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# Perceptions of Elementary School Teachers, Counselors, and Principals About Bullying at Two School Sites in Utah and Mexico

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Perceptions of Elementary School Teachers, Counselors, and Principals

About Bullying at Two School Sites in Utah and Mexico

Bernardo Villar

A dissertation to be submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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## ABSTRACT

### Perceptions of Elementary School Teachers, Counselors, and Principals About Bullying at Two School Sites in Utah and Mexico

Bernardo Villar

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Doctor of Philosophy

Bullying is a serious issue that exists not only in the United States but in other countries as well. There are significant, and often devastating, implications for both the bully and the victim. This research focused on the perspectives of teachers, principals, and counselors related to bullying in two elementary schools in Utah and Mexico. Through semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions and archival records, this qualitative study explored different perspectives on bullying found in two schools exhibiting approximately the same student and teacher demographics. Interviews with teachers, counselors and principals allowed for comparison of differences and similarities between both locations. Consistent themes developed throughout the study regarding the issue of bullying and how it was addressed differently at each site. Many of these differences stemmed from three main elements. The main elements that emerged were the contrast in training that was provided to teachers, the role of the principal, and the support for educators practicing the strategies they were taught. In addition, differences were also found in the understanding of the law and policies surrounding bullying.

Keywords: bullying, bully, victim, teachers, educators, principals, counselors, solutions, trainings, elementary school, and cultural influence

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## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

Bullying presents a serious threat to our society, impeding the healthy development of school-age children (Arseneault, Walsh, Trzesniewski, & Newcombe, 2006). A bully is defined in one source as “an aggressive person who intimidates or mistreats weaker people” (Encarta World English Dictionary, 1999). The American Academy of Family Physicians stated that bullying can lead to serious academic, social, emotional, and legal problems in a child’s life. Researchers have warned that if bullying continues in our schools, serious implications for both the bullies and their victims will inevitably follow (Coy, 2001). Specifically, researchers note that victims often have poor psychosocial adjustment, low self-esteem, and other persisting negative outcomes after being bullied, prior to bullying, or both (Hazler & Denham, 2002). Additionally, children might feel unwell, experience migraine headaches, feel depressed, lonely, or anxious. Most principals understand that bullying is a glaring problem and acknowledge that the problem needs to be addressed to save schools and communities (Garrity, 1997). Bullying in schools is a serious problem and was the focus of this study.

### **Bullying in Schools**

Not only from my perspective as a school principal, but also from my viewpoint as a researcher since this study’s inception, I have felt compassion for the victims of bullying. One case study illustrated a 32-year-old man’s experiences with the challenges of bullying (Cowie, 1998). Ian described himself as a “sensitive, popular, and gregarious child.” His bullying victimization began at the age of 13 when he attended an English boarding school where he was verbally, psychologically, and physically bullied every day for about four years. Ian told his parents and a teacher but to no avail. He tried to contain his behavior because he knew first-hand the pain associated with it. He expressed, “I stopped growing when I began to be bullied.” He

felt unhappy, isolated, alone, and scared. As Ian grew older, he also felt shame, anxiety, muscle tension, and feelings of loneliness. In Ian's own words,

Bullying has produced in me a great deal of fear, anxiety, hate and violence . . . I have an irrational belief that any weakness I show should be punished, plus I feel a lot of shame. I also have a great deal of compassion for others and an absolute hate of anyone abusing positions of power bullying others. It has created a great deal of integrity in me. It has also given me an enormous self-awareness because of what I have been forced to look at, even though I have a huge way to go. (Cowie, 1998,p.118)

I have a greater understanding of bullying situations through my experiences as a principal. I have heard from teachers who were upset over a student being bullied. The teachers often recalled the pain and shame of being bullied themselves when they were younger. It is important that not only researchers but also teachers, principals, counselors, and professors understand how these accounts contribute to the whole school environment. Each victim's experience highlights both the individual and societal consequences associated with bullying.

**Observations of bullying in US schools.** As I have observed bullying at school I have noticed different actions at the various age levels. I have noted that in the grades kindergarten through second, the students that are bullied and those that bully seem to be more forgiving and resolve the issue more quickly than those in upper grades. For example, I once observed three children who were playing with a large red ball. When one child could not catch the ball, it was not thrown back to her. Her classmates were annoyed that she was not able to catch the ball. They physically pushed her and used facial gestures letting her know that she was not allowed to play with them anymore because of her poor skills. However, within a short period of time, they returned wondering if she would like to try a different game not using the ball at all. This seemed

to typify an example of direct bullying at a first grade level, which quickly resolved (forgiveness on the part of all involved, if you will).

As I observed third and fourth graders, the bullying seemed to last longer. On one occasion, I noticed several boys and girls playing football, and a young man could not seem to catch the ball. Repeatedly he was pushed by children of both sexes. His team ended up losing the game largely because of his errors. This young man was not allowed to forget his mistake. His peers teased him and he was not allowed to rejoin the group. I continued observing the group to see if this would pass quickly. I went to the classroom and had a discussion with the teacher. The issue continued into the classroom. The teacher had to address the situation repeatedly and remind the students that they needed to let it go. At this point, I stepped into the classroom and outlined what the consequences would be if the situation continued. After addressing the class, I went out the next day to observe to see if there was any change. The young man was once again playing with the other students, but after a much longer interval than that seen in the example provided concerning younger children.

I have also observed that in the fifth and sixth grade, as the students grew older, the process of bullying seemed to become more refined and lasted for longer periods. Students who bullied seemed to want more control over their peers to inflict harm. As I have observed and dealt with bullying, I found that bullying situations with this age group can continue for months at a time and may go on as long as an entire school year. The process could involve an individual against another or a group of students against one student. Such aggression may be verbal or physical and it may also involve the exclusion of an individual from the group through indirect bullying.

As a school principal, I note how bullying distracts from students' learning time. Through personal observations, experience, and informal conversations with colleagues, bullying appears to present a serious, ongoing problem for students and staff members. For the past eight years, I have witnessed an increase in the incidence of bullying on the school's playground.

As I have become focused on the subject of bullying along with a team of teachers in my current school, I have developed a new form for tracking these types of behavioral issues in the school. Each teacher and staff member keeps track of incidents by filling out white slips about unacceptable behavior. The attendance secretary logs and maintains a record of all the incidents. Upon tallying all the bullying and physical incidents, we have noted that the incidents have increased by 15 percent over the past two years. Afterward during informal interviews with students, they reported that a large percentage of their behavior mimics the video games they have played or movies that they have viewed.

While collaborating with a colleague who is also a principal, he shared his experiences with difficult effects of bullying. Bullying at his school occurred to such an extreme that he canceled all recesses. His community supported his decision and felt satisfied that the school took action to curtail the problem. At his school, not only were teachers, and principals concerned with the problem but parents as well were concerned to the point of supporting the cancellation of recesses. The growing concern about bullying among parents, teachers, and counselors has led to an increase in systematic responses by legislative bodies (Limber & Small, 2003). Various responses by legislative bodies will be further discussed in the next chapter.

As a principal, I have wondered what formal or local training some of my colleagues and teachers need to adequately address bullying in their schools. As I questioned them, many responded that they had not received any local training and the only formal training was given to

them at regional or national conferences. Two colleagues responded that their training came formally from study taken for master's degrees in educational counseling. We all agreed that our counseling background gave us an advantage, having received psychological training on bullying. However, many principals and teachers lack the knowledge and skills to respond effectively to bullying. As reported in the literature, teachers are overwhelmed with the temperament of students who are entering our school systems (Lumsden, 2007). Many of them believe that attitudes and problems that surfaced in the upper elementary grades five or so years ago are now showing up in first graders.

Bullied students sometimes take revenge with weapons. Victims have retaliated violently as in the tragic shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado and Santana High in Santee, California. Research on the 37 school shootings that took place in America from 1974 to 2000 found that those students perpetuating the violence felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked, or injured prior to the incident (Glew, Fan, Katon, & Rivara, 2008).

An examination of widely accepted prevalence rates worldwide for bullying shows that this behavior is an unfortunate reality which happens across disparate cultures and educational settings (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Researchers have found that the phenomena is widespread among school-age children across several countries in Europe (Smith & Brain, 2000). This study considered the concerns of bullying in Mexico.

**Bullying in Mexican schools.** As an individual of Mexican descent, I often wondered how my colleagues, teachers, and counselors in Mexico deal with bullying problems or if they even notice a problem. I have wondered, "What are some of their observations? Is bullying a social issue, a school issue, or has the scope of the problem reached the same heights as in United States or Europe? Has bullying been increasing incrementally in that part of the world?"

Does this also represent a looming threat in Mexico and Latin America?” Researchers studying this issue in Mexico appear to have developed the same definition of bullying as in the United States, and these researchers also reported similar effects on bullies and their victims (Ortega, Rivera, & Sanchez, 2008; Quezada, Navarro, & Mora, 2005).

Unfortunately, some researchers are suggesting that bullying and subsequent effects on children have become more alarming each day in the Mexican school systems (Barrientos, 2007). The limited research available states that bullying in Mexico—much like the United States—apparently occurs daily according to some pioneering researchers (Arcus, 2002). Polaino-Lorente stated that in Mexico, out of 3,000 students interviewed, 40.6 percent were verbally attacked in one form or another, and 21.7 percent have experienced physical aggression against them. However, these pioneering researchers aside, there is still little research to confirm the extent of bullying in Mexico and its definitions, conceptions, and perceptions in Mexican society and education. Most research to date seems to be focused predominately on South and Central America rather than Mexico (Arnold, Zeljo, & Doctoroff, 2008).

In both elementary and secondary school, private and public, the bullying problem in Mexico is a growing concern. Older adolescents and also younger children are participating in, and feeling the effects of bullying. Many people (e.g. policymakers, lawmakers, principals, teachers, parents, adults, and students) in North, Central, and South America have chosen to take action to prevent the effects of bullying on a child’s life (Barrientos, 2007; Smith, 2000). Violence and safety in the schools of Mexico and other Latin countries has been a subject for political and public discussion (Pansters & Berthier, 2007). Is violence via bullying inevitable? Is bullying a product of the cultural environment in Mexico? Nashiki (2005) asks these questions, reflecting how in the past few years these same questions have been asked on television, national



radio, and newspapers in terms about (a) violence invading schools, (b) killings, (c) gangs taking over areas, and (d) suicide. Little is known regarding how students in Mexico experience bullying compared to what we know regarding American students and bullying. There are few research studies with significant results and many yet unexplored questions.

### **Research Focus and Impetus**

Principals and teachers find it difficult to address bullying issues with students and parents. Without conceptual knowledge it is difficult for school principals to address bullying properly (Pepler & Craig, 2000). Knowledge is necessary in order to plan proper training to address the problem. It is vital for principals to have appropriate training to combat bullying in schools (Garrity, 1997). It is also important that school principals work with school counselors and teachers to understand and address the problem of bullying (Drake, Price, Telljohann, & Funk, 2004). A void exists in research investigating the issue of bullying in Mexico. A comparison with the United States could be helpful. Is Mexico faced with the same problem of bullying within the educational system as the United States? Bullying may or may not be occurring to the extent that it is in the United States. This problem was addressed in this study by examining bullying through a comparative case study between one school in the United States and one somewhat similar school in Mexico.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to investigate and define bullying, and its implications involving the roles and perceptions of teachers, principals, and counselors in Davis School District, Utah, USA and Ixtapaluca, Estado de Mexico, Mexico. The study involved an investigation of the day-to-day educational experience and overall physical facility of an elementary school in Mexico, and an elementary school in the United States. The perceptions of

school personnel with a similar role in Mexico were documented to compare with those with similar roles in the Davis School District. Teachers, principals and counselors were surveyed as to what training they received and how such training may have helped them understand and deal with bullying problems. The support that principals gave to teachers and staff members was also researched. From this effort, I hoped to contribute to the body of research striving to understand bullying more fully, and I hoped to learn about what strategies are effective in assisting principals in Mexico and the United States, assist teachers and counselors with bullying problems.

### **Research Questions**

Bullying as a behavior, as culturally embedded artifact and/or as a societal dysfunction, is not fully understood. This research investigated bullying by comparing an elementary school in a western U.S. state with a Mexican elementary school to highlight differences and uncover definitions, explanations, and attitudes in each setting. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. How is bullying perceived and defined in the two sites by school personnel?
2. What do teachers perceive about bullying policies, support and additional training?

The schools' role, and its employees' roles in dealing with bullying are currently more defined in United States schools compared to those in Mexico. It is anticipated that the basic definitional question may be most informative in the school in Mexico. However, these questions will also be helpful in Davis County, Utah. Important factors to be investigated are the expectations of teachers, principals, and counselors in both areas, and how they compare in dealing with the problems of bullying, how they intervene, and the differences between the culture and intervention process in the United States and Mexico. The perception of other school personnel,

as well as the similarities and differences between the educational days and structure in both schools, was also investigated.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are used throughout the chapters of this study:

1. *Relational*: Relational means having a personal connection with someone such as family and friends.
2. *Aggression*: Aggressive behavior is actions that hurt or harm others.
3. *Physical Aggression*: This behavior involves direct physical attacks, such as punching, tripping, kicking, pushing, shoving, hitting, or any other form of physical force against another individual.
4. *Verbal Aggression*: This behavior involves the attempted humiliation of an individual through both overt and covert verbal abuse, including name-calling, putdowns, threats, howling, sighing, and other audible expressions.
5. *Relational Aggression*: This behavior aims to manipulate the web of third party relationships in order to hurt a particular individual. Spreading rumors, gossip, lies, telling secrets; eye-rolling, exclusion, and the “silent treatment” all aim to promote cruelty through the social networks.
6. *Strategy*: This is a plan or skill especially used to solve a problem.
7. *Empathy*: Empathy is the art of putting oneself “in the shoes of another.”
8. *Bully*: A bully is defined in one source as “an aggressive person who intimidates or mistreats weaker people”
9. *Victim*: One incapable of or has a difficult time defending himself or herself, and the bully being in complete control of the situation.

### **Significance of the Study**

There is little research literature in Mexico regarding teachers' and principals' involvement in preventing or dealing with bullying. Throughout much of the literature, researchers have conducted some limited studies addressing the role of teachers in bullying interventions, but there are even fewer limited studies concerning principals (Lumsden, 2007; Piotrowski & Hoot, 2008; Ross, 2003; Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Additionally, staff development can assist teachers, principals and counselors in how to create a safe classroom environment where each student feels safe and appreciated (Lane, 2007; Lodge & Frydenberg, 2004). In addition, current research highlights that the process of understanding and defining bullying within a local culture is one of the most powerful ways to bring together local community resources to make school cultures more humane and less prone to bullying. I feel that teachers, principals and school personnel are often not trained how to deal with bullying in the United States. Are the teachers, principals, and counselors in Mexico in the same situation?

For both case studies, I focused mainly on how school teachers worked with students to prevent bullying. I also investigated the perspectives of principals and counselors concerning how they viewed bullying and the role they have in preventing the bullying problem in both Mexico and the United States.

### **Summary**

Bullying is a serious problem in schools for students and staff—particularly in light of serious consequences such as school shootings. Limited research has been conducted on the role of teachers and principals in preventing and dealing with bullying. No research has been done to compare perceptions of and approaches to the bullying problem in a school in Mexico with a school in the United States. The purpose of this study is to define and compare the issue of

bullying in Mexico and the United States from the perspectives of elementary teachers, principals, and counselors in two elementary schools one in Utah, USA; and one in the Estado de Mexico, Mexico in order to draw implications for practice, and to explore what has or hasn't worked in U.S. schools that could inform Mexican Practice and vice versa.

## Chapter Two Literature Review

A bully is defined as someone who has taunted and physically pushed around weaker children (Coy, 2001; Gysbers & Henderson, 2000; Pepler & Craig, 2000). Bullying is a pervasive problem within schools. Bullies cause mental anguish, engender fear, and trigger emotional trauma within their victims (Brunstein, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld, & Gould, 2007; Gini, 2007). Children targeted by bullies are often timid and fearful; whereas children who bully tend to be socially aggressive. Victims of bullies experience psychological, emotional, physical, and academic suffering, often becoming bullies themselves (Pepler & Craig, 2000). While officials at all levels have responded to bullies, today's society demands that a more systematic, proactive approach to be taken to prevent bullying in schools due to the fact that the nation is concerned about killing and shooting in schools (Greenya, 2005). Researchers have reported multiple perspectives on the issues surrounding bullying. This chapter reviews important concepts including the nature of bullying, personal effects of bullying, responses to bullying, bullying linked to violence, and bullying intervention plans.

### **Perspectives on Bullying**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that approximately 30 percent of all children and youth in sixth to tenth grades have been bullied or have been involved in bullying other children. Bullying is an international concern and many countries have implemented laws to deter the problem (Smith & Brain, 2000).

**Bullying linked to violence in schools.** School violence has become a pervasive problem, occupying a prominent role in the national consciousness of the United States and Mexico (Ortega et al., 2008; Quezada et al., 2005). Crothers and Levinson (2004) among many other researchers have decried the actions of violence in such U.S. towns as Littleton (Colorado),

Jonesboro (Arkansas), West Paducah (Kentucky), Pearl (Mississippi), Edinboro (Pennsylvania), and Springfield (Colorado). All incidents involved relatively small towns and cities that experienced a shocking episode of violence where children killed their fellow students and teachers. These incidents were often connected in some way with bullying behavior towards the shooter, resulting in the tragic deaths of peers and teachers. As a result, violence in school communities became a leading concern for educators, parents, and policy makers.

Violence is a problem in some schools and is acknowledged in the United States. Mexico also has violence in some of their schools. Alfredo Furlan a professor of the National University of Mexico, stated that educators consider that the level of violence has been increasing to where there is a fear to work in the educational system. He has noted that we live in an era of violence and turmoil in Mexico and in a state of political disarray when it comes to the Mexican Educational System. It is evident that there needs to be a change in the system to assure the safety of students and teachers (Hutton & Bailey, 2007; Overstreet, Devine, Bevans, & Efreom, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

**Bullying in Mexico.** In light of this problem, some researchers in Mexico have begun to develop perspectives on bullying. Some researchers have found that historically the characteristics of bullying may stem from the cruelty placed on Mexico during its development and from how poverty may play a role in the rise of this growing phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1998b). Parents in Mexico are concerned that bullying keeps growing without any solution or intervention from the government (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The United States has implemented guidelines from the federal government and states to impede bullying within the school system.

**US response to bullying.** As a principal, I have personally become aware of the increase in school violence and have attended conferences on bullying that have focused on the spread of violence in schools across the nation. I have received daily e-mail messages informing me of new programs, workshops, conferences, and material available to curtail the problem within the walls of schools.

Researchers have found a strong relationship between school violence and bullying. Between 1974 and 2000 there were at least 37 school shootings. Out of those 37 shootings, 71 percent of the attackers felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked, or injured by others prior to an incident (Greenya, 2005; Nolle, Guerino, Dinkes, & Chandler, 2005-2006; Uba, Yaacob, & Juhari, 2010).

The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HRSA) has devoted and promoted a full campaign to address bullying in the schools. As part of the HRSA campaign, a website has been created to curtail bullying in schools: [www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov). The HRSA sent out a DVD to every school in the United States to review in the schools as part of their campaign. They also created public service announcements available online. Videos were developed for professionals in the educational field as well as those in the health and safety, mental health, law enforcement, and youth-serving fields.

### **Nature of Bullying**

To understand the concerns of bullying in public schools, researchers have examined it from multiple perspectives. Many definitions for bullying have emerged out of the work of researchers in the field who have discovered that bullying occurs in many forms and in varied settings (House, Martin, & Ward, 2002; Olweus, 1993; Shields & Cicchetti, 2001; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005; Veenstra et al., 2005). Because of the lack of clarity of what constitutes bullying,



it may actually occur more frequently within school walls than school leaders realize. While direct bullying can easily be identified, indirect bullying may go undetected because of its subtlety.

