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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, TEACHERS' PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE BULLYING INTERVENTION, by MEGAN LEIGH MARSHALL, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chair, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty. The Dean of the College of Education concurs.

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ABSTRACT

TEACHERS' PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE BULLYING INTERVENTION
by
Megan Marshall

Despite the critical role teachers play in the management and reduction of bullying in schools (Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Frey, Jones, Hirschstein, & Edstrom, 2011; Nicolaides, Toda, & Smith, 2002), minimal research has been conducted examining teachers' responses to these negative behaviors (Bauman & Hurley, 2005; Marshall, Varjas, Meyers, Graybill, & Skoczylas, 2009; Sairanen & Pfeffer, 2011; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). Moreover, a critical topic lacking in the literature is the identification of potential barriers (e.g., difficulty identifying bullying, lack of time to address these behaviors) inhibiting teachers from successful intervention. The purpose of this exploratory study was to assess teachers' perceived barriers to effective bullying intervention, as well as to examine potential relationships between how teachers reported responding to bullying and perceived barriers to successful intervention. Individual in-depth qualitative interviews with 30 fourth through eighth grade teachers were used to determine teachers' responses and perceived barriers to bullying interventions. Inductive and deductive approaches to data analysis (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999; Nastasi & Schensul, 2005; Varjas, Nastasi, Moore, & Jayasena, 2005) were used to explore teachers' self-reported barriers. Teachers described the presence of numerous barriers that challenged their ability to consistently and effectively respond to bullying. Qualitative results indicated that these barriers occurred on multiple levels and included the following four major themes: student-, teacher-, school- and sociocultural-based barriers. Further, quantitative analyses were used to investigate potential relationships

between teachers' self-reported responses to bullying and perceived barriers. No systematic relationships were evident. That is, teachers reported responding to bullying similarly regardless of their perceived barriers to effective intervention. Implications for improving and informing anti-bullying efforts aimed at eliminating these barriers and increasing the likelihood of teacher intervention are discussed. Future research ideas also are suggested.

TEACHERS' PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE BULLYING INTERVENTION

by

Megan Marshall

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
List of Tables		iv
List of Figures		v
Abbreviations		vi
Chapter		
1	AN INTEGRATED TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MODEL FOR SCHOOL-BASED BULLYING	1
	School-Based Efforts to Prepare Teachers to Manage Bullying	5
	Rationale for a Teacher Professional Learning Model for School-Based Bullying	13
	Effective Professional Development for Teachers	16
	Participatory Culture-Specific Intervention Model	19
	Integrated Teacher Professional Learning Model for School-Based Bullying	22
	Conclusion	43
	References	45
2	TEACHERS' PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE BULLYING INTERVENTION	64
	Rationale	72
	Method	74
	Results	84
	Discussion	101
	References	110
Appendixes		121

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Seven Essential Components of the ITPLMB……..	23
2	Template for the ITPLMB……	28
3	Number and Percentage of Participants Who Reported Experiencing Each Barrier……..	86
4	Number and Percentage of Participants Who Reported Implementing Each Bullying Response…….……..	98

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Two by Two Framework for Teachers' Responses to Bullying……...	26
2	Ongoing Support and Feedback Process of the ITPLMB…….	41
3	Teachers' Responses to Bullying ……...……..	69
4	Coding Hierarchy for Teachers' Self-Reported Barriers to Effective Bullying Intervention……	85

ABBREVIATIONS

CFGs	Critical Friends Groups
ITPLMB	Integrated Teacher Professional Learning Model for School-Based Bullying
NEA	National Education Association
OBPP	Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
PCSIM	Participatory Culture-Specific Intervention Model
PD	Professional Development

CHAPTER 1

AN INTEGRATED TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MODEL FOR SCHOOL-BASED BULLYING

Despite substantial research efforts, anti-bullying legislation, and ongoing media attention, school-based bullying continues to be an international, pervasive epidemic due to its widespread impact on students' well-being and academic performance (Due et al., 2005; Griffin & Gross, 2004; Nansel et al., 2001). Bullying is broadly defined as repeated and intentionally aggressive behavior characterized by an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and victim (Olweus, 1993). Children and adolescents report experiencing bullying at alarming rates during the school day (Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007; Craig et al., 2009; Nansel et al., 2001; Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009). For example, in a recent study, 49% of more than 15,000 students in grades 4 through 12 reported being bullied at least once during the last month (Bradshaw et al., 2007). Bullying includes both physical (e.g., hitting, pushing) and verbal (e.g., name-calling, threatening) behaviors (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, O'Brennan, & Gulemetova, 2011; Olweus, 1993). In addition, bullying can be inflicted indirectly via relational bullying (e.g., socially ostracizing others, spreading rumors; Olweus, 1993) and electronically (e.g., sending disrespectful and harassing photographs, emails, text messages; Diamanduros, Downs, & Jenkins, 2008). Prior research has indicated that bullying peaks in middle school (e.g., Goldbaum, Craig, Pepler, & Connolly, 2007; Nansel et al., 2001) and occurs in several locations within the school environment (e.g., the classroom, hallway, cafeteria, playground;

Bradshaw et al., 2007). Furthermore, girls are more likely to be involved in indirect bullying, whereas boys are more likely to be involved in verbal and physical bullying (Wang et al., 2009).

Studies have shown that bullying results in numerous deleterious effects for involved students (i.e., bullies, victims, bully-victims, and bystanders), including short- and long-term behavioral (e.g., Nansel et al., 2001), physical (e.g., Srabstein & Piazza, 2008), social-emotional (e.g., Craig et al., 2009) and mental health problems (e.g., Gladstone, Parker, & Malhi, 2006). Bullying victimization also has been associated with decreased academic performance (Glew, Fan, Katon, Rivara, & Kernic, 2005; Juvonen, Wang, & Espinoza, 2011; Srabstein & Piazza, 2008), school avoidance (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996), and impaired concentration in the classroom (Boultan, Trueman, & Murray, 2008). Students frequently involved in bullying as victims or perpetrators tend to dislike school and demonstrate lower academic competence and school attendance (e.g., Glew et al., 2005; Srabstein & Piazza, 2008).

Teachers spend a substantial portion of the school day interacting with students and are therefore at the forefront of the battle against bullying. School climate research has indicated that by implementing consistent and effective interventions for school-based bullying, teachers can play a critical role in providing a safe and supportive environment that promotes student learning (Colvin, Tobin, Beard, Hughes, & Sprague, 1998; Kasen, Berenson, Cohen, & Johnson, 2004). However, several studies have shown that students do not perceive educators to be effective in identifying or resolving bullying

incidents and therefore are reluctant to approach them for help (Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Doll, Song, & Siemers, 2004; Espelage & Asidao, 2001; Hazler, Miller, Carney, & Green, 2001; Holt & Keyes, 2004; Swearer & Cary, 2003; Varjas, Meyers, Bellmoff, et al., 2008). Remarking on the perceived ineffectiveness of teachers, James and colleagues (2008) stated that "research shows that without specific training, teachers have a poor understanding of bullying and how to manage it" (p. 161). Despite the critical need for teacher preparation on bullying, teachers frequently report being ill-equipped to combat these behaviors due to lack of training (Benítez, García-Berbén, & Fernández-Cabezas, 2009; Holt & Keyes, 2004; Marshall, Varjas, Meyers, Graybill, & Skoczylas, 2009; Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005).

The first step of successful prevention or reduction of bullying requires educators to be able to accurately recognize these behaviors and possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively intervene (Kokko & Porhola, 2009; Limber & Small, 2003; Nicolaides, Toda, & Smith, 2002; O'Moore, 2000). Increased learning opportunities for teachers have been highly encouraged, both at the pre-service and in-service level (Kokko & Porhola, 2009; James et al., 2008; O'Moore, 2000), to provide critical information regarding the types, prevalence, signs and consequences of bullying, as well as to educate teachers about how to intervene and prevent these behaviors (O'Moore, 2000). Studies have demonstrated that teachers can significantly reduce the negative effects of bullying (e.g., poor academic achievement, increased mental and physical health concerns, absenteeism) if properly prepared; however, teacher professional learning programs specifically targeting the reduction of bullying are scarce

(Horne, Orpinas, Newman-Carlson, & Bartolomucci, 2004; Nicolaides et al., 2002; Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003).

The demands placed on classroom teachers are extraordinary. Educational policies and standards are frequently changing, requiring teachers to be both responsive to new professional roles and responsibilities and accountable for providing an equitable education for increasingly diverse students (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2006; Valli & Buese, 2007). Teachers are under immense pressure to meet current standards of educational success which are largely defined by students' performance on high-stakes, content-based assessments (e.g., Carroll, 2007; Hilliard, 2000). Beyond providing academic instruction, teachers also have the ethical responsibility of protecting students from harm (as espoused by the National Education Association's code of ethics, 1975). Because bullying thwarts teachers' efforts to enhance academic achievement and threatens students' safety in schools (Colvin et al., 1998; Kasen et al., 2004), teachers have both a professional and ethical responsibility to decrease these behaviors (NEA, 1975).

The current paper first examines school-based efforts to prepare teachers to address bullying, including anti-bullying prevention/intervention programming and pre-service/in-service education for teachers. Following, in response to findings in the literature, the rationale for developing a teacher professional learning model specific to bullying is discussed. Research on effective Professional Development (PD) for teachers (e.g., Desimone, 2009; Joyce & Showers, 1980; Truscott & Truscott, 2004) and the

Participatory Culture-Specific Intervention Model (PCSIM; Nastasi, Moore, & Varjas, 2004) are reviewed, followed by the presentation of an integrated teacher professional learning model for bullying. This model seeks to address the challenges associated with existing efforts to educate teachers about bullying prevention, as well as to incorporate essential components of effective PD and the PCSIM into a comprehensive model for educators to use to reduce bullying.

School-Based Efforts to Prepare Teachers to Manage Bullying

Bullying legislation has increasingly required schools to develop and implement policies and procedures to prohibit bullying (Hu, 2011; Limber & Small, 2003; Srabstein, Berkman, & Pyntikova, 2008; Terry, 2010; Whitted & Dupper, 2005). As a result, numerous intervention and prevention programs have been designed to address school-based bullying (for a review, see Farrington & Ttofi, 2009; Merrell, Gueldner, Ross, & Isava, 2008). For the purpose of this paper, the literature on several anti-bullying efforts that incorporate teacher education as at least one aspect of the bullying intervention, prevention, or pre-service/in-service program are presented (e.g., Benítez et al., 2009; Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004; Olweus & Limber, 2010; O'Moore & Minton, 2005; Salmivalli, Kaukiainen, & Voeten, 2005). More specifically, the following three initiatives are discussed in detail to provide foundational information regarding the range of school-based approaches used to prepare teachers to address bullying: (1) a comprehensive anti-bullying program: The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP; Olweus, 1993; Olweus & Limber, 2010); (2) a teacher-targeted anti-bullying

intervention: Bully Busters (Horne, Bartolomucci, & Newman-Carlson, 2003; Newman, Horne, & Bartolomucci, 2000; Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004); and (3) a pre-service training course designed to educate teachers about bullying (Benítez et al., 2009).

A Comprehensive Anti-Bullying Program

Founded on the premise that bullying is a systemic problem requiring school-wide intervention, comprehensive anti-bullying programs target interventions at the student, teacher/classroom, school, and sometimes the community level (e.g., Olweus, 1993; Olweus & Limber, 2010; Smith, Schneider, Smith, & Ananiadou, 2004; Whitted & Dupper, 2005). The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) was one of the first comprehensive programs developed to reduce bullying in schools (Olweus, 1993) and has been widely implemented and evaluated worldwide (Limber, 2004; Olweus & Limber, 2010). The program is based on the following principles in which adults "(a) show warmth and interest in their students; (b) set firm limits to unacceptable behavior; (c) use consistent, nonphysical nonhostile negative consequences for violation of rules; and (d) act as authorities and positive role models" (Limber, 2011a, p. 72). Intervention strategies used in the OBPP to reduce and prevent bullying are designed to address multiple levels. For example, community-level interventions include developing school-community partnerships and involving community members on a coordinating committee. School-level strategies aim to educate school personnel on the fundamental principles of the program and improve the supervisory system. Classroom- or teacher-level interventions include implementing weekly classroom meetings in which teachers and students develop

and discuss class rules against bulling. Finally, individual-level strategies require teachers to intervene during all suspected bullying situations by talking with bullies, victims, and parents of involved students (Olweus, 1993; Olweus et al., 2007; Olweus & Limber, 2010).

The OBPP incorporates a school kick-off event, administration of the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (a student assessment of bullying), and school-wide rules against bullying (e.g., students and adults will not bully others, students and adults will try to help students who are bullied). Members of the coordinating committee participate in a two-day training with certified OBPP trainers and are responsible for building-level implementation, which includes providing a full-day training for all school personnel. Further, staff discussion groups (comprised of no more than 15 teachers and other school personnel) are led by a member of the coordinating committee and meet regularly to provide support during program implementation (i.e., encourage staff to present questions or concerns about the program) and discuss successes and failures related to bullying dilemmas (Olweus, 1993; Olweus et al., 2007; Olweus & Limber, 2010).

The OBPP was initially implemented and evaluated in the 1980s as part of a national anti-bullying campaign in Bergen, Norway (Olweus, 1993). Findings from the study, targeting 2,500 students in grades 5 through 8, indicated approximately a 50% decline in students' self-reported victimization (Olweus, 1991, 1993). Teachers' ratings of bullying in the classroom also decreased (Olweus, 1991, 1993). Since that time, numerous anti-bullying programs inspired by the OBPP have been implemented and

evaluated internationally with mixed results (e.g., Eslea & Smith, 1998; Pepler, Craig, O'Connell, Atlas, & Charach, 2004; Roland, 1989; Stevens, Van Oost, & de Bourdeaudhuij, 2004). Olweus and Limber (2010) recently stressed the importance of interpreting these results with caution because "the programs used in these interventions have deviated considerably, but to different degrees, from the OBPP model in terms of program content, implementation model, or actual implementation" (p. 383). Assessing factors affecting program implementation, Kallestad and Olweus (2003) analyzed data from teachers and schools implementing the OBPP program in Norway and found that several teacher-level (i.e., efficacy in managing bullying, empathy with victimized students, having read more of the program materials) and school-level factors (i.e., school staff's openness in communication, the school's attention to bullying-related problems) accounted for a significant portion of variance in program implementation. Further, results confirmed that teachers were "key agents of change with regard to adoption and implementation of the OBPP" (Olweus & Limber, 2010, p. 379).

Implementation of the OBPP in several diverse settings in the United States (e.g., rural, urban communities) have yielded some positive outcomes (e.g., Black & Jackson, 2007; Limber, Nation, Tracy, Melton, & Flerx, 2004); however, the program "has not demonstrated consistent efficacy in schools in North America" (Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt, & Hymel, 2010, p. 42; Bauer, Lozano, & Rivara, 2007). While examining these inconsistent findings, Limber (2011b) identified potential barriers to implementation and evaluation of the OBPP in the U.S., including resistance by school staff, a desire for simple solutions, and low fidelity of implementation. Accordingly,

researchers have called for cultural adaptations of the program for U.S. implementation, such as increased community involvement on the coordinating committee, additional professional learning opportunities for teachers on the importance and use of classroom meetings, and increased emphasis on the coordinating committee to plan and implement the OBPP (Limber, 2011a, 2011b; Olweus & Limber, 2010). Despite the location or cultural adaptations, critical features of the OBPP consistently include bullying-related training for school personnel and ongoing staff support meetings (Limber, 2011a, 2011b; Olweus & Limber, 2010).

A Teacher-Targeted Anti-Bullying Program

Another approach to school-based anti-bullying prevention and intervention programming relies heavily on teacher education for the management of bullying (e.g., Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004; Salmivalli et al., 2005). For instance, Bully Busters is a teacher-targeted bully prevention program that incorporates staff development and monthly support meetings with fellow teachers (Horne et al., 2003; Newman et al., 2000). The program includes a psychoeducational curriculum that consists of modules focused on increasing teachers' awareness and recognition of bullying, as well as identifying classroom-based prevention and intervention efforts to reduce these behaviors. Bully Busters is implemented over the course of several staff development sessions (recommended by the authors to be delivered weekly in three 2-hour training sessions) and incorporates both didactic (e.g., presentation of related content) and experiential learning opportunities for teachers (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004). The learning modules provide teachers with content knowledge related to bullying, classroom

activities to educate and include students into the anti-bullying program, and suggested questions to be discussed during the support/supervision sessions with other educators. Guided by an instructor who adheres to the training curriculum presented in the Bully Busters manual, the support/supervision team meetings are comprised of four to eight teachers who meet bimonthly. These team meetings serve as a reminder for teachers to continue to address bullying, as well as a venue to share success and failure stories, seek advice from their peers, dispel fears, feel empowered, obtain additional classroom activities, and develop collaborative problem-solving skills (Horne et al., 2003; Horne et al., 2004; Newman et al., 2000).

Newman-Carlson and Horne (2004) implemented the Bully Busters curriculum with sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade teachers in a Southeastern U.S. middle school. All teachers were informed of the opportunity to attend a staff development training program on bullying (for which they received continuing education credit). Seventy-one percent of eligible teachers participated in the study (N = 30) and were divided into control (i.e., did not receive training) and treatment (i.e., received Bully Busters training) groups. Results indicated that teachers in the treatment group reported increased knowledge and application of bullying interventions, improved personal self-efficacy, and decreased discipline referrals compared to classrooms in the control group. In another study, Browning and colleagues (2005) evaluated Bully Busters in a rural elementary school in Tennessee. School personnel who were trained using the Bully Busters curriculum (including teachers, administrators, and support personnel) reported significant increases on knowledge-based questionnaires assessing their awareness of bullying,

classroom-based prevention strategies, behavioral characteristics of and interventions for bullies and victims, and teacher and student stress management techniques (Browning, Cooker, & Sullivan, 2005).

