March 2018

A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis of Current Anti-bullying Policies in Ontario

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Master of Arts

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Recommended Citation

Cheng, Zhu, "A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis of Current Anti-bullying Policies in Ontario" (2018). *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository*. 5225.
https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/5225

Abstract

This study asks how school bullying is conceptualized in current anti-bullying policies in Ontario. Policy documents PPM 144 (*Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012*), PPM 145 (*Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012*), and the Model Plan (the *Working Draft: Safe and Accepting Schools Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, 2013*) are examined. Drawing upon concepts from Foucault, this study expresses how disciplinary techniques operate in anti-bullying policies and how they contribute to the formation of dominant discourses on bullying. It argues that school bullying is represented as an individual problem in these policies. Accordingly, bullying prevention and intervention mainly relies on individualized approaches, leaving power relations and social oppression in the larger society unproblematized. This study raises the possibility that educators might help create spaces for students to "be governed less" (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 141) by these discourses.

Keywords: School bullying, anti-bullying policies, individual, Foucault, disciplinary techniques, discourse, subjectification, governmentality

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor Dr. Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw for her unwavering guidance and encouragement during my study at Western University. Dr. Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw helps me carve out a focus from my interests in anti-bullying and guides these interests in productive directions. It is her academic and emotional support that gives me motivation and makes this thesis possible. The time spent with her in reading groups and meetings is so precious and will never fade in my memory.

I am also deeply grateful to my thesis committee member, Dr. Rachel Heydon, whose insightful advice has been invaluable in the completion of the thesis. Dr. Rachel Heydon also teaches me a great deal on curriculum and educational research during the course session. I can't thank her enough for her tremendous effort to offer every possible help throughout my progress.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank my family for their unconditional love and support.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

I wrote this introduction shortly after the Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week ran in Ontario between November 19 and 25, 2017. The week was established in subsection 300.0.2(1) of the Education Act, and begins with the third Sunday in November of each year. The purpose of it is "to heighten awareness and understanding of bullying and the impact it can have on the overall school environment" (Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144 - *Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012,* p. 3). As the document *Bully – We Can All Stop It: A Guide for Parents of Elementary and Secondary School Students* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013) defines, bullying is

> aggressive behaviour that is typically repeated over time. It is meant to cause harm, fear or distress or create a negative environment at school for another person. Bullying occurs in a situation where there is a real or perceived power imbalance. (p. 1)

The last two decades have seen the development of anti-bullying policy as a form of state curriculum policy across the world (Espelage, 2016). Informed by mainstream school bullying research, bullying prevention and intervention has become an urgent priority in public schools in many Western countries, such as Australia (Cross, et al., 2011; Chalmers el at., 2016), the UK (Smith, Smith, Osborn & Samara, 2008; Raynor & Wylie, 2012), and the US (Hall, 2017; Cornell & Limber, 2015). In Canada, most provinces and territories have anti-bullying policies, including Ontario (Winton & Tuters, 2015).

Both traditional and postpositivist policy researchers assume that policy is developed

to fix pre-existing public concerns or problems (Scheurich, 1994; Bacchi, 2009). However, such assumption neglects the cultural dimension and political nature of public policies. Bacchi (2009) states that "in this conventional understanding of public policy, governments are seen to be *reacting* to fixed and identifiable 'problems' that are exogenous (outside) the policy process", left unexamined "the creative or productive role of government in shaping particular understanding of problems" (pp. 1-2, italics in original). Filtered through a Foucauldian screen, the conceptualization of bullying in prevalent anti-bullying policies can be regarded as "a given social object or practice" that exists "only in certain specific ways and not others" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 31). Discourses on bullying not only constrain, but also enable "writing, speaking, and thinking" about bullying "within specific historical limits" (p. 31).

Drawing upon Foucault's work, I engage in a Foucauldian discourse analysis of current anti-bullying policies in Ontario, namely PPM 144 (*Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012*), PPM 145 (*Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012*), and the Model Plan (*the Working Draft: Safe and Accepting Schools Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, 2013*). My objective is to interrogate how these policies construct school bullying and to uncover the deep-seated assumptions that underpin such construction. To this end, I also draw on two Foucault-informed policy analytic methods "policy archaeology" (Scheurich, 1994) and the "WPR approach" (What's the problem represented to be?) (Bacchi, 2009). These two policy analytic methods are in accordance with each other, challenging the dominant problem-solving paradigm, and seeking to scrutinize how policies *frame* problems rather than *address* them.

1.2 Outline

This paper is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 presents the background of this study and the outline of the paper. It reviews the historical and theoretical contexts of school

bullying research and its application to anti-bullying policies. It also introduces a new trend that problematizes the way school bullying is defined and represented in anti-bullying policies. This trend takes into account the social dynamics and power relations in the larger society. The literature review underscores the necessity to conduct this study to examine how bullying is construed in anti-bullying policies in Ontario. Finally, chapter 1 presents the research questions of this study. Within a Foucauldian framework, Chapter 2 clarifies some concepts and theories (i.e., "discourse and power/knowledge", "subjection", and "governmentality") that are related to my research questions. Chapter 3 describes Foucauldian discourse analysis and two policy analytic methods informed by Foucault, policy archeology (Scheurich, 1994) and the WPR approach (Bacchi, 2009). It also clarifies the constraints and trustworthiness of this study. Chapter 4, the findings, interrogates the concept of "safe school" and scrutinizes the dominant discourses on bullying by identifying the disciplinary techniques embedded in anti-bullying policy-making. It discusses the subjectification and discursive effects produced by the bullying problem represented in the policies. It also considers the possibility of creating spaces for students under current anti-bullying policies. Chapter 5 highlights that school bullying is individualized and constructed as problem behaviour in the policies. It provides recommendations for future research, primarily around the role of educators in anti-bullying policy implementation.