The way bullying has been defined is nebulous and constantly changing. A bully is defined as “an aggressive person who intimidates or mistreats weaker people” (Encarta World English Dictionary, 1999). Bullying is also defined as a “use of superior strength or influence to intimidate (someone), typically to force him or her to do what one wants” (Merriam-Webster, 2012). Yet, one word cannot fully capture the construct of bullying in Mexico. Throughout my literature review on bullying in Mexico, researchers have labeled this construct as *hostiagmient*, *la violencia silenciosa*, *mobbing*, and *acosto* (Espinosa, Rios, & Pedrero, 2009; Lopez, 2007; Sanchez, 2002).

In accordance with its definition, tenets of bullying have also been described in many ways. Bullying has been defined as a behavior of aggression with the intent to do harm or disturb others (Garrity, 1997; Olweus, 1993; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Bullying is a behavior that occurs repeatedly over time. There is an imbalance of power with a more powerful person or group attacking a less powerful one (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Oliver (1994) stated that bullying most commonly referred to a long-standing physical or psychological abuse of a person who was unable to defend him or herself. It has also been defined it as a willful, conscious desire to hurt another, and to put him or her under stress.

**Frequency of bullying.** Bullying occurs in schools more frequently than one might expect. Parault, Davis, and Pellegrini (2007) found that bullying occurred every seven minutes within the school setting. Smokowski and Kopaz (2005) stated that bullying affects approximately one in three children. Bullying seemed to impact every type of student—there was

no bias as to whom it affected. Bullying occurred equally to boys and girls who had reported being victims. The Institute of Education Sciences stated that the overall rate of violent incidents for all public schools in the United States was 31 incidents per 1000 students (Bowman, 2001). The rate of violent incidents was significantly higher in middle schools (52 incidents per 1,000 students) than in primary schools (25 incidents per 1,000 students). The Institute also reported that 52 percent of all schools reported at least one student threat of physical attack without a weapon. Primary schools reported a 21% weekly reporting of student bullying (Bowman, 2001).

Sanchez (2002) stated that bullying occurs as often in Latin America and Mexico as in the United States and other parts of the world. Studies have indicated that bullying most definitely permeates the schools in Mexico, but only 50% of children report it to their parents (Hutton & Bailey, 2007). Fifty percent of students also stated that it is even more difficult for them to report it to teachers (Hutton & Bailey, 2007). Some studies have reflected on how bullying is a cultural part of Mexican society, hurting the children within it (Chavez, 2003; Violence, 1997). Other researchers note how bullying springs from a child's upbringing as students learn from the adults that surround them. The behavior that adults exhibit and model are the behaviors that children repeat (Prados, 2008).

**Types of bullying.** Bullying comes in many forms. Researchers have discussed direct and indirect bullying, racial harassment, and cyber bullying. Olweus (1993) distinguished between direct and indirect bullying. He stated that direct bullying was a “relatively open attack on a victim” (p. 9). He further defined bullying as a negative action that was a purposeful attempt to injure or inflict discomfort on another person through words, physical contact, gestures, or even exclusion from a group. He also stated that repeated harassment was defined to exclude the occasional negative action that was not perceived as being serious because it may have been

directed toward one student on one occasion and toward another student during a different time. Direct bullying involved physical aggression, such as kicking, hitting, or taking money/belongings. It was something that someone repeatedly did or said to gain power and dominance over another, including action or implied action, such as threats. These actions were intended to cause fear and distress.

In contrast, Olweus (1993) defined indirect bullying as a “form of social isolation and intentional exclusion from a group” (p.10). Olweus stated that indirect bullying is referred as relational victimization and described as the manipulation of relationships or friendships to inflict emotional pain on another. The definition of bullying has been considered by other researchers as well. For example, Coy (2001) identified direct verbal aggression as a form of direct bullying including the behaviors of name-calling, shouting, abusing, accusing a student, malicious rumor spreading, and social exclusion. He also included putting another student down, saying or writing inappropriate things about a student, threatening a student with bodily harm, and taunting or teasing another student. Coy added that social exclusion may include deliberately excluding another student from activities, refusing to talk to another student, and finally coercing another student into doing something against his or her will. According to Coy, bullying does not necessarily require one-on-one conflict, but it did require a competent theory of mind skills, enabling bullies to manipulate others, and ingeniously inflict direct harm.

Another common form of bullying is racial harassment. Children of minority cultures or of ethnic origin experienced more racist name-calling (though not necessarily other forms of bullying) than white children of the same age and gender (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, the extent of racial bullying in the United States is not known, nor have researchers yet explored if there is a significant difference due to racial diversity. Although most pupils said they did not

like bullying, a significant majority admitted they could join in bullying (Smith, Twemlow, & Hoover, 1999). Also, these ‘pro-bullying’ or ‘anti-victim’ attitudes tended to increase over the years up to ages 14 or 15, after which they begin to decline (Olweus, 2003).

Another particularly troubling area of bullying has emerged in modern society. Bullying is quickly becoming much more sophisticated with the advent of new technology and online social networking (Aluedse, 2006). This type of bullying is known as cyberbullying (often also spelled cyber-bullying) or online bullying. This type of bullying has turned into an extension of the school day and continues beyond school hours (Richards, 2005). Cyberbullying is characterized as bullying and harassment by the use of electronic devices through means of e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, mobile phones, pagers, and websites (Dooley, Pyszalski, & Cross, 2009). Other terms used for cyberbullying are electronic bullying, electronic harassment, e-bullying, sms bullying, mobile bullying, online bullying, digital bullying, or Internet bullying. In this research I included an investigation of cyberbullying to see if this phenomenon existed in Mexico and compared differences with the United States, particularly in terms of student technology-savvy level.

**Gender differences.** Both males and females were found to engage in bullying activities. The activities can be physical, behavioral, psychological, or a combination of the three (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Craig, 1997). Boys and girls both exhibited bullying through name-calling—including racial epithets. Students of both genders from minority cultures appeared to be called names more frequently than those from the majority. Within different school settings researchers have covered, boys engaged in more physical forms of bullying. Girls on the other hand demonstrated more indirect and relational bullying. Boys were more frequently mentioned in the bullying literature as perpetrators, but the sexes were more equal in the victim category. Dennis

(1999) specifically demonstrated that gender differences played a role in types of name-calling. He stated that boys and girls reported similar rates of bullying concerns. However, boys tended to be the victims of name-calling accompanied by physical bullying, whereas girls were bullied primarily through name-calling and rational aggression. Boys were more likely to be called names by both genders. Girls tended to be called names by other girls.

To summarize, researchers defined bullying nebulously and incidents were more frequent in the schools than one might expect. The concerns of bullying have been examined from different, multiple perspectives. Direct bullying was often identified and discussed, but indirect bullying was often overlooked. Finally, racial harassment was an unfortunate facet of bullying in schools, and both genders participated in bullying.

**Locations of bullying.** Bullying is a widespread issue that can occur anywhere. The majority of bullying takes place in public areas of the school such as the playground, the lunchroom, the classroom, and corridors (Low, Frey, & Brockman, 2010; Vaillancourt et al., 2010). It is also often asserted that bullying chiefly takes place on the way to and from school (Olweus, 1993). According to Olweus, bullying depends on the size of the school and the supervision that takes place where and when bullying occurs. It is noted that bullying becomes more frequent during recess and lunch time because there seems to be less supervision during these activities. Olweus conducted a study showing that if more adults are involved in these activities less acts of bullying occur.

### **Characteristics of Children Involved in Bullying**

Bullying involves at least two participants: bully and victim. This section described each of the participants in this formula. The descriptions of their characteristics illustrate the seemingly simple but actually complex interactions of factors at play that lead to bullying.

Bullying relationships often involved several bullies, but a significant majority involved one-on-one relationships (Ma, Stewin, & Mah, 2001).

**Bullies.** Hazler (2002) identified bullies as having characteristics that often would alienate them from others, including controlling through verbal and physical threats, being angry and revengeful, having little empathy for their victims, and creating resentment and frustration among their peers. In Mexico, researchers have found that other influences are also involved such as the advertisements and programs that Mexican children view (Chavez, 2003).

Some bullying characteristics were common among both social and antisocial groups. Garrity (1997) stated that bullies needed power and attention in a social setting. She believed bullies can be taught how to channel the characteristics they have developed in positive leadership activities with the proper support. However, attempting to control their power may be counterproductive as they had an overwhelming need for the power (Garrity, 1997).

Researchers (Hazler, 2000; Ma et al., 2001; Oliver, 1994; Olweus, 2003; Smith & Brain, 2000) have noted that the general findings of the characteristics of bullies.

1. Bullies engaged in significant physical fighting behaviors, criminal misconduct, making friendships with larger peers or same size, and academic misconduct.
2. Bullies were historically insecure children with low self-esteem who bullied to gain attention.
3. Bullies often suffered from depression.
4. Bullies had friends who were bullies.
5. Bullies often were more aggressive, more confident, and physically stronger.
6. Bullies experienced punitive forms of discipline and authoritarian parents.
7. Bullies teased and mocked their victims, then ostracized them and spread rumors.

8. Bullies were often found to have conduct disorder and anxiety disorders.

**Victims.** There are certain characteristics particular to the victims as well. Researchers in Latin America have asserted that seven out of ten students are victims of bullying or witness bullying (Castillo, 2010). Olweus (1992) defined bullying and victimization in terms of the following: a child was bullied or victimized when he or she was exposed, repeatedly and overtime, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons. The victim was thus incapable of defending himself or herself, or had a difficult time defending himself or herself, and the bully was in control of the situation.

Researchers (Hazler, 2000; Ma et al., 2001; Oliver, 1994; Olweus, 2003; Smith, 2000) among others have noted that the general findings of the characteristics of bullying victims.

1. Victims were quiet, cautious, sensitive, and insecure; may have had difficulty asserting themselves; appeared to do nothing to provoke attacks; and were unlikely to retaliate if attacked or insulted.
2. Victims were perceived as “different” or weak.
3. Victims were isolated socially and reported feeling sad or lonely.
4. Victims experienced psychosomatic symptoms (e.g., sleep disturbances, enuresis, unexplained abdominal discomfort, or headaches).
5. Victimization often interfered with psychosocial development, and academic performance.
6. Victims became cynical if they thought authority figures let the bullying persist.
7. Victims sometimes accepted that they deserved to be taunted, teased, and harassed (similar to victims of domestic violence and other forms of abuse).

8. In rare cases, victims tried to harm themselves or others, or even considered suicide rather than endure continual harassment and humiliation.
9. Victims were at-risk for depression and poor self-esteem later in life.
10. Victims suffered from possible eating disorders and psychiatric problems.
11. Victims were often reluctant to go to school, with high absenteeism common.

O'Connell, Pepler, and Craig (1999) noted that younger children were less likely to say they would offer support to other victims. These researchers felt that the children had a self-imposed social limit due to fear of becoming the next victim. Some students might have submitted to being involved in bullying out of concern for their own safety, thus giving reinforcement to bullies through the attention they received for their behaviors. Craig and Pepler (1999) suggested that these behaviors may serve to prolong bullying episodes.

### **Impact of Bullying**

In recent years, bullying and consequent victims at school have drawn a lot of attention in the both media and press. This heightened coverage has been accompanied by increased public awareness about victimization. As a result, the United States and other nations have become more aware that bullying can truly have long term effects on the social and emotional development of victims.

**On victims.** According to the Society for Adolescent Medicine it has been estimated that up to three-quarters of young adolescents experienced some type of bullying, and as many as one-third reported more extreme experiences of coercion or inappropriate touching. Such statistics have prompted action on many fronts, including The Society for Adolescent Medicine (Scott, 2008).



***Psychological repercussions.*** Bullying has a negative effect on the development of victims' positive self-esteem, and some victims of bullying regarded themselves as responsible for what was happening to them. Some children experienced stress-related symptoms (e.g. headaches and nightmares) and even school phobia. Other children continued to present low self-esteem and depression (Arseneault et al., 2006; Craig, 1997; Hazler & Denham, 2002). Studies have also found bullying has significantly related to depression and that in the United States of America it is found that bullying among teenagers posed a threat to healthy development and is a potential cause of violence (Uba et al., 2010).

The parents of the victims may also have felt ashamed that their child was not a social success. As a result they may have been unwilling to contact the school for help. Parents also expected the "child to fend off attack" (Hazler & Denham, 2002). Bullying has been viewed as a stressful event which could negatively impact everyone involved and leads to anti psychosocial behaviors such as smoking, drinking, and violent behavior later in life (Catalano, Kim, Haggerty, & Abbott, 2011; Uba et al., 2010). There is also a substantial increase in psychopathology in both young males and females almost two decades after being bullied at the age of eight, with anxiety disorders, depression, and conduct disorder along with suicide attempts and completed suicide (Kaltiala-Heino & Frojd, 2011; Nunn, 2010).

***Personal isolation.*** Personal characteristics of victims play an important role in future isolation as they search for sources of support. One study noted those who were victimized had fewer positive peer interactions and a lower sense of attachment to school (Lodge & Frydenberg, 2004). Hazler and Denham (2002) articulated through their research on international studies a nearly unanimous agreement that victims of bullying commonly had ineffective social skills,

poor interpersonal skills, were less popular, had difficulty relating to peers, and were socially isolated.

Victims were not considered the cause of the aggression placed on them, but they tended to have characteristics which—when combined with those of abusers—increased their isolation from social support and made them more likely to become repeated prey. Cyclically, the public humiliation of being bullied and harassed created within the victim a tendency to become isolated and discouraged intervention. All lead the victim to seek further isolation to limit the embarrassment.

***Functioning in adult life.*** The effects of bullying far outlast grade-school traumas. According to Olweus (1991), children whose bullying behavior remained unchecked were at risk of growing into adults with a tendency to act in a domineering or violent ways towards partners, workmates, and their own children. Bystanders were also affected through learned helplessness at their own failure to act. Fear was instilled into victims by bullying and intimidation. Victims were significantly distressed by this behavior and exhibited signs of social withdrawal, school avoidance, stress-related problems, decline in academic performance, depression, and sometimes suicide.

The Center for Disease Control (Violence, 1997) stated that the emotional impact of school violence was clearly highlighted. This study indicated that one out of every 20 students missed school in a month because they did not feel safe during or on the way to school. The continuing abuse from bullies resulted in problematic emotions for defenseless victims. In addition, Hazler (2000) stated that victims searched out feelings of anger and vengefulness and later entertained fantasies of revenge and acted out aggressively against their school peers.

**On communities and society.** Finally, victims themselves often became the bully or the aggressor of violence, and thereby affected their community and society as a whole. In the last decade, the American public has been informed of incidents of school shootings and other violent situations (Arcus, 2002), and experts suggested that retaliation was the main impetus of these unbelievable events. Bauman (2005) also stated that bullying was not synonymous with violence or aggression, but was a particular form of both of these characteristics. In fact, two thirds of perpetrators of school shootings reported that they had been bullied by peers.

### **Responses to Bullying**

When children have been asked about bullying and victimization, they often have responded with ambiguous answers. O'Connell, Pepler, and Craig (1999) noted in a study of Canadian children that 83 percent were concerned about bullying. Those from age five to fourteen stated that bullying made them feel either "a bit" or "quite" unpleasant, 41 percent indicated that they want to help a victim when they see it occurring, and 11 percent of peers indicated that they would try to put a stop to it. Thirty one percent of students admitted they would join in on the bullying if it was someone they did not like. About half of the bullies reported to be victims as well.

Pepler and Craig (2000) suggested that all members of a school system and community had certain roles and responsibilities in dealing with the problem of bullying. Such a problem required a broad-based response because it arose from different causes. The responses of all parents, staff, and legislators should involve strategies to identify the incident of bullying and to address it.

**Parents.** Olweus (1993) noted that both teachers and parents were unaware of the extent of bullying and did not address it with children. According to Smith (1999), parenting practices

were linked to childhood symptomatology and the relationships that affect the child during their development in their preadolescent years. In Smith's study of 64 fourth and fifth grade boys, their results showed that fearful boys who were harshly disciplined by parents showed high levels of aggression. The same study also claimed that children with high aggression also experienced a lack of consistency from their parents. Smith believed that to alleviate the bullying problem there needed to be support at home. After completing their study, they concluded that children supported in the home were less likely to be suspended from school and the learning environment improved as well.

In terms of ideal response situations, parents needed short and long-term responsibilities. In the short term, parents should meet with the principal to discuss the bullying problem and work with the school to develop strategies for the problem. Parents also need to respond by monitoring bullying problems at home with school support to deal with the problem. Parents should also be informed and remain alert for signs of bullying and victimization (Ennio Cipani, 2005; Garrity, 1997; Uba et al., 2010). Researchers suggested parents and caregivers should have received training and workshops to learn effective strategies with their children at home to respond to the issue of bullying (Garrity, 1997).

Additionally, parent involvement in a child's schooling has been related to a child's success in school in different areas besides academia (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Through parent involvement, a child not only improved academically, but also improved behaviorally, had lower absenteeism, and had a more positive attitude towards school (Garrity, 1997). Parent involvement is a key component that leads to a more positive academic outcome in children by developing in children a shared responsibility for education (Gonzales-DeHass, Willems, & Hobein, 2005). In the United States, parents are a vital component to the educational system. In

Mexico, no documents or research were found that addressed parental role in the Mexican education system.

The literature concerning parent involvement in education suggests that parents are an important and positive component to a child's academic achievement. If parent involvement had such an impact on students' learning, then it might influence students' behavior as well.

**Teachers.** Few existing studies exist regarding teachers' perspectives on bullying among children, and the findings were not always easy to interpret. Teachers seemed to underestimate the frequency and magnitude of bullying because of their lack of understanding and knowledge of how widespread the problem actually was. Many recognized that bullying could be physical and emotional in nature but failed to see how spreading rumors or intimidation or taking others' belongings as a form of bullying. Reid, Monsen, and Rivers (2004) also stated that teachers needed a clearer understanding about different types of bullying.

From teacher interviews in the United States, Reid and colleagues (2004) found a disturbing statistic: only 25 % of teachers exhibited a full understanding of bullying. While teachers observed students' behavior within the classroom, they sometimes did not identify and respond to bullies as readily as their students. Thus, a teacher might not step forward to correct the bullying situation. Mishna (2004) recommended correct ways for teachers to address bullying. Often teachers placed blame on the victim, but teachers need to take the responsibility to address the problem of bullying with appropriate consequences and with interventions to help the bully move toward a more positive social interaction in the future. Teachers need self-confidence and understanding of bullying to intervene. Dr. King (1958) stated that perhaps the greatest potential for stemming the tide of the global plague known as bullying could be found in the actions of the teachers' heeding their students' suffering.

After I met informally with different elementary schools principals and elementary teachers from Mexico, they voiced their opinion that bullying is a parent and government responsibility. These principals and teachers believe—and researchers have noted—that if parents begin to address the issue at home then there would be fewer problems at school (Nashiki, 2005; Spriggs, Iannotti, T.R.Nansel, & Haynie, 2007); However, others argue that schools are a reflection of society and its context, and this issue needs to be addressed by the educational authorities of Mexico (Quintana, 2009).

Unfortunately, in both Latin America and the United States, teachers are not immune to contributing to the process of bullying. Chavez (2003) stated in Mexico sometimes teachers influence the actions of students by pulling the student's ears and showing that their acts of aggression are acceptable. Also, he notes that commonly used phrases teachers apply to students include calling them lazy or dumb. These are minor when compared to other common phrases teachers use to address students.

**Counselors.** The following historical counseling perspective is imperative to understanding how the counseling profession has come to be involved in school bullying. Before the 1920s and 1930s, the United States lacked an organizational approach to school counseling guidance, especially as it related to protecting students from violence. As few as sixteen years ago, counselors were employed merely as vocational counselors. A vocational counselor was only to make sure all students were on track for graduation. If students had questions concerning their future beyond high school, they were instructed according to what the counselor felt was best for them (Hoyt, 2001; Larivee, 2002). The choices included working in a trade or going to college. There was not any form of testing or evaluation of what skills the student had. Counseling mainly related to what the counselor thought was best for the student (House, Marin,

& Ward, 2002). Society sought a change to school counseling with a new focus to meet the needs of society. To address this need, a service model of guidance was developed. Various services were identified as necessary, including an individual inventory, information, counseling service, placement, and follow-up service (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000).

