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Bullying in Georgia Schools: Demographic Profiles and Psychosocial Correlates of Students Who Would Intervene in a Bullying Situation

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Bullying in Georgia Schools: Demographic Profiles and Psychosocial
Correlates of Students who Would Intervene in a Bullying Situation

By

Lori Goldammer

B.A., MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of Georgia State University in Partial Fulfillment
of the
Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
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APPROVAL PAGE

Bullying in Georgia Schools: Demographic profiles and psychosocial correlates of
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ABSTRACT

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Bullying in Georgia Schools: Demographic Profiles and Psychosocial Correlates of Students who Would Intervene in a Bullying Situation
(Under the direction of Dr. Monica Swahn)

While researchers have assessed the prevalence and health impact of bullying, there are still relatively few successful interventions and strategies implemented to reduce and prevent bullying. A particular promising area is to know more about students who may be willing to intervene in a bullying situation, which is the focus of this thesis. Using the data from the Georgia Student Health Survey II (GSHS 2006) (n=175,311) an empirical analyses of students who state that they are willing to intervene in a bullying situation, their demographic characteristics and psychosocial attributes will be examined. The survey administered to students across Georgia in grades 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th measured the number of students who reported being a bully-victim, bully or a victim of bullying, and their likelihood to engage in risky behaviors.

The results demonstrated students who were white and were girls were most likely to intervene in bullying situations. Grade level was not significant when it involved intervening, but was an important marker for the co-occurrence of bully-victims. One compelling finding is that the bully subgroup was most likely to always intervene. School climate factors such as success in school, clear expectations and liking school were significant indicators of willingness to intervene.

These findings assist researchers and schools to better understand the characteristics of students who are willing to intervene and school factors that may promote students likelihood of intervening. These findings may guide how bullying is addressed in Georgia schools, and underscore the importance of providing safe school climates.

INDEX WORDS: bullying, bully-victim, bully, victims, aggressive-victimization, intervene, and school climate

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Over the last few years, there has been an increase nationally in the number of reported school bullying incidents. Currently, approximately 30% of students report being involved in bullying situations (Carlyle & Steinman, 2007). While these rates have remained relatively steady over the last few years, there has been an increase in the reporting and awareness of bullying. In part, this increased reporting may be the result of the popular media outlets highlighting the most severe cases, such as that of Jaheem Herrera and Carl Walker-Hoover. These cases gained national attention, because both 11 year-old boys committed suicide after being bullied by their peers at their elementary schools. Although suicide is the most extreme and severe outcome of bullying, there are many other serious health risk factors associated with bullying. In light of the seriousness of bullying and heightened reporting, researchers still know little information about who intervenes and their motivation and/or purpose for involvement.

Historically, bullying has not been perceived as a serious health threat and for many images of the school yard bully taking students' lunch money may come to mind. In fact, many adults view bullying as a rite of passage for school aged children. Some

adults may even express that some teasing and taunting serves a purpose, because it “toughens up” a child. However, experts in the field are well aware of the social and emotional impact of bullying. Therefore, bullying should be perceived as a serious act of violence. As with other critical acts of violence there are significant repercussions on the health and well-being of students. Furthermore, bullying disrupts the overall school climate for students in grades K-12 directly impacting other areas, such as attendance and academics (Nansel, 2003; Glew, Fan, Katon, Rivara & Kernic, 2005).

Georgia state law pertaining to bullying historically has been insufficient to support shifts in school climate. On May 27, 2010, Senate Bill 250 passed in Georgia to better define and address bullying in the schoolhouse. The bill describes bullying as an act that, “(1) causes another person substantial physical harm or visible bodily harm, (2) has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school or interfering with a student’s education, or (3) is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment” (Georgia Law, 2010). The new law mandates schools to develop an investigation system and approach to address reported incidents of bullying. Coverage is extended under the law to elementary school aged students who feel they are victims of bullying. Parents of both the bully and the victim must be contacted at the first report of a bullying situation. At the county level, policies and procedures regarding bullying and consequences must be clearly described in the district’s Student Code of Conduct. Students found in violation of the policies three or more times are to be placed in an alternate setting.

A critical consideration of the bullying definition is the victim’s perception of the incident, and how they *think* and *feel* about the incident. Many times in school settings,

educators, parents and students dismiss bullying as a minor infraction. Instead, it is important to note the student's feelings. If they feel bullied, than in fact they are a victim. The perception of bullying on behalf of the victim is the key component to establishing a case. When working with both victims and bullies, it is important to consider the duration, intensity and frequency of the bullying incident. Many experts also state that an imbalance of power must be present and that this power is abused by another person or group (Nansel, Overpeck, Haynie, Ruan, & Scheidt , 2003). Until bullying escalates to a misdemeanor or felony, such as stalking, harassment or other violent acts law enforcement agencies have limited justification for involvement. This point emphasizes the importance of school-based interventions.

Reforms regarding bullying are not only being made at the state level, but also at the federal level. Recently, the United States Department of Education (USDOE) and other federal agencies become more involved in bullying policies and procedures. These agencies have warned school districts about dismissal of bullying cases without investigation. In fact, on October 26, 2010 the USDOE, under the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), sent a letter urging schools to be proactive and vigilant in addressing school bullying (Office for Civil Rights, 2010). The letter included that, "some student misconduct that falls under a school's anti-bullying policy also may trigger responsibilities under one or more of the federal antidiscrimination laws enforced by OCR" (Office for Civil Rights, 2010). The investigation process for schools is a critical component to determine the extent and validity of a claim. Moreover, this process is critical in determining if civil rights under federal law were violated. For example, students repeatedly engaging in name calling based on another student's race, disability,

or gender may be in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and charged with federal crimes under hate crime legislation or sexual harassment statutes. Although sexual orientation is not directly covered under the Civil Rights Acts, sex discrimination is, and derogatory remarks or actions may, “overlap sexual harassment or gender-based harassment” (Office for Civil Rights, 2010). Usually these charges are more severe and may include a fine and/or prison time. The OCR (2010) further states the seriousness of this issue, “Bullying fosters a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair the physical and psychological health of its victims and create conditions that negatively affect learning, thereby undermining the ability of students to achieve their full potential”. Due to the severity of bullying, school districts may also be held culpable and lose funding for inappropriately handling and addressing situations related to school-based violence.

1.2 Terminology and Subgroups of Bullying

Lawmakers and experts recognize the difficulties in defining and addressing bullying cases. Nevertheless, from the work of Olweus (1993), the most widely accepted definition is, “A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is the repeated and intentionally harmful actions by one or more person against another person with an imbalance of social or physical power exposed repeatedly and over time “ (Black, Washington, Trent, Harner & Pollack, 2010, p.735). Bullying can be distinguished from other violent acts and is different from other acts of violence because it requires *repeated* incidents. For example, acts of isolated violence toward other students might include name calling, eye rolling, rumoring, or physical acts, but when any of these isolated violent acts are repeated and the intent is to be harmful then it is considered bullying.

Due to the difficulty in defining bullying, the federal government and law enforcement have delegated this responsibility to the states. Typically, the Board of Education at the state or district level is responsible for governing policies and procedures addressing bullying. Therefore, there is no uniform approach to bullying and each state and school district handles situations of bullying differently. Many experts argue agreeing on a definition is paramount to addressing bullying, so it can be better identified by prevention specialist and school officials.