1.3 Literature Review

1.3.1 The Dominant Bullying Research. Although some school bullying research was conducted as early as 1885 in the United States, it was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that research on school bullying got going in countries like the UK and Scandinavia (Horton & Forsberg, 2015). Dan Olweus, a Scandinavian psychologist, is generally recognized as the Founding Father of school bullying research and a world leading expert in this field. His early work *Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys* was translated into English in 1978. This book has been identified as providing the dominant

paradigm for the school bullying research community (Horton & Forsberg, 2015). It attributes school bullying to individual acts of aggression and personality traits (Smith, 2013; Thornberg, 2015). From then on, school bullying research has mainly centered on examining students' individual behaviours, psychological states, parental factors (Wang, et al., 2012; Knight, 2014 and others), family types (Vacca & Kramer-Vida, 2012), and interpersonal relationships (Pepler, et al., 2006). The research, accordingly, has led to the emergence and prevalence of anti-bullying policies and programs across nations. In the last 2 decades, "research has increasingly informed bullying prevention, policy, and legislative efforts" (Espelage, 2016, p, 768).

In 2003, Australia was one of the first countries to legislate a national anti-bullying policy, the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF). NSSF required schools to adopt integrated evidence-based strategies to improve students' physical and mental health (Cross, et al., 2011). Four years following NSSF's dissemination, the effectiveness of the policy was formally evaluated in 2007. The findings indicated that

> schools appear not to have widely implemented the recommended safe-school practices, teachers appear to need more training to address bullying, especially covert bullying, and bullying prevalence among students seems relatively unchanged compared to Australian data collected 4 years prior to the launch of the NSSF. (p. 398)

Recently, Chalmers et al. (2016) examined the perspectives of some professionals from Education Departments across three states of Australia. These professionals were involved in anti-bullying policy-making process. The result showed that there remained great variations in the definition of bullying and the resulting anti-bullying guidance and practices. "It would be simplistic to suggest that the mere existence of an anti-bullying policy is a panacea" for bullying in schools (p. 106).

The study of Smith and his colleagues (2008) found that the proportion of schools

having an anti-bullying policy has vastly risen in the UK since an anti-bullying project was launched by the Department of Education and Science. As an outcome of this project, *Don't suffer in silence: An anti-bullying pack for schools*, issued in 1994, became a major guideline for schools to improve their own anti-bullying programs in the UK. By focusing on the detailed content of a large number of policies and programs in different schools, the research suggests that in most schools, the definition of bullying is explicitly stated and parents are kept informed of bullying incidents, and yet "many policies are weak in crucial areas, including other definitional issues; responsibilities beyond those of teaching staff; following up of incidents; management and use of records; and specific preventative measures such as playground work and peer support" (Smith, Smith, Osborn & Samara, 2008, p. 10). In another study conducted in the same year concerning the effect of these anti-bullying policies, Samara and Smith (2008) found that "schools are clearly responding to the new requirements and challenges regarding bullying" and there is evidence "of some modest progress" over the last decade in the UK (p. 674). Six years later, it turned out that "despite the recent development of anti-bullying policies within schools, bullying remains a significant issue for many pupils" (Raynor & Wylie, p. 782). To further investigate this significant issue, Raynor and Wylie undertook a self-report survey with pupils in Grade 8 (aged 12 – 13) secondary schools in London, the UK. Their study suggested "some difficulties with current anti-bullying policies, namely that they had minimal impact on bullying and some pupils felt that they have to deal with occurrences between themselves" (p. 788).

Having conducted a systemic review on anti-bullying policy interventions in the U.S. and other countries over the last 20 years, Hall (2017) finds that "there were no significant changes in perceived effectiveness before and after the passage of an anti-bullying policy" (p. 55). In the meanwhile, Hall also points out that there are other elements such as the limitations in the evaluation methods and the implementation of policy that might have affected the result. Hence, although it is the case that current anti-bullying policy is "not

sufficient to affect student behaviour" (p. 57), Hall insists that "research on school bullying policy will undoubtedly continue to expand with the growing understanding of the need for evidence-based education policies and as bullying policies continue to be introduced and revised in schools across the globe" (p. 63). Similarly, in the view of U.S. scholars Cornell and Limber (2015), school anti-bullying policies should "reflect best practices informed by scientific research", and so they recommend "greater reliance on evidence-based practices" and appropriate disciplinary methods (p. 341).

These are but a few of the studies which aim to provide insights into contemporary school bullying research in some Western countries where school bullying has been identified as a serious societal concern. While these studies provided a great deal of empirical data and useful information about the prevalence of school bullying, they had less to say about it as a phenomenon beyond behaviour (Walton, 2011).

1.3.2 Beyond Behaviour. In recent years, some scholars have recognized that the traditional paradigm for studying bullying does not sufficiently consider the socio-political context of the "macrosystem", within which the interpersonal relations and interactions are situated (see Schott & Søndergaard, 2014; Horton, 2016). Using the metaphor of a set of Russian nesting dolls, Horton (2016) vividly illustrates current bullying research. The five dolls are "the individual", "the microsystems", "the mesosystems", "the exosystems", and "the macrosystems" (p. 16). According to Horton, the first doll is the most popular one among school bullying researchers and "has been explained in terms of supposedly individual characteristics and predictors of bullying behaviour" (p. 16). The second doll includes the setting of family, school, and peer group, but "the focus has been less on the settings than on the interactions between individuals or groups of individuals within those settings" (p. 16). The third doll stands for interactions between microsystems, such as the collaborations of family and school, and the fourth doll represents indirect affecting factors like "staff training, neighboring community environments and parent stress" (p. 12).

However, in terms of the third and fourth dolls, researchers have still focused on "individuals or groups of individuals whose actions and interactions have direct implications for bullying interventions" (p. 16). The last "macrosystem" doll "is the highest level of the ecological model" and its "institutions and associated ideologies… permeate the society as a whole" (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, as cited in Horton, 2016, p. 17). Horton expresses his concern about how little attention the last doll has received so far. In his understanding, vital to the research into bullying is the environments which influence students' interaction with others, and where those interaction are situated. Here environments refer "not only to the social context, but also to the actual systems themselves and the institutions and cultures that constitute them" (p. 17).

