ETHNIC IDENTITY AND SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF BULLY PARTICIPANTS

Relationships among bully victimization, bully perpetration, ethnic identity, and subjective well-being (i.e., life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect) were examined in a group of urban, ethnically diverse early adolescents. Indices of subjective well-being correlated with participants’ scores on bully victimization and perpetration measures but bully perpetration was not significantly related to negative affect. The authors used cluster analysis to determine participants’ status as either bully-victims, perpetrators, non-participants, or victim-perpetrators. They found significant analysis of variance differences on the variables of interest between bully participants vs. non-participants. This article discusses implications for bully prevention efforts with ethnic minority youth.
construct as universal in nature and has failed to attend to cultural differences that may exist (Garnett et al., 2014; Mendez, Bauman, & Guillory, 2012; Polanin & Vera, 2013). The extant research also tends to focus on the negative outcomes of bullying participation but often fails to examine whether bullying behaviors impact indices of positive well-being such as life satisfaction or positive affect.

One area within the bullying literature that needs further exploration is the relationship between cultural identity and bullying participation (i.e., victimization and/or perpetration) for ethnic minority youth. Several researchers have suggested that ethnic minority groups receive a disproportional amount of victimization from bullies (Averdijk, Müller, Eisner, & Ribeaud, 2011; Garnett et al., 2014; Mendez et al., 2012; Verkuyten & Thiis, 2002), and that youth from other historically marginalized groups such as children with a disability or lesbian, gay, or bisexual adolescents receive proportionally more bullying attacks than do children who are part of the cultural majority (Kosciw, Diaz, & Greytak, 2008; Poteat & DiGiovanni, 2010; Rose, Mondan-Amaya, & Espelage, 2010). While youth with salient cultural identities such as being an ethnic minority or a student with a disability may be easier targets for bully victimization, aspects of cultural identity also could be tied to the reasons that kids perpetrate bullying. Although this has not yet been answered by existing research, it is plausible that youth who feel negatively about their cultural group members may attempt to elevate their own status by victimizing peers in other groups, creating a bullying hierarchy (Polanin & Vera, 2013). Furthermore, according to the findings of several studies, kids who are bully-victims often start out as victims and then bully as a response to being victimized (Arseneault, Bowes, & Shakoor, 2010, Haynie et al., 2001). Hence, kids who were bullied because of a stigmatized cultural group identity may be at greater risk to become perpetrators of bullying who target other cultural minority youth.

Particular concern about youth who fall into the category of bully-victims may be reasonable. Researchers have found that kids who have been both victims and perpetrators of bullying are at highest risk for disorders of physical and mental health as compared to kids who were either solely victims or perpetrators (Wolke, Copeland, Angold, & Costello, 2013). It is important not only to look at correlates of bullying such as academic, mental, and physical health problems but also at the extent to which indices of adaptive daily living or subjective well-being such as positive and negative affect or life satisfaction are related to bullying experiences.

Although one might assume that youth who are involved in bullying their peers do so because of existing mental health issues, some positive developmental outcomes are likely also associated with such behavior. For example, researchers have found that bully perpetrators exhibit some signs of positive well-being such as emotional and social competencies (Woods, Wolke, Nowicki, & Hall, 2009) and popularity among peers (Juvonen, Graham, & Schuster, 2003).

The present study was designed to identify any existing patterns in the relationships among ethnic identity, bullying experiences, and subjective well-being (i.e. life satisfaction, positive affect, negative affect) in a group of early adolescents of color. Findings from this study may help inform school counselors about the role that ethnic identity plays in either contributing to bullying behavior or the impact that bullying may have on ethnic identity. Furthermore, findings may help clarify whether bullying experiences may have a relationship to well-being, as opposed to solely impacting negative outcomes. Implications of the findings can influence the content of bullying prevention efforts offered in schools with ethnically diverse students.