Bully-victims (also noted in the literature as bully/victim) are a unique subgroup of students and will be examined closely in this thesis. At times, the bully-victim subgroup has been scrutinized as a valid sub-group, because of limited and conflicting descriptions, but they are an important group that needs to be better understood and examined in research. Most commonly, studies have examined their prevalence and how best to define their behaviors since they exhibit both bully actions and victim reactions. In contrast, bully-victims' willingness to intervene has received minimal focus in the research in comparison to effort and time spent defining bully-victims. This term can best be described as individuals labeled as the victim and the aggressor in a situation. At times, the bully-victim may also be referred to as the aggressive/victim, but this is usually only in broader context other than just bullying (Solberg, Olweus & Endresen, 2007). From this point forward the term bully-victims will be utilized.

In addition to defining bullying, other terminology in the bullying literature need to be discussed. For example, frequently the aggressor of the situation is referred to as the bully. It is also common for the bully to be referred to as the "pure bully" (Pollastri, Cardemil & O'Donnell, 2010). This term indicates exclusivity of just being a bully, not

any other level of involvement in the bullying situation. As for the person who is the recipient of the bullies' action, they are commonly referred to as the victim or target. As with the pure bully, the literature has made distinction between "pure victims" and victims (Pollastri et al, 2010). This distinction meaning that the victim is only involved in the situation as a victim, and not involved in any other capacity. Individuals that witness bullying and are not engaged in a positive or negative ways are referred to as the bystander. The bystander simply witnesses the act of bullying and does not do anything to help or hinder the situation. On the other hand, individuals that witness the behavior and act in a favorable manner toward or assist the victim may be referred to as an ally. This label has helped to empower bystanders and motivate them to stand up and speak out for individuals who may be the target of bullies. Most bullying interventions target the bystander and/or the ally, because they lack a vested interest in either the bully or the victim.

Large scale global bullying studies conducted by Dr. Dan Olweus, a Norwegian researcher, over several decades suggest that bystanders are the most likely person to intervene in a bullying situation (Olweus, 1994). To address bullying on a larger scale the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) model hopes to address bullying through ongoing school-wide based interventions, instead of addressing individual incidents of bullying. Specifically, OBPP discourages viewing bullying as problems between a bully and victim and instead addresses bullying through four main levels the school, classroom, individual and community levels. The components of the OBPP model are outlined more in depth in Chapter V. More recently, Dr. Olweus has collaborated with Dr. Limber, a researcher at Clemson University. Together they have

researched the effectiveness of OBPP pertaining to its' impact and relevance within the context of the United States. Nevertheless, despite their body of research, there is limited data available demonstrating whether their large scale findings are generalizable or meaningful to smaller populations or other regions of the United States. In a recent study Olweus and Limber examined the impact and effectiveness of the OBPP model within the states of South Carolina, Philadelphia, California and Washington (Olweus & Limber, 2010).

Since Georgia has not participated in the OBPP evidence-based trials or other research, the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) would like to gain a better understanding of bullying trends pertaining to Georgia student populations. Particularly, schools would like to better understand students' willingness to intervene in bullying situations and how to encourage safe levels of involvement. As a way to gain insight into students' willingness to intervene and bullying in Georgia schools analyses of the relatively recently conducted Georgia Student Health Survey II (GHSS 2006) can answer many of the important but unaddressed questions.

1.3 Research Questions

Through the use of the GSHS II (2006) data and for the purpose of this paper, the following research questions pertaining to bullying will be examined:

- 1.) How prevalent is the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation?
- 2.) What demographic characteristics are associated with the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation?
- 3.) What psychosocial correlates are associated with the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation?

- 4.) How does the co-occurrence of bullying and victimization associate with the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation?

The first research question is important for individuals in fields of education and public health. Schools have a vested interest in better understanding complexities surrounding the intervening process for students. The answers to these questions may help to guide school officials to better estimate the number of students who will intervene and who may have had bully or victim experiences. This information may also help to guide the development of school intervention programs that can be tailored toward supporting, encouraging and empowering students to intervene in a bullying situation. Students need to be trained how to respond appropriately and the steps to take when addressing bullying within their school.

The second research question aims to determine the demographic profile of students willing to intervene. As with any other program, prevention and intervention efforts need to be geared toward a target population. Through analysis of the GSHS II (2006) we want to determine the gender, grade and ethnicity of a student most likely to intervene. Furthermore, we want to determine which subgroups (bully-victims, bully, victims or bystanders) are most likely to respond when faced with a bullying situation.

The third research question seeks to further expand analyses of the psychosocial characteristics of students willing to intervene. Many of the psychosocial elements may be modified through the school climate. For example, if a character trait of a students' willingness to intervene is the importance of feeling successful in school, then schools may seek to improve these perceptions among students. Holt and Espelage (2006) stated

it succinctly when they said, “Through identifying areas that promote positive youth psychosocial functioning in the face of adversity, more effective intervention and prevention programs can be designed” (p.985).

Lastly, the fourth research question aims to examine the likelihood of bully-victims to intervene. The concept behind co-occurrence supports that individuals involved in bullying may take on the roles of being both the bully and the victim in varying situations. In other words, bullying is contextual and depends on situation-specific student perspectives. This concept may be difficult for some, because it requires professionals to withhold judgment and to evaluate the merit of each individual case, taking into the consideration the perspectives of all parties involved. Many times, co-occurrence is associated with students that are victims of intimate partner violence, but then bullies in other environments, such as school. For many bullies, this provides them with the opportunity to exert their power over other individuals.

In conclusion, Olweus & Limber (2010) describe this paradigm of bully-victims as partially having to do with personality traits, as well as psychosocial factors. The complexity of this issue partly stems from the question whether or not we can conceptualize bullies also as victims. The paradigm challenges many belief systems about the traditional “schoolyard bully”. This belief needs careful consideration, because it could have significant meaning and outcomes for prevention and intervention strategies of bullying. Many bullies have not been taught or developed empathy and social skills. These skill sets are what guide them to identify and report incidents of bullying. Therefore, if bully-victims can empathize for how it feels to be bullied while

learning to assert themselves than they may be more willing to report incidents of bullying.

1.4 Outline of Thesis

The thesis will first introduce the prevalence and demographic characteristics associated with students who are willing to intervene in a bullying situation, based on a survey of Georgia 2006 middle and high school students. Moreover, a specific and previously unanswered question about the association between willingness to intervene and previous bully or victim involvement is assessed. As described above, Chapter I discusses bullying in the larger context, presents common bullying terms, addresses federal, state and local levels of involvement in bullying prevention and lastly outlines the research questions pertaining to bullying. Chapter II presents a comprehensive review of current literature surrounding patterns of bullying behaviors, known risk and protective factors, as well as associated health impacts. Chapter II also integrates theoretical perspectives related to bullying and specifically bully-victims. Chapter III discusses the context and rationale of the study, the sample population, study procedures, protection of human subjects and analysis plan. Chapter IV presents the study analysis results and answers the primary research questions. Lastly, Chapter V discusses the research questions, limitations, strengths, significant implications, future directions for research on this topic, and concluding thoughts.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Overview

Traditionally, the participants of bullying have been characterized by certain roles. In past research, these roles have been clearly defined and separate from one another. For example, the roles of the people involved have been the bully, victim and bystander. Moreover, bullying research focused on strategies offered to address the bully, and how to create school environments that support reporting of bullying incidents. The identification and definition of roles may seem arbitrary and insignificant, and a point of contention regarding linguistics. However, they are quite an integral part of understanding and addressing the prevalence of bullying. In fact, when clear definitions are not defined this may “hamper meaningful comparisons” of prevalence rates (Solberg et al, 2007).

2.2 Prevalence

The prevalence of bullying in either the role as bully, victim or bully-victim is 30% among American teenagers (Glew, Fza, Katon & Rivara, 2008). Similar findings were found by Nansel (2003) indicating that 29.9% of his total sample had experienced bullying in a moderate or frequent fashion. Further extrapolation of the data showed the

breakdown of this bullying as 13% being reported by bullies, 10.6% reported by victims, and 6.3% reported by bully-victims (Nansel, 2003).