The traditional way of describing guidance counseling included three aspects: vocational, educational, and personal-social (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). Gysbers and Henderson noted that from the 1920s to the 1980s, the position of a school counselor was the focus, not the program of guidance itself. The position of school counselor was part of personnel service, which today is often called student services. This service was included with other related services such as the school psychologist, speech and hearing, school nurse, and social worker. Because of the position and orientation of school counselors, guidance in the schools was seen as a support service.

The list of duties for counselors became greater, and the lack of organizational structure and district policy for guidance in the schools left counseling guidance undefined. During the 1960s and early 1970s, the current concept of counseling began to take shape. During this time period, there was a reorientation to guidance and what the school counselor was to deliver. A comprehensive guidance program framework was developed which is still being used today. Increasingly, comprehensive programs were being implemented in schools through the 1990s. The position of the counselor changed and is replacing the old view of counseling. Comprehensive guidance programs became the major way of organizing and managing guidance in schools (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000).

**Principals.** Principals play a central role in curtailing bullying in the United States. Smith and Birney (2005) noted that the principal's function as a school leader suggested that they were

the ones that set the tone of the school and set up the structures for efficient classrooms. Teachers trusted the principal to problem solve and address the issue of bullying. Principals played a key role in creating a safe school environment by influencing the direction the school would take to adopt violence prevention programs. Scott (2008) also noted that principals had different choices available to address violence in their schools. Principals chose and encouraged programs and practices that focused on the preventions of serious disruptive behaviors. They also supported and controlled programs that addressed disruptive student behaviors in the schools. Principals were the key decision makers in the schools, and with appropriate training regarding effective bullying prevention measures they potentially could make a difference (Scott, 2008).

Principals should know how to establish and maintain a safe environment. A child must not only receive academic development from an educational institution, but must also feel safe and comfortable at that institution (DeSouza & Ribeiro, 2005). When students feel threatened, their ability to learn is diminished (Kumpulainen, Rasanen, & Puura, 2001). Principals should know how to anticipate problems such as bullying and take measures to prevent it from occurring while understanding differences in the lived experience and expectations regarding bullying of those from different cultures (Olweus, 2003).

Pepler and Craig (2000) stated that the role of the principal was vital to curtailing bullying. The role of the principal was to record incidents on a tracking sheet to allow him or her to determine if there were repeated infractions. It was the responsibility of the principal to proceed according to the code of conduct that the school or district had developed. The principal needed to take certain steps, such as informing parents and determining consequences by consulting with the school board policy. It was also the role of the principal to determine if police should be called to address the situation. The roles of administrative staff in the school



were very important to the overall effectiveness of a model program to curtailing bullying. The No Child Left Behind 2001 Act (NCLB) stated that every community should have an effective principal. Part of the effective principal's role was to address bullying and have a safe school environment. Under NCLB, school safety was addressed and became one of the new duties of principals (Scott, 2008).

### **History of Legislative Initiatives in the United States**

United States legislative initiatives in response to bullying involved complicated processes which will be explained in this section. Even though schools are governed by a complex set of interconnected state and federal laws, the majority of policies and practices concerning disciplinary practices are crafted at the state and local levels. Many of the specific policies pertaining to school suspension or expulsion are determined at the school level or at the district level, which involve a combination of state legislative policy and local school board district policy (Limber & Small, 2003). Legislative responses to bullying appeared to be the impetus for establishing district policies about bullying (Bethel, 2004). The review of literature did not find any discussions about if this form of legislative involvement exists in Mexico to the extent that it does in the United States.

**Federal.** President George W. Bush presented a comprehensive educational reform initiative that focused on school accountability called No Child Left Behind in 2001. This was a reauthorization of the Reform Act of 1965 affecting the education of all students K-12. NCLB included the accountability piece of educational reform and also included initiatives related to school safety. The responsibility was given to schools to create school safety plans that included tracking and reporting crime statistics and threats to school safety. This act fundamentally stated that students have the right to a safe learning environment.

Garrity (1997) stated that bullying problems in the school setting were indeed a safety issue and were attracting the attention of teachers, principals, and parents across the country. This increasing attention is due to youth violence and the behavior management of aggressive children taking up increasing amounts of valuable school time and state education resources. Lodge and Frydenberg (2004) noted that 1.6 million school-age students in the United States were being bullied at least once a week. Such statistics about the drain on resources led many to rethink how school policies directed the safety of students and curtail the problem of violence. In fact, American policymakers began urgently seeking solutions to school bullying and violence in recent years. This increased awareness has led to legislation in some states addressing the issue of bullying and violence.

**State.** The majority of US states have required school districts to adopt an anti-bullying policy. Colorado, New Hampshire, and West Virginia were the latest to pass legislation that required schools to put into effect an anti-bullying policy. Massachusetts has allocated one million dollars to “bully-proof” its schools. Similar legislation concerning anti-bullying has passed in the 32 states (see Appendix A).

Many schools districts have adopted a *zero tolerance* policy meaning three instances and the student was expelled or suspended from school. An official US government website called *Access Washington* stated that by August 1, 2011 each school district should have adopted or amended a policy that prohibits the harassment, intimidation, or bullying of any students. This initiative served to protect students and their right to a safe environment by curtailing criminal behavior and violence.

**Local.** School laws, rules, and policies alone did not stop the potential harmful actions of bullying. Unfortunately, bullying had detrimental effects for both the bully and the victim

(Bethel, 2004). Children who were chronic bullies seemed to remain bullies as adults (Sourander et al., 2007). Almost seven percent of American's eighth-graders stayed home at least once a month because of bullies. Victims—as well as bullies—must learn to integrate into the mainstream of school society and become better skilled in peer interaction. All students should have the same opportunity to be involved in school and be provided with a safe environment of learning. But unfortunately, children who were identified as bullies at age eight were three times as likely as other youths to break the law by age 30 (Hazler & Denham, 2002).

Sometimes it was difficult to distinguish between bullying and criminal acts. Whether or not bullying—in terms of teasing, intimidation, or rumor spreading—could be labeled a crime is determined by state statutes, age, and the seriousness of the offense. The definition of crime as it is related to crime in the school and community is specifically referred to as a “violation of ... criminal law, whether or not the act is detected, reported, or officially acted upon” (Hazler & Denham, 2002).

Principals need to acknowledge this law in their respective states as it pertains to criminal acts within a school setting. Individual school districts develop policies that particularly relate to the laws and guidelines enforced by the state. Specific instructions may be provided by school districts to principals and teachers for reporting any incident of this nature.

### **Davis School District's Bullying Intervention**

In the United States school district where this study took place, school discipline plans were required to contain a component specifically addressing bullying. Students have a right to obtain an education free of violence and intimidation under Safe School Policy established in Davis School District. This requirement arose after the legislature passed a resolution encouraging schools to have a *Bullying Plan* followed by the State Board amending the

administrative rule to include bullying. The Utah State Board of Education Administrative Code (2006) is in Appendix B.

**Follow the Gysbers Model.** Davis School District utilizes Gysbers Model (2000) to curtail and prevent school bullying. Gysbers noted that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, guidance in schools emerged in a response to dramatic changes that had occurred in the industrial, occupational, educational, and social structures and institutions of the time. The Gysbers model contains three major elements: (a) content, (b) organizational framework, and (c) resources (Appendix C).

The first area of the Gysbers model deals with content. This area identifies student competencies the school district considered important for students to master as a result of their participation in the district's comprehensive guidance program. These competences were grouped in different ways that included specific grade levels or areas of career, education, and personal development.

The Gysber model's organizational framework contains both structural components and program components. The structural component provides a rationale for the program and lists the basic assumptions that pull the program together. The program components identify four parts that organize the delivery of the program's guidance activities and interventions. These components are guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive service, and system support. The curriculum component provides a way to impart guidance content to students in a systematic way. Individual planning helps students fulfill the need to systematically plan, monitor, and manage their development and to consider and take action on their next steps personally, educationally, and occupationally. The component of responsive services was

included because of the need to respond to the direct, immediate concerns of students which involved crisis counseling, referral, or consultation with parents, teachers, or other specialists.

The last component of the Gysber model is system support that allowed the other guidance processes to be effective through a variety of support activities, such as staff development, research, and curriculum development. System support also encompassed the need for the guidance programs to provide appropriate support to other programs in school. These basic guidance components serve as organizers for other guidance methods, techniques, and resources required in a comprehensive guidance program (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000).

A school counselor's time was an important element in the comprehensive model. They should spend their time in all four components of the total program. Eighty percent of a school counselor's time should be spread across the first three components that constitute direct service to students' components of the program. The remaining 20% should be devoted to the system support component. According to the Gysbers (2000) model, different levels require different allocations of the counselor's time. For example, at the elementary level, the school counselor spent time working to teach the curriculum component more than the secondary counselor. Secondary education spent more time in individual planning.

It was critical for such a program to have the support and involvement of everyone to make the comprehensive guidance program a success. Not only did the program need the support of all the school staff, it also needed the financial backing of the school district (Pepler & Craig, 2000). In support of the comprehensive program in Davis School District, the district grant writing department wrote a grant requesting financial support to place counselors in both elementary and secondary schools. The funds provided by the grant were diminished over time,

but the Davis School District continued to fund counselors at both levels through other funding sources as they saw the value of having counselors in school of all levels.

Davis School District has followed the Gysber's (2000) model and has devoted time and energy to address this issue under the component of responsive services. The district has developed four lesson plans that address bullying. In conjunction with these plans, eight books were used to illustrate and demonstrate the breadth and scope of bullying. The books addressed bullying at different academic grade levels (Appendix D). They also touched on different aspects of the bullying lessons.

**Implement lessons.** The lesson plans organized by Davis School District provided an outline for professionals to follow. These outlines and lessons were aligned with the Utah State Office of Education guidelines and acted as supplements to the curriculum of Davis School District. Before lessons begin in schools, parents were informed of the problem of bullying and what was taking place in the lessons. The lessons were designed for kindergarten through sixth grade. Each lesson was broken up into sections and each section contained a message from the counselor. The lesson, in addition, had information that was sent home for parents (Appendix E).

The first lesson was designed to increase skills to deal with bullies while not overly sensitizing the students. One of the challenges counselors face was ensuring they addressed the seriousness of bullying while making a distinction between being a bully and teasing amongst friends. It was important for the child to understand and interpret teasing, or normal behavior, compared to bullying. This lesson also provided an excellent time to review the need to approach situations calmly and not jump to conclusions. Pre and post-tests were given to the students to verify student understanding in Appendix F and G.

The next lesson involved stating expectations and reviewing the prior lesson. This lesson continued the bullying discussion and addressed the challenge of dealing with a bully situation. This lesson, like other lessons, was taught through children's literature. Goals were set during this lesson to help the students curtail bullying and know how to deal with bullying. Students practiced going through the steps of who they can contact and how to address the situation. Each lesson has alternate books listed as well that can be used to enhance student learning.

The third lesson involved teaching not only students but parents and teachers as well, a shared vocabulary which can empower the student to negotiate the conflicts and help define their relationships in healthier ways as mentioned in Chapter One. Students learned about resolutions and possible facts they could present in conversation. Here the victims had a language to express what was happening, how it felt, and what was required of them to feel safe and protected at school. Parents and students were encouraged to approach school administration and take an active role in supporting a safe school environment.

In the fourth lesson, students were taught that bullies are people as well. Students were reminded what relational aggression and toxic friendships are and how they needed to recognize when a friend has become a bully. Also addressed in this lesson was the fact that bullies might be reacting to something painful in their own lives. Students were taught to have empathy for victims and how to respond to bullies. Appropriate strategies were reviewed to stop the hurt without the victim becoming a bully. These lesson plans were an excellent example of bullying prevention initiatives, and will be highlighted in my study within the Davis School District.

**Apply a Bullying Prevention Conceptual Framework.** In addition to the Davis School District's model, for the purposes of this study I—with the help of my academic advisor—have developed an initial conceptual framework for bullying prevention pathways based on the

literature review. Appendix H includes this bullying framework developed specifically to reflect the pathways of influence in a school setting between principals, counselors, teachers, playground supervisors, and parents. This model is subject to change as the study evolves. As an initial explanation, this model posited that administration plays a key role as principals initially influence counselors. Counselors then influence parents, individuals, groups, teaching, and teachers. Finally, teachers exert influence on the school environment, classroom management, and discipline.

### **Summary**

For decades, researchers have strongly communicated that bullying takes place in our public schools (Smith & Brain, 2000). However, a void has existed in research investigating the preparation that principals receive to address the problem either in the United States or Mexico. Bullying occurs on the playground, classroom, school hallways, or wherever there is limited supervision. Bullying truly places an emotional strain on the victims. Many victims become quiet, cautious, insecure, and have difficulty asserting themselves. They can become socially detached and have a low self-esteem later in life.

Even given these consequences, few studies address the issue of bullying in the United States or Mexico and the effect that principals may have curtailing this problem. Yet, the scarcity of studies unfortunately has not mirrored a scarcity in bullying effects. Many episodes of violence continually occur because of bullying. Recently, these effects have become such an issue in the U.S. that lawmakers have stepped in to mandate that states implement guidelines to help address the problem in schools. Indeed, currently, districts and schools were required to establish policies and guidelines to address the issue of bullying (Scott, 2008).



School bullying is a serious threat to the children involved. At least 30 percent of children in the United States reported feeling the effects of bullying (Reid, Monsen, & Rivers, 2004). As the literature review has shown, bullying is not merely a school issue but also a dilemma for society to the extent that lawmakers and policymakers have recently begun establishing guidelines for districts and schools. Dozens of states have established programs, and yet many districts still search for an answer to curtail bullying in schools. Davis School District is only one example.

Clearly, more attention is needed to understand and define school bullying. Throughout this literature review, a recurrent theme reflected the idea that benefits can be gleaned from interventions and researching how those who have an impact in the lives and policies surrounding students—specifically principals—can help implement anti-bullying programs. Principals must work with school staff, families, colleges, and their communities to provide a safe school environment in which citizens care for each other.

### **Chapter Three Research Methods**

This chapter contains the following sections: the purpose of the research, interview construction and protocol, description of the sample schools, research questions, data collection, data analysis, and the possible limitations and delimitations of this research. Each section contains detailed information to help explain the research process.

This study is a qualitative comparative case study investigation to describe bullying through the perceptions of personnel in two school sites. Secondly, the effective role of the principal in confronting bullying was investigated. This research was accomplished through a comparative case study of bullying issues found in an elementary school in Utah and a school in Mexico.

#### **Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of this study was to describe, define, and explain bullying in Mexico and in the United States. Through this investigation, findings described definitions and perceptions held by principals, counselors, and teachers regarding bullying as a concept and “problem” in both sites. This case study developed a theory to explain how these definitions, perceptions, and context affected attitudes and practices regarding interventions to curtail the problem.

Thus, the intent of this case study was to investigate, compare, and contrast bullying and the concept maps or definitions that may affect practices of principals, counselors, and teachers, (or the individuals in Mexico who fill these roles) in both sites as they deal with—or choose not to deal with—bullying behavior. I interviewed principals, counselors, and teachers in commensurate positions in Mexico to understand their roles and perceptions in collaboration with American principals, who I posited to be the critical players in bullying prevention. I

studied a Title I school in a Northern County School in Davis School District and an elementary school in Ixtapaluca, Mexico to understand how bullying unfolded in these schools.

In response to government policies and the increase in school violence, Davis School District has taken a course of action to address bullying within the schools in accordance with Utah law that requires schools to develop both a process to include the community in developing policy about bullying along with many other required features. The district trained principals, counselors, and additional staff to address the legal requirements. Through a short pilot study with teachers, principals, and counselors from Mexico the Mexicans noted they believed that bullying probably did not exist in Mexico. However, through the case study method employed in this study, in-depth information and understanding was gleaned about the school system in Mexico that lead to the conclusion that bullying does exist in Mexican schools.

### **Research Design**

This research was designed as the comparison of two case studies. The first case examined bullying in the United States, and the second case examined bullying in Mexico. In each case, I examined how principals, counselors, and teachers defined the problem of bullying in schools and their perceptions of how and when bullying existed at their school.

This case study used a grounded theory methodology as the qualitative research approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1998a; Strauss & Corbin, 1998b), which derives theory from data, and not vice versa. This is important to note because data collection and analysis were the catalyst to generating a theory of bullying and the role of the principal defining and understanding how to address bullying. In other words, the data analysis came first in my study, and theory generation followed. Through my research I employed a constant comparative method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998a)—within the grounded theory methodology approach—

utilizing interviews and personal observations and other methods of data gathering such as journal taking and observations. Through the coding process, I developed a theoretical model of defining bullying, in addition to roles and perceptions of principals, counselors, and teachers. I coded data records independently from each other.

**Institutional Review Board Procedure.** An application for clearance to conduct the research was made by both the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Brigham Young University and by Davis School District and approved. This IRB protocol followed all the guidelines set by the University to ensure the legitimacy of the study and protects the privacy of all respondents. I adhered to the Davis School District guidelines that were followed according to the educational policies of the Davis School District and a letter was submitted to Brigham Young University giving me permission to go ahead with my study. All information was kept in a locked filing cabinet in my office. I assured the respondents that all information gathered would be kept confidential and within a secured locked filing cabinet, downloaded to one computer, and locked with a password.

**Demographics and sample.** The Title I school in Davis School District that I selected had similar characteristics to the site chosen in Mexico including size of student population, community, economic surroundings, and the socio-economic backgrounds of the students and their families. I confirmed this information from official district records outlining the characteristics of all Title I schools. The demographics of the school included population, socio-economic background (as exhibited by free and reduced lunch percentages), and ethnic diversity. I met with the director of the central office in Mexico to compare the demographics of the school including population, socio-economic background; this was exhibited through reports from the central office of the school. The two schools involved in the study were both elementary schools.

Table 1

*Demographics of the Sample*

Interviewees	Utah School	Age	Mexico School	Age
Principal	Male	45-50	Female	45-50
Counselor	Female	30-35	Female	30-35
Special Education	Female	25-30	Female	35-40
Kindergarten	Female	40-45	Female	40-45
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Female	45-50	Female	45-50
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Female	50-55	Female	35-40
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Female	25-30	Female	35-40
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Female	45-50	Female	45-50
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Female	40-45	Male	40-45
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Male	30-35	Female	35-40

At each school in Utah and Mexico, I constructed a comprehensive list of teachers. I asked the principals for recommendations of which teachers could be potential interviewees based on which subjects would be able to share the most information pertaining to my study. I also got the name of the counselor of each school. After meeting with the principal I selected nine teachers from the principal's recommendations. Interview subjects for each case included the principals, a teacher from each grade level (Kindergarten through Sixth grade), a special education teacher and a school counselor. The total number of informants in the Utah school are 9 teachers, 8 female and 1 male, with a male principal and a female counselor. In the Mexican school it was pretty much the same, except it was a female principal, 1 female counselor, 9 teachers, 1 male and 8 female. The male/ to female ratio is about the same in both schools.

Table 2

*School Site Similarities*

School Site	Student Population	Teacher Staffing	Demographics	Location
Northern County School	420	16.5	Low SES	Urban
Escuela del Sur	432	12.0	Low SES	Urban

**Case studies.** I investigated which schools would be appropriate to choose for my research by looking at the number of teachers, size of the student population, and economic status. I chose a Title I school in Davis School District, Utah and selected one school in Ixtapaluca, Mexico that paralleled the school in Davis School District in terms of teachers, student population size and high poverty level. I met with the principal of the school in Mexico to make sure that the number of teachers and economic status of the school were also comparable to the Title I school in Utah.

**Utah elementary school.** I aimed to select a Title I school in Utah given the high poverty level that defined these schools as “at-risk”. I began researching the 14 Title 1 schools from Davis School District records. In terms of background, Title I schools are schools that receive additional federal funding according to the low socio-economic status of parents’ income. Each of the schools is rated by free and reduced lunch status. Schools are ranked by how many parents or homeless persons apply for free or reduced lunch indicating the level of federal funding and ratio of children from low-income backgrounds. Upon reviewing the free and reduced lunch percentages of 14 schools, I narrowed the school selection to the four schools with the highest percentages of free and reduced lunch. After working with the district, it came to light through discussion with administrators that Title 1 schools possess more complex and potentially

confounding issues. Therefore, I used another selection criterion of choosing a school, from the narrowed list of four, in which I had worked previously and in which I felt had bullying issues in need of further exploration.