**Previous Scholarship**

Bullying is defined as a systematic abuse of power involving repeated aggression against another person that is intentional (Olweus, 1994). Bullying actions can be both direct (e.g., name calling, physical intimidation) and indirect or relational (e.g., spreading rumors; social exclusion) (Wolke, Woods, Bloomfield, & Karstadt, 2000). A growing body of research supports the notion that bullying has negative implications for various aspects of physical, mental, and emotional health (McDougall & Vailancourt, 2015; Rodkin, Espelage, & Hanish, 2015). Although students who are victimized by bullying are believed to bear most of the emotional brunt of bullying, the perpetrators of bullying also demonstrate negative outcomes (Farrington, Loeber, Stallings, & Ttofi, 2011). Both bullies and victims of bullying have been found to experience reduced life satisfaction and

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**BULLYING RESEARCH HAS EXAMINED THE CONSTRUCT AS UNIVERSAL IN NATURE AND HAS FAILED TO ATTEND TO CULTURAL DIFFERENCES THAT MAY EXIST.**

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While the existing research tends to focus on the negative outcomes of bullying participation, it often fails to examine to what extent indices of positive well-being are related to such experiences. One such set of indices of positive well-being is subjective well-being (SWB). SWB has been defined as an indication of an individual's quality
of life (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Lent, 2004) that includes beliefs about how satisfied one is with one’s life and the frequency with which one experiences positive and negative feelings (Vera et al., 2011). These positive indices of quality of life are important and in particular may have implications for long-term effects of bullying. For example, if youth who bully peers gain social status by exerting their power over others, then their overall life satisfaction may be quite stable, regardless of whether they are also experiencing academic or disciplinary problems in school. Likewise, if victims of bullying maintain overall satisfaction with life despite the fact that they are unhappy while they are in school, the factors that buffer the impact of bullying could be used as an important element of resiliency promotion or counseling efforts with this group. Thus, the authors of the present study argue that it is important to examine both traditional outcomes associated with bullying such as mental health symptoms or school failure, and outcomes that are associated with general quality of life.

Past researchers have demonstrated a relationship between ethnic identity and various outcomes associated with well-being (Smith & Silva, 2011). Namely, adolescents with higher levels of ethnic identity were more likely to have higher self-esteem, purpose in life, and self-confidence (Lee, 2003; Martinez & Dukes, 2007; Morgan et al., 2011). Hence, one might anticipate that youth with higher levels of ethnic identity would be less likely to be involved in bullying episodes, in particular as perpetrators. However, whether having more positive ethnic identity would affect one’s likelihood of being a victim of bullying is not known.

Researchers who have looked at bullying in non-White samples have found mixed evidence on the role of ethnicity in bullying experiences. In a sample of Black and Hispanic students in the United States, Black students were more likely to be both victims and perpetrators of bullying as compared to Hispanic students (Peskin, Tortolero, & Markham, 2006). Another study determined that Hispanic students were more likely to report bullying behaviors, whether as a victim or perpetrator, as compared to African American students (Nansel, Overpeck, Haynie, Ruan, & Scheidt, 2003). Furthermore, Garnett et al. (2014) found that having one or more minority group memberships (e.g., ethnic minority and gay) increased the likelihood of being victimized by bullies compared to having fewer minority group memberships. Ver-voort, Scholte, and Overbeek (2010) found that ethnically diverse classes were contexts where bullying of ethnic minority adolescents occurred more frequently. However, Fisher and colleagues (2015) found that while Caucasian students experienced more race-related bullying when they were in the minority, African American students experienced twice the amount of race-based victimization when in settings with more students of color. Perhaps definitive statements about which cultural groups experience the most victimization are not possible, as context and power dynamics within the community may determine which groups are targeted at any given time. However, examining how bullying participation may vary in culturally diverse settings is valuable given the increasing diversity that is represented in schools throughout the United States.

