may not only effect the program, but the teachers implementing the program. Bauman and Del Rio (2006) assert that teachers may feel fearful when referring incidents of relational bullying to the office, as they may be “perceived as ineffective classroom managers” (p. 226). Failure to intervene in incidents of bullying may also be attributed to a perceived lack of administrative support (Yoon & Gilchrist, 2003). However, O’Brennan, Waasdorp, and Bradshaw (2014) find that the relationship between school staff and administrators did not predict teacher comfort in school bullying intervention. This suggests that positive relationships between school staff and administrators is more significant in regard to programming or school-wide planning, compared to “on-the-spot bullying intervention,” (O’Brennan, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2014, p. 876). When teachers perceive administrator support, student experience with school violence (bullying, aggression, and victimization) decreases (Espelage, Polanin, & Low, 2014). Principal support may increase teacher confidence, and should be considered in developing school-based bullying prevention programs (Skinner, Babinski, & Gifford, 2014).

**Student factors.** Characteristics such as student gender, popularity, and social skills have been shown to influence teacher response to bullying situations. In a comparison of school staff and student perceptions of school bullying, Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O’Brennan (2007) found that teachers and students identify the way a student looks as the most common reason they are targeted in bullying. However, school staff are more likely than students to perceive students who engage in the perpetration of bullying behavior as popular and feared
(Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). Students whose social skills are lacking may experience relational bullying; which teachers may find to be understandable given their personal perception of the child as “less appealing” (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006). Teacher’s may also intervene according to “…whether they considered the victimized child responsible, whether the child matched their assumptions about victim characteristics,” (Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005, p. 718).

Student gender also influences teacher intervention (Hektner & Swenson, 2012; Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008). These beliefs follow gender stereotypes, and may be associated with the type of bullying behaviors in which boys and girls engage (Hektner & Swenson, 2012). Research indicates that teachers feel that bullying is a normative behavior for boys and are more likely to advocate independent coping (Hektner & Swenson, 2012; Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008). Teachers also suggest girls should “ignore or avoid” those who perpetrate bullying (Hektner & Swenson, 2012). Such perceptions and responses may be the effect of teachers observing boys participating in more physical bullying than girls, or a lack of understanding that avoidance reinforces social exclusion (Hektner & Swenson, 2012). In instances of sexualized bullying or sexual harassment, teachers were likely to intervene when male students targeted “quiet girls,” however teachers were reluctant to intervene when they perceived the male and female student to be in a dating relationship, and “were ambivalent about their responsibility toward gay and lesbian targets of bullying,” (Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009, p. 519). In some cases, teachers may fail to intervene in bullying because they feel that the students “bring it on themselves.” Such is the case of gay and lesbian students, whom teachers held responsible for their own victimization (Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009).
**Teacher factors.** Individual characteristics of teachers have been linked to teacher’s identification and intervention in bullying behaviors. A number of these characteristics may be learned, which suggests that targeted training may increase teacher understanding of school bullying, as well as efficacy in intervention.

**Demographic Characteristics.** Teacher gender is also found to influence a teacher’s identification and intervention in school bullying. This may be attributed to differences in how male and female teachers perceive the seriousness of a bullying incident. “Mildly serious” incidents of bullying, such as dirty looks, are more likely to be ignored by male teachers than female teachers, while “moderately serious” incidents, such as name calling, are more likely to be considered serious by female teachers compared to male teachers (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 655). When the gender of teachers and students are the same, teachers are more likely to discipline students who are targeted with bullying behavior (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016). The effect of ethnicity on teacher intervention is similar; when teacher and student ethnicity differ teachers are less likely to discipline students who engage in bullying behavior (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016). In this case, teachers were also more likely to involve other students in response to the bullying behavior (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016). Female teachers have been found less likely, as compared to male teachers, to engage other adults in intervening in school bullying (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016).

In instances of sexualized bullying, or sexual harassment, male teachers are more likely to punish male perpetrators, while female teachers punished male perpetrators but reported talking “to female students whom they perceived as targets of male students’ sexually harassing behaviors both about how to identify such behaviors and how the female
students’ own behaviors contributed to or could prevent the harassment,”
(Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009, p. 533). In this regard, female
teachers felt it was their duty to heighten “the girls’ awareness” and recommended girls
modify both appearance and sexual behaviors to minimize harassment (Anagnostopoulous,
Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009, p. 533). Female teachers also report counseling female
students they perceived to be in abusive dating relationships, while male staff also found it to
be their role to educate male students regarding actions which constitute sexual harassment
(Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009).

Coping. A teacher’s evaluation and response to an incident of school bullying is
influenced by the teacher’s personal beliefs, attitudes, and experiences (Yoon, Sulkowski, &
Bauman, 2016). The manner in which pre-service teachers cope with stress has also been
found to impact intervention in school bullying. Specifically, pre-service teachers are less
likely to think social bullying among boys requires teacher intervention when they utilize
denial and self-blame to cope with stress (Kahn, Jones, & Wieland, 2012).

Beliefs. Teachers’ beliefs that bullying is normative are less likely to intervene and
stop incidents of bullying behavior (Hektner & Swenson, 2012). These staff members are
more likely to think their intervention in bullying makes matters worse and find aggressive
student responses to threat to be acceptable (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brien, 2007).
Teachers also hold beliefs about how targeted children should respond; specifically, that
targeted children should assert themselves. This belief was linked to teachers encouraging
and teaching targeted students to stand up for themselves, and decreased peer empathy and
peer intervention on behalf of the victim (Hektner & Swenson, 2012). Teachers who favor
targeted students asserting themselves also believe that “parents can help teach their children
more assertive ways to respond to aggressive peers,” (Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008, p. 448).

Grumm and Hein’s (2012) study of German teachers found that beliefs about aggressive behavior are a factor in teacher response to bullying. Specifically, teachers who view aggression negatively are more likely to intervene actively in school bullying (Grumm & Hein, 2012). Furthermore, teachers who believed that aggressive behaviors cannot be changed were more likely to blame the students involved (the target or the perpetrator) and are less likely to intervene (Grumm & Hein, 2012).

**Empathy.** Empathy is a significant predictor of teachers’ attitudes towards bullying as well as their perceptions of the seriousness of bullying incidents (Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Yoon, 2004; Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005). Teachers are more likely to have empathy for the targets of overt bullying behaviors, compared to the targets of covert bullying behaviors (Byers, Caltabiano, & Caltabiano, 2011). Given this, it is important to understand how teachers develop empathy for students targeted by bullying. While Craig, Henderson, and Murphy (2000) suggest that teacher training focus on building empathy, Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O’Brennan (2007) found that personal experience with bullying predicted teacher attitudes towards bullying as well as intervention in incidents of bullying. Specifically, experience being bullied at school, by other teachers, parents of students, or students, was negatively associated with a teacher’s ability to intervene in bullying behavior (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O’Brennan, 2007).

**Personal experience with bullying.** Having been the target of school bullying as a child impacts a teacher’s response to incidents of school bullying. Yoon, Sulkowski, and Bauman (2016) found that teachers who experienced bullying in childhood were more likely
to both discipline students perpetrating bullying and seek the assistance of other adults in bullying interventions. However, these same teachers were less likely to support students targeted by bullying behavior. This can be compared to teachers who report being bystanders to bullying behavior as children, who were more likely to involve other adults and support targets of bullying behavior (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016).

**Teacher efficacy.** Bullying prevention strategies must focus on the school, classroom and individual level (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Classroom level best practices must support the teacher and other adults in the school building to intervene in bullying behavior, which Bell, Raczynski, and Horne (2010) identify as “teacher efficacy.” Teachers who possess effective strategies to reduce school bullying were less likely to think bullying was a problem at their school, were more likely to intervene, and less likely to think their intervention made matters worse (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). However, self-efficacy may not increase response to all types of bullying. Byers, Caltabiano, and Caltabiano (2011) found that self-efficacy only increased intervention in overt bullying (Byers, Caltabiano, & Caltabiano, 2011). Furthermore, being the target of bullying made teachers less likely to think they could effectively address bullying behavior (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007).

Duong and Bradshaw (2013) utilize Witte’s (1992) Extended Parallel Process Model to determine how teacher efficacy impacts intervention in bullying. The model first suggests that individuals appraise threat, through analysis of susceptibility and severity, and if a threat exists they then appraise the efficacy of their planned response (Witte, 1992). The appraisal of efficacy includes both response efficacy (the likelihood that the recommended action will work) and self-efficacy (the ability of an individual to implement the recommended action
Findings indicate that more experienced teachers were likely to consider both threat (how much bullying is a problem at their school) and efficacy (response and self-efficacy) when intervening in a bullying incident; however, less experienced teachers were more likely to act based on perceived efficacy alone (Duong & Bradshaw, 2013). Finally, Benítez, García-Berbén, and Fernández-Cabezas (2009) found the self-efficacy of pre-service teachers increased, along with ability to identify and intervene in bullying, when information about the phenomenon of bullying was embedded in university curriculum.

Teacher efficacy in responding to bullying also impacts student behavior. Veenstra et al. (2014) found that teacher efficacy was correlated both with the anti-bullying attitudes of students and decreased reports of bullying. However, as teachers were perceived to exert more effort to stop bullying, student anti-bullying attitudes decreased. Overall, bullying decreased when students perceived teachers to have a high efficacy in addressing bullying and to do so with little effort (Veenstra, Lindenberg, Huitsing, Sainio, & Salmivalli, 2014). Yet, self-efficacy may only be an important factor when it is specific to bullying behavior. Yoon, Sulkowski, and Bauman (2016) found that more general self-efficacy in “behavior management” was not a factor that effected a teacher’s response to school bullying.

Finally, teacher efficacy may also be influenced by principal support. Skinner, Babinski, and Gifford (2013) found that teachers who perceived their principal as supportive reported higher levels of self-efficacy for working with students who perpetrate bullying behavior. Teachers also had higher expectations for these students.

Teaching experience. Research indicates that pre-service teachers are not adequately prepared to address school bullying behaviors. This may be in part because pre-service
teacher programs do not address bullying in the curriculum (Benítez, García-Berbén, & Fernández-Cabezas, 2009). New teachers face a number of challenges and may become overwhelmed when they don’t receive training to address issues such as bullying and specifically relational aggression (Kahn, Jones, & Wieland, 2012). As previously indicated, Doung and Bradshaw (2013) found that experienced teachers were better able to understand the threat of bullying. However, they also found experienced teachers’ assessment of bullying behavior to be more complex in that it accounted for threat and self-efficacy (Duong & Bradshaw, 2013). However, Bauman and Del Rio (2006) find that pre-service teachers are more likely to find bullying a problem when compared to experienced teachers, and suggest that “experienced teachers become desensitized to bullying to compensate for their lack of skills to respond to bullying” (p. 226).

**Bystander Intervention**

In bullying incidents, the role of the bystander is usually represented by a child – as a bystander the child would seek to intervene by addressing the bully, getting the target away from the bully, or getting a teacher, who it is assumed will then intervene (Olweus, 2003). However, whether the teacher witnesses the bullying or the student engages a teacher to intervene in bullying, the teacher is assessing the situation in an effort to respond appropriately. While the stakes may be higher for teachers, due to ethical obligations, teachers may engage in the same decision making process as any bystander approaching an urgent, emergent, or criminal situation.

**Stages of Intervention.** Latane and Darley (1970) define five stages of bystander intervention. Ultimately, throughout the five stages, the bystander is making a “series of decision,” which lead the bystander to either take action or not (p. 31). The first stage
requires that the bystander notice the event. This “external event has to break into his thinking and intrude itself on his conscious mind” and as a result the bystander will “pay attention” (Latane & Darley, 1970, p. 31). Next the bystander must “interpret” the event “as an emergency” (Latane & Darley, 1970, p. 31). In determining whether or not an event is an emergency, the bystander may consider if the event “can be explained in more normal ways” (Latane & Darley, 1970, p. 31). Next, the bystander must determine that it is their “responsibility to act;” which requires assessing the situation to determine whether “help is on the way” or whether “someone else might be better qualified to help” (Latane & Darley, 1970, p. 32). Once the bystander determines that they should in fact act, they then must determine the “form of assistance”; specifically, whether action should be direct, such as “rushing to help the victim” or indirect, or “detour” such as “calling a doctor or the police” (Latane & Darley, 1970, pp. 32, 35). Finally, the bystander must “implement” the course of action determined (Latane & Darley, 1970, p. 32). It is at this point “the person may finally begin to act in the situation” (Latane & Darley, 1970, p. 32).

Each decision that the bystander must make, in determining whether to act, is based on subjective interpretation of the event and the surroundings. Latane and Darley (1970) state that factors such as the amount of stimuli in the environment, the action of other bystanders, the history of the bystander, the mood of the bystander, whether the victim is “deserving” of help, characteristics of the victim, relationship between the victim and bystander, and difficulty of intervention influence action. However, Levine (1999) found that the perceptions of social relationships within the emergency situation is a key influence on bystander intervention; and was more important than the number of other bystanders present.
When considering the application of this series of stages to teachers in instances of bullying, the event is slightly altered. While the teacher must first notice the event, they would need to next identify it as bullying behavior rather than an emergency. While some bullying behaviors may be considered emergencies, some acts of bullying are covert, may be hard to detect, and may not include behaviors typical in an emergency. Teachers must therefore rely on their ability to define and recognize bullying behavior. The literature indicates that incidents of relational bullying are covert and may not be identified by teachers, or may be considered less serious than physical bullying and may not warrant teacher intervention (Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009; Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Yoon & Kerber, 2003; Hazler, Miller, Carney, & Green, 2001; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000).

Teachers are less likely, compared to a typical bystander, to grapple with whether or not they have a responsibility to act. State regulations, teacher codes of ethics, and school policy may obligate or require teachers to intervene in instances of bullying. Therefore, unlike the bystander described by Latane and Darley (1970), teachers are required and held responsible to act in instances of school bullying. However, this legal and ethical obligation to act rests on the teachers’ ability to effectively identify bullying behavior. Research indicates that teachers are not confident in their ability to identify bullying behavior and suggests that structural factors, such as school policy and administrator support, may complicate a teacher’s decision to act (Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009; Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Boulton, 1997; Nicolaides, Toda, & Smith, 2002; Whitted & Dupper, 2005; Wienke Totura, Green, Karver, & Gesten, 2009; Yoon and Gilchrest, 2003 (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004)).
Once teachers identify a situation as bullying, they must then decide on the mode of intervention. Latane and Darley (1970) describe interventions as “direct” or “detour” (p. 35). For a teacher, a direct intervention would be intervening in the incident and addressing the student perpetrating the bullying behavior. A detour intervention may be addressing the witnessed behavior with the teacher of the perpetrator or the school principal. Research indicates that teachers assess the seriousness of a bullying incident when determining if they should intervene; and view physical acts of bullying to be more serious than verbal or relational bullying (Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009; Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Hazler, Miller, Carney, & Green, 2001; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). Therefore, in acts of physical bullying, teachers may choose “direct” interventions, whereas in instances of relational aggression they may be more likely to implement a “detour” intervention, such as suggesting a target avoid the student who is perpetrating the bullying.

According to Latane and Darley (1970) the skill of the bystander is a critical factor in an intervention. Duong and Bradshaw’s (2013) assessment on teacher efficacy, both response efficacy and self-efficacy, align with Latane and Darley’s theory. Response efficacy measures the teacher’s access to effective intervention strategies, similar to the bystander’s knowing what to do or how to intervene. However, teacher self-efficacy indicates that they can implement the strategies at hand, similar to the bystander’s ability to carry out the planned intervention. Overall, after identification, teacher efficacy is crucial to effective intervention in bullying behaviors. Given this, it is especially concerning that teachers are “not confident” in their ability to resolve bullying (Boulton, 1997).
Factors that support intervention. There are a number of factors or circumstances that may promote bystander provision of assistance to a victim in the case of an emergency or crime. These factors may also influence a teacher’s identification and intervention in an instance of bullying. The first factor is the outcome of cost-benefit analysis. According to Banyard, Plante, and Moynihan (2004), bystanders are most likely to intervene if personal cost of the intervention is low. Chabot, et al. (2009) further explain, “Individuals are more likely to engage in an event that has a positive outcome (i.e., a benefit), especially if there is an associated cost such as time, money, or potential loss of status… the expense of time or effort (i.e., cost) must generally not exceed the perceived outcomes.” (p. 1698). A factor of such cost/benefit analysis may be the potential harm to the victim; the more serious the threat of harm, the more likely a bystander is to intervene (Nicksa, 2014). However, costs and benefits are not always tangible, like legal repercussions or physical danger, but include psychological costs such as guilt (Wenik, 1985). In the case of empathic arousal, such psychological costs may lead the bystander to better recognize an emergency situation and help more quickly (Fischer, Greitemeyer, Pollozek, and Frey, 2006). This “cost-reward model” leads bystanders to accept more potential personal costs, due to increases costs to the victim associated with not helping (Fischer, Greitemeyer, Pollozek, and Frey, 2005, p. 276).

Some bystanders may engage in helping because they personally believe it is the “moral” or “right” thing to do. Time, Payne, and Gainey (2010), suggest that differences in morals may be the only thing separating one’s willingness to help (when not obligated) and another looking away. Findings of their survey indicate 99% of participants stated that they felt that they would not need to be legally required to help (Time, Payne, & Gainey, 2010). Overall, because of individual morals, 96% of survey participants perceived that they would
be willing to help another in case of an emergency. Chabot et al. (2009) found that bystanders were willing to intervene when individual danger, or cost, was high, and stated such results “offer support for Baston’s (1995) theory of altruism; people will help others despite risk and harm” (p. 1706).

