2006

Assessment of Teasing and Bullying Within a Neighborhood Catholic Elementary School

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ASSESSMENT OF TEASING AND BULLYING

WITHIN A NEIBORHOOD CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BY

Leah Marchewka

A Directed Research Project

Submitted to the Faculty of
Barry University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Specialist in School Psychology

Miami Shores, Florida

March 5, 2006

BARRY UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The prevalence of bullying behaviors within a Catholic elementary school was assessed

using the Teasing and Bullying Survey: School Version (TABS-S, Bodin, 2002). The

TABS-S is a 35-item self-report instrument for grades 4 through 8 measuring the

student's experience of having been a bully, victim, or bystander. Parent (TABS-P) and

teacher (TABS-T) versions were developed to parallel the student version. Descriptive

analyses were used to evaluate the prevalence and type of bullying and teasing behaviors

obtained from 147 students, 63 parents, and 9 teachers. The results of this study found

that direct forms of bullying were more frequent, boys experienced a higher percentage,

and both parents and teachers were aware of these behaviors.

Assessment of Teasing and Bullying
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On March 7, 2000, in a small private Catholic school in Williamsport

Pennsylvania, a 14-year-old girl named Elizabeth Bush shot and injured a cheerleader

then threatened to turn the gun on herself (Bowman, 2001). According to Bowman

(2001), this incident occurred during Elizabeth Bush's first year attending this private

institution. Previously she attended a public school where she was the victim of bullies.

Students threw stones at her, chased her, and left a note in her locker telling her to leave

her school and her town or her parents would be harmed. Elizabeth's parents transferred

her to the private school hoping her life would be better, but the teasing had continued at

the new school.

Bullying has been defined as any unprovoked behavior intended to physically or

psychologically attack, damage, exclude and/or intimidate (Batsche, 1997; Snell &

MacKenzie, 2002; Larson, Smith & Furlong, 2002). Various researchers have extended

this definition. Crothers and Levinson (2004), for example, define bullying as the

repeated negative actions of other students over time. It has been further proposed that

the objective of bullying behavior is to establish and maintain power in social

environments, with the likelihood that successful bullying will be repeated (Crothers &

Levinson, 2004; Snell & MacKenzie, 2002). Not surprisingly, these behaviors are

generally directed toward those individuals who perpetrators believe to be physically

weaker, easily intimidated or who will not fight back (Batsche, 1997; Crothers &

Levinson, 2004). According to Crothers and Levinson (2004), students who are

chronically bullied may lack the social skills that are needed to develop and integrate with peer groups in order to prevent attacks (Crothers & Levinson, 2004).

There is consensus among experts that very often the serious acts of violence in schools have been preceded by the perpetrator experiencing ostracization, persecution, threats, unrelenting severe bullying humiliation, and harassment (Aspy, et al., 2004; Crothers & Levinson, 2004). In many cases, the students who engaged in these bullying behaviors later became the targets of the victim turned perpetrator. It has been noted that even milder forms of bullying should be treated seriously as they may be an early indicator of a situation that has the potential to result in more serious violent behavior (Aspy et al., 2004; Smith & Sandhu, 2004).

It is a common assumption that private schools offer a higher level of security and support for its students as compared to public schools (Watt, 2003). This assumption, however, is based upon research that was conducted over 25 years ago. These early studies empirically linked private schools to academic achievement as well as lower rates of school crime and misconduct. These studies, however, did not address the social, emotional or academic effects that these aggressive behaviors can have on students. The results of the studies did not support the assertion that private schools were beneficial, or superior to the public institutions (Watt, 2003). Still today, there is a prevailing view that private schools are superior (Watt, 2003).

A review of the literature indicates that most research evaluating the type, prevalence and effects of teasing and bullying behavior has been conducted in the public school system (Snell & MacKenzie, 2002; Brendtro, 2001; Batsche, 1997; Crick, Casas & Nelson, 2002; Larson, 2000; Hoover & Olson, 2000; Froschl & Gropper, 1999; Scott,

Nelson & Liaupsin, 2001; Crothers & Levinson, 2004; Larson Smith & Furlong, 2002; Aspy et al., 2004; Smith & Sandhu, 2004; Schwartz, McFadyen-Ketchum, Dodge, Pettit & Bates, 1999;Wheeler, 2004; Espelage, Bosworth & Simon, 2000; Stevens, De Bourdeaudhuij & Van Oost, 2000; Dill, Vernberg, Fonagy, Twemlow & Gamm, 2004). In contrast, there is a dearth of research assessing bullying behavior in the private sector, although according to Watt (2003), a few studies have been conducted in non-public schools.

Snell and MacKenzie (2002) note that teasing and bullying behaviors can have long-term effects on students' academic functioning and social and emotional adjustment. Children who are bullied may experience negative attitudes toward school and low academic functioning resulting in higher truancy and drop out rates. Social effects of bullying include poor peer relationships, peer rejection, learned aggression and displacement. Emotional effects include decreased self-esteem, fear, loneliness, depression and anxiety (Snell & MacKenzie, 2002).

Bullying behaviors can also be classified as direct or indirect bullying. Examples of direct bullying include physical and verbal attacks such as name-calling, ridicule and threats resulting in immediate effects. In these cases, the targeted child, along with other children, know that bullying has occurred and, in fact, know the identity of the bully.   On the other hand, indirect bullying is characterized by rumors, intimidation and the encouragement of group rejection or relational victimization. In this case, the identity of the bully is not apparent, and the targeted child may not even be present during the incident (Brendtro, 2001; Crick, Casas & Nelson, 2002; Snell & MacKenzie, 2002; Wheeler, 2004). Lock & Trautman (2003) note that bullying behaviors may be

encountered three different ways: verbal and written (i.e., name-calling, placing phone calls, sending e-mails), physical (i.e., pushing, gestures with derogatory meaning, damaging personal effects), or social/relational (i.e., gossip, telling personal information, excluding).

Two types of victims have also been identified. The passive type of victim is generally anxious, insecure, may appear withdrawn or submissive, does not put up a defense, and does not seem to provoke the aggressive behaviors (Batsche, 1997; Schwartz, McFadyen-Ketchum, Dodge, Pettit & Bates, 1999). The provocative type of victim, on the other hand, while also anxious, will put up a defense and tends to anger quickly.

Data indicate that although girls do engage in direct physical and verbal bullying, they more frequently use indirect bullying. Conversely, boys tend to engage in three times as much direct as indirect bullying. The occurrence of direct bullying is equal among girls and boys. Overall, girls engage in more bullying behaviors than boys. Boys, as compared to girls, are more often victims of physical abuse while girls are more often victims of verbal abuse (Batsche, 1997; Froschl & Gropper, 1999; Snell & MacKenzie, 2002; Larson, Smith & Furlong, 2002).