The Present Study
Sparse literature to date has explored the role of ethnic identity in bullying participation. Therefore, the present study explores how bullying is related to ethnic identity and subjective well-being among a sample of early adolescents of color. The authors hypothesized that the participants who scored lower on a measure of ethnic identity would have increased likelihood of being involved in bullying, either as perpetrators or victims. The authors chose the tripartite construct of subjective well-being (SWB), which comprises positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999), to measure participant well-being and hypothesized that bully participants, both perpetrators and victims, would evidence lower levels of life satisfaction and positive affect and higher levels of negative affect compared to non-participants. The study sought to make a contribution to school counselors’ understanding of the nature of bullying as it exists among ethnic minority adolescents, and to add to the field’s understanding of how to potentially prevent bullying among these adolescents, an important part of creating a safe school environment for all students, which is emphasized in the ASCA National Model of school counseling (American School Counselor Association [ASCA], 2012).

Research Questions
The following research questions guided this investigation:

1. Are there significant relationships among bullying behaviors, victimization experiences, ethnic identity, and subjective well-being?
2. Do youth who participate in bullying, either as perpetrators or victims, have lower levels of ethnic identity and subjective well-being compared to those who do not participate in bullying?
EXAMINING HOW BULLYING PARTICIPATION MAY VARY IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE SETTINGS IS VALUABLE GIVEN THE INCREASING DIVERSITY IN SCHOOLS.

METHOD

Participants

The study’s participants comprised 104 seventh- and eighth-graders (58 males, 46 females) from a public middle school located in a large, urban Midwestern city. Ages of participants ranged from 12-15 years (M = 13.3, SD = .74). Study participants were ethnically and racially diverse (75% Latino, 10% Asian American, 10% African American and 5% biracial). The majority of students were born in the United States (77%), with 14% reporting that they were born in Mexico and the remaining 9% born in other countries such as El Salvador, Colombia, and Guatemala. More than half indicated that they spoke another language besides English (54%). Although participants were not asked to estimate their families’ socio-economic status, a significant portion of the school's student body, 84%, received free or reduced school lunch.

Materials and Procedures

After obtaining IRB approval from the sponsoring university and permission from the school administrators to invite participation from the students, surveys were administered to students during their school day in their respective homerooms. The participants’ school had a very small percentage of White students (<10%), which was not large enough to produce a comparison group in which the authors could examine differences in SWB, bullying, or ethnic identity scores in ethnic minority versus White students. Thus, while all seventh- and eighth-grade students were eligible for participation, for the purposes of this study, only non-White students were included in the analysis. Students who submitted completed consent forms completed the survey. Thus, of the 143 eligible seventh and eighth graders, 120 had signed consent forms and were in school on the day the survey was administered. Of these 120 students, 104 indicated they were from ethnic groups other than White, which is proportional to the overall demographics of the school.

To control for differences in reading levels, research assistants read each survey item aloud to the group during administration. Three additional team members were in the classrooms to provide individual assistance to participants as they completed the surveys. No students failed to complete the surveys.

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). SWLS (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) is a five-item measure of satisfaction with the quality of one’s life. It is intended to represent the cognitive component of SWB. Scores range from 5 to 35 with higher scores indicating greater satisfaction with one’s life. Sample items include, “So far, I have gotten the things I want in life.” Past studies provided support for the validity and reliability of this instrument with ethnically diverse adolescent samples (Vera et al., 2008). For example, the SWLS significantly correlated with measures of optimism, hope, and subjective happiness in ethnically diverse adolescents (Morgan et al., 2011). In previous studies, the internal consistency reliability estimates of scores on the SWLS with similar samples were .82 (Morgan et al., 2011) and have ranged from .80 to .89 in studies with individuals of various ages and ethnicities (Pavot & Diener, 1993). Internal consistency reliability for this sample was estimated to be .79.

Multi-group Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM). The MEIM (Phinney & Ong, 2007) is a six-item instrument intended to measure participants’ level of exploration of their ethnic group membership and commitment to their ethnic group. Participants indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with the statements such as “I have a strong sense of belonging to my nationality or own ethnic group” and “I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about my ethnic group.” Scores range from 5 to 30 with higher scores indicating higher levels of commitment to and exploration of one’s ethnic identity. The internal consistency reliability estimate of scores from this scale was estimated to be .81 by Phinney and Ong (2007).