Social norms also have an impact on a bystander’s willingness to get involved. Bullying prevention programs frequently try to norm the behavior of intervention, as is the case of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program which establishes school-wide rules specific to seeking the assistance of an adult and helping the target of bullying behavior (Olweus, et al., 2007). However, social norms may not always suggest that the bystander intervene. According to Wenick (1985), “the underreporting of crime may be due in part to a lack of perceived social pressure” to report (p. 1789). However, the social norms specific to gender and perceived relationships may over-ride social norms which promote intervention (Tice & Baumeister, 1985; Levine, 1999; Schwartz & Clausen, 1970).

Finally, in cases of intervention in domestic violence, Chabot et al. (2009) found that bystander experience with childhood abuse was a predictor of participant intervention. While this study did not find experience specific to domestic violence to be a predictor; they suggested that experience with any type of abuse may be a factor. Tice and Baumeister (1985) suggest that such intervention may be based on a feeling of “mutuality or kinship with the victim, understanding the victim’s suffering, and desiring to aid others,” (p.421).

Research indicates that teacher empathy and relationships with students may influence intervention in bullying behavior (Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005; Yoon, 2004). Again, due to ethical codes, it is presumed that all teachers would view intervention in acts of peer abuse, such as bullying, as “the right
thing do to.” Little is known regarding any cost benefit analysis calculated by teachers in determining whether to intervene. However, factors such as school policy, administrator support, and parent involvement may be included in a cost benefit analysis of sorts. For example, if the teacher is aware that referring a student to the office may suggest a lack of classroom management skills to the school Principal, there may be high cost in making such a referral. Likewise, there may be low cost to failing to intervene if the school policy is vague in regard to required action. Finally, research indicates that school culture, or cultural norms around bullying behavior, may influence teachers (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Hektner & Swenson, 2012). Therefore, positive norms which require students and teachers to be vigilant in identifying and intervening in bullying may support teacher intervention, whereas acceptance of bullying behavior as part of growing up may deter it.

**Factors that prevent helping.** Research indicates that when bystanders do not recognize the event as an emergency, they do not respond (Chabot, Tracy, Manning, & Poisson, 2009). Furthermore, bystanders may not recognize a situation as an emergency if the behavior is generally tolerated (Chabot, Tracy, Manning, & Poisson, 2009). Social norms specific to gender may also influence a bystander. Tice and Baumeister (1985) found “highly masculine subjects were less likely to take action to help the victim than were other subjects,” (p. 420). This failure to act was attributed to fear of embarrassment, fear of the appearance of a loss of poise, or obedience to authority (Tice & Baumeister, 1985). However, Schwartz and Clausen (1970) found that men are more likely to intervene in the presence of women and that women were more likely to seek help for the victim than to provide direct assistance.
Bystanders must also have the information and skills necessary to intervene. “Even if a witness determines that an event is a serious accident or crime, indecision over what type of intervention is necessary may result in a complete failure to act,” (Wenik, 1985, p. 1790). Depending on the situation, bystanders may also fear becoming a victim as a result of intervention (Time, Payne & Gainey, 2010; Shibata, Mori, Okamura, & Soyama, 2008; McIntyre, 1994).

**Other Bystanders.** Bystanders are also impacted by the presence of others. The presence of other bystanders may lead the bystander to assume others will or have helped. Bystanders may also be influenced by “evaluation apprehension” or a fear that others may evaluate the bystander’s action in a negative way (Fischer, Greitemeyer, Pollozek, & Frey, 2006). Schwartz and Gottlieb (1980) suggest that the apprehension is the result of bystanders who “seek to optimize these evaluations” (p. 418). “Audience inhibition” may also occur where a bystander may want “to engage in helping behavior” but feels “restrained from doing so because of the presence of others who are not helping” (van den Bos, Muller, & van Bussel, 2009, p. 873). Therefore, anonymity may be an important factor in bystander intervention. Schartz and Gottlieb (1980) found bystanders were not influenced by whether or not they were anonymous to the victim, but bystander helping was inhibited if the bystander’s anonymity was compromised by another bystander or witness. When alone the bystander felt “it was their responsibility to act because ‘no one else knew of the emergency’,” (Schwartz & Gottlieb, 1980, p. 427). However, in the presence of another, the bystander may fail to act altogether. When a number of other bystanders are present in an emergency situation, a bystander may “assume that a victim is receiving help or that help is already on the way” (Garcia, Weaver, Moskowitz, & Darley, 2002, p. 844). A bystander’s
“speed of helping” can also be influenced by “the cues regarding others’ expectation in the emergency situation,” (Schwartz & Gottlieb, 1980, p. 427). Audience inhibition may also be attributed to “pluralistic ignorance;” which causes the bystander to second-guess their perception of an emergency because they believe the others do not identify the events in the same way (Prentice & Miller, 1996). In some instances, the bystander may fail to act in the presence of others due to a diffusion of responsibility – or the sharing of the responsibility to act with others, instead of feeling it belonged to the bystander along (Schwartz & Gottlieb, 1980). The bystander may also fail to act because they don’t want to be mistaken for the perpetrator of the emergency, or the cause of the victim’s pain (Cacioppo, Petty, & Losch, 1986, as cited in Garcia, Weaver, Moskowitz, & Darley, 2002).

In should be noted that in some instances the presence of others may actually increase a bystander’s helping of a victim. Garcia, Weaver, Darley, and Spence (2009) found that fear of public scrutiny actually encouraged the bystander to assist. Such scrutiny may occur if the bystander is violating a social norm to provide assistance, and action on the part of the bystander is determined according to both their “perception of public scrutiny as well as by the actual level of public scrutiny,” (Garcia, Weaver, Darley, & Spence, 2009, p. 222).

Levine (1999) suggests that the way in which bystanders “perceive” the incident may be more important that the number of other bystanders present; specifically, the way in which the bystander perceives the relationship between the perpetrator and target. Bystander intervention is then guided by social standards for appropriate behavior or intervention, given this perceived relationship. For example, 38 bystanders, who later became witnesses in a murder trial, failed to intervene when they saw a two and a half year old boy with two older boys walking around their town. Overwhelmingly, these witnesses indicated that they
perceived the boys to be brothers, and that it was not their place to intervene. A few
witnesses also indicated that one of the older boys “inoculated against” their intervention by
engaging the bystander in a conversation that presented the group as brothers, even though
they were not (Levine, 1999, p. 1147).

It has been shown that, like the bystander, teacher skills (efficacy) and gender
influence teacher intervention in instances of school bullying (Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan,
Pereira, & Lichty, 2009; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Bell, Raczynski, & Horne, 2010; Benítez,
García-Berbén, & Fernández-Cabezás, 2009; Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O’Brennan, 2007; Duong
& Bradshaw, 2013; Whitted & Dupper, 2005). However, little has been done to analyze the
influence of “other bystanders” or “other teachers” on a teacher’s intervention in bullying.
While the actions of others may contribute to shared social norms for behavior – including
intervention – it is unknown whether the presence of other teachers may cause audience
inhibition, pluralistic ignorance, and diffusion of responsibility or public scrutiny. Levine’s
suggestion that social categories influence bystanders is consistent with research which
indicates that teachers fail to intervene in sexual harassment or abuse in a dating relationship
(Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009). However, the degree to which
student perpetrating bullying behaviors may “inoculate against intervention” is also
unknown.

Perception of the Victim. Bystanders may also fail to intervene due to their
perception of the victim. Latane and Darley (1970) state that bystanders use a number of
variables to determine whether the victim “‘deserves help’” (p. 33). This includes assessing
responsibility for the situation and whether or not they feel that the victim “asked for” their
misfortune (Latane & Darley, 1970, p. 34). Furthermore, some bystanders may feel that
ultimately the world is just; therefore, whatever happens to people is deserved (Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1970). These notions are further complicated by individual prejudice. Rayburn, Mendoza, and Davison (2003) found that “prejudice was associated with more blame for all crime victims (both hate crime and non-hate crime) and less blame for all perpetrators,” (p. 1069). When accounting for race, prejudiced minority participants judged hate crime victims as “less culpable” and “non-hate crime victims as more blameworthy” while non-minority participants judged hate crime victims as “more culpable” and non-hate crime victims as “less blameworthy,” (Rayburn, Mendoza, & Davison, 2003, p. 1069).

This is consistent with the bullying literature which states that teachers are influenced by student characteristics such as gender or social skills. Teachers may ultimately be less likely to intervene in instances of bullying, if they – like Latane and Darley (1970) bystander – feel like the target of the bullying behavior “asked for it” (p. 34) (Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005).

**Conclusions**

School bullying is a complex phenomenon, which negatively affects all students and conditions for learning. Teachers and school officials are legally and ethically required to intervene in incidents of school bullying, to ensure a safe learning environment. Best practices include teacher training, but research indicates that teacher identification of bullying behavior is influenced by social norms and seriousness, while intervention is influenced by response and self-efficacy. Given that teachers are likely not participants or targets in student school bullying, they may be considered bystanders; or, bystanders which are required to act. The stages of bystander intervention, identified by Latane and Delany’s (1970), align with much of the literature on teacher identification and intervention in school
bullying. However, such alignment also identifies gaps in the literature. Specifically, it is unknown to what degree teachers calculate cost-benefit analysis when determining intervention; and more importantly, what systemic factors may be associated with such a calculation. It is also unknown to what degree the presence of other adults, including the principal and other teachers, influence a teacher’s intervention – or lack of intervention – in school bullying. While student characteristics which influence intervention have been explored, it remains to be understood if students inoculate against intervention or if teachers’ perception that students are responsible for their own victimization is generalizable. Finally, given that identification of bullying and teacher efficacy are key to successful intervention, the degree to which policy, training, and social norms influence these actions have just begun to be explored.

Implications

The existing literature clearly demonstrates the negative consequences experienced by students involved with school bullying. However, students do not experience school bullying in a vacuum. Rather teachers can greatly impact student experience. But, “few studies” exist that assess teacher beliefs about school bullying, willingness to intervene, and method of intervention (Duong & Bradshaw, 2013, p. 422; Holt, Keyes, & Koenig, 2011; Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008, p. 433).

Use of Latane and Darley’s (1970) framework for bystander intervention may inform understanding of the role of teachers in school bullying. Alignment of the model with the existing literature on school bullying identifies areas for further research; specifically aspects of efficacy and impact of other bystanders, such as administrators and other teachers, on a teacher’s response to school bullying. While Skinner, Babinski, and Gifford (2014) found
that support from the school principal increased a teacher’s self-efficacy in response to bullying behavior, the authors state that future research must define the elements of principal support found to improve self-efficacy, as well as how principal support and teacher efficacy impact school wide bullying prevention programs.

Further study is also needed specific to how teacher experience with, and intervention in, school bullying varies according to student grade level. Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O’Brennan (2007) found that middle school teachers witnessed and responded to bullying differently than their peers at elementary and high schools, which “suggest that middle school is a particularly challenging time for students and the staff who work with them,” (p. 379). The authors recommend further research specific to developmental differences which may account for such difference, as well as “specialized training” for middle school staff that help them to meet the “unique needs” of middle school students (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O’Brennan, 2007, p. 379).
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Limited research exists regarding the knowledge, skills, and efficacy of teachers in responding to school bullying. No known research has analyzed the influence of “other bystanders,” namely administrators and other teachers, on teacher intervention in incidents of school bullying. Furthermore, existing research has only just begun to examine how a teacher’s definition and recognition of bullying behavior guides them in direct intervention. Each of these variables (recognition, skills, efficacy, and other bystanders) has been identified by Latane and Darley (1970) as important factors in determining the action of a bystander. The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of these factors teachers – bystanders who are ethically and legally obligated to respond - in incidents of school bullying. Specifically, this study examines the effect of a teacher’s ability to identify bullying, perception of administrators’ support, and response to bullying and perception of other teachers’ direct intervention in bullying on his/her ability to directly intervene in incidents of school bullying. This chapter includes the research questions and a description of the research methodology. The latter includes the sampling procedure and population, instrumentation, and procedures for data collection and analysis.

**Research Design**

This exploratory study was proposed with a quasi-experimental design, in which groups of teachers from multiple buildings in two school districts would be surveyed and results compared and analyzed with quantitative methods. This design included utilizing cluster analysis, to analyze data and create a typology of teachers according to the factors which influence their response to school bullying.
The design of this study was adjusted after data collection to account for response rates; specifically the number of participants from each district and the number of records from the South District which did not identify a school building. While the study was proposed to include 481 teachers employed at ten middle school buildings in one Midwestern school district, the study population included 535 middle school teachers employed in two Midwestern school districts. In the adjusted design, methods remained quantitative, but utilized a general linear model rather than cluster analysis. Chi-square tests and correlation were also utilized to understand how variables were related.

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How consistently are teachers able to identify bullying behavior?

2. How consistently do teachers feel supported by administrators to directly intervene in bullying?

3. How consistently do teachers feel their peers directly intervene in school bullying?

4. How is teacher self-efficacy in response to bullying incidents related to peer response and administrator support?

5. Is there a significant relationship between a teacher’s ability to correctly identify bullying behavior and a teacher’s likelihood to directly intervene?

6. Is there a significant relationship between a teacher’s likelihood to directly intervene in incidents of school bullying and the teacher’s perception of other bystanders, as measured by administrator support and peer response?
Data regarding each of these factors were collected through the survey instrument created. Participants gave consent to participate in this research upon beginning the survey. The survey instrument collected data regarding teacher accuracy in identify bullying behavior, likely response to scenarios of bullying behavior (direct or detour), self-efficacy, perception of administrator support and perception of the response of other teachers in their building to school bullying. Additionally, the survey included items which collected demographic data also utilized in analysis. These variables include gender, age, years of teaching experience, years of experience in their current middle school building, participation in training regarding school bullying, and personal experience with bullying behavior. Majority of variables were collected using closed-end scaled questions which were dichotomous (yes-no), nominal, or ordinal (5 point Likert scale). Once data were gathered, variables were coded and new variables were calculated. Calculated variables included the creation of an “accuracy rate” which reported the proportion of scenarios in which the participant correctly identified student behavior as bullying or not. The survey included three scenarios of bullying behavior, and a variable was also calculated and named “direct intervention” which determined the number of these bullying scenarios in which the teacher would respond with direct intervention (0, 1, 2, or 3). Finally, administrator support and peer response variables were calculated as aggregates of survey items which loaded into factors resulting from exploratory factor analysis.

Research questions focused on understanding the factors which influence a teacher’s direct intervention in three scenarios of school bullying and a number of statistical methods were utilized to analyze results. Descriptive statistics were utilized to compare results according to demographic variables, such as school district, years of teaching experience,
participation in training regarding bullying, and calculated variables, such as rate of accuracy in identifying bullying behavior. A standard grading scale was applied to calculated variables, including accuracy rates, peer response and administrator support, to assess teacher and school district “grades” in these areas. The relationship between each of the variables of analysis in the study was examined with correlation. These variables included accuracy rates, years teaching experience, participation in training(s) related to school bullying, intended direct intervention in bullying scenarios, perceptions of administrators support, perceptions of other teachers’ response to bullying, and measures of teacher efficacy in bullying prevention and intervention.

Consistency of teacher ability to identify bullying was analyzed first through descriptive statistics, which utilized the calculated accuracy rate. The grading scale was then applied to assess grades for teachers. Measures of central tendency were calculated to compare results. Chi-square analysis was utilized to understand the relationship between accuracy rate and other demographic variables including years of teaching experience and participation in training. Effect sizes were also measured.

Descriptive statistics were then utilized to determine how the calculated field of “direct interventions” varied according to demographic variables specific to experience and training. Chi-square analysis further explored the relationship between direct interventions, accuracy in identifying bullying behavior, administrator support scores and peer response score.

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to understand how six survey items specific to administrator support were related, as well as how three survey items specific to the intervention of other teachers, or peers, were related. Such analysis identified factors and
Cronbach’s alpha was calculated to test the reliability of these factors. Survey items were then reduced to single variables created for each of these factors, which were named administrator support and peer support. Chi-square analysis was utilized to understand the relationship between these factors and self-efficacy and effect sizes were calculated. Finally, a general linear model were utilized to test the effect of these factors, as well as school building, on a teacher’s direct intervention in instances of bullying.

**Population and Sample**

This study proposed to sample 481 middle school teachers, employed in 10 buildings located in one Midwestern school district. The study, however, was not conducted as proposed. Rather, the survey was administered to a population of middle school teachers located in two Midwest school districts. These districts employ 535 teachers in 8 school buildings, where they teach students in grades 6-8. This population includes certified teachers, both full and part time.

The entire population of middle school teachers in these districts was invited to participate in the survey. A tailored design model was utilized in an effort to increase participation (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). This included establishing trust through partnership with the school district. In the North School District, district staff notified teaching staff that they would receive an email inviting them to participate in the study. In the South School District, district officials sent out a letter to teachers which included a link to the on-line survey. The invitation letters were each designed to demonstrate a high value of teacher perspective to increase benefits of participation, while participation costs were decreased through survey design to ensure the tool was engaging and easy to complete (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). While a tailored approach seeks to address survey
error, the potential for nonresponse error exists given that a population level survey was conducted. Nonresponse error may result if the teachers who chose not to participate in the survey are different, according to variables meaningful to this research (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009).