The literature also suggests that children who have been the victims of bullying often retaliate, in essence, becoming bullies themselves. In fact, there is evidence that some children who have been the victims of the most extreme peer violence may actually become some of the most aggressive bullies. These bullies are the victims who were the most disliked by peers, and were at the most risk for emotional and social maladjustment.

The provocative type profile is more likely to become the victimized/aggressive/rejected bully (Batsche, 1997).

Reports of incidence rates of the different types of bullying vary according to who is providing the information. Teachers have reported that the most prevalent forms of observed aggression in the schools are intimidation, threats, pushing and name-calling (Scott, Nelson & Liaupsin, 2001). On the other hand, students have reported teasing as the most prevalent form of aggression. Students also reported that they felt the verbal attacks were the most hurtful as compared to physical attacks (Hoover & Olson, 2000).

As might be expected, age is also a factor in the incidence of bullying behavior. For example, the youngest students are at the most risk because they are weaker and more vulnerable than older students (Batsche, 1997). Many kindergarten students experience physical and verbal bullying by their peers, though the harassment begins to focus on a small group by the time they enter first grade (Bullying Effects, 2004). Direct bullying seems to be greater in grades two through six, then decreases during junior high and high school, while verbal aggression remains constant (Batsche, 1997). According to Crothers and Levinson (2004), 15-20% of the student population will be victimized by bullies during their academic career.

Literature related to the social risks associated with bullying suggests that both perpetrators *and* victims are at increased social risk, although the nature of those risks is different. For example, Snell and MacKenzie (2002) noted that longitudinal studies of aggressive behavior had shown a correlation between the perpetration of bullying behaviors and future social problems (e.g., Eron, Huesmann, Dubow, Romanoff, & Yarmel, 1987; Farrington, 1991; Olweus, 1991; Loeber et.al.,1993; Nagin & Tremblay,

1999). According to Snell and MacKenzie (2002), children between sixth and ninth

grade who are chronic bullies tend to display more antisocial behaviors and have more

disciplinary problems during their adolescent years. As adults, their antisocial behavior

may continue and they may have higher rates of unemployment and criminal activity

(Snell & MacKenzie, 2002). In fact, 60% had one or more criminal convictions by age

24 (Batsche, 1997; Snell & MacKenzie, 2002).

The victims of bullying behavior, on the other hand, may experience difficulty

concentrating and may develop school phobia (Crothers &Levinson, 2004). Victims also

tend to have a generally negative attitude toward school, higher truancy rates, and higher

drop out rates during adolescence (Batsche, 1997; Snell & MacKenzie, 2002). There has

been a consensus that victims of bullying behavior can experience detrimental social

effects, which include peer rejection, learned aggression and displacement.

Unfortunately, this type of reduction in opportunities for peer relationships has been

associated with delinquency and substance abuse. The emotional effects of bullying

include decreased self-esteem, fear loneliness, depression and anxiety. Decreased self-

esteem and depression are likely to continue into adulthood as a result of long-term peer

victimization (Batsche, 1997; Crick, Casas & Nelson, 2002; Snell & MacKenzie, 2002;

Tate, 2001).

In terms of the bullying environment, Froschl and Gropper (1999) and Snell and

MacKenzie (2002) have reported that bullying often occurs in unsupervised areas within

the school, and is usually not reported. Children who are bystanders to teasing and

bullying incidents often fear becoming the new target, and tend to focus on their own

stress and confusion while providing an audience, which is reinforcing to the bully, instead of helping the child being targeted.

The children who are being bullied often do not report these behaviors to adults for fear of retaliation (Batsche, 1997). In addition, the literature suggests that teachers often do not intervene when aggressive behaviors are observed. This reportedly occurs for several reasons. First, teachers may believe that the behavior is simply a part of growing up. Second, some teachers may believe that children should learn to work out their own problems and not be tattletales (Froschl & Gropper, 1999; Snell & MacKenzie, 2002). Furthermore, Batsche (1997) notes that teachers often ignore verbal aggression and excluding behaviors because they are viewed as less serious than a physical assault.

Given children's reticence and teachers' reported disinclination to respond, it may not be surprising that parents are often not aware of the problem. The literature also suggests, however, that even parents may mistake aggression for rough play (Will & Neufeld, 2003). These tendencies on the part of children, teachers and parents become particularly troublesome when viewed from the perspective of the literature that suggests that when bullying behavior is viewed as part of growing up, and accepted by adults, the potential for violence escalates (Will & Neufeld, 2003).

Advances in technology have also extended the boundaries for bullies. Today, bullying behavior is not only displayed at school and on the playground, but may also be displayed through the Internet (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) investigated Internet harassment, which they defined as a purposeful action to intentionally harass or embarrass someone, or to write malicious comments about someone, while online (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). The online aggressor is similar to the

schoolyard bully, where the goal of the behavior is to obtain power over others. These authors identified four different group types associated with the internet: the target (e.g., the child being threatened, or worried about another person's actions), the online aggressor (e.g., the child who is harassing others), the aggressor/targets (e.g., children who reportedly act as an aggressor, as well as being targeted by others), and the non-harassment involved (e.g., neither aggressor, nor target). The non-harassment involved children are simply children not involved in bullying activity, nor are they worried about another child's actions.

Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) interviewed 1,501 adolescents between the ages of 10 and 17 to investigate the extent of Internet bullying in this age group. The results of their study revealed that 4% of the sample reported being targets, 12% reported being aggressors, and 3% reported being aggressor/targets. Of the aggressors, 84% reported that they knew who they were harassing, whereas only 31% of those being targeted knew who the harasser was. Adolescents who reported being aggressor/targets also reported experiencing the same psychological, social, and academic challenges that bullies, as well as victims, experience in the school yard setting. The results also revealed that the online aggressor and aggressor/targets groups were more likely to be high school students, rather than middle school students (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004).

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the prevalence of bullying activity within a neighborhood Catholic elementary school to determine if there is a need for a bullying prevention program and to provide descriptive statistics for the construction of norms to facilitate our understanding of this behavior in this population. In order to expand on available information the extent, frequency, and type of teasing and

bullying that was occurring within the school, was assessed using the Teasing and

Bullying Survey: School Version (TABS-S, Bodin, 2002). With Bodin's permission and

collaboration, the school version was modified to create parallel parent (TABS-P) and

teacher (TABS-T) versions of the original scale.