EXAMINING HOW BULLYING PARTICIPATION MAY VARY IN CULTURALLY DIVERSE SETTINGS IS VALUABLE GIVEN THE INCREASING DIVERSITY IN SCHOOLS.
.83 and .81 (Morgan et al. 2011). The internal consistency reliability for scores from this sample was estimated to be .85 for positive affect and .80 for negative affect.

University of Illinois Aggression Scales (Espelage & Holt, 2001). Students’ experiences of bullying and victimization were assessed with two scales from the University of Illinois Aggression Scales (Espelage & Holt, 2001), a measure composed of subscales that assess perpetration and victimization experiences. A separate subscale that measures physical fights is also a part of the Aggression Scales but was not used in this study. Of the two subscales used, the University of Illinois Bully Scale (IBS) is a nine-item measure that assesses students’ school experiences related to the frequency of teasing, name calling, social exclusion, and rumor spreading. Students were asked how often in the past 30 days they teased other students, upset other students for the fun of it, excluded others from their group of friends, and other items on a 5-point scale: (1) Never, (2) 1 or 2 times, (3) 3 or 4 times, (4) 5 or 6 times, and (5) 7 or more times. Higher scores indicated greater frequencies of victimization. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses support the construct validity of these scales (Espelage & Holt, 2001), and Cronbach’s alpha coefficients range from .85 to .91. In the current investigation, the Peer Victimization Scale scores’ internal consistency reliability was estimated to be .83.

**RESULTS**

A power analysis allowed the authors to determine that a sample size of 100 would give a power of .80 to detect medium effect sizes at a .05 significance level (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Thus, the analyses selected to address the research questions were sufficiently powered. Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and ranges of scores on the variables examined in the study.

To answer the first research question (i.e., Are there significant relationships among bullying behaviors, victimization experiences, ethnic identity, and subjective well-being?) the authors calculated Pearson Product Moment Correlations for all of the study’s key variables (see Table 2). They found a positive correlation between bullying perpetration and victimization ($r = .45, p < .01$) in the sample. The data indicated that positive levels of ethnic identity were associated with higher positive affect ($r = .65, p < .01$), satisfaction with life ($r = .48, p < .01$), and lower levels of bullying perpetration ($r = -.22, p < .05$) and victimization ($r = -.25, p < .05$). Higher levels of bullying perpetration were related to lower satisfaction with life ($r = -.23, p < .05$) and positive affect ($r = -.24, p < .05$). Higher levels of reported victimization were associated with lower levels of positive affect ($r = -.26, p < .05$), higher levels of negative affect ($r = .25, p < .05$), and lower levels of life satisfaction ($r = -.24, p < .05$). These findings provided mixed support for the first research question in that higher levels of ethnic identity were negatively correlated with bullying participation (both perpetration and victimization) and positively correlated with positive affect and satisfaction with life, while negatively correlated with negative affect. However, the anticipated relationship that was not supported was the expectation that negative affect would be significantly correlated with bullying perpetration ($r = .16, p < .05$).

After examining the correlations, the authors utilized two-step cluster analysis to determine whether subgroups existed within the sample with regard to bullying participation in response to the second research question (i.e., Do youth who participate in bullying, either as perpetrators or victims, have lower levels of ethnic identity and subjective well-being compared to those who do not participate in bullying?). Cluster analysis is a technique used to organize observed data into meaningful groups when no a priori hypotheses exist about how data should be associated (Everitt, Landau, Leese, & Stahl, 2010). Given

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic identity</td>
<td>21.43</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>8-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bully perpetration</td>
<td>10.27</td>
<td>12.03</td>
<td>0-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bully victimization</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>7.18</td>
<td>0-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive affect</td>
<td>34.92</td>
<td>7.64</td>
<td>16-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative affect</td>
<td>25.67</td>
<td>6.56</td>
<td>11-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>24.67</td>
<td>7.51</td>
<td>6-35</td>
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that participants could theoretically be classified in four possible groups (i.e., high on UIBS-Victim and low on UIBS-Perpetration subscales; low on UIBS-Victim and high on UIBS-Perpetration; high on both subscales; low on both subscales), the authors used cluster analysis to inform the group classifications that would best fit the data from the participants.

