“A Pack of Wolves”: Bullying in an increasingly diverse school population - A socio-ecological model analysis

Southeastern School Behavioral Health Conference 2017 @ Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
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What is Bullying?
http://www.online-stopwatch.com/rocket-timer/full-screen/

Definition of bullying

What is bullying?

• No single accepted definition

• Consists of 3 criteria (Olweus, 2010)
  1. Intention
  2. Imbalance of power
  3. Repetitiveness
The Bullying Cycle


Reflect on your past experiences

• When is the earliest experience you had as a
  1. Bully
  2. Victim
  3. Bully/Victim
  4. Bystander

Write down the age on the paper.

Significance & Purpose of study

• Systematic research into bullying is still new (about 40 years)
• UNESCO 2017 global status report states that 246 million children and young people experienced school violence
• NICHD survey in 1998 indicates 3 out of 10 students in US are involved in bullying
• YRBSS survey in 2015 indicates 15.5% had been electronically bullied, 20.2% had been bullied on school property
• In 2015, The Department of Homeland Security reported 69,920 refugees entered in US of which 43.9% are children and youth (0-17 years)
• School bullying within multicultural context limited
Conceptual framework
Social-ecological model

Macrosystem
Exosystem
Mesosystem
Microsystem

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<td>Limited investigations in school bullying in multicultural context, especially on refugee children that are greatly increasing in our schools due to globalization and immigration</td>
<td>Examine the impact of school bullying on the special population of refugee children</td>
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<td>over the past 30 years.</td>
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<td>Most bullying research uses self report that employs a quantitative approach to the bullying phenomenon</td>
<td>Does not provide in depth knowledge into the bullying phenomenon</td>
<td>Employ an explanatory design where quantitative method is carried out first and qualitative method used as a follow up to clarify and confirm the findings.</td>
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<td><strong>4. Immigration</strong></td>
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<td>Race and ethnicity on the one hand and immigration status on the other have been confounded</td>
<td>Limited investigation of bullying impact on immigrants and refugees</td>
<td>Studying the impact of bullying on native born; immigrants and refugee children</td>
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<td><strong>5. Age</strong></td>
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<td>Current findings on impact of bullying on children within different age group is mixed</td>
<td>Limited investigations regarding aggression in young children Grade 3 and below</td>
<td>Comparing the impact of bullying on Grade 3 and Grade 6 students in school</td>
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1. Does being a refugee result in a higher prevalence of bullying as compared to a native born and immigrant within 3rd and 6th Grade classrooms?

2. Does immigration status and age influence the level of bullying in the classrooms?

3. Through a social ecological model framework, how does the influence of the individual, teachers and family impact bullying among refugee children?

Explanatory Design

- Quantitative Method
  - Swearer Bully Survey
    - a. Students
    - b. Teachers

- Qualitative Method
  - Interview of students

- Data Analysis
  - Combine & interpret results

Sample design

- Purposeful sample
- Public school with a mixed population of native born and refugee children
- Students: (N=199) from Grade 3 & 6
- Respondents: Total 116 (58 %)
- Teachers: (N=13)
  - 6 (3rd Grade) and 6 (6th Grade) and 1 gym instructor
Descriptive Statistics of Student Sample

Quantitative Sample (Survey)
Grade Level: G3 (N=51, 57%) & G6 (N=65, 43%)
Gender: Girls (N=59, 51%) & Boys (N=57, 49%)
Immigration status:
  Refugees (N= 57, 49%)
  Immigrants (N= 27, 23%)
  Native Born (N= 32, 28%)

Descriptive Statistics of Student Sample

• Qualitative Sample (Interview) – 12 questions
• 22 students selected for follow up interview
  Grade Level: G3 (N=10) & G6 (N=12)
• Gender: Girls (N=12) & Boys (N=10)
Immigration status:
  Refugees (N= 7)
  Immigrants (N= 4)
  Native Born (N= 11)

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

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<td>No significant difference on prevalence of bullying among refugee, immigrant and native born</td>
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<td>Surge in school bullying research over the past 30 years. Focus mostly on Western countries</td>
<td>Refugee children (non passive victim) as compared to immigrant &amp; native born (passive victim)</td>
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Non passive and passive victim

- **Non passive victim**: Grade 3 Thai refugee
  "When they are mean to me, I tell don’t treat me like that. If they actually hit me, I say don’t touch me.”
  Grade 6 refugees would report the bullying situation to the teacher, principal and parents.