2.3 Risk and Protective Factors

Previously, bullies have been of concern because they have exhibited many serious and important risk factors. Olweus & Limber (2010) indicate bullies suffer from a host of risk factors such as depression, anxiety, self-esteem, social isolation and psychosocial problems. There does seem to be some disagreement surrounding self-esteem levels of bullies. Some researchers support the claims that bullies do in fact have low self-esteem, and that they bully to make themselves feel better. Other researchers have noted that bullies do not have low self-esteem. Many student bullies struggle with identifying social cues and knowing when to exhibit particular social skills. In contrast, many victims are at risk for the following behaviors: mental health concerns, health problems, depression, anxiety, poor self-esteem, headaches, stomach aches and suicidal ideation (Olweus & Limber, 2010). However, when reviewing these groups on a continuum, bully-victims are most at-risk for negative or high-risk behaviors. For example, they are more depressed, anxious and experience higher rates of ADHD than their bully or victim counterparts (Ball, Arseneault, Taylor, Maughan, Caspi & Moffitt, 2008). Furthermore, they are referred more often for psychiatric disorders and school refusal (Ball et al, 2008).

Self-esteem scores for bully-victims were also found to be lower than bullies alone. In one study Glew and colleagues (2008) found that bully-victims were more likely to engage in risky behaviors. The example cited indicated bully-victims are more likely to carry weapons. Ultimately, this behavior will impact school climate. More

serious bullying can lead to more serious victimization or in some cases re-occurrence of violence. Craig & Pepler (2003) found children to be more at-risk if they experienced more intense bullying that resulted in more intense victimization. Age also seems to be a risk factor. Students are most at- risk during their adolescent years in middle school to be bullied (Carlyle & Steinman, 2007). This time period may represent when students are most vulnerable and susceptible to peer pressure and abuse.

In addition to risk factors, protective factors are an important consideration for bullying. Protective factors help to prevent students from becoming involved in bullying and encourage willingness to intervene. Ideally, specialists in the field want to learn how to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors. Ball and colleagues (2008) assert that genetics may serve as a protective factor for some students, and minimize the risk for being a bully-victim. They argue that some students have certain personality traits that make them more or less susceptible to bullying at school. Another critical protective factor is the perception of social support. Usually, this sort of support varies by the student's age, but typically originates from the parent or peer group during their elementary school age years. As students age, relationships with parents begin to diminish and peer supports become more valued. Holt & Espelage (2007) found in one of their surveys that bully-victims have the most amount of difficulty accessing social support networks, but also strongly value these relationships. Additionally, the relationships that do exist may not have the same quality of relationship. This contradiction is troublesome, because bully-victims who are in need of strong social supports are unable to access and cultivate the support needed. It also seems to be the case that victims seek out other victims of bullies to be friends (Holt et al, 2007).

In considering students willingness to intervene, limited research is available regarding the characteristics or reasons why a student intervenes. As mentioned previously, most literature indicates the bystander as the person most likely to intervene, but discusses limited demographic or psychosocial factors (Olweus, 1994). Although research by O'Connell, Pepler and Craig (1999) provided valuable insight through their naturalistic observations of videotaped elementary school aged children (5 to 12 years old) on the playground engaged in social situations. From their research, O'Connell and colleagues (1999) found that 54% of students support the bullying indirectly by observing bullies, 21% of students modeled bullies and only 25% of students intervened in a bullying situation. In other words, only one in four bullying situations results in intervention among other students. This finding is interesting considering when asked most students indicate they are likely to intervene, but their actions relay a different outcome (O'Connell et al, 1999). As for demographic factors, older boys (grades 4-6) were more likely to contribute to bullying situations, especially in contrast to girls and younger boys (grades 1-3) (O'Connell et al, 1999). A promising psychosocial factor contributing to positive interventions determined children with high social status were more likely to intervene (O'Connell et al, 1999). Pepler (2006) describes this concept of building positive peer relationships and supports as the importance of building "social architecture".

Despite having an understanding of some of the demographic features, researchers do not seem to understand the reasons why the bystander intervenes. Many speculations include ideas that the bystander feels a moral obligation to intervene, while other researchers feel students are able to empathize with the victim. Gini, Pozzoli,

Borghi & Franzoni (2008) theorize one reason students may not intervene is because they blame the victim. As with many other violent related offenses or crimes, the victims may be perceived as being “deserving” of the actions or even worse that the victim is at fault. Gini and colleagues (2008) further explained this belief system is self-serving, because it provides a rationale for why the bystander will not be a victim, “Holding this belief gives people a sense of security that they themselves will be exempt from suffering undeserved misfortunes” (p.620). This belief was also held by O’Connell and colleagues (1999) that not intervening provided self preservation by not putting one’s self at-risk to be in a vulnerable or unsafe situation. The power differential and diffusion of responsibility were also two additional reasons provided for why students may not intervene (O’Connell et al, 1999).

2.4 Theories

Albert Bandura’s Social Learning Theory may be one of the best theories used to explain how observations impact individuals’ ability to acquire new behaviors. This theory is of particular importance to the research studying bullying and the relationship between bully-victims. This well-known theory indicates individuals learn how to behave and respond to situations based on the observation and modeling of other people. In 1977, Bandura highlighted three traits of a modeler that make children more likely to model behavior, these are powerful modelers, the model is rewarded instead of punished and the modeler shares attributes in common with the child (O’Connell et al, 1999). The Social Learning Theory provides an explanation for the “cycle of violence”. This sort of violence is often comprises the student’s culture, and may be modeled by influential family members, peers and community members. For bully-victims who may of

experienced intimate partner violence this theory is especially applicable. Bauer, Herrenkohl, Lozano, Rivara, Hill and Hawkins (2006) explained that children exposed to violence learn and use it as an effective and acceptable approach to addressing conflicts. Another important consideration pointed out by Bauer et al (2006) is that bullies may not recognize their aggressive behavior as inappropriate, because it was modeled through intimate partner violence. Ireland and Smith (2009) describe this as “Exposure to violence teaches children that controlling others through coercion and violence is normal and acceptable, and indeed using such strategies helps people reach their goals...thus family violence begets subsequent violence in the next generation is likely to be embedded in a more general antisocial orientation” (p.325).

The Social Ecological Model may also help to explain how varying levels of influences impact bullying and how best to provide levels of interventions. The model utilizes ideas that an individual’s environmental factors interact with one another. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010) use this model to provide an explanation for violence, and suggest four main levels of interest. These areas are individual, relational, community and societal. Therefore, bullying prevention and intervention strategies need to be addressed through a systematic approach that considers how these levels impact one another (Craig & Pepler, 2003). Lastly, in order to have effective outcomes, the bullying interventions must address all levels of the Social Ecological Model (Barboza, Schiamberg, Oehmke, Korezeniewski, Post & Heraux, 2008). The data in the GSHS II (2006) is vital to help us better determine if these trends are prevalent in Georgia Schools. This specific analysis is significant, because it could inform and guide bullying interventions, policies and procedures.