Bell and colleagues (2010) implemented and evaluated an abbreviated version of the Bully Busters program in a Southeastern U. S. middle school serving sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders. Seventy-five percent of the teacher population participated in the study (N = 52 teachers), while 488 students (73% of the student population) completed pre- and post-test measures. Participating teachers reported significant improvements in their perceived self-efficacy of intervening during bullying situations; however, actual teacher-implemented interventions were not assessed. Furthermore, no significant changes related to school climate, victimization, or school safety were reported by students (Bell, Raczynski, & Horne, 2010). Finally, Hunter (2007) conducted a qualitative study of middle school students' perceptions of Bully Busters. After a year-long implementation by teachers, results indicated that students who were satisfied with the program reported that their teachers (a) implemented more program elements and (b) appeared engaged in implementation. Conversely, students who were dissatisfied reported feeling frustrated with their teachers' resistant or disinterested attitude toward the program (Hunter, 2007). Recommendations for future research on the Bully Busters program have included identifying characteristics associated with teacher engagement, evaluating the frequency and efficacy of teacher-implemented anti-bullying strategies, and pinpointing ways to enhance program buy-in for teachers (Horne, Bell, Raczynski, & Whitford, 2011).

Pre-Service/In-Service Teacher Learning Efforts to Address Bullying

Researchers have examined pre-service and practicing teachers' knowledge, attitudes and responses to bullying (e.g., Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Holt & Keyes, 2004; Nicolaides et al., 2002; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). However, minimal research has investigated the effects of professional learning efforts intended to educate individuals either preparing to become (i.e., pre-service) or currently employed (i.e., in-service) as teachers about bullying (Benítez et al., 2009). Beyond the in-service components of comprehensive or targeted anti-bullying intervention/prevention programs such as those described above (e.g., Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004; Olweus, 1993; Olweus & Limber, 2010), little is known regarding how practicing teachers are being prepared to deal with these behaviors. Although key topics to address during bullying-related training for teachers have been proposed (e.g., O'Moore, 2000), empirical studies investigating these professional learning efforts are lacking.

In terms of pre-service preparation, Benítez and colleagues (2009) developed and evaluated a course on bullying for pre-service teachers in Grenada, Spain. The 60-hour elective course met twice weekly in two hours sessions to provide students enrolled in a teacher educator program with an overview of bullying. The following concepts were addressed during the course: "problem definition and characteristics, etiological factors, analysis of the agents involved, effects of bullying, evaluation of the phenomenon, and knowledge and practices for interventions that prevent or address bullying" (Benítez et al., 2009, p. 195). Pre-post analyses indicated significant improvements in pre-service teachers' capacity to accurately define bullying and identify characteristics of involved

students, as well as perceived ability to effectively intervene in bullying situations (Benítez et al., 2009). In summary, numerous researchers (and educators) have called for more teacher preparation related to bullying (e.g., Benítez et al., 2009, Marshall et al., 2009; Nicolaides et al., 2002; O'Moore, 2000); however, minimal attention has been given to training efforts, particularly for practicing teachers, regarding bullying.

Rationale for a Teacher Professional Learning Model for School-Based Bullying

Research on anti-bullying prevention/intervention programs and pre-service educational opportunities indicates that teachers can become more knowledgeable and confident in identifying and addressing school-based bullying through teacher professional learning efforts (e.g., Benítez et al., 2009; Browning et al., 2005; Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004). There are several reasons, however, why the aforementioned approaches may be challenging for schools to implement or ineffective in reducing bullying. First, unfunded mandates and financial constraints placed on schools often make it challenging to devote the necessary resources (e.g., money and staff, particularly external staff) to sustain anti-bullying prevention and intervention programs (Hu, 2011; Limber & Small, 2003). Second, in-service professional learning opportunities frequently require schools to pay for on-site presenters or for teachers to attend off-campus staff development (thus requiring financial commitments to pay for substitutes). Third, teachers daily lives are inherently busy and therefore time to attend staff development opportunities based on the availability of prevention/intervention program coordinators may be limited (Hazler & Carney, 2006). Finally, a mandated, one-size-fits all approach to preparing teachers to address bullying may not meet the diverse needs of educators

(Orpinas, Horne, & Staniszewski, 2003). Orpinas and colleagues (2003) noted that pre-packaged anti-bullying programs are limited by "the lack of support and engagement of teachers, who may feel the program is one additional burden on their already busy schedules, and that programs are not specifically tailored to the needs of their particular school and students" (p. 433).

Several studies suggest that important characteristics of effective anti-bullying efforts include the degree of integrity and commitment to implementation by teachers (Hirchstein, Van Schoiack Edstrom, Frey, Snell, & MacKenzie, 2007; Kallestad & Olweus, 2003; Pepler, Smith, & Rigby, 2004; Salmivalli et al., 2005), as well as the degree to which the program is contextualized within local settings (Black, Washington, Trent, Harner, & Pollock, 2010). More generally, researchers have indicated that school-based prevention and intervention programs are more likely to be accepted and sustained over time when key stakeholders within the school environment (e.g., teachers, students, administrators) are invited to participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the program (e.g., Boxer, Musher-Eizenman, Dubow, Danner, & Heretick, 2006; Nastasi et al., 2004; Varjas et al., 2006). Further, recognition and adherence to specific school cultural factors (i.e., norms, beliefs, values, behavioral expectations) has been found to be critical to the success of many school reform initiatives such as school-based, cross-cultural organizational consultation (Meyers, 2002), mental health promotion programming (Nastasi, Varjas, Bernstein, & Jayasena, 2000), and anti-bullying preventive-intervention efforts (Varjas et al., 2006; Varjas, Meyers, Meyers, et al., 2008). To meet the specific needs of educators regarding bullying, an economical and

adaptable teacher professional learning model is needed in which input is solicited from teachers in the local context (i.e., participatory) and incorporated into the development and implementation of the model (i.e., culture specificity).

Adequately preparing teachers to manage bullying requires more than a one-shot, lecture-format presentation on how to identify and respond to these behaviors (Bauman, Rigby, & Hoppa, 2008; Heinrichs, 2003). Due to the complex nature of bullying, it is unrealistic to assume that teachers can simply be taught to implement specific strategies to effectively address a range of problems related to bullying. Furthermore, the literature suggests that little is known regarding the effectiveness of specific anti-bullying strategies (e.g., pulling aside and talking to the victim, punishing the bully; Schwartz, Kelly, Duong, & Badaly, 2010). As a result, rather than providing predetermined responses for bullying, educating teachers about how to problem-solve, develop, and evaluate strategies for each unique bullying situation may be more efficient and effective in meeting the needs of the local context.

The Integrated Teacher Professional Learning Model for School-Based Bullying (ITPLMB) presented in this paper was developed from theory, practice, and prior research findings with the goal to create an economical and culture-specific template to use when educating teachers about the content of bullying (e.g., prevalence, types, causes and consequences), how to engage in problem-solving strategies to identify and implement effective responses to bullying, and to incorporate ongoing peer support and feedback to promote sustainability within local contexts. During development of the ITPLMB, an examination of the aforementioned research on bullying was initially

reviewed. Following, literature pertaining to effective teacher learning and school-based intervention models led to the identification of several critical components that were incorporated into the ITPLMB. The next sections provide a brief literature review on (1) effective PD for teachers and (2) aspects of the PCSIM that have been effective for school-based change. In the final section of this paper, the research-based components of PD and the PCSIM comprising the ITPLMB are described, followed by the presentation of the Integrated Teacher Professional Learning Model for School-Based Bullying.

Effective Professional Development for Teachers

Professional development opportunities aim to increase and improve teachers' knowledge, skills, dispositions, and pedagogy to increase student learning. To achieve this goal, professional development has traditionally included direct didactic activities such as workshops, seminars, in-service opportunities, and local, state and national conferences (Desimone, 2009; Little, 1993). However, more complex views of professional learning have developed that incorporate not only prescribed and discrete educational efforts for teachers, but also informal interactions and experiences (Borko, 2004; Desimone, 2009; Easton, 2008). For instance, throughout the school day, teacher learning and development occurs within multiple contexts and aspects of practice such as participating in group discussions with peers, mentoring, receiving performance-based feedback, developing lesson plans and assessments, co-teaching, and interacting with parents and administrators (Borko, 2004; Easton, 2008; Guskey, 2000; Little, 1993; Putnam & Borko, 2000). Due to the dynamic nature of teacher learning, it was critical to

identify and incorporate features of effective PD into the bullying-focused teacher professional learning model presented in this paper.

Researchers have investigated the essential characteristics of PD with varying results. For example, Joyce and Showers (1980) analyzed over 200 studies examining the effectiveness of teacher educational strategies and identified the following five critical elements for professional development: (1) description of skill, strategy or theory, (2) demonstration or modeling of skills, (3) simulated practice, (4) structured feedback, and (5) continued support for authentic application. These researchers also indicated that the combination of more than one of these elements used during teacher professional learning efforts increased the likelihood of impact on teachers' awareness, knowledge, skill acquisition, and application (Joyce & Showers, 1980). Conversely, Desimone (2009) conducted a thorough review of the literature and instead of focusing on the type of professional development activities (workshops, group discussions, etc.), she identified five critical or core features of effective PD, including (a) focus on content, (b) active learning, (c) coherence between what is taught and teachers' knowledge base, (d) duration, and (e) collective participation. Desimone (2009) argued that the impact of professional development can be assessed using a path model which proposes that following effective PD incorporating the aforementioned characteristics, an increase in teachers' knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes and beliefs leads to changes in instructional practices, and finally, to improved student achievement.

Truscott and Truscott (2004), citing discontent with traditional, one-time PD trainings, piloted an innovative professional development/consultation program with

elementary school reading teachers. The program investigated the effectiveness of a model based on the tenets of Positive Psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) such as developing social climates that foster strength and relatedness among educators, enhancing teachers' perceptions of knowledge and competence, encouraging autonomous decision-making, and applying skills in an authentic setting. Socioconstructivist learning theory principles (i.e., situated cognition, social context, and scaffolding instruction; Piaget, 1954; Merriam, Caffarrella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978) also were incorporated into their 2-year project, which included direct instruction with the consultant via workshops, demonstration lessons, coaching, and ad hoc inquiry groups. Participating teachers reported valuing the opportunity to exhibit control and choice regarding the focus of the professional learning program, applicability of the program to their specific students and classroom instructional strategies, and feedback received on the implementation of skills. Further, when asked to identify the most helpful elements of the professional development model, teachers reported the social/collaborative component of the program and the availability of the consultant. Truscott and Truscott (2004) suggested that "the power of choice, control, social collaboration, and contextual-validity appear to be potentially important" (p. 64) when implementing professional development opportunities for teachers.

Researchers working from different PD models have identified a number of common aspects of successful teacher learning. For example, researchers found that effective PD should be supportive by addressing the individual needs and learning styles

of educators and integrating these needs with school and district goals (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Quick, Holtzman, & Chaney, 2009). PD also should be job-embedded so as to be relevant to teachers' specific concerns and practiced in authentic experiences throughout the school day (Easton, 2008; Garet et al., 2001; Truscott & Truscott, 2004). It should be instructionally-focused, emphasizing both content and pedagogy (Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001; Joyce & Showers, 1980; Kennedy, 1998; Quick et al., 2009) and encourage teachers to be active decision makers (Truscott & Truscott, 2004). Further, it should be collaborative in nature and actively engage teachers through learning communities designed to promote social problem-solving and peer feedback (Garet et al., 2001; Quick et al., 2009) Finally, PD needs to be ongoing, both in duration (number of professional learning sessions) and intensity (hours spent in each session; Desimone, 2009; Garet et al., 2001; Quick et al., 2009). Based on these findings, several key components for effective teacher professional development were identified and incorporated into the ITPLMB. These components will be described in detail in the section on the description of the teacher professional learning model.

Participatory Culture-Specific Intervention Model

The Participatory Culture-Specific Intervention Model (PCSIM; Nastasi et al., 2004) provides a framework for the development, implementation and evaluation of culture-specific interventions. Emphasizing participatory and recursive problem-solving and data-based decision making, the PCSIM tailors intervention and prevention efforts to local contexts. In line with these efforts, portions of the PCSIM were integrated into the professional learning model presented in this paper. By incorporating active participation

from stakeholders during all stages of the process, the PCSIM enhances social and ecological validity, acceptability, integrity, sustainability, and institutionalization of programs (Nastasi et al., 2004). Two key elements of the PCSIM include (a) culture, defined as the shared ideas, language, values, beliefs, and behavioral norms of the members of the culture (Nastasi, Varjas, Sarkar, & Jayasena, 1998) and (b) culture specificity, a term used to indicate the incorporation of authentic experiences of individuals within the cultural group, as well as their perceptions of those experiences into change efforts (Nastasi et al., 1998). The PCSIM aims to ensure that both culture and culture specificity are effectively addressed throughout the intervention process (Nastasi et al., 2004).

The PCSIM has been implemented in various school settings, both nationally and internationally (see Nastasi et al., 2004; Varjas et al., 2006; Varjas, Meyers, Meyers, et al., 2008), and applied to diverse presenting problems (e.g., bullying, mental health promotion). For example, when utilizing the PCSIM to develop, implement, and evaluate a culture-specific preventive intervention for bullying, Varjas and colleagues (2006; Varjas, Meyers, Meyers, et al., 2008) solicited input from students, counselors, parents, administrators, and teachers to provide a contextual and culture-specific examination of the local needs and goals related to bullying. These researchers found that the participatory and recursive process informed the intervention that led to acceptability among the researchers, students and educators. Further, students participating in the

victim support groups reported a reduction in post traumatic stress symptoms (Varjas et al., 2006) and internalizing problems, as well as significant increases in personal adjustment (Varjas, Meyers, Meyers, et al., 2008).

The basic tenets of the PCSIM (e.g., participatory focus, culture specificity) have also been applied to change efforts other than school-based intervention programming. For instance, the participatory culture-specific model was effectively applied to a multicultural consultation project designed to develop and sustain mental health promotion programming in a developing country (Nastasi et al., 2000). Further, Graybill (2011) incorporated core elements of the PCSIM into the development of a graduate-level course on social justice education. The course aimed to increase the effectiveness and acceptability of the curriculum by including key stakeholders' (e.g., students, instructor) experiences and needs into the course development and implementation (Graybill, 2011).

Although the PCSIM has not been directly applied to teacher professional learning, the positive results yielded from prior studies (e.g., Nastasi et al., 2000; Nastasi et al., 2004; Varjas et al., 2006; Varjas, Meyers, Meyers, et al., 2008) suggest that many of the foundational elements of the PCSIM would be effective if incorporated into a teacher professional development model. For instance, emphasizing a participatory focus among teachers, as well as a recursive/ongoing decision-making process, may lead to culture-specific modifications to increase acceptability, integrity, and efficacy of teacher professional learning efforts. Soliciting and incorporating teachers' input regarding their perceived needs and availability of time and resources related to staff development may also lead to a sense of ownership and involvement in the professional learning process.

Subsequently, capacity-building and sustainability of professional learning efforts may increase. Several key elements of the PCSIM were incorporated in the teacher professional learning model and will be discussed in the following section.

Integrated Teacher Professional Learning Model for School-Based Bullying

The Integrated Teacher Professional Learning Model for School-Based Bullying (ITPLMB) is intended to be an economical and adaptable professional learning model designed to educate teachers about how to engage in problem-solving to develop culture- and context-specific interventions to address bullying, as well as to facilitate collaboration with one another to provide ongoing support and feedback. The ITPLMB proposed in this paper addresses the aforementioned challenges to preparing teachers to manage bullying (e.g., fiscal constraints, lack of teacher input and culture specificity) and incorporates essential characteristics of PD and the PCSIM identified in the literature. The seven essential components of the ITPLMB are presented in the next section, followed by a review of the development, description and implementation of the ITPLMB.

Seven Essential Components of the ITPLMB

After reviewing the literature, seven key features of effective PD and the PCSIM were identified and deemed necessary for successful teacher learning (see Table 1). These seven essential components are identified in italics throughout the remainder of the paper to denote their contribution to the professional learning model. The components include (1) *focus on content and process:* the professional learning experience emphasizes both content (subject matter) and process (how learning/change occurs) and

Table 1

Seven Essential Components of the ITPLMB

Components	Definition
Focus on Content and Process	The professional learning model should be instructionally-focused emphasizing both content and process (e.g., Desimone, 2009; Joyce & Showers, 1980; Truscott & Truscott, 2004).
Participatory	Collaboration between facilitator(s), participants, and team leaders in the development and implementation of the learning session, as well as during the ongoing support team meetings and participatory consultation sessions (e.g., Desimone, 2009; Nastasi et al., 2004; Truscott & Truscott, 2004).
Coherence	Consistency between what is being taught and participants' knowledge, skills, dispositions, and contextual requirements (e.g., school and district standards; e.g., Desimone, 2009).
Autonomy	Participants exhibit power, choice and active decision-making throughout the development, implementation, and evaluation of the professional learning model (e.g., Truscott & Truscott, 2004).
Authentic Application	Utilizing real-world examples and implementing strategies in authentic settings (e.g., Truscott & Truscott, 2004).
Culture and Context Specificity	Adhering to participants' environment, skills, resources, and needs during professional learning opportunities (e.g., Nastasi et al., 2004; Truscott & Truscott, 2004).
Ongoing Support and Feedback	Participants and team leaders experience ongoing peer and consultative support for implementation feedback and further problem-solving sessions leading to culture-specific modifications to increase acceptability and sustainability (e.g., Joyce & Showers, 1980; Nastasi et al., 2004; Truscott & Truscott, 2004).

is instructionally-focused (e.g., Desimone, 2009; Joyce & Showers, 1980; Truscott & Truscott, 2004), (2) *participatory:* the focus of the professional learning opportunity is a collaboration between the facilitator(s) and participants during development and implementation (e.g., Desimone, 2009; Nastasi et al., 2004; Truscott & Truscott, 2004), (3) c*oherence:* information being presented is consistent with participants' knowledge, skills, dispositions, and contextual requirements (e.g., school and district standards; e.g., Desimone, 2009), (4) *autonomy:* participants exhibit power, choice and active decision-making throughout the development and implementation of the professional learning opportunity (e.g., Truscott & Truscott, 2004), (5) a*uthentic application:* real-world examples are utilized and strategies are implemented in authentic settings (e.g., Truscott & Truscott, 2004), (6) *culture and context specificity:* participants' environments, skills, resources, and needs are acknowledged and incorporated into the professional learning model (e.g., Nastasi et al., 2004; Truscott & Truscott, 2004), and (7) o*ngoing support and feedback:* ongoing peer and participatory consultative support for implementation feedback and further problem-solving sessions leads to culture-specific modifications to increase acceptability, sustainability, and efficacy (e.g., Joyce & Showers, 1980; Nastasi et al., 2004; Truscott & Truscott, 2004).