**Instrumentation**

An on-line survey instrument was created for use in this study. On-line surveys allow data to be collected from multiple participants in a way that is cost efficient, accessible, and which allows for easy data access and export for analysis (Saxon, Garratt, Gilroy, & Cairns, 2003). On-line surveys are used widely across studies of teachers and school bullying in the extant literature. While some of these studies administer surveys to students and teachers (i.e., Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O’Brennan, 2007), the population of interest in this study is middle school teachers. Multiple studies administered to teachers utilize written vignettes to illustrate an incident(s) of school bullying (Bauman, Rigby, & Hoppa, 2008; Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Kahn, Jones & Wieland, 2012; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). However, the use of written scenarios may be “limited because written vignettes generally are devoid of important characteristics that influence how teachers may respond,” (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016, p. 96). Video scenarios, however, are more similar to a teacher’s actual experience seeing bullying in school and may include more factors which influence teacher response (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016).

This survey instrument differs from the majority of existing studies in that it utilizes video scenarios. Currently, the use of video scenarios in surveys of teachers regarding school bullying in the extant literature is limited to one study (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016). Yoon, Sulkowski, and Bauman (2016) utilized three video scenarios which each depicted a
different type of bullying – physical, verbal, and relational. These video scenarios were prefaced with the definition of bullying behavior and were followed by open and scaled questions, which collected data on teachers’ response to the bullying, and scaled questions (Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016).

Video scenarios were utilized differently in this study. This survey instrument utilized five video scenarios which feature behavior that is bullying and behavior that is not bullying. Similar to the Yoon, Sulkowski, and Bauman (2016) study, the survey utilized videos which depicted physical, verbal and relational bullying. However, unlike the study, two additional scenarios, which did not depict bullying, were included. The definition of bullying behavior was not provided, rather, teachers were asked to assess the behavior in the scenarios based on their own judgement and understanding of school bullying.

It was also hoped that video scenarios would engage teachers and minimize time necessary to complete the survey. The five videos of student behavior were edited from the film “Bullying or Not?” (Virginia Youth Violence Project, 2009). These scenarios were utilized with permission of the Virginia Youth Violence project (See Appendix A). Scenarios from this film were selected because it is one of the few known videos which highlights the differences between bullying and other physical, verbal, and social interactions among school-aged peers. It is important to note that while the scenarios which are not considered bullying include conflict or teasing, they do not depict bullying because the behavior does not meet the research-based definition of bullying behavior (see page 15). The five scenarios selected include three examples of bullying behavior, and two examples of behavior that is not bullying. Scenarios included physical, verbal and social/relational bullying, which accounts for Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, and Wieners’ (2005) finding that teachers consider
specific modes to be more severe and are therefore more likely to intervene. The scenarios utilized in the survey are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Survey Instrument Video Scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Behavior Classification</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not Bullying</td>
<td>Student A approaches a table of other students and Student B tells her that the open seat is taken and she cannot join the group. Student A leaves; other students at the table suggest Student B needs to apologize to Student A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Physical Bullying</td>
<td>Student A is playing basketball in a gymnasium. Student B approaches Student A, takes the basketball and tells him to get lost. Student A says he was there first, Student B responds with, “Too bad, shrimp, I want to play now.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Verbal Bullying</td>
<td>A group of students is standing in a hallway. Student A approaches the group and is made fun of for being the “stupid new kid,” talking “funny” and is told to “go back where you came from.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Social Bullying</td>
<td>Student A approaches a table of other students and Student B tells her that the open seat is taken and she cannot join the group. Student A leaves; other students roll their eyes, describe Student A as a “such a loser” and make plans to “make sure no one talks to her.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Not Bullying</td>
<td>A group of students is standing in a hallway. Student A tells Student B that her soccer team “stunk this weekend, we totally beat you.” Student B responds that the game was “really close and next time we will beat you,” and the two continue to banter.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scaled survey items were also included specific to teacher efficacy, administrator support and response, peer response to incidents of bullying, and personal experience with bullying, both as a child and currently as a teacher. Survey items were modeled after those frequently utilized in teacher surveys. This includes use of staff survey items on the John Hopkins Bullying Prevention Survey (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O’Brennan, 2007), but with response options expanded from dichotomous (y/n) to scaled response. Such expansion allowed for increased variability. Finally, the survey included demographic items specific to
experience, training, age, gender, and race. See Appendix B for the complete survey instrument.

This study serves as a pilot for the survey instrument utilized to collect data. As a result, measures were taken before survey administration to establish a valid and reliable survey instrument. Establishing face and content validity help to ensure that the new survey instrument is “measuring what it is supposed to,” (Kumar, 2005, p. 154). Face and content validity were established before and during the pilot of the survey. Prior to the pilot, a group of content experts were asked to review the survey instrument and make recommendations. These experts helped to ensure that survey items were designed appropriately to study variables (face validity) and is balanced, but adequately measures the desired aspects of school bullying outlined in this project (content validity) (Kumar, 2005). While both face and content validity are subjective, use of experts and a pilot will improve the accuracy of the instrument (Kumar, 2005). Validity of survey items was also tested with principal component analysis and reliability was then tested through calculation of Cronbach’s alpha. Overall, the survey instrument created for this study aligns with current research and practice for use of on-line administration of surveys to teachers about school bullying. It is unique in that it assesses teacher ability to identify bullying behavior, and measures new constructs specific to administrator and peer support. While efforts were made to establish validity and reliability, this study includes only the second known survey instrument to utilize video scenarios to research bullying with teachers. As a result, more research is needed to understand the validity of utilizing video scenarios to assess teachers in this way.
Data Collection

Proposals to conduct research were submitted to both school districts. Initially, these proposals, which outlined the purpose, requirements and benefits of the research, were sent as inquiries to district staff members who worked in bullying prevention. These contacts then passed on proposals to appropriate district staff members; in both districts these staff members had job responsibilities tied to research and assessment within the district. School district permission to conduct research was obtained from both districts. Upon obtaining this permission from each district, the project research proposal was submitted to the Iowa State University Institutional Review Board. This proposal was approved on March 22, 2016 (See Appendix C).

Qualtrics was utilized to administer the survey. In the North School District, all school staff were invited to participate in the survey. Individual participant emails were obtained through the district website. The district’s staff member who served as a contact for this study helped to classify the job titles of building staff, which were associated with each name and email address on the website, to allow for the identification of teachers for the purpose of inclusion in this study. The district contact then sent an introduction email to all middle school staff members introducing the study. After this, individual email invitations were sent to individual participants through Qualtrics. These invitations addressed the participant by name, named the school district, and referenced the introduction sent by the district staff member (see Appendix D).

In the South School District, district officials preferred to contact teachers directly with the invitation to participate in the study. This communication and invitation was only extended to middle school teachers. A link to the on-line survey was imbedded in this
invitation. Because of the nature of this link, all responses were anonymous and could not be tied to individual email addresses. While the process for identifying and inviting survey participants was different in each school district, both resulted in providing access to the online survey to all middle school teachers within the district.

To complete the survey, participants needed access to the internet and access to YouTube, the website which hosted the video scenarios embedded in the survey. Due to the size of each video, it was not possible to embed the videos directly into the Qualtrics survey. The fact that videos were hosted on YouTube was not noticeable to participants (i.e., the videos appeared to be embedded directly into the survey and did not require participants to click a link, open a new browser window, or toggle back and forth between the video and survey). In the South School District, multiple participants experienced technical difficulties access the videos due to the district’s firewall, which blocked YouTube content. As a result, multiple versions of the on-line survey were created, with videos hosted on multiple platforms including Vimeo and Google. These versions were then tested at the district level and shared with staff; however, firewall issues persisted. Finally, the district lifted its block of YouTube content to for teachers to participate in the survey. However, it is highly likely that multiple failed attempts to participate deterred teachers from participating in the survey once such issues were resolved. Such errors were likely to increase costs associated with the survey, such as time and effort, and decreased trust between potential participants and this survey. According to social exchange survey methodology, participants must perceive that benefits exceed costs to participate in the survey (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). According to Dillman, Smyth and Christian (2009), “one of the most effective ways of decreasing costs is making it as easy as possible for participants to respond,” (p. 25). Sending
multiple links to the survey, many of which did not work due to the district’s firewall, did not make it easy for participants to respond. Furthermore, while the “sponsorship by legitimate authority” was obtained through partnership with the district, a factor which can increase trust (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009, p. 28), this trust likely deteriorated with each faulty survey link sent.

For teachers in the North School District, two reminder messages were sent over a two week period; one six days after the initial email and one five days after the first reminder. In the South School District, frequent communication specific to the different versions of the survey limited the number of actual reminders. Instead, these communications encouraged participants to try to new version of the survey. The final communication to potential participants notified them of the lift on the YouTube block and assured that technical difficulties had been resolved.

The survey instrument was designed to automatically code survey responses. A 5 point Likert scale was utilized throughout the survey, with 5 representing the most positive response and 1 representing the least positive. Dichotomous variables were assigned a 1 for yes and 2 for no. Demographic scales were assigned numeric values associated with the number of responses.

Once the data were exported from Qualtrics, a number of steps were taken to further code the data and prepare for analysis. Because the survey was administered to unique individuals in the North School District and to anonymous participants through multiple established links in the South School District, data were collected in three sets – one from North School District and two from South School District. Before these data sets were merged, records in which the participant did not give consent to participate (and therefore did
not complete the rest of the survey) were deleted. Then the results for the North School District were linked to the participant key to import unique participant identification numbers, positions, and school buildings (in which the participant worked) into the dataset. This allowed for inclusion of only teacher records in this study. Once the building and position were added to the dataset, the email address and any other identifying information were deleted to prevent identification of participants. A district field was added to both datasets and completed with either North School District or South School District. Given the South School district only invited teachers to participate in the study, a “position” field was created and completed for all participants. For the South School District datasets, a “survey number” field was created and filled with a 1 or 2, depending on the dataset. Then, the three datasets were merged and fields were reconciled.

Additional fields were then added to assess participant accuracy in identifying bullying behavior in the video scenarios. First, “correct” fields were added to each scenario and completed with a 1 if the participant correctly identified the behavior as bullying behavior or not. Then, fields for “accuracy score” and “items answered” were added to the dataset. The “accuracy score” field aggregated all “correct” scores for the scenarios and the “items answered” field counted the number of scenarios each participant completed. An “accuracy rate” field was then added, which calculated the number of completed scenarios in which each participant correctly identified student behavior as bullying or not. For participant records in which all survey items specific to the video scenarios were skipped, an accuracy score of -99 was entered to differentiate these participants from those with 0% accuracy.
Given that each of the video scenarios depicted one of three types of bullying (physical, verbal, and social/relational), accuracy scores were also calculated for each type of bullying. To do this, the following fields were added to the dataset: Accuracy Physical, Accuracy Verbal, and Accuracy Social. Accuracy rates were then calculated, which represented the proportion of correct responses for each type of bullying out of the total scenarios completed for each type of bullying.

Teacher identification of bullying, through the five scenarios, was then framed as an assessment of teacher knowledge and understanding of school bullying. Accuracy rates were then coded according to a typical school grading scale, with A representing an accuracy rate of 90-100% and F representing accuracy rates of 59% or below.

Each bullying scenario question was followed with a list of possible responses to the behavior illustrated in the video. Participants were allowed to choose multiple actions from a list of options (see Table 2). Latane and Darley’s (1970) theory of bystander intervention classifies bystander responses as either “direct” or “detour” (p. 35). These definitions were then utilized to classify survey options as direct interventions, which provided immediate assistance, or detour interventions, which involved reporting the incident to someone else who would provide assistance. It is important to note that in direct interventions, the bystander utilizes their own skills, knowledge, and strength in the situation (Latane & Darley, 1970). This contrasts with detour interventions in which the individual to which the incident is reported is considered to be more qualified, compared to the bystander, to respond (Latane & Darley, 1970). Given the options for response, a third category was created called “delayed direct.” This type of intervention was not immediate, but utilized the skills, knowledge, and strength of the participant to address the behavior. Additionally, a “no
action” category was created which captured responses in which the participant indicated they would not respond to the behavior. Participants selecting “other” defined their action. These definitions were then utilized to classify the behavior as a direct intervention, delayed direct intervention, detour intervention, or no action. Table 2 details the intervention options provided on the survey as well as the classification of each response.

Table 2. Classification and scoring of participant responses to incidents of school bullying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response to scenario behavior</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follow up with the student engaged in bullying at a later time</td>
<td>Delayed Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up with the student targeted by the bullying at a later time</td>
<td>Delayed Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignore it</td>
<td>No Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervene to stop the behavior</td>
<td>Direct Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>No Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send the students involved to the office</td>
<td>Direct Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to an administrator about the behavior at a later time</td>
<td>Detour Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to another teacher, counselor, school psychologist or other adult at school about the behavior at a later time</td>
<td>Detour Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait to see how other adults present respond</td>
<td>No Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please define)</td>
<td>Coded based on defined action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Classifications were then utilized to create a direct intervention score for each participant. This score only utilized participant responses to the three scenarios of bullying behavior, as analysis focused on direct intervention in incidents of bullying. This score was calculated by first creating a “direct intervention” field for each of the three scenarios that depicted bullying which summed the number of direct interventions the participant identified in response to the scenario. An overall direct intervention variable was then created, which
represented the total number of bullying scenarios in which the participant indicated that they would intervene directly (0, 1, 2, or 3).

Demographic data were coded upon export from Qualtrics. Data collected regarding number of years teaching were coded into a new dichotomous variable, with 1 representing 10 or fewer years teaching and 2 representing more than 10 years of teaching experience. Data collected specific to training were further analyzed and two new variables (total trainings and research-based trainings) were added. These variables utilized data that participants, who had received training specific to school bullying, provided specific to the type of training they had participated in, including who provided the training and whether it was associated with a research-based bullying prevention program. The number of training responses selected by participants was aggregated to count the total trainings, then responses specific to research-based trainings were counted to determine the number of research-based trainings.

Finally, the overall format of the dataset was adjusted to allow for use in SPSS. This included editing column headings so that titles were in row 1, and ensuring variable names for like survey items included the scenario number. Overall, the use of Qualtrics greatly supported data collection and coding. However, the study is limited by the technical issues experienced by teachers invited to participate in the survey at South School District. This issue introduced bias.

**Validity and Reliability**

Campbell and Stanley (1967) identify factors that compromise the internal and external validity of an experimental design, which include; history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistical regression, selection, experimental mortality, and selection-
maturation interaction. Given that this study employed a quasi-experimental design, this survey represents a single collection of data from participants. As a result, internal validity was not compromised by these factors.

Campbell and Stanley (1967) identify factors which jeopardize external validity, or the degree to which the results are representative or generalizable, to include; reactive effect of testing, interaction of selection biases, reactive effects of experimental arrangements, and multiple-treatment interference. The quasi-experimental design of this study limited generalizability; therefore, the results are only representative of middle school teachers in the two participating school districts. Given that a population level survey was conducted, external validity may be compromised by a biased selection of participants. For example, the participants who chose to complete the survey may do so because of a personal experience with bullying, or because they have received special training on the topic. Biased selection may not be limited to the participant level, but instead may be a factor at the district level. Both school districts were willing to participate in the study; all the factors which influenced district decisions to participate are unknown, but it is probable that both districts were interested in the topic or resulting data. This could be due to an existing commitment to bullying prevention; which would result in biased selection of participating districts. Therefore, survey results may only represent teachers in these districts with previous experience with school bullying. Furthermore, it is unknown how technology issues limited participation in the South School District. Therefore, limited access may have biased selection to only include teachers in specific buildings or teachers with other means of internet access.
Future studies may help to determine both the reliability and validity of the survey instrument. Such studies may also ensure unbiased selection of survey participants. Given participation and completion rates, it may also be beneficial to conduct focus groups to gather additional feedback specific to the survey items and video scenarios prior to replication.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed with SPSS Statistics 22. The proposed plan for data analysis in this study utilized cluster analysis; a method which allows for grouping individuals into similar groups, which differ from each other, to summarize results in a meaningful way (Everitt, Landau, Leese, & Stahl, 2011). However, given the number of variables in this study and the small sample obtained, cluster analysis was not used, as it would be difficult to understand if detected clusters were a result of the patterns in the data or the small sample. Furthermore, at least seven variables were explored in this study, and according to Siddiqui (2013) “every additional variable requires an over-proportional increase in observations to ensure valid results,” (p. 287). While there is no general guideline for the relationship between sample size and number of variables analyzed in cluster analysis, “a bigger sample size is needed to provide valid results,” (Siddiqui, 2013). Given this, data were analyzed by multiple methods; appropriate for the sample size, variables and research questions. This included descriptive statistics, correlation, factor analysis, chi-square and effect size calculations, and analysis of variance.

Chi-square tests of independence are utilized in studies of a single sample to determine whether categorical variables are associated or independent (Franke, Ho, & Christie, 2012). In this study chi-square tests were utilized to understand the associations
among variables of interest, including demographic and calculated variables. The use of a
general linear model, with ANOVA, is applicable to quasi-experimental research designs,
such as this, can “accommodate” continuous and categorical variables, which exist in this
study, and account for both model and error components (Rutherford, 2000, pp. 5-9). In this
study analysis of variance was utilized to determine the effect of peer response and
administrator support on direct intervention. However, Fan (2001) suggests that “statistical
significant testing relies too heavily on sample size, and the issue of practical significance is
often ignored” in research (p. 275). While significance testing allows sampling error to be
limited, the use of effect sizes may provide a more practical understanding or application of
results (Fan, 2001). Given the response rate in this study and resulting small sample and the
need for the practical application of results, effect size calculations were utilized along with
tests of statistical significance, to better understand variables and results.