CHAPTER III METHODS AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Context of Study

According to the GADOE's (2010) website, there were 1,559,828 students enrolled in Georgia schools in spring of 2006. Nearly, 9% (8.90%) of students in grades 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th were administered the GSHS II (2006). The test was administered through school system in the State of Georgia, and the window to administer the survey was open from March 13th to May 1st, 2006 (GA Department of Education, 2006). Eighty-three percent of the 159 counties in the State of Georgia participated in the survey (GA Department of Education, 2006). The surveys were given during regular school hours in the computer lab by school personnel. The survey yielded 181,316 results, but due to concerns surrounding validity 6,001 results were not included, decreasing the final number of responses to 175,311 (GA Department of Education, 2006). A formal report was conducted by the GA DOE. The results from the survey are compiled and shared with stakeholders, such as schools, community agencies and organizations. The outcome of the survey is significant, because it provides a roadmap for prevention and intervention efforts to target areas of concern.

The primary purpose of the GSHS II (2006) is to examine behaviors and beliefs pertaining to student health. The survey is administered to gather information and determine trends that might encourage risky behaviors. Specifically, it asks students questions pertaining to school climate, drug and alcohol usage in the last thirty days, accessibility of drugs and alcohol, age of use of drugs and alcohol, perception of how harmful drugs and alcohol are to the body, students' perception of adult disapproval, location of where students use drugs and alcohol, risky behaviors within the last 30 days, nutrition information and student information pertaining to health education and other behaviors. The other behaviors include, but are not limited to such questions as dropping out of school, amount of time spent watching TV, instant messaging, willingness to intervene in bullying situations, suicidal ideation, safety at home and the ability to seek out an adult, if in need. The majority of the responses was yes/no responses or utilized the Likert scale, with the response options being *sometimes*, *always* or *never*.

3.2 Rationale of Study

Although the study ask questions pertaining to school climate and bullying, survey items did not directly examine the relationship of bullies and victims and their impact on acts of bullying. However, since the survey does ask about the prevalence of being a bully or a victim, from this dataset additional analysis can be computed to determine if there is co-occurrence and its' impact on one's willingness to intervene in a situation regarding bullying. Recently, literature and study reviews are finding that students are not just "pure bullies" or "pure victims". Instead, they are finding that many students are both bully-victims.

3.3 Sample

One of the reasons the GSHS II (2006) is helpful in reviewing health trends of students is because of the large number of students that participate in the survey. The testing instrument aims to sample the school population, because it does not capture every student's responses. Since the survey was administered across the State of Georgia it is safe to assume that the 175,311 responses were representative of students' beliefs from varying backgrounds including rural, suburban and urban areas. Basic information was exacted from the survey to assess the demographics of the sample through reviewing the gender, grade and ethnicity.

3.4 Statistical Analysis

Two statistical software packages were used to analyze the data. The Statistical Analysis System commonly referred to as SAS was used to compute the prevalence and the demographic information of student participants. The second software package used was callable SUDAAN where logistical and multilogistical analyses were computed. A multi-logistical analysis allows the analyses to include an outcome variable with more than two levels.

To evaluate the extent to which students are willing to intervene in a situation, odds ratios were calculated through SUDAAN. With the odds ratios, a "1" implies that the event is not significant. In other words, the occurrence is equally likely to occur in either group. If the number is >1 this means the event is more likely in the first group. The larger the number the greater odds of the event occurring. Likewise, a number <1 indicates means the event is less likely to occur in the comparison group.

3.4 Human Subjects Considerations

Since the GSHS II (2006) is administered to adolescents in middle and high school, informed consent was required from the students' parents to participate. Consent for the administration of the survey was gathered through a passive consent process. Typically, the passive consent form consists of a letter sent home with the students to the parent or is part of the student's registration packet when they enroll in school. The letter contains the purpose, rationale and procedure for the study. The passive consent requires the evaluator to provide basic information about the study. However, the burden of consent falls on the parent/guardian to opt out of the survey. Decisions determined by parents/guardians are made on the behalf of students, since they are not of legal adult age to consent. Parents/Guardians also have the right to examine the survey prior to administration. Typically, in the event that no one objects to the study, than it is assumed consent is provided for the student to participate in the study. The second tier of approval is given by willing students who must assent—or indicate their willingness to complete the survey. The survey was voluntary and students could quit at any time throughout the process without penalization.

The appropriate paperwork for an exempt/expedited study for secondary data analyses was submitted for IRB approval. However, the IRB committee declared the analysis to be exempt from requiring IRB approval. Once again, this exempt status was because the primary study had already received IRB approval, and the data was utilized in the analysis was secondary information with no identifying information since all surveys were anonymous

There were a few special issues that needed to be considered before moving forward with the study analysis. Prior to the analysis, permission to utilize the GSHS II (2006) dataset needed to be granted. A special request was sent to Georgia State University's College of Education and Center for Research on School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management as well as the Counseling and Psychological Services Departments. Dr. Joel Meyer and Dr. Jeff Ashby were asked to grant permission to extract information from the data. Information pertaining to basic demographic information and the co-occurrence of bullies and victims as it pertains to bullying was used. Permission was granted from the necessary parties to move forward with the analysis.

3.5 Demographic profile from the GSHS II (2006)

From the GSHS II (2006), student responses from 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grade were included in the sample. Approximately, 60% of 6th and 8th graders equally comprised the survey population. 30.16% (n=52,877) came from 6th grade students, while similarly 30.77% (n=53,940) of the responses came from 8th grade students. While slightly more than 20% of 10th graders participated (n=38,509) and even fewer 12th graders participated with 17.10% (n=29,985) involvement rate. Another demographic characteristic assessed through the survey was ethnicity. The GSHS II (2006) ethnicity categories were Black, Hispanic, White, Asian and Other. The majority of the students classified their ethnicity as White or Black (47% and 37%, respectively). In regard to gender, the sample yielded similar number of responses from boys and girls. The sample was represented with 51.40% (n=90,106) girls responding and 48.60% (n=85,205) of boys responding. The demographic factors from the GSHS II (2006) are summarized in (Table 3.1)

*Table 3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Students
Participating in the GA Student Health Survey*

Demographic Features	Percent	Frequency (n=175,311)
Gender		
Boys	51.4	90106
Girls	48.6	85205
Grade		
6th Grade	30.16	52877
8th Grade	30.77	53940
10th Grade	21.97	38509
12th Grade	17.1	29985
Ethnicity		
Black	37.45	65658
Hispanic	7.01	12296
White	47.38	83058
Asian	3.35	5878
Other	4.80	8421

CHAPTER IV RESULTS

The following section presents the results of examining GSHS II (2006) data related to the four study research questions:

- 1.) How prevalent is the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation?
- 2.) What demographic characteristics are associated with the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation?
- 3.) What psychosocial correlates are associated with the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation?
- 4.) How does the co-occurrence of bullying and victimization associate with the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation?

Specifically, for willingness to intervene subgroups of students were examined in comparison to other groups. Demographic features assessed included gender, grade and ethnicity factors of students involved in bullying situations. Next, results of psychosocial factors such as, perception of school success, school rules and school climate will be presented. Finally, results examining the extent to which both victims and bullies reported willingness to intervene in a situation will be reported.

4.1 Findings of Demographic Factors

Results from the GSHS II (2006) indicates that 7.83% (n=13,722) of students classified themselves as bully-victims, with no overall major difference detected by gender. The demographic profile most commonly found in the GSHS II (2006) for bully-victims were 6th grade white males. 6th grade white females were mostly likely to be considered bullies. The most common subgroup for victims were 8th grade black males. The overall findings for subgroups associated with bullying by demographic characteristics are presented in Table 4.1.