***Mexican elementary school.*** Selecting the school from Mexico proved to be more challenging. To begin my search, I discovered that the North County District had a Spanish Immersion program that involved schools in Mexico. This Spanish Immersion program employed several teachers from Mexico. I invited all the Spanish Immersion teachers to a meeting and explained my study. After meeting the teachers, I gathered information about potential schools and began to make contacts with principals in Mexico. I shared with the principals what I wanted to accomplish in my study and explained the selection criteria and description of the school I had selected in the North County District. After contacting principals in Mexico, one school was described almost identically to the school that I was studying in North County. Listening to educators in both Mexico and Northern Utah on the topic of demographics and social issues in their schools, many of the responses were parallel (i.e. while spoken in different languages I noted the same meaning in their statements). The principal of this similar school visited the school in Northern County and we discussed further the study relating to her school and the findings.

**Data Collection.** At the two identified case sites, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the informants to understand how they define and characterize bullying. My interviewing and observations were an integral part of the case study method.

I created my own reflective researcher's journal regarding my observations and pursued any documents regarding bullying policy or interventions at either school site. I entered the information into my reflective researcher's journal. In this journal, I kept track of all comments

and observations during the interview process by writing them down as they arose in the interviews. It seem like sometimes I would be able to get information from the interviewee that they were willing to share more off the record in Mexico than when they were being interviewed. I am not sure what made them keep their silence during the interview process. Whether, this had to do with policy or concern for their employment. I also had the opportunity to meet with other staff members while visiting the sites. These notes also included events that were sponsored by the selected schools, comments by colleagues, or trainings occurring during the course of research. I audio recorded the interviews with the permission of the informants and transcribed all the interviews and notes.

The interviews utilized an episodic approach (Flick, 1997), to get rich, deep and meaningful data. It also involved analysis and coding of initial interviews before subsequent interviews were conducted. This process resulted in a generative and evolutionary growth and change of focus over time in the questions asked of interview subjects.

I conducted interviews in a semi-structured process. I set up the interviews to encourage more conversation, which in turn provided more data. As I developed an order and language of the interview questions, I put into place additional questions as I progressed through the interviews so that individual interviews and the overall process would be more effective (e.g. changing my order of questions or language to suit the interviewee's train of thought). I also followed up with previous interviewees based on any interesting new information that arose from subsequent interviews.

The procedures that I employed involved developing interview questions and continually revisiting questions based on the findings during the process of interviewing candidates. Data collection began with three initial interviews at the school in Davis County Utah. After



transcribing and coding these initial interviews, I reviewed the interview questions and findings. I followed-up with other researchers to determine if each question was eliciting useful data. I would interview the candidates during the day and that evening I would transcribe the interview and look at the data and information gathered. If the findings warranted a change or restructure of the questions or interview practices, these were reformulated accordingly. I continued with the questions and interviews at Davis, while concurrently transcribing and coding until reaching data saturation. For the Mexican case study, I would arrive at the site at 7:00 am in the morning and they would begin my interviews. I would leave the site at 7:00 pm in the evening. Again I would review the information and see if any changes may be warranted. I followed the same format repeating the same steps, informed but not limited by the findings from the Davis County site. But, at the second site, I found it necessary to make further revisions to the interview questions to account for cultural and contextual differences between the sites.

I created a conceptual framework demonstrating the pathways of defining and making meaning regarding bullying in both schools which guided the development of a pilot interview protocol for principals, counselors, and teachers. In these pilot interviews, I also asked informants to add important details and critique the research questions. Based on my review of these pilot interviews, I developed my final interview questions. I used this pilot process because those involved in education are more likely to recognize whether or not different questions capture the entire construct of bullying compared to those that are not in the field of education and do not deal with students on a daily basis.

As I gathered information from the interviews, I began to see a clearer picture of the construct of bullying in schools in the United States and in Mexico and began to merge the data collected. Throughout the process, I began to recognize that my original assumptions that I had

presumed from the information gathered and from my literature review were not totally correct. Consequently, the instrument evolved as my research progressed. The evolution of the instrument is a natural outgrowth of the constant comparative qualitative process.

The interview method also allowed follow-up questions when necessary. A follow-up question arose if the interviewee did not completely respond to the question, did not understand the question that was asked, or if subsequent interviews indicated the need for further clarification or information. The interview was also designed to provide the interviewee ample time to respond without constraint. As I asked questions, I also explicitly told interviewees that they could add any other comments that they felt were pertinent to the subject, giving them added time between questions.

I held the interviews in a private room at the school where they worked. If the interviewee preferred, I conducted the interview at a designated office in another school building, or another site of the interviewees' choosing. I audio recorded each interview digitally and took notes throughout our time together not only regarding the content of what they said but also my impressions and notes about the interview process. Since the dependability of a study involves acknowledging and documenting the change—or qualitative ebb-and-flow—in the research as the story unfolds, I attempted to account for changing conditions during the entire interview process. I did this by making and examining my notes throughout the entire process, not only after completing the interviews as is common in much research, to audit whether or how any challenges to my original assumptions occurred.

Through this process, I also gathered additional information that came from other conversations held outside of the interview time. One such opportunity occurred when I met with the Regional Area Director of the school. I found it very interesting that she felt the problem was

being resolved by the training that was offered at the beginning of the school year. This was contrary to the data gathered during the interview process. I also had the opportunity to meet with other young adults that were working on their master's degree, who were visiting the administrator home where I had stayed. They felt that bullying was a new issue in Mexico and that much more training needed to occur in the schools, with parents, and with the public in general. Part of their degree was to go into the school and teach about the subject matter. But, they felt this approach wasn't enough. It was interesting that people were willing to share a lot while we were off campus.

### **Data Analysis**

Throughout the interview process, I used the NVIVO 6.0 program to help me construct a log of coded entries with the information gathered during each interview. I coded the data into categories that resulted from the interviews, such as principal training, responses to bullying, extant interventions, and counselor and teacher involvement in either training or dealing with bullying in the school. I also used the NVIVO 6.0 software to accomplish the qualitative analysis of the data from the observations and archival documents. Finally, I analyzed both case studies to compare and contrast the findings (Richards, 2005).

After coding the responses into initial categories (and analyzing differences in responses within the categories), I grouped them into more aggregated higher-level nodes. For example, if I had four initial categories for teacher statements about the characteristics of the bully (e.g. mean, physical appearance, verbal aggression, and attention-getter), these categories were labeled into a higher level coding of personality characteristics. The identification of final themes was based on whether a 50% threshold was met. That is, if 50% or more of the respondents mentioned content included in the category, it was retained as a theme.

For each theme, I developed a table of sample quotations to illustrate each theme, including a citation to identify the source of each quotation according to informant attributes, such as position, gender, and age. I did so anticipating that gender or age themes may identify patterns that may inform future research. Also, at the beginning of each interview, the age, gender, years of teaching, and levels of education were noted for each participant.

Through the analyses, I created an audit trail for future researchers to evaluate my process and findings, should anyone choose or need to do so. To ensure that all the information was correctly coded, I created and frequently reviewed a code-book providing a master list of all codes and their definitions. Any changing conditions, such as questions concerning different incidents in the research, were also addressed in this code-book. Due to confidentiality, I cannot and did not describe informants with any identifying information, and I maintained confidentiality with all direct references to the data in the study.

I followed an emic approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Richards, 2005) to allow the findings to emerge from the data. The within-case analyses were based on the qualitative data collected at each site, including my own research journal. Each interview was individually coded and analyzed, and interview data was analyzed across informants at each site to identify themes and patterns that emerge from the data. Additional informants were added as necessary to achieve data saturation until new information ceased to arise from the interviews. The cross-case analyses compared bullying at the two sites in Davis District and Ixtapaluca, Mexico to more clearly define and understand bullying both within and across both contexts.

This process involved coding nodes and themes, developing an information table, ensuring confidentiality, and refining my theoretical model of bullying. I began to analyze my data as soon as I started my fieldwork by entering it into a computer program (NVIVO 6.0).

I looked for themes and patterns that emerged from the interviews as well as relationships between the themes and patterns. I searched and analyzed for interventions being used by principals, counselors, and teachers. In addition, I searched for descriptions, definitions, and meanings of bullying as well as *when* and *in what situations* bullying occurs, paying particular attention to contextual conditions (e.g. bullying when the teacher is absent). I also tracked how often bullying occurred. I investigated how themes that emerged from their answers relate to the study's research questions.

Through the use of the NVIVO program, I broke down all interviews into different categories. Using open coding, I also coded data into different categories or nodes, allowing these categories to emerge and evolve to fit the data. This analysis informed the development of future interview and follow up questions. To avoid losing sight of the richness of the information that the interviewees shared with me, I routinely referred back to the typed transcripts and data records during the coding and categorizing process. I referred often to the interview data to understand the meaning the interviewees wished to convey. In other words, the coded categories are not simple word counts, but rather the textual data from the interviewed person indicating an idea or construct, no matter which specific word or name they used.

### **Delimitations of the Research**

This study involved one Title I school in one school district in northern Utah and one comparable school in Ixtapaluca, Mexico. Since this study was been set up to investigate only these two cases, a Utah school and a Mexican school, generalization of the identified issues and themes concerning bullying cannot be made to other school settings in Utah or Mexico.

**Summary**

Through researching definitions, roles, and perceptions of principals, counselors, and teachers in this case study I hoped to increase the understanding of these school personnel in elementary schools in the United States and Mexico regarding the complex processes of bullying. After reviewing the literature, my perception is that defining bullying is a complex process that involves cooperation and open dialogue among school personnel. I used a qualitative comparative case study method to investigate the perspectives of principals, counselors, and teachers in two elementary schools in Utah and Mexico regarding how they defined and perceived bullying and their involvement in addressing the bullying problem followed by suggestions to reduce bullying.

## Chapter Four Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to report the findings of the two case studies. Findings include information about the environments of the schools, samples, bullying and the perceptions of the interviewees regarding the issues. The research questions were:

1. How is bullying perceived and defined in the two sites by school personnel?
2. What is seen as the effective role (if any) of the principal in confronting bullying behavior in the school?

The findings focus on the perceptions of the 18 teachers interviewed. The responses of the two principals and two counselors are also reported.

### Case Study Schools

It is important to compare the physical settings of both locations in this study. Both environments displayed similar demographics in terms of socio-economic status, number of teachers and student enrollment. However, the physical structures of the two school buildings were different. Beyond physical differences, time structuring differences were noted as well.

**Case study Utah.** The school in the Davis County in Utah, which I will refer to as Northern County School, reflected an open architectural concept. In my observations I would consider it a typical American school. As you drive up to the school, it has a large parking lot and is very inviting. All classrooms were inside and all windows faced out to the playground. The playground was open and students were able to play freely with playground equipment provided by the school. In terms of staff, Northern County School hired one limited supervisor who had playground supervision duties. The students were released in increments of 15 minutes and not all students were released at the same time during lunch. Students attended school in a six and

half hour block period with a 15 minute recess in the morning and 30 minute lunch and 15 minute recess in the afternoon.

There is a pleasant front office where you are greeted by a secretary or other office staff available. You have comfortable chairs to sit in and you can see updated computers in the office staff areas. There is also a computer for students to check in if they arrive late. They have several restrooms designated for students of different age levels. I also observed that everything was quite up to date in the classrooms. Teachers had Smartboards, iPads and computers available in their rooms. In Northern County School, the school had an open invitation policy for parent involvement. After school, students were walked out and they were allowed to walk home freely or were picked up by an adult. As I began to interview the teachers of the Northern County School, I noted that they were very confident in their replies.

**Case study Mexico.** The school in central Mexico which will be referred to as Escuela del Sur was designed with all the classrooms facing into a courtyard. Escuela del Sur considered the courtyard as the playground yet there was no playground equipment. Students created their own entertainment for play. Teachers monitored the playground as they ate their lunch. Students were unsupervised during the time teachers prepared their lunch and while they were exiting the classrooms. From my observations, this timeframe was when most of the aggression occurred. For example, within a 15 minute observation I noted six incidents of aggression. All students were released at the same time. Escuela del Sur students attended school for a five hour block with a 30 minute lunch and recreation period.

I observed the site in Mexico was quite different compared to the school in the US. The school is in the middle of town without any parking. It is enclosed with a large cement fence with bulky metal gates that are guarded. Visitors must be buzzed into the school after someone



opens a small window to see who you are. The office has one secretary that does everything by herself with no assistance. She uses an archaic typewriter and an outdated computer. Visitors need to stand and wait to be seen. If students arrive late they are locked out until roll is taken. If a student is absent too many times, he/she is dismissed from the school and someone else fills the open slot.

The school is enclosed and they have a courtyard for students at recess, but they do not have any equipment. Students need to make their own entertainment or bring things such as card games or marbles. They have one set of restrooms for staff and students. You must bring your own toilet paper and soap to wash your hands.

The classrooms were quite bare. They still had chalkboards, and while I did observe one Smartboard, it was only being used as a whiteboard. There are so many desks crammed in the room that it's difficult for the teacher to reach a student if the need arose. In fact, students must crawl over each other's desks to get to their seats since there is no room for aisles.

In Mexico, parents were not allowed in the building area. At Escuela del Sur parents dropped off students at the front doors at a set time and all students entered the building at the same time.

Then the doors were locked, and if students arrived late they were locked out for 15 minutes. The doors were kept locked for the remainder of the school day. As the interviewer this phenomenon piqued my curiosity. I asked the principal her reasoning for the locking of the doors. She told me that it was an issue of child safety and that this is how it has always been done due to fear that children could be kidnapped and sold. Many of the parents work and some are from single family parents, so there is a large concern that only the authorized adult will pick up and have access to their children. At the end of the day students were walked to the doors by the teachers, the doors unlocked, and students were picked up by parents. A student could only leave the

premises if a parent or authorized adult was there to pick them up. As I began to interview the teachers of the Escuela del Sur, I noted that they were very timid in their replies.

### **Perceptions of Teachers**

Teacher's responses about bullying were the primary source of data in this study. There were also findings from the counselors and principals responses. It is important to repeat before reporting professionals' perceptions that the extant literature describes bullying as a behavior that hurts or harms others and elicits physical aggression involving direct physical attacks (e.g. punching, tripping, kicking, pushing, shoving, hitting, or any other form of physical force against another individual) (Olweus, 2003).

**Nature and extent of bullying.** Both teacher groups in Mexico and Utah identified bullying as a concern. By using a 50% threshold I looked for strong indications of developed major themes. If a theme met this threshold level, I wanted to use this level to compare how close it came to a strong awareness. However, their understanding of bullying differed. Both groups demonstrated a strong grasp on the definition of bullying define by researchers, but the application to situations and incidents did not match their stated understanding of the concept.

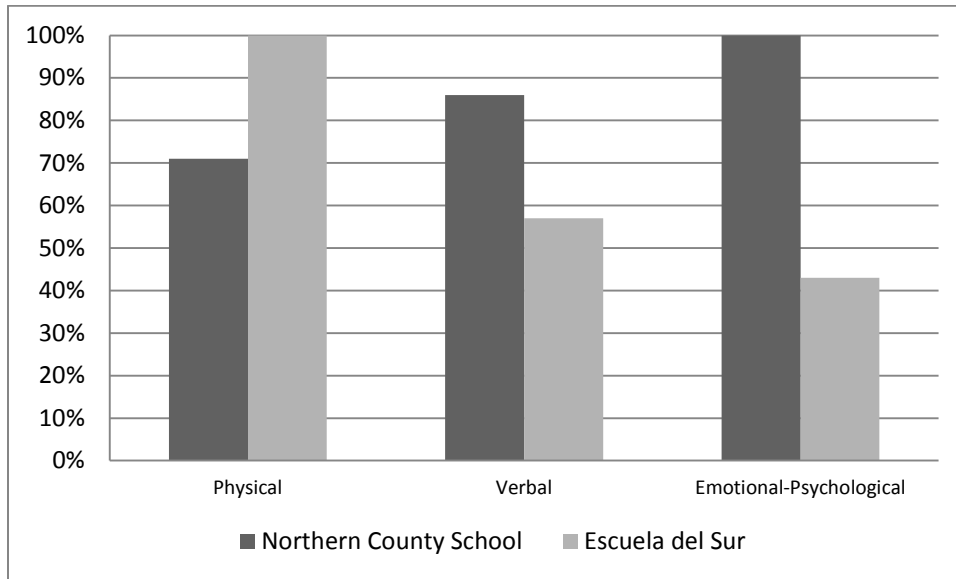
To further elaborate, teachers interviewed in the Northern County School perceived that bullying involved physical, emotional, and verbal abuse. In their responses describing bullying, 71% noted the physical dimension of bullying and 86% noted the verbal element as well. However, 100% responded that an emotional-psychological element was also involved. Many used the same words to describe the dimensions of bullying "It can be threatening them verbally, or physically, instilling fear" (interview 1, 5, and 9). All interviewees noted the instilling of fear such as "being threatened or intimidated by someone else" (interview 2), and "using words or

actions to assert improper authority over someone else” (interview 4). It seemed that they were all well informed of what bullying is and how it affected the school environment.

On the other hand, in Escuela del Sur 100% of teachers identified the physical aspect of bullying—indeed, they described this as a very strong factor of bullying. As I spoke with them, their demeanor would change as they described the physical component to bullying. Their tone and body language became more fervent and angry as they spoke. For example, many teachers noted “it is physical as well as a verbal, being bothered by school mates.” (interview B1, B2, B4, B9). Another reported, “It is a violent conduct one person against another person” (interview B8). As I processed the data, I noted that 57% of interviewees included a verbal element. For example, “Bullying is seen on a regular basis when kids frequently use words or actions to bother or bug others companions, when one wants power over the other.” (interview B 6) It was also reported, “Not only is the physical hurtful, but the verbal that may cause enormous depression in a student”. It interested me that 43% noted an emotional-psychological element, even though this did not meet the threshold to be noted as a theme. I felt it was an interesting point of discussion because I kept reading and going over the interviews, I felt it would be much stronger than it was. For example, as one teacher noted, “It is bad treatment of one physically, psychologically and emotionally” (interview B9). Another colleague similarly responded, “It is a psychological effect that it has on a student” (interview B5). Interestingly, not all interviewees displayed the same conviction when they described verbal or emotional elements of bullying. Some felt more passionately than others, as one teacher stated in a resigned tone “It occurs within all schools, it is physical and psychological” (interview B2).

When comparing the two schools, I found that the Mexico teachers reported bullying as more of a physical issue than anything else. They were willing to admit bullying comprised of

emotional and verbal aspects, but none of the Mexican teachers spoke about these tenets as strongly as the U.S. teachers in the Northern County School. The teachers interviewed in the Northern County School felt bullying was more of an emotional issue (see Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* Percentage of teacher perceptions of the elements of bullying

When I interviewed Northern County's teachers they appeared very confident in their answers. They were quick to respond and were aware of the topic of bullying and what was expected of them. However, in Mexico the teachers took longer pauses before answering. They appeared very cautious in responding to the concept of bullying. These teachers would often state that bullying has become the new buzz word and they were expected to address the issue, but they received limited instruction and information regarding how to address it. Some information had been given to them through pamphlets and handouts, but they noted little practical instruction or in-service training. They emphasized that the government had forced them to implement a program to address bullying, but they had not received any real formal training or instruction.

Incidentally, while visiting the school in Mexico, I ran into local university students and they shared with me that they were required to complete hours of community service. They said their professor felt they needed to inform educators on bullying. I was surprised upon meeting with them and discussing with them, that it became clear that they truly understood the concept of bullying and what it entailed. So, I asked further about their goals with the information they possessed and their methods of dissemination. They stated that according to their professor and the community service hours they needed to complete, they teach students and teachers about bullying, and they would teach students how to combat bullying. I asked how they felt about their goals and progress. They said they hoped they were making an impact on the students and teachers, but they were not collecting any data to measure their success. I asked how they were sharing the information; they stated they were visiting the classrooms. Sadly, they noted that while they were sharing, the teachers would leave the classroom to use the opportunity for prep time. Later meeting with the principal of the school we spoke about the perceptions and understanding that the teachers had of bullying. I had shared with the principal that the university students understood bullying and what it entail. I also shared that the teachers would often leave during the discussions the university students were having with the students. After a long discussion the principal felt that she was going set up more staff meetings with the university students and invite them to also do a presentation in the evening with parents and students. I felt if the teachers would stay in the classroom with the university students they themselves would have a better understanding and bullying and possibly the laws that were in place in Mexico. The students were limited on the materials they had. It was too costly for the school to copy the lessons that they were sharing with students. The students guarded the materials the University had shared with them because funds were so limit to obtain more.