Development, description and implementation of the ITPLMB

The ITPLMB presented here was created as a result of a study investigating bullying in a metropolitan school district (see Varjas et al., 2006). One element of the study included qualitative interviews with 30 fourth- through eighth-grade teachers regarding their perceptions, experiences and responses to school-based bullying. Answers to interview

questions targeting how teachers intervened when confronted with a bullying situation yielded a two by two framework to analyze culture-specific intervention strategies based on two variables: Teacher Intent and Teacher Involvement (see Figure 1; Marshall et al., 2009). Teacher Intent referred to the purpose of the response to bullying (i.e., the reason the teacher intervened) and included constructive (educative) and punitive (disciplinary) responses. Teacher Involvement indicated the role of the teacher in implementing the intervention and included direct (personal involvement) and indirect (referral to another individual) responses. Interventions were categorized into a two by two framework that conceptualized responses as either constructive or punitive AND direct or indirect, resulting in the following four response types: Constructive-Direct (e.g., talking with the bully), Constructive-Indirect (e.g., referring the victim to the counselor), Punitive-Direct (e.g., removing the bully from the classroom), and Punitive-Indirect (e.g., referring the bully to an administrator; Marshall et al., 2009). As an outgrowth of this framework, the research-driven ITPLMB presented here was developed to assist teachers in identifying, implementing and evaluating culture- and context-specific responses to bullying.

To further aid in this process, problem-solving approaches were reviewed. Structured problem-solving frameworks aim to promote analytical decision making to assist in the identification, analysis, intervention, and evaluation of solutions to presenting problems (Gutkin & Curtis, 2009). Emphasizing a participatory and culture-specific approach incorporating local contextual needs and input, Nastasi and colleagues (2004) identified six steps in the participatory problem-solving and decision-making process, including (1) identify the goal or problem, (2) brainstorm responses or solutions,

Teacher Intent	Teacher Involvement: Direct Response	Teacher Involvement: Indirect Response
Constructive Response	Constructive – Direct Responses 1. 2.	Constructive – Indirect Responses 1. 2.
Punitive Response	Punitive – Direct Responses 1. 2.	Punitive – Indirect Responses 1. 2.

Figure 1. Two by two framework for teachers' responses to bullying. Adapted from "Teacher Responses to Bullying: Self-Reports From the Front Line," by M. L. Marshall, K. Varjas, J. Meyers, E. C. Graybill, and R. Skoczylas, 2009, *Journal of School Violence, 8*(2), p. 144.

(3) evaluate solutions for potential effectiveness, (4) select a strategy, (5) develop an action plan for implementation, and (6) establish a plan to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the action plan. Following these steps provides educators with a pragmatic, coherent way to structure and analyze complex problems within local contexts so that informed decisions are made regarding challenging situations in schools (Nastasi et al., 2004). These steps are incorporated into ITPLMB to educate teachers how to

engage in problem-solving strategies to identify, implement, and evaluate culture-specific responses to bullying.

The ITPLMB is designed to be appropriate for educators of all grade levels, degree of experience, and demographic settings. Additionally, it is intended to be economical and flexible to the time-constraints of busy educators in diverse settings. The ITPLMB is designed for no more than 30 participants and can include teachers of any grade/school level. By providing a detailed template for the professional learning model, it is the author's goal to present teachers and facilitator(s) with the tools and resources to guide implementation, while concurrently allowing for contextualization to meet the needs of the local context. Individual(s) leading the ITPLMB (subsequently referred to as facilitators) may be one or more school personnel who play various roles within the school setting, such as a counselor, teacher, administrator, behavior specialist, and/or school psychologist.

The steps necessary to develop and implement the ITPLMB, as well as the requisite skills needed by the facilitator(s) for each step, are described below. These steps include (1) preparation for the professional learning opportunity, (2) implementation of the learning session, and (3) ongoing practice and support. A summary of the activities and objectives associated with each of these three steps is presented and summarized in Table 2. In addition, references and resources are included to aid in the development, implementation, and sustainability of the ITPLMB (see Appendixes A, B, C, & D).

Step 1: Preparation. Preparation for implementation of the ITPLMB includes several actions. Initially, facilitator(s) commit to leading the professional development

Table 2

Template for the ITPLMB

Step 1. Preparation
- a) Individual(s) agree to be facilitator(s) and obtain administrative and district support, schedule the learning session, and inform teachers
- b) Disseminate and retrieve a needs assessment questionnaire to participating teachers prior to the learning session to identify and incorporate local needs (see Appendix A)
- c) Administer a survey to students on bullying (e.g., The Student Survey of Bullying Behavior – Revised 2; Varjas et al., 2009) to provide essential context and culture-specific data from the students' perspectives regarding prevalence, types, consequences, and responses to bullying
- d) Assemble relevant materials and information into a presentable format

Step 2. Implementation of the learning session
- a) Background information
  - i) Present and discuss the definition of bullying, including both the 'established' and personal/local definitions of bullying, as well as the types, prevalence, trends, causes and consequences, and signs of victimization and bullying (See Appendix B; e.g., Bradshaw et al., 2007; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Griffin & Gross, 2004; Nansel et al., 2001; Wang et al., 2009)
- b) School responses to bullying
  - i) Identify local and national school policies and procedures related to bullying and discuss strengths and weaknesses (Limber & Small, 2003; Srabstein et al., 2008; Terry, 2010; www.bullypolice.org)
  - ii) Allow teachers to discuss their typical responses to bullying and the perceived effectiveness of those strategies as they relate to common responses in the literature (e.g., Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Marshall et al., 2009; Nicolaides et al., 2002; Yoon & Kerber, 2003)
- c) Decision-making strategy and problem-solving framework
  - i) Present the strategy and framework and discuss potential responses and resources (see Figure 1 and Appendix C)
  - ii) Allow participants to collaborate and apply the decision-making strategy and problem-solving framework to hypothetical and authentic experiences of bullying

Step 3. Ongoing support and feedback
- a) Direct participants to establish peer support teams of approximately 4-8 members to meet monthly to discuss implementation, evaluation, and modifications of the problem-solving framework and to provide support for ongoing dedication to the reduction of bullying
- b) Ask the support teams to identify a team leader and develop and sign an action plan for how they will implement interventions and continue to meet, discuss and evaluate their responses to bullying (see Appendix D)
- c) Explain that ongoing participatory consultation (Nastasi et al., 2004) will occur between the team leader and the facilitator(s) after each support team meeting (see Figure 2)

opportunity and obtain district- and building-level approval. Many school districts use online programs to announce and solicit participation for professional development opportunities. These programs typically provide school personnel with a description of the PD, as well as information regarding the intended audience, time and location, number of attendees, date by which the school personnel must register, and number of continuing education credits afforded (if applicable). Interested teachers often can sign-up electronically and as a result, facilitator(s) can identify and solicit information from participating teachers prior to the PD.

A needs assessment questionnaire, developed by the facilitator(s), is distributed to attendees to complete and return prior to the PD opportunity. This information will allow facilitator(s) to incorporate teachers' culture-specific beliefs, needs, and dispositions into the focus and content of the ITPLMB (see Appendix A for a sample questionnaire). The needs assessment may include a myriad of questions based on specific environments and can target teachers' perceptions of the seriousness and frequency of bullying in the local context, the definition and typical responses to bullying, perceived needs to reduce these behaviors, related school policies, and specific bullying topics of interest to teachers. Also, by asking attendees to indicate their experience in education, facilitator(s) can tailor the professional learning model to meet the needs of teachers at various stages of teacher development (for information, see Burden, 1990; Fuller, 1969; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Katz, 1972). For instance, if the majority of participating teachers have many years of experience (i.e., in the Maturity Stage of Development; Katz, 1972), facilitator(s) may want to provide more opportunities for discussion and brainstorming among attendees.

Conversely, if most teachers are in their first year of teaching (i.e., in the Survival Stage of Development; Katz, 1972), specific guidance and support regarding bullying interventions may be more beneficial. The needs assessment also informs attendees that the PD consists of a one-day learning session, as well as ongoing monthly support team meetings with their peers. Teachers are asked to sign the needs assessment as a contract indicating their understanding and commitment to attending both the learning session and the ongoing team meetings. Finally, if feasible, having students in the local context complete a survey on bullying (e.g., The Student Survey of Bullying Behavior – Revised 2; Varjas, Henrich, & Meyers, 2009) will allow facilitator(s) to include critical context- and culture-specific data from the students' perspectives regarding the prevalence, types, consequences, and responses to bullying *(focus on content and process, participatory, coherence, autonomy, culture and context specificity, ongoing support and feedback*).

Preparation for the professional learning opportunity also includes assembling the appropriate materials (e.g., handouts, resources) and creating a presentation that incorporates information needed for their professional learning. Because new and updated literature on bullying is rapidly emerging, facilitator(s) are encouraged to use the resources presented in this paper, as well as information obtained through bibliographic searches, to effectively infuse current information on bullying into the learning session. Facilitator(s) will need to collect content-focused information regarding national and state anti-bullying laws, as well as district and school-level bullying policies and definitions (typically found in disciplinary handbooks). For detailed information regarding anti-bullying legislation by state, visit www.bullypolice.org or reference the following

articles: Limber & Small, 2003; Srabstein et al., 2008; and Terry, 2010 (also see Appendix B). National and local prevalence data can be found from sources such as national or statewide health and behavioral assessments (e.g., The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System) or local surveys such as the one previously suggested (*focus on content and process, coherence, culture and context specificity).*

Literature-based information regarding universal developmental and gender-related trends about bullying, potential causes and consequences of these behaviors, and signs of victimization and bullying also are incorporated into the presentation (for information, see Appendix B and Bradshaw et al., 2007; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Griffin & Gross, 2004; Nansel et al., 2001; Wang et al., 2009). Finally, school personnel's perceptions of and responses to bullying are addressed, both in terms of local teachers (based on the needs assessment) and national perspectives of educators. Facilitator(s) are encouraged to reference Bradshaw and colleagues (2011) nationwide study of NEA members' perceptions of bullying. Broadly, the information incorporated in the presentation is selected, in part, based on the data collected from local students (via the student survey) and teachers (via the needs assessment) and focuses on specific concerns of the local context (e.g., cyberbullying, bullying toward gender non-confirming youth, relational bullying among females; *focus on content and process, participatory, coherence, autonomy,* c*ulture and context specificity).*

Several skills are necessary for facilitator(s) to successfully execute Step 1 of the ITPLMB. First, this individual(s) will need to be able to conduct a literature search on bullying and summarize relevant findings. Second, facilitator(s) will need to be

knowledgeable about data collection, analyses and interpretation to effectively present findings from the needs assessment with teachers and survey data with students. Facilitator(s) also will need to incorporate the bullying literature and relevant local findings into an organized presentation that is appropriate for diverse audiences (Nastasi et al., 2004). Finally, time-management and organizational skills are required to develop a plan for implementation of the learning session.

Step 2: Implementation of the learning session. The learning session is intended to be implemented by the facilitator(s) over the course of 8 hours (completed either on one occasion or in multiple shorter sessions based on local needs). The learning session is comprised of the following three sections: (1) background information, (2) school responses to bullying, and (3) decision-making strategy and problem-solving framework (see Table 2).

Background information. The learning session begins with a discussion of the similarities and differences among the individual teacher's definitions (obtained from the needs assessment) and the 'established' definition of bullying in the literature (see Olweus, 1993), as well as local district or school definitions. Questions to guide this discussion include the following: Is your definition of bullying consistent with the literature and school/district definitions? How are they similar or different? Can you think of potential implications for the differences among these definitions? Following this discussion, information obtained from the needs assessment regarding teachers' perceived frequency and seriousness of bullying within the local context is presented. The types of bullying, prevalence, developmental and gender-related trends of

school-based bullying, signs of victimization and bullying, and causes and consequences of bullying (obtained partially from the student survey) are also presented and discussed with the teachers (*focus on content and process, participatory, coherence, culture and context specificity*).

School responses to bullying. The facilitator(s) then lead a discussion regarding the strengths and weaknesses of local school and/or district policies and procedures in place to address bullying. Questions to guide the discussion include, but are not limited to, the following: Are there policies/procedures in place at this school for you to follow if you encounter bullying? If so, what are they? How were you informed of these guidelines? Do you consistently adhere to the policies when you witness bullying? Why or why not? Do you perceive the procedures to be effective in reducing bullying? Why or why not (*focus on content and process, participatory, coherence, culture and context specificity*)?

Information regarding anti-bullying legislation and state and local policies mandating educators to respond to bullying are also presented. Subsequently, common responses to bullying reported by teachers in the literature (e.g., pulling aside and talking to students, calling out inappropriate behavior, sending students to a counselor or administrator, calling students' parents, and talking to other staff; Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Marshall et al., 2009; Nicolaides et al, 2002; Yoon & Kerber, 2003) are examined. Based on the answers to the needs assessment, the facilitator(s) then leads a discussion of how teachers typically respond to bullying and the perceived effectiveness of those responses. Finally, specific topics of interest identified

by the teachers in question 7 of the needs assessment are examined (See Appendix A; *focus on content and process, participatory, coherence, autonomy, culture and context specificity).*

Decision-making strategy and problem-solving framework. To assist teachers in identifying, implementing and analyzing responses to bullying based on their local contexts, a unique decision-making strategy is presented to assist in the problem-solving process. As previously mentioned, the decision-making strategy was developed from a qualitative study of teachers' responses to bullying (Marshall et al., 2009) and provides a distinct structure for the culture- and context-specific development, implementation and evaluation of teachers' approaches to bullying. The strategy, coupled with the participatory and culture-specific problem-solving framework, aids in the identification of effective and ineffective responses to bullying based on individual teachers' knowledge, skills, dispositions, resources, and school policies (*focus on content and process, coherence, autonomy, culture and context specificity*).

The decision-making strategy allows for the simultaneous examination of two primary variables (Teacher Intent and Teacher Involvement) when developing strategies to respond to bullying. Teacher Intent (purpose of the response) is based on teachers' perceptions of the implemented strategy, as opposed to inferring students' perceptions of these responses. For example, although making a bully apologize may be perceived as punitive or embarrassing to the student, the response may be categorized as educative based on the intent of the teacher. Teacher Intent includes constructive and punitive responses, with the former defined as approaches perceived by teachers to be educative,

supportive, and/or non-punitive for the students (e.g., talking with bullies and victims, referring students to the counselor), and the latter being responses perceived by teachers to be undesirable and/or punishing for the students (e. g., removing the bully from the classroom, sending the bully to an administrator). Teacher Involvement delineates the role of the teacher in implementing the intervention and includes direct versus indirect responses. Direct responses include approaches through which the teacher intervenes with the students personally (e.g., making the bully apologize), while indirect responses are strategies through which teachers respond by referring the students to another individual (e.g., administrator, counselor, or parent). In review, interventions are therefore categorized into a two by two framework that conceptualizes interventions according to the following four response types: Constructive-Direct, Constructive-Indirect, Punitive-Direct, and Punitive-Indirect (see Figure 1; Marshall et al., 2009).

Unlike prior studies examining teachers' responses to bullying based primarily on the participating student (e.g., victim, bully, bystander) and/or the type of bullying (e.g., verbal, relational, physical; Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Nicolaides et al, 2002; Whitaker, Rosenbluth, Valle, & Sanchez, 2004; Yoon & Kerber, 2003), this decision-making strategy allows for concurrent examination of both teacher intent and teacher involvement without solely focusing on the involved student(s) or type of bullying. As some responses may be effective and appropriate for multiple types of bullying and/or participating students, this tool provides a systematic way for teachers to categorize responses to various bullying incidents. For example, if a teacher uses a Constructive-Direct intervention (e.g., pulling aside and talking to a student) with a suspected bully

and perceives the intervention to be effective, the teacher may utilize the same or similar approaches for students suspected of teasing, harassing, or fighting.

Following the presentation of the decision-making strategy, an introduction to the participatory and culture-specific problem-solving model is presented. In review, the 6 problem-solving steps include (1) goal or problem identification, (2) brainstorm responses or solutions, (3) evaluate solutions for potential effectiveness, (4) select a strategy, (5) develop an action plan for implementation, and (6) establish a plan to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the action plan (Nastasi et al., 2004). Participants are asked to form small groups and collaboratively use the problem-solving framework and decision-making strategy to first address a hypothetical bullying situation. To assist facilitator(s) in leading this exercise, Appendix C provides an example previously used by the author during a professional development workshop with teachers. The scenario was selected based on contextual concerns of the district in which the PD occurred. Accordingly, facilitator(s) are encouraged to develop context-specific hypothetical scenarios to use during the professional learning session based on teachers' concerns reported on the needs assessment (*focus on content and process, participatory, autonomy, authentic application, culture and context specificity*).

Participants begin by reading the hypothetical bullying scenario, identifying the problem, and brainstorming potential responses. Next, teachers categorize the generated strategies into the two by two decision-making strategy and identify several responses for each of the four response types. For example, based on the presented scenario in Appendix C, a Constructive-Direct response might include pulling aside and talking to

the students who created the alleged website, while a Constructive-Indirect approach might include consulting other educators for assistance (i.e., consulting a teacher or counselor who knows the student(s) well or has experience with cyberbullying). A Punitive-Direct strategy might be to punish the bullies (e.g., removing the students from the classroom), while a Punitive-Indirect approach might include calling the bullies' parents. Accounting for individual and local contributing factors, participating teachers are asked to discuss the perceived effectiveness of these potential responses. Subsequently, the most viable strategy is identified and an action plan is developed collaboratively to facilitate implementation and evaluation of the chosen response (a more detailed description of the evaluation element is described in the next section). Following this exercise, participants are asked to remain in small groups and identify an authentic experience of bullying to be resolved using the decision-making strategy and problem-solving framework (*focus on content and process, participatory, coherence, autonomy, authentic application, culture and context specificity).*

This approach provides a systematic way to educate teachers to problem-solve responses to bullying specific to their environment. For instance, because teachers' responses may have different effects based on different students, classes, and/or schools (e.g., in some circumstances counselors may be punitive or sending a student to an administrator might be constructive), teachers must acknowledge, incorporate, and understand the impact of individual, contextual, and cultural factors affecting these responses. The decision-making strategy and problem-solving framework challenges the way teachers think about responding to bullying behaviors and allows them the

opportunity to choose anti-bullying strategies based on their own needs, skills, experiences, and available resources. Furthermore, it provides a participatory and systematic framework to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of context- and culture-specific anti-bullying interventions.