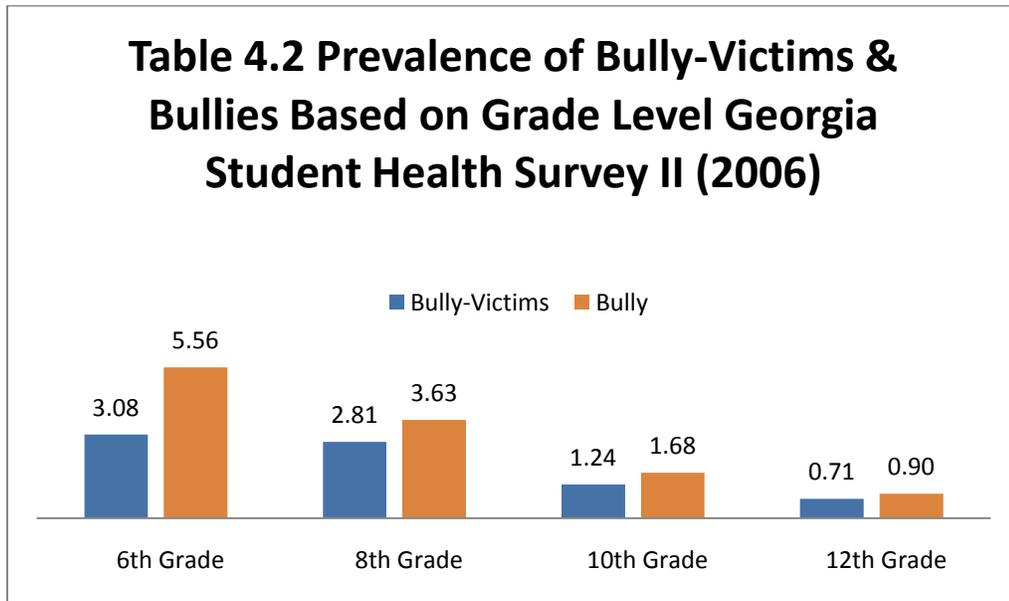
Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics and Bully Involvement

Demographic Features	Bully-Victim (n=13722)		Bully (n= 20616)		Victim (n=13874)		Neither (n=127099)	
	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.
Gender								
Boys	4.14	7254	5.46	9566	4.31	7560	34.70	60825
Girls	3.69	6468	6.30	11050	3.60	6314	37.40	66274
Grade								
6 th Grade	3.08	5397	5.56	9745	1.82	3192	19.70	34543
8 th Grade	2.81	4918	3.63	6359	3.05	5349	21.28	37314
10 th Grade	1.24	2170	1.68	2942	1.85	3244	17.20	30153
12 th Grade	0.71	1237	0.90	1570	1.19	2089	14.31	25089
Ethnicity								
Black	3.09	5419	3.52	6169	3.78	6635	27.06	47435
Hispanic	0.56	981	0.74	652	0.5	883	5.21	9126
White	3.51	6156	6.52	11432	2.97	5211	34.37	60259
Asian	0.21	368	0.33	582	0.18	315	2.63	4613
Other	0.46	798	0.64	1127	0.47	830	3.23	5666

4.2 Prevalence of Bully-Victim Relationship

As for the prevalence of bully-victims, younger students were more likely to be both bullies and victims. Students in 6th grade were most likely to report being bully-victims, followed by 8th graders, then 10th graders and lastly 12th graders. The prevalence

of reporting bully-victims for these grade levels were as follows, 3.08% (n=5397), 2.81% (n=4918), 1.24% (n=2170) and .71% (n=1237). Sixth graders were most likely to label themselves as bullies with 5.56% (n=9745) in contrast to .90% (n=1570) of 12th grade students labeling themselves as being a bully. Table 4.3 below demonstrates this pattern.



Students categorizing themselves as victims followed a similar pattern.

4.3 Findings of Likelihood to Intervene

The second major portion of this research was evaluating student's likelihood to intervene in a situation. Table 4.5 presents students' reported willingness to intervene in a bullying situation by bullying roles. Next to bystanders, bullies 5.72% (n=10025) are the most likely to always intervene. Slightly less than half of all students, 41.17% (n=72167) of students indicated they would always intervene and 50.41% (n=88370) reported intervening sometimes, indicating that the vast majority or 91.58% (n=160537) of students would always or sometimes intervene.

Table 4.3 Prevalence of Students Indicating “I would help someone who was being bullied

	Always Intervene (n=72167) Total %=41.17		Sometimes Intervene (n=88370) Total %=50.41		Never Intervene (n=14774) Total %=8.43	
Gender	Percent	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent	Freq
Boys	18.69	32767	24.91	43670	1.95	8768
Girls	22.47	39400	25.50	44700	3.43	6006
Grade						
6th Grade	14.07	24661	13.44	23568	2.65	4648
8th Grade	12.15	21292	15.77	27648	2.85	5000
10th Grade	8.09	14188	12.12	21243	1.76	3078
12th Grade	6.86	12026	9.08	15911	1.17	2048
Ethnicity						
Black	12.77	22393	20.15	35330	4.53	7935
Hispanic	2.89	5060	3.38	5920	0.75	1316
White	22.26	39017	22.76	39900	2.36	4141
Asian	1.25	2193	1.77	3107	0.33	578
Other	2.00	3504	2.35	4113	0.46	804
Role						
Bully-Victim	2.82	4937	4.13	7242	0.88	1543
Bully	5.72	10025	5.25	9203	0.79	1388
Victim	2.29	4014	4.56	7989	1.07	1871
Neither	30.34	53191	36.47	63936	5.69	9972
I have been bullied by other students during the past 30 days						
Yes	8.53	14962	9.38	16445	1.67	2931
No	32.63	57205	41.03	71925	6.76	11843
I have bullied other students during the past 30 days						
Yes	5.11	8951	8.69	15231	1.95	3414
No	36.06	63216	41.72	73139	6.48	11360
I have missed school because I felt unsafe during the past 30 days						
Yes	1.85	3243	1.90	3336	0.62	1080
No	39.32	68924	48.50	85034	7.81	13694
I feel safe at school						
Yes	15.23	26703	12.11	21223	1.72	3019
No	25.93	45461	38.30	67147	6.71	11755
I have been teased at school during the past 30 days						
Yes	13.93	24415	16.22	28427	2.37	4149
No	27.24	47752	34.19	59943	6.06	10625

Several psychosocial factors were associated with willingness to intervene in a bullying situation. Students who reported that that always felt successful at school were nearly 2 times more likely (Adj. OR 1.94; 95%CI 1.78-2.12) to intervene than students who never felt successful. Moreover, students who indicated clear school rules were also more likely to intervene (Adj. OR 1.95; 95%CI 1.83-2.08) than those who did not. Similarly, students who reported that school sometimes established clear school expectations (Adj. OR 1.41; 95%CI 1.32-1.50) or who always liked school (Adj. OR 2.28; 95% CI 2.11-2.24) were more likely to intervene than those who did not.

Table 4.4 Logistic Regression Analyses of Psychosocial Factors as Correlates of Likelihood to Intervene in a Bullying Situation.

School Climate Questions	Always vs. Never Adj. OR (95% CI)	Sometimes vs. Never Adj. OR (95% CI)
I feel successful at school=always	1.94 (1.78-2.12)	1.65 (1.52-1.79)
I feel successful at school=sometimes	1.62 (1.50-1.75)	1.79 (1.67-1.93)
I feel successful at school=never	1.00	1.00
My school sets clear rules for behavior=always	1.95 (1.83-2.08)	1.72 (1.62-1.83)
My school sets clear rules for behavior=sometimes	1.41 (1.32-1.50)	1.66 (1.56-1.77)
My school sets clear rules for behavior=never	1.00	1.00
I like school=always	2.28 (2.11-2.46)	1.18 (1.10-1.28)
I like school sometimes	2.12 (2.00-2.24)	1.87 (1.77-1.97)
I like school=never	1.00	1.00
I have been teased at school during the past 30 day=yes	1.42 (1.36-1.49)	1.39 (1.32-1.45)
I have been teased at school during the past 30 day=no	1.00	1.00

In addition to psychosocial features, demographic features were examined within each gender, grade and ethnicity to determine the most likely demographic profile of a student that will intervene in a situation. The results indicated that girls (Adj. OR 1.66; 95%CI 1.60-1.73) were more likely to always intervene than boys. Although grade level

was not a strong predictor students in high school were appeared slightly more likely than middle school students to be willing to intervene. Moreover, white students (Adj. OR 2.03; 95%CI 1.86-2.21) were more likely to always intervene in comparison to other racial and ethnic groups. Lastly, bullies (Adj. OR 1.26; 95%CI 1.17-1.35) were more likely to always intervene than any other subgroup.