To understand how consistently teachers are able to identify bullying behavior,
teacher classification of the behavior depicted in scenarios was analyzed using descriptive
statistics. Accuracy was assessed and scored for each scenario and aggregated to calculate an
accuracy rate, and results were reported according to the proportion of participants who
accurately identified bullying. Rates were then assessed according to a standardized grading
scale. Correlation was utilized to understand the relationship between accuracy rates and
other variables, including years of teaching experience, training, direct intervention,
perception of administrator support, perception of peer intervention in bullying, and
measures of self-efficacy. Chi-square tests and effect sizes were then utilized to determine
how the training and years of experience impact accuracy.
Next, data were analyzed to determine how teachers utilize direct intervention in incidents of school bullying. For the three scenarios which depicted bullying behavior, direct intervention behavior was analyzed and scored according to the number of bullying scenarios in which the participant identified direct intervention as a response. Descriptive statistics were utilized to determine how intervention varied according to the type of bullying behavior. Correlation was again utilized to determine how direct intervention was related to other variables. Chi-square analysis and effect size calculations were utilized to understand the relationship between direct intervention and other study variables, including accuracy rate, administrator support, and peer response to bullying.

A number of survey items were related to participants’ perception of administrator support. Exploratory factor analysis was utilized to ensure that all administrator-related survey items loaded into one factor. Cronbach’s alpha was then calculated and items were reduced to one variable by adding the scores of the survey items together. Administrator support scores were also assessed according to a standard grading scale; which identified grades based on mean score for each school district. Correlation was utilized to determine how perception of administrators was related to other variables. Chi-square tests and effect size calculations were then utilized to understand the relationship between administrator support and other study variables.

Three survey items were related to participants’ perceptions of other teachers’ responses to school bullying in their school. Exploratory factor analysis was utilized to ensure that these items loaded into one factor, and Cronbach’s alpha was calculated. One variable, peer response, was then created by adding together the scores of all survey items in the factor. The relationship between teachers’ perceptions of peer response to bullying and
other variables was explored through correlation. Peer response scores were also analyzed for each school district, and the grading scaled was utilized to assess grades for each district and overall. Chi-square tests and effect size calculations were utilized to understand the relationship between peer response and other variables.

Finally, the effect of bystanders on a teacher’s direct intervention in incidents of school bullying was analyzed. Analysis of variance was utilized to test the effect of the bystander variables of administrator support and peer response, as well as school building, on direct intervention. The resulting model further supports understanding of how factors which influence bystander response, as defined by Latane and Darley (1970), account for variation in direct intervention.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This study identifies factors which influence a teacher’s response to school bullying; specifically, factors which promote a teacher’s direct intervention in such incidents. The study is focused on the experience of middle school teachers, a population which reports greater experience with school bullying compared to teachers in elementary and high school settings. An on-line survey instrument was created and administered to collect data from middle school teachers in two school districts located in mid-sized Midwestern cities. This survey collected data specific to factors which align with Latane and Darley’s (1970) theory on bystander intervention. In this theory, before a bystander responds s/he must notice and appraise the incident as one which warrants intervention, decide to respond and how to respond, and be efficacious in implementing the selected response (Latane & Darley, 1970). This series of decisions is influenced by the presence and response of other bystanders (Latane & Darley, 1970). In this study, these factors were analyzed in accordance with teachers’ indicated response to filmed scenarios of student behavior, which included incidents of school bullying. Factors analyzed included teacher accuracy in identifying scenarios of school bullying, teachers’ indicated response to these incidents, teacher perception of administrator support and response to bullying, teacher perception of peer (other adult/teacher) response to bullying, and self-efficacy.

This analysis includes tests of the validity and reliability of the survey instrument. A general understanding of teacher experience and perceptions was developed through descriptive statistics. This included using a standard grading scale to assess grades for teacher
accuracy, administrator support and peer response to bullying. The relationship between factors which may influence a teacher’s direct intervention were analyzed with correlation and chi square tests. While statistical significance was assessed, it was reliant on a small sample resulting from a low survey response rate. To understand practical significance, not dependent on sample size, effect sizes were also calculated (Fan, 2001). Finally, the effects of variables on a teacher’s direct intervention were tested with analysis of variance.

**Population**

The purpose of this study was to understand factors that influence the direct intervention of middle school teachers in instances of school bullying. A population-level survey was conducted with middle school teachers employed by two Midwestern school districts. Located in the same state, teachers of both districts were governed by the same state-level influences specific to school bullying including the state’s anti-bullying policy, guidance provided by the Department of Education, and the Board of Educational Examiner’s Code of Ethics.

**School Districts and Buildings**

Participants were located in two school districts, referred to by the pseudonyms North School District and South School District in this study. Both districts are situated in communities which meet the US Census Bureau’s definition of “urbanized areas,” given populations of more than 50,000 people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Both school districts are one of the largest 15 school districts in the state according to total student enrollment, each serving a total student enrollment of over 8,500 students who are diverse in terms of race, ethnicity and socio-economic status.
The North School district serves 1,931 middle school students enrolled in two school buildings (State Department of Education, 2016). Just over three fourths of the student population (75.97%) identify as white, and the next largest racial/ethnic group are Hispanic students, who make up 15.54% of enrolled middle school students (State Department of Education, 2016). Nearly two thirds of students (66.39%) experience poverty as measured by enrollment in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program. Additionally, 5.28% of middle school students are identified as English Language Learners (ELL) (State Department of Education, 2016).

The South School District is almost double the size of North, serving 3,408 middle school students in six school buildings (State Department of Education, 2016). While the total enrollment of the district is greater than that of the North School District, the population of each school building is smaller, ranging between 325 and 750 students (compared to an average enrollment of 966 in the North School District’s two buildings) (State Department of Education, 2016). Middle school students in the South School District are also more diverse than their peers in the North School District, with 55.19% of students identifying as White (State Department of Education, 2016). However, school building enrollment in the South School District varied according to race and ethnicity. Enrollment of White students ranged from 23.85% to 87.56% among the six school buildings, with four buildings enrolling between 52% and 57% white students (State Department of Education, 2016). Enrollment of Black students ranged from 1.78% to 48.93% depending on building, with four buildings enrolling between 16% and 24% Black Students (State Department of Education, 2016). These data suggest that four of the six middle school building are representative of the entire district population in terms of race/ethnicity, with two outliers – buildings with much higher

footnote: The name of the state withheld due to anonymity
proportion of Black or White students, respectively. The South School District experiences similar rates of poverty when compared to North, with 69.54% of students receiving Free and Reduced Price Lunch (State Department of Education, 2016). The proportion of middle school students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) in the South District was 1.94%, less than half of the rate in the North District. Table 3 illustrates the racial and ethnic diversity among students in the North and South School Districts, compared to the racial and ethnic diversity of students across the state in which both districts are located.

Table 3. Student race and ethnicity in North and South School District.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Asian Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North School</td>
<td>1,931</td>
<td>0.93% 2.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Middle Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South School</td>
<td>3,408</td>
<td>1.70% 20.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Middle Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State All Schools</td>
<td>509,063</td>
<td>2.40% 5.65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between 60% and 80% of middle school students in both districts are proficient in math and science (State Department of Education, 2015). However, when compared to their peers across the state, students in both districts experience lower rates of proficiency (State
Department of Education, 2015). Table 4 compares these proficiency rates according to district and subject, with proficiency rates for all students in the state.

### Table 4. Comparison of reading and math proficiency rates for students in North and South School Districts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6th Grade</th>
<th>7th Grade</th>
<th>8th Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>59.9%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While located within the same state, the North and South School Districts differ in terms of middle school enrollment and racial/ethnic diversity among middle school students, with South School District being more diverse than North School District and the state. A similar proportion of students (between 65% and 70%) in each school district experiences poverty. Students in these districts also have similar proficiency rates in reading and math, which are lower than rates for the state in which they are located, across all subjects.

### Participants

A total of 127 teachers participated in the on-line survey. This includes 60 teachers from North School District and 67 teachers from South School District. Almost half (49.62%) of participants who participated in the survey completed it. As a result, the response rate for the survey is 11.78%. A total of 63 complete records exist, with 68.25% completed by participants from the North School District. It should be noted that the South School District’s low response rate is likely due to participants experiencing difficulty accessing the survey; specifically, participants were unable to see the embedded YouTube videos due to the school district’s firewall settings. As a result participants were sent multiple versions of
the survey, nearly all of which were not accessible. Finally, the school lifted its block of YouTube and participants were able to participate. Table 5 details participation by district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Completed Surveys</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North School District</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23.53%</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>71.67%</td>
<td>16.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South School District</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>23.93%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29.85%</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>23.74%</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>49.61%</td>
<td>11.78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between 36 and 62 participants completed demographic survey items. Sixty-one participants provided information specific to gender, race and ethnicity. Overall, 63.93% of survey participants identified as female. This includes 62.79% of participants at North School District, and 66.67% at South School District. Just over 95% (95.08%) of survey participants identified as White. One participant identified as African American (1.64%) and one identified as Pacific Islander (1.64%). One participant identified his or her race/ethnicity as other; however, in the comment box provided for participants to define race and ethnicity the participant stated that “race doesn’t have any effect on my answers.”

Fifty-seven survey participants completed a survey item specific to age, or year of birth. All teachers were born between 1946 and 1993 and the mean age of survey participants was 40.9 years. Figure 1 illustrates the distribution survey participants by age.
Teaching Experience. Thirty-six participants provided data specific to their teaching experience. Majority of these participants 58.33%, had more than 11 years of teaching experience, with 41.67% teaching for more than 15 years. Eighty percent of these most experienced teachers (teaching for more than 15 years) were from the North School District. Only six teachers, or 16.67%, who participated in the survey had been teaching for 5 years or less.

Sixty two participants provided information regarding their years of experience teaching at their current school. Over 61% of participants (61.29%) taught at their current school building for 5 years or less, with 19.35% of participants in their first year of teaching at their current school building. This compares to 22.58% of participants who have taught for 10 or more years at their current school. Teachers at North School District had longer tenure in their current building compared to South School District; with 44.19% of North teachers assigned to their current building for six or more years, compared to 26.32% of teachers at South School District.
Experience with Bullying. Participants also provided data regarding their personal experience with school bullying, both as a child and adult, and training specific to school bullying. Over 77% of participants (77.42%) either agreed (70.97%) or strongly agreed (6.45%) with the statement “Everyone experiences bullying at some point in their life,” while 17.74% of participants neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Majority of participants, 82.26%, reported personal experience with bullying as a child. This includes 83.72% of teachers at North School District and 78.95% of teachers at South School District. Experience with bullying, however, was not limited to childhood. Nearly one-third (32.26%) of teachers report being bullied at their current school. This includes 27.91% of participants from North School District and 42.11% of participants at South School District. Nineteen participants, or 30.65%, went on to identify perpetrators of bullying as students, other teachers, parents, and administrators. Students were identified as perpetrators, by 57.89% of participants and parents were identified by 42.11% of participants. Nine participants, or 47.3%, indicated they were bullied by more than one of these populations.

Training. Participants indicated what training they had received specific to school bullying. Overall, 35 participants, or 57.38%, had been trained regarding school bullying. This includes 68.42% of participants from South School District and 52.38% of participants from North School District. Such trainings included those provided by the state Department of Education (DOE), Regional Education Agencies (REAs), the State Education Association (SEA), and the state Safe Schools organization (SSS). Participants also indicated that they had received trainings on research-based programs including the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP), Second Step Violence Prevention and Steps to Respect. A total of 36 participants indicated that they had participated in one of these, or another training which
they were asked to define. Those who received training indicated that they had participated in between one and four trainings regarding school bullying. Additionally, 23 participants, or 63.88%, of those who reported participating in training, received training specific to a research-based bullying prevention program. Figure 2 illustrates the type of training received by survey participants.

Figure 2. Participation in training specific to school bullying.

Participants at North School District reported participation in 38 trainings, while participants at South School District reported participation in 15 trainings. Because the survey items included types of trainings and training providers, it is unclear if this is an unduplicated count of training received. For example, it is unknown if Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) training was provided by the REA or DOE (or neither). Twenty one survey participants reported having received training in the Olweus Bullying Prevention
Program (OBPP). Training were provided to 36.11% of participants by Regional Education Agencies, and 25% of participants were provided training by the state Safe Schools organization. Just over 11% of participants (11.11%) classified training received as “other.” Such trainings were defined as district wide training, training received in college, training received in other states, or professional development provided “long ago.”

Validity and Reliability

The study represents a pilot of the survey instrument created and utilized to collect data from teachers regarding school bullying. In addition to measuring teacher accuracy in identifying bullying behavior, and teacher response to incidents of school bullying, the survey measured how teachers perceive building administers and fellow teachers respond to bullying. The validity and reliability of survey items which measured these perceptions were tested.

Six survey items measured teacher perceptions of administrator support and response to school bullying. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to identify the relationship between these six survey items and test for underlying constructs. Principal component analysis extracted one factor. Table 6 illustrates factor loadings and communality for each component.
Table 6. Component loadings for six administrator related survey items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Communality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrators are responsive to teacher reports of bullying</td>
<td>0.877</td>
<td>0.770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators watch and do nothing</td>
<td>0.861</td>
<td>0.741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrator is likely to intervene in bullying</td>
<td>0.857</td>
<td>0.735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators do enough to stop bullying</td>
<td>0.839</td>
<td>0.704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators clearly communicate how teachers should address bullying</td>
<td>0.639</td>
<td>0.408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers told to not classify student behaviors as bullying</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>0.249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cronbach’s alpha calculated for these six administrator support items was $\alpha = 0.833$.

The factor was labeled *Administrator Support*, and scores were aggregated to calculate one administrator support score, which was then used in analysis.

Three survey items measured participant perception of how other adults in the school building respond to school bullying. To test for an underlying construct and identify any relationship between these three survey items exploratory factor analysis was conducted. Principal component analysis extracted one factor which included all three items. Table 7 illustrates factor loadings and communality for each component.
Table 7. Component loadings for three peer response related survey items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Communality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers/other adults are likely to intervene in school bullying.</td>
<td>0.900</td>
<td>0.811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers/other adults watch bullying and do nothing.</td>
<td>0.838</td>
<td>0.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers/other adults at this school do enough to stop bullying.</td>
<td>0.723</td>
<td>0.523</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Cronbach’s alpha calculated for these three peer response items was $\alpha = 0.744$. The factor was labeled peer response, and scores were aggregated to calculate one peer response score, which was then used in analysis.

**Findings**

The population of survey participants for this study are located in two school districts located in medium-sized Midwestern cities, serving somewhat similar student populations, in terms of socio-economic diversity and academic achievement. Data collected were then analyzed to answer research questions regarding teacher response to school bullying. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized to analyze data, including the assessment of grades associated with accuracy rates, peer response scores, and administrator support scores. Correlation, chi-square tests, and general linear models were utilized to determine relationships between variables and the effect of multiple variables on the direct intervention of teachers in school bullying incidents.
Analysis

Data collected through the on-line survey were then analyzed to answer each of the research questions. Analysis included use of descriptive statistics, assessment of grades, chi-square analysis, correlation, factor analysis, and general linear models.

Variables. The variables analyzed in this study align with the factors which influence bystander intervention, identified by Latane and Darley (1970). Relationships among variables was first analyzed with correlation, the results of which are included in Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8. Correlation among factors which influence teacher direct intervention in school bullying.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Accuracy Rate 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Direct Intervention                                      0.293* 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Years of Teaching Experience   -0.218 0.306 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Training  -0.122 -0.226 . 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Admin Support  0.215 0.238 0.075 -0.242 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Peer Response  0.202 0.075 0.359* -0.070 0.492** 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Knowledge of bullying intervention strategies 0.002 0.199 0.310 -0.508** 0.599** 0.311* 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ability to intervene 0.095 0.090 0.162 -0.217 0.417* 0.236 0.464** 1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

The analysis yields a number of significant relationships among the variables. Direct intervention, the variable of focus in this study, has a significant correlation with accuracy rate. Peer response is significantly correlated with both years of teaching experience and is
highly correlated with administrator support. Measures of self-efficacy – knowledge of bullying intervention strategies and ability to implement those strategies in intervention – are significantly correlated to a number of variables. Administrator support is significantly correlated to both of these measures of self-efficacy, and peer response is correlated with knowledge of bullying intervention strategies. The variables, knowledge and ability, are also significantly correlated to each other. While the correlation between training and knowledge of bullying intervention strategies, which is significant, appears to be negative this is likely due to the way variables were coded (1 = yes training, 2 = no training).

**Accuracy.** The first research question of this study asks how consistently teachers are able to identify bullying behavior. To determine this, participant responses to survey items which included videos of student behavior were utilized to calculate a rate of accuracy in identifying bullying behavior. A total of 71 survey participants responded to at least one of the five video scenarios, with 90.14% completing all five scenarios. Of these five scenarios, three included bullying behavior and two did not. Accuracy rates were calculated by determining the ratio of correct responses to total responses. Accuracy rates ranged from 0% to 100%, with a median and mode of 80%. Figure 3 illustrates accuracy rates according to school districts. Results are aggregated among all district buildings due to the low number of participants from identifying a school building in one of the districts.
Figure 3. Survey participant accuracy rates in identifying bullying behavior, by district.

Accuracy results indicate that only 25.35% of teachers were able to accurately identify bullying behavior in the survey items completed. This rate varied according to school district, with only 11.54% of teachers in South School District accurately identifying bullying in all items completed, compared to 33.33% of teachers in the North School District. Nearly 6% of all survey respondents (5.64%) were able to correctly identify student behavior as bullying, or not, in no more than half of the video scenario survey items they completed.

To aid in the interpretation of the results, accuracy rates were coded using a standard grading scale. According to this scale, an A represents scores of 90 to 100, B represents scores of 80-89, C represents scores of 70-79, D represents scores of 60-69, and F represents
scores of 59 and below. When accuracy scores are assessed grades the scores of 28.17% of teachers are graded as D or F, or scores of 67% or below. Another 46.48% earn a low B (80%), and only 25.35% earn an A (100%). Figure 4 illustrate the accuracy rates of teachers in both districts.