To successfully complete Step 2 of the ITPLMB, facilitator(s) will need to demonstrate effective communication skills (e.g., presenting ideas, listening to others and asking questions, clarification, and summarizing information; Nastasi et al., 2004) and present the material using both didactic and experiential approaches (Horne et al., 2003). Facilitators also will need to be able to brainstorm, elicit and integrate divergent perspectives, and keep discussions on topic (Nastasi et al., 2004). Finally, group facilitation skills such as engaging teachers in the generation of ideas and encouraging equitable participation among members (Nastasi et al., 2004) will also be necessary during the break-out portion of the learning session.

Step 3: Ongoing support and feedback. At the end of the learning session, facilitator(s) ask participating teachers to establish peer support teams of four to eight members (the number recommended by Horne et al., 2003) for ongoing feedback and sustainability. The support teams may be established by grade-level, subject, or based on convenience regarding time available to attend subsequent meetings, depending on the local context. Heterogeneity among team members may provide more diversity in terms of experience and knowledge, contributing to “broader problem-solving and creativity” (Horne et al., 2003, p. 7). The facilitator(s) explains that the support teams are encouraged to meet monthly for approximately one hour to discuss authentic bullying

incidents and identify perceived effectiveness of the specific responses described in the learning session *(focus on content and process, participatory, coherence, autonomy, authentic application, culture and context specificity, ongoing support and feedback*).

During the explanation of the support teams, the facilitator(s) instructs the teams to develop and sign an action plan for how they will implement interventions and continue to meet, discuss, and evaluate their responses to bullying. Appendix D provides a sample action plan to assist teachers in creating a feasible and meaningful strategy to facilitate capacity building and sustainability of the ongoing, recursive problem-solving process. The facilitator(s) asks each team to identify a team leader who will be responsible for coordinating the logistics of the monthly meetings (e.g., time, location), as well as leading discussions on the strengths, weaknesses, and concerns related to bullying interventions. Prior to the meetings, the team leader will ask each member to complete the following questions: (1) What types of bullying have you encountered since our previous meeting? (2) What anti-bullying intervention(s) have you implemented? (3) Were the intervention(s) effective? Why or why not? (4) Would you use the intervention(s) again? Why or why not? (5) What questions do you have for the team to help you continue to address bullying *(focus on content and process, participatory, coherence, autonomy, authentic application, culture and context specificity, ongoing support and feedback*)?

During each group session, members will briefly share their experiences, including successes and failures, related to bullying interventions implemented since the previous group meeting. While members are sharing, other teachers are encouraged to

provide suggestions and feedback and participate in collaborative problem-solving to traverse difficult issues related to bullying. Following, based on their responses to question five above, members are asked to present their bullying-related questions to the support team. Team leaders facilitate discussions to these questions and then summarize the issues presented at the end of each support session. The team leader also is responsible for checking in with the facilitator(s) after each session to discuss the progress and concerns of the support teams (e.g., Are group members actively participating? What are the key points discussed during the support group? Are modifications necessary to enhance the group process?). This participatory consultation approach to ongoing staff development (see Nastasi et al., 2004) aims to provide facilitator(s) with an avenue to monitor implementation and provide continuous, individualized assistance to the teams (see Figure 2 for a visual representation of the ongoing support and feedback process of the ITPLMB). Further, these ongoing consultation sessions seek to enhance acceptability and sustainability (Nastasi et al., 2004) of the professional learning model over time and can be conducted via email, phone call, or in-person conference *(focus on content and process, participatory, coherence, autonomy, authentic application, culture and context specificity, ongoing support and feedback*). Requisite skills of the team leader include the ability to effectively pose questions, monitor time requirements and participation among group members, summarize key points, keep the discussion on topic, check for understanding, and discuss adherence to the action plan (Nastasi et al., 2004).

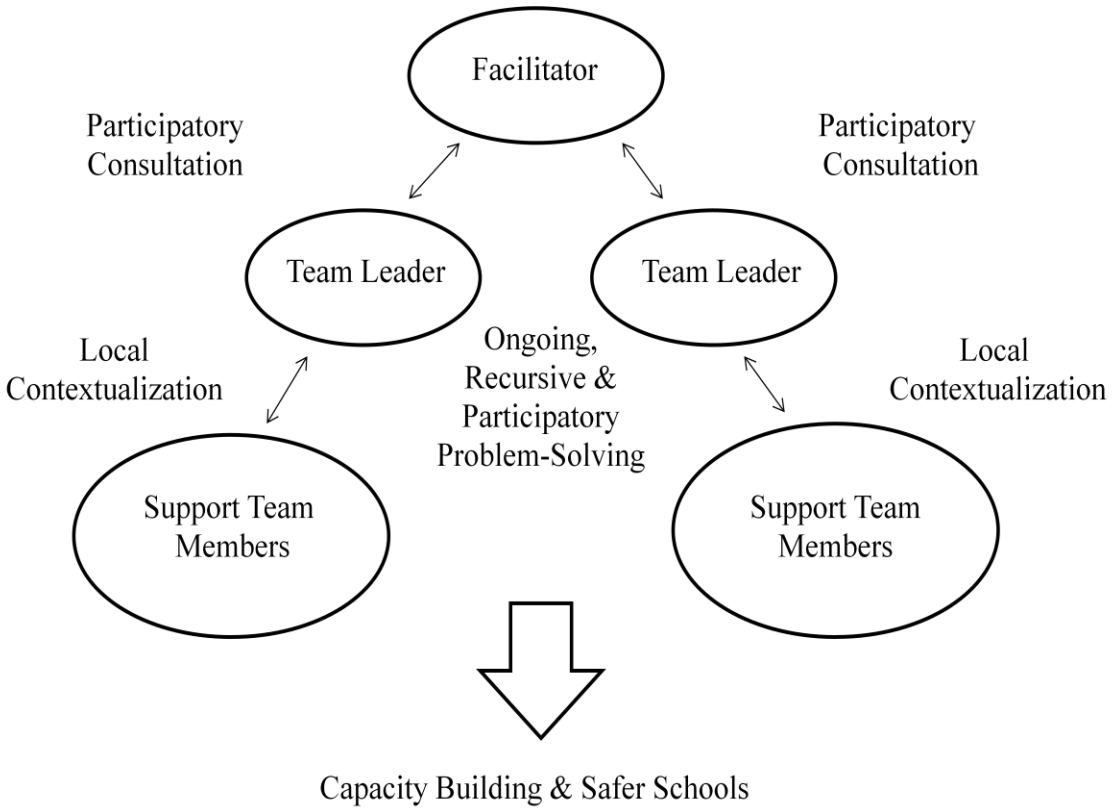

Figure 2. Ongoing support and feedback process of the ITPLMB.

Prior research has indicated that combining in-service professional learning efforts with ongoing support and consultation is necessary to produce significant change in teachers' knowledge and skills related to classroom management (Shapiro, DuPaul, Bradley, & Bailey, 1996) and bullying interventions (Horne et al., 2003). Thus, although these support team meetings require a commitment from already over-burdened teachers, solely attending the learning session is likely insufficient to result in lasting change. Addressing the necessity of support teams in the aforementioned Bully Busters program, Horne and colleagues (2003) noted that "the degree to which teachers' efforts are

effective stem largely from their motivation to continue meeting and working as a team" (p. 7).

Teachers spend the majority of their time in the classroom and are thus isolated from other educators (Lortie, 1975). Subsequently, teachers have reported desiring increased time for collaboration and reflection with their peers regarding their experiences throughout the school day (Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, & Rodriguez, 2005). Initiatives designed to meet the needs of teachers and promote job-embedded professional learning communities have successfully promoted school cultures of collaboration (e.g., Bambino, 2002) and enhanced teacher professionalism (e.g., Key, 2006). For instance, the National School Reform Faculty provides a framework for collegial consultation, reflective practice, and peer problem-solving through the use of Critical Friends Groups (CFGs; e.g., Bambino, 2002; Dunne, Nave, & Lewis, 2000; Key, 2006). These CFGs are comprised of teachers who meet regularly and use protocols and activities to guide facilitated discussions of student work and teacher practice (for more information, see www.nsrfharmony.org). Team leaders of the ongoing support team meetings described in this paper are encouraged to reference the protocols used by CFGs to generate ideas and suggestions for facilitating meaningful and collaborative support sessions among teachers related to culture- and context-specific bullying interventions.

During Step 3 of the ITPLMB, the facilitator(s) will consult with the team leaders after each group session (see Figure 2). These sessions do not need to be lengthy; however, the facilitator(s) will need to be sensitive to the individual needs of each group/leader. Successful participatory consultation will require the facilitator(s) to

provide meaningful feedback, assess group needs, communicate effectively with the group leader, and problem-solve presented concerns (Nastasi et al., 2004).

Conclusion

The literature on bullying clearly recommends increased preparation for teachers to effectively identify and intervene in bullying situations (Holt, Keyes, & Koenig, 2011; Kokko & Porhola, 2009; James et al., 2008; O'Moore, 2000). When properly prepared, teachers can reduce the deleterious effects of bullying for students (Nicolaides et al., 2002; Rigby & Bagshaw, 2003). However, due to the significant variability in time and resources available to schools, economical and adaptable professional learning models are needed to meet the diverse needs and over-burdened schedules of educators. The integrated teacher professional learning model presented in this paper, the ITPLMB, seeks to address this need for bullying-related preparation for teachers.

The ITPLMB is unique to the literature in that it incorporates all seven essential components identified as critical for effective teacher learning (e.g., Desimone, 2009; Joyce & Showers, 1980; Nastasi et al., 2004; Truscott & Truscott, 2004). Specifically, the ITPLMB includes providing descriptive information about bullying and how schools respond (*focus on content and process*), as well as acknowledging local definitions and policies related to bullying (*coherence*). Participating teachers are asked to provide input regarding their knowledge and needs both before and during the learning session and they work collaboratively with others on an ongoing basis (*participatory*). The decision-making strategy and problem-solving framework allows teachers to choose responses (*autonomy)* to implement and evaluate in their own classrooms (*authentic application*)

based on the individual needs of that teacher (*context and culture specificity).* Finally, through the use of monthly support meetings and participatory consultation, teachers provide ongoing support and feedback regarding the implementation and modification of bullying strategies (*ongoing support and feedback).*

The ITPLMB provides a culture-specific template to use when preparing teachers to address bullying. By taking into account both individual (e.g., years of experience teaching, personal experiences with bullying, knowledge and skills related to prevention and intervention efforts) and local contextual factors (e.g., administrative support, school policies on bullying, perceived effectiveness of influential individuals such as counselors and administrators), teachers can apply a culture-specific lens to implementing and evaluating effective responses to bullying. This ongoing, job-embedded professional development model is designed to provide teachers with an opportunity to engage in collaborative problem-solving with their peers, an experience rarely afforded to contemporary teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2009), in an effort to reduce bullying and sustain best practices in schools.

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CHAPTER 2

TEACHERS' PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE BULLYING INTERVENTION

Teachers play a critical role in students' daily lives and are both responsible for employing effective pedagogical practices, as well as providing a safe and supportive environment for students to learn (National Education Association [NEA], 1975). Ensuring students' safety includes recognizing and effectively responding to bullying, which is a pervasive form of aggressive behavior (Griffin & Gross, 2004). Bullying is characterized by an imbalance of power in which a person(s) exhibits intentionally harmful and repetitive behavior toward another person(s) (Olweus, 1993). The prevalence of bullying reported by children and youth in schools both internationally (e.g., Due et al., 2005; Craig et al., 2009) and nationally (e.g., Bradshaw, Sawyer, & O'Brennan, 2007; Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009) is startling. For instance, Wang and colleagues (2009) surveyed a nationally representative sample of sixth through tenth graders in the U.S. (*N* = 7,182) and found that over half of students (53.6%) reported experiencing and/or participating in verbal bullying (e.g., name calling, verbal threats) at least once during the prior two months. In regards to other types of bullying, 20.8% of students reported physical bullying (e.g., hitting, pushing), 51.4% reported relational bullying (e.g., gossiping, socially ostracizing), and 13.6% reported cyberbullying (Wang et al., 2009). Cyberbullying is defined as intentionally hurtful and repetitive behavior indirectly inflicted on another person via digital media (e.g., email, text message, social media website; Diamanduros, Downs, & Jenkins, 2008). Numerous studies have indicated that

bullying results in immediate and long-lasting consequences for victims, bullies, and bystanders (e.g., Due et al., 2005; Griffin & Gross, 2004; Nansel et al., 2001). Due to the incidence and negative effects for involved students, educators have increasingly recognized the importance of addressing bullying in schools (O'Moore, 2000).

Teachers play an essential role in the management and reduction of school-based bullying (Craig, Henderson, & Murphy, 2000; Frey, Jones, Hirschstein, & Edstrom, 2011; Nicolaides, Toda, & Smith, 2002). Prior research indicates that educators generally hold negative attitudes towards bullying and feel responsible for addressing and preventing these behaviors (Boulton, 1997). When asked how they intervene during bullying incidents, teachers have reported using a variety of strategies, including disciplining the bully, enlisting other adults, working with the bully and victim, referring the student(s) to the counselor or school psychologist, and talking to the parents of involved students (e.g., Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Bauman, Rigby, & Hoppa, 2008; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Dake, Price, Telljohann, & Funk, 2003; Marshall, Varjas, Meyers, Graybill, & Skoczylas, 2009; Sairanen & Pfeffer, 2011; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). Despite these efforts, researchers have found that students do not perceive educators to be consistently effective in identifying or resolving bullying (e.g., Craig et al., 2000; Fekkes, Pijpers, & Verloove-Vanhorick, 2005; Smith & Shu, 2002; Varjas et al., 2008). When adults in the environment do not respond to bullying successfully, children and youth continue to be placed at-risk for experiencing the deleterious effects of school-based bullying (e.g., school avoidance, poor academic achievement, increased mental health

concerns; Gladstone, Parker, & Malhi, 2006; Glew, Fan, Katon, Rivara, & Kernic, 2005; Juvonen, Wang, & Espinoza, 2011; Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996; Srabstein & Piazza, 2008).

Effectively managing bullying can be challenging and a complicated endeavor for teachers (Beran, 2006; Doll, Song, & Siemers, 2004; Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005). Addressing bullying requires teachers to be able to accurately identify these behaviors, perceive bullying to be a problem requiring intervention, and possess the knowledge and skills to successfully respond (Kokko & Porhola, 2009; Limber & Small, 2003; Nicolaides et al., 2002; O'Moore, 2000). School climate factors such as anti-bullying policy, perceived administrative support, and time available to address these behaviors also influence teachers' reactions (e.g., Bauman et al., 2008; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Mishna et al., 2005). Accordingly, teachers' responses to bullying, or lack thereof, are likely affected by numerous factors. Since teachers are on the front line to tackle bullying (e.g., Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008; Marshall et al., 2009; Mishna et al., 2005; Salmivalli, Kaukianinen, & Voeten, 2005), it is important to explore the variables that influence when and how teachers choose whether or not to intervene (Novick & Isaacs, 2010). Minimal research has been conducted examining the obstacles that teachers perceive encumber their ability to successfully and consistently respond to bullying. To address this gap in the literature, the purpose of this exploratory study was to assess teachers' perceived barriers to effective bullying intervention, as well as to examine potential relationships between how teachers reported responding to bullying and perceived obstacles to effective intervention.

Numerous bullying prevention and intervention programs have been developed to reduce school-based bullying (e.g., Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004; Olweus & Limber, 2010; Plog, Garrity, Jens, & Porter, 2011; Smith & Shu, 2000) and the majority of these programs rely heavily upon teacher intervention for implementation (e.g., Committee for Children, 2001; Crothers & Kolbert, 2004; Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004; Salmivalli et al., 2005). Due to their critical role in bullying prevention and intervention programming, researchers have called for studies exploring teachers' perceptions of and responses to these negative behaviors (e.g., Bauman & Hurley, 2005; Crothers & Kolbert, 2004; Holt, Keyes, & Koenig, 2011; Marshall et al., 2009; Sairanen & Pfeffer, 2011; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). Much of the available research indicates that discrepancies exist between teachers' and students' perceptions of the frequency (e.g., Bradshaw et al., 2007; Stockdale, Hangaduambo, Duys, Larson, & Sarvela, 2002) and efficacy (e.g., Newman & Murray, 2005) of teachers' responses to bullying. For example, Bradshaw and colleagues (2007) surveyed school staff (N = 1,547) and students (N = 15,185) and found that only 10% of educators reported ignoring bullying, whereas over 50% of students indicated that they had "seen adults in the school watching bullying and doing nothing" (p. 375). Further, the vast majority of students felt their school's bullying prevention efforts were inadequate (Bradshaw et al., 2007), suggesting the need for increased and improved support from school personnel.

The preponderance of literature investigating teachers' approaches to bullying has used quantitative methodology, including self-report surveys providing predetermined definitions of bullying (e.g., Bradshaw et al., 2007), hypothetical bullying scenarios (e.g.,

Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Yoon & Kerber, 2003), and preset lists of interventions from which to base their responses (e.g., Bauman et al., 2008; Kochenderfer-Ladd & Pelletier, 2008; Sairanen & Pfeffer, 2011). In an effort to investigate bullying using a diverse approach (i.e., non-quantitative), Marshall and colleagues (2009) conducted qualitative interviews with fourth through eighth grade teachers (*N* = 30) regarding their definition of bullying and specific responses to these behaviors. Analysis of teachers' self-reported responses to bullying yielded a two by two framework based on teacher intent (defined as the purpose of the strategy and categorized as Constructive or Punitive) and teacher involvement (defined as the role of the teacher in implementing the response and categorized as Direct or Indirect; see Figure 3). The unique framework provided a tool to conceptualize and analyze teachers' responses to bullying based on the following four response types: Constructive-Direct, Punitive-Direct, Constructive-Indirect, Punitive-Indirect. Results indicated that teachers' approaches to bullying were complex and influenced by multiple individual and contextual factors (Marshall et al., 2009).