The authors first explored the appropriateness of classifying participants into the four aforementioned groups. Although this model showed adequate cohesion and separation ($s = .6$), it was deemed inadequate based on the large cluster size ratio (4.08) with one cluster accounting for 52.1% of the sample.

Next, they performed a two-step cluster analysis without a fixed number of clusters to determine how participants naturally subgrouped on the UIBS variables based on their responses. In this case, two distinct subgroups emerged from the data: Non-Participants ($N = 58$), those who scored low on both victimization ($M = 1.25$, $SD = 1.89$) and perpetration ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 4.38$); and Participants ($N = 46$): those who scored high on both victimization ($M = 12.27$, $SD = 7.50$) and perpetration ($M = 20.25$, $SD = 13.69$).

In terms of cluster validation, the ratio of largest cluster to smallest in this model (1.61) is within acceptable range and the Silhouette Coefficient ($s = .6$) indicates that the model demonstrates adequate cohesion and separation to be considered good (Kaufman & Rousseeuw, 2009). Therefore, testing for significant differences was possible between those in the participant (i.e., bully-victim) group and those in the non-participant group on the variables of ethnic identity and SWB, in accordance with the second research question.

Chi-square analysis indicated that membership in either cluster was not related to gender ($\chi^2 (1) = 21, p > .10$) or race/ethnicity ($\chi^2 (6) = 9.41, p > .10$). From there, the authors were able to evaluate this cluster model in terms of the hypothesized differences between evaluation variables. Specifically, they expected the data to show that Non-Participants would score higher on ethnic identity, positive affect, and satisfaction with life than Participants, while scoring lower on negative affect than would Participants. Analysis of variance demonstrated that Non-Participants indeed scored higher on the MEIM ($M = 22.69$, $SD = 3.98$) than Participants ($M = 19.78$, $SD = 3.98$), which was a statistically significant difference ($F(1,83) = 10.85, p = .001$). Similarly, Non-Participants scored higher on the SWLS ($M = 27.23$, $SD = 5.73$) than Participants ($M = 20.57$, $SD = 8.32$), which was a statistically significant difference ($F(1,85) = 19.44, p < .000$). On the PANAS, Non-Participants scored higher in Positive Affect ($M = 36.71$, $SD = 7.19$) than Participants ($M = 31.85$, $SD = 7.63$), another statistically significant difference ($F(1,80) = 8.20, p = .005$). This difference was also observed in Negative Affect, as Participants scored higher ($M = 27.72$, $SD = 7.13$) than Non-Participants ($M = 24.45$, $SD = 5.99$), a statistically significant difference ($F(1,79) = 4.85, p = .031$). The authors’ hypothesis regarding anticipated differences between Participants and Non-Participants was therefore supported. Table 3 presents a summary of these statistics.

**DISCUSSION**

**General Findings**

This study examined the relationships between cultural identity, well-being, and bullying participation (i.e., victimization and/or perpetration) in
ONE POSSIBILITY IS THAT YOUTH WITH LESS POSITIVE FEELINGS ABOUT THEIR ETHNIC MEMBERSHIPS ARE AT RISK FOR BEING TARGETS OF BULLIES OR BECOMING PERPETRATORS.