![Figure 4](image)

**Figure 4. Distribution of Accuracy Rates by School District.**

*Type of Bullying Behavior.* Accuracy rates varied according to the type of bullying behavior depicted in the video scenario. One video scenario was included that depicted physical bullying. On this scenario, 60 of 70 participants, or 85.71% of participants, accurately identified the bullying behavior. This included 80.76% of participants from South School District and 88.64% of participants from North School District. Figure 5 illustrates the frequency with which teachers accurately identified bullying behavior.
The survey included two items related to verbal bullying. One of these scenarios depicted verbal bullying and one did not. At least one of these scenarios was accurately identified by all participants who completed items specific to both scenarios. Fifty-one participants, or 79.69% accurately identified both of these bullying scenarios. The remaining thirteen participants (20.31%) were able to accurately identify one of the scenarios. Figure 6 illustrates frequency of verbal accuracy rates.

Figure 5. Accuracy rate for physical bullying scenario.
Figure 6. Accuracy rate for verbal bullying scenarios.

The survey also included two items specific to social or relational bullying; one which depicted bullying and one which did not. Of the 64 participants who completed both of these survey items, one participant was not able to correctly identify behavior in either scenario. The majority of participants, 57.81%, were able to correctly identify the behavior in one of the scenarios, while the remaining 40.63% of participants were able to accurately identify both scenarios. Frequency of accuracy rates is depicted in Figure7.
Figure 7. Accuracy Rate for Social Bullying Scenarios.

Accuracy specific to social bullying varied according to school district, with 46.51% of participants accurately identifying both scenarios at North School District, compared to 28.57% of participants at South School District. Participants were also more likely to correctly identify the scenario which depicted social bullying. Overall, 87.5% of participants accurately identified the scenario of social bullying. This compares to 51.56% of participants who identified accurately that the interaction between the students in the other scenario was not social bullying.
Training. The impact of training on teacher accuracy in identify bullying was analyzed. Training was defined in three ways, the first of which was participation in any training related to school bullying. For survey participants who answered this question as yes, follow up questions were asked relating to the total number of trainings in which the teacher participated and whether those trainings were related to a named research-based bullying prevention program.

Accuracy rates ranged from 60% to 100% for the 36 survey participants that indicated they had participated in training specific to school bullying. Table 9 details accuracy rates according to the whether or not respondents participated in training.

Table 9. Accuracy rates of bullying identification according training participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participated in Training</th>
<th>Accuracy Rate</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41.67%</td>
<td>58.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>61.11%</td>
<td>38.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>57.38%</td>
<td>42.62%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over sixty percent of participants with higher rates of accuracy (80% and 100%) had training specific to school bullying. This compares to 41.67% of participants with an accuracy rate of 60%. Cohen’s $d$ was calculated to measure effect size at 0.331, which indicates that training has a medium effect on accuracy rates.

Number of Trainings. The relationship between teacher accuracy in identifying bullying behavior and number of trainings attended was also analyzed. Survey participants reported participating in between one and four trainings, with just over half of these
participants (50.70%) reporting participation in one training specific to school bullying.

Table 10 details accuracy rates according to the number of trainings reported.

Table 10. Accuracy rates of bullying identification according to number of trainings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Trainings</th>
<th>Accuracy Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n 0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>12 58.33% 33.33% - - 8.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>32 37.50% 37.50% 18.75% 3.13% 3.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>18 38.89% 44.44% 16.67% 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62 41.94% 38.71% 14.52% 1.61% 3.23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A chi-square test was performed to further examine the relationship between accuracy rates and number of trainings. The results of this test were not significant, $X^2 (8, N=62) = 5.898, p = 0.659$.

*Research-based training.* Training was also analyzed according to whether or not it was related to a research-based bullying prevention program, such as OBPP, Second Step Violence Prevention, and Steps to Respect. The total number of trainings related to research-based programs ranged from zero to two. A total of 23 survey participants, or 32.40%, participated in one or two such trainings. Table 11 illustrates this total number of research-based trainings by accuracy rate.
Table 11. Accuracy rates of bullying identification by number of research-based trainings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accuracy Rate</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
<td>34.38%</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>55.56%</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>62.90%</td>
<td>35.48%</td>
<td>1.61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A majority of participants with high accuracy rates did not participate in research-based trainings. However, the results of a chi-square test, performed to further examine the relationship between accuracy rates and participation in research-based training, were not significant, $X^2 (4, N=62) = 2.162, p = 0.706$. The number of research-based trainings were then coded to be dichotomous (0 research-based trainings, 1-2 research-based trainings) to calculate effect size. The effect size calculation ($d = 0.2774$) indicates research-based training has a small effect on accuracy rates.

*Years of Experience.* The number of years of teaching experience was analyzed along with participation in training. Teachers were categorized into two groups based on years of teaching experience; with one group teaching 10 or fewer years and the other teaching for more than 10 years. Table 12 illustrates accuracy rates by number of years of teaching experience.
Table 12. Accuracy rates of bullying identification by number of years of teaching experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accuracy Rate</th>
<th>Number of Years of Teaching Experience</th>
<th>≤10</th>
<th>&gt;10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>54.54%</td>
<td>45.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41.67%</td>
<td>58.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cohen’s $d$ was calculated to determine the effect of years of teaching experience on accuracy. The results ($d = 0.4505$) indicate that number of years teaching has medium sized effect on accuracy rates.

**Administrator Support.** The administrator support scores were calculated by weighting the 5-point Likert-scale responses (5 = more desired response, 1 = least desired response) for the six survey items which loaded into the administrator support factor, then aggregating the weighted scores. Administrator support scores ranged from 11 to 30, with a mean score of 22.05 ($SD = 4.33$). Scores were assessed with a standard grading scale, and ranged from F (11 of 30, or 36.67%) to A (30 of 30, or 100%). Figure 8 illustrates the distribution of participant administrator support scores as grades.
Figure 8. The distribution of administrator support scores among survey participants.

Administrator support scores varied according to school building and district. Figure 9 illustrates administrator support scores by school district. While it is understood that administrators vary by school building, analysis is provided at the district level as sufficient building data was not provided by participants in one district.
Like accuracy rates, administrator support scores were assessed according to a standard grading scale for each district. Table 13 illustrates these scores by district.
Table 13. Distribution of administrator support grade by school district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School District</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North School District</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23.12</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>11.63%</td>
<td>6.98%</td>
<td>30.23%</td>
<td>25.58%</td>
<td>25.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South School District</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19.35</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
<td>29.41%</td>
<td>23.53%</td>
<td>11.76%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>22.05</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>18.33%</td>
<td>13.33%</td>
<td>28.33%</td>
<td>21.67%</td>
<td>18.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades can be assessed for each district according to mean score. The mean administrator support score for the North School District is 23.11 (SD = 4.25). Out of 30 possible points, this mean represents a grade of 77.03% or C. The South School District’s mean score of 19.35 (SD = 3.32), also out of 30 possible points, would be 64.5% or a grade of D. For all districts the mean administrator support score was 22.05 (SD = 4.33), or a grade of C (73.5%).

Effect size calculations demonstrate that participation in a bullying related training has a medium effect on teacher’s administrator support score (d = 0.4826), but participation in research-based training only has a small effect (d = 0.198). Years of teaching experience, however, had no effect (d = 0.06).

**Peer Response.** The third research question was specific to teacher perception of peer response to bullying. To measure peer response, a calculated variable was created by weighting and averaging scores for the three survey items which loaded into the peer response factor. Peer response scores ranged from 6 to 15, out of a possible 15 points. These scores were also assessed as grades, and ranged from F (6 of 15, or 40%) to A (15 of 15, or
100%). Figure 10 illustrates the distribution of peer response scores, as grades, among survey participants.

![Figure 10](image.png)

**Figure 10. The distribution of peer response scores among survey participants.**

The mean peer response score was 10.8 ($SD = 1.9$). Figure 11 illustrates the distribution of scores for each district.
Figure 11. Peer response scores according to school district.

Grades were assessed according to the mean peer response score for each district and overall. In the North School District, the mean score was 11.33 ($SD = 1.58$) out of a total of 15 points, or 75.5% which is a grade of C on the standard grading scale. The South School District’s mean score of 9.56 ($SD = 2.06$), which is a grade of 63.7% or D. Overall, teachers mean score of 10.8 ($SD = 1.90$) is a grade 72% or C in peer response to school bullying. Table 14 illustrates the distribution of peer response grades, by district.
Table 14. Peer response grades by school district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School-District</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North School District</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11.33</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>32.56%</td>
<td>16.28%</td>
<td>44.19%</td>
<td>6.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South School District</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9.56</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>27.78%</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>10.80</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>9.84%</td>
<td>31.15%</td>
<td>18.03%</td>
<td>36.07%</td>
<td>4.92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effect size calculations indicate that participation in training specific to bullying prevention has a small effect \((d = 0.1700)\) on teachers’ peer support scores and participation in research-based training has no effect \((d = 0.089)\). However, years of teaching experience has a large effect \((d = 0.762)\).

**Self-efficacy.** To test each aspect of Latane and Darley’s (1970) theory on bystander intervention, two measures of self-efficacy were added to the analysis. The theory delineates efficacy as self-efficacy and response efficacy (Latane & Darley, 1970). The first is measured on this survey through an item in which participants agree or disagree with the statement, “I am knowledgeable of effective bullying intervention strategies.” Participants who responded that they were knowledgeable then answered a follow up questions measuring response efficacy. In this question participants agreed or disagreed with the statement, “I am able to implement effective bullying intervention strategies.” Nearly 60% of participants (59.68%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were knowledgeable of effective strategies for bullying prevention. Of these individuals, 83.78% agreed or strongly agreed
they could act on this knowledge, or implement these strategies. Table 15 illustrates participant responses to these survey items.

**Table 15. Distribution of participant responses to survey items which measure efficacy.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Level of Agreement</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Disagree (2)</th>
<th>Neither (3)</th>
<th>Agree (4)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am knowledgeable of effective bullying intervention strategies. (self-efficacy)</td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>16.13%</td>
<td>20.97%</td>
<td>48.39%</td>
<td>11.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to implement effective bullying intervention strategies when needed. (response efficacy)</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.41%</td>
<td>10.81%</td>
<td>78.38%</td>
<td>5.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relationship between these self-efficacy variables and other variables of analysis was then tested. The relationship between participation in training related to school bullying and the two measures of efficacy were measured through calculation of effect size. Results indicate training has a large effect ($d = 1.1449$) on self-efficacy and a small effect on response efficacy ($d = 0.3526$). Furthermore, participation in research-based training also had a large effect ($d = 0.7647$) on self-efficacy but no effect ($d = 0.014$) on response efficacy. Finally, years of teaching experience had a medium effect ($d = 0.6172$) on self-efficacy and a large effect on response efficacy ($d = 0.7487$).

Chi-square tests were conducted to determine the relationship between response efficacy, self-efficacy, peer response, and administrator support. Results indicate that self-efficacy has a significant relationship with peer response, $X^2 (36, N=61) = 52.561, p = 0.037$. The relationship between response efficacy and peer response was also significant, $X^2 (21,$
Chi-square tests indicate that administrator support is not significantly related to either self-efficacy or response efficacy.

**Direct Intervention.** The fifth research question in this study asks whether there is a relationship between a teacher’s ability to accurately identify bullying behavior and the teacher’s direct intervention in instances of school bullying. Direct intervention was measured through participant response to a survey item which followed each video scenario, in which the participant could identify multiple actions they would take if they witnessed the behavior in the scenario. Responses to these survey items were analyzed for the three scenarios which illustrated bullying behavior.

For each survey item, participants could choose from options of direct intervention, delayed direct intervention, detour intervention, or no intervention. Overall, 94.42% of participants identified direct intervention in at least one of the bullying scenarios. Table 16 include the total participants by number of direction interventions.
Table 16. Proportion of participants by number of direct interventions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Direct Interventions</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Proportion of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Direct interventions, like accuracy, varied according to the type of bullying depicted in the scenario. Of the three videos of bullying, each of type of bullying (physical, verbal, social) was depicted. Table 17 provides detail specific to the type of intervention participants would take in these instances, according to type of bullying.

Table 17. Participant intervention rates by type of intervention and type of bullying behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Bullying</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Delayed Direct</th>
<th>Detour</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>86.67%</td>
<td>61.67%</td>
<td>48.33%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>90.16%</td>
<td>65.57%</td>
<td>65.57%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>64.29%</td>
<td>80.36%</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results indicate that a majority of participants are likely to respond to school bullying with direct intervention. However, rates of direct intervention varied according to type of bullying, with participants most likely to directly intervene in incidents of verbal bullying and least likely to intervene in incidents of social bullying.
**Accuracy.** The research question was specific to the impact of accuracy rate on direct intervention in bullying behavior. Analysis indicates that of the participants who would implement direct intervention in all three scenarios of school bullying, 85.3% were able to identify school bullying with 80% or 100% accuracy. However, 100% of participants who would not implement any direct interventions also had these accuracy rates. Figure 12 illustrates direct intervention by accuracy rate.

![Figure 12. Distribution of accuracy rates according to number of direct interventions.](image-url)
A chi-square test was performed to understand the relationship between direct interventions and accuracy rate in identifying bullying behavior. The results of this chi-square test were not significant, $\chi^2 (12, N=68) = 20.857, p = 0.053$.

**Administrator Support.** This study sought to understand the impact of administrator support on teachers’ direct intervention in incidents of school bullying. Descriptive statistics and measures of central tendency allowed for comparison of administrator support scores by intended direct intervention. Figure 13 illustrates this comparison.

![Figure 13. Administrator support scores according to number of direct interventions.](image)

Mean administrator support score varies according to the number of intended direction interventions. The mean support score for individuals who would directly intervene in two scenarios of bullying (of 3 possible) was higher ($M = 23.20, SD = 4.31$) than the mean
score of individuals who would directly intervene in all three incidents of school bullying ($M = 22.55, SD = 3.83$). Additionally, those who would not directly intervene in any incidents of bullying had a higher mean administrator support score ($M = 20.50, SD = 2.38$) than those who would intervene in one incident ($M=19.40, SD = 5.60$).

Results were also compared according to the “grade” given to administrator support. Majority (63.63%) of individuals whose administrator support score received a grade of A would utilize direct intervention in all three scenarios of school bullying. This is the greatest proportion of individuals reporting direct intervention in all three scenarios across all administrator support grades. However, for all administrator support grades except F, the largest proportion of participants identified direct intervention in all three scenarios. For individuals whose administrator support score was an F, 36.36% identified direct intervention in one scenario and three scenarios. Table 18 illustrates the frequency of participants’ direct intervention according to administrator support grades.

**Table 18. The administrator support score grades of survey participants according to frequency of direct intervention in school bullying.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrator Support Grade</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>36.36%</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
<td>36.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.65%</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
<td>17.65%</td>
<td>58.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
<td>46.15%</td>
<td>46.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
<td>63.63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Peer Response.** The study also sought to understand the relationship between teachers’ direct intervention in school bullying and perceptions of peer response to school bullying. Descriptive statistics and measures of central tendency were utilized to compare results. Figure 14 illustrates this comparison.

![Figure 14. Peer response scores according to number of direct interventions.](image)

Teachers who would directly intervene in two of three scenarios of school bullying had the highest mean score for peer response ($M = 11.53$, $SD = 1.64$). However, mean scores ranged from 10.00 (zero direct interventions) to 11.53 (two interventions), a difference of 1.53.
Peer response grades were also analyzed according to intention to directly intervene. Table 19 illustrates the distribution of grades by number of direct interventions in bullying scenarios.

**Table 19. The peer response grades of survey participants according to frequency of direct intervention in school bullying.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Response Grade</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>15.79%</td>
<td>63.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
<td>45.45%</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>22.73%</td>
<td>68.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results indicate that participants whose peer response score received a grade of A would only use direct intervention in one or two scenarios of school bullying. For participants with peer response grades of C or D, responses ranged from zero direct interventions to three direct interventions.

A chi-square test was conducted to determine the relationship between peer response and direct intervention. The results were not significant $\chi^2 (27, N=61) = 32.129, p = 0.227$. Analysis of variance was then utilized to test the effect of peer response on the direct intervention of teachers and the results were not significant $F (9, 60) = 1.870, p=0.078$.

**Bystander Influence on Direct Intervention.** The effects of bystanders, specifically administrators and other teachers, on direct intervention in school bullying were examined in this study. A general linear model was created, to test the effect of both administrators and
other teachers on direct intervention. This model also accounted for school building. Results indicate that peer response does have a significant impact on a teacher’s direct intervention in incidents of school bullying \( F(8, 58) = 6.067, p=0.014 \). Administrator support also has a significant impact, \( F(14, 58) = 6.515, p=0.009 \). Finally, the effect of school building was also significant, \( F(3, 58) = 8.014, p=0.012 \). While the interaction between peer response and administrator support was significant, \( F(4, 58) = 5.610, p=.024 \), other interactions between variables in the model were not.

**Summary**

This study collected data from teachers located in two Midwestern school districts. Though different in terms of total enrollment and diversity, students in these districts experience similar rates of poverty and academic achievement. A total of 127 teachers participated in the survey, and the response rate was 11.78%.

In terms of accuracy, 25.35% of teachers were able to correctly identify the scenarios of school bullying which they viewed. While these teachers receive a grade of A, the majority of teachers (46.48%) earn a B. Both training and years of teaching experience had medium effects on accuracy.