Table 4.5 Demographic Profile of Students Likely to Always Intervene

	Always vs. Never Adj. OR (95% CI)	Sometimes vs. Never Adj. OR (95% CI)
Gender		
Girls	1.66 (1.60-1.73)	1.41 (1.36-1.46)
Boys	1.00	1.00
Grade		
6th Grade	0.68 (0.64-0.72)	0.56 (0.52-0.59)
8th Grade	0.68 (0.64-0.73)	0.68 (0.64-0.72)
10th Grade	0.79 (0.75-0.85)	0.86 (0.81-0.92)
12th Grade	1.00	1.00
Ethnicity		
Black	0.59 (0.54-0.64)	0.8(0.74-0.87)
Hispanic	0.84 (0.76-0.93)	0.89 (0.81-0.98)
White	2.03 (1.86-2.21)	1.79 (1.65-1.95)
Asian	0.77 (0.68-0.87)	1.00 (0.89-1.13)
Other	1.00	1.00
Subgroup		
Bully-Victims	0.75 (0.69-0.80)	0.86 (0.80-0.92)
Bully	1.26 (1.17-1.35)	0.99 (0.92-1.06)
Victims	0.61 (0.58-0.65)	0.87 (0.82-0.92)
Neither	1.00	1.00

The last research question is aimed at addressing the willingness to intervene and the co-occurrence of aggression and victimization. In these analyses, school climate was a significant factor. As presented in Table 4.7, bully-victims were over 13 times more likely (Adj. OR 13.76; 95%CI 13.13-14.42) to be teased within past 30 days and to be absent from school (Adj. OR 4.79; 95%CI 4.44-.17). Moreover, bully-victims felt the

most unsafe (Adj. OR 4.79; 95% CI 4.44-.17) at school. Furthermore, bully-victims are least likely to perceived always have clear rules for behavior (Adj OR 0.62; 95%CI 0.57-0.67) and to feel successful in school (Adj OR 0.64; 95%CI 0.58-0.70).

Table 4.6 Demographic Profile & Psychosocial Characteristics of Students Reporting both Bully-Victimization

	Bully-Victim vs. Neither	Bully vs. Neither	Victim vs. Neither
	Adj. OR	Adj. OR	Adj. OR
	(95% CI)	(95% CI)	(95% CI)
Gender			
Girls	0.72 (0.69-0.75)	0.90 (0.87-0.93)	0.81 (0.78-0.84)
Boys	1.00	1.00	1.00
Grade			
6th Grade	3.39 (3.15-3.65)	3.25 (3.05-3.46)	1.96 (1.83-2.08)
8th Grade	2.55 (2.37-2.74)	2.07 (1.94-2.21)	2.24 (2.12-2.38)
10th Grade	1.35 (1.25-1.46)	1.32 (1.24-1.42)	1.41 (1.33-1.50)
12th Grade	1.00	1.00	1.00
Ethnicity			
Black	1.35 (1.29-1.41)	.78 (0.75-0.82)	1.86 (1.79-1.94)
Hispanic	1.33 (1.22-1.44)	0.96 (0.89-1.03)	1.22 (1.13 -1.32)
White	1.00	1.00	1.00
Asian	.94 (0.83-1.06)	0.80 (0.72-0.88)	0.93 (0.83-1.05)
Other	1.28 (1.17-1.40)	0.98 (0.91-1.06)	1.66 (1.53-1.80)
School Climate Questions			
I have missed school because I felt unsafe during the past 30 days=yes	4.79 (4.44-.17)	4.14 (3.85-4.45)	1.89 (1.73-2.08)
I have missed school because I felt unsafe during the past 30 days=no	1.00	1.00	1.00
I feel safe at school=yes	0.56 (0.53-0.60)	0.51 (0.48-0.53)	0.75 (0.72-0.79)
I feel safe at school=no	1.00	1.00	1.00
I have been teased at school during the past 30 days=yes	13.76 (13.13-14.42)	12.88 (12.40-13.39)	1.89 (1.73-2.08)
I have been teased at school during the past 30 days=no	1.00	1.00	1.00
I like school=always	0.80 (0.73-0.88)	1.19 (1.10-1.28)	0.61 (0.56-0.66)
I like school=never	1.00	1.00	1.00
I feel successful at school=always	0.64 (0.58-0.70)	0.78 (0.71-0.86)	0.68 (0.62-0.74)
I feel successful at school=never	1.00	1.00	1.00

My School sets clear rules for behavior=always	0.62 (0.57-0.67)	0.76 (0.71-0.82)	0.63 (0.59-0.67)
My School sets clear rules for behavior=never	1.00	1.00	1.00
I would help someone who is being bullied=always	0.75 (0.70-0.81)	1.26 (1.17-1.35)	0.62 (0.58-0.66)

CHAPTER V DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Complexities of Bully-Victim Relationships

Within the last few years, bullying issues and concerns have captivated society. Educational institutions from elementary schools to colleges and universities have been impacted by bullying incidents, both public and private institutions alike. The increased awareness and reporting has required educational institutions to re-evaluate their policies, procedures and best practices in regard to bullying incidents. In recent years, researchers are finding that bullying is a multifaceted issue that deserves careful consideration. Of particular concern is the bully-victim relationship and that adequate distinction is given between different characteristics and aspects of bullying. Another important concern is the population of students that is most likely to intervene in a bullying situation. It is of particular interest to evaluate the bully-victim subgroup to see if they are more or less likely to intervene when bullying situations present themselves. Since bully-victims have experienced both sides of the situation this group's insight is critical to better understanding the complexities of bullying within the school setting.

5.2 Discussion of Research Questions

The main research question from the analysis was to examine the extent to which students may be both a bully and a victim in bullying situations and their willingness to intervene. It was clear from the analysis that the hypothesis was in fact true and that a significant proportion of students in Georgia schools report both bully and victim experiences.

As mentioned in earlier chapters, the purpose of this analysis was to determine the answers to these follow questions.

- 1.) How prevalent are bully-victims is the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation? In this study, the prevalence of willingness to intervene for all students varied on a continuum where 91.58% (n=160537) of students indicated they would always or sometimes intervene. Overall, 41.17% (n=72167) of students indicated they would always intervene and 50.41% (n=88370) reported intervening sometimes. 8.43% (n=14774) of students responded that they would never intervene. As for the bully-victim group, only 2.82% (n=4937) indicated they would intervene.
- 2.) What demographic characteristics are associated with the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation? This study showed the most strongly associated factors with willingness to intervene were students in 6th grade and students who were white. Next, to the bystanders, bullies (Adj. 1.26; CI 95% 1.17-1.35) were also the most likely subgroup to always intervene.
- 3.) What psychosocial correlates are associated with the willingness to intervene

in a bullying situation? This study demonstrated that school climate is significant in regard to willingness to intervene. The study found that successful students (Adj. OR 1.94; 95% CI 1.78-2.12), students who indicated clear school rules (Adj. OR 1.95; 95% CI 1.83-2.08) or who always liked school (Adj. OR 2.28; 95% CI 2.11-2.24) were more likely to always intervene.