Likewise, Winton and Tuners (2014) contend that the relations and interactions among bullying participants are significantly impacted by "historical and systemic hierarchies of power" and "the related power structures and cultures privilege certain ways of knowing, being and behaving over other ways" (p. 134). Walton (2005) has a similar view, noting that bullying is socially and politically constructed and stems from "ideological relations of power" (p. 11). Hamarus and Kaikkonen (2008) also recognize that "[b]ullying is embedded in cultural norms, values, and social status in the whole community" (p. 1). Nonetheless, current anti-bullying policies and programs are still mainly based on the understanding of bullying as the result of malicious behaviours conducted by individual students due to personality traits and levels of aggression. In their book *School Bullying: New Theories in Context*, Schott and Søndergaard (2014) argue that contemporary studies and the resulting policies on bullying "have largely ignored the influence of certain forms of social power" (p. 210). When engaging in bullying, children exercise these forms of power based on "how they are positioned and position themselves according to wider societal norms regarding the race, gender, sexuality, ability, size, bodily shape, social class and so on" (Horton, 2016, p. 13).

1.3.3 Problem or Problematic? Drawing upon Foucauldian archaeology, Bacchi (2009) suggests that researchers can "uncover the (assumed) thought that lies behind specific problem representations" (p. 5). Viewed from this standpoint, the way bullying is problematized in policies shapes the "problem" of bullying as well as the discourse and knowledge on bullying, which Walton (2010) describes as "the definitional aspects of bullying that not only constrain understanding of the problem but also place limitations on the practices of policies meant to address bullying" (p. 135). The "problem" of bullying represented in anti-bullying policies, according to Walton, is an individual "problem" of delinquent behaviours caused by a lack of personal and social skills, such as the ability for emotional control and social interaction with other students. In Walton's (2005) words, "such a conceptualization provides possibilities for preventative and interventionist [anti-bullying] strategies" (p. 94), which educators tend to heavily rely on, since they are eager to "bring quick resolution to bullying incidents so that they can get on with the task of teaching" (p. 95). In these anti-bullying strategies, it is implied that the training of emotional and social skills offered by schools can prevent the alienation between students that ostensibly leads to bullying. However, Lystad (1972) states that "alienation has been particularly related to economic and political elements" (p. 90). Ignorance of these elements leads to over-simplified representation of the bullying "problem" in anti-bullying policies, which, to some extent, relieves the school system and the whole society from the responsibility "to engage students, educators and other members of the community in learning about the complex and conflicting nature of human values and interactions" (Sinton & Tuters, 2014, p. 134). In fact, the way bullying is constituted in policies and practices has been undermining the effectiveness of curbing this phenomenon in the long term (Ryan & Morgan, 2011). It is out of this fear that Horton (2016) insists on rethinking "the supposedly individual predictors of bullying behaviour" in terms of "the wider social, cultural, organizational and political contexts from which they stem" (p. 14).

Similarly, Winton and Tuters (2014) point out that "[c]onstructing bullying as the

consequence of individual's choices reflects the neoliberal conception of the subject as one who exercises rational choices and is responsible for those choices" (p. 133). The overwhelming emphasis on individual responsibility in anti-bullying procedures, in Walton's (2005) words, "has strong populist appeal, evident in rhetorical advocacy of a return to 'law and order'" and to "enshrine neoconservative ideologies in educational philosophy and practice" (p. 103). A major problem in such conceptualization of anti-bullying policy is a misconception that power is relational and can be made equal between students by themselves (Walton, 2005). Students are assumed to have the ability to confront bullying by making "right" choices and by changing their attitudes towards themselves. "The dominant logic", as Walton insightfully perceives, "is that individual behaviour has the potential to either poison or polish a particular environment" (p. 96). Walton continues to note that school environment means much more than the simple sum of each individual student's behaviour. Bullying can be understood as "a complex phenomenon which is enacted or constituted through the interactive/intra-active entanglements that exist between a variety of open-ended, social, discursive, material/physical and subjective forces" (Schott & Søndergaard, 2014, p. 9). Bullying is "a social phenomenon in the process of Othering related to race, gender, religion, sexual orientation and disability, among other vectors of inequality" (Smith, 2013, p. 84). Seen in this light, marginalized groups can be further disempowered by anti-bullying policies that emphasize individual behaviours, as a "preoccupation with the role of individuals, combined with a simplistic and problematic understanding of power" does not address how "social oppression" gives rise to bullying incidents (Walton, 2005, p. 122).

1.3.4 The Gap. While a good deal of research has been done on anti-bullying policies and programs at both national and regional levels, there has been little focus on the study of such policies and programs in broad socio-political contexts (see Horton & Forsberg, 2015; Schott & Søndergaard, 2014; Walton, 2015; Winton & Tuners, 2014). The school bullying problem is constructed in policies with inadequate attention paid to the general

"macrosystem", that is, the "culture, society, social categories, power structures across different social groups, ideologies, cultural norms, etc." (Thornberg, 2015, p. 183). Accordingly, it is not surprising that anti-bullying policies are supposed to significantly curb bullying in schools, and yet they "are largely ineffective" (Walton, 2011, p. 131). "The general picture has been one of considerable difficulty in maintaining the impact of anti-bullying programs" (Galloway & Roland, 2004, as cited in Ellwood & Davies, 2010, p. 90). This gap between expectation and the present situation deserves questioning and thus leaves space for further investigation. In a study focusing on anti-bullying incentives in the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Saskatchewan, Roberge's (2011) research shows that despite the development and implemented of "a variety of bullying intervention and prevention programs" in "an assortment of structures", there has been little consistency in results" (p. 12). She suggests "a re-tailoring of policies" and "an analysis of discourse" as two of "the logical next step[s]" (p. 12). Along similar lines, Horton (2016) contends that research on school bullying should start to consider the possibility of removing "the macro lens" which focuses on individuals and adopting "a wide-angle lens" which takes into account "the social, institutional and societal contexts within which the school bullying occurs" (pp. 211-212).

Schools should not be merely thought of "as collections of individuals", but rather "as institutions wherein particular social and moral orders are reiterated, reinforced, subverted and contested" (Rivers et al., 2007, as cited in Horton, 2011, p. 273). Schools are "classically complex, single systems made up pf multiple interacting parts" (Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011, p. 637) and "the messy practices of relationality and materiality of the world" (Law, 2009, p. 142). It is because of the complex nature of schools that education policies should not be understood as static or one-size-fits-all problem-solving methods.