In terms of direct intervention, 50.00% of teachers indicate that they would directly intervene in each of the three scenarios of school bullying included in the survey instrument. Direct intervention rates varied according to type of bullying (physical, verbal, social).

Finally, the role of bystanders in direct intervention was analyzed. The results of factor analysis yielded a single “administrator support” factor and a single “peer response” factor. Survey items which loaded into these factors were then aggregated into two single calculated variables. Overall, administrator support was graded a C \( (M = 22.05) \), with grades
varying according to school district. Peer response also received a grade of C ($M = 10.8$) by participants, and again grades varied according to district. Chi-square tests indicate that peer response is associated with teachers’ self-efficacy and response efficacy, but administrator support is not. Finally, analysis of variance results indicate that administrator support, peer response and school building are variables which affect direct intervention.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

Research on bystander intervention suggests that a number of factors influence a bystander’s decision making, and ultimately whether or not s/he takes action to help. In the case of school bullying, students are frequently acknowledged as bystanders and encouraged to take action. However, students are not the only bystanders in incidents of school bullying, adults also witness this behavior. Adults may be overlooked in their role as bystanders, in part because they have a legal and ethical obligation to protect students from school bullying. However, like all bystanders, their perceptions of bullying behavior, themselves, and those around them – namely other adults – may, very much, influence their response to student bullying. The purpose of this study was to understand how a teacher’s direct intervention in instances of school bullying is effected by how accurately s/he identifies bullying behavior, his or her perception of other adults’ (administrators and other teachers), as well as his or her own self-efficacy. These factors which may affect direct intervention align with the factors identified by Latane and Darley’s (1970) theory on bystander intervention. Research indicates that student experience with bullying decreases when teachers are efficacious in addressing it (Veenstra, Lindenberg, Huitsing, Sainio, & Salmivalli, 2014). Therefore, identification and understanding of the factors which influence teachers as bystanders, may help to increase teacher intervention and thereby decrease students’ experience with school bullying.

Conclusions

This study utilized tests of statistical significance and effect size calculations to identify variables which impact the direct intervention of teachers in instances of school
bullying. Results identify a number of correlations, associations and effects among the variables. Assessment of grades indicate that while most teachers earn As and Bs in identification of school bullying behavior, administrator support and peer response earn Cs. While direct intervention is associated with accuracy rates, analysis of variance indicated that peer response, administrator support, and school building have a significant effect on teachers’ direct intervention in school bullying. Further application of Latane and Darley’s (1970) theory in school bullying is necessary to fully understand how these variables influence teacher, or bystander, self-efficacy and action in response to school bullying.

**Accuracy**

Before we can understand what drives teachers to use direct intervention in instances of school bullying, we must understand how they identify or recognize bullying behavior. This study attempts to understand this recognition by utilizing five scenarios, three of which include bullying behavior, to measure teacher accuracy in identifying bullying. Results indicate that only 25.35% of teachers participating in the survey were consistently accurate in identifying student behaviors as bullying. This compares to 46.48% of teachers who were able to identify 4 of 5 incidents of bullying. The remaining 28.18% of teachers identified 3 or fewer scenarios correctly, including 4.23% of teachers who were unable to correctly identify any of the scenarios. These results suggest that teachers have difficulty identifying bullying behavior. This difficulty may arise from an inability to differentiate bullying from other concerning student behaviors, such as teasing or conflict.

According to Grumm and Hein (2012), it is “important that teachers can differentiate different forms of aggressive behaviors in their classrooms and that they are able to identify those behaviors in a reliable way,” (p. 308). This is because the protocol for response to
bullying, frequently established by district or state anti-bullying policies, may require
documentation and investigative procedures unlike other behaviors. Additionally, bullying
and other types of peer conflict call for differentiated responses. For example, peer mediation
is frequently used with success in instances of general peer aggression or conflict. However,
such action is not recommended in the case of bullying due to the imbalance of power
between the perpetrator and target (Cascardi, Brown, Iannarone, & Cardona, 2014). Overall,
bullying and other types of violence or conflict require “differentiated prevention and
intervention measures,” (Cornell & Limber, 2015, p. 341).

The results of this study suggest that such differentiation between student behaviors,
as well as prevention and intervention in these behaviors, must go beyond understanding how
teachers define aggressive behaviors and focus on teachers’ accuracy in identifying behaviors
when they see them. While teachers are likely called on to intervene in a diverse number of
disruptive and problematic student behaviors, it is important that they are able to distinguish
bullying from other such behaviors. Overall, this study further supports the need for
additional research and training regarding how teachers evaluate or appraise incidents of
bullying identified by Yoon and Bauman (2014).

Teacher accuracy rates varied according to type of bullying, with teachers most likely
to accurately identify verbal bullying and least likely to accurately identify social bullying.
Research indicates that teachers are more likely to intervene in bullying incidents that they
consider to be serious, and most frequently intervene in physical and verbal bullying (Byers,
Caltabiano, & Caltabiano, 2011; Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Ellis & Shute, 2007;
Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005; Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016; Yoon &
Kerber, 2003). Results may further confirm that teachers do not intervene as frequently in
incidents of social bullying behaviors because they are not able to accurately identify these behaviors as bullying (Ellis & Shute, 2007, p. 660; Yoon & Kerber, 2003).

While participation in training has a medium effect on accuracy, participation in research-based training had a small effect. Results suggest it is more important to participate in training, than participate in a research-based training – or training specific to the research-based prevention programs included on the survey. Considering that training had a large effect on teachers’ self-efficacy in incidents of bullying, findings also suggest that training increases teacher knowledge and confidence in response to bullying more than it increases teachers’ accuracy in identifying bullying behavior or response efficacy. Years of teaching experience also had a medium effect on accuracy; however, the correlation between accuracy and years of experience was negative. This is interesting considering years of teaching experience had a medium effect on self-efficacy and a large effect on response efficacy. These findings suggest that teachers with more experience find themselves more confident and effective in responding to bullying, but accuracy rates indicate otherwise.

**Direct Intervention**

Results indicate that teachers were highly likely to address school bullying in some way – either through direct intervention, detour intervention, or a combination of the two. No teachers indicated that they would not respond, or that they would ignore bullying behavior altogether, and only 5.88% indicated that they would not use direct intervention in any scenario of bullying. This aligns with the results of other studies which suggest teachers are not likely to “ignore the incident” in the case of bullying behavior (Bauman, 2008; Burger, Strohmeier, Sprober, Bauman, & Rigby, 2015; Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016).
This study also finds that teachers are likely to use multiple interventions – both direct and detour. Use of multiple strategies has been found successful compared to utilizing only one strategy, however previous studies have shown teachers to favor use of only one or two strategies (Burger, Strohmeier, Sprober, Bauman, & Rigby, 2015; Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016). These strategies are likely to include punishing the student perpetrating the bullying behavior and seldom include working with the target (Burger, Strohmeier, Sprober, Bauman, & Rigby, 2015).

Results indicate that teachers are more likely to use direct intervention in instances of verbal (90.16%) and physical bullying (86.67%) compared to social bullying (64.29%). These findings further support existing research which demonstrates teachers are less likely to intervene in social bullying (Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005; Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). Among all variables of analysis in this study, direct intervention was only correlated with accuracy rates. This suggests that teachers who can accurately identify bullying behavior more frequently utilize direct intervention in instances of bullying. Given that the direct intervention score was derived from action in only the scenarios in which bullying occurs, it makes sense that those who are more likely to identify bullying correctly have a higher score, or more frequently utilize direct intervention in instances of bullying.

**Administrator Support**

Exploratory factor analysis indicate that the survey items specific to administrator support are valid and reliable. While these items were aggregated into a single “administrator support” variable, it is important to note that scores ranged from 11 to 32; such a range indicate that survey participants have very different experiences with administrator support.
Assessment of administrator support grades, indicate that overall administrator support earns a grade of C. This grade varies according to school district; with South School District earning a D in administrator support. Administrator support was correlated with both peer support and measures of self-efficacy; both knowledge of bullying intervention strategies and implementation of bullying prevention strategies. However, chi-square tests indicated that the association between administrator support and measures of efficacy were not significant.

The literature indicates that administrator support is key to successful implementation of bullying prevention programs (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). The results of this study indicate that this may be due to the influence of administrator support on self-efficacy, as suggested by Skinner, Babinski, & Gifford (2014), and peer response. While administrator support grades are average, results indicate a highly significant effect on direct intervention ($p = 0.009$). This adds to the existing literature which suggests that failure to intervene may be due to perceived lack of administrative support (Yoon & Gilchrist, 2003). Ultimately, better understanding of the influence of teacher perception of administrator support may lead to decreased student experience with bullying (Espelage, Polanin, & Low, 2014).

**Peer Response**

Exploratory factor analysis identified a “peer response” factor which measured teachers’ perceptions of how other teachers in the building respond to school bullying. Overall, peer response earned a grade of C; with teachers in the South School District grading peer response with a D. Peer response was correlated with years of teaching experience and administrator support as well as self-efficacy. Chi-square tests indicate a significant association between peer response and both self-efficacy and response-efficacy. This study also found that years of teaching experience had a large effect on peer response.
scores, which may indicate that either time or length of working relationships may increase perceptions of adequate response to school bullying. However, these findings are some of the first to study the influence of teachers on each other in bullying intervention. The extant literature reveals little about how other teachers influence direct intervention in school bullying. However, the literature does indicate that student experience with bullying is predicted by teacher perceptions of school culture (Espelage, Polanin, & Low, 2014) and teacher efficacy (Veenstra et al., 2014). Further research may more directly link teacher perceptions of peer response to bullying, found in this study, to school culture.

The general linear model created in this study, to test the effect of bystanders (administrators and other teachers) on direct intervention indicated that administrator support, peer response and school building had significant effects on direct intervention. These results indicate that Latane and Darley’s (1970) theory on bystander intervention – especially the influences of other bystanders on response – has applications to school bullying when teachers are considered bystanders. The results also suggest that the environment in which teachers are expected to intervene in bullying influences their response. While administrator support and peer response scores are specific to the other people in a school environment, the significance of the building variable may represent other measures of school culture and climate. Espelage (2014) advocates for the study of school bullying across ecological systems; this requires increased attention to the study of the chronosystem, including how “...changes in school staff and administration” affect bullying (Espelage, 2014; Hong & Espelage, 2012). Use of the ecological model would expand the study of bullying beyond teachers and students, and account for the influence of administration and overall school culture.
According to Drake, Price, Telljohann, and Funk (2003), addressing bullying in schools requires “all teachers, the school principal, students and parents” to not only participate in bullying prevention activities but also to support a school wide approach (p. 354). This study furthers understanding of how both teachers and administrators impact the direct intervention of teachers in bullying; action known to decrease student experience with bullying. However, it is concerning that administrator support and peer response scores (which earned Cs) were not higher. Such findings indicate that while these factors have significant effects on direct intervention, those effects are not experienced regularly in the North and South School Districts. Efforts to increase peer response and administrator support scores - to As - may increase direct intervention and decrease student experience with school bullying in these districts.

Limitations

This study is limited due to a number of factors associated with survey participation. While web-based survey administration should allow for ease in collecting data from large populations (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009), the response rate of this survey was extremely low (11.78%). This may be due, in part, to technical difficulties (and multiple communications) with potential participants in the South School District. However, the North School District’s participation rate was only 16.86%. Efforts were made to establish trust with potential participants, through district endorsement of the study and communication with potential participants. Such efforts led 23.74% of participants to begin the survey, but majority of these participants (50.39%) failed to complete it.

Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2009) identify four types of survey error; coverage, sampling, nonresponse, and measurement. Coverage error, or error which occurs when not all
member of the population have a chance to participate in the survey, as well as sampling error, which occurs when only a section of the population is surveyed, are limited (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). This study administered a population level survey and school districts partnered in the administration of this survey, which helped to assure all middle school teachers in each building were included. The survey was administered via email and all teachers had access to an email address provided by the school district. Furthermore, teachers were allowed to complete the survey on district time – when they had access to their computer, the internet, and the invitation sent to them via email.

Nonresponse error, or error which occurs when those who participate in the survey are different than those who don’t, may be a factor in this study (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). According to Umbach (2004), nonresponse error may increase with web-based surveys, such as the one utilized in this study, and may also be “particularly troubling when response rates are low,” (p. 27). It is unknown how teachers who participated in this survey differ from all teachers in the population in terms of years of teaching experience or participation in training specific to bullying. However, 82.26% of survey participants reported experiencing bullying as a child and 32.26% have experienced bullying as a teacher (perpetrated by students, parents, other teachers, or administrators). While it is unknown what proportion of middle school teachers have a personal experience with bullying, research indicates that approximately 22% of children, ages 12-18 experience school bullying or cyberbullying in the United States (US Department of Education, 2015). Furthermore, a national study of bullying conducted by the National Education Association found that 18% of teachers experienced bullying as an adult (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, O'Brien, & Gulemetova, 2011). While an exact comparison cannot be made, it is possible that survey
participants were motivated to participate in this study due to a personal experience with bullying and therefore are not representative of the general population of teachers at these schools or overall.

Finally, measurement error, or the error which occurs due to imprecise or inaccurate survey responses likely resulting from poorly designed survey items, may be a factor in this study (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). This survey represents a pilot of the survey instrument. Revisions to the survey instrument, and continued research and testing, would help to minimize measurement error.

The results of this study may also be limited by the video scenarios utilized in the survey. Currently, the survey only includes five scenarios on which teacher accuracy in identifying bullying is determined. It may be the case that a greater number of scenarios are necessary to properly assess teacher accuracy. Furthermore, the scenarios utilize scenes from a previously recorded video, which was recorded in cooperation with a school district, of which the students acted out the scenarios. While the videos include scenarios which depict bullying behavior with female and male students, the students in the videos are predominately white. Both gender and ethnicity has been found to be a factor in how teachers respond to incidents of school bullying (Ellis & Shute, 2007; Yoon, Sulkowski, & Bauman, 2016). Yet, in this study it is unknown if student or teacher gender and ethnicity were factors in direct intervention.

Finally, it is unknown to what degree teachers were influenced by the current attention given to school bullying in the media. Overall, the negative effects of school bullying are widely known and schools are working hard to address the behavior. Furthermore, both school districts participating in this study have anti-bullying policies
which align with the state’s anti-bullying policy. To this end, it would be expected that teachers would respond and directly intervene in instances of school bullying. The results of this study are based on teacher self-reports of intended behavior. Such intentions may be guided by socially desirability and may not accurately reflect actual response.

**Recommendations**

The initial findings presented in this study suggest a number of steps be taken by stakeholders and researchers. Action by stakeholders may ensure that teachers are better supported in school bullying prevention and intervention. While cost may be associated with some recommendations, such costs are minimal compared with the potential cost (fiscal, academic, social) of inaction. Furthermore, implementation would engage multiple stakeholders to partner and positively impact school climate through a reduction in school bullying behavior.

The results of this study also suggest additional research is necessary to fully understand study variables and the impact of these variables on a teacher’s direct intervention in instances of school bullying. Such research could build upon this pilot, ensure results are generalizable, and provide insight to action necessary to ensure that teachers are prepared to intervene in school bullying.

**Stakeholders**

The outcomes of this study should be of great interest to stakeholders; particularly school administrators, district leadership, state education agencies, policy makers and teacher preparation programs. While each of these groups may currently make efforts to prevent and protect students from school bullying, their action may often be based on an assumption that all parties (the stakeholders included) understand and can identify school bullying. Results of
This study indicate that 25.35% of teachers participating in this study are able to accurately identify school bullying behavior.

Currently, all 50 states have an anti-bullying policy (www.stopbullying.gov). However, only 25 states have policies which provide training regarding school bullying (Stuart-Cassel, Bell, & Springer, 2011). Despite policies, bullying prevention and intervention training is currently provided at national, state, and local levels. Results indicate that such training has large effects on self-efficacy, but a medium effect on accuracy in identifying bullying behavior. Furthermore, training did not affect teachers’ direct intervention in school bullying. While a national study of teachers and educational support professionals found that a majority of participants have strategies and resources for intervening in bullying, participants identified the need for further training (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, O'Brennan, & Gulemetova, 2011). This may indicate that “the quality or appropriateness of the resources…needs further consideration,” (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, O'Brennan, & Gulemetova, 2011, p. 17). Such results indicate that additional, and potentially new, training is necessary to adequately prepare teachers to identify, and then intervene, in instances of school bullying. Bauman, Rigby, and Hoppa (2008) suggest that current methods of training, such as “conferences or in-service programmes” are not sufficient, but rather teacher preparation programs should “equip teachers with a variety of strategies to manage bullying,” (p.850). The authors further suggest such trainings “should not be exclusively didactic; future educators need the opportunity to practice new skills in this area, using role play and observation,” (Bauman, Rigby, & Hoppa, 2008, p.850). The creation and administration of such training may be costly; however, use of technology may greatly reduce costs. Furthermore, teachers who can accurately identify and stop bullying greatly
reduce risks of litigation faced by school districts failing to uphold anti-bullying legislation. Reduced risk of liability in incidents of school bullying would surely offset any costs associated with training.

The need for training which improves teacher accuracy in identifying bullying may not only be pursued and implemented through state policy. Currently, both Federal and State Education Agencies, as well as local school districts invest resources (time and money) into comprehensive bullying prevention programs. It is unknown to what degree these organizations utilize research-based training, found in this study to have a small effect on teacher accuracy rates. Furthermore, the content of these trainings may currently focus on understanding the research-based definition of bullying behavior and/or program implementation. Such trainings may be constructed under the assumption that if teachers understand the definition of school bullying they will be able to identify the behavior, quickly, in a school environment. How bullying is defined is clearly important, however federal, state and local training efforts may benefit from expansion which allows teachers to practice identifying student behavior in scenarios, such as those utilized in this survey instrument. According to Yoon, Sulkowski, and Bauman (2016) teacher training should “go beyond information level…and should help teachers better understanding social dynamics and group processes of students, along with specific practical strategies to address bullying and victimization,” (p. 110). Such modifications may increase accuracy and effectiveness in intervention.