The TABS-S is a self-report measure of the student's experience of having been a

bully, a victim, or a bystander (i.e., observing someone being victimized). This

instrument is still in a research stage, therefore, reliability and validity information is not

available. The TABS-S was chosen for use in the present study because of its availability

without cost and with the intent to contribute to the development of norms for the

instrument. Several instruments were eliminated from consideration because of the

financial costs associated with their use (i.e., Olweus Bully-Victim Questionnaire, 1994;

Peer Relations Assessment Questionnaire, Rigby, 1995).

The parent version of the test (TABS-P) was developed to parallel the student

version. It assesses parent's perceptions of the extent to which their own child is a victim,

a bully, or a bystander. Similarly, the teacher version of the test (TABS-T) assesses

teachers' perceptions of the incidence of teasing and bullying behaviors on the grounds of

the school. All three versions of the TABS use a 5-point Likert scale format.

Method

Participants

Participants included students, parents and teachers from a small parochial

elementary school in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.   Students in grades four through eight

were selected for inclusion because the TABS-S was designed to be appropriate for

students in these grades. Parent participants were the parents of the same fourth through

eighth grade students. All teachers in the school were given the opportunity to participate.

These populations included approximately 150 students in the fourth through eighth

grade, 130 parents (many parents had more than one student in these grades), and 11

teachers. Of these populations, data was gathered from 147 students, 63 parents and 9

teachers. The students ranged in age from nine through 15 (mean age = 11.36, *SD* =

1.49).

Materials

The TABS-S is a 35-item survey. Each item solicits a yes/no response related to a

specific teasing and bullying behavior in the school as well as a five point Likert

response. Students chose from one of the following responses regarding the frequency

of experiencing bulling behaviors: 1- happened zero times this week; 2 - happened one to

two times this week; 3 - happened three to five times this week; 4 – happened six to ten

times this week; or 5 – happened eleven or more times this week. Also included is a

short section to help identify "hotspot" locations where teasing and bullying are more

likely to take pace. Student questions solicit information related to the child's experience

as a victim, perpetrator and/or observer.

Parent and teacher versions were designed in the same format as the student

version to solicit information regarding observations and perceptions related to the

children's victim, perpetrator and bystander behaviors in the school. Using questions that

are parallel to the student version, the parent version solicits the parent's perception of

how his or her child is being treated by other students, as well as how his or her child is

treating other students. The parent version maintains the same order and number of items

as the student version, but the items were adjusted to reflect their observations and

perceptions (e.g., student item - someone ignored you or would not answer you; parent item – a student ignored or would not answer your child). Each item solicits a yes/no response related to a specific teasing and bullying behavior in the school as well as a five point Likert question with responses identical to the student version. A final section on the survey solicited observations on how often the parent has observed aggressive behaviors in several "hotspot" locations.

The teacher version was created by adjusting the instructions to ask how the teachers perceive that students at the school are being treated by other students. The teacher version maintains the same order and number of items as the student version, but the items were adjusted to reflect their observations and perceptions of student behavior (i.e., student item - someone ignored you or would not answer you; teacher item – a student being ignored by another student). Each item solicits a yes/no response related to a specific teasing and bullying behavior in the school as well as five point Likert items with responses identical to the student and parent versions. The section to help identify "hotspot" locations asked teachers to identify how often they observed aggressive behaviors in these locations.

The survey assessed how many children were being victimized and/or were victimizing others, how often behaviors were occurring, and where the behaviors took place as well as the severity and frequency of these behaviors. The items target controlling behaviors, disconnecting behaviors, hurtful behaviors, threatening and violent behaviors. This survey is still in a research stage. The present study will contribute to the development of norms for this instrument.

Procedure

The Teasing and Bullying Survey: School Version (TABS-S) (Bodin & Bogumill, 2002) was administered to students in grades four through eight. Parent (TABS-P) and teacher (TABS-T) versions of the survey were distributed to parents and teachers.

Student surveys were distributed to students in their classroom, and completed in a group setting. An age-appropriate cover letter was attached to each survey. The cover letter was read aloud to the students. The letter contained an explanation of the survey and a reminder not to include any identifying information on their survey. Students then had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the directions. If a student had a question while completing the survey, they were asked to raise their hand, and the examiner would go to the student to answer the question quietly. Upon completion of the survey, students placed their own surveys into one group envelope so that all individual student data remained anonymous.

The parent surveys and teacher surveys were distributed as part of a packet of self-study instruments that the school was using in its self-study related to their upcoming re-accreditation process. Parent and teacher cover letters clearly identified the TABS-P and TABS-T as an independent research instrument. The cover letters to parents and teachers provided an explanation of the survey, as well as a reminder to not include any identifying information, so that the survey responses would remain anonymous. Parents and teachers were asked to return the completed surveys to the school office in envelopes marked "self-study surveys" in order to maintain anonymity.

Results

Analyses of the results were carried out using the statistical package SPSS for

Windows 10.0. Descriptive analyses were used to evaluate the prevalence and type of

bullying and teasing behaviors. Survey responses were obtained from 29 fourth grade

students, 28 fifth grade students, 31 sixth grade students, 33 seventh grade students, and

26 eighth grade students. The students reported teasing and bullying behaviors they

endured by other children, and also reported behaviors in which they engaged.

The data in Table 1 show the student survey items, including the version of each

question that asks about endured behaviors as well as the version of the question that asks

about the students own initiation of that particular behavior. The "Affirmative

Responses" column indicates the number of students (out of 147) who answered each of

these questions in the affirmative. The data in the "Frequency" column indicates the

percentage of students who answered in the affirmative.

Table 1
Behaviors For Total Number of Students

Teasing and Bullying Items	Affirmative Responses	Frequency
	N	%
1. Someone ignored you or would not answer you.	73	51.4
You ignored someone or would not answer them.	53	38.4
2. Someone bossed you around.	60	42.3
You bossed someone around.	33	23.7
3. Someone tried to stop you from being someone's friend.	58	40.3
You tried to stop someone from being someone else's friend.	21	14.9
4. Someone acted as if you were disgusting or gross.	48	33.3
You acted as if someone was disgusting or gross.	33	23.4
5. Someone bothered or annoyed you.	119	82.6
You bothered or annoyed someone.	47	34.8

6. Someone picked a fight with you.   38   26.4
    You picked a fight with someone.   13   09.4

7. Someone would not play or talk with you.   52   36.4
    You would not play or talk with someone.   31   23.1

8. Someone was rude to you or disrespected you.   88   62.9
    You were rude to someone or disrespected
    someone.   35   25.5