- **Passive victim**: Grade 6 native born
  "They know I won’t do anything about it”.
  Grade 3 native born
  "Bullies are like wolf”

New categorization of victim

- **Passive victims** are defined as one who do not react visibly or act upon the bullying situation.
- **Non passive victims** are defined as one who reacts by defending themselves and act upon by reporting to higher authority during the bullying situation.
- Refugee children react as non passive victim unlike immigrant and native born who react as passive victim

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<td>Student &amp; Teacher Survey</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Highest prevalence of bullying on school bus</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>More victims than bully</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non unanimous</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Children victimized more frequently than teacher’s knowledge</td>
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Descriptive Statistics of prevalence of bullying

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<th>Swearer Bully Survey Children</th>
<th>Swearer Bully Survey Teacher</th>
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<tr>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bully</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bystander</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
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Children's definition of bully

- Someone who adopts the form of physical, emotional and verbal bullying
- Physical: Hitting and pushing
- Verbal: yelling, saying bad words, commenting on physical characteristics such as size; dressing, skin color and intelligence
Children’s description of bully

- Poor academics - “Don’t get good grades”; “Don’t like anything; they don’t follow directions…”
- “Mean person”
- “A person who picks on little kids, who tell little kids not to mess with kids their size”
- Seek out easy target – “I am a really nice person. I really want people to see me as a nice person and this makes it easy for me to be picked on”

Children’s definition of victim

- Calling for help – “A victim is scared, he or she needs help, they feel like a they are prisoner…want to move on with life…”
- Repetition – “The victim is someone who is picked on by bully and has always been bullied”

Children’s description of victim

- Quiet and shy but can be angry and mad
- Academic performance affected – “He doesn’t complete his homework, he gets bad behavior points”
- Absent from school – “…it makes them not come to school”
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**Ethnic & Immigrant bullying: Bullied because of difference**

- Grade 6 refugee (Boy): Cause some people see me as different, cause of my color, judge me by where I am from, food we eat, clothes we wear”.
- Grade 6 refugee (Girl): “There is this girl in my class I’m talking to her and she says I don’t get you and things like that, and I say why don’t you get me, I speak English, and she says I don’t care, I’m not getting you because you look bald when you are wearing your scarf”.

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<td>Grade 3 children are subject to a higher prevalence of bullying as a victim as compared to Grade 6 children</td>
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limitations

1. Not possible to determine to whom the refugee child’s bullying is directed to
2. Swearer bully survey system might not be as culturally appropriate
3. Parents not included in the sample due to more than 50 home languages spoken

Implications of bullying to future acts of violence

• Grade 6 African refugee boy “Cause I believe that what you learn in school helps you understand how to act outside of school, they were bullied, so they learned to be bullies, then they need to bully…”
• The Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence (2008) also suggests that bullies are up to “4 times as likely as non-bullies to be convicted of crimes by age 24”.

DIRECTION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

• Develop a more culturally appropriate bully instrument for diverse school community
• To have various focus group with translators to include parents sample in the study
• To further investigate the new category of victims and also bully and bystander
Resources for Bullying Prevention

**Supporting Children:**
- www.ncpc.org
- http://www.netsmartzkids.org
- www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org

**Supporting Adults**
- www.clemson.edu/olweus/
- http://www.stopbullying.gov/
- http://www.cfchildren.org/

What does it mean for me?

- What can I do to STOP the bullying cycle for
  1. Bully
  2. Victim
  3. Bully/Victim
  4. Bystander

Share one strategy for the above roles
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HpTZhlhcrQ

Resources

Resources


Thank you

Questions?
You can contact me at Jane.Lim@mtsu.edu

Learning Objectives

1. Olweus’ definition of bullying
2. Be aware of the impact of Bronfenbrenner social-ecological framework on bullying
3. Roles of victims, bullies and their impact in the classroom
4. Develop strategies to STOP the bullying cycle