Accuracy and direct intervention results in this study confirm existing research which suggests that teachers have difficulty identifying specific types of bullying, in this case social aggression (Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000). However, this study indicates that teachers
may have difficulty identifying bullying behavior overall; not simply identifying specific
types of bullying behavior (overt and covert), but differentiating bullying from conflict,
teasing and peer aggression. Just over 25% of study participants were able to accurately
identify bullying behavior in five video scenarios. Any revisions to policy, training or
professional development related to school bullying should make considerations for how
teacher accuracy and direct intervention can be improved across all types of bullying.

It is also important to note that direct intervention in instances of bullying behavior is
positively correlated with accuracy rates. Research indicates that students view teachers as
unwilling to intervene in instances of bullying (Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003). Results of this
study indicate that teachers are willing to intervene – with 50% of teachers stating they
would directly intervene in all instances of school bullying and another 23.53% stating they
would directly intervene in two of three instances. However, what students perceive as
unwillingness to intervene may result from teachers’ inability to identify bullying behavior in
general. Furthermore, while research indicates that students and teacher identify bullying
behavior differently, these differences are likely complicated by teacher’s overall ability to
identify bullying behavior.

However, merely training individual teachers may not be enough to reduce student
experience with school bullying. This study indicates that other bystanders (including
administrators and peers) influence a teacher’s direct intervention in school bullying. As a
result, steps need to be taken to ensure that all members of a school community are working
together to address bullying; and feel supported and confident in the response of those around
them. Such steps may require further research into “how, exactly, cultural norms within a
school could impact bullying,” (Hektner & Swenson, 2012, p. 517). Moreover, use of the
ecological model may allow for such comprehensive exploration of these effects (Espelage, 2014; Hong & Espelage, 2012).

School administrators should recognize the important relationship between the administrator support variable created in this study and other variables of interest. Not only did administrator support have a significant impact on direct intervention, it was positively correlated with self-efficacy and peer support. The literature indicates that teachers may fear their administrator views them as a poor classroom manager when they refer instances of relational bullying to the office (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006). This study finds that administrator support is positively correlated to both aspects of teacher efficacy in school bullying – self-efficacy (knowing what to do) and response efficacy (implementing the solution) (Duong & Bradshaw, 2013; Latane and Darley, 1970). Administrator support is also a positive correlate of peer response. This may be because supportive administrators increase the self-efficacy of all teachers, which is observed as peer response. Administrators may also increase teacher efficacy through creation of process and procedures for addressing school bullying as well as devoting school resources to training or provision of school wide bullying prevention programs.

School administrators, teachers, and bullying prevention experts should recognize the importance of peer response in bullying intervention. This study finds that peer response has a significant impact on direct intervention, and was also significantly associated with self-efficacy. Stakeholders must understand this in efforts to create school environments free from bullying; being careful to help teachers work together to understand that their peers value direct intervention and appropriately respond to incidents of bullying.
Finally, results of this study may be important for teacher preparation programs. Research currently indicates that pre-service teachers are unprepared to address bullying and may become overwhelmed (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Kahn, Jones, & Wieland, 2012). While policy makers, state and district stakeholders may address training needs for in-service teachers, efforts to adjust curriculum in teacher preparation programs to train pre-service teachers regarding school bullying – specifically regarding accuracy and intervention – may ensure that teacher candidates graduate with the skills necessary to address bullying behavior in the classroom (Benítez, García-Berbén, & Fernández-Cabezas, 2009).

**Future Study**

A number of factors and results of this study should be further examined. This study was limited by a small number of participants. Replicating this study at a state then national level would help to understand how results were limited by response rates and survey error. Replication could also involve an expanded population – such as elementary and high school teachers, and other school staff such as classroom associates, school counselors, lunch room staff, bus drivers, and janitors. Such research would also assure that results could be generalized beyond middle school teachers at the two school districts participating in this study.

**Instrumentation.** Considerations should also be given to revising the survey instrument in future research which builds on this study. While this study examined accuracy rates of teachers, it should be noted that accuracy was tested across five video scenarios. Inclusion of additional video scenarios would allow for a more robust test of accuracy. Such expansion of scenarios would allow for multiple measures for each type of bullying behavior, allowing for increased measures of consistency. Scenarios should also be expanded to
include students diverse in terms of age, gender, and ethnicity. Additionally, other forms of bullying, which the literature indicates are difficult for teachers to identify, such as sexual harassment, could be included (Anagnostopoulous, Buchanan, Pereira, & Lichty, 2009).

The current survey instrument measures bystander response (or intervention) after each scenario that the participant identifies as bullying behavior. The intervention survey item allows for participants to choose multiple actions, or interventions, which meet with Latane and Darley’s (1970) definitions of direct and detour responses, such as intervene and stop the behavior, send the students to the Principal’s office, or follow up with the school counselor at a later time. Considerations should be made for how direct interventions are measured in future studies. Utilizing a ranked scale on the intervention item would allow for not only measuring if direct intervention would be used, but if it would be the first response of the bystander. Such a scale could also be expanded to include specific disciplinary action, such as punitive and non-punitive response to the student perpetrating bullying (Burger, Strohmeier, Sprober, Bauman, & Rigby, 2015). Options to “ignore” behavior could also be expanded to replicate scales used by Cortes and Kochenderfer-Ladd (2014) which included “advocate ignoring” and “encourage assertion.”

It is also important to explore, both through scenarios utilized and direct intervention measures, if teacher identify bullying and directly intervene in instances where students report bullying behavior that is not witnessed by the teacher. The literature suggests that teachers are less likely to intervene when bullying is reported compared to witnessed (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007). This may be an important differentiation in understanding how teachers identify bullying and when they choose direct intervention as a response. This may also impact the construct specific to peer support. It is important to
differentiate peer response to bullying that is witnessed and peer response to reports of school bullying. That said, the theory on bystander response utilized in this study was specific to response to an event or emergency which the bystander witnesses. As a result the theory may not apply to instances where bullying is reported, but not witnessed, by teachers. However, future studies may test this application and determine whether the theory can be applied to reported behavior in the case of school bullying.

It may also be important to add a construct specific to general teacher views of intervention in instances of school bullying. While the current survey instrument measures whether or not the teacher would utilize direct intervention in each scenario, it does not capture overall teacher views of direct intervention. The literature suggests that teachers may feel direct intervention makes matters worse for students in certain instances (Ellis & Shute, 2007). It is important to understand overall views of direct intervention, its effectiveness, and how teachers decide when to use it. This may also allow for understanding under what circumstances teachers prefer detour interventions. Furthermore, Burger et al. (2015) find that teachers frequently use authority-based interventions and may lack “knowledge and practice skills regarding alternative (non-punitive) approaches to working both with the bully and the victim,” (p. 199). To better understand how teachers would implement direct intervention, survey items may be added which measure teacher efficacy (knowledge and implementation) specific to both authoritarian and non-punitive interventions.

It is also important that survey items specific to training be modified. Currently, one item measures whether or not the training was research-based and what organization provided the training. In future studies it would be important to separate these variables, first measuring the type of training (research-based or not), and then creating a separate item for
the training provider. It is currently unknown if specific organizations (like the State Education Agency) solely provide research-based training. It may also be of interest to note if training was provided as part of a school-wide anti-bullying program, as research indicate staff involved in implementing schoolwide prevention programs are more likely to intervene (O’Brennan, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2014). Overall, additional research, perhaps including a focus group, may provide the additional details necessary to create an adequate survey item to measure teacher participation in training.

**Accuracy and Experience.** In future studies, accuracy could further be tested to understand more about the factors which teachers use to assess whether student behavior is or is not bullying. It is important to know if teachers look at student body language, listen for key words, or assess bystander behavior when determining if what they witness is in fact bullying. The literature suggests that teachers identify students engaged in bullying differently than students do; more frequently identifying students as bullies or bully-victims and less likely to identify students as targets (Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, de Bettencout, & Lemme, 2006; Wienke Totura, Gree, Karver, & Gesten, 2009). In the scenarios utilized in this survey instrument, teachers could be asked questions which assess how they identify the students. The context of the scenarios may help to further understanding as to how teachers “see” bullying and the students involved.

Results of this study indicate that accuracy rates are related to direct intervention, as is years of teaching experience (but the interaction between the two variables is not significant). Findings suggests that years of teaching experience do not necessarily increase accuracy but does increase direct intervention. More experienced teachers may be more likely to directly intervene in all instances of student conflict or peer aggression – not just
instances of school bullying. Future studies, specifically which use an expanded number of scenarios of student behavior, may test whether or not experience effects direct intervention in all student behavior, or only in incidents of school bullying.

**Understanding Administrator Support.** Results indicate that administrator support is correlated with teacher self-efficacy as well as peer support. Additional research is needed to further understand the relationship between these variables. While administrator support does not affect direct intervention, it is related to peer support (which has a nearly significant effect on direct intervention). Research, however, demonstrates that administrator support is related to decreased student experience with bullying and victimization, and increased willingness of students to respond as bystanders to school bullying (Espelage, Polanin, & Low, 2014). More research is needed to fully understand how administrator support effects bystander intervention in incidents of school bullying.

Both administrator support and peer support may actually measure the larger culture or climate of the school environment. Positive relationships between these groups may “create a collective sense of school pride” which in turn encourages bystander response (O’Brennan, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2014, p. 876). Espelage, Polanin, and Low (2014) found that “teacher and staff perceptions of school environment correspond with student reports of bullying behavior,” (p. 301). Furthermore, the relationships between school staff and administration are key in the implementation of new programs and initiatives (O’Brennan, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2014).

It is also important to better understand the correlation between administrator support and self-efficacy. Again, teachers fear their administrator will respond negatively to their reports of school bullying, and see them as poor classroom managers (Bauman & Del Rio,
2006). However, it is unclear how administrators may support teachers to develop the skills and strategies necessary to report school bullying or implement such strategies. The administrator support construct may be expanded to ask direct questions specific to whether school administration has provided resources to develop these strategies and skills.

**Expanding Peer Support.** Currently, the construct specific to peer support includes three survey items. Expansion of this construct may allow for further understanding how teachers feel peers respond. It was also assumed, in this study, that peer support would only mean the support of other adults in the building. This survey instrument does not measure how students respond to school bullying. While teachers are known to impact student response to bullying (Espelage, Polanin, & Low, 2014), it is unclear if students impact teachers as bystanders. Furthermore, in Latane and Darley’s (1970) theory on bystander intervention, bystanders are influenced by those around them perceived to have authority. It was assumed that other adults would have authority in a school building. However, students have a role in shaping the school environment. This may include testing perceptions specific to certain groups of students, such as popular students, student leaders, or student athletes.

Further exploration of the impacts of other bystanders (peers, administrators, even students) might suggest use of an ecological framework; where the impact of different systems on behavior, in this case direct intervention, are explored. This framework accounts for personal and environmental factors, and may better account for the influence of other factors, such as culture, on intervention (Hong & Espelage, 2012). Furthermore, these factors could still be aligned with Latane and Darley’s (1970) theory on bystander response. The ecological framework may also provide insight into how specific variables, such as
administrator support, impact the individual teachers and their peers, or how all stakeholders are impacted by school climate.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

VIRGINIA YOUTH VIOLENCE PROJECT

Permission to use Bullying or Not? video

Jennifer Farley <afarley@kstate.edu>
to youthvio, docnill 10/12/15

Good Afternoon,

My name is Jennifer Farley and I am a Doctoral Candidate at Iowa State University. I am working to complete research for my dissertation which seeks to understand teachers’ ability to identify and intervene in school bullying incidents. In my research, I plan to develop a survey which includes video scenarios of student behavior (both conflict and bullying). Survey participants (teachers) will be asked to identify whether the behavior in each video scenario is, or is not, bullying. They will also be asked a series of follow up questions specific to how they would respond to the behavior in the video clip.

I found the Virginia Youth Violence Project’s video, Bullying or Not?, on YouTube. I find this to be an incredibly valuable resource to explain and highlight the difference between bullying behavior and peer conflict. I would very much like to use the scenarios that are a part of this video on the survey instrument I am developing. This survey will be administered to approximately 500 teachers in an urban school district. Such use of this video will require editing the video into short segments, which show the student interaction without the narrators’ clarification of whether the behavior is or is not bullying.

Would it be permissible for me to utilize this video (Bullying or Not?) in this manner? Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the survey, how the survey will utilize this video, or my research.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Farley

Hi Jennifer,

Sure, you’re more than welcome to use our video. Additionally, you might find the below article useful.

Thanks,

Maria Malone

From: Jennifer Farley <afarley@kstate.edu>
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2015 3:13 PM
To: edh-yvp
Cc: docnill@virginia.edu
Subject: Permission to use Bullying or Not? video
Jennifer Farley <jfarley@batstate.edu>

to edh-yvp

Marina,

Thank you so much! I also appreciate the paper and look forward to reading it.

It is also OK to post the clips back on YouTube? I just learned (though conversations with Cornwell) that the video clips I plan to use exceed the allowable limit for embedded clips. Therefore, their recommendation was that I use YouTube as part of the survey instrument. I believe I can do this in a way that makes them not searchable (unlisted) and potentially private. Please let me know what you think.

Thank you again,

Jennifer

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edh-yvp <youthis@virginia.edu>

to me

Hi Jennifer,

I checked with Dr. Cornwell and that’s fine! Let us know if you need anything else.

Marina
Teacher Survey on School Bullying - CB

Q62 Thank you for your willingness to participate in this survey. This form describes this research project. It has information to help you decide whether or not you wish to participate. Research studies include only people who choose to take part—your participation is completely voluntary. Please discuss any questions you have about the study or about this form with Jennifer Farley (jefarley@iastate.edu or 515-371-1754) before deciding to participate.

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Title of Study: The Obligated Bystander: An analysis of factors which influence teacher intervention in school bullying.

Investigators: Jennifer Farley, Dr. Linda Hagedorn

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to learn how the following factors impact a school staff member’s intervention in incidents of school bullying: the identification of bullying behavior, the perception of administrator support, the perception of other school staff member's intervention in bullying, the staff member's access to and use of bullying prevention tools and resources. You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a middle school teacher or staff member in SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME. This study is focused on the experiences of middle school staff because research indicates that students experience bullying most during their middle school years. You should not participate if you are under the age of 18 or are not a full-time or part-time middle school staff member in SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME.

Description of Procedures

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an on-line survey about your experience with school bullying; specifically your experience identifying and intervening in such incidents. The survey is approximately 20 minutes in length. Survey questions utilize five video clips of student behavior. Most survey questions can be answered using scales of agreement or likelihood. The goal of the questions is to understand whether or not specific factors influence a teacher’s intervention in school bullying.

Risks or Discomforts

Individuals who have a personal experience with school bullying may experience discomfort in viewing scenarios about school bullying or answering questions about bullying behavior in their current school building.

Benefits

If you decide to participate in this study, there may be no direct benefit to you. It is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit society by documenting the factors that influence bullying prevention in school; with emphasis on the role of the teacher in bullying prevention, which has only recently begun to be studied.

Costs and Compensation

You will not have any costs from participating in this study. You will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Participant Rights

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part in the study or to stop participating at any time, for any reason, without penalty or negative consequences. You can skip any questions that you do not wish to answer. District and school building administration will not be made aware of the identities of survey participants. Your choice of whether or not to participate will have no impact on you as an employee in any way.

If you have any questions about
the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011. Confidentiality Your identity as a survey participant will remain confidential. Your school district will not be made aware of your individual participation. Your school district will be given a copy of the survey responses provided by participants, but identifying information (such as name, race, gender, age, position, years of experience, participation in training, building name) will not be shared. Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies, auditing departments of Iowa State University, and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy study records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information. To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken: Unique identification numbers will be created for both participants and the school buildings in which survey participants work. A single data file (key) will be created which links identifying data (participants name, building and email address) to these unique identification numbers. Identifying information will then be separated from survey data and only the unique identification numbers will be used in data analysis. The key will be stored in a location separate from the survey results. Both survey results and the key will be kept in encrypted external hard drives which will be stored in locked cabinets. The key will be destroyed in accordance with IRB guidelines. Participant identities will be kept confidential through the entire research process. When results are reported, all school buildings will be given pseudonyms. Results will not be reported according to demographic information when fewer than 10 people are part of any demographic category. Questions You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study. For further information about the study, contact Jennifer Farley at jefarley@iastate.edu or 515-371-1754. Or, Dr. Linda Hagedorn at lindah@iastate.edu or (515) 294-7002. Consent and Authorization Provisions Please indicate below whether you agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read this document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. Please print a copy of this informed consent for your own files or email Jennifer (jefarley@iastate.edu) and a copy of this informed consent document will be emailed to you.

☐ I give consent and wish to participate in this survey
☐ I do not give consent and wish not to participate in the survey.

If I give consent and wish to ... Is Selected, Then Skip To Thank you for choosing to participate...If I do not give consent and w... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey
Q61 Thank you for choosing to participate in this survey. This survey will utilize video clips, so please adjust the volume on your computer so the videos are audible. All video clips in this survey were produced by the Virginia Youth Violence Project at the University of Virginia. These clips have been edited and appear in this survey with the permission of the Virginia Youth Violence Project. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Please remember that your participation in this survey is voluntary and will help provide understanding of teacher's experience with school bullying.
Q1 Please watch the following video:
This video scenario includes the following student interaction: Student A approaches a table of other students and Student B tells her that the open seat is taken and she cannot join the group. Student A leaves; other students at the table suggest Student B needs to apologize to Student A.
This video can be found via this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAeVHAdLiLM

Are the students at the table engaged in bullying behavior or not?
☐ This behavior is bullying.
☐ This behavior is NOT bullying.