4.) How does the co-occurrence of bullying and victimization impact the willingness to intervene in a bullying situation? In this study, where a little less than 8% of students reported being both bully-victims, bullies were most likely to report intervening (Adj. 1.26; 95% CI 1.17-1.35). Other significant findings related to the co-occurrence included bully-victims reported being teased over 13 times (Adj. OR 13.76; 95% CI 13.13-14.42) more likely than the other subgroups. Additionally, this group reported feeling unsafe within the last 30 days, and was more likely to miss school (Adj. OR 4.79; 95% CI 4.44-.17).

5.3 Implications of Findings

In considering the overall prevalence of bully-victims, the findings from the survey were consistent with other reports of bully-victims. Carlyle and Steinman (2007) found that 7.4% of students are classified as bully-victims. Results from this study also align with those in the scientific literature in that the association of grade and bully-victims reports was similar. Sixth graders were more likely than 12th graders to characterize themselves as bully-victims, supporting Carlyle and Steinman's findings (2007). Another similarity is that all aspects of bullying decrease with age, with a peak

reported during the middle school years (Carlyle and Steinman, 2007). These findings have implications for students that are bully-victims. As a whole, bully-victims are of a concern, because they have compounded risk. Bully-victims tend to have more risk factors and fewer protective factors as seen with the analyses relating to the psychosocial risk factors when compared with perceptions of school climate. In fact, it seems that school climate may be more important than individual risk. Therefore, this population of students may also be most at-risk for increased likelihood of mental health manifestations, such as anxiety, depression and suicide. In general, bully-victims have higher rates of mental health concerns and substance abuse in comparison to bullies or victims. Furthermore, these sub groups of students are less likely to have strong and effective coping skills to handle daily problems that may arise.

These findings have significant ramifications for the educational systems. Students involved in bullying are more likely to have high levels of truancy, and frequently to not continue their education. Often times, students whether they are bullies or victims drop out of school altogether and do not complete their class needed for graduate from high school. Students that remain in school and are bullies or victims also may demonstrate poor academic achievement, because they do not feel that their school environment supports them. Victims of bullying also do not feel safe and that the school climate is safe for them to attend. Ultimately, the bully-victim is a worst case combination of the student that does not like school and that does not feel safe. Lastly, many educational systems are not well equipped to handle bully-victim situations. Some school districts still function under zero tolerance policies for bullying. These sorts of zero tolerance policies punish the bully, but in the case of bully-victims also end up

punishing the victim. They are ineffective at addressing the root cause, which in many cases is the cycle of violence. Therefore, in light of more research surrounding bully-victims, educational institutions must learn how to better address bullying.

The findings from this analysis demonstrate important societal implications. Many researchers in the field of bully-victims speculate that bullies learn to bully, because it is modeled behavior. The violent behavior is modeled by someone who exerts power over them, such as a parent or guardian. When this behavior is modeled on a frequent basis, the behavior becomes intrinsic and the child learns that they hit, curse or degrade someone they may regain power and control over another individual. In other cases, sometimes, even just witnessing intimate partner violence or a father bully a mother is enough to send the message to a child that conflict is handled through bullying others. While we have focused on the societal implications impacting the bully, it is important to remember that some of the bullies learn to be bully from their home, also are exposed to intimate partner violence, community violence or may be victims of child maltreatment. Often times, they are individuals with poor empathy and problem solving skills that have been developed over time, as a result of the violence they may have endured or witnessed.

5.4 Study Strengths and Limitations

The large sample size of $n= 175,311$ students was a strength of this study. Due to the size of the sample it is inclusive of many students, as well as students representing various ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic status, urban and rural areas. Another strength of the study is that the responses were anonymous and confidential, thus

responses are likely more accurate. The survey was easily administered and allowed for a wide variety of health education subject areas to be covered.

One limitation from the analysis is that the results may not be generalizable. The responses all came from students residing in the state of Georgia. For example, these results may not be generalizable to students who live in another state. Students living in another state may have different demographic features or beliefs that would yield different outcomes. Another, limitation of the study is that not all students in 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th were surveyed. Instead, only a certain percentage of the students were used in each grade level, because a sampling approach and not a census methodology were employed. Required validity levels were unable to be found for the 2006 survey, however, directions and minimal validity requirements were specified for the administration of the GSHS II (2010). For the GSHS II (2010) at least 20% of each grade level was required from the counties that participated. However, selection of participating students was not documented and therefore may skew some of the results.

Another limitation of the demographic category is that the ethnicity categories were narrowly defined, and did not include a bi or multi ethnic category for students of more diverse backgrounds. Another consideration for this demographic feature is that some students may not define their race and ethnicity the same nor understand the concept of ethnicity, as social constructs of society.

Lastly, it is important to consider the impact of the self-reported information.. Students determined their own status such as a (bully, victim, bully-victim or neither). This categorization was based on student's perception and not an external instrument, such as a scale used in the OBPP. Therefore, results may represent either under or over

reporting of bullying involvement as well as other factors examined. Moreover, this study only examined students willingness to intervene and not their actual behavior, As have been noted previously, Pepler and colleagues (2006) examined an important aspect of self reporting. The researchers pointed out in their argument that oftentimes there are a difference between beliefs and actions. For example, students may say they will intervene in bullying situations, but when confronted with a situation they watch the event unfold as an idle bystander. Response bias may be another explanation for the discrepancy between a students' perceived and actual response, because it is more socially desirable to help another student.

5.5 Recommendations and Prevention Strategies

The focus of this thesis was to examine bully-victims and their willingness to intervene in situations. The findings support previous research but also indicate new areas for research. In fact, the findings further support the importance of prevention efforts, especially since several potentially modifiable factors such as feeling safe at school, liking school and feeling successful were found to be strongly associated with willingness to intervene. These factors can be incorporated into prevention programs and also guide future research. It is important to also recognize that there is a growing body of literature that examines evidence-based prevention strategies that address bullying in school settings across the country. These methods are also important, because they address bullying concerns for the bully, the victim and bully-victims. Some of the recommended programs are discussed briefly below to provide additional context for future research and implementation of prevention programs.

The first of these programs is utilizing OBPP. Dr. Olweus is one of the world's most highly recognized and respected researchers in the field of bullying. His research spans over many decades, and has received multiple accolades and recognition for his work. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the United States Department of Health and Human Services has acknowledged his program as exemplary as well as The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence has awarded the program as one of the 11 Blueprints for violence prevention (Clemson University, 2010). The OBPP is only of the most comprehensive programs, because it requires a systematic approach to handle bullying, and incorporates the school, classroom, the individual and the community (Olweus & Limber, 2010). In order to have an effective approach all of these aspects must be considered in the approach used to address bullying. Table 5.1 provides an overview of the necessary components of the OBPP model.

School Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establish a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee (BPCC) -Conduct trainings for the BPCSS and all staff Administer the – Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (Grades 3-12) -Hold staff discussion group meetings -Introduce the school rules against bullying -Review and refine the school's supervisory system -Hold a school wide kick-off event to launch the program involve Parents
Classroom Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Post and enforce school wide rules against bullying -Hold regular (weekly) class meetings to discuss bullying and related topics -Hold class level meeting with students' parents.
Individual Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Supervise students' activities -Ensure all staff intervene on the spot when bullying is observed -Meet with students involved in bullying(separately for bullies and victims) -Meet with parents of involved students -Develop individual intervention for involved students as needed
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Involve community members on the Bullying Prevention

Level	Coordinating Committee -Develop school-community partnerships to support the school's program -Help spread anti-bullying messages and principles of best practice in the community
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In addition to the components Olweus (1993) established, “three rules [as] natural starting points: 1.) We shall not bully other students 2.) We shall try to help other students who are bullied 3.) We shall make a point to include students, who become easily left out”. These three rules are the overriding guidelines for each of the different levels. The OBPP has found to have reductions in bullying both within the United States and across other countries. Olweus et al (2010) found a 16% reduction in bullying in a pilot program in South Carolina while other schools without the intervention found a 12% increase in bullying.