Teachers' understanding and awareness of bullying is likely one factor affecting their responses (e.g., Boulton, 1997; Mishna et al., 2005). Research suggests that accurately identifying bullying can be challenging for several reasons. First, since bullying is frequently concealed from school personnel (i.e., exhibited outside of the adults' view) and includes covert behaviors such as social exclusion, spreading rumors and cyberbullying, it is often difficult for teachers to recognize (e.g., Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Craig et al., 2000; Olweus, 1993; Tangen & Campbell, 2010). Second, students

Teacher Involvement: Role of teacher in implementing the strategy

Teacher Intent: Purpose or rationale of the response	Direct Response	Indirect Response
Constructive Response	Constructive – Direct Responses 1. Pull aside and talk to student(s) 2. Call out inappropriate behavior 3. Protect the victim 4. Make bully apologize 5. Use personal experience with bullying	Constructive – Indirect Responses 1. Send, inform or refer student(s) to counselor 2. Consult other educators 3. Call victim's parents
Punitive Response	Punitive – Direct Responses 1. Remove or move bully in the classroom 2. Punishment 3. Physically get in the middle of students 4. Yell	Punitive – Indirect Responses 1. Call bully's parents 2. Send, inform or refer bully to administrator

Figure 3. Teachers' responses to bullying. Adapted from "Teacher Responses to Bullying: Self-Reports From the Front Line," by M. L. Marshall, K. Varjas, J. Meyers, E. C. Graybill, and R. Skoczylas, 2009, *Journal of School Violence, 8*(2), p. 144.

often do not inform their teachers of the victimization, making it problematic for school personnel to address bullying (Fekkes et al., 2005; Whitney & Smith, 1993). Finally, differentiating between bullying and teasing behaviors has been reported by teachers to be a complex process hindering consistent and effective intervention (Mills & Carwile, 2009; Smith et al., 2010).

Teachers' attitudes toward and perceptions of bullying also may influence their ability and willingness to intervene (e.g., Bauman & Hurley, 2005; Craig et al., 2000; Ellis & Shute; 2007; Yoon, 2004; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). For instance, in a quantitative study about teachers' perceptions of bullying, Kochenderfer-Ladd and Pelletier (2008) found that participants were not likely to intervene if they perceived bullying to be a normative behavior. Teachers' empathy (i.e., level of sympathy for involved students) and the degree to which they perceived bullying to be serious also have been found to influence their responses (e.g., Craig et al., 2000; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Yoon, 2004). For example, when provided hypothetical scenarios of physical, verbal, and relational bullying, teachers reported more empathy for physical bullying and perceived it to be more serious than verbal and relational bullying. As a result, they were more likely to intervene during incidents of physical bullying (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Yoon & Kerber, 2003).

As suggested in prior research (e.g. Marshall et al., 2009), deciding whether or not to respond to bullying also might be affected by individual teacher characteristics (e.g., perceived self-efficacy, personal and professional experience; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Novick & Isaacs, 2010; Sairanen & Pfeffer, 2011; Yoon, 2004) and contextual factors (e.g., resources available, anti-bullying policy; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Mishna et al., 2005). Several studies have indicated that teachers' perceived self-efficacy or preparedness for successfully resolving a bullying situation was predictive of their reported likelihood of intervening (e.g., Bradshaw et al., 2007; Novick & Isaacs, 2010; Yoon, 2004). Sairanen and Pfeffer (2011) examined teachers' potential responses to

bullying and found that teachers who had received anti-bullying training were significantly more likely to report implementing an intervention than teachers who had not received training. Researchers also have suggested that teachers' inaction may be attributable to school-level factors such as "perceived lack of administrative support, lack of a school-wide policy regarding bullying, and the culture of the school" (Bradshaw et al., 2007, p. 378).

The identification of specific barriers that teachers perceive impede their ability to respond to bullying is lacking in the literature. Of the scant research available, most has examined educators' perceived obstacles to the implementation of bullying prevention or intervention programs (e.g., the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program; Coyle, 2008; Limber, 2011; Olweus & Limber, 2010) or to a limited number of specific anti-bullying strategies (Dake et al., 2003; Dake, Price, Telljohann, & Funk, 2004). For example, Dake and colleagues (2003) investigated teachers' practices and perceived barriers to implementing three bullying prevention activities (i.e., creating classroom rules to address bullying, having serious talks with bullies and victims, holding bullying-related classroom discussions). Questions assessing teachers' perceptions of and use of each classroom-based prevention activity were presented, followed by a list of potential barriers related to each selected activity. Examples of presented barriers included the following: "this is the responsibility of a different school staff person (e.g., counselor, principal) or the parent"; "having serious talks with the bully and victim would not help the problem"; "I would not feel comfortable talking about these issues"; or "there would be no barriers." Results revealed that teachers were not employing most of the selected

bullying prevention activities even though they did not perceive barriers to implementation. The majority of teachers, however, indicated bullying to be an ongoing problem in their classrooms (Dake et al., 2003). The findings suggested, among other things, that teachers used anti-bullying approaches and experienced associated barriers not addressed in the study.

Rationale

A notable gap in the bullying literature exists regarding teachers' perceived barriers to effective bullying intervention. As previously mentioned, researchers have investigated factors affecting teachers' ability and proclivity to respond to bullying (e.g., self-efficacy, anti-bullying policy, perceptions of seriousness); however, these studies have predominantly been quantitative in nature and failed to directly assess the barriers educators perceive impede their authentic responses to bullying (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Bauman et al., 2008; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Novick & Isaacs, 2010; Sairanen & Pfeffer, 2011). Additional research is needed to examine teachers' self-reported barriers to bullying intervention based on authentic responses being implemented by teachers (i.e., not based on bullying-related strategies rarely being employed by teachers or using a forced-choice format of presented barriers). Providing a pre-set list of barriers may potentially ignore obstacles specific to a wide range of skills, resources, contexts, and responses. Conversely, examining these impeding factors in terms of a limited number of presented anti-bullying strategies may not provide an accurate assessment of the obstacles teachers face when employing authentic responses. Examining the barriers that inhibit teacher intervention, as well as potential relationships

between perceived obstacles and anti-bullying strategies being used by teachers, may provide a clearer understanding of teachers' ability and willingness to respond to these harmful behaviors.

The purpose of the present study was two-fold. First, qualitative, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers to elicit in-depth information regarding barriers encountered when addressing bullying in schools (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). As such, the following research question was posed (i.e., Research Question 1): What barriers to effective bullying intervention do teachers report encountering?

The second goal of this study was to examine potential relationships between the types of responses used by teachers to address bullying (as indicated in Marshall et al.'s 2009 study and presented in Figure 3) and their perceived barriers to implementation. Specifically, the researchers aimed to investigate whether or not the perceived obstacles reported by teachers influenced their responses to bullying. For example, did teachers who perceived a lack of administrative support respond to bullying differently (possibly using more direct strategies) than teachers who perceived themselves as inadequately prepared to intervene and thus solicited assistance from others (i.e., implemented more indirect approaches)? Data from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Although this study was exploratory in nature, it was hypothesized that investigating potential relationships between teachers' perceived barriers and responses to bullying would provide valuable information regarding factors associated with teachers' perceived ability to manage these behaviors. As such, Research Question 2 was as follows: Is there a relationship between teachers' perceived barriers to

intervention and their self-reported responses to bullying? Data analysis procedures and subsequent results are presented separately for each research question.

Method

Context

The present study was conducted as part of a larger, multi-year research project on bullying in a southeastern urban school system (see Varjas et al., 2006). At the time of data collection, the school district's total enrollment was 2,495 students (48.7% female, 51.3% male) with the following ethnic breakdown: 43% African American, 50.1% Caucasian, 1.8% Hispanic, and 5.1% other. Of the total student enrollment, 29% received free or reduced lunch. The district employed 224 teachers and 78% of teachers had advanced degrees. The average years of teacher employment in the district was 12 years.

One component of the larger project included interviews with fourth through eighth grade teachers (N = 30) at two schools: one serving fourth and fifth graders and one serving sixth through eighth graders. The semi-structured interviews explored teachers' perceptions and experiences with bullying, as well as their responses to these behaviors and perceived barriers to effective intervention. Marshall and colleagues' (2009) initial analysis of the interviews focused on teachers' self-reported responses to bullying. In the current study, the researchers aimed to extend these findings by (1) examining teachers' perceived barriers to bullying intervention and (2) investigating potential relationships between teachers' self-reported responses to bullying and barriers inhibiting teachers' ability to effectively intervene. The teacher interviews presented in

this paper, as well as all stages of this multi-year project, received approval from the local school district and the university Institutional Review Boards.

Participants

During faculty meetings at the two targeted schools, members of the research team informed teachers of the opportunity to participate voluntarily in semi-structured interviews related to their perceptions of bullying. Thirty teachers (N = 30) voluntarily consented to participate (10 fourth and fifth grade and 20 middle school teachers). Twenty-five participants initially volunteered to participate during a faculty meeting (i.e., selected through convenience sampling; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). These participants then referred the five remaining teachers who were absent at the faculty meetings (i.e., selected through snowball sampling; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Participants represented all grade levels, core academic subjects, extracurricular courses (e.g., physical education, art, and foreign language), and general and special education settings. The participating teachers were primarily Caucasian (25 Caucasian, 3 African American, and 2 multi-racial) and female (25 female, 5 male). Years of experience within the current school environment ranged from 4 months to 26 years *($M = 4.7$, $SD = 6.05$)*, while overall years of teaching experience ranged from 4 months to 30 years *($M = 11.78$, $SD = 8.95$)*. Participants reported the highest degree obtained as follows: 7 bachelor's degrees, 19 Master's degrees, 2 Educational Specialist degrees, 1 law degree, and 1 doctoral degree.

Design, Procedure and Instrumentation

The semi-structured interview protocol was developed from a review of the literature, data obtained from additional components of the larger research project (e.g., student interviews, intervention groups with identified victims of bullying), and system needs based on administrative and educator feedback (see Appendix E for a copy of the interview protocol; Varjas et al., 2006; Varjas et al., 2008). The interview questions explored teachers' definition of bullying, characteristics of bullies and victims, potential short- and long-term consequences for involved students, perceptions of effective responses by teachers and other school staff, skills needed to work with victims and bullies, barriers to effective intervention, and available school resources and procedures related to bullying. Responses to the following interview questions directly examined teachers' perceived barriers to effective intervention (i.e., Research Question 1) and were analyzed in the present study: Are there any barriers to making an intervention with a bully and/or a victim in your school? If so, what are they and can you provide examples?

Results from Marshall and colleagues' (2009) study were reviewed to investigate potential relationships between teachers' self-reported responses to bullying and barriers to intervention (i.e., Research Question 2). Marshall et al. (2009) analyzed teachers' responses to the following interview questions: (1) Once you have identified a bullying situation, how do you decide whether or not and when to intervene with the bully? How would/do you intervene? What steps would you take to do so? (2) Once you have identified a bullying situation, how do you decide whether or not and when to intervene with the victim? How would/do you intervene? What steps would you take to do so?

Participants signed informed consent prior to data collection and completed a demographic form requesting information related to their ethnicity, gender, educational background, teaching experience, and grade/subject taught. The interviews were conducted by two female members of the research team (one doctoral-level and one specialist-level school psychology graduate student). Interviews lasted on average 45 minutes (range = 30 to 75 minutes) and were completed during one session with each participant. Prior to the interviews, the research team met to discuss the interview protocol and procedures related to conducting open-ended, semi-structured interviews. Interviewers used standardized note taking strategies and were encouraged to probe for further responses when necessary to elicit in-depth and unanticipated information regarding teachers' perceptions and experiences with bullying (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). All but one of the interviews was audiotaped (one participant declined being audiotaped). In this instance, the interviewer took detailed written notes of the interviewee's responses. Information from this interview was included in the data analysis.

To assess participants' perceptions of and experiences with bullying, interviewees were asked three questions related to the (1) seriousness and (2) frequency of bullying, as well as (3) training received on this topic. First, participants were asked to rate their perception of the seriousness of bullying based on the following five-point Likert-type scale: "not at all" (1), "somewhat" (2), "moderate" (3), "significant" (4), and "extremely significant" (5). Teachers serving the fourth and fifth graders (M = 3.9, SD = 0.74) rated bullying to be more serious than the middle school teachers (M = 3.63, SD = 0.78). The

mean for all 30 participants was 3.72 with a standard deviation of 0.76. The second question assessed participants' perceptions of the frequency of bullying and included the following responses: "never" (1), "once a month" (2), "weekly" (3), "2-3 times per week" (4), and "daily" (5). Results indicated similar frequencies of bullying witnessed by teachers at the fourth and fifth grade school (M = 3.8, SD = 1.03) and the middle school (M = 3.85, SD = 1.14). The overall mean for perceived frequency was 3.83 with a standard deviation of 1.09. Finally, participants were asked if they had received training about bullying. Twenty percent of teachers (n = 2) at the fourth and fifth grade school and 55% of middle school teachers (n = 11) indicated that they had received training on bullying at some point in their educational career. This training included a range of formal (e.g., bullying workshops) and informal (e.g., discussions at faculty meetings) experiences.

Data Analysis: Research Question 1

Members of the research team transcribed the interviews and imported the information into Atlas/Ti 5.1, a coding software package that assists in the management of qualitative data. Two phases of coding were completed and are described in detail in the following section.

Phase 1 coding. Two independent coders (both female doctoral students) initially analyzed the interviews in their entirety using the principles of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Specifically, data were analyzed using a constant comparative method including open coding, axial coding, and selective coding procedures (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Open coding refers to the process of breaking down data into manageable

segments (i.e., by line, sentence, paragraph) to examine similarities and differences among responses (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The researchers took detailed notes and conversed regularly with the research team while developing a coding manual reflective of preliminary themes presented in the data. Next, a second round of coding (i.e., axial coding) led to the identification of interrelationships among the interviewee's experiences with bullying. Common themes were compared for similarities and differences and codes were grouped into primary (i.e., level 1) and secondary (i.e., level 2) codes. Finally, through selective coding, core categories were developed in which all emerging themes could be sub-categorized. Members of the research team met frequently during the coding process to discuss and modify the coding manual as needed (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Once the final coding manual was developed, two coders independently read and coded the data for interrater agreement. After attaining 90% agreement (Bakeman & Gottman, 1986), the researchers separately coded the remaining interviews. Randomly chosen 100-line passages were compared for each remaining interview to prevent coder drift, which occurs when coders change their perceptions or definitions of codes (LeCompte, 1999). Interrater agreement remained above 90% for all 100-line passages, ensuring that coder drift had not occurred. Two primary codes identified during Phase 1 coding included *Teacher Interventions* and *Barriers to Intervening*. Marshall and colleagues (2009) analyzed the *Teacher Interventions* data and categorized teachers' responses into the four response-types described previously and presented in Figure 3.

Phase 2 coding. After subsequently reviewing the literature and data coded *Barriers to Intervening* identified in Phase 1, the researchers determined that secondary data analysis was necessary to provide more detailed codes regarding participants' perceived barriers to effective bullying intervention. As such, the primary author reread the interview transcripts to ensure all responses related to participants' perceived barriers were included in the previously coded data. Results indicated that the *Barriers to Intervening* code sufficiently incorporated relevant data; however, a more in-depth examination of teachers' responses was needed to provide descriptive information regarding their perceived barriers. Thus, responses coded as *Barriers to Intervening* in Phase 1 were re-analyzed (i.e., Phase 2 coding) using inductive and deductive approaches to data analysis (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999; Nastasi & Schensul, 2005; Varjas, Nastasi, Moore, & Jayasena, 2005).

Responses were analyzed using the principles of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). First, the primary author read all previously coded barrier responses and used open coding procedures (i.e., taking detailed notes; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to develop preliminary codes and categories (i.e., inductive approach). General themes related to teachers' perceived barriers to bullying intervention (e.g., lack of administrative support, ineffective discipline policies) were identified through a literature review of relevant theoretical and empirical research (i.e., deductive approach). A second round of coding (i.e., axial coding; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) identified connections between the interviewees' reported barriers, resulting in the generation of primary (level 1) and corresponding secondary (level 2) codes. The research team met often to discuss

similarities and differences among participants' responses and further modify the codes. Finally, core domains in which all emerging themes could be sub-categorized were identified (i.e., selective coding; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and a coding manual of teachers' self-reported barriers to bullying intervention was generated.

Another member of the research team (a female, specialist-level school counseling graduate student) then independently analyzed the data using the developed coding manual. Subsequent to the second coder's review, discrepancies were discussed and the coding manual was revised. Both coders worked independently and met frequently with members of the research team to discuss and finalize the classification of codes and the coding manual. Consensus coding was conducted until 100% agreement was reached for all data (Schensul, LeCompte, Nastasi, & Borgatti, 1999).

Trustworthiness

To enhance trustworthiness of the data, several techniques recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were implemented by the researchers. For instance, as part of a larger, multi-year research project on bullying, multiple methods (i.e., interviews, questionnaires, intervention groups for victims of bullying) were used to gather information from several sources (i.e., students, key stakeholders, teachers) in different schools (i.e., triangulation). Prolonged engagement in the target school district (i.e., several years) allowed the researchers to learn the culture, minimize potential distortions, and build trust with school personnel. Further, members of the research team met frequently during all stages of the project to discuss procedures, researchers' biases, findings, and interpretations (i.e., peer debriefing). An audit trail, which is the systematic

documentation of all relevant data and procedures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), was maintained for dependability and confirmability of results. This included raw data such as interview transcripts, individual and team process notes, all versions of the modified coding manuals for both phases of coding, and detailed reports regarding secondary data analysis procedures. Thick, rich descriptions of the themes identified in this study are presented to assist others in determining the transferability of these findings to different individuals and contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finally, as an additional validity measure, information yielded from the teachers' interviews was presented and discussed with teachers in the district at a professional learning opportunity.

Data Analysis: Research Question 2

Potential relationships between teachers' self-reported barriers and responses to bullying were examined using both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Initially, the primary researcher tallied the number and type of responses and barriers reported by each interviewee. This process resulted in 30 documents (one for each participant) elucidating the frequency of each self-reported response to bullying and perceived barrier endorsed by each interviewee (see Appendix F for the data analysis template). Upon further investigation, the researchers determined that the overall frequencies of each teacher's self-reported responses to bullying (either specific responses such as pull aside and talk to student(s) or categorical responses such as constructive responses, direct responses, etc.) could not be directly assessed or compared due to the qualitative nature of the study. This was also true for participants' perceived barriers to bullying intervention. Specifically, our approach to qualitative data analysis allowed for responses to be categorized as more

than one code (i.e., double-coded) and provided opportunities for in-depth responses regarding a particular incident to be coded several times within an interview (i.e., coding multiple responses describing the same incident) (La Pelle, 2004). Although these types of responses provide rich, descriptive, and contextualized information, participants' perceived barriers and responses to bullying were sometimes double coded or coded multiple times in reference to the same bullying-related experience. Due to these issues, a frequency count would not yield accurate results regarding which responses and barriers were used more or less often by participants.