**Bully appearance and actions.** After probing about the definition of bullying, I asked if teachers could describe a bully by his/her appearance, actions, or any other traits. In Northern County School, 71% of educators felt a bully did not have such defining characteristics. In fact, one educator stated clearly, “I think anyone can be a bully” (interview 1). Another teacher said, “No. There is no particular person that is defined as being a bully. A bully could be anybody” (interview 3). Many others at this school expressed the same comments concerning bullies.

When I interviewed at the Escuela del Sur, I was amazed that 72% reported that a bully could indeed be identified by his or her actions or traits. In other words, only 28% felt that a bully could not be identified by appearance, actions or any other traits. “Well here we have everything, Those that are academically inclined, those that are not academically inclined, Like I said we have everything, those with values and those that haven’t been taught values, so no I don’t believe so”(interview B9) This hearkens back to what the Escuela del Sur teachers felt about how the majority of bullying carried a physical element. They felt that one could identify a bully by what he or she was doing, which parallels what they had stated earlier. For example, one teacher said, “Yes, it is those students that do not learn a lot academically or are not accepted by a sport team” (interview 7B). Another stated, “Yes, they are introverts and they resolve everything by being aggressive, they cannot communicate well” (interview 8B). Yet another reported, “They are not a very calm child, but they are very anxious” (interview 3B).

Throughout this process I was struck by the trend that those in Escuela del Sur felt they could identify a bully simply by actions of the child being aggressive, anxious, or having low self-esteem. I perceived they still had difficulty understanding the complete concept of bullying. They stated that if a child was aggressive he or she was a bully regardless if the action was repeated or not. On the other hand, North County teachers felt that anyone can be a bully, that

you could not really recognize a bully by appearance or actions. Any student, mild mannered or intelligent, smaller or larger than most, wealthy or poor could act as a bully. They were emphatic that there is not one specific identify mark of a bully.

**Characteristics of a victim.** The next content area was the definition of a victim and what this entailed. I asked both groups of teachers to describe what a victim looked like. In the Northern County School, 85% interviewed felt that a victim could be almost anyone. They elaborated that victims could be students within the same grade levels that were smaller in stature than their classmates. As one interviewee specified, a victim is “a small frail person” (interview 5).

This trend stood in direct contrast to what Escuela del Sur teachers noted. They were very sure of themselves that a victim could be identified. Seventy-one percent of teachers felt that students who are victims are passive, quiet, very reserved, and shy. Particularly, the quietest student came up repeatedly as the most victimized. Many teachers stated, “It is the student that is calm, very passive, quiet and reserved” (interview B9, B7, B8). I questioned why, but they often responded that was “just the way it was” (interview B7, B8, B9). They noted bullying usually happens to students that do not speak up for themselves. The Mexican teachers also seemed very confident in their perception that it was only the timid that were bullied. Thus, the Northern County School teachers felt that any person can become a victim in contrast to the Escuela del Sur teachers who felt that only shy, timid, quite students are victims.

**Bullying locations.** I was intrigued by responses teachers gave at the Northern County School about where bullying occurred. Teachers felt that bullying was not a pressing issue at their school. Of the teachers interviewed in the Northern County School, 57% said that they had not seen any bullying, or that it was not a problem at their school. They had phrases like “I’ve

not seen much bullying” (interview 3), “I am trying to think of a specific situation. I am sure it happens, but not in my class” (interview 10). In Northern County School, only 28% of teachers felt that bullying took place on the playground, but not in their classrooms (they were very emphatic about this perception). Suggesting that bullying would occur in their environment seemed to feel like a personal attack to them, based on their body language and tone.

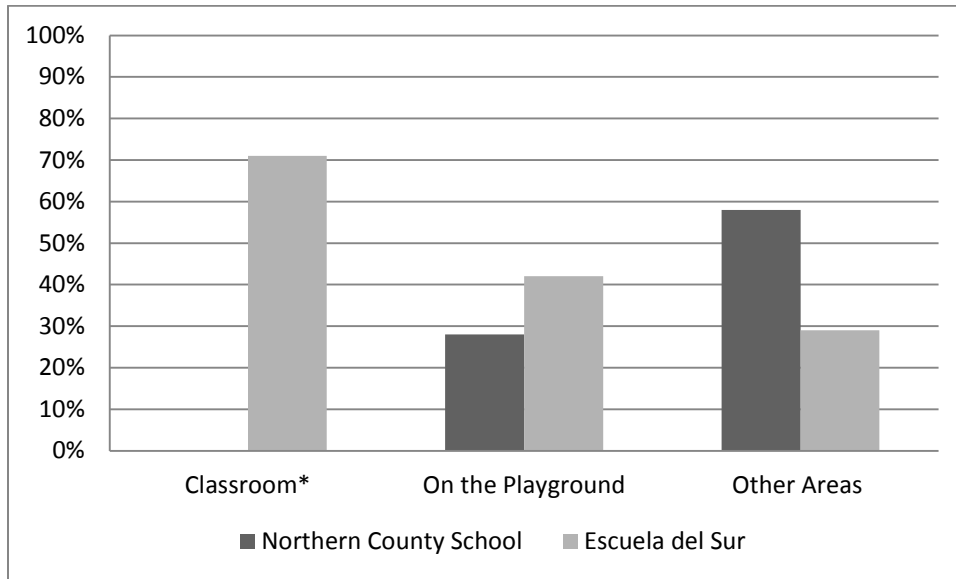
However, 100% of teachers in Escuela del Sur in Mexico felt bullying was an issue and that it occurred constantly in different areas such as the classroom, on the courtyard, on the way to school, and on the way home from school. They stated such things happen at recess and in the classrooms (interview B9, B8).

Regarding their classroom perceptions, it is important to note here the large difference in classroom sizes. In Northern County School, the largest classroom had 29 students and in Escuela de Sur the largest classroom had 52 students. Many of the teachers in Mexico felt these large numbers contributed to the problem. In my observations of the classroom environment, I noted that the classrooms in Escuela del Sur were also packed with desks, wall to wall. There wasn't any room to move from student to student. In Escuela del Sur, there were only about 12 inches to walk in between desks, whereas in the Northern County School, there were at least 24 inches. So this allows the teachers in the Northern County School to make better observations of what was happening within the classroom because the students were positioned further away from each other. In Escuela del Sur the students are so close and there are so many that it is difficult to control everything that goes on in the classroom.

Teachers in the Northern County School felt that a very small percentage of bullying took place in the classroom. Fifty-eight percent noted the majority of bullying behavior took place in other areas, emphasizing that the playground was a main problem area. However, in Mexico



71% of teachers felt that bullying took place in classrooms while the teacher was present and felt that 42% of bullying took place in the school yard. Only 29% of bullying took place in other areas such as walking home or walking to school (see Figure 2).



\*Northern County Teachers felt that no bullying occurred in their classrooms.

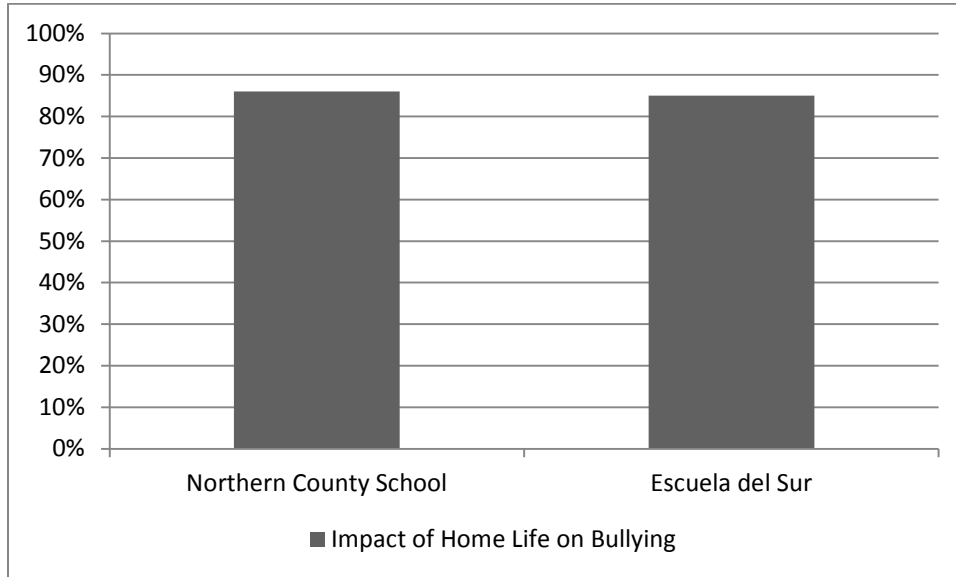
*Figure 2.* Teacher perception of bullying locations

Perceptions of school principals and counselors matched the teachers. In Northern County School principals reported that bullying occurred on the playground and other areas, but not in the classroom. They attributed this to the direct supervision of the students by school personnel. Northern County School counselor's perception was that bullying occurred only in areas other than the classroom, such as at home or out of the educational environment. The school administration in Mexico felt that bullying was a school issue, and that they were dealing with it both in the classroom and the courtyard. The counselor in Escuela del Sur felt that bullying was occurring everywhere and that it all stemmed from the home environment. This counselor believed the only way the issue could be resolved is for the government to step into the homes and educate the parents. This theme will be explored further in the next section.

**Home life and bullying behaviors.** Indeed, one interesting theme centered around educators' emphasis on the home life of the student and the impact it had on a student's behavior. Feedback from both schools was almost identical. Of the teachers from Northern County School, 86% felt that the issues from bullying came from the type of home life the student had. They stated that most students mimic what they see or are taught at home and bring it into the school environment. This finding was mirrored by the teachers in Escuela del Sur. Eighty-five percent reported that the home life impacted the bullying behavior of the student. This common theme was reflected in the following statement by one teacher: "We really can't have any success without the parents" (interview B4). They felt what a student is shown or taught at home is what they bring to school. Both groups also felt that how the student is treated at home is the way the student will treat his school companions.

After completing my interviews in Mexico, I just happen to have a meeting informally with different elementary school principals from the area and elementary teachers from the school where I was holding my interviews, some I had interviewed, and some were from the school but weren't on the suggested lists from the principal. They voiced their opinion that bullying is a parent and government responsibility. This meeting came about because a teacher wanted to go out to lunch, several teachers joined us and a couple principals from schools in the area heard that I was visiting the school. They want to talk to me about questions concerning schools in the United States. From that discussion I had gathered that the teachers and the principals were on the same page that most things that happen at the school are imposed by the government without additional support. They also were very strong that first parents needed to take on the responsibility of the actions of their students and teaching them at home.

In an interesting contrast, when interviewing principals and counselors neither group mentioned the home life of the student. Both principals and counselors felt that it was the school's responsibility to educate students on what is acceptable in school (see Figure 3).



*Figure 3.* Percentage of teacher perceptions of the impact of home life on bullying

**Teachers' Involvement.** The next set of findings dealt with whether or not the behavior of teachers had any effect on bullying. Some of the ideas that emerged indicated that teacher visibility, teacher supervision and teacher training had some effect.

**Importance of visibility.** Particularly, I wanted to discover any differences between cases in terms of teachers' beliefs that their involvement would impact the frequency of bullying. Teachers in the Northern County School felt that bullying only occurred when students were unsupervised. A large percentage (71%) of teachers interviewed in the Northern County School felt if students were aware that an adult was visible that bullying was not likely to occur. "I think that the students are aware that I'm aware that they are attempting to bully somebody that they won't do it" (interview 1).

Teachers in Escuela del Sur felt bullying occurred whether the teacher was present or not. Eighty-six percent of the teachers in the Escuela del Sur responded very emphatically that it would not make a difference if teachers were present or not. This is the exact opposite of what the Northern County School teachers reported. A teacher in the Escuela del Sur stated that students were not afraid because often the teachers are overwhelmed with so many students in the classrooms that poor behavior remained unaddressed or unnoticed. Some teachers commented that there is a fear that if they do correct a child, they may be disciplined by the state or federal government. They attributed this to the Child Act Law 1989 (Derechos de Niño's) in Mexico. A telephone number is posted in each classroom and throughout the building. If a child felt that the teacher was demeaning or improperly correcting a student, the student could call that number and the teacher would receive a visit by a case worker to ensure the child was safe in the classroom and within the school. School administrators in Mexico felt their hands were tied with this measure in place.

***Role of interventions.*** In the Northern County School, 71 % of teachers felt they impacted students' behavior by informing them about the effects of their decisions concerning bullying. They felt giving the information to the students' facilitated good choices. The teachers also felt that if they were proactive in their classrooms by making students aware of bullying and its consequences that helped address and curtail the problem of bullying. Likewise, the teachers in Escuela del Sur almost equally (73%) felt they would have a potential impact on bullying outcomes by informing students of how bullying directly affects their lives if they could have the training and information necessary. (This seems in contrast to what they perceive occurring in their classrooms.)

It was interesting to reflect that both the Northern County School and Escuela del Sur had similar percentages in terms of perceptions that informing students through training and instruction would curtail bullying and encourage positive collaboration among students. The difference was in how instruction is disseminated. Northern County School had regular student lessons occurring throughout the year and teachers receive bullying prevention instruction as well. Even though a large percentage in Escuela del Sur felt that lessons, instruction and training would impact bullying incidents, neither teachers or students are receiving enough training or information. Specifically, in the last two years teachers have received one lesson and a few pamphlets. They stated they did not receive any instruction on the pamphlets. They were only told to read them and find ways to incorporate them into their daily teaching.

***Value of training.*** Data were collected on the views of teachers, administrators and counselors regarding teacher training to deal with bullying. Each group had opinions on this topic.

*Teachers.* In Northern County School, 100% of teachers suggested that if they had additional training that they would be able to handle bullying much more effectively and learn about what they need to look for in future bullying situations. One teacher stated

Training would--by having current training, or having yearly training--keeps us (the teachers and everyone working at the school) right there on the forefront in our minds and we don't forget about things. I think that as years go by, I think things change and techniques and there's just a lot of new information that comes out that in training we would benefit from (interview 3).

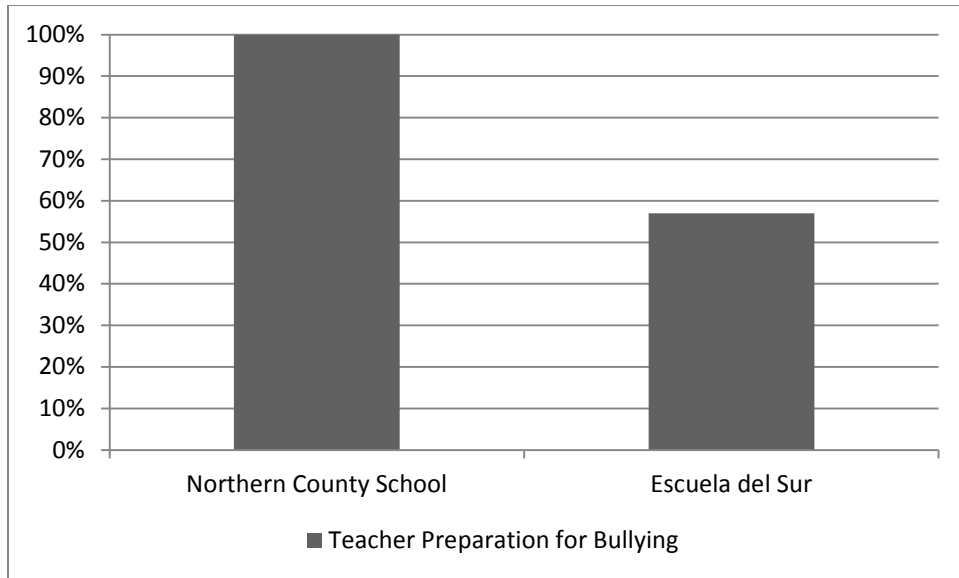
Indeed, teachers reported they would look forward to any additional training the district or administration would offer. Another teacher noted

I think that if there is training, everybody is on the same page and they know exactly what should be done in a situation if they run across bullying. The teachers can help support each other when bullying occurs and they're all doing the same thing if they catch a different student that is not one of their own bullying they know exactly what to do (interview 1).

Teachers also stated that by having more training they could help students resolve problems before reaching a breaking point.

In contrast, only 57% of teachers at Escuela de Sur suggested that training would be something they would like, even though they feel bullying is a problem (see Figure 4). They did not feel they had the time or power to curtail bullying. "It would make our job easier, but I am not sure if it is possible or available" (interview B1). They kept referring to bullying as a home issue needing to be addressed there. This group, like at the Northern County School, responded that having more training could help them understand bullying better and know what to look for when it is happening but those in Escuela de Sur were not committed enough to dedicate time to receive additional training as those in the Northern County School. After following up on these seemingly conflicting viewpoints, 29% of the teachers interviewed in Mexico did not feel that training was an option. Training had never been offered before. They felt that all too often they are given pamphlets and handouts and doing so was considered full training.

*Administration.* In the Northern County School the principal felt that administrators are always trying to find new information and new training to make sure the problem is taken care of in their school. They are always open to suggestions from the district and other offers of information and instruction. In Escuela del Sur the administration felt they did a great job in giving and sharing information with the staff.



*Figure 4.* Teacher perception of a positive impact of additional preparation

*Counselors.* The counselor in the Northern County School felt that the problem is being addressed well. However, she noted there is always room for improvement. She also stated that new research is published constantly with updated information and instruction on how to address the bullying problem. The counselor in Escuela del Sur felt that additional training is very important and needs to happen. She expressed concern that she is not sure where the funding will come from or when would it take place. She expressed hesitation about how such training could fit into the teacher's schedule. She emphasized she works with five schools and feels there is not nearly enough time or funding.

**Support concerning bullying.** Throughout the interview process, I asked about extant support systems for educators and students. Teachers, administrators and counselors all had opinions on this question. There was a stark difference of opinion.

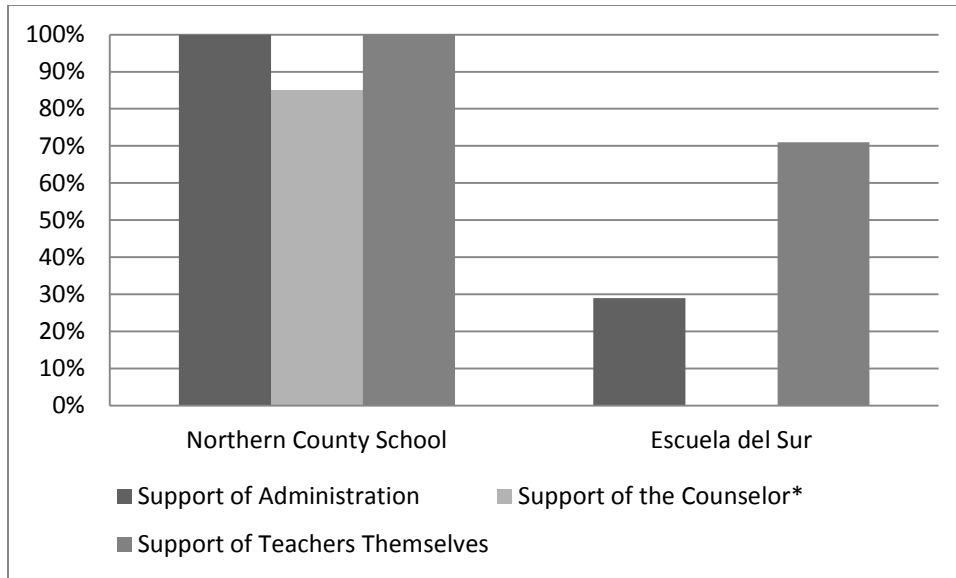
All the teachers, 100% at the Northern County School mentioned that they felt support came from themselves and administration and 85% mentioned that the counselor was another form of support (see Figure 5). Fifty-seven percent also felt they received outside sources of

support, including in-service offered by the district or opportunities to attend conferences. However, in Escuela del Sur only 29% felt they had the support of administration. I then asked who actually supports the teacher in dealing with bullying. The educators of Escuela del Sur responded that 71% of the support came from the teachers themselves and that they had little support from other sources. No teachers mentioned the counselor as a source of support. They felt that they were alone in dealing with the bullying issue in their classrooms. What was also surprising to me was that when the counselor was asked the same question, she didn't even mention herself as a support to the teachers.