The second noteworthy finding is that ethnic identity scores were significantly lower in bully participants as evidenced in both the correlational analyses and the group comparisons (vs. non-participants). This pattern of findings could be interpreted in three ways. One possibility is that youth with less positive feelings about their ethnic memberships are at risk for being targets of bullies or becoming perpetrators who debase others to feel better about themselves. This finding converges with those of Arbona, Jackson, McCoy, & Blakely (1999), who found a positive relationship between African-American ethnic identity and non-fighting attitudes. Another possibility is that being bullied as an ethnic minority might erode positive feelings about one's culture, in particular if one is being targeted as a result of cultural group memberships, especially if one is a member of a cultural group not well represented in a school setting, but even if one is in the ethnic majority statistically speaking (Fisher et al., 2015). The third possible interpretation is that a variable such as self-esteem (not studied in this investigation) might serve as a mediating variable and account for youth’s tendencies to both participate in bullying and feel less positively about their ethnic group memberships, although some studies have found that self-esteem is not necessarily the best predictor of bullying victimization (D’Esposito, Blake, & Riccio, 2011; Woods et al., 2009). Future research can examine the plausibility of these interpretations.

Third, most bullying research has examined victims and bullies as distinct groups despite the fact that more current research suggests that youth who are bully-victims are perhaps at greatest risk in the long-term (Arseneault et al., 2010, Haynie et al., 2001; Wolke et al., 2013). The cluster analysis in the current study suggests that for this sample, grouping kids as either participants (bully-victims) or non-participants was the best fit for the data. This suggests that more fluidity may exist between the roles of victim and perpetrator, as suggested by others (Arseneault et al., 2010, Haynie et al., 2001), and that kids who start out as victims are more likely to continue participation in either or both capacities (i.e., chronic victims and occasional bullies) vs. solely being the target of bullies. Future research could focus on critical incidents that lead victims to become bullies.

The fourth finding is that ethnic identity appears to be vulnerable in the bullying process, as a potential predictor or outcome. This is particularly important for school counselors who work with ethnic minority youth.

Ethnic identity is a strong indicator of positive mental health and other outcomes for people of color in heterogeneous communities (Neville & Lilly, 2000; Wilson & Constantine, 1999). In fact, various studies have documented that positive cultural identities serve to buffer the negative impact of stressors such as racism and discrimination for people of color (Lee, 2003; Utsey, Ponterotto, Reynolds, & Cancelli, 2000). Hence, if bullying is a process through which ethnic identity could be eroded for youth of color (or perhaps worse, the reason that kids are victimized), it is important to include this possibility in bullying prevention programs for ethnic minority kids. School counselors could advocate for the inclusion of multicultural educational programs that seek to promote positive identity development and decrease prejudice (London, Tierney, Buhin, Greco, & Cooper, 2002) or empathy training as part of primary prevention efforts to create school climates where cultural identities are affirmed (Schonert-Reichl, Smith, Zaidman-Zait, & Hertzman, 2012).

Limitations and Directions for Future Research
This study is not without limitations. First, the findings of this study are exclusive to one public school located in a large, metropolitan Midwestern city. Replicating such studies in multiple geographically diverse locations is important in order to provide a more representative perspective on the effects of bullying behaviors as they relate to subjective well-being among urban youth of color. A similar limitation of this study is the small number
of participants that were included in each of the subgroups analyzed in the cluster analysis. Second, although the results are noteworthy, future studies of this subject may benefit from including a larger, more diverse sample of adolescents to determine the generalizability of these findings. Collecting specific socio-economic data from the study’s participants also would have been valuable in order to clarify class differences. Third, the study is cross-sectional so determining which variables might have served as causal factors of outcomes such as SWB was not possible. Longitudinal studies are more powerful vehicles from which to examine issues of causality and should be implemented in the future. Last, the findings of this study are based on self-report, which may be subject to bias, and the inclusion of observational data or collateral reports might have strengthened the reliability of such ratings.