9. Someone acted as if you were weird, awkward,
    or different.   66   46.5
    You acted as if someone were weird, awkward,
    or different.   33   23.9

10. Someone called you names or put you down.   79   56.0
    You called someone names or put them down.   46   33.1

11. Someone spread rumors or stories about you.   53   37.6
    You spread rumors or stories about someone.   18   12.8

12. Someone from your school used email or the
    internet to be mean to you.   17   11.8
    You used email or the internet to be mean to
    someone from your school.   5   03.6

13. Someone made fun of a person or something
    you care about.   85   59.9
    You made fun of a person or something
    someone cares about.   22   16.3

14. Someone laughed at, teased, or made fun of
    you.   68   48.2
    You laughed at, teased, or made fun of someone.   33   23.7

15. Someone played a mean trick or "joke" on you.   43   30.1
    You played a mean trick or "joke" on someone.   20   14.6

16. Someone swore or cursed at you.   72   50.3
    You swore or cursed at someone.   36   25.9

17. Someone was mean about your being a boy or
    a girl.   22   15.5
    You were mean about someone being a boy or
    girl.   7   05.1

18. Someone was mean about your not acting like
   a boy or girl.   21   14.7
   You were mean about someone not acting like
   a boy or girl.   10   07.4

19. Someone was mean about your race, religion,
   or nationality.   20   14.4
   You were mean about someone's race, religion,
   or nationality.   9   06.6

20. Someone of your own race accused you of
   acting like a person of another race.   15   10.5
   You accused someone of your own race of
   acting like a person of another race.   5   03.6

21. Someone would not leave you alone when you
   asked them to.   82   56.9
   You would not leave someone alone when they
   asked you to.   27   19.4

22. Someone threatened you by saying things like
   "I'll get you!" or "You are going to get it!"   30   21.0
   You threatened someone by saying things like
   "I'll get you!" or "You are going to get it!"   17   12.1

23. Someone threatened to hurt you or beat you up.   26   18.2
   You threatened to hurt someone or beat them up. 12   08.8

24. Someone played "keep away" with your things.   45   31.9
   You played "keep away" with someone's things. 11   08.1

25. Someone purposely tore, broke, or ruined
   something of yours.   43   30.3
   You purposely tore, broke, or ruined something
   of someone's.   7   05.1

26. Someone made you give him or her something
   that is yours.   28   19.6
   You made someone give you something that is
   thiers.   7   05.2

27. Someone locked you up or trapped you
   somewhere.   8   05.6
   You locked someone up or trapped them
   somewhere.   3   02.2

28. Someone pushed or tripped you.	75	52.4
You pushed or tripped someone.	35	25.0
29. Someone scratched you or pulled your hair.	49	34.0
You scratched someone or pulled their hair.	22	15.9
30. Someone slapped, pinched, punched or kicked you.	79	55.2
You slapped, pinched, punched, or kicked someone.	33	23.9
31. Someone threw you down or held you down.	22	15.4
You threw someone down or held them down.	11	07.9
32. Someone threw something hard or sharp at you.	27	18.8
You threw something hard or sharp at someone.	6	04.3
33. Someone choked you.	9	06.3
You choked someone.	4	02.8
34. Someone threatened you with a gun, knife, or other object.	3	02.1
You threatened someone with a gun, knife, or other object.	2	01.4
35. Someone hurt you with a gun, knife, or other object.	5	03.5
You hurt someone with a gun, knife, or other object.	1	00.7

Most Frequent Behaviors

According to the student self-reports the ten most frequent behaviors reportedly

endured ("happened to me") are listed in Table 2. Of these most frequent behaviors, the

majority of students felt they endured bothersome or annoying behaviors from other

students, while a preponderance of students felt as though another student had been rude

or disrespectful to them. A great number of students reported that someone made fun of

someone, or something they cared about. It was equally as common for students to not

be left alone when they asked to be. Numerous students endured being called names, or

put down by other students. Many students reported being slapped, pinched, punched or

kicked, while others were reportedly pushed or tripped. It seemed to be common that

many students felt they were ignored or not answered by other students when speaking to

them. Numerous students reported being cursed at, while many also reported that other

students act as if they were weird, awkward or different.

Table 2
Most Frequent Behaviors Endured

Teasing and Bullying Items	Affirmative Responses	Frequency
	N	%
5. Someone bothered or annoyed you.	119	82.6
8. Someone was rude to you or disrespected you.	88	62.9
13. Someone made fun of a person or something you care about.	85	59.9
21. Someone would not leave you alone when you asked them to.	82	56.9
10. Someone called you names or put you down.	79	56.0
30. Someone slapped, pinched, punched or kicked you.	79	55.2
28. Someone pushed or tripped you.	75	52.4
1. Someone ignored you or would not answer you.	73	51.4
16. Someone swore or cursed at you.	72	50.3
14. Someone laughed at, teased, or made fun of you.	68	48.2

On the other hand, the ten most frequently reported behaviors that students

engaged in ("I did it") included students ignoring, not answering another student when

spoken to, bothering or annoying another student, calling other students names, or putting

them down. Many students also reported that they cursed at other students, were rude or

disrespectful to another student, or pushed or tripped another student. Numerous students

reported acting as if another student was weird or different, while it was equally as

common to have slapped, pinched, punched, or kicked another student. Various students

engaged in bossing around other students, while others reported to have teased or made

fun of another student.

Most Frequent Behaviors Endured across Grade Levels

        The most frequently endured ("happened to me") behaviors that were reported by

students in Table 2 are compared across the five grade levels in Table 3. Of the ten most

frequently endured behaviors, eight increased in frequency, one maintained, and one

decreased from fourth to sixth grade. The behaviors that increased in frequency between

fourth and sixth grade included being rude or disrespectful, being sworn or cursed at

increased, not being left alone when asked, and being bothered or annoyed by another

student. There were also increases in reports of students acting as if the target were

weird, awkward, or different, as well as students being ignored or not answered. Other

students experienced increased occurrences of being made fun of or having someone or

something the student cared about made fun of, as well as being called a name or put

down. The behavior that maintained in frequency between the fourth and sixth grade was

being pushed or tripped. In contrast, the behavior that decreased between the fourth and

sixth grade was being slapped, pinched, punched, or kicked.