In one of his latest articles *What is policy? 21 years later: Reflections on the*

possibilities of policy research, Ball (2015) clearly restates how policy should be seen:

> Policies are 'contested', mediated and differentially represented by different actors in different contexts (policy as text), but on the other hand, at the same time produced and formed by taken-for-granted and implicit knowledges and assumptions about the world and ourselves (policy as discourse). (p. 311)

On the same page, Ball continues to express his concern about current policy research:

> Looking across the now huge body of policy research, even including those studies that explicitly align themselves to some kind of policy sociology, there is a lot more text work than discourse work; that is, a lot more focus on what is written and said, rather than how those statements are formed and made possible. (p. 311)

Seen in this context, to interrogate the way anti-bullying policy as both "text and discourse" constructs the problem of bullying helps make visible what is taken-for-granted and what is left unproblematized. Walton (2015) has lately expounded:

> The common refrain is that we need to keep finding gaps in the knowledge and fill them with better research-based approaches and strategies. In the case of bullying, more research is not better, contrary to research industry ideology. In fact, I would argue, based on my many years of adjudicating proposals on bullying for major international educational conferences, that instead of doing more research, we need to stop our industry, take a step back, look at the problem in broad contexts rather than micromoments, and go back to the drawing board. (p. 30)

Walton's argument urges the bullying research to scrutinize the bullying problem within broad social and political contexts. In this vein, Foucault's work can be drawn on to ask how bullying and bullies are "constituted in the research and in the interventions arising

out of that research" (Ellwood & Davies, 2010, p. 95), and "how certain discursive forms articulate objects and subjects in their intelligibility" (Butler, 1995, as cited in Ellwood & Davies, 2010, p. 95).

1.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced the background of this study and presented the outline of the paper. I have also reviewed the historical and theoretical contexts of school bullying research and its application to anti-bullying policies that are currently enacted and implemented in schools across Western countries. This dominant paradigm of bullying research has aroused quite a lot of concern in recent years. Some researchers have started to problematize how school bullying is defined and represented in anti-bullying policies and programs and what the effect can be. They purport to take into account the way bullying behaviour manifests the wider society when doing bullying research. The work of Foucault can be fruitfully read as providing both the theoretical frame and the methodology in such research. As Bansel, Davies, Laws, and Linnell (2008) propose, "[i]t is time to revisit school bullying from a sociological perspective and with the benefit of subsequent analyses of subjectification and power made available in Foucault's writing" (p. 59).

As an attempt to echo with these researchers and to examine the anti-bullying policies in schools in the province of Ontario, this study seeks to respond to the following research questions:

The main question is:

How is the problem of school bullying represented in current anti-bullying policies and programs in schools in the province of Ontario?

The sub-questions are:

1. What is the problem of school bullying constructed to be in anti-bullying policies in Ontario?

2. How could we understand the presuppositions or assumptions about bullying

discourse/knowledge underlined in these policies?

3. How does the construction of school bullying in anti-bullying policies exert influence on people? What is left unexamined?

4. How could the representation of the problem be questioned and disrupted?

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This anti-bullying policy analytic work is conducted through the lens of Foucault (1977b, 1980a, 1982, 1983, 2000a, 2000c). Ball (1993) suggests that policy analyses should "ask critical/theoretical questions, rather than simple problem-solving ones" (p. 16). I draw on Foucault's notion of discourse in this study to ask some of these critical/theoretical questions. This chapter defines key concepts closely related to my research questions, and presents the main theories I put into use in Chapter 4. Such concepts and theories, including "discourse and power/knowledge", "subjection", and "governmentality", shed light on how I examined, analyzed, and interpreted anti-bullying policies in this study.

2.2 Discourse, Power/Knowledge

Policies "exercise power through a *production* of 'truth' and 'knowledge', as discourses" (Ball, 1993, p. 14, italics in original). Cheek (2008) defines discourse as the "ways of thinking and speaking about aspects of reality" (p. 2). They are culturally and socially constructed representation of reality. Cheek also reminds:

> At any point in time, there are a number of possible discursive frames for thinking, writing, and speaking about aspects of reality. However, as a consequence of the effect of power relations, not all discourses are afforded equal presence or equal authority. (P. 2)

Through the operations of power relations, certain discourses construct categories of knowledge and thus govern "certain possibilities for thought" (Ball, 1993, p. 14). As such,

discourse is "situated far more closely to knowledge, materiality and power than it is to language" (Hook, 2007, p. 542). It is not "a communicative exchange", rather, it is "a complex entity that extends into the realm of ideology, strategy, language and practice, and is shaped by the relations between power and knowledge" (Sharp & Richardson, 2001, p. 195). Near the beginning of "The order of discourse", Foucault (1981) asserts:

> In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality. (p. 52)

Power as a discursive relation circulates throughout society and permeates these procedures that contribute to shaping discourse. Power is not simply a top-down phenomenon, neither can it be read as one individual or class's domination over another or others. Rather, power is both "reflective" and "impersonal" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 22). As McHoul and Grace put it, "discourse moves in, and as, the flows of power" (p. 23). Following the late works of Foucault, Schneck (1987) recognizes how forceful discourse might be:

> Discourse is understood to be a violent creativeness foisted upon the world. The larger constellation of discourse is no longer neutrally termed an 'episteme,' but termed a *regime du savoir* - a 'regime of knowledge.' Not a meek process of interpretation, in other words, to know – to claim knowledge, to will truth – is to make reality, discursively and violently. (pp. 27-28, italics in original)

By claiming knowledge to will truth, discourse can serve to frame the reality of a specific area with a set of assumptions or presuppositions, which is often taken for granted and consequently remains unchallenged. It "provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organizes and gives structure to the manner in which a particular topic, object, process is to be talked about" (Kress, 1985, p. 7). For Foucault, "'knowledge' is

much more a matter of the social, historical and political conditions under which, for example, statements come to count as true or false", and thus he proposed to examine discourse at the level of the statement (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 29). For Foucault, there are three criteria for identifying statements. Firstly, statements are primarily "functional units" as "components of discursive formations"; they "do things, bring about effects rather than merely 'represent' states of affairs" (p.37). Secondly, "groups of statements act to both constrain and enable what we can know", thus statements should be "parts of knowledge" (p. 37). Thirdly, statements should be "part of a technique or techniques for the production of human subjects and institutions" (p. 38).