Data were thus analyzed based on whether or not the respondent reported experiencing the barrier or utilizing the response (dichotomized as yes or no), regardless of whether the barrier or response was coded more than once. Next, the researchers assessed whether or not teachers' responses to bullying varied based on their perceived barriers to effective bullying intervention. Participants who reported experiencing each barrier were identified and their responses to bullying were tallied. Thus, if 19 of the 30 participants reported experiencing a barrier, those 19 participants' responses to bullying were recorded (e.g., 17 of 19 used the Constructive-Direct response, pull aside and talk to student(s); 11 of 19 used the Punitive-Indirect response, call the bully's parents). The researchers then examined teachers' bullying-related responses based on participants who perceived each barrier. Finally, the primary author reviewed the data coded *Barriers to Intervening* (identified in Phase 2 coding) and *Teacher Interventions* (from Phase 1 coding) in its entirety to determine if the two codes were directly related. This was done

by reading all codes in blocks of responses to see if participants mentioned both a barrier and intervention in the same response block.

Results

Research Question 1

Teachers' reported barriers to effective bullying intervention yielded a coding hierarchy with the following four level 1 codes: *Student-Based*, *Teacher-Based*, *School-Based*, and *Sociocultural-Based Barriers* (see Figure 4). Barriers were defined as factors that hindered teachers from effectively addressing bullying. The next section summarizes and discusses each level 1 code and its corresponding subcodes (i.e., level 2 codes). Quotes from teachers are included to provide rich descriptions and exemplify the codes. Further, Table 3 presents the number (out of 30) and percentage of participants who reported experiencing each barrier at least once during the interview.

Student-Based Barriers. *Student-Based Barriers* (level 1) were defined as obstacles to effective teacher intervention resulting from students' actions, inactions, and/or lack of knowledge or skills. According to participants, the following level 2 codes emerged as *Student-Based Barriers*: (a) *not informing teachers*, (b) *lack of student knowledge or skills to differentiate bullying and teasing*, (c) *bullying denied when confronted*, (d) *students encourage bullying*, (e) *students intentionally bully outside of teachers' view*, and (f) *individual student factors* (see Figure 4). In terms of the proportion of teachers endorsing *Student-Based Barriers*, all but two level 2 codes (i.e., *not informing teachers* and *individual student factors*) were reported by fewer than half of the participants (see Table 3).

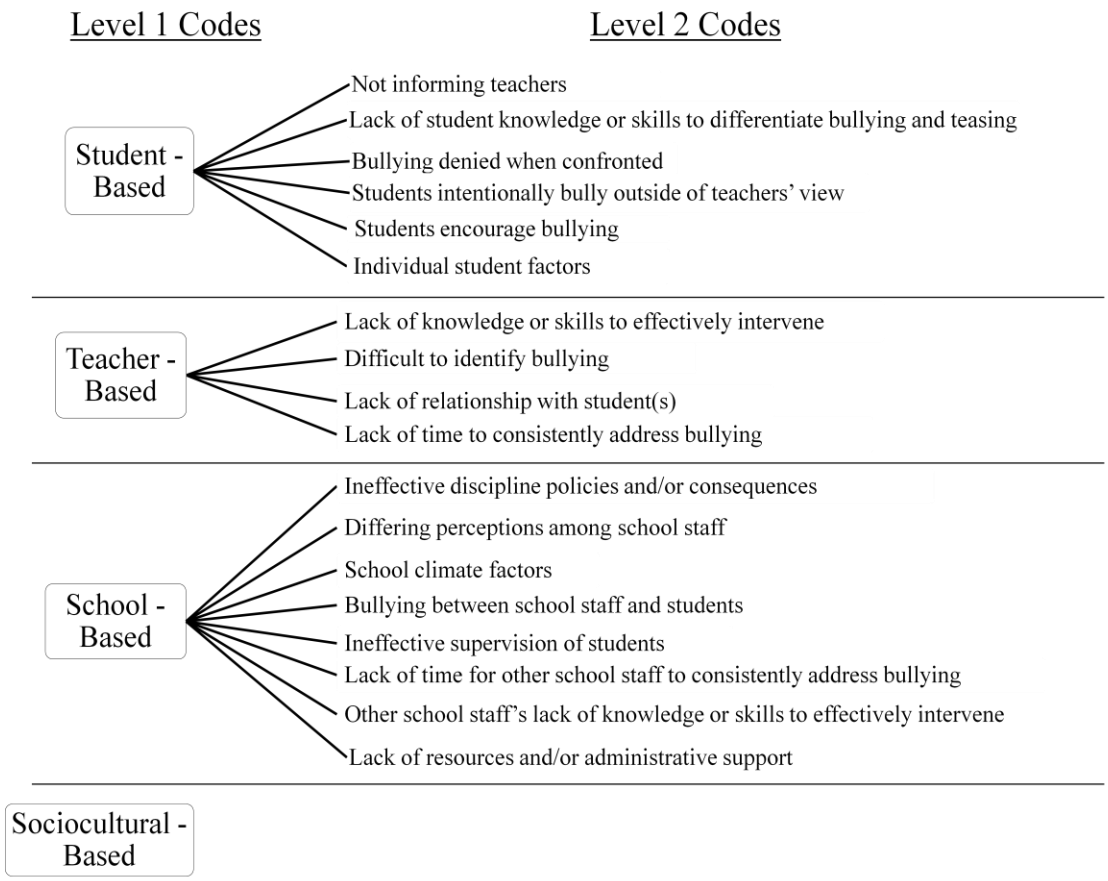

Figure 4. Coding hierarchy for teachers' self-reported barriers to effective bullying intervention.

Table 3

Number and Percentage of Participants Who Reported Experiencing Each Barrier

Type of Barrier	Barrier	*N*	Percentage
Teacher	Lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene	25	83%
School	Ineffective discipline policies and/or consequences	22	73%
School	Lack of resources and/or administrative support	22	73%
Sociocultural	Sociocultural-based	22	73%
Student	Individual student factors	18	60%
Teacher	Difficult to identify bullying	16	53%
School	Lack of time for other school staff to consistently address bullying	16	53%
Student	Not informing teachers	15	50%
School	Other school staff's lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene	15	50%
Teacher	Lack of time to consistently address bullying	13	43%
School	School climate factors	9	30%
School	Ineffective supervision of students	8	27%
Student	Students intentionally bully outside of teachers' view	7	23%
School	Differing perceptions among school staff	7	23%
Student	Bullying denied when confronted	6	20%
Student	Students encourage bullying	6	20%
Student	Lack of student knowledge or skills to differentiate bullying and teasing	5	17%
School	Bullying between school staff and students	4	13%
Teacher	Lack of relationship with student(s)	3	10%

Note. N = 30 participants.

Interviewees expressed difficulty effectively responding to bullying as a result of students *not informing teachers* (level 2; 15 of 30; 50%) about these incidents or coming to them for assistance in resolving the situation. Teachers theorized several reasons for students' reluctance to inform teachers, including apprehension regarding being perceived as "a tattletale" or "weak" by other students, fearing their teachers would not believe them, and feelings of embarrassment as a result of the victimization. As one teacher explained, victims may think "what did I do wrong? There must be something wrong with me and I do not really want to bring this up to my teacher or my mom or my dad because there is something wrong with me." Fear of retaliation by the bully also was reported as a potential explanation for why students did not notify their teacher. Finally, participants stated that students did not report bullying to their teachers if they did not perceive these individuals as being helpful in effectively resolving the situation.

Another barrier to effective teacher intervention included a *lack of student knowledge or skills to differentiate bullying and teasing* (level 2). Participants (5 of 30; 17%) described this barrier as not only a potential cause of bullying (i.e., students often "don't realize that they've tripped over that line that goes between teasing and bullying"), but also a deterrent to teacher identification and intervention. For instance, one teacher stated, "when they [students] are not sure what bullying is, they do not report it. It goes unreported in cases where it should be reported." Conversely, teachers expressed frustration regarding their ability to successfully manage bullying if students *deny bullying when confronted* (level 2; 6 of 30; 20%) by a teacher. According to respondents, students often stated that they were "just teasing" or "just playing" when approached by

teachers. Interviewees indicated that this occurred with both perceived bullies and victims. One teacher described victimized students by stating, “I see these kids [the victims] and they will say, ‘oh, it’s nothing’… but I don’t believe it. They often try to make light of something that I don’t feel they really feel lightly about.” Further complicating the matter, participants indicated that *students intentionally bully outside of teachers’ view* (level 2; 7 of 30; 23%) and “then it becomes way more problematic talking to a bunch of kids and trying to get to the bottom of it.” Finally, effective teacher intervention was hindered when *students encourage bullying* (level 2; 6 of 30; 20%) by admiring the bully or laughing while another student was being bullied.

The final and most commonly endorsed *Student-Based Barrier* (level 1) reported by participants (18 of 30; 60%) included *individual student factors* (level 2). These factors included students’ gender, age, grade, ethnicity, academic competence, or social/emotional/behavioral functioning. For instance, one teacher illustrated the difficulties associated with addressing relational bullying (i.e., socially ostracizing others) with middle school students by stating,

> Helping them understand, let’s try and make sure everybody can be included, is hard at this age because they are trying to single themselves out but they want to be a part of the crowd. It is just a very confusing age.

Individual student perceptions of behavior also were indicated as a potential obstacle. One teacher noted, “for different people one thing can be said and…it is not going to bother them and to another it is going to be for them at least, in their reality, it is going to be bullying.” Gender differences were identified as a barrier in that female bullying was

described as covert with "a lot of verbal bullying and intimidation that is harder to detect and … harder to intervene."

Teacher-Based Barriers. *Teacher-Based Barriers* (level 1) were defined as factors related to participants' actions, inactions, and/or lack of skills or knowledge that resulted in perceived barriers to effective bullying intervention. These barriers were specific to the interviewee functioning in the role of a teacher. As such, information regarding participants' perceptions of other school staff's responses to bullying, related school policies, and/or available resources was not coded as a *Teacher-Based Barrier* (those will be addressed in the section on *School-Based Barriers*). The following level 2 codes emerged as *Teacher-Based Barriers:* (a) *lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene*, (b) *difficult to identify bullying*, (c) *lack of relationship with student(s)*, and (d) *lack of time to consistently address bullying* (see Figure 4).

The barrier reported by the most teachers (25 of 30; 83%; see Table 3) included a *lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene* (level 2) with a bully, victim, and/or bystander. Interviewees frequently noted that their minimal "knowledge" and "training" on bullying resulted in ineffective and inconsistent responses. For example, when confronted with bullying incidents, respondents stated, "I do not know how I should deal with it"; "I have tried several things and I do not think I have been particularly successful"; and "most bullying situations that I have identified have continued, so I do not know that I have the skills because of that." One teacher described her challenges associated with maintaining objectivity when intervening with bullies:

> I don't think my skills are nearly what I need because I am angry at them [the bullies] for bullying…You have to be much more nonjudgmental. You have to be very patient and you have to be very inviting to let that kid [the bully] feel comfortable talking to you about what is really going on. That requires you to be very emotionally detached from the situation and usually I empathize so much with the victim…I'm very protective of victims so I really want to make that person stop and I'm angry and as soon as I'm angry, I'm useless.

Teachers also reported that it was *difficult to identify bullying* (level 2; 16 of 30; 53%). One teacher described the challenge of determining whether a behavior had occurred repetitively (and therefore constituted bullying as opposed to a one-time event) by stating, "I see the students one period a day…so typically I would not see a lot of repetitions in the behavior." Several teachers reported that they did not know how to consistently differentiate between bullying and teasing or playing. For example, one teacher noted, "bullying is hard to identify…and when it crosses that line from gentle sarcasm to really hurtful, it is hard to know." Participants also mentioned that students' and teachers' perceptions of bullying may differ, making it challenging for teachers to effectively identify and intervene during bullying situations while also permitting playful, prosocial interactions.

Another barrier reported by several respondents (3 of 30; 10%) included their *lack of relationship with involved student(s)* (level 2). When asked how teachers distinguished between bullying and teasing, one participant stated, "that is why it's a problem for teachers…the best you can do is you hope to get to know the children and then you have to take a look and see how they are reacting to it." Thus, knowing students well enough to accurately identify victimization was emphasized. The final *Teacher-Based Barrier*

(level 1) included the *lack of time to consistently address bullying* (level 2; 13 of 30; 43%). As the following quotes illustrate, not having enough time may lead to inconsistencies in teachers' responses to and follow-up with bullying: "there are just so many incidents you can deal with and get your teaching done. You know you can be writing notes and writing kids up and emailing the parents all the time and it is impossible"; "I think any teacher's biggest barrier is finding the time to organize things and get it together and following through. I just think teachers have trouble with time and following up."

School-Based Barriers. *School-Based Barriers* (level 1) were defined as factors inhibiting effective teacher intervention as a result of other school staff's actions, inactions, and/or lack of knowledge or skill, or as a result of school policy, available resources, or overall school climate. *School-Based Barriers* were comprised of the following level 2 codes: (a) *ineffective discipline policies and/or consequences*, (b) *differing perceptions among school staff*, (c) *school climate factors*, (d) *bullying between school staff and students*, (e) *ineffective supervision of students*, (f) *lack of time for other school staff to consistently address bullying*, (g) *other school staff's lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene*, and (h) *lack of resources and/or administrative support* (see Figure 4).

A common barrier reported by 22 of 30 teachers (73%; see Table 3) related to *ineffective discipline policies and/or consequences* (level 2) for bullying. Respondents reported being unaware of the procedures to follow when presented with bullying and requested an "explicit" and "consistent" school policy for these behaviors. Participants

also described difficulty reducing bullying when consequences implemented by other school personnel (e.g., counselors, administrators, teachers) were nonexistent, ineffective, or implemented inconsistently. For instance, one teacher stated, “I do not think the consequences are nearly clear or strong enough. I think there needs to be a set policy that is very transparent that everybody understands.” Another teacher described the implications of inconsistent and ineffective responses by school staff:

> I think the kids need to see that we are actually doing something about it [bullying]...it is threatened to them that if you bully you will be suspended or you will be whatever, but there is never follow through and the kids see that. So the kids do not see that they have any power because even if they report the bully, so what, nothing happens.

In general, participants reported that many of the consequences implemented for bullying (e.g., in-school suspension, silent lunch, detention) were ineffective for long-term reduction of these behaviors.

Another *School-Based Barrier* (level 1) included *differing perceptions among school staff* (level 2; 7 of 30; 23%). These perceptions related to school personnel’s beliefs about bullying, participating roles of involved students (e.g., bully or victim), appropriate consequences for these behaviors, and who should be informed of bullying situations. For example, respondents explained that some school staff perceived bullying as a typical and inevitable occurrence in adolescence and therefore did not intervene. Even when school staff perceived these behaviors as problematic, teachers reported challenges to the reduction of bullying when school staff viewed involved students differently (i.e., one person viewed a student as a bully while another person viewed the student as a victim). Describing this *School-Based Barrier*, one teacher stated, “we are all

not on the same page, we view him as a bully, like 80% or 90% of the staff views him as a bully, but the administration views him as 'oh, pitiful, poor child.'" Interviewees also indicated that effectively addressing bullying was hindered when perceptions of effective consequences for bullying differed among school personnel. For example, one teacher noted, "you do not reward them [the bullies] by pulling them out and letting them do special things. That is not a consequence. That is a reward and therein lies the conflict between staff."

School climate factors (level 2; 9 of 30; 30%) were reported as a barrier to effective bullying intervention. Examples of these factors mentioned by participants included unclear behavioral expectations for students, transition from one year to the next, lack of teacher involvement in student behavior, and passive acceptance of bullying. Overall, participants stated that these issues resulted in a school culture that perpetuated, or at the very least, tolerated bullying. One teacher reported, "it is sort of a school policy that it [bullying] is okay…it is becoming a school epidemic. The hitting, the pushing, the physical-ness of it is everywhere." *Bullying between school staff and students* (level 2; 4 of 30; 13%) was also mentioned as a barrier. Participants noted that when adults modeled bullying behaviors (towards each other or students) it "sends a message that that's acceptable behavior" and consequently, students become "less likely to feel safe going to that person or feel like this school will take care of [them]." Further, *ineffective supervision of students* (level 2; 8 of 30; 27%), particularly during transitions, was reported as a school barrier. For example, one teacher noted,

> You cannot stand out in the hall and talk to another teacher while your children are going to the bathroom because if you are, your attention is not focused. And you are like, "oh my god, that sounds so stringent." Well that is just the life of a teacher, you have got to be vigilant, you cannot be ignoring…they are children, they need our intervention.

Participants reported the *lack of time for other school staff to consistently address bullying* (level 2; 16 of 30; 53%) as an obstacle to effective bullying intervention. Other school staff mentioned by respondents included administrators, counselors, other teachers, paraprofessionals, school psychologists, and social workers. Many participants reported sending involved students to the counselor to address bullying; however, it was noted that counselors "are overloaded as is" and they "do not…have enough time" to address the numerous instances of bullying or consistently follow-up with students. Another school barrier mentioned by participants included *other school staff's lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene* (level 2; 15 of 30; 50%) with a bully, victim, and/or bystander. One interviewee reported that other teachers lacked behavior and classroom management skills to effectively address bullying. Others described a lack of compassion for involved students (both bullies and victims), discomfort addressing these students, and ineffective interventions implemented by other school personnel as contributing barriers. For instance, one teacher stated, "I do not think a teacher saying, 'no Johnny, do not speak that way' makes it go away."

Another commonly reported *School-Based Barrier* (level 1) included a *lack of resources and/or administrative support* (level 2; 22 of 30; 73%) when addressing bullying. Examples included having only one social worker, not having an alternative school as a potential school placement for students, "sporadic" support and follow

through from administration, and not educating students about bullying in elementary school. The lack of education or training on bullying was a commonly reported barrier not only for school personnel, but also for students and parents. One teacher summarized *School-Based Barriers* as "the lack of number of people in the school that are trained. There is only one social worker. Also, the difficulty of pinpointing it [bullying] early enough."

Sociocultural-Based Barriers. *Sociocultural-Based Barriers* (level 1) were defined as factors inhibiting effective teacher intervention as a result of individuals or factors external to the school environment (see Figure 4). These outside influences were reported by 22 of 30 participants (73%; see Table 3) and included both community and larger societal factors. For instance, participants' inability to stop bullying outside of school, parents' reactions to bullying, and differences regarding perceptions of and responses to bullying among community members were identified as *Sociocultural-Based Barriers* (level 1). Teachers noted challenges associated with responding to bullying that occurred "outside of school", "at home", or "in the projects" that was later "brought into school." One teacher explained, "sometimes we can deter them from doing it here in the school, but I do not think it has a major, lasting effect as far as when they leave the school building." Participants mentioned that many students bullied others as a result of behaviors witnessed at home or in the community. Describing bullying behavior, one teacher stated, "a lot of what is happening in school is just a reflection of the way the children are being treated at home. So, they are showing what is being modeled." Explaining school personnel's attempts to counter bullying, one teacher noted, "to some

extent you are working against the culture and the home to try and put an end to it [bullying] and I think that is the biggest problem we face as a school."