Table 3
Most Frequent Behaviors Endured Across Grade Levels

Teasing and Bullying Items	Grade Levels				
	4	5	6	7	8
5. Someone bothered or annoyed you.	74.1	82.1	86.7	84.8	84.6
8. Someone was rude to you or disrespected you.	37.0	60.7	66.7	65.5	84.6
13. Someone made fun of a person or something you care about.	53.8	55.6	60.0	60.6	69.2
21. Someone would not leave you alone when you asked them to.	48.1	60.7	66.7	54.5	53.8
10. Someone called you names or put you down.	59.3	59.3	60.0	53.1	48.0
30. Someone slapped, pinched, punched or kicked you.	44.4	59.3	43.3	69.7	57.7
28. Someone pushed or tripped you.	50.0	57.7	50.0	45.5	61.5
1. Someone ignored you or would not answer you.	40.7	51.9	50.0	51.5	64.0
16. Someone swore or cursed at you.	25.9	37.0	46.7	69.7	69.2
14. Someone laughed at, teased, or made fun of you.	42.3	53.8	46.7	45.5	53.8

Between the sixth and eighth grade, six of the endured behaviors reportedly
increased in frequency, and four decreased. None of the behaviors maintained in
frequency between sixth and eighth grade. The percentage of behaviors that increased in
percentage included reports of being sworn or cursed at, students being rude or
disrespectful, and being slapped, pinched, punched, or kicked. Still, other students
experienced being ignored or not answered, pushed or tripped, or something or someone
the student cared about was made fun of. In contrast, the behaviors that decreased in

percentage between the sixth and eighth grade included reports of being called names or put down, not being left alone when asked, someone acted as if a student was weird, awkward, or different, and being bothered or annoyed.

When the most frequently endured behaviors are compared between the fourth and eighth grades, only one of the behaviors decreased in frequency, being called names or put down. All other nine behaviors reportedly increased.

Least Frequent Behaviors

According to the student self-reports, the ten least frequently occurring behaviors that students endured (Table 4) included reports of someone acting mean about a student being a boy or a girl, being throne or held down, someone was mean about a student not acting like a boy or girl, and someone acting mean about your race, religion, or nationality. There were also experiences of students using email or the Internet to be mean to another student, and students of one race accusing same-raced students of acting like another race. Some students reported being choked, being locked up or trapped somewhere, being hurt with a gun, knife or other object, or being threatened with a gun, knife or other object.

Least Frequent Behaviors across Grade Levels

When the least frequently occurring behaviors that students endured were compared across the five grade levels (Table 5), the results indicated that between the fourth and sixth grade, four of the behaviors increased in percentage, while six decreased. email or the internet to be mean to another student, and students being hurt with a gun, knife, or other object. There was also an increase in the occurrence of students being

Table 4
Least Frequent Behaviors Endured

Teasing and Bullying Items	Affirmative Responses	Frequency
	N	%
17. Someone was mean about your being a boy or a girl.	22	15.5
31. Someone threw you down or held you down.	22	15.4
18. Someone was mean about your not acting like a boy or girl.	21	14.7
19. Someone was mean about your race, religion, or nationality.	20	14.4
12. Someone from your school used email or the internet to be mean to you.	17	11.8
20. Someone of your own race accused you of acting like a person of another race.	15	10.5
33. Someone choked you.	9	06.3
27. Someone locked you up or trapped you somewhere.	8	05.6
35. Someone hurt you with a gun, knife, or other object.	5	03.5
34. Someone threatened you with a gun, knife, or other object.	3	02.1

Behaviors between forth and sixth grade included a reported increase of students using

mean about another student not acting like a boy or girl, and students being mean about

another student's race, religion, or nationality. In contrast, behaviors that decreased in

frequency included students acting mean about another student being a boy or girl, being

locked or trapped somewhere, and being threatened with a gun, knife, or other object.

There also was a reported decrease in students of one race, accusing a same-race student

of acting like another race, and the same decrease in the number of students being thrown

or held down. In terms of students being choked, there also was a reported decrease in

frequency.

Table 5
Least Frequent Behaviors Endured Across Grade Levels

Teasing and Bullying Items	Grade Levels				
	4	5	6	7	8
17. Someone was mean about your being a boy or girl.	19.2	18.5	06.7	21.2	11.5
31. Someone threw you down or held you down.	14.8	33.3	13.3	12.1	03.8
18. Someone was mean about your not acting like a boy or girl.	07.4	17.9	10.0	28.1	07.7
19. Someone was mean about your race, religion, or nationality.	15.4	20.0	16.7	09.1	12.0
12. Someone from your school used email or the internet to be mean to you.	00.0	07.1	06.7	12.1	36.0
20. Someone of your own race accused you of acting like a person of another race.	11.5	14.3	10.0	03.0	15.4
33. Someone choked you.	07.1	03.7	06.7	06.1	07.7
27. Someone locked you up or trapped you somewhere.	11.1	07.4	03.3	03.0	03.8
35. Someone hurt you with a gun, knife, or other object.	03.6	03.7	06.7	00.0	03.8
34. Someone threatened you with a gun, knife, or other object.	03.6	03.7	00.0	00.0	03.8

From the sixth to eighth grade, six of the least occurring behaviors that students endured increased in frequency, while four decreased. Behaviors that increased included students using email or the internet to be mean to another student, students accusing same-raced students of acting like another race, and someone acting mean about them being a boy or girl. Other reports included students being threatened with a gun, knife, or other object, being choked, and being locked or trapped somewhere. In contrast, the least occurring behaviors that decreased in frequency included being thrown or held down, someone being mean about your race, religion, or nationality, being hurt with a gun, knife, or other object, and someone was mean about you not acting like a boy or girl.

When the least frequently occurring behaviors were compared between the fourth and eighth grade, six behaviors increased in frequency, while four decreased. Behaviors that increased from fourth to eighth grade include using email or the internet to be mean to another student, accusing same-raced students of acting like another race, being choked, and someone was mean about a student not acting like a boy or girl. Reports of being threatened, and of being hurt with a gun, knife or other object also increased. In contrast, behaviors that decreased in frequency were being throne or held down, someone acting mean about a student being a boy or girl, being locked or trapped somewhere, and someone being mean about your race, religion, or nationality.

Gender Differences

Differences in the frequency of behaviors between the boys and girls were also observed. The most reported (Table 6) behaviors, endured and engaged in were considered. According to the students, the behavior the boys most frequently endured was being bothered or annoyed by another student, while others reported to have only

engaged in this behavior. The boys also reported that they were slapped, pinched, punched, or kicked by a student, while others reportedly only engaged in these behaviors. Numerous boys experienced a student being disrespectful to them, while only some acted disrespectful to another student. Many were called names or put down, while some reportedly called others names. A lot of boys experienced a student making fun of someone or something they cared about, while few reported to have engaged in this behavior. Some were cursed at, while others reported to have engaged in cursing at another student. Many reported that they were not left alone when they asked to be, while only several reported they would not leave others alone. A number of boys reported being pushed or tripped, and ignored, while only some of the boys pushed other students or ignored other students. Several of the boys experienced a student acting as if they were weird, awkward or different, conversely a small amount reported to have engaged in this behavior.