**Implications for School Counseling Practice**

School counselors may benefit by exploring the link between feelings about cultural group membership and bullying in greater detail in their school environments. Researchers such as Poteat and DiGiovanni (2010) have documented the damaging effects of culturally biased language as part of bullying. Rather than conceptualizing and intervening with bullying as a universal phenomenon, school counselors can take the important step of identifying bullying that is culturally motivated and labeling it as discrimination. Culturally motivated bullying can be considered as a type of micro- or macro-aggression experienced by some youth of color. Identifying bullying as a social justice issue may ultimately be helpful in creating school environments that are more caring and supportive for all students (Polanin & Vera, 2013).

School counselors are in powerful positions to advocate for youth who are being bullied (Phillips & Cornell, 2012), to intervene with those who perpetrate, and to promote positive cultural identity affirmation for all students within the school community. In fact, prevention efforts that foster positive school climate may be more effective than traditional early intervention efforts that seek to reduce bullying once it has been identified as a problem (Polanin & Vera, 2013). Creating culturally affirming school environments may involve both direct school counseling interventions (e.g., specific multicultural education curricula, creating and implementing programs that celebrate diversity) and indirect service such as consulting with teachers on how to create culturally inclusive lesson plans that celebrate the achievements of underrepresented minority groups in their schools. However, working with school administrators to implement and enforce comprehensive anti-bullying school policies and programs is also important when it comes to preventing victimization.

Furthermore, one important part of the comprehensive school counseling model is developing student competencies in social-emotional learning. Bradshaw (2015) discusses the promise of social-emotional learning programs for reducing a range of aggressive-disruptive behavior problems, even though such programs were not designed to reduce bullying per se. When social-emotional learning programs also include parent training (e.g., to raise awareness of bullying), promoting the use of classroom management strategies such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (Sugai & Horner, 2006), and increased levels of adult supervision in contexts where bullying most often occurs (e.g., playgrounds), schools have been shown to be effective in reducing bullying amongst their students (Bradshaw, 2015). Each of these components represents an appropriate way in which school counselors can direct their expertise and energies in enhancing the learning process for all students (ASCA, 2012).

With respect to more secondary types of bullying prevention efforts, those that would not necessarily target the overall environment of the school, school counselors also play a critical role in protecting students from victimization (Jacobson & Bauman, 2007). Past research has identified important characteristics of youth who are more vulnerable to peer victimization, such as feelings of inadequacy (D’Esposito et al., 2011). However, for some students, feelings of inadequacy may be tied to a negative view of their cultural group membership. This could be in part because of larger societal views of their cultural group, direct experiences of prejudice, or both. Thus, to better prevent bullying participation among students who represent cultural minorities, issues of identity and oppression should be addressed as part of the curriculum of any anti-bullying program. The majority of bullying interventions typically aim to treat symptoms in victims and teach perpetrators empathy skills but few target cultural issues specifically (Polanin & Vera, 2013). Although this is a shortcoming of current anti-bullying practice, it represents an opportunity for school counselors to be on the cutting edge of strengthening interventions to reduce and prevent bullying.

Last, with respect to identifying which students may be involved in bullying experiences, an implication of these findings is that fewer youth may be solely either perpetrators or victims. Rather, this study’s cluster analysis findings may reflect the increasing presence of bully-victims, who, as Wolke et al. (2013) noted, are in the
CONCLUSION

This study examined relationships among bully victimization, bully perpetration, ethnic identity, and SWB (i.e., life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect) in a group of urban, ethnically diverse early adolescents. Indices of SWB were significantly related to participants’ status as either bully-victims, perpetrators, nonparticipants, or victim-perpetrators. It was determined that the sample was best classified as either bully participants (victim-perpetrators) or nonparticipants. The study showed significant differences on ethnic identity and the SWB variables between bully participants vs. nonparticipants. Findings from this study help to further clarify the potential impact and/or contributing factors of bullying experiences in ethnically diverse adolescents. For school counselors who work in ethnically diverse settings, this set of findings and its implications may be very beneficial.

REFERENCES


The greatest need of professional attention. The complexity of students’ roles in bullying episodes is an important component of prevention and intervention offered by school counselors.