Parents' responses were mentioned as a barrier to effective bullying intervention for several reasons, such as parents' denial regarding their child's involvement in bullying and inconsistent, nonexistent, or even excessive consequences at home for these behaviors. Teachers noted that parental responses to being informed of their child's involvement in bullying varied considerably. For instance, some parents insisted their child was the victim and did "not want to accept that their child [was] part of the problem," while other parents were "scary to call. They may yell at you, they may not." Overwhelmed parents may lack the time and resources to appropriately address their child's behavior, as one teacher explained,

> I think the parents see it as an intrusion to hear from us, and they do not want to have to deal with what happens at school at home. They have enough to deal with at home, and a teacher calling and saying, "Your son is calling people names at school," is the last thing they want to hear.

Respondents emphasized the difficulty of reducing bullying in school when students' behaviors were not addressed effectively at home (i.e., "there are no consequences at home", "their parents don't assign them any responsibility").

Participants discussed challenges to bullying intervention as a result of differences regarding the perception of and responses to bullying among community members. For example, teachers noted difficulties addressing these behaviors when students lived in an environment that emphasized "if you are hit or you are attacked or someone says something about you [sic], you attack back, you hit them back." Further, one teacher reported that bullying was "not addressed in the neighborhood and they [students] don't

perceive it as bullying. They perceive it as just messing with someone." Participants also noted that students "get very mixed messages" regarding behavioral expectations related to bullying in their community and at school, resulting in "a lot of internal conflicts for kids." Finally, teachers expressed significant difficulty decreasing students' bullying behaviors when it was "so ingrained in their behavior" that it has become "an automatic response."

Research Question 2

To investigate potential relationships between teachers' self-reported responses to bullying and perceived barriers, the number (out of 30) and percentage of participants who reported implementing each response to bullying at least once (as identified by Marshall et al., 2009) were tabulated (see Table 4). The majority of teachers (28 out of 30; 93%) reported using the Constructive-Direct response of pulling aside and talking to involved students. Nineteen out of the 30 teachers (63%) reported implementing Punitive-Indirect interventions such as calling the bully's parents and sending, informing or referring the bully to an administrator. Following, the Constructive-Indirect response of sending, informing or referring involved student(s) to the counselor was used by 18 out of 30 teachers (60%), while 17 out of 30 participants (57%) consulted other educators (a Constructive-Indirect response). Please refer to Table 4 for a complete list of teachers' self-reported responses to bullying.

To determine whether participants' responses to bullying varied based on their perceived barriers to effective intervention, teachers who reported experiencing each barrier were identified and their responses to bullying were recorded. For example, using

Table 4

Number and Percentage of Participants Who Reported Implementing Each Bullying Response

Type of Response	Response	*N*	Percentage
Constructive-Direct	Pull aside and talk to student	28	93%
Punitive-Indirect	Call bully's parents	19	63%
Punitive-Indirect	Send, inform or refer bully to administrator	19	63%
Constructive-Indirect	Send, inform or refer student to counselor	18	60%
Constructive-Indirect	Consult other educators	17	57%
Constructive-Direct	Call out inappropriate behavior	12	40%
Punitive-Direct	Remove or move bully in the classroom	10	33%
Constructive-Indirect	Call victim's parents	9	30%
Punitive-Direct	Punishment	9	30%
Punitive-Direct	Physically get in the middle of students	4	13%
Constructive-Direct	Make bully apologize	3	10%
Constructive-Direct	Protect the victim	2	7%
Constructive-Direct	Use personal experience with bullying	2	7%
Punitive-Direct	Yell	1	3%

Note. N = 30 participants.

the 30 data analysis documents (one for each participant; see Appendix F) described previously, teachers who reported experiencing the *Teacher-Based Barrier*, *lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene* were identified. This was the most frequently reported *Teacher-Based Barrier* with 25 of 30 (83%) participants endorsing this barrier. Each response to bullying (e.g., punishment, yell, consult other educators, protect the victim) was tallied (dichotomized as yes or no) for each of these 25 participants.

Appendix G presents the number and percentage of teachers (out of 25) who reported utilizing each response to bullying. Following, to examine variability among teachers' responses to bullying based on their perceived barriers, the same procedure was completed for all 19 barriers identified in this study. Responses used by teachers based on the most frequently reported *School-Based* (i.e., *ineffective discipline policies and/or consequences*), *Sociocultural-Based*, and *Student-Based* (i.e., *individual student factors*) *Barriers* are presented in Appendices H, I, and J respectively. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to present the results for each of the remaining 15 barriers, the findings were consistent with those presented below.

Results indicated that regardless of teachers' perceived barriers to bullying intervention, the majority of participants (over 50%) reported responding to bullying using one of the following five approaches: (1) pull aside and talking to students, (2) send, inform, or refer bully to administrator, (3) consult other educators, (4) call bully's parents, or (5) send, inform or refer student to counselor. Further, despite participants' perceived barriers, less than one-quarter reported responding to bullying by making the bully apologize, physically getting in the middle of students, protecting the victim, using a personal experience with bullying, or yelling. Results indicated that participants' responses to bullying did not systematically vary based on their perceived barriers to intervention. In other words, teachers reported responding to bullying similarly regardless of their perceived barriers.

Data coded *Barriers to Intervening* (identified in Phase 2 coding) and *Teacher Interventions* (from Phase 1 coding) were examined to see if participants mentioned both

a barrier and an intervention in the same response block. Results indicated only 14% of the responses coded as a barrier directly identified a corresponding intervention. For example, one participant stated,

> I talk with the child [the victim] and talk with the bully and try and develop some sort of strategy for both of them [i.e., Constructive-Direct response: pull aside and talk to student], although it feels kind of like I am just sort of grabbing the dark, not sure that what's been done has been effective or not [i.e., *Teacher-Based Barrier, lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene*].

Another teacher noted, "I haven't had a lot of luck sending kids to [the counselor; i.e., Constructive-Indirect response: send, inform, or refer student to counselor]. I guess because her schedule is so busy she tends to meet with them like once and then never again" [i.e., *School-Based Barrier, lack of time for other school staff to consistently address bullying*]. Finally, another teacher reported, "I did actually try and get one of my kid's schedules changed because of harassment from some other girls [i.e., Constructive-Direct response: protect the victim]… and then her mother did not want her to change her schedule, she wanted her to deal with it" [i.e., *Sociocultural-Based Barrier*].

Although the findings yielded several occurrences when participants described direct connections between their responses to bullying and perceived barriers to effective intervention, the majority of responses coded as a barrier (86%) did not include a corresponding intervention. Further, of the few instances revealed, no systematic connections emerged between the types of barriers (level 1 or level 2 codes) and specific responses to bullying (either particular responses such as making the bully apologize or categorical responses such as constructive responses, direct responses, etc). These findings, along with those presented above, suggest no systematic relationships between

participants' perceived barriers to bullying intervention and the responses implemented to address these behaviors.

Discussion

Teachers play a vital role in the management and reduction of bullying (e.g., Craig et al., 2000; Frey et al., 2011; Nicolaides et al., 2002). In order to improve our understanding of the extent to which educators' address bullying, it is important to investigate what factors teachers perceive hinder them from effectively intervening (i.e., barriers) and how these obstacles relate to anti-bullying responses employed by teachers. The current study addressed these understudied topics through semi-structured interviews with fourth through eighth grade teachers. Prior research has primarily assessed teachers' bullying-related experiences using hypothetical scenarios, predetermined definitions of bullying, and preset lists of intervention strategies and potential barriers (e.g., Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Bauman et al., 2008; Bradshaw et al., 2007; Colvin, Tobin, Beard, Hagan, & Sprague, 1998; Dake et al., 2003; Griffin & Gross, 2004; Yoon & Kerber, 2003). As a result, the current study provides a unique contribution to the bullying literature by describing teachers' perspectives based on their personal definitions, responses, and perceived barriers to bullying intervention.

Teachers in this study described the presence of numerous barriers that challenged their ability to consistently and effectively respond to bullying (see Figure 4). Results indicated that these obstacles occurred on multiple levels and included *Student-*, *Teacher-*, *School-* and *Sociocultural-Based Barriers.* For example, barriers to effective intervention were identified based on participants own perceived inadequacies (e.g., lack

of knowledge or skills, difficulty identifying bullying), school-related concerns (e.g., ineffective school policies, lack of administrative support, inadequate school-based resources, other educators' lack of time and/or skills), sociocultural influences (e.g., community resources and perceptions, parental responses) and student-related factors (e.g., personal factors, not informing teachers). These findings are consistent with social-ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), which posits that human action is shaped by the complex interplay of individual characteristics and the interrelated systems in which individuals interact (i.e., peer group, family, community, culture). Applying a social-ecological perspective to bullying has been endorsed by other researchers (e.g., Espelage & Swearer, 2004; Espelage & Swearer, 2011; Newman, Horne, & Bartolomucci, 2000) and provides a valid theoretical framework in which to examine the results from this study. Conceptualizing these findings through a social-ecological lens is important because teachers' perceived barriers were evidenced within multiple systems (i.e., student, teacher, school, cultural). Based on these data, it is suggested that teachers' individual factors, as well as factors associated with students, the school environment, and the culture at large contributed to teachers' perceived obstacles to bullying intervention.

Due to the limited research on teachers' perceived barriers to authentic bullying responses, this study was exploratory in nature. However, many of the self-reported barriers identified by teachers in this study were consistent with researcher-generated lists of barriers used in prior research (Dake et al., 2003; Dake et al., 2004; Hendershot, Dake, Price, & Lartey, 2006). For instance, Hendershot and colleagues (2006) asked 404

elementary school nurses in the U.S. to indicate whether or not they experienced specific barriers (based on a presented list) to bullying intervention. Fifty-two percent of school nurses reported that their responses to bullying were hindered because these behaviors often occurred in places where they were not supervising (i.e., outside of their view). A little more than one-quarter of participants indicated they did not have enough time (28%) and felt unprepared (27%) to address these behaviors. Further, 15% reported inadequate administrative support, while 11% were unsure of the signs of bullying (i.e., difficult to identify bullying; Hendershot et al., 2006).

On the other hand, several barriers included on the survey and endorsed by school nurses (Hendershot et al., 2006) were not reported by teachers in the current study. These barriers indicated that other school personnel were more qualified to intervene (45%), it was not their job to address bullying (21%), there were no barriers (15%), no bullying prevention efforts existed (9%), and the school board would not have supported their effort (4%; Hendershot et al., 2006). Although prior studies have indicated that some school personnel perceived no barriers to implementation of bullying prevention and intervention efforts (Dake et al., 2003; Dake et al., 2004; Hendershot et al., 2006), all participants in the current study reported experiencing barriers. This unique finding has several implications. First, these results highlight the importance of examining barriers based on teachers' personal experiences and perceptions of bullying. If teachers' perspectives are not explored, we may not be gaining an accurate understanding of the obstacles teachers face when responding to bullying. Second, teachers in this study reported that bullying occurred frequently in their schools, with many participants

reporting multiple incidents in a single week (*M* = 3.83 on a scale of 1 to 5). Further, participants perceived bullying to be moderately to significantly serious (*M* = 3.72 on a scale from 1 to 5). Prior studies have indicated that teachers' who perceived bullying to be a serious occurrence were more likely to respond to these behaviors (e.g., Craig et al., 2000; Ellis & Shute, 2007; Yoon, 2004). Since teachers in this study perceived bullying to be both prevalent and serious, participants may have been more likely to respond to bullying and thus demonstrated an increased awareness of the barriers that inhibit these interventions.

Findings from the current study have important implications for both preparing teachers to manage bullying and informing school-based bullying intervention and prevention efforts. Examining and addressing teachers' perceived barriers may identify explicit ways in which school leaders, policy makers, and researchers can increase the likelihood of consistent and effective implementation of bullying-related responses by teachers. For instance, the barrier reported by most teachers in this study (25 of 30; 83%) revealed their own lack of skills or knowledge as a hindrance to successful intervention. This perceived inadequacy may account in part for prior research findings indicating that teachers do not consistently intervene in incidents of bullying (e.g., Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Olweus, 1993; Sairanen & Pfeffer, 2011). Similar to previous research (e.g., Bauman et al., 2008; Mishna et al., 2005; Yoon, Bauman, Choi, & Hutchinson, 2011), over half of the participants (57%) in this study indicated they had not received anti-bullying training. These findings lend credence to assertions made by both teachers and researchers regarding the ongoing need and desire for additional training about bullying (e.g.,

Boulton, 1997; Mishna et al., 2005; Nicolaides et al., 2002). Thus, better preparing teachers to address bullying may be one way to maximize effective intervention.

Many teachers in this study (22 of 30; 73%) also reported experiencing school-related barriers, such as ineffective and inconsistent discipline policies regarding bullying, as well as a lack of school-based resources and administrative support. The importance of implementing explicit anti-bullying policies and providing consistent administrative support for teachers has been stressed by researchers and teachers (e.g., Mishna et al., 2005; Swearer, Espelage & Napolitano, 2009; Twemlow & Sacco, 2010). For instance, in a qualitative study with teachers, Mishna and colleagues (2005) found that the majority of participants reported not knowing how to respond effectively to indirect bullying (i.e., non-physical behaviors) due to the absence of a school policy providing guidelines for their responses (as opposed to confronting direct types of bullying such as hitting or pushing for which there were standard procedures to follow). Findings from the current study support the recommendation that in order to enhance teachers' responses to bullying, schools need to adopt clear and consistent policies and procedures regarding bullying, as well as provide teachers with accessible resources and supportive leadership.

Sociocultural factors (e.g., parents' reactions to bullying, prevalence of bullying occurring outside of school, differing behavioral expectations and perceptions of bullying among community members) also led to barriers for the majority of participating teachers (22 of 30; 73%). These results highlight the need for participation from families and community partners when developing and implementing anti-bullying programs (e.g.,

Olweus & Limber, 2010; Swearer et al., 2009). As espoused by Craig and colleagues (2010), “to enhance the potential for change, connections with the community can be established to extend an understanding of bullying and to promote consistent responses to bullying problems throughout the broader community” (p. 224). Finally, individual student factors also were reported as a common barrier by many teachers (18 of 30; 60%). Prior studies have found that teachers’ responses to bullying were influenced by various individual characteristics (e.g., gender, social status, developmental and personality factors) of involved students (e.g., Mishna et al., 2005; Nesdale & Pickering, 2006). Similarly, the findings from this study suggest that when developing anti-bullying programs and professional learning efforts for teachers, scholars and educators need to carefully consider the various individual student factors contributing to teachers’ confidence and ability to implement successful responses.

Interestingly, no systematic relationships emerged between teachers’ self-reported responses to bullying and perceived barriers to intervention. As such, regardless of their perceived obstacles, teachers reported responding to bullying using the same strategies. Teachers in this study clearly expressed a desire to decrease bullying, as well as frustration and concern regarding the numerous obstacles impeding intervention. Despite their ability to identify and articulate these barriers, teachers continued to implement similar responses despite their oftentimes perceived ineffectiveness. As one teacher explained, “I don’t think it is a great way, but as consistency goes, we are sending people to the office and nothing is happening.” These findings suggested that although participating teachers were clearly concerned about bullying, they felt incompetent and

limited in their ability to influence the multiple systems in which bullying was maintained. In addition, the aforementioned lack of preparation in terms of bullying interventions may have contributed to teachers employing the same anti-bullying strategies regardless of their perceived barriers. Providing alternative strategies for teachers to use when responding to bullying is essential. Without other options, many teachers are likely to continue implementing the same (often perceived ineffective) responses, which in turn may lead to feelings of despondency and ultimately inaction in terms of bullying intervention.

Overall, teachers reported experiencing numerous barriers to effective bullying intervention on multiple levels (see Figure 4). As a result, the frequently recommended whole-school approach to bullying (e.g., Olweus, 1993; Olweus & Limber, 2010; Smith, Schneider, Smith, & Ananiadou, 2004; Whitted & Dupper, 2005) in which interventions are targeted at multiple levels (i.e., student, teacher, school and community) may be the most effective way of addressing and eliminating the multifaceted barriers teachers perceive hinder their involvement.

Limitations and Future Research

Although the sample size in this study (N = 30) met suggested guidelines for qualitative research (Creswell, 1998), nonrandom sampling methods and participation from teachers in one school district limit the generalizability of these results. Future research is needed to investigate educators' perceived barriers and responses to bullying in diverse geographical settings and grade levels. Further, assessing the perspectives of other key stakeholders (e.g., administrators, students, counselors, school psychologists,

caregivers) may provide more comprehensive information regarding obstacles that perpetuate school-based bullying. The present study relied on face-to-face interviews to assess teachers' self-reported barriers and responses to bullying. Thus, the results may be subject to social desirability effects and may not correspond fully to how teachers intervene (or do not intervene) in naturally occurring situations. Future research utilizing observational data and other methodologies (e.g., review of discipline referrals, quantitative surveys) may help to capture how teachers respond in authentic settings.

The present study was exploratory in nature and thus additional research is needed to verify these findings. For example, follow-up studies are recommended to determine if teachers in diverse settings report experiencing similar or different obstacles to bullying intervention. Examining the frequency and perceived impact of each barrier in terms of teachers' responses to bullying may provide valuable information to guide intervention efforts and bullying-related professional learning opportunities for teachers. Further, identifying factors that teachers perceive enhance their ability to respond to bullying (i.e., facilitators) may elicit specific ways through which researchers and educators can support and increase teacher intervention. Additional information is needed to investigate potential barriers identified in other research that were not reported by teachers in this study (e.g., it is not their job to intervene, other school personnel are more qualified to respond, no bullying prevention efforts existed; Dake et al., 2003; Hendershot et al., 2006). Unlike prior research findings (Dake et al., 2003; Dake et al., 2004; Hendershot et al., 2006), none of the participants in this study reported experiencing no barriers when addressing bullying. More information is needed to determine if teachers' perceptions of

bullying and related barriers were affected by social desirability effects resulting from the face-to-face interview format. Finally, although no systematic relationships emerged between teachers' perceived barriers and self-reported responses to bullying, future research is needed to investigate potential connections between these two variables using other methodologies. This may be accomplished by developing and administering a survey to teachers regarding their perceived barriers and responses to bullying.