On the other hand, the girls also reported being bothered or annoyed to be the most frequent behavior endured, while only some of the girls reported to engage in this activity. The girls also endured being disrespected by another student, while few reported being disrespectful. Commonly, the girls experienced a student making fun of someone or something another student cared about, while a small number reported making fun. Numerous girls were not being left alone when asked, while small amount would not leave others alone. The girls also reported being called names, while only some were engaging in name-calling. Many were pushed or tripped, while few reported being physically aggressive. Several were ignored by another student; conversely a small number reported ignoring other students. Some girls reported that another student acted

Table 6
Most Frequent Behaviors Endured - Male and Female

Teasing and Bullying Items	Male
	%
5. Someone bothered or annoyed you.	39.6
30. Someone slapped, pinched, punched or kicked you.	29.4
8. Someone was rude to you or disrespected you.	29.3
10. Someone called you names or put you down.	27.7
13. Someone made fun of a person or something you care about.	26.8
16. Someone swore or cursed at you.	26.6
21. Someone would not leave you alone when you asked them to.	26.4
28. Someone pushed or tripped you.	25.2
1. Someone ignored you or would not answer you.	24.6
14. Someone laughed at, teased, or made fun of you.	24.1

Teasing and Bullying Items	Female
	%
5. Someone bothered or annoyed you.	43.1
8. Someone was rude to you or disrespected you.	33.6
13. Someone made fun of a person or something you care about.	33.1
21. Someone would not leave you alone when you asked them to.	30.6
10. Someone called you names or put you down.	28.4
28. Someone pushed or tripped you.	27.3
1. Someone ignored you or would not answer you.	26.8
30. Someone slapped, pinched, punched or kicked you.	25.9
14. Someone laughed at, teased, or made fun of you.	24.1
16. Someone swore or cursed at you.	23.8

as if they were weird,awkward or different, while others reportedly acted as if others were weird or different. A number of girls reported being slapped, pinched, punched or kicked, while fewer reported to have slapped, pinched, punched or kicked another student. Girls also reported being cursed at, while only some reported to have cursed at another student.

The least reported behaviors endured (Table 7) and engaged in were also considered. The self-reports indicated that the least frequent behaviors that boys endured was being thrown or held down, while others reported being the perpetrator. Some of the boys reported that a student was mean about their race, religion, or nationality, while a smaller amount of the boys reported to have engaged in this activity. Regarding the use of email or the internet to be mean to another student, several of the boys endured this behavior, while few engaged. It was also reported that same-race students accused others of acting like a person from another race, while a small number of boys reported to have made the accusations. Boys also reported that a student was mean about them not acting according to their own gender, while few of the boys reported that they were mean to someone for not acting like their gender. A number of boys reported being choked, while few reported choking another student. Some boys experienced a student being mean to another student about their being a boy, while a small number reported to being mean to another student about their gender. Several reported being locked or trapped somewhere, while few reported to have locked or trapped another student somewhere. A number of the boys reported to have been threatened, as well as to have been hurt with a gun, knife, or other object, while only a minority reported to have engaged in these behaviors.

Table 7
Least Frequent Behaviors Endured - Male and Female

Teasing and Bullying Items	Male %
31. Someone threw you down or held you down.	11.2
19. Someone was mean about your race, religion, or nationality.	07.9
12. Someone from your school used email or the internet to be mean to you.	06.3
20. Someone of your own race accused you of acting like a person of another race.	05.6
18. Someone was mean about your not acting like a boy or girl.	04.9
33. Someone choked you.	04.9
17. Someone was mean about your being a boy or a girl.	04.2
27. Someone locked you up or trapped you somewhere.	03.5
34. Someone threatened you with a gun, knife, or other object.	02.1
35. Someone hurt you with a gun, knife, or other object.	02.1

Teasing and Bullying Items	Female %
17. Someone was mean about your being a boy or a girl.	11.3
18. Someone was mean about your not acting like a boy or girl.	09.8
19. Someone was mean about your race, religion, or nationality.	06.5
12. Someone from your school used email or the internet to be mean to you.	05.6
20. Someone of your own race accused you of acting like a person of another race.	04.9
31. Someone threw you down or held you down.	04.2
27. Someone locked you up or trapped you somewhere.	02.1
33. Someone choked you.	01.4
35. Someone hurt you with a gun, knife, or other object.	01.4
34. Someone threatened you with a gun, knife, or other object.	00.0

The least frequent behavior the girls endured was someone being mean about them being

a girl, while few of the girls reported to have been mean to another student about their

gender. Also, the girls reported that a student was mean about them not acting like a girl,

while again, few of the girls reported to have engaged in this behavior. They also

endured a student being mean about their race, religion, or nationality, while only some

reported being mean on this item. Regarding using email or the internet to be mean,

several of the girls endured, while only a few reported to engage. Numerous girls

reported that same-race students accused them of acting like a person from another race,

while a minority reported to have made the accusations. Some of the girls reported being

thrown or held down, while few reported engagement in this activity. A small number

reported being locked or trapped somewhere, being choked, and being hurt with a gun,

knife, or other object. No engagement was reported for these activities. There was also

no report of endurance, or engagement of being threatened with a gun, knife, or other

object.

Parents

The data in Table 8 show the parent survey items, including the version of each

question that asks about behaviors that their child has endured as well as the version of

the questions that solicits information about behaviors in which their child might have

engaged. The "Affirmative Responses" column indicates the number of parents (out of

the total n = 63) who answered each question in the affirmative. The data in the

"Frequency" column indicates the percentage of parents who answered in the affirmative.