The functioning of statements is governed via specific rules (McHoul & Grace, 1993). These rules "have to do with historically variable bodies of knowledge" and are rules "for what it is possible to know" (p. 38). For Foucault, "'knowledge' is a matter of the social, historical and political conditions under which statements come to count as true or false" (p. 29). That is why Hook (2007) argues that "a study of discourse must necessarily entail a focus on discourse-as-knowledge" (p. 542).

The way bullying is constructed in prevalent education policies and research echoes "the dominant discourse on bullying", which "is the idea that bullying is anti-social behaviour where one student wields power over another, …and that such behaviour must be stopped" (Walton, 2011, p. 131). This dominant bullying discourse that attributes bullying to students' interpersonal power imbalance regularizes and sets the boundaries of how bullying is talked about and dealt with, which forms the concept of bullying, the criteria to classify bullying behaviours, the approach to addressing bullying, and the resulting bullying coping strategies. By identifying binaries, keywords, and concepts embedded in anti-bullying statements and interrogating the historical and social conditions under which these statements are shaped, this study seeks to "recognize and analyze the existence of 'dominant' discourse" in social policy, as Ball (1993) calls on (p. 15). Within

the framework of discourse and power/knowledge relation, it is possible to unpack the regimes of meaning-making constructed in and as discourse, and to see how and why some categories of knowledge and lines of thinking have come to be taken as "truths" while others are excluded or marginalized. Discourses are about "the creation and limitation of possibilities"; they are "systems of power/knowledge (pouvoir/savoir) within which we take up subject position" (Pennycook, 1994, p. 128).

2.3 Subjection

"[D]iscourse is an ordered set of polemical and strategic facts, while on another level it is the set of linguistic facts which express these polemics and strategies" (Foucault, 2000c, p. 2). Following Foucault and others, Luke (1995) argues that "all language has a *refractive* rather than transparent effect, mediating, interpreting, and reconstructing versions of the natural and social world, identity and social relations" (p. 19, italics in original). Specific texts might contain "linguistic and discursive artifacts" as techniques of distortion and misrepresentation, and thus they are capable to make attempts "to position, locate, define, and, in some instances, enable and regulate readers and addressees" (Luke 1995, pp. 19-20). Discourse, language and texts contribute to subject framing and positioning through what Foucault terms "polemical and strategic games" at the material level:

> …rather than ask ourselves how the sovereign appears to us in his lofty isolation, we should try to discover how it is that subjects are gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organism, forces, energies, materials desires, thoughts, etc. We should try to grasp subjection in its material instance as a constitution of subjects. (Foucault, 1977b, p. 97)

Subjection refers to "particular, historically located, disciplinary processes and concepts which enable us to consider ourselves as individual subjects and which constrain us form thinking otherwise" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 3). These processes and concepts permeate

all sectors of everyday life and thus limit the possibility for people to cognize themselves in a different way. In McHoul and Grace's view, "changes of public ideas precede changes in private individuals, not vice versa" (p. 4).

Foucault's work has dealt with "three modes of objectification which transform human beings into subjects" (Foucault, 1983, as cited in Peters, 1996, p. 82), namely "the modes of inquiry of the discipline-based discourses that objectivized human beings in different and specific ways; the objectivizing of the subject through what he calls 'dividing practices' (e.g., mad/sane, sick/healthy) and the way human beings turn themselves into subjects, especially in the realm of sexuality" (Peters, 1996, p. 82). Foucault terms the three modes of objectification as scientific classification, dividing practices and subjectification. These modes alert me to reflect on the nature of the existing anti-bullying policy and to speculate on how subjects are being constituted in it and with what effects.

Scientific classification may generate and institutionalize knowledge that "exaggerates or mythologizes the difference between groups and thus provides evidence of the supremacy of the dominant group" (Curtis & Harrison, 2001, p. 740). School bullying is "an object of scrutiny and expertise under the gaze of social science researchers, journalists, and administrators" (Walton, 2006, p. 21). "A focus on statistics, characteristics, psychological profiles, and measurable events, and the like, forms the constitution of public relations" (p. 113). These public relations reinforce the socially constructed difference and hierarchy as core processes in school bullying (Thornberg, 2015).

The second mode of objectification is what Foucault calls "dividing practices". He exemplifies this term in *the Subject and Power*:

The subject is either divided inside himself or divided from others. This process objectivizes him. Examples are the mad and the sane, the sick and the healthy, the criminals and the "good boys". (Foucault, 1983, p. 208)

Foucault describes how the "dividing practices" were operated in the 19th century penal system. Indeed, what Foucault analyzes about the institutions in the past has congruence with the current institution of schooling in many aspects, hence his work is of particular significance in considering the process of subjection within schooling (Jacobson, 2010). Schools are, to some extent, similar to the army where human beings are trained "as objects to be molded, not subjects to be heard or signs to be circulated and read" (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 154). This disciplinary power not only seeks to "divide individual humans into their component parts in order to effect a more exact training; it also divides or individualizes one human from another" (Jacobson, 2010, p. 265). "The perpetual penality that traverses all points and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes" (Foucault, 1995, p. 183). Normalization is exerted through the disciplinary power which operates in dividing discourses and practices. These dividing discourses and practices "provide value-laden grids of ranking through classification, examination, and knowledges", which "mirrors the workings of dominance inherent within bullying activities" (Jacobson, 2010, p. 273).