In conclusion, results from this study offer educators, policy makers, and researchers a firsthand account of the challenges teachers face when managing school-based bullying. As these individuals are often on the forefront of bullying and responsible for addressing these behaviors, teachers' perceptions of and responses to bullying must be considered and incorporated into anti-bullying initiatives. Understanding and eliminating the multifaceted obstacles teachers described in this study is a critical step in enhancing teachers' efforts to reduce, or optimally, prevent school-based bullying.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Sample Needs Assessment Questionnaire for Teachers to Complete Prior to the Learning Session

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Name:_____ Date:_____ School:_____

Grade/Subject:_____ How long have you been teaching:_____

Please complete by _____ and return this form to _____

1. On a scale of 1 to 5, can you please rate your perception of how serious of a problem you think bullying is at your school.

Not at all Significant	Somewhat	Moderate	Significant	Extremely
1	2	3	4	5

2. On a scale of 1 to 5, can you please rate on average the frequency you witness instances of bullying at your school.

Never	Once a Month	Weekly	2-3 Days per Week	Daily
1	2	3	4	5

3. What is your definition of bullying?

4. How do you typically respond to bullying?

5. Does your school have a policy or standard procedures to follow if bullying occurs?

6. What do you think needs to be done to decrease bullying?

7. Are there specific topics related to bullying (cyberbullying, talking to parents of bullies, etc.) you would like addressed in the professional learning opportunity? Please be as specific as possible.

8. This professional learning opportunity includes a one-day learning session and monthly small group meetings with your peers to provide ongoing support, practice and feedback. By signing below, you are indicating that you understand and agree to participate in the learning session and ongoing support team meetings.

Name:_____

Note. This needs assessment questionnaire can be altered to meet the needs of the local context.

APPENDIX B

Selected School-Based Bullying Resources

Websites:

CDC's Injury and Violence Prevention and Control – provides information on how to identify, assess, and respond to school-based bullying. The website (http://www.cdc.gov/ ViolencePrevention/youthviolence/index.html) also includes information for educators and parents about cyberbullying.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) - CASEL's Social and Emotional Learning and Bullying Prevention guide (available at http://casel.org/publications /sel-and-bullying-prevention) provides an overview of the prevalence and consequences of bullying, information related to applying a Social Emotional Learning framework to bullying, and available school-based resources.

Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) – GLSEN provides information and resources to help schools address anti-LGBT bullying. http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/ antibullying/index.html

Intervention Central – Jim Wright includes numerous academic and behavioral interventions for educators on his website, http://www.interventioncentral.org. He also provides a booklet entitled *Preventing Classroom Behavior: What Teachers Can Do* that can be found at http:// www.jimwrightonline.com/pdfdocs/bully/bullyBooklet.pdf

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) – provides fact sheets and resources on numerous topics, including bullying intervention and prevention, cyberbullying, homophobia and bullying, and information for parents. See http://www.nasponline.org/resources/listingb.aspx

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) – presents facts and frequently asked questions about bullying, as well as resources and information related to implementation and evaluation of the OBPP in schools. http://www.olweus.org/public/index.page

Stop Bullying Now! - The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) launched a national campaign for bullying prevention and intervention called Stop Bullying Now! The website (http://www.stopbullying.gov) provides free, research-based materials and activities to help students and adults identify and deal with bullying.

The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) – is a national, school-based survey conducted by the CDC to assess students' health-risk behaviors, including bullying. For national, state, and local results see http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/yrbs/index.htm

U.S. Laws on Bullying - For a list of U.S. laws and related information by state, see http://www.bullypolice.org

Books:

Coloroso, B. (2008). *The bully, the bullied, and the bystander.* New York, NY: Collins Living.

Davis, S. (2007). *Schools where everyone belongs: Practical strategies for reducing bullying.* Champion, Illinois: Research Press

Hoover, J. H., & Oliver, R. L. (2008). *The bullying prevention handbook* (2nd ed.). Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

Swearer, S. M., Espelage, D. L., & Napolitano, S. A. (2009). *Bullying prevention & intervention: Realistic strategies for schools.* New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Additional Information:

Please also refer to this paper's references for a comprehensive list of published work on bullying.

APPENDIX C

Example Activity for Implementation of the Problem-Solving Framework and Decision-Making Strategy for Teachers' Responses to Bullying

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Hypothetical scenario. Dylan is a 9th grade gay student who is out. Over spring break, one of Dylan's friends reports to his teacher that other students from the high school have created a website that says "Dylan is gay" and includes derogatory comments about Dylan and his "lifestyle." Dylan's friend tells the teacher that he is now afraid to come back to school because the website includes threats to physically harm him. The teacher goes online and finds the website. While the students who created the website are using screen names, they provide enough information about themselves for the teacher to easily identify them.

As a group, please complete the following steps based on the hypothetical scenario presented above:

Step 1: Identify the problem (e.g., Do you consider this bullying? If so, what type? What are potential negative effects for the victim?).

Teacher Involvement: Role of teacher in implementing the strategy

Teacher Intent: Purpose or rationale of the response

	Direct Response	Indirect Response
Constructive Response	Constructive – Direct Responses 1. 2. 3.	Constructive – Indirect Responses 1. 2. 3.
Punitive Response	Punitive – Direct Responses 1. 2. 3.	Punitive – Indirect Responses 1. 2. 3.

Step 2: Brainstorm responses or solutions to the problem identified in Step 1. Categorize the generated responses into the following four response types below (definitions of each type are provided for your reference). Please include 2 – 3 responses for each category.

- *Constructive Responses:* approaches teachers perceive to be supportive, educative and/or non-punishing for the student(s)
- *Punitive Responses:* responses teachers perceive to be undesirable and/or punishing for the student(s)
- *Direct Responses:* approaches in which the teacher intervenes with the student(s) personally
- *Indirect Responses:* strategies in which teachers respond by sending the student(s) to another individual (e.g., counselor, administrator, or parent) to address the situation

Step 3: As a group discuss the potential feasibility, effectiveness, and consequences of each response based on your local resources (e.g., availability of school counselors and/or psychologists to consult, bullying materials to reference), as well as individual (e.g., perceived effectiveness of your knowledge and skills to address bullying, personal attitudes toward bullying, time constraints) and contextual factors (e.g., perceived administrative and parental support, school anti-bullying policies).

Step 4: Based on your discussion during Step 3, identify one strategy that appears to be the most viable to implement if actually presented with this hypothetical scenario in your school.

Step 5: As a group, discuss and develop an action plan for implementation of the strategy identified in Step 4. For instance, if your team chose to talk to the students who allegedly created the website, what do you plan to ask and/or discuss with the students? Will you talk to the students individually or as a group? When and where will this discussion take place?

Step 6: Establish a concrete plan to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the action plan selected in Step 5. Questions to consider include the following: How will you know if the response you implemented was effective? If you perceive the strategy to be ineffective, how will you modify the action plan?

Note. A portion of this worksheet was used previously in a professional development presentation by the author. The hypothetical scenario was chosen due to current contextual issues in the school district in which the PD was implemented. The scenario was adapted from scenarios created by Tsugawa, T. (n.d.). Vermont Human Rights Commission. Retrieved from http://hrc.vermont.gov/sites/hrc/files/pdfs/harassment%20docs/harassment_bullying_scenarios.pdf

APPENDIX D

Sample Action Plan for Support Team Meetings

Name:_____ Date:_____ Grade/Subject:_____

Support Team Members:_____
_____

Team Leader: _____

Members should be prepared to discuss the following questions at each support team meeting:

1. What types of bullying have I encountered since our previous meeting?
2. What anti-bullying intervention(s) have I implemented?
3. Were the intervention(s) effective? Why or why not?
4. Would I use the intervention(s) again? Why or why not?
5. What questions do I have for my team to help me continue to address bullying?

Date of Support Team Meetings: _____
(Teams should plan on meeting
approximately 1 hour per month) _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature:_____ Date:_____

Facilitator(s) Name & Contact Information: _____

Note. This action plan can be altered to meet the needs of the local context.

APPENDIX E

Semi-Structured Teacher Interview Protocol

- What is your understanding of the word bullying? Can you describe what that looks like through: behaviors or interactions you might observe, words you might hear?

- On a scale of 1 to 5, can you please rate your perception of how serious of a problem you think bullying is at your school.

Not at all	Somewhat	Moderate	Significant	Extremely Significant
1	2	3	4	5

- On a scale of 1 to 5, can you please rate on average the frequency you witness instances of bullying at your school.

Never	Once a Month	Weekly	2-3 Days per Week	Daily
1	2	3	4	5

- Can you please describe a bully using personal characteristics such as physical appearance, interpersonal mannerisms, social status, etc.

- Once you have identified a bullying situation, how do you decide whether or not, and when to intervene? How would/do you intervene? What steps would you take to do so?

- What do you think the effects are for bullies? (Probe for social/emotional/behavioral effects, academic achievement effects, short-term consequences & long-term consequences). Can you give me an example?

- How do you know a victim of bullying when you see one? Describe a victim using personal characteristics such as physical appearance, interpersonal mannerisms, social status, etc.

- Once you have identified a victim, how do you decide whether or not, and when to intervene? How would/do you intervene? What steps would you take to do so?

- What do you think the effects are for victims? (Probe for social/emotional/behavioral effects, academic achievement effects, short-term consequences & long-term consequences). Can you give me an example?

- What do you think the effects are for bystanders (other students who witness bullying)? (Probe for social/emotional/behavioral effects, academic achievement effects, short-term consequences & long-term consequences). Can you give me an example?

- Do you think there are difference between teasing and bullying? If so, how do you distinguish between the two? Do you intervene differently for teasing and bullying?

- Have you ever seen anyone intervene with a bully in school? How often? Who was it: staff, administrator, parent, or a student? Can you give an example?

- Have you ever seen anyone intervene with a victim in school? How often? Who was it: staff, administrator, parent, or a student? Can you give an example?

- What skills would you need to intervene with a bully/victim? Do you feel that you have those skills? What learning activities would help you to feel more confident in your abilities?

- Have you ever received training about bullying in schools before? Where or by whom? What was that like? Can you describe it?

- What resources are available in your school that would help you with your decisions about intervening in bullying situations? Are there specific policies in place for the entire school?

- Who or where would you go with questions about how to deal with bullying? Do you ever discuss this issue with co-workers?

- Are there any barriers to making an intervention with a bully and/or a victim in your school? What are they? Can you give examples?

- What steps do you believe need to occur to effectively reduce bullying in your school?

Key Topics Checklist

1. Characteristics of Bullies
2. Characteristics of Victims
3. Social/Emotional, Behavioral, and Academic Effects for Bullies
4. Social/Emotional, Behavioral, and Academic Effects for Victims
5. Social/Emotional, Behavioral, and Academic Effects for Bystanders
6. How do you intervene?
7. Do you think you need more training?

Follow-up/Additional questions if time permits:

- Why do students pick on each other? Can you give me an example?

- Do these kinds of things (name some of the bullying behaviors that the teacher has mentioned) happen at certain times or in certain areas in your school? If so, why?

- Are there certain students who always pick on or make fun other kids? Are there certain kids who always get picked on or made fun of? Why do you think these students get picked on or made fun of?

- How do kids react to being picked on or made fun of?

- How do students react when they see others being picked on or being made fun of? How do you think they should react?

- How do the other teachers react when they see a kid being picked on or made fun of? How do you think the teachers should react when they see a student getting bullied?

- What happens to a student who is caught bullying another student? What are the school policies regarding discipline for bullying? What usually happens to the student who is bullying? What happens to the student who is bullied?

- Have you ever felt bullied or threatened by a student? If yes, how did you react? Did you do something about it? Why or why not? Can you give an example?

- If "yes" to above: Did any other adult know you were being threatened? If yes, how did that adult react? Were you happy or unhappy with the adult's reaction?

- Have you witnessed other teacher's or staff react to the bullying of a student? What was their reaction? Were you satisfied with their reaction?

APPENDIX F

Data Analysis Template for Potential Relationships between Teachers' Responses and Barriers

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Interviewee #__

Teachers' Self-Reported Responses to Bullying				
Teacher Involvement				
		Direct Response	Indirect Response	**Totals**
Teacher Intent	Constructive Response	Constructive – Direct Responses 3. Pull aside and talk to student(s) __ 4. Call out inappropriate behavior __ 5. Protect the victim __ 6. Make bully apologize __ 7. Use personal experience with bullying __ (Total = __)	Constructive – Indirect Responses 3. Send, inform or refer __ student(s) to counselor 4. Consult other educators __ 5. Call victim's parents __ (Total = __)	**CRs = __**
	Punitive Response	Punitive – Direct Responses 3. Remove or move bully in the classroom __ 4. Punishment __ 5. Physically get in the middle of students __ 6. Yell __ (Total = __)	Punitive – Indirect Responses 3. Call bully's parents __ 4. Send, inform or refer bully to administrator __ (Total = __)	**PRs = __**
	Totals	**DRs = ___**	**IRs = ___**	**Total # = ___**

Teachers' Reported Barriers to Effective Bullying Intervention			
***Student-Based* (Total = ___)**		***School-Based* (Total = ___)**	
1. Not informing teachers	__	1. Ineffective discipline policies and/or consequences	__
2. Lack of student knowledge or skills to differentiate bullying and teasing	__	2. Differing perceptions among school staff	__
3. Bullying denied when confronted	__	3. School climate factors	__
4. Students intentionally bully outside of teachers' view	__	4. Bullying between school staff and students	__
5. Students encourage bullying	__	5. Ineffective supervision of students	__
6. Individual student factors	__	6. Lack of time for other school staff to consistently address bullying	__
***Teacher-Based* (Total = ___)**		7. Other school staff's lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene	__
1. Lack of knowledge or skills to effectively intervene	__	8. Lack of resources and/or administrative support	__
2. Difficult to identify bullying	__		
3. Lack of relationship with student(s)	__		
4. Lack of time to consistently address bullying	__	***Sociocultural-Based* (Total = ___)**	
Total Number of Barriers Reported = ___			

APPENDIX G

Number and Percentage of Participants Who Reported Implementing Each Response to Bullying Based on Participants Who Endorsed the Teacher-Based Barrier, Lack of Knowledge or Skills to Effectively Intervene

Type of Response	Response	*n*	Percentage
Constructive – Direct	Pull aside and talk to student	24	96%
Punitive – Indirect	Send, inform or refer bully to administrator	16	64%
Constructive – Indirect	Consult other educators	15	60%
Punitive – Indirect	Call bully's parents	15	60%
Constructive – Indirect	Send, inform or refer student to counselor	14	56%
Constructive – Direct	Call out inappropriate behavior	11	44%
Punitive – Direct	Remove or move bully in the classroom	10	40%
Constructive – Indirect	Call victim's parents	8	32%
Punitive – Direct	Punishment	7	28%
Constructive – Direct	Make bully apologize	3	12%
Punitive – Direct	Physically get in the middle of students	3	12%
Constructive – Direct	Protect the victim	2	8%
Constructive – Direct	Use personal experience with bullying	1	4%
Punitive – Direct	Yell	1	4%

Note. n = 25 participants.

APPENDIX H

Number and Percentage of Participants Who Reported Implementing Each Response to Bullying Based on Participants who Endorsed the School-Based Barrier, Ineffective Discipline Policies and/or Consequences

Type of Response	Response	*n*	Percentage
Constructive - Direct	Pull aside and talk to student	21	95%
Constructive - Indirect	Send, inform or refer student to counselor	14	64%
Constructive - Indirect	Consult other educators	13	59%
Punitive - Indirect	Call bully's parents	13	59%
Punitive - Indirect	Send, inform or refer bully to administrator	12	55%
Punitive - Direct	Remove or move bully in the classroom	10	45%
Constructive - Direct	Call out inappropriate behavior	8	36%
Punitive - Direct	Punishment	8	36%
Constructive - Indirect	Call victim's parents	5	23%
Constructive - Direct	Make bully apologize	3	14%
Punitive - Direct	Physically get in the middle of students	2	9%
Constructive - Direct	Protect the victim	1	5%
Constructive - Direct	Use personal experience with bullying	1	5%
Punitive - Direct	Yell	1	5%

Note. n = 22 participants.

APPENDIX I

Number and Percentage of Participants Who Reported Implementing Each Response to Bullying Based on Participants Who Endorsed the Sociocultural-Based Barrier

Type of Response	Response	*n*	Percentage
Constructive - Direct	Pull aside and talk to student	21	95%
Constructive - Indirect	Send, inform or refer student to counselor	15	68%
Punitive - Indirect	Call bully's parents	14	64%
Constructive - Indirect	Consult other educators	13	59%
Punitive - Indirect	Send, inform or refer bully to administrator	13	59%
Constructive - Direct	Call out inappropriate behavior	10	45%
Punitive - Direct	Punishment	8	36%
Constructive - Indirect	Call victim's parents	7	32%
Punitive - Direct	Remove or move bully in the classroom	7	32%
Punitive - Direct	Physically get in the middle of students	3	14%
Constructive - Direct	Protect the victim	2	9%
Constructive - Direct	Make bully apologize	2	9%
Constructive - Direct	Use personal experience with bullying	2	9%
Punitive - Direct	Yell	1	5%

Note. n = 22 participants.

APPENDIX J

Number and Percentage of Participants Who Reported Using Responses Based on Participants Who Endorsed the Student-Based Barrier, Individual Student Factors

Type of Response	Response	*n*	Percentage
Constructive - Direct	Pull aside and talk to student	17	94%
Punitive - Indirect	Send, inform or refer bully to administrator	13	72%
Punitive - Indirect	Call bully's parents	12	67%
Constructive - Direct	Call out inappropriate behavior	11	61%
Constructive - Indirect	Send, inform or refer student to counselor	11	61%
Constructive - Indirect	Consult other educators	11	61%
Constructive - Indirect	Call victim's parents	7	39%
Punitive - Direct	Remove or move bully in the classroom	7	39%
Punitive - Direct	Punishment	5	28%
Punitive - Direct	Physically get in the middle of students	3	17%
Constructive - Direct	Make bully apologize	2	11%
Constructive - Direct	Use personal experience with bullying	2	11%
Constructive - Direct	Protect the victim	1	6%
Punitive - Direct	Yell	1	6%

Note. n = 18 participants.