Table 8
Parent Observations

Teasing and Bullying Items	Affirmative Responses	Frequency
	N	%
1. Another child ignored or would not answer your child.	25	42.4
Your child ignored or would not answer another child.	18	32.1
2. Another child bossed your child around.	30	49.2
Your child bossed another child around.	11	19.3
3. Another child tried to stop your child from being someone's friend.	28	46.7
Your child tried to stop Another child from being someone else's friend	6	10.2
4. Another child acted as if your child were disgusting or gross.	14	23.3
Your child acted as if another child were disgusting or gross.	11	18.3
5. Another child bothered or annoyed your child.	42	68.9
Your child bothered or annoyed another child.	21	36.8
6. Another child picked a fight with your child.	9	15.0
Your child picked a fight with another child.	1	01.7
7. Another child would not play or talk with your child.	21	35.0
Your child would not play or talk with another child.	11	18.0
8. Another child was rude or disrespectful to your child.	27	45.0
Your child was rude or disrespectful to another child.	8	13.3
9. Another child acted as if your child were weird, awkward, or different.	18	30.5
Your child acted as if another were weird, awkward, or different.	5	08.3
10. Another child called your child names or put		

him or her down.	27	45.0
Your child called another child names or put him or her down.	7	11.7
11. Another child spread rumors or stories about your child.	10	16.7
Your child spread rumors or stories about another child.	0	00.0
12. Another child from your child's school used email or the internet to be mean to your child.	3	05.0
Your child used email or the internet to be mean to another child from your child's school.	1	01.6
13. Another child made fun of someone or something your child cares bout	16	26.7
Your child made fun of someone or something another child cares about	8	13.3
14. Another child laughed at, teased, or made fun of your child.	27	45.0
Your child laughed at, teased, or made fun of another child.	16	26.7
15. Another child played a mean trick or "joke" on your child.	7	11.7
Your child played a mean trick or "joke" on another child.	3	05.1
16. Another child swore or cursed at your child.	10	16.7
Your child swore or cursed at another child.	0	00.0
17. Another child was mean about your child being a boy or girl.	1	01.7
Your child was mean about another child being a boy or girl.	0	00.0
18. Another child was mean about your child not acting like a boy or girl.	2	03.4
Your child was mean about another child not acting like a boy or girl.	0	00.0
19. Another child was mean about your child's race, religion or nationality.	4	06.7
Your child was mean about another child's race, religion or nationality.	0	00.0

20. Another child of your child's race accused your
child of acting like a person of another race.   0   00.0
Your child accused another child of his or her
own race of acting like a person of another race.   0   00.0

21. Another child would not leave your child alone
when your child asked them to.   18   30.0

Your child would not leave another child alone
when asked to.   5   08.3

22. Another child threatened your child by saying things
like "I'll get you" or "You are going to get it!"   5   08.2
Your child threatened another child by saying things
like "I'll get you or "You are going to get it!"   1   01.6

23. Another child threatened to hurt your child or
beat him or her up.   4   06.6
Your child threatened to hurt another child or
beat him or her up.   0   00.0

24. Another child played "keep away" with your
child's things.   10   16.4
Your child played "keep away" with another
child's things.   1   01.6

25. Another child purposely tore, broke, or ruined
something belonging to your child.   5   08.2
Your child purposely tore, broke, or ruined
something belonging to another child.   1   01.6

26. Another child made your child give up
something that was his or hers.   3   04.9
Your child made another child give you
something that was his or hers.   0   00.0

27. Another child locked up or trapped your child
somewhere.   2   03.3
Your child locked up or trapped another child
somewhere.   0   00.0

28. Another child pushed or tripped your child.   17   27.9
Your child pushed or tripped another child.   4   06.6

29. Another child scratched your child or pulled his or her hair.	8	13.1
Your child scratched another child or pulled his or her hair.	0	00.0
30. Another child slapped, pinched, punched or kicked your child.	12	19.7
Your child slapped, pinched, punched, or kicked another child.	4	06.7
31. Another child threw your child down or held him or her down.	2	03.3
Your child threw another child down or held him or her down.	0	00.0
32. Another child threw something hard or sharp at your child.	1	01.6
Your child threw something hard or sharp at your child.	0	00.0
33. Another child choked your child.	1	01.6
Your child choked another child.	0	00.0
34. Another child threatened your child with a gun, knife, or other object.	1	01.6
Your child threatened another child with a gun, knife, or other object.	0	00.0
35. Another child hurt your child with a gun, knife, or other object.	1	01.6
Your child hurt another child with a gun, knife, or other object.	0	00.0

The parent's perception of teasing and bullying behaviors were compared with behaviors reported by the students. The most frequent teasing and bullying behaviors parents observed (Table 9), that were also reported to occur frequently by students, included reports of their child being bothered or annoyed by other students, their child being bossed around by another student, and students trying to stop their child from being friends with someone. Parents also reported to have observed students being rude or

disrespectful to their child, their child being called names or put down, as well as being

laughed at, teased, or made fun of by other students. Parents also observed their child

being ignoring or not played with. Parents also reported that some students acted as if

their child was weird or different. Parents also observed that some students would not

leave their child alone when the child asked to be.

Table 9
Parent - Behaviors Observed Most

Teasing and Bullying Items	Affirmative Responses	Frequency
	N	%
5. Another child bothered or annoyed your child.	42	68.9
2. Another child bossed your child around.	30	49.2
3. Another child tried to stop your child from being someone's friend.	28	46.7
14. Another child laughed at, teased, or made fun of your child.	27	45.0
10. Another child called your child names or put him or her down.	27	45.0
8. Another child was rude or disrespectful to your child.	27	45.0
1. Another child ignored or would not answer your child.	25	42.4
7. Another child would not play or talk with your child.	21	35.0
9. Another child acted as if your child were weird, awkward, or different.	18	30.5
21. Another child would not leave your child alone when your child asked them to.	18	30.0

On the other hand, behaviors that students reported to have occurred frequently that parents had not, were being made fun of, cursed at, pushed or tripped, and being slapped, pinched, punched or kicked.

Teachers

Similarly, the data in Table 10 show the teacher survey items, which have only one version related to behaviors that they have observed in the students on campus. The "Affirmative Responses" column indicates the number of teachers (out of 9) who answered each of these questions in the affirmative. The data in the "Frequency" column indicates the percentage of total responses that were answered in the affirmative.