If This behavior is bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To How serious is this incident of bullying...
If This behavior is NOT bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To Please watch the following video:

Q35 How serious is this incident of bullying?
☐ Very Serious (1)
☐ Serious (2)
☐ Moderate (3)
☐ Minor (4)
☐ Very Minor (5)

Q6 What would you do if you saw this behavior in the cafeteria at school? Please select all that apply.
☐ Follow up with the student engaged in bullying at a later time.
☐ Follow up with the student targeted by the bullying at a later time.
☐ Ignore it.
☐ Intervene to stop the behavior.
☐ Nothing.
☐ Send the students involved to the office.
☐ Talk to an administrator about the behavior at a later time.
☐ Talk to another teacher, counselor, school psychologist or other adult at school about the behavior at a later time.
☐ Wait to see how other adults present respond.
☐ Other (please define) ____________________
Q2 Please watch the following video:
This video scenario includes the following student interaction: Student A is playing basketball in a gymnasium. Student B approaches Student A, takes the basketball and tells him to get lost. Student A says he was there first, Student B responds with, “Too bad, shrimp, I want to play now.”

This video can be accessed through the following link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THjIMxZfXuy0

Is the student in the yellow shirt engaged in bullying behavior or not?
☐ This behavior is bullying.
☐ This behavior is not bullying.

If This behavior is bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To How serious is this incident of bully...If This behavior is not bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To Please watch the following video:

Q36 How serious is this incident of bullying?
☐ Very Serious (1)
☐ Serious (2)
☐ Moderate (3)
☐ Minor (4)
☐ Very Minor (5)

Q7 What would you do if you saw this behavior on the playground at school? Please select all that apply.
☐ Follow up with the student engaged in bullying at a later time.
☐ Follow up with the student targeted by the bullying at a later time.
☐ Ignore it.
☐ Intervene to stop the behavior.
☐ Nothing.
☐ Send the students involved to the office.
☐ Talk to an administrator about the behavior at a later time.
☐ Talk to another teacher, counselor, school psychologist or other adult at school about the behavior at a later time.
☐ Wait to see how other adults present respond.
☐ Other (please define) ____________________
Q3 Please watch the following video:

_This video scenario includes the following student interaction: A group of students is standing in a hallway. Student A approaches the group and is made fun of for being the “stupid new kid,” talking “funny” and is told to “go back where you came from.”_

_This video can be accessed through this link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MW3AbaljBYc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MW3AbaljBYc)_

Are the students in the hall engaged in bullying behavior or not?
- This behavior is bullying.
- This behavior is not bullying.

If This behavior is not bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To How serious is this incident of bully...If This behavior is not bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To Please watch the following video.

Q37 How serious is this incident of bullying?
- Very Serious (1)
- Serious (2)
- Moderate (3)
- Minor (4)
- Very Minor (5)

Q8 What would you do if you saw this behavior in the hallway at school? Please select all that apply.
- Follow up with the student engaged in bullying at a later time.
- Follow up with the student targeted by the bullying at a later time.
- Ignore it.
- Intervene to stop the behavior.
- Nothing.
- Send the students involved to the office.
- Talk to an administrator about the behavior at a later time.
- Talk to another teacher, counselor, school psychologist or other adult at school about the behavior at a later time.
- Wait to see how other adults present respond.
- Other (please define) ____________________
Q4 Please watch the following video.

*This video includes the following student interaction: Student A approaches a table of other students and Student B tells her that the open seat is taken and she cannot join the group. Student A leaves; other students roll their eyes, describe Student A as a “such a loser” and make plans to “make sure no one talks to her.”*

This video can be accessed through this link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-4cY0nHptU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-4cY0nHptU)

Are the students at the table engaged in bullying behavior or not?
- ☑ The behavior is bullying.
- ☐ The behavior is not bullying.

If The behavior is bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To How serious is this incident of bullying...If

The behavior is not bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To Please watch the following video:

Q38 How serious is this incident of bullying?
- ☑ Very Serious (1)
- ☑ Serious (2)
- ☑ Moderate (3)
- ☐ Minor (4)
- ☐ Very Minor (5)

Q9 What would you do if you saw this behavior in the cafeteria at school? Please select all that apply.
- ☐ Follow up with the student engaged in bullying at a later time.
- ☐ Follow up with the student targeted by the bullying at a later time.
- ☐ Ignore it.
- ☐ Intervene to stop the behavior.
- ☐ Nothing.
- ☐ Send the students involved to the office.
- ☐ Talk to an administrator about the behavior at a later time.
- ☐ Talk to another teacher, counselor, school psychologist or other adult at school about the behavior at a later time.
- ☐ Wait to see how other adults present respond.
- ☐ Other (please define) ____________________
Q5 Please watch the following video:

_This video includes the following student interaction: A group of students is standing in a hallway. Student A tells Student B that her soccer team “stuck this weekend, we totally beat you.” Student B responds that the game was “really close and next time we will beat you,” and the two continue to banter._

_This video can be accessed through the following link:_
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnE5zElJC9w

Are either of the two students speaking engaged in bullying behavior or not?
- The behavior is bullying.
- The behavior is not bullying.

If The behavior is bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To How serious is this incident of bully...If The behavior is not bullying. Is Selected, Then Skip To Have you ever seen a student bullied ...

Q39 How serious is this incident of bullying?
- Very Serious (1)
- Serious (2)
- Moderate (3)
- Minor (4)
- Very Minor(5)

Q10 What would you do if you saw this behavior in the hallway at school? Please select all that apply.
- Follow up with the student engaged in bullying at a later time.
- Follow up with the student targeted by the bullying at a later time.
- Ignore it.
- Intervene to stop the behavior.
- Nothing.
- Send the students involved to the office.
- Talk to an administrator about the behavior at a later time.
- Talk to another teacher, counselor, school psychologist or other adult at school about the behavior at a later time.
- Wait to see how other adults present respond.
- Other (please define) ____________________
Q12 How much is bullying a problem at this school?
- Serious problem (1)
- Moderate problem (2)
- Minor problem (3)
- Not a problem (4)

Q54 How concerned are you with bullying at this school?
- Very Concerned (1)
- Concerned (2)
- Somewhat Concerned (3)
- Slightly Concerned (4)
- Not Concerned (5)

Q11 Have you ever seen a student bullied at this school?
- Yes
- No

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Have you ever intervened in an incident of bullying at this school?
If No Is Selected, Then Skip To If you see bullying at this school, h...

Q14 Have you ever intervened in an incident of bullying at this school?
- Yes
- No

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To What was your objective in intervening?
If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Why did you not intervene?

Q31 What was your primary objective in intervening? Please select all that apply.
- Stopping the behavior.
- Getting the students back on track.
- Ensuring the student who was bullying gets punished.
- Rescuing the target of the bullying.
- Other (please define) ____________________

Q16 When I have intervened in a bullying situation, things have gotten worse.
- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Unsure (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)

If Strongly Agree (1) Is Selected, Then Skip To If you see bullying at this school, h...
If Agree (2) Is Selected, Then Skip To If you see bullying at this school, h...
If Unsure (3) Is Selected, Then Skip To If you see bullying at this school, h...
If Disagree (4) Is Selected, Then Skip To If you see bullying at this school, h...
If Strongly Disagree (5) Is Selected, Then Skip To If you see bullying at this school, h...
Q33 Why did you not intervene? (select all that apply)
☐ It was best to let the students sort it out for themselves.
☐ I was afraid to make it worse for the target of the bullying.
☐ It is someone else's responsibility to intervene.
☐ The behavior was too minor to bother with.
☐ I was too busy to get involved.
☐ I did not have time to intervene.
☐ I was afraid of the student engaged in bullying.
☐ I am not confident in my skills to intervene.
☐ Other adults were not intervening.
☐ I wasn’t sure if the behavior was bullying.
☐ If I sent the students to the office nothing would be done about it.
☐ Other (Please define) __________________

Q23 If you see bullying at this school, how likely would it be for you to intervene?
☐ Very Unlikely (1)
☐ Unlikely (2)
☐ Undecided (3)
☐ Likely (4)
☐ Very Likely (5)

Q47 If other adults at this school see bullying, how likely are they to intervene?
☐ Very Unlikely (1)
☐ Unlikely (2)
☐ Undecided (3)
☐ Likely (4)
☐ Very Likely (5)

Q19 How much do you agree or disagree with this statement: Adults at this school are doing enough to stop bullying.
☐ Strongly Disagree (1)
☐ Disagree (2)
☐ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
☐ Agree (4)
☐ Strongly Agree (5)
Q21 How often do adults at this school to watch bullying and do nothing?
- Always (1)
- Most of the time (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Rarely (4)
- Never (5)

Q63 How often are teachers/staff told to not classify student behaviors as bullying?
- Always (1)
- Most of the time (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Rarely (4)
- Never (5)

Q48 If administrators at this school see bullying, how likely are they to intervene?
- Very Unlikely (1)
- Unlikely (2)
- Undecided (3)
- Likely (4)
- Very Likely (5)

Q45 The administrators at this school clearly communicate how teachers and staff should address school bullying.
- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)

Q44 Administrators at this school are responsive to teacher/staff reports of school bullying.
- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Agree (5)
Q20 How much do you agree or disagree with this statement: Administrators at this school are doing enough to stop bullying.
   ☑ Strongly Disagree (1)
   ☑ Disagree (2)
   ☑ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
   ☑ Agree (4)
   ☑ Strongly Agree (5)

Q22 How often do administrators at this school watch bullying and do nothing?
   ☑ Always (1)
   ☑ Most of the time (2)
   ☑ Sometimes (3)
   ☑ Rarely (4)
   ☑ Never (5)

Q15 I am knowledgeable of effective bullying intervention strategies.
   ☑ Strongly Disagree (1)
   ☑ Disagree (2)
   ☑ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
   ☑ Agree (4)
   ☑ Strongly Agree (5)

   If Strongly Disagree (1) Is Selected, Then Skip To I feel safe at this school.
   If Disagree (2) Is Selected, Then Skip To I feel safe at this school.
   If Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) Is Selected, Then Skip To I feel safe at this school.

Q50 I am able to implement effective bullying intervention strategies when needed.
   ☑ Strongly Disagree (1)
   ☑ Disagree (2)
   ☑ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
   ☑ Agree (4)
   ☑ Strongly Agree (5)

Q13 I feel safe at this school.
   ☑ Strongly Disagree (1)
   ☑ Disagree (2)
   ☑ Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
   ☑ Agree (4)
   ☑ Strongly Agree (5)
Q24 Everyone experiences bullying at some point in their life.
- Strongly Disagree (1)
- Disagree (2)
- Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)
- Agree (4)
- Strongly Disagree (5)
Q25 Were you ever bullied as a child?
☐ Yes
☐ No

Q26 Have you been bullied at this school?
☐ Yes
☐ No

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Who bullied you? If No Is Selected, Then Skip To Have you ever received training specific to school bullying?

Q27 Who bullied you? Please select all that apply.
☐ Student
☐ Parent
☐ Teacher
☐ Administrator
☐ Other (please define) ____________________

Q49 Have you ever received training specific to school bullying?
☐ Yes
☐ No

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To Please indicate which of the following trainings have you been a participant? If No Is Selected, Then Skip To For how many years have you been teaching?

Q55 In which of the following trainings have you been a participant? Please select all that apply.
☐ Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
☐ Second Step Violence Prevention
☐ Steps to Respect
☐ Training from the Area Education Agency (AEA).
☐ Training from the Iowa Department of Education.
☐ Training from Iowa State Education Association.
☐ Training from Iowa Safe Schools.
☐ Other (please define) ____________________

Q29 For how many years have you been teaching?
☐ First year
☐ 2-5 years
☐ 6-10 years
☐ 11-15 years
☐ More than 15 years
Q28 For how many years have you been a teacher at this school?
- First Year
- 2-3 years
- 4-5 years
- 6-7 years
- 8-9 years
- 10 or more years

Q53 What is your gender?
- Female
- Male
- Other gender identity (please define) ____________________

Q56 What is your race/ethnicity?
- African American
- Asian
- Latino
- More than one race/ethnicity
- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- White/Caucasian
- Other (please define) ____________________
Q58 What year were you born?

- 2000
- 1999
- 1998
- 1997
- 1996
- 1995
- 1994
- 1993
- 1992
- 1991
- 1990
- 1989
- 1988
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- 1986
- 1985
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APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Date: 3/23/2016
To: Jennifer Farley
2206 S. Duff Ave.
Ames, IA 50010

From: Office for Responsible Research

Title: The Obligated Bystander: Analyzing factors which influence teacher intervention in school bullying

IRB ID: 16-096

Approval Date: 3/22/2016
Date for Continuing Review: 3/21/2018
Submission Type: New
Review Type: Expected

The project referenced above has received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Iowa State University according to the dates shown above. Please refer to the IRB ID number shown above in all correspondence regarding this study.

To ensure compliance with federal regulations (45 CFR 46 & 21 CFR 50), please be sure to:

• Use only the approved study materials in your research, including the recruitment materials and informed consent documents that have the IRB approval stamp.

• Retain signed informed consent documents for 3 years after the close of the study, when documented consent is required.

• Obtain IRB approval prior to implementing any changes to the study by submitting a Modification Form for Non-Exempt Research or Amendment for Personal Changes form, as necessary.

• Immediately inform the IRB of (1) all serious and/or unexpected adverse experiences involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) any other unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

• Stop all research activity if IRB approval is revoked, unless continuation is necessary to prevent harm to research participants. Research activity can resume once IRB approval is reestablished.

• Complete a new continuing review form at least three to four weeks prior to the date for continuing review as noted above to provide sufficient time for the IRB to review and approve continuation of the study. We will send a courtesy reminder as this date approaches.

Please be aware that IRB approval means that you have met the requirements of federal regulations and ISU policies governing human subjects research. Approval from other entities may also be needed. For example, access to data from private records (e.g., student, medical, or employment records, etc.) that are protected by FERPA, HIPAA, or other confidentiality policies requires permission from the holders of those records. Similarly, for research conducted in institutions other than ISU (e.g., schools, other colleges or universities, medical facilities, companies, etc.), investigators must obtain permission from the institution(s) as required by their policies. IRB approval in no way implies or guarantees that permission from these other entities will be granted.

Upon completion of the project, please submit a Project Closure Form to the Office for Responsible Research, 1138 Pearson Hall, to officially close the project.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns at 515-294-4569 or IRB@iastate.edu.
North School District Introduction Letter

Dear [INSERT NAME],

Greetings! As DISTRICT STAFF NAME indicated in his/her message yesterday, I am reaching out to you as part of a research study on school bullying. As you know, the best way to understand complex issues in education is to directly ask teachers about their personal experience. In this study, your personal experience with identifying and intervening in school bullying will help stakeholders understand how to support teacher efforts in bullying prevention and intervention.

This short on-line survey should take no more than 20 minutes to complete. To ensure your input is included in this study, please click on the link below:

[LINK]

There is a risk that the survey may make you uncomfortable if you’ve had a personal experience with school bullying. Your participation is completely voluntary. Any information which may identify you, your school building, or your school district, will not be associated with your individual responses or any survey reports. Your school district will be given a copy of the survey responses provided by participants, but identifying information (such as name, race, gender, age, position, years of experience, participation in training, building name) will NOT be shared.

Your participation in this survey will greatly increase the general understanding of the experiences of school staff with student bullying behavior. The results of this survey will be the focus of my dissertation and may be published to help fill the existing gap in research specific to supporting school staff in bullying prevention and intervention.

If you have any questions regarding this survey and participation, please contact me at jefarley@iastate.edu or 515-371-1754.

Thank you for your time and consideration in completing this survey. Your perspective is highly valuable in this study. Thank you for your participation!
Sincerely,

Jennifer Farley  
Doctoral Candidate  
School of Education  
Iowa State University

South School District Introduction Letter:  
The following language was recommended for South School District’s use in notifying potential participants of the study.

Dear [INSERT NAME],

Greetings! As you know, school districts across the nation are currently challenged by student bullying behavior. School bullying is a complex issue and the best way to understand complex issues in education is to directly ask teachers about their personal experience. Our district has been invited to participate in a research study on school bullying which allows you, as a teacher, to share your personal experience with identifying and intervening in school bullying. Jennifer Farley, at Iowa State University, is conducting this study and the results will help stakeholders understand how to support teacher efforts in bullying prevention and intervention.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your experience is captured through a short on-line survey which should take no more than 20 minutes to complete. To ensure your input is included in this study, please click on the link below:

[LINK]

There is a risk that the survey may make you uncomfortable if you’ve had a personal experience with school bullying. Again, your participation is completely voluntary and all responses will be kept confidential. Any information which may identify you, your school building, or your school district, will not be associated with your individual responses or any survey reports. The district will be provided a summary of the survey results.

Your participation in this survey will greatly increase the general understanding of teachers’ experiences with student bullying behavior. The results of this survey will be the focus of Jennifer’s dissertation and may be published to help fill the existing gap in research specific to supporting teachers and administrators in bullying prevention and intervention.

If you have any questions regarding this survey and participation, please contact Jennifer Farley at jefarley@iastate.edu or 515-371-1754.

Thank you for your time and consideration in completing this survey. Your perspective is highly valuable in this study.

Sincerely,
DISTRICT OFFICIAL