"Foucault's conception of discourse", write McHoul and Grace (1993), "is indispensable for an understanding of the role of 'power' in the production of knowledge – including, importantly, *self*-knowledge" (p. 57, italics in original). How one develops one's way of knowing, and how one positions oneself within the scope of that knowing, function as a form of subjection as much as subjection forced by the other (Bansel et al., 2009). "In a Foucauldian analysis [of school bullying], the acts of labelling and being labelled are integral to the process of subjectification" (p. 62). When "bullies", "the bullied", or "bystanders" are constantly labelled and subjected, they are not likely to escape from the constitution of these roles, rather, they themselves become part of the power of production. The child is "not only one who is labelled but who actively makes the world, and his or her position within it, make sense within the available discourses" (p. 62).

Peters (1996) elaborates that for Foucault, there are three types of struggles, namely struggles against forms of domination, struggles against forms of exploitation and struggles against forms of subjectivity. In these struggles, the type of struggles against subjection is of more importance in the present time (Peters, 1996) because the modern state constitutes "a modern matrix of individualization, or a new form of pastoral power" (Foucault, 1983, p. 215). The problem, therefore, is "not to liberate us from the state per se but from the type of individualization that is linked to the state through this new form of pastoral power" (Peters, 1996, p. 83). Subjectification, as Dahlberg and Moss (2005) point out, "has become the most common and effective means of government in modern times" (p. 20).

2.4 Governmentality

Foucault clarifies what "government" is in its broad meaning:

> "Government" did not refer only to political structures or to the management of states; rather, it designated the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed-the government of children, of souls, of communities, of families, of the sick. It covered not only the legitimately constituted forms of political or economic subjection but also modes of action, more or less considered and calculated, that were destined to act upon the possibilities of action of other people. To govern, in this sense, is to structure the possible field of action of others. (Foucault, 1983, p. 221)

Hunter (1994) points out that "the state did not invent its own instruments of government", instead, "it is a consequence of the expert and field-specific character of 'governmentality' that it must rely on the available forms of expertise that define the domain to be governed" (p. 173). This is consistent with Scheurich's (1994) analysis of professionalization, which collaborates closely with governmentality. Professionalization is "the proliferation of professions to treat and manage the citizenry, i.e. produce the disciplined, productive citizen", although "the larger implications of this goal are not evident to professionals

themselves" (p. 307). Having studied the anti-bullying policy documents from several school districts, Walton (2006) argues that professionalization is one of "social regularities that contribute to particular constructions of the problem of violence in schools" (p. 168).

With Foucault, Peters (1996) notes that there exists a "*paradox* of the neoliberal state" wherein the state has become more powerful despite its neoliberal policies masked as a self-limiting doctrine (p. 81). Foucault's notion of governmentality is a fruitful approach for understanding this paradox. In the new form of individualization, human beings "turn themselves into market subjects under the sign of *Homo economicus*", on which the state relies to retain its institutional power (p. 81, italics in original). Peters proceeds to argue that "[t]his is the basis for understanding the 'government of individuals' in education as a technique or form of power that is promoted through the adoption of market forms" (p. 81). This "logic of the market" has had a great impact on the field of education. Ball (2003) also points out that "the market" is one of the "three interrelated policy technologies" (the other two are "managerialism and performativity"), which, as "key elements of education reform 'package'", politically appealing to the "state-centered, public welfare tradition of educational provision" (pp. 215-216), and aiming not simply at changing what people do, but who they are.

Governmentality is a form of governmental rationality that assumes the wellbeing, happiness, or productiveness of individuals rely on their behaviours that reinforce the social order (Scheurich, 1994). Such productive citizens "continually re-learn 'right behaviour' by the public display of 'wrong behaviour', especially through the social process of identifying social problems, problem groups and policy solutions" (p. 307). According to Walton (2006), strategies pertaining to law and order are abundant and "the compulsion towards discipline, regulation, and punishment is strong" (p. 174). The specific harsh punishment as suspension and expulsion is authorized in quite a few disciplinary policies (Cornell & Limber, 2015).

Governmentality as a form of power is not only achieved through disciplines, orders and regulation, which are part of what Foucault terms "technology of domination". More importantly, governmentality is also operated through "technologies of the self", such as the "different practices of the self-care of the self, knowledge of self, confession and truth-telling" (Besley, 2007, p. 57). According to Besley (2007), these "practices of the self" is related to moral education of the young. Hunter (1994) makes it explicit:

> we must understand the fact that all Western states developed mass education systems through the bureaucratic adaptation of Christian pastoral pedagogy to the needs of social training. The result of this conjuncture of bureaucratic planning and spiritual discipline was the improvised assemblage of an institutional environment that continues to determine what counts as education 'for us and among us': the school as a purpose-built milieu in which learning takes place through the instituted relations-of surveillance and self-examination, obedience and self-development- that join the pastoral teacher and student. (p. 173)

Seen in the light of the origin of education system in Western states, the issue of school bullying can be considered to be a typical locus where both "bureaucratic planning and spiritual discipline" (Hunter, 1994, p. 173) take their duties. Through such processes, "technologies of the self" is explicitly and implicitly carried out.

2.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed a Foucauldian framework, including concepts "discourse and power/knowledge", "subjection", and "governmentality". These concepts provide the backbone of my analysis of anti-bullying policies, laying a foundation for it and guiding its direction. How policy constructs the bullying "problem" and how the corresponding "solutions" are proposed involve not only educational practices but also political struggles. "The contemporary 'school bully' in neoliberal Canada now serves to embody the violence,

aggression, status and individuality we celebrate inside and outside our schools while masking the superficiality of popular collectivist, socially inclusive ideals" (Valentine, 2014, p. 80). It is this background that necessitates discourse analyses of anti-bullying policies through the lens of Foucault, who offers unique insights into how discourse "consists of determinate discursive practices which many equally well be on the side of writing as of reading" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 22).

<center>Chapter 3</center>

<center>Methodology</center>

3.1 Introduction

"Whatever the theoretical frame that is informing the understandings of discourse will also inform and shape the understanding of discourse analysis that is in use" (Cheek, 2008, p. 2). Foucault's theoretical framework "provides a toolbox or set of tools that can be used to shape the discursive analysis undertaken" (p. 2). This study aims to examine how school bullying is constructed within existing anti-bullying policies. To this end, it is imperative to probe deeply into the conceptual logics underpinning the construction of bullying, which offers "the potential to challenge ways of thinking about aspects of reality that have come to be viewed as being natural or normal and therefore tend to be taken for granted" (p. 2). Ball (1995) asserts that in educational research, theory should be "to engage in struggle, to reveal and undermine that is most invisible and insidious in prevailing practices" (p. 267). In Graham's (2005) words, Foucauldian discourse analysis is "well placed to do this" (p. 4).