In schools in both Mexico and Utah the counselors themselves felt they were a great support to administration and teachers. These findings contrasted with the view of the educators in Escuela del Sur. Not one teacher mentioned the counselor as a support although the counselor's view was much different. The counselor was mentioned by administration and that it would be nice to have her at the school more often. They also mentioned that most of her time was dedicated to referring students to the school psychologist for special education.

Upon interviewing administration in both schools the administration felt they were a support to the staff. In Mexico few teachers felt that the administration was supportive in helping with the problem of bullying in the school and classroom. In the area of in the Northern County School, they felt they were a great support in impeding bullying. In the Northern County School the teachers agreed and all questioned felt that the administration was very supportive. When asked about who they could rely on, one teacher answered "The administration, myself, any teacher really as well as the counselor" (interview 2). Another replied, "We have administration, we have our counselors, we have teachers" (interview 3).





\*Escuela del Sur Teachers felt they get no support from counselors with bullying.

*Figure 5.* Teacher's perception of support against bullying

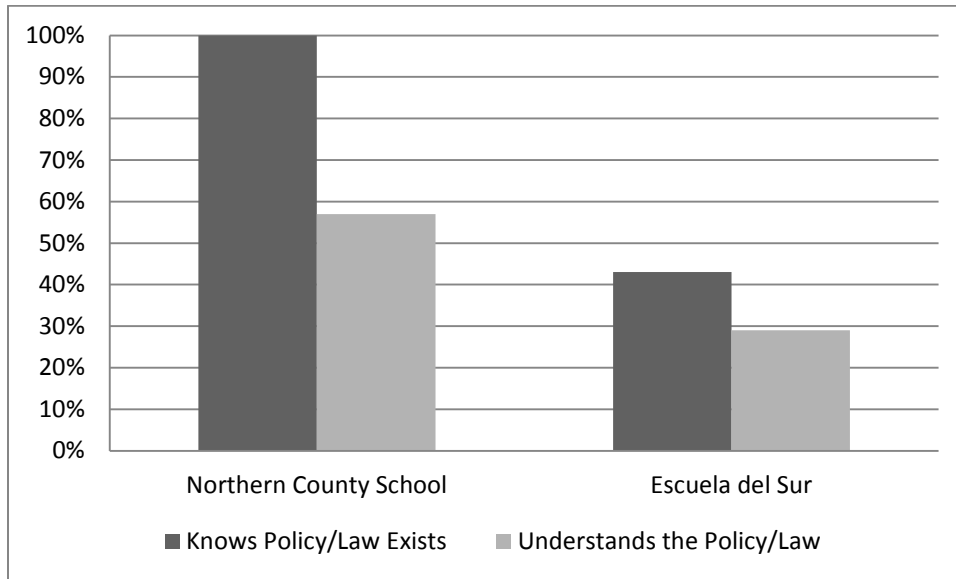
**Potential solutions to bullying.** When asked in Northern County School if there were any solutions to bullying, all of teachers responded that everything currently in place was working to control the situation. Such statements included, "I believe in being proactive and being very involved" (interview 3). Another reported, "Our school is currently using the conflict resolution model school-wide" (interview 9). However, in Escuela del Sur 43% of educators felt that there was no realistic solution to impede bullying. They could not respond with any solution themselves. They strongly believed nothing could be done without the support of home, given the decisive impact home life had on students' actions as mentioned previously. They emphatically felt it was parents' responsibility to educate and inform their children of the problem and this would solve bullying. As one teacher said, "Well, it is difficult, I believe it is very difficult, because it really is within the family environment. If it doesn't start there, it is a difficult situation to work with" (interview B5).

***Establish policies and guidelines.*** With regard to law and policy, teachers were questioned if they knew any laws had been established concerning bullying. In the Northern County School, 100% of teachers knew there was a federal law that in turn had states make laws and from there knew that the district needed to established a policy for individual schools. Specifically, they knew there was a no-tolerance policy against violence. Many noted the phrase “Zero tolerance” (interviews 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9). Others further explained, “We don’t put up with it” (interviews 4, 6, 7). “It is not tolerated here on or off our school grounds” (interviews, 1, 4, 6, 8, 9). However, only 57% of interviewees understood the law and district policy and how it was implemented in their school. Thus, they all knew there were laws and policies but not all knew the specifics contained therein.

By contrast, when asked in Escuela del Sur if there was a law a or policy in place for a plan of action against bullying, 43% of teachers knew there was a plan, but of that group 71% were unaware of its contents (see Figure 6). As one teacher expressed: “Laws? Yes there probably are, but I’m not sure what they are” (interview 7B). Another simply stated, “We don’t know and if there is one, if it is being enforced” (interview 8B). Yet another noted, “We are still waiting to be notified if there will be one put in place” (interview 3B). Thus, almost 20% more did not know of the policy or law, compared to those in the Northern County School. Teachers in Mexico repeated that bullying was the new buzz word and they needed to do something about it but they were unsure of policies in place or what was expected from them as educators.

When interviewing the administration, both groups knew of anti-bullying policies in their respective areas. This finding led me to ask how such policies were being implemented in the school. In the Northern County School the administrator knew exact details of the policy, how it needed to be implemented, and what steps were taken to make sure in worked in the school. In

furthering questioning administration, they said that they gleaned this information through training in leadership meetings and via e-mail. They had received instructions and timelines regarding how the information had to be communicated.



*Figure 6.* Percentage of teacher awareness of policies or law on bullying

On the other hand, the administrator of Escuela del Sur used many overlapping words to explain that the law or any policy was in place and that it was a new buzz item, but was unable to state specifically how it was being placed in schools or how teachers were to receive instruction on the policy or law being implemented. This question seemed to catch the administration by surprise. The principal stated that the information of how and when the policy or law could be implemented would come down through the chain of command. Once the government made a decision the principal was sure this information would reach the area director and from there to her. Only then would they know how to share such instruction with the rest of the staff.

***Address cultural influences.*** One of the last themes that arose in the Escuela del Sur interviews was cultural influence. This did not come up during interviews with Northern County School. Due to the topics of students wearing uniforms and Mexico as a country of tradition,

cultural differences arose during discussion. While talking with the educators at Escuela del Sur, 57% felt that bullying stems from cultural developments in Mexico. They felt that cultural differences influenced student's behavior, and while probing this idea further, teachers expressed that the way in which the government runs the country was, in turn, how students were taught to interact with each other. They also felt it once again stemmed from the home environment. They believe that bullying is a reflection of the cultural tradition of the different invasions that took place in Mexico. Traditions for both the bully and victim had been passed on from one generation to the next. They lamented changing this status quo would involve very large amounts of education for parents and students.

This somber deliberation encouraged me to follow up on their comments about wearing uniforms. Could uniforms play role in curtailing bullying? If so, how? Again this was an issue present only in the Escuela del Sur. Fifty-seven percent of teachers felt that uniforms help in addressing the bullying problem because students are not identified as having limited resources. Teachers felt that having uniforms gave students an even playing field. Wearing uniforms also helped identify which school a student attended and if an issue or incident occurred outside of the school walls staff members know which school to contact. Thus, if there were altercations with students on the way home, others could recognize which school the students originated from and contact that school to address the problem. When administration was asked if wearing uniforms played a role in curtailing bully, they did not believe so because uniforms only helped identify students and the school they attend.

### **Summary**

I examined the information obtained from principals, teachers from each grade level, and a counselor and special education teacher from an elementary school in the United States and in

Mexico. I compared their responses concerning bullying. I used interviews and observations to gather the information and then used the NVIVO 6.0.0 program to code and analyze the data to answer my research questions. To report my findings I listed all those themes that reached a 50% threshold or higher. Then I compared the information given by the teachers at the two different schools followed by the responses of principals and counselors. All the information was compared from the both schools. There was only one area where the school in Mexico had a theme that did not arise in the United States and that involved school uniforms.

**Findings of Case Study Utah.** Three elements arose in the defining of bullying: 71% of them describe bullying to be physical, 86% noted it had a verbal element to it and 100% felt it had an emotional-psychological component. In asking where bullying occurred, the teachers felt that bullying never occurred in the classroom. However, 58% felt it took place in other areas, such as hallways and bathrooms, and 28% felt it took place on the playground. Many also attributed bullying to the home life students had, with 86% of the teachers feeling that a student's home life impacted his/her actions at school. 100% of the teachers in Northern county school felt that additional training would benefit them as well as the students. They also believed it would help the school environment. In researching what resources they have available, 100% felt that a great support would be the administration and teachers themselves, and 85% felt that the counselor was also a great support. Finally, 100% of the teachers understood that there were federal and state laws as well as district policies in place to assure a safe school environment concerning bullying.

**Findings of Case Study Mexico.** Three elements arose in the definition of bullying. One hundred percent of them described bullying to be physical while 57% noted it had a verbal element to it and 43% felt it had an emotional-psychological component. In asking where

bullying occurred, 71% felt that bullying occurred in the classroom, 42% felt it took place on the playground and 29% felt it took place in other areas such as hallways and bathrooms. They also attributed bullying to the home life students had, with 85% feeling that the student's home life impacted their actions at school. Only 57% of the teachers in Escuela del Sur felt that additional training would benefit them as well as the students. In researching what resources were available to them, 71% felt that they were their own support and resource. No teachers considered the counselor a resource for bullying. Only 29 % felt administration was a support or resource. In regard to policy and procedure, 42% of the teachers knew that there were federal and state laws as well as regional policies in place to ensure a safe school environment concerning bullying. Of those teachers, only 28% knew what the rules and procedures actually stated.

**Comparison of two case studies.** It was quite a contrast between the two sites. There were many more resources to offer students and teachers in the Northern County School. In the United States, we would be outraged to attend school in the same conditions as Escuela del Sur. Here, if the power goes off for more than a couple of hours, parents, teachers and students become upset and angry. There, students and teachers were appreciative of what little they had and did not expect more.

While both schools felt that bullying was an issue, they had some contrasting beliefs concerning bullying and what to do about it. They both agreed that bullying had the same elements: physical, verbal, and emotional-psychological. While the Northern County School felt that 71% of bullying was physical, Escuela del Sur felt that 100% of bullying was physical. The Northern County School thought that 86% of bullying was verbal, while Escuela de Sur noted verbal bullying at 57%. In doing a comparison of the emotional-psychological element, 100% of

the teachers in the Northern County School felt that all bullying contained this element. In Escuela del Sur, only 43% felt there was an emotional-psychological element.

The next area of bullying was the location in which it was occurring. The differences were quite interesting. In the Northern County School, 0% of the teachers felt bullying happened in the classroom. In Escuela del Sur, 71% felt that it did occur in the classroom. I believe this is a result of the amount of students and the set up in each classroom. In the Northern County School the teachers had about 29 students in their classrooms, while in Escuela del Sur, the teachers had 52 or more students in their classroom. It seems a high correlation to bullying in the classroom. Both schools agreed that bullying occurred on the playground as well as in other areas. In the Northern County School, 58% of the teachers felt that it occurred in other areas, while in Escuela del Sur only 29% felt in happened in other areas.

It was interesting to see that teachers at both sites were very close in their perception of the effect of home life on bullying. At the Northern County School, 86% felt that a student's home life impacted bullying at school. Escuela del Sur supported the same idea with 85% believing that home life influences what a student does at school. The teachers believed the students mimicked what they were taught at home and this contributed to the school environment.

As the investigation continued, the theme of teacher preparation came to light. In the Northern County School, 100% of the teachers were in favor of additional preparation, while in the Escuela del Sur only 57% felt it would be beneficial. Of that 57%, many weren't sure when it would take place or even IF it would take place, and didn't really think it was an option.

When it came to resources available, it was interesting to see the comparison in how teachers saw administration. In the Northern County School, 100% of teachers felt that the

administration was a support and resource. In Escuela del Sur only 29% of teachers saw administration as a resource or support. As far as the counselor was concerned, 85% of teachers saw the counselor in the Northern County School as a useful resource. In Escuela del Sur, even though this was still a resource available, 0% of the teachers saw the counselor as a support or resource. Even further, the counselor herself did not comment that she was a resource to teachers for bullying. In both schools, however, the teachers saw themselves as support. One Hundred percent of the teachers saw themselves as a support in the Northern County School, while in the Escuela del Sur 71 % saw themselves as a support or resource.

In questioning the teachers concerning laws and policies about bullying, there was a large contrast in their understanding between the two schools. In the Northern County School, 100% knew that there were laws in place and district policies. But in Escuela del Sur only 42% knew that there were federal or state laws, and of the 42% only 28% understood what they contain.

It was quite interesting to see the comparison between the two sites. There were some obvious differences and similarities. It is clear from the findings that Escuela del Sur teachers have been exposed to the concept of bullying. Further education and assistance are necessary to be able to adequately address the issue at this site. However, teachers at this site don't find further education pertinent or available. In the Northern County School, teachers had also been exposed to the concept of bullying. Conversely, they had a deeper understanding of this concept. Compared to the Escuela del Sur site, teachers at the Northern County site were more open to the idea of further education and assistance to confront the challenges of bullying.



## **Chapter Five Discussion**

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings and present my conclusions based on the research, interviews, observations, and analyses that have been conducted. I will also offer recommendations and insights into how the findings will contribute to the body of existing research addressing bullying as well as discuss some of the cultural environment implications. I will provide recommendations for these principals, counselors, and teachers to address future bullying issues. Hopefully, this research sets a baseline which will foster future research initiatives in this field within both countries.

### **Reflections on Factors Influencing Bullying**

Findings from the two elementary schools differed in many ways from my expectations. In the Northern County School findings were somewhat consistent with the extant theory surrounding bullying such as; “As I understand it we have a no tolerance policy on bullying” (interview 4), “Yes, zero tolerance” (interview 9). During the interview process I gathered that the Northern County teachers were somewhat conversant with the concepts, laws, and policies surrounding bullying. For the most part, they were functioning well in implementing programs and addressing the bullying in the school. However, I found that results conflicted with current theorizing in the school in Mexico. According to the principal and counselor, they believed that they were being supportive and communicating well with teachers on the issues of bullying and the expectations from the staff. But the teachers had a different perspective; they didn’t feel that administration gave support. They did feel that they had a great principal but, in the area of bullying they didn’t have the training or support to address the issue of bullying. In meeting with the area director of the district in Mexico, she also felt that the teachers had received ample training. Yet, both the principal and the area director could only give one specify training that the

teachers and parents received. It is important to note that research literature on bullying in Mexico is limited. The literature covers some of the issues of bullying but doesn't cover policies or laws or even how the government is addressing bullying in the schools. In Mexico many felt they somewhat understood the concept of bullying but had a difficult time implementing any plan of action. Many did not understand what the plan of action was at the time. The staff felt it was simply the new buzz word for the scholastic school year.

In terms of leadership, the principals of both institutions understood the concept of bullying and how it might be controlled in their schools. However, in Mexico the principal felt that the school was addressing the problem and that the teachers understood how to handle bullying in the classroom and school environment. However, the teachers actually felt that they had little information and training to address bullying. Counselors in both schools possessed a firm understanding but in Mexico there was little follow-up due to limited funding and time.

**Student environments.** I found both schools had very similar demographics in terms of socio-economic status and student enrollment. As the teachers, principal, and counselor were interviewed I felt that the schools mirrored each other very well. Nonetheless there was a difference in the building structure environments of the schools. As I looked critically within both environments, by design one structure limited bullying while the other made bullying possible. The school in Mexico had closed courtyard with the students in plain view. The difficulty arose in that the teachers were not stationed so they could have a clear view of the students.

**Recess environment.** The Northern County School had an open concept playground, which had both advantages and disadvantages. There are so many different areas that the students can hide out or run to and it is difficult to see all the students all the time. To address

this problem, the school installed cameras and this has helped because students know they are being watched.

A challenge for Mexico was the timing of release during lunch. When I suggested an interval release for students in Mexico so all were not released at one time during the lunch hour, the principal responded, “We have always done it this way.” Teachers and administration welcomed suggestions, but it was difficult for them to understand at first why it would be beneficial to change policies.

From what I observed at both schools, I believe both schools have their positives and challenges at recess. Through observation, I believe they are doing what they believe is the best they can within the structural constraints given them. I believe the school in Mexico could curtail bullying in their environment if they were more open to following up on suggestions of change in structure and scheduling of teachers as well as lunch and recess time. The school in Northern County was very open to suggestions and willing to accept any help that could improve and support a successful learning environment.

***Home environment.*** As a principal, I believe that the success or failure of a child in school does not take place only within the walls of the school but rather within many environments. Researchers have stated that parent involvement is important to student success and theorized a relationship between parental involvement and a child's academic achievement, as well as stronger pre-literacy skills (Arnold et al., Zelio, & Doctoroff, 2008). Here in the United States, we emphasize the importance of parent involvement in a student's academic and social development (Craig, 1997). Is this type of support available in the Mexico?

These principal and teachers believe—and researchers have noted—that if parents begin to address the issue at home then there would be fewer problems at school(Hutton & Bailey,

2007; Nashiki, 2005). However, others argue that schools reflect society and its context, and this issue needs to be addressed by the educational authorities of Mexico (Quintana, 2009).

**School personnel.** Upon completing my interviews, I felt that the administration had an understanding of the definition of bullying in both schools. I also felt that both school counselors had a grasp of the concept of bullying. This information had been effectively disseminated to most of the teachers in the Northern County School. In Mexico, some of the educators understood most of the definitions of bullying. However, the majority of them had a difficult time adapting the definition to real situations.

***Differences in perceptions by schools.*** I found that the personnel in Escuela del Sur, as well as the Northern County, identified bullying as a concern. However the understanding of bullying was quite different in both groups.

In the Northern County School, they did very well in identifying bullying in terms of understanding that it could involve a physical, emotional and/or verbal aspect. They seemed very well informed about bullying and what takes place during bullying situations. They also understood that it had to be a repeated offence to be considered bullying. They were very confident in their responses and it was apparent that they were well-informed on the subject.

The Escuela del Sur was quite different in what they understood as a bullying situation. Most felt that bullying was only physical. They did not understand that it had to be a repeated offence to be considered bullying. They often spoke of how students are physical with each other in the classroom. They spoke very little regarding the aspects of emotional and verbal bullying. Many of them shared that it was something new and a new buzzword among the school officials. They were always looking for a confirmation from me if they were giving the right answer or not. They would often perseverate on the issue that it happened only in the classroom and they

could not control it. I believe that the faculty of the Escuela del Sur were limited on training and information. Many referred to some pamphlets they had received concerning bullying. I believe this impeded the answers given concerning the subject. I believe that the Mexican government needs to extend their training to include all staff and give them a better understanding of bullying.

***Bully appearance and actions.*** After the questions with the principals, teachers, and counselors where they defined bullying, I wanted to see if they had a concept of what a bully would look like to them. I wanted to see if they could detect the appearance of a bully by just entering the room. In short, I wanted to know if they had a preconceived notion of a bully. I was quite surprised by the outcome.

In the Northern County School, most of them responded that a bully could be anyone; that is, it could be an intelligent student, a not so smart student, a short student, a tall student, a thin student, or a heavy-set student. They noted that there wasn't any way to really distinguish a bully from any other student: essentially, anyone could be a bully. They commented that there really aren't any distinct markings of a bullying that stand out as if to say "I am a bully." This was quite unlike the responses at the Escuela del Sur.

In the Escuela de Sur, many of the teachers and administration staff had a preconceived idea of a bully. They truly believed that you could know a bully just by the way he/she acted. In particular, a person's walk could distinguish them as a bully (effectively "walking like a hoodlum"). They believed that a bully would usually be physically bigger. The teachers also stated that a bully would be a student that was academically behind, sometimes an introvert that solved all of his or her problems by being aggressive. In short, they had very strong opinions on what a bully looks like. I believe that the teachers and staff of the Escuela del Sur had a

predetermined notion of what a bully is, and because of these predetermined ideas, it would be hard for a student in that school without these characteristics to be identified as a bully. I believe that administration, counselors, and teachers need to have more in-service to help them understand the whole concept of bullying. They have some information on the topic of bullying, but they need a broader understanding concerning the subject. Again, this is a new concept in Mexico, so I wonder how it was approached when the idea of bullying first arose in the United States. I believe it would be best if the subject was broken down in detailed segments for staff.