Table 10
Teacher Observations

Teasing and Bullying Items	Affirmative Responses	Frequency
	N	%
1. A child ignored another child.	7	77.8
2. A child bossed around another child.	8	88.9
3. A child tried to stop another child from being someone's friend.	7	77.8
4. A child acted as if another child were disgusting or gross.	7	77.8
5. A child bothered or annoyed another child.	9	100.0
6. A child picked a fight with another child.	5	55.6
7. A child would not play or talk with another child.	6	66.7
8. A child was rude or disrespectful to another child.	8	88.9
9. A child acted as if another child were weird, awkward, or different.	7	77.8

10. A child called another child names or put him or her down.	7	77.8
11. A child spread rumors or stories about another child.	5	55.6
12. A child from your school used email or the internet to be mean to another child.	1	11.1
13. A child made fun of a person or something another child cared about.	5	55.6
14. A child laughed at, teased, or made fun of another child.	8	88.9
15. A child played a mean trick or "joke" on another child.	1	11.1
16. A child swore or cursed at another child.	5	55.6
17. A child was mean about another child being a boy or a girl.	1	11.1
18. A child was mean about another child not acting like a boy or girl.	1	11.1
19. A child was mean about another child's race, religion, or nationality.	2	22.2
20. A child of one race accused another child of the same race of acting like someone of another race.	2	22.2
21. A child would not leave another child alone when asked to.	7	77.8
22. A child threatened another child by saying things like "I'll get you" or "You are going to get it!"	3	33.3
23. A child threatened to hurt or beat up another child.	3	33.3
24. A child played "keep away" with another child's things.	2	22.2
25. A child purposely tore, broke, or ruined something that belonged to another child.	2	22.2

26. A childe made another child give up something belonging to him or her.	2	22.2
27. A child locked up or trapped another child somewhere.	0	00.0
28. A child pushed or tripped another child.	9	100.0
29. A child scratched another child or pulled his or her hair.	3	33.3
30. A child slapped, pinched, punched or kicked another child.	9	100.0
31. A child threw down or held down another child.	2	22.2
32. A child threw something hard or sharp at another child.	3	37.5
33. A child choked another child.	1	11.1
34. A child threatened another child with a gun, knife, or other object.	0	00.0
35. A child hurt another child with a gun, knife, or other object.	0	0.0

The teacher's perception of teasing and bullying behaviors were also compared with the most frequently occurring behaviors reported by the students. The most frequent behaviors that teachers reported to have observed (Table 11) include students bothering or annoy another student, students being pushed or tripped, and slapping, pinching, punching, or kicking another student. Teachers also reported observing children being bossed around, children being rude or disrespectful to other children, and children being laughed at, teased, or made fun of. Other behaviors observed include being ignored and children trying to stop others from being friends. Teachers also reported that some

students would act as if another child were disgusting or gross, or as if they were weird, awkward or different. Also, one of the behaviors that the teachers reported to have occurred frequently, that the students had not, was a student acting as if another was disgusting.

Table 11
Teacher - Behaviors Observed Most

Teasing and Bullying Items	Affirmative Responses	Frequency
	N	%
5. A child bothered or annoyed another child.	9	100.0
28. A child pushed or tripped another child.	9	100.0
30. A child slapped, pinched, punched or kicked another child.	9	100.0
2. A child bossed around another child.	8	88.9
8. A child was rude or disrespectful to another child.	8	88.9
14. A child laughed at, teased, or made fun of another child.	8	88.9
1. A child ignored another child.	7	77.8
3. A child tried to stop another child from being someone's friend.	7	77.8
4. A child acted as if another child were disgusting or gross.	7	77.8
9. A child acted as if another child were weird, awkward, or different.	7	77.8

In contrast, behaviors reported by students, that teachers had not rated as most frequent, included being made fun of, cursed at, and being left alone when asked.

Discussion

The prevailing view of private schools is that they offer a higher level of security and safety for its students, as compared to the public system. Though few in number, the results of studies conducted in the private sector have not supported the assertion that private schools are superior to public schools in terms of social or emotional effects that can result from another student's aggressive behavior. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the prevalence of teasing and bullying activity within a neighborhood Catholic elementary school.

Students

Grade level

According to the students at the parochial elementary school, older students are experiencing more bullying behaviors than the younger students. Also, responses to questions related to behaviors such as someone disrespecting you, not leaving you alone, ignoring, or pushing you suggest that the most frequent behaviors endured for all grade levels were direct forms of teasing and bullying. The occurrence of these behaviors reportedly increased between the fourth and eighth grades. In contrast, research within the public system says that direct forms of bullying increase until about the sixth grade and then begin to decrease as students enter Junior High. In addition, it should be noted that many students at the parochial school reported that they have endured more bullying behaviors than they have engaged in. The implication of their responses suggests that students may lack a sense of responsibility or sensitivity concerning their behavior toward other students.

Students in younger grades left more questions unanswered concerning the

occurrence of teasing and bullying behaviors than the older grades, which may impact the

interpretation of this data. A focus group consisting of students from each grade

provided some insight into the students' responses. The students indicated that there was

some discomfort in answering these sensitive questions in close proximity to their peers.

Specifically, some students said that they felt that other students were too close, and

might see their responses. These students may have been afraid of retaliation. Another

student suggested that answers may have been given to impress or joke. Yet another

student remembered having difficulty in understanding the TAB-S directions.

Apparently, in this particular classroom, the examiner provided instructions, which the

teacher paraphrased intending to help. However, the student became confused and did not

ask for clarification.

Gender

The literature indicates that the occurrence of direct bullying in the public school

system is equal among boys and girls (Batsche, 1997; Froschl & Gropper, 1999; Snell &

MacKenzie, 2002; Larson, Smith & Furlong, 2002). In the present parochial school,

however, the frequency of direct bullying was reported to be higher among the boys than

the girls.

Parents

The literature indicates that, in the public sector, parents are often not aware of the

teasing and bullying behaviors that their children experience. Quite the opposite was

reported by parents at this parochial school. Parents reported being aware of, and having

observed, instances of indirect and direct bullying behaviors occurring in the school.

However, the parent rate of observation was less than the percentage reported by

students. Also, parents reported to have observed more verbal bullying behaviors than

teachers.

Teachers

Literature suggests that teachers are generally aware of both indirect and direct

forms of bullying, including intimidation, threats, pushing, and name-calling. Similarly,

teachers at the parochial school in the present study also reported these same types of

behaviors to be the most frequently observed, such as pushing, teasing, or bossing

another child around. Teachers in the parochial school also reported higher rates of direct

physical bullying behaviors occurring in the school, as compared to both student and

parent reports.

Conclusion

The current study investigated the prevalence of bullying activity within a

neighborhood Catholic elementary school in order to facilitate our understanding of this

behavior within this population. Because of a lack of research on bullying behaviors in

the private sectors, little is known about the prevalence and its long-term effects on

students' academic functioning and social and emotional adjustment within this

population. The results of this study found the prevalence of direct as well as indirect

forms of bullying behavior, whether it is verbal, physical, or social/relational, between

students to be similar to what had been found in the literature regarding the public

system. However, it also found that parents and teachers in this private school are more

aware of bullying behaviors than parents and teachers in the public sector.   Due to a lack

of responses concerning the younger grades and the small number of teachers, these

findings may be somewhat limited. The present study supports the need for increased

research within the private sectors regarding the prevalence of bullying behaviors in order

to increase our understanding, and prevent the adverse long-term academic, social and

emotional effects that these behaviors can have on children.

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