This chapter describes Foucauldian discourse analysis and two policy analysis methods "policy archaeology" (Scheurich, 1994) and the "WPR approach" (What's the problem represented to be?) (Bacchi, 2009) as the methodology of this study. These two methods are both informed by Foucault and help anchor my study in a pertinent manner. Policy archaeology "provides a way of addressing bullying that accounts for complexity in ways that current approaches mostly do not even consider" (Walton, 2010, p. 135). And "WPR approach" facilitates the task of interrogating "the problematizations uncovered in public policies" (Bacchi, 2009. p. 263), which has a clear resonance with my objective to examine how bullying is conceptualized in anti-bullying policies. "Policy archaeology"

and the "WPR approach" also enlighten the data collection and analysis procedures of this research, which I explain in the remainder of this chapter. Finally, the constraints and trustworthiness of the chosen methodology are discussed.

3.2 Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

According to Cheek (2008), Foucault considers his own writing and research as an attempt to open up new possibilities of thinking in a new way: "I write in order to change myself and in order not to think the same thing as before" (Foucault, 2000a, p. 240). Hence, the methods for doing Foucauldian discourse analysis can arise from these possibilities and thus Foucauldian discourse analysis is "not a unified, unitary approach" (Cheek, 2008, p. 2). Although many methods of discourse analysis apparently owe multiple debts to Michel Foucault, "there exists no strictly Foucauldian methods of analyzing discourse" (Hook, 2007, p. 521). What underpins discourse analysis approaches is "the theoretical premise on which the research being reported" (Cheek, 2008, p. 2). In this sense, the Foucauldian theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2 lays the foundation of the methodology used in this study.

"There is no space outside of discourse and that all discourse has a constitutive and constructive effect on the social world" (Luke, 1995, p. 19). In educational institutions, omnipresent discourses, language and texts not only predispose children to make meaning of the world in particular ways, but contribute to maintain dominant power relations. Reflecting on Foucault's work, Ball (2015) reasserts in one of his latest articles that "[d]iscourse and concomitantly power relations are manifest in material and anthropological forms, that is, in policy objects, architectures, subjectivities and practices" (307). In this vein, Foucauldian discourse analysis of educational policies does not "reduce analytic attentions (and discourse itself) to textual level and hence to leave our critical readings and writings open to the subsumption of other facets of the opposing discourse"

(Hook, 2007, p. 539). Instead, it "is concerned with the way in which texts themselves have been constructed, ordered, and shaped in terms of their social and historical situatedness" (Cheek, 2008, p. 3). For instance, When Graham (2005) conducted a study interrogating "the construction of otherness and differential treatment of children presenting with problematic behaviour in schools", instead of engaging in a struggle of "truth and fiction with the human sciences as to the existence of ADHD or 'behaviour disorderedness', her aim was "to consider not whether the ADHD/behaviour disorder is *true* but how its objects *might become formed*" (p. 7, italics in original). Likewise, my study centers on how the bullying "problem" is constructed in anti-bullying policies instead of whether the policy "solutions" are effective or the policy texts are the "truth". Indeed, as Graham (2005) reminds us, "[d]iscourse analysis informed by Foucauldian or other post-structural theory endeavors to avoid the substitution of one 'truth' for another, recognizing that "there can be no universal truths or absolute ethical positions" (Wetherall, 2001, as cited in Graham, 2005).

Hook (2007) notes that "the central focus of Foucault's work is on the rules, systems and procedures that constitute and are constituted by, our 'will to knowledge'" (Young, 1981, as cited in Hook, p. 522), and "these rules, systems and procedures comprise a discrete realm of discursive practices – the order of discourse – a conceptual terrain in which knowledge is formed and produced" (p. 522). This is consistent with what Walton (2005) describes as "technical processes" of bullying investigation (p. 60). The technical processes as "one form of discursive practice" are "the purview of the privileged who have status and authority through membership in particular institutional sites", and thus "the notion of bullying can be thought of as a discursive field within relations of power rather than as a static category of violence" (p. 50). Walton further points out that "it becomes clear that bullying is a construction embedded in discursive practice that arises from a network or system of institutional, historical, social, and political relations" (p. 61).

Foucault's term of "discursive practices" functions in both "inhibiting and productive" manners, "implying a play of prescriptions that designate both exclusions and choices" (Hook, 2007, p. 523). Cheek (2008) articulates that "while discursive frameworks order reality in a particular way, rendering it visible and understandable, they may also constrain or even exclude the production of understandings and knowledge that could offer alternative views of that reality" (p. 3). In terms of bullying, Bansel, Davies, Laws and Linnell (2008) emphasize that "a critical approach to the problem of bullying necessarily involves paying attention to the normalized practices of power in schools" (p. 67). Foucauldian discourse analysis can be employed as such a critical approach in that it offers the possibility of interrogating how "knowledge underpinning a discourse can be used both to claim authority and presence in certain settings and to exclude other possible discursive framings or ways of viewing those settings" (Cheek, 2008, pp. 2-3). These processes of "formation and constraint, production and exclusion" (Hook, 2007, p. 523) are significant mechanisms in Foucauldian-informed policy analytic work at the discourse level.

3.3 Policy Archaeology

Although Foucault did not focus most of his works on schooling, his elucidation of knowledge and archaeology has significant implications for education research (Walton, 2010). Reflecting on his interactions with the post-structural works of Foucault, Scheurich (1994) develops "Policy Archeology Methodology" as "a new way of thinking about social and education policies and the social and education problems that the policies are meant to solve and alleviate" (p. 297). This methodology "substantially alters and expands the policy studies area" and "critically interrogates both conventional policy studies and the new interpretivist-postpositivist approaches" (p. 297).