The second recommended prevention strategy is to promote the use of the State of Georgia’s emergency hotline through a health communication approach. The State of Georgia’s toll-free number 1-800- SAY-STOP or 1-800-729-7867 hotline allows individuals to call anonymously and confidentially to make a report of student bullying, bringing drugs or weapons into the school. Signs advertising the number are posted around each school in the state of Georgia to improve awareness about the number. During regular business hours, the call rings into the GA DOE. If it is beyond regular business hours, it rings into the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI). Once the call is received at the state level, the incident is then reported to a designee at the district level. Next, a report is sent to the district representative and then the Principal is contacted at the local school level. In the cases of bullying, the Principal may have a designee or team of individuals that will investigate the claim. The emergency number allows individuals

to report cases of bullying without the fear of retaliation or punishment. Furthermore, it provides documentation for incidents that are reported. The hotline serves as a strong prevention method to encourage reporting of incidents that could make school unsafe.

The third recommendation for schools to help curb bullying is through the use of the Second Step violence prevention curriculums created by the Committee for Children. This curriculum was created to help teach students social skills through a series of classroom lessons for students in grades K-8th grade. Typically, the lessons include showing the student a picture of a situation and asking them questions regarding the scenario. Examples of questions asked of student may be, “What do you think is occurring in this situation?”, “How can you tell the person might be feeling this way?” or “How do you think would be a fair way to handle this problem?” Second Step has three main training sections, Empathy Training, Problem Solving/Impulse Control Training and Anger Management Control. For students that are bullies who may exhibit aggressive tendencies the modules help them to figure out other strategies and approaches to solving their problems. Follow-up was completed with students to determine the skill sets learned. Over half of the students, 60% indicated they had learned better anger management skills (Edwards, Hunt, Meyers, Grogg & Jarrett, 2005). Specifically, 12.7% of students learned to ignore/walk away from situation, 10.2% how to calm down, 9.6% to breathe deep and 9.6% to count backwards as ways to alleviate their anger (Edwards et al, 2005). Similar findings although not quite as high were found for the other components (Edwards et al, 2005). The Second Step program is a research based program and has a substantial amount of research to back their findings. As with the OBPP, the Second Step program has received many awards from the United States

Department of Education, SAMHSA and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

The last strategy is to begin training staff members to examine the built environment within schools. This strategy is commonly referred to as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED was first coined by C. Ray Jeffrey. In the arena of public health, this concept has been used by many urban planners to create more walkable and pedestrian-friendly cities to promote physical activity. Ultimately, these changes have found to have a positive health impact on members of these communities. Since this time the National Institute of Crime Prevention has embraced the approach as a way to prevent crime through the alteration of the physical environment. The Sarasota Police Department was one of the first police departments to apply the principles and publish their findings. Through the use of the following four components: 1.) Increase visibility, 2.) Natural access control 3.) Reinforce public and private space and 4.) Maintenance, the police department was able to significantly decrease crime, particularly crime against people and property (Carter, Carter & Dannenberg, 2003). Increased visibility simply means providing more opportunity for more people to monitor an area. Natural access control is creating elements in the built environment that either help or hinder your goal. An example might be building sidewalks in an area with high number of pedestrian deaths. Through better defining public and private space, boundaries are better established helping to provide a clear set of guidelines for an area. Lastly, of course, maintenance of all these aspects is required for a successful program.

Although first used in the criminal justice arena, the concepts are applicable to school settings. The CPTED model allows for stakeholders to provide input regarding their community. Then through additional meetings, surveys and mapping, community members and school officials are able to determine areas in the school environment that cultivate bullying. These areas are often coined “hot spot” areas. It is no surprise areas such as bathrooms, recess, the cafeteria and buses have been cited as areas for bullying most likely to occur. In a Dutch study conducted by Fekkes, Pijpers & Verloove-Vanhorick, (2005) they found the playground and classroom to be the most common area for bullying. Usually, bullying occurs in places with limited visibility or supervision. For example, the teacher does not follow the students into the bathroom or on a bus where the bus driver may not be able to observe student behaviors. Even in classrooms, many bullies will wait for an opportunity to bully when the teacher is not looking. Olweus (1993) in his early work found an increased likelihood in the number of bullying related incidents at recess if there were fewer teachers on duty. He indicated the greater the “teacher density” the less likelihood for bullying incidents (Olweus, 1993). Additionally, there are structural aspects of these spaces that are not safe. Most of these spaces are designated as public or private space, with minimal areas marked as mixed use. Unlike a classroom where clear lines of possessions are drawn with students’ own desks, books and materials denoted as private spaces, but then learning centers, stations or reading areas might be denoted as public space. When schools are built and modified consideration needs to be given regarding creating spaces that promote safer schools.

5.6 Future Areas of Research

In conclusion, the findings provide a brief overview of factors associated with students' willingness to intervene from a large cross-sectional survey. Because of the survey design, the complexities surrounding bully-victims as well as the developmental patterns that may influence student interactions with their peers cannot be addressed or examined in this study. Experts have always indicated that bullying is most likely to occur in the absence of adult supervision. The average bullying incident occurs within a 26 second time frame (Atlas and Pepler, 1998). Bullying occurs every seven minutes on school playgrounds and every 26 minutes in classrooms and 17% of the time an adult was within reasonable distance (Atlas and Pepler, 1998; Craig and Pepler, 1997). Peers witnessed 85% of bullying incidents but intervened only 11% of the time (Craig, 1993). Typically, it is most likely to occur in schools when there is limited adult supervision, such as bathrooms, cafeteria and on buses. It seems that bully-victim situations follow the same rules. Bullying whether it is done by a pure bully or a bully-victim is contextual. For unknown reasons, there are some environments that are more conducive to bullying. Therefore, this may be an important area for further research.

Additionally, since research demonstrate that a significant proportion of students are bully-victims, how can further empathy skills be developed and what other unique characteristics or experiences may be associated with being in this subgroup of students are other important areas for future research. Moreover, research should examine what approaches or strategies can used utilized to assist bully-victims to better understand the connection between the feelings they feel as victims and the feelings of the victims they bully. It almost seems that the bullying behavior in bully-victims is a way of exerting

power of others, because in other situations they feel vulnerable. This further research would also have important implications for parents and educators that typically perceive bullies and victims as only one or the other, not bully-victims. If we were able to teach bully-victims better empathy and coping skills, this would likely also impact their willingness to intervene in a bullying situation.

5.7 Conclusion

Bullying has been a part of school culture for many decades if not longer. In the late 1960's and early 1970's bullying finally began to receive the research and recognition it deserved abroad as a serious health concern (Olweus, 1994). This focus and interest in bullying prevention eventually spread to the United States and the general population started to perceive the concern as a genuine health risk for school-age children. With increased media attention highlighting the heightened suicidal ideation and actions of some students that are victims of bullying, the topic seems to finally be taken as a serious health priority by individuals in the education and public health arena. It is through increased research, programming and prevention strategies, such as the ones listed above that will allow violence and bullying in schools to decrease.

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