*Victims of bullying.* With regard to victims, personnel in both schools understood the definition of a victim. But, again there existed a contrasting viewpoint on how they would describe one. The Northern County School again felt that anyone could be a victim. However, the Escuela del Sur staff had firm ideas on what victims looked like. They were quite sure that a victim was a quiet, passive, shy student. They also described the victim physically as a frail student and small in stature. I do not believe they really understood the concept of a bullying victim. It is apparent that they need to be exposed to more literature and instruction on how bullying occurs and that it can happen to anyone. I believe cultural conflicts and personal beliefs influence one idea of what bullying is, such as the concept of machismo (meaning the male-dominant role). Again, I feel more training would be beneficial at Escuela del Sur.

**Bullying situations.** I personally found that the literature conflicted with views of teachers I interviewed in the United States. Since bullying literature in Mexico is limited, it was surprising to find that teachers in that region felt the behavior was a glaring problem. Interesting perceptions were gleaned from both schools regarding when, where and how bullying occurs.

As I interviewed the teachers of the Northern County School, it was surprising to see that the viewpoint of the teachers was different than the viewpoint of the administration. The

counselor seemed relatively indifferent. The teachers felt that bullying did not generally occur in their classrooms. They felt that most the bullying was occurring in unsupervised areas such as the playground, cafeteria, before or after school. This contrasted with my interview with the administration. In one instance, the teacher stated that she did not know of any incidents happening in her classroom and administration was taken aback by this response, because at the time they were dealing with a bullying issue in her classroom that required district personnel to be involved. I felt like the teachers of the Northern County School were almost embarrassed to admit that they might have a bullying issue in their classroom. It was obvious to me that they understood the entire concept of bullying but were afraid to admit that it occurred in their classroom environment. I believe that this occurred more because of the laws and policies that have been put in place by the district and state mandating that each school must have a safe school policy for their students and that it the responsibility of administration and school staff to assure that it is in place.

Escuela del Sur, in contrast, had a very different view of bullying and where it occurred. They were not afraid to express their opinion that it occurred in the classroom most of the time. I felt that by sharing their views of where it occurred they were hoping for some type of help. They did express it occurs in other areas, but they felt it happened mostly in their classrooms because of the tight spaces and the large number of students in the classroom. I do concur with them that there needs to be some type of assistance to lower class size. Their rooms were packed—almost double the size of the classrooms in the Northern County School. The difficult aspect was that the administration felt that the bullying was being taken care of in the classroom as well as the courtyard. There would probably be a decrease in incidents if they could lower class size and have teachers received training and instruction about how to recognize bullying

and address it in their own classrooms. Administration stated that a new curriculum was presented to the teachers on how to address bullying in the school setting at the beginning of the school year. I believe it is important for the administration to stay involved and do classroom observations to see if the lessons are being taught to the students.

**Home life of the bully.** It was very interesting to me that a similar theme regarding the home environment emerged at both schools. As I interviewed the teachers at these schools, their answers almost echoed each other.

I first interviewed the Northern County school and heard the teachers' comments concerning the student's home life and how it was one of the reasons that bullying occurs. They felt that students were mimicking what they assumed happened at home. They stated that many of the bullying issues stemmed from the type of home life the child had and that home life affected how the child would react to different situations at school. The difficult part was that the teachers felt it was the parent's responsibility to educate the child on proper behavior at home. However, the challenging component to this assumption is: Who is to say that the parents have the tools or parenting skills to do so? The teachers' expectation is based on their assumptions.

As I interviewed the Escuela del Sur, I heard the same answers from those teachers. The Escuela del Sur staff was more adamant about the parents' responsibility to teach and educate their kids on the subject. The teachers' demeanors were much stronger and almost angry when they discussed that it was the parents' job to teach their children better values.

The administration of both schools had a different view point, that we need to educate parents so they can educate the students. Administration also felt that it was their jobs as educators to do the best they can while they have the children in school. They cannot change the outside factors and how students arrive at school, but they have five to six hours with the



students and what they do in those six hours impacts the school environment. I believe it is important that the administration work with educators and counselors to have a positive attitude and realize the calling they have as educators. Being a teacher is more than a job: it is a calling. I believe motivating staff to change their beliefs, would in turn, change the environment of the school.

**Teacher Training.** The challenge of the teacher is to understand the student behaviors and their causes. The two schools did not have the same teacher training. The teachers offered a variety of opinions about additional training regarding bullying. The challenge of the teacher is to understand the behaviors and their causes.

As I interviewed the Northern County School teachers they said they were very open to the idea of additional training that would help them understand and work with different bullying situations. The teachers felt by having more training they could be more proactive in combating bullying. They believed that more training would help alleviate issues in the classroom. They also felt that training would help them recognize bullying in the classroom. The attitude in the school seemed to be that everyone needed to work together to address bullying.

Escuela del Sur seemed at first to be very open to additional training. However, through the interviewing process, I could not identify a similar level of commitment to that in the Northern County School. For example, a teacher of Escuela del Sur felt that there was not time for training. They also questioned if, by receiving more training than what they already had, that there would be additional benefits. Some of the group did not realize that any training was available and commented that it would take time away from students due to their already crammed schedule.

I believe that it is important for both schools to have additional training. The Escuela del Sur needs additional training that begins with the basics so they can understand the broader concept of bullying, and then know how to address it. I also believe it is important to offer training for the Northern County School so they are more aware of the situations that occur around them, often in their own classrooms. This will help teachers at both schools be prepared to educate their students and their parents to understand the issues of bullying.

**Support from Administration.** Throughout the interview process at both locations, it became obvious that there was a large difference in how the teachers viewed administrative support. In the Northern County School, they had a very positive attitude towards administration and all they did to support them. In the Escuela del Sur, the teachers were more reluctant to approach the administration, thinking they might be viewed as complainers or not following instructions that were given initially.

In the Northern County School it was reassuring to hear the teachers comment on the support system they had. They were very explicit in describing all those involved in helping them understand and cope with bullying within the school. I was quite impressed to listen to their point of view concerning the support they had in their administration. Their responses came very quickly and easily. They felt that the counselors were a great support to them by being a resource, as well as to the students, by coming into the classroom teaching lessons about bullying. Teachers expressed that they were also a part of the support system. They understood that they played an important role in addressing the level and type of bullying in their school. They also stated they were all on the same team and needed to work together. This was quite different to what the Escuela del Sur staff had to say.

In Escuela del Sur it was obvious that they did not have the same feelings that the Northern County School had toward their administration. The majority of teachers in the Escuela del Sur felt that they themselves were their only form of support. In responding to the question of their support system, they took quite some time to respond. They really pondered before answering and they were quite forceful in letting me know that administration was too busy and the counselor did not have time because of referrals for special education. However, they also wanted to express that they admired the principal and all she had done for the school.

I believe that the administration needs to look at what is expected from the teachers and listen to their needs in the Escuela del Sur. Further training in both learning environments would help. In the Northern County School training would help teachers understand new developments and research concerning bullying and assess what future training would be beneficial. At Escuela del Sur, additional training will help them understand the concepts of bullying and give better support to their teachers. I feel by doing this it will improve the holistic climate in both schools.

**School uniforms.** A theme that arose in the Escuela del Sur that did not appear in the Northern County School involved cultural influence. This subject might have had an impact on the outcome of the research. Two areas where this was apparent was in the topics of school uniforms and parental involvement.

Uniforms were only used at the Escuela del Sur and not the Northern County School. The teachers at Escuela del Sur seemed split on the subject. Some felt uniforms helped curtail the problem and some felt they did not make a difference. It was interesting to contrast their views. However, their responses also highlighted that they did not understand the concept. I believe that the uniforms helped in controlling behavior issues not related to bullying as they explained it, such as students being identifiable as to which school they attend and not by their economic

status. I believe that it would be an interesting avenue of research on whether or not wearing uniforms helps in any way to diminish bullying. There is strong evidence that the school culture of the Northern County School did have an influence on diminishing bullying.

**Parental involvement.** Another interesting finding was the way the school system was set up for parent involvement. In the Northern County School it was evident that parents were encouraged to be part of their child's learning process. They were welcomed into the school, with the school doors always open to them. The school's communication style invited parents into the classrooms. This style contrasted starkly with the Escuela del Sur with doors locked and parents not allowed into the complex. Parents wanting to speak to the principal would need to make an appointment in advance through the secretary. If they wanted to pick up their student they would need to buzz at the main doors and someone, such as the administration or other designated staff, would look through a window and then allow them in. They were not allowed near the classroom. Another individual would find the child and then bring the child to the office. It seemed that teachers ideally wanted parents to be part of their child's education, but the extant system is not amenable to such an ideal.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This qualitative comparative case study hopefully will serve as a foundation for additional information and theories concerning the field of research regarding bullying in Mexico and the United States. Since both cases were done in low-income populations, future research could be centered around investigating school environments that are not low income, and cross-sections of constants other than income. I utilized the responses from teachers, principals, and counselors for this research project. For additional research in the future, different subjects could be used such as parents, students, and support staff.

Throughout the findings, one of the main differences I noted involved training. The Escuela del Sur teachers felt they acted upon everything the government suggested. However, it is my opinion that they are not allowed to think outside of the box and bring in trainings or experts on their own. A future researcher could do initial interviews, provide training, and then follow up with interviews again. By doing so, future exploration could examine how training impacts the bullying situation in schools in Mexico.

The implications from the findings showed that one of the major themes was the need of training for all staff concerning bullying. Also the findings demonstrated that a better support system needs to be in place for educators. The administration of Escuela del Sur acknowledged that the barriers of their understanding were due to limited funding and training. Future research could more fully delve into the intricacies and implications of training and support systems to curtail bullying. This investigation may help teachers, principals, and counselors understand bullying in these settings in effective ways, and may inform them about bullying of and by Latino students in the United States.

### **Implications**

Throughout this study several thoughts and questions came about concerning bullying and the effects it has on students and society as a whole. What are the actual effects? Also, one cannot but question what is happening to the children psychologically from all the rules and regulations regarding bullying. What is being done to the school environment from all the laws? Are too many restrictive laws and guidelines being made so that children are being deprived or stunted in their development and growth into independent human beings? Has the government gone too far in dictating how children and adults should solve problems and interact?

**Society.** In the Northern County site there is an understanding of the concept and what is expected regarding the rules and regulations concerning bullying. But, are they being implemented correctly and what are the outcomes? I reflect on my youth as I learned from different situations. I recall a time that I was transferred to a school where I was the only Latino in the school. I believe I the experience of being ignored, or as one can say, being bullied made me a stronger person and taught me to work harder for what I wanted to accomplish in school, career, and in life. Also as a youth I would often hear the phrase “it builds character”. Has the right been taken away from students to build their own character due to the laws being imposed on schools? What is being taught to students when they are being placed in a bubble so that nothing will damage their ego? Isn’t the ego being damaged by not allowing them to grow independently through experiences where they learn to problem solve on their own? Is the government molding a society that is not self-sufficient? Does the impact of so many rules, laws, and regulations become damaging and negative effect to individual growth? What are going to be the long term effects of the laws and regulations on our children’s development? Is society going to get to the point when it will lose responsibility for its actions? Is it going to allow the government to keep imposing rules to the point where we will not understand what is politically correct or where one becomes so programmed by these policies and regulations, one suppresses their own thoughts and words?

In my observations, I have noted that children now have a more difficult time resolving their own issues and problems. They assume they must need an adult to mediate. In the Northern County site what cultural changes are coming about? Dr. LeGrand Richards a professor at Brigham Young University refers to schools having an appearance of being a prison. What kind of prison is being created in our school system? Is not the educational system set up for learning?

And learning can occur as a result of a negative experience as well as a positive one. Are any and all experiences vital and necessary parts of the learning component? Yes students are taught to act with a certain level of respect and to have traditional manners, but if so many rules and regulation are imposed on them, where and when will they grow? And through the process of learning, children can then choose their behavior rather than being forced to act a certain way.

In both sites I found cultural differences and how our government has put into place to protect the few; but what does that do to the society? Is it truly bad that in the Escuela del Sur that student need to defend themselves and that parents teach them to fight back for what is right? If they are not to stand up for themselves, what will become of them? Or will they create a society of adults with children living at home because they were not taught to be responsible for their own actions. These comments are general, but in my observations, I was amazed at how often I encountered children of adult age still living at home with parents within the Northern County site. There may be something to learn from Mexico regarding this evolutionary pattern.

We need to look past the cement walls, plush entries, and pamphlets of policy and procedure, and address the needs of the students. This can begin, by asking the question of what really is best for their development and learning, beyond the temporary behavioral disruption of the day.

**Schools.** I found a large difference between the schools while discussing solutions. In working with the Northern County School, the administration, teachers, and counselors felt that what was in place was working and supported the idea of additional training if needed. They were very pleased with the status quo. They were not afraid to admit that additional training does not hurt. However, in Mexico I found the opposite situation. Theirs was a climate of despair. They felt that there were not any viable solutions. The only action that the teachers kept referring

to was that it was the responsibility of the parents, and if the parents are not on board, then nothing could be done to alleviate the problem. I would suggest that the administration and educational system needs to find a way to provide future training for the teachers, and encourage all to become fully invested.

The principals at both schools understood that there were laws and policies in place. It was apparent that the principal from the Northern County School knew the policies and laws well. There was not any hesitation from principal in the Northern County School in their responses and understanding of what was expected. They were very confident in their knowledge of the laws and confident that their staff knew this as well. The teachers in the Northern County School were as the administrators indicated and well versed in the policies in place. They were also aware of where to go to find out new or additional information. They accepted their role in implementing it into the school environment. The counselor in the Northern County School was very competent and well trained on the topic. She was also responsible to teach students and staff on law, policy, and how to address the issue if it was occurring in the classroom and any other areas in the school.

I found a very different response at Escuela del Sur. Administration knew that there was a law but were not sure exactly what the law stated and they were not sure how the information would be disseminated to them or their staff. They kept referring to the government and how they would let them know when information would be coming.

The counselor of the Escuela del Sur knew a lot about the subject but felt there was not enough time in her schedule to teach or address the issue. The teachers in Escuela del Sur were surprised by the questions concerning policy and law. Some knew there was a law, but they were not aware of the content of the law. Some did not even know that if there was a law or policy in



place. Again I would strongly suggest that administration needs to figure out how to train staff and inform them of new and changing concepts.

### **Conclusions**

In this study I attempted to comprehend and compare bullying in an elementary school in the United States and one in Mexico. I also attempted to understand the views of administration, teachers, and counselors in how bullying is dealt with in the broader school environment as well as individual classrooms. A review of the literature demonstrated that bullying is an issue in schools. After analyzing the research, bullying encapsulated three main areas of concern: physical, emotional, and verbal. Each area, as well as other areas, were defined and discussed. The information gathered came from archival records and semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. I addressed how bullying is perceived and defined in the two different sites and what the role is of the principal, if any, in confronting bullying behavior in school.

By examining these two low-income schools, the results of this research indicated that bullying is a great concern in the school environment in both cases, but I feel it is a much larger concern in Mexico due to the difficulty of accepting change. I gained some insights about how the dissemination of information varies from government to government, school to school, administrator to administrator and counselor to teacher. The principals of the two schools had the same vision, but had different ways of communicating it to the teachers. What I found most significant and surprising was the way teachers in the elementary school in Mexico viewed bullying and were not properly trained in addressing and understanding the concept of bullying.

Another difference was the way the information was shared. During the interviews the Mexican teachers felt that they are not given any training once the information is given to them.

In contrast to the elementary school in the United States, training came with the information. It is unlikely that systemic change will happen right away in the elementary school in Mexico.

Positive changes will take time and incremental progress. In the future, administration needs to pay attention to the communication with teachers and staff members on this critical issue. The results of the study seem to indicate that the school in Mexico would do better by providing training for teachers and staff about bullying and what it entails. It also indicated that for the school in Mexico to be more effective, the administration needs to listen to the teachers and provide them the additional support they need. It also indicated that the school in the United States is preparing the teachers well in the area of bullying. It was also brought to my attention that if the school in Mexico is going to continue to depend on the government for their information they need to have a better form of communication. By establishing these minimal standards, the teachers will have a better understanding and be better prepared to cope and bring about positive change to curtail bullying.

Hopefully the creation of a dialogue among those dealing with bullying will move the educational system toward better support of principals, counselors, teachers, and students to curtail bullying in schools. I hope that the information gathered will help both cultures and schools to see what is working and not working to curtail bullying. I also hope that districts will be informed by the findings to support the education and training of principals, counselors, and teachers regarding how to address the subject of bullying and how to understand and impact positively the experience of newcomers from Mexico to United States schools when confronting bullying in the United States setting.

As a principal myself I feel it is our duty to educate students on what is appropriate behavior in school and in society. We cannot control outside influences, but we can address what

needs to take place while they are in the school setting. I concluded that the principal as well as the government play an important role in addressing bullying in schools. For schools to have success and create a safe environment they need to be trained on the challenges today's youth face and encounter.

### **Epilogue**

As this study came to a conclusion, I was able to see very beneficial outcomes. I was able to encounter and develop lasting relationships with many new people. I had the opportunity to meet with the Secretary of State of Mexico, which was instrumental in helping me organize and move forward in Mexico. I had the wonderful opportunity to have him over to my home three or four times. He was very generous with his time. When I arrived in Mexico, he offered his home and I was also able to meet with him in his office. Throughout this journey, I have learned more about my own background as well as some surprising differences in our educational system here and the educational system in Mexico.

I became very close to the teachers and staff in Mexico almost immediately. They opened their classrooms and homes to me right away. I shed tears upon leaving, and I am not sure if it was because I wanted more data, or because of the kindness of the staff and students. Since then, I have been able to meet with the principal from that school several times. She, along with a colleague, attended my school to learn more about what we do here in the United States. We plan to maintain a close professional relationship. I will be visiting her school again in the near future. We hope to have the opportunity to have a few teachers from both schools experience the other school so we can continue to learn from each other. I feel strongly that there are many things they can learn from us. I am also excited to see what we can learn and integrate into our policies and procedures that can be beneficial for the children we are responsible to educate.

One concept that impacted me is the love students have for their teachers, and how it is understood that education is a privilege and not a right. No matter how behind we may feel Mexico's educational system is compared to ours or other cultures, they have pride or passion for their culture and such a high-level of respect for education. The students in Mexico comprehend that one must earn the right to study and that it is a gift and opportunity that must not be discarded. I count myself quite lucky to have been able to go on this journey and in the process be reminded that in our country, we have many privileges that should not be confused or assumed as rights.

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## **Appendix A**

### **States with Laws to Combat Bullying in Schools**

1. Alaska
2. Arizona
3. Arkansas
4. California
5. Colorado
6. Connecticut
7. Delaware
8. Georgia
9. Idaho
10. Illinois
11. Indiana
12. Iowa
13. Kansas
14. Louisiana
15. Maine
16. Maryland
17. Minnesota
18. Mississippi
19. Nevada
20. New Hampshire
21. New Jersey
22. Ohio
23. Oklahoma
24. Oregon
25. Rhode Island
26. South Carolina
27. Tennessee
28. Texas
29. Vermont
30. Virginia
31. Washington
32. West Virginia

**Appendix B****STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT DISCIPLINES PLANS R277-609**

A. Each school district shall develop and implement a board approved comprehensive district plan for school discipline. The plan shall include policies to define, prohibit, and intervene in bullying, including the requirement of awareness and intervention strategies, and training of social skills, for students and school staff. The policies shall:

- (a) provide training specific to overt aggression that may include physical fighting such as punching, shoving, kicking; verbal threatening behavior, such as name calling; or both physical and verbal aggression or threatening behavior;
- (b) provide training specific to relational aggression, or indirect, covert, or social aggression or indirect, covert, or social aggression, including rumor spreading, intimidation, enlisting a friend to assault a child, and social isolation;
- (c) provide training specific to cyber bullying, including use of e-mail, web pages, text messaging, instant messaging, three-way calling or messaging, or any other electronic means for aggression inside or outside of school;
- (d) provide for student assessment of the prevalence of bullying in school/school district, specifically locations where students are unsafe and additional adult supervision may be required, such as playgrounds, hallways, and lunch areas;
- (e) complement existing safe and drug free school policies and school Harassment and hazing policies;
- (f) include strategies for providing students and staff, including aides, paraprofessionals, and coaches, with awareness and intervention skills

such as social skills training;

(g) include strategies to provide for necessary adult supervision;

(h) be clearly written and consistently enforced;

(i) include parents, community council, and other community members in policy development, training, and prevention implementation.

Along with these requirements the Davis School District Board added some changes to the current policy. The following were added.

**5S-400 School Attendance and Discipline Policy**

5.2.3 Each school's discipline plan shall include;

Provisions which define and prohibit bullying and outline appropriate training and intervention to address bullying behaviors. Training and intervention provisions shall comply with Utah Administrative Code RR277-609-3(5) and District Policy 5S-401 Safe and Orderly School Policy.

**5S-401 Safe and Orderly School Policy**

4.6 Bullying

4.6.1 It is the intent of the Davis School District to respond to school-related bullying incidents by implementing prevention efforts where victims of bullying can be identified and assisted, and perpetrators educated, in order to create safer schools that provide a positive learning environment. Students who engage in any form of bullying on or about school property, or at any school activity may be suspended or expelled under the terms of this policy.



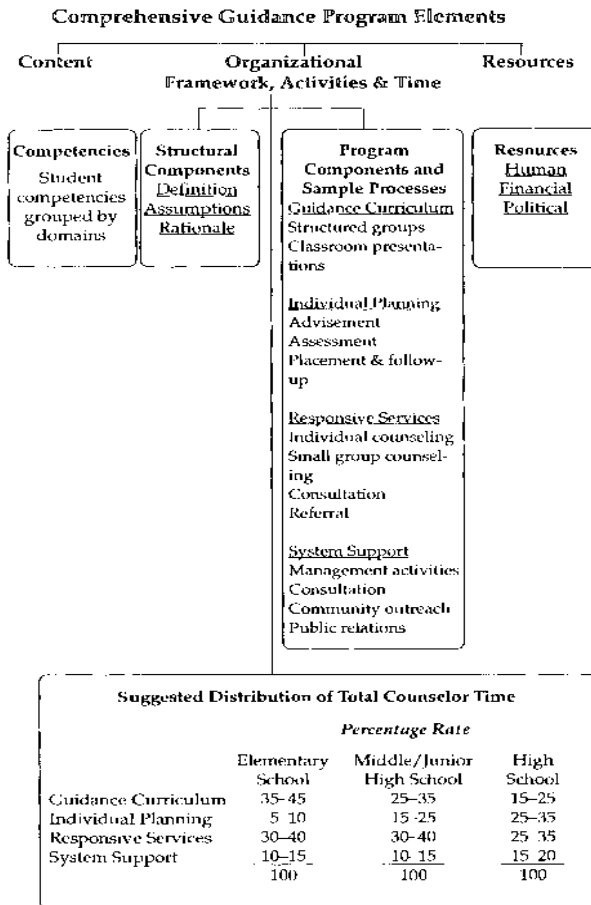
4.6.2. “Bullying” as defined in this policy means aggressive behavior that is intended to cause harm or distress; exists in a relationship in which there is an imbalance of power; and may be repeated overtime.

4.6.3 Each school shall develop a bullying prevention program using a prevention program approved by the District’s Student Services Department as a model.

4.6.4 The school bullying prevention program shall also include training as specified in Utah Administrative Code R277-609-2, student assessment of the prevalence of bullying in school, and adequate adult supervision.

4.6.5 The school bullying prevention program shall be clearly written and consistently enforced.

**Appendix C- Comprehensive Guidance for Program Levels**



**Appendix D - Books Used in Bullying Lessons**

Cricking written by Janell Cannon

The Recess Queen written by Alexis O'Neill and Laura Hulisk-Beith

The Playground Problem written by Margaret McNamara and illustrated by Mike Gordon

Blue Cheese Breath and Stinky Feet written by Catherine DePino and illustrated by  
Bonnie Matthews and Charles Beyl

There's NO Such Thing as a Dragon written by Jack Kent

Stop Picking on Me written by Pat Thomas

My Secret Bully written by Trudy Ludwig and illustrations by Abigail Marble

**Appendix E – Parent Letter**

Dear Parents,

You have probably noticed all of the attention directed toward the issue of bullying in the last several years. Recently, research has been focused on a particular kind of bullying known as relational aggression.

Relational aggression involves manipulating relationships in order to control or hurt another person. Unlike the more commonly known methods of bullying, relational aggression is often used against friends, and the threat involved is loss of the friendship, or even complete isolation. It can be difficult for adults to see, partly because the aggressors are skilled at hiding it, and partly because of victims' reluctance to seek help. Research indicates that relational aggression can be just as harmful as physical aggression, and may be related to depression, loneliness, peer rejection, anxiety, substance use, lack of school connectedness and maladaptive eating behaviors. A few examples of relational aggression include:

- Spreading rumors
- Telling others not to play with the person
- The silent treatment
- Name calling

This year the elementary school counselors in Davis School District will be addressing relational aggression in our schools. Students will participate in lessons to educate them about this topic. We will address ways they can resolve conflicts without resorting to relational aggression, and what they can do if they are victims of relational aggression.

You will be receiving more information about our endeavors. We hope to work with you to create a safer emotional environment for your children.

Sincerely,

Principal

## Appendix F – Behavior Test

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

### Behavior Pre/Post Test for Elementary

Check Box Either Yes or No

- |    | Yes                      | No                       |  |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Called other kids names that made fun of them?                                     |
| 2  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Said something about someone else that you knew wasn't nice?                       |
| 3  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Walked away when your friends started talking about someone else you know?         |
| 4  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Laughed when someone else made fun of another person?                              |
| 5  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Written a note or graffiti about someone else that wasn't nice?                    |
| 6  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Felt put down by someone, but not spoken up about it?                              |
| 7  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Asked your friends to stop talking about another friend who wasn't there?          |
| 8  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Let someone talk to you into doing something you really didn't want to do?         |
| 9  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Refused to talk to someone so it would upset them?                                 |
| 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Invited a new person to sit with your crowd at lunch?                              |
| 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Repeated a rumor you heard about a friend?   |
| 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Started a rumor about a person who was mean to someone else?                       |
| 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Made fun of another person's clothes or appearance?                                |
| 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Stood up for another person that your friends were making fun of?                  |
| 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sent an e-mail to someone that said something negative you wouldn't say in person? |
| 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Been a target of a rumor?  |
| 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Threatened someone because they made you mad?                                      |
| 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Gone to sit with someone who was by themselves and sad?                            |
| 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listened to gossip about another person?   |
| 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Received messages in a chat room or e-mail that hurt your feelings?                |
| 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tried to sit with a group of kids at lunch and been told that you couldn't?        |
| 22 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Excluded someone to make them feel bad?  |

- 23   Cried or felt sad because of something mean another person did to you?
- 24   Helped another person with their homework, even though your friends said not to?
- 25   Made a new friend?
- 26   Been part of a crowd of kids who watched as your leader made fun of another person?
- 27   Deliberately done something you knew would hurt someone?
- 28   Took something that belonged to someone else just to bother them?
- 29   Wanted to speak up and defend another person, but didn't because you were afraid?
- 30   Had to sit by yourself in class because your friends decided to move away from you?
- 31   Complimented someone you don't know very well?
- 32   Tried to convince others to be mean to someone or to ignore them?
- 33   Done something to embarrass a person you didn't like?
- 34   Threatened not to be friends with someone if they didn't do what you wanted them to do?
- 35   Stayed and watched one person be mean to another?
- 36   Dared someone to do something they didn't want to do?
- 37   Insulted someone verbally because they looked at you the wrong way?
- 38   Wrote something unkind about someone you didn't like in a public place, without signing your name?
- 39   Called a person you don't like an unkind name when they could hear you?
- 40   Listened in when a friend called another person and tried to get them to talk to you?
- 41   Made up something to get a former friend in trouble?
- 42   Given a friend a compliment?
- 43   Teased a person you don't know very well?
- 44   Deliberately ignored a person you don't like when they said hi to you?
- 45   Stayed friends with someone because you were afraid of what they would do if you didn't?
- 46   Been teased by someone else about the way that you look?
- 47   Excluded someone from your group because your friends told you to?

- 48   Looked or gestured at someone in a way that meant to hurt or insult them?
- 49   Been in a chat room but not participated when a person you know got teased by your friends?
- 50   Forgiven a friend who hurt your feelings?

Score:

A - \_\_\_\_\_ B - \_\_\_\_\_ V - \_\_\_\_\_ PB - \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix G – Behavior Test Answer Sheet

## Counselor Answer Sheet

## Behavior Pre/Post Test for Elementary

Check Box Either Yes or No

- |      | Yes                      | No                       |  |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| A 1  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Called other kids names that made fun of them?                                     |
| A 2  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Said something about someone else that you knew wasn't nice?                       |
| P 3  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Walked away when your friends started talking about someone else you know?         |
| B 4  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Laughed when someone else made fun of another person?                              |
| A 5  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Written a note or graffiti about someone else that wasn't nice?                    |
| V 6  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Felt put down by someone, but not spoken up about it?                              |
| P 7  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Asked your friends to stop talking about another friend who wasn't there?          |
| V 8  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Let someone talk to you into doing something you really didn't want to do?         |
| A 9  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Refused to talk to someone so it would upset them?                                 |
| P 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Invited a new person to sit with your crowd at lunch?                              |
| A 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Repeated a rumor you heard about a friend?   |
| A 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Started a rumor about a person who was mean to someone else?                       |
| A 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Made fun of another person's clothes or appearance?                                |
| P 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Stood up for another person that your friends were making fun of?                  |
| A 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sent an e-mail to someone that said something negative you wouldn't say in person? |
| V 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Been a target of a rumor?  |
| A 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Threatened someone because they made you mad?                                      |
| P 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Gone to sit with someone who was by themselves and sad?                            |
| B 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listened to gossip about another person?   |
| V 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Received messages in a chat room or e-mail that hurt your feelings?                |
| V 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tried to sit with a group of kids at lunch and been told that you couldn't?        |
| A 22 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Excluded someone to make them feel bad?  |



- V 23   Cried or felt sad because of something mean another person did to you?
- P 24   Helped another person with their homework, even though your friends said not to?
- P 25   Made a new friend?
- B 26   Been part of a crowd of kids who watched as your leader made fun of another person?
- A 27   Deliberately done something you knew would hurt someone?
- A 28   Took something that belonged to someone else just to bother them?
- B 29   Wanted to speak up and defend another person, but didn't because you were afraid?
- V 30   Had to sit by yourself in class because your friends decided to move away from you?
- P 31   Complimented someone you don't know very well?
- A 32   Tried to convince others to be mean to someone or to ignore them?
- A 33   Done something to embarrass a person you didn't like?
- A 34   Threatened not to be friends with someone if they didn't do what you wanted them to do?
- B 35   Stayed and watched one person be mean to another?
- A 36   Dared someone to do something they didn't want to do?
- A 37   Insulted someone verbally because they looked at you the wrong way?
- A 38   Wrote something unkind about someone you didn't like in a public place, without signing your name?
- A 39   Called a person you don't like an unkind name when they could hear you?
- B 40   Listened in when a friend called another person and tried to get them to talk to you?
- A 41   Made up something to get a former friend in trouble?
- P 42   Given a friend a compliment?
- A 43   Teased a person you don't know very well?
- A 44   Deliberately ignored a person you don't like when they said hi to you?
- V 45   Stayed friends with someone because you were afraid of what they would do if you didn't?
- V 46   Been teased by someone else about the way that you look?
- B 47   Excluded someone from your group because your friends told you to?

- A 48   Looked or gestured at someone in a way that meant to hurt or insult them?
- B 49   Been in a chat room but not participated when a person you know got teased by your friends?
- P 50   Forgiven a friend who hurt your feelings?

Chances are you've used some if not all of these behaviors in the past week. Check and see which of the following you used the most.

**Aggressive Behaviors:**

1, 2, 5, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 22, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 43, 44, 48

**Bystander Behaviors That Support Aggression:**

4, 19, 26, 29, 35, 40, 47, 49

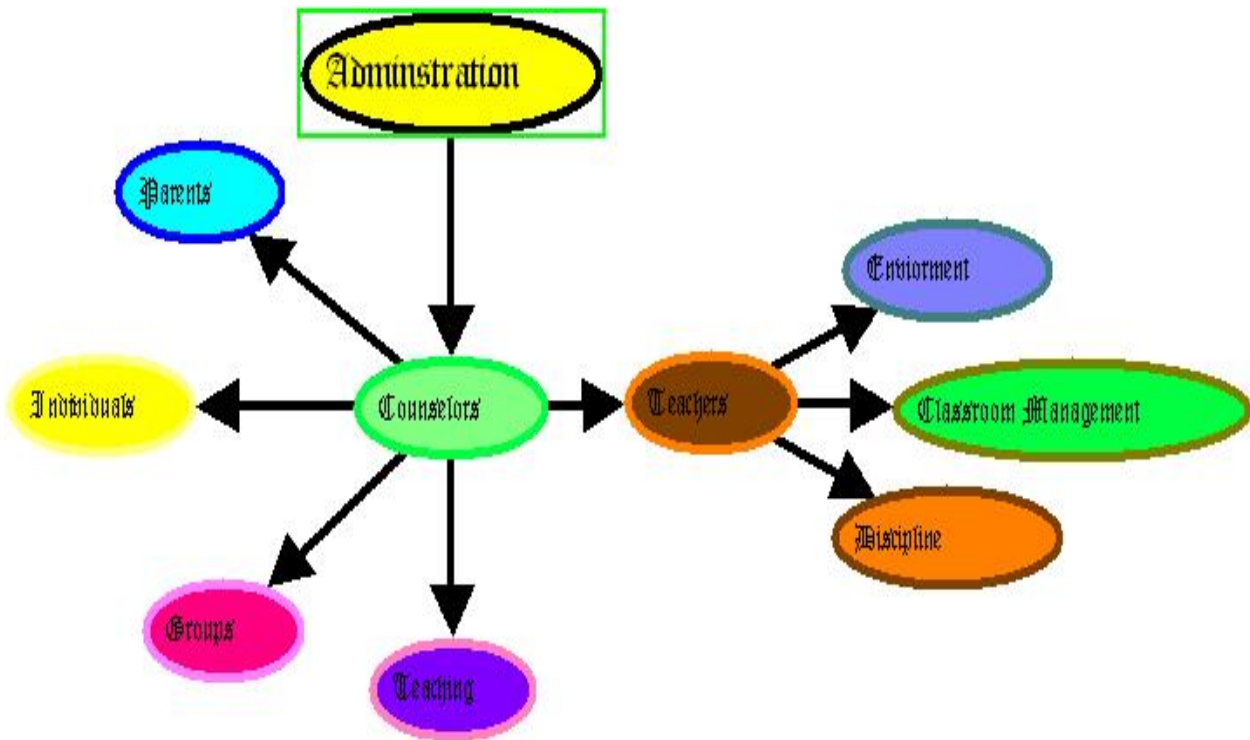
**Behaviors Checked Off by a Victim:**

6, 8, 16, 20, 21, 23, 30, 45, 46

**Power Behaviors: Congratulations!:**

3, 7, 10, 14, 18, 24, 25, 31, 42, 50

Appendix H—Conceptual Framework for Bullying in Schools



## Appendix I – District Procedures

- 1) District procedure requires that you redirect those who contact you seeking data from or about school, your teachers, or students to Research & Assessment. Researchers will be directed to complete a research request (<http://www.davis.k12.ut.us/rad/research/main.html>, "Request Information Form") which is submitted to Chris Wahlquist, Research & Assessment.
- 2) Anyone who wants information/data must go through this process.
- 3) Researchers may not utilize district resources to conduct studies. For instance, researchers may not
  - distribute/collect materials through the pony
  - expect personnel to serve as the collector or distributor of forms or data
  - conduct a survey using the district online survey system
 These are examples only. The underlying idea is that the district should not have to expend funds to further a research project or study.
- 4) Researchers must submit all required information as described in the "Request Information Form" at the link described above. Once that information is submitted, the Research Review Committee writes a report of the request and checks for legal and policy compliance and any limitations the district may need to impose on the study. The request is forwarded to the Superintendent's Executive Staff where it is approved or denied.
- 5) If the request has been approved, the researcher will be able to provide you with a copy of the district letter of approval. The letter will be on district letterhead and signed by Chris Wahlquist. If a study has limitations, those limitations will be listed in the approval letter.
- 6) No. District approval allows a researcher to contact principals, but principals are not required to agree to allow the study to go forward in the school.
- 7) Some of the possible reasons for a principal not allowing a study in his/her school in the event it has been approved by the district are the following:
  - takes too much time away from instruction
  - does not forward school or district goals
  - does not benefit student learning
  - creates a potential disruption
  - utilizes non-approved curriculum
  - takes too much personnel time
  - does not promote best instructional practices
  - conflicts with school goals
  - is a disguised attempt to press a school into purchasing a product

**Appendix J**  
**Principal Questionnaire**

- 1) What does bullying mean to you?
  - a. Please describe...
  - b. Where were you when you saw a situation of bullying?
  - c. What was the situation?
  
- 2) Do you believe bullying is a school problem?
  - a. Do you believe bullying exists in your school?
  
- 3) How do you believe your position as principal impacts the bullying situation at your school?
  - a. Do you have a roll in dealing with bullying?
  - b. What is that role?
  - c. How do you see yourself dealing with the problem?
  
- 4) What do you believe should be done about bullies in school?
  
- 5) What do you believe are the perceived benefits of having a teacher, counselor or playground supervisor at the school to address bullying?
  - a. Do you know the Davis School District policy on bullying?
  - b. Do you know the law about bullying as it is referred to in NCLB (No Child Left Behind)?
  
- 6) Does your school or leaders have a policy about bullying?
  - a. What is that policy?
  - b. Have you had a conference or meeting to help you deal with bullying behavior?
  - c. What was the outcome of the meeting?
  - d. Do you believe teachers and staff know the policy concerning bullying?
  
- 7) Are there any ways in which the teachers, counselor, and playground supervisors can improve the bullying prevention program in the school?
  - a. How do you see this can this be done?
  
- 8) Have you received any training related to bullying before becoming a principal or after becoming one?

**Appendix K**  
**Teacher Questionnaire**

- 1) What does bullying mean to you?
  - a. Please describe ...
  - b. Where were you when you saw a situation of bullying?
  - c. What was the situation?
  
- 2) How do you believe your position as a teacher impacts the bullying situation at your school?
  
- 3) What do you believe should be done about bullies in school?
  
- 4) What do you believe are the perceived benefits of having training for the school to address bullying?
  
- 5) What problems, if any, have you encountered or noticed with bullying in your classroom?
  
- 6) Are there any ways in which the school services can be improved to address bullying in the school?
  
- 7) What are the resources available or personal available that deal with bullying?
  
- 8) Do know what the policy of Davis School District is concerning bullying?
  
- 9) How do you think a bullying prevention program can be placed in your school?
  
- 10) Do you think there is a certain type of student that is a bully and describe that student would look like to you?
  
- 11) What type of conflict resolutions are you using in the classroom and what type of impact are they having?

**Appendix L**  
**Counselor Questionnaire**

- 1) How do you believe bullying is a school problem?
- 2) How do you believe your position as counselor impacts the bullying situation at your school?
- 3) What do you believe are the perceived benefits of having a counselor in the school to address bullying?
- 4) Will you describe some of the bullying lessons that you give to the students?
- 5) What problems, if any, have you encountered with bullying in the school?
- 6) What are the ways in which the counselor services can be improved to address bullying in the school?
- 7) What type of conflict resolutions are you using in the classroom and what type of impact are they having?
- 8) What do you believe are the roles of the principal, counselor, teacher, and playground supervisor in curtailing bullying? How can these roles improve the program?