Policy archaeology is distinctly different from traditional policy research approaches in that it doesn't think of a problem as a "disease" which is caused by "priori conditions"

and needs to be cured by policy practices (Scheurich, 1994, p. 298). Rather, it examines "the numerous, complex strands and traces of social problems prior to their naming as social problems" ((p. 300). Such an objective conforms to discourse analysis from the Foucauldian theoretical perspective, which recognizes that "the image of an object represented in a text is formed according to the frame or focus that shapes what is to be seen" (Cheek, 2008, p. 3). In this sense, policy archaeology can be considered as having the same theoretical root as Foucauldian discourse analysis. Importantly, policy archaeology provides a unique entry point for discourse analysis of educational policies such as anti-bullying policies, which are meant to give "solutions" to "social problems".

To illuminate policy archaeology, Scheurich (1994) provides a four-arena focus (i.e., Arena I. The education/social problem arena: the study of the social construction of specific education and social problems; Arena II. The social regularities arena: the identification of the network of social regularities across education and social problems; Arena III. The policy solution arena; the study of the social construction of the range of acceptable policy solutions; Arena IV. The policy studies arena: the study of the social functions of policy studies itself) (p. 300). Taking an example of the problem of failing school children, Scheurich explains in detail how each arena of policy archaeology can be applied to "the problem-policy axis of school services" (305). According to Scheurich, these arenas are non-linear and permeable while being put into practice.

Policy archaeology as a "method of inquiry" helps identify "how the problem of bullying in schools has come to be understood in certain ways (the dominant narrative) and how policy solutions are constrained and limited accordingly, thereby confounding their purpose" (Walton, 2010, p. 135). Being aware that a "continued emphasis on policies that perpetuate behaviour modification as a response to bullying constitutes a failure to adequately address the complexity of the problem" (p. 148), Walton clearly argues that policy archaeology methodology is valuable and has great potential in anti-bullying policy

analysis through the lens of Foucault.

Mixed with policy archaeology (Scheurich, 1994), another post-structural approach to policy analysis put into use in this study is the WPR approach (Bacchi, 2009).

3.4 The WPR Approach

"What is the problem represented to be?" (WPR) approach was first offered by Carol Bacchi in 1999 to "provide insights into the ways women's inequality has been understood in Western policy interventions, and the implications for feminist theorists" (Bacchi, 2009, p. vi). Ten years later, when Bacchi (2009) published her new book *Analyzing Policy: What's the problem represented to be?* in 2009, the WPR approach became an unconventional policy analytical methodology in recent years that "offers both an original methodology and scholarly paradigm, by providing to the social sciences a mode of critical enquiry which simultaneously engages to contemporary post-structuralist accounts of power, subjects and social change" (Bletsas & Beasley, 2012, p. 1).

Drawing upon social construction theory, poststructualism, feminist body theory, and above all, Foucault's notion of governmentality, the WPR approach "encourages one to undertake adverse process of analysis aimed to question and make visible the 'truths', norms and values embedded in a policy" (Bonfani, 2014, p. 373). If in the Arena II of policy archaeology, the concept of "social regularities", as Scheurich (1994) points out, is "a somewhat mobile metaphor that requires more scrutiny and thought" (p. 313), then in my view, the WPR approach provides a scaffold for policy analysts to better scrutinize and think about these social regularities by focusing on "how governing takes place" (Bacchi, 2009, p. vii).

Bacchi (2009) suggests the following six questions to be applied to particular problem representations as departure points:

1) What's the problem represented to be in a specific policy?

2) What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the problem?

3) How has this representation of the problem come about?

4) What is left unproblematic in this problem representation?

5) What effects are produced by this representation of the problem?

6) How/where has this representation of the problem been produced, disseminated and defended? (p. 48)

These questions offer a guideline on which my research questions are based. Unlike most governmentality studies, which examine "specific instances where the role of government is", drawn upon Foucault's concepts of governmentality, a WPR approach "directs attention to the role played by institutions, agencies and 'knowledges', including but beyond the state, in governing processes" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 266). Since school bullying can be considered as constructed by social dynamics (Schott & Søndergaard, 2014), school bullying research entails an in-depth examination on "the criteria of *formation*, *transformation*, and *correlation*" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 40, italics in original) of bullying concepts to identify the discourses enacted in such processes.

The implementation of anti-bullying policies and programs involves a wide range of groups of people (e.g., psychologists, counselors, social workers, administrators, educators, parents, and peers). Each group plays a part in governing practices which are "indirect", and yet these practices exert direct influence on children's lived experiences. Bacchi (2009) underscores that "the impact on individuals' lives can be and often is both direct and punitive" (p. 266). The "wider conceptualization of politics as including struggles around identities and 'difference', including issues around gender, sexuality, ethnicity or 'race', and everyday life" (Mottier, 2001, p. 332) which the WPR approach intends to embrace, is what this research is committed to.

3.5 Data Collection

Cheek (2008) states in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* that Foucauldian discourse analysis "uses conventional data collection techniques to generate texts able to be analyzed within Foucauldian theoretical framework" (p. 3). What samples of text should be chosen depends on the purpose and the scale of the research. Since this research is an anti-bullying policy analysis, policy documents are the main source of data. "Jurisdiction for Canadian education is overseen by the provincial government", so that provinces or territories are in charge of "matters of curriculum and instruction" (Roberge, 2011, p. 2). In such a context, I select anti-bullying policy and program documents issued by the province of Ontario. These documents are purported to prevent and reduce the incidents of school bullying in Ontario.

On September 1, 2012, Ontario became the third province in Canada to implement anti-bullying legislation (Education Law Newsletter, Fall 2012). Since then, plenty of anti-bullying policies, strategies and programs have been carried out in schools and communities. Since most Ontario public acts and regulations are available electronically, the research data will be mainly collected from the official documents issued by Ontario Ministry of Education through the website from 2012 to date. Thus, the official website of Ontario Ministry of Education http://www.edu.gov.on.ca provides the main source of the data of this research. Such data include "legislation, regulations, policy/program memoranda, policy documents, and ministry web pages" which are related to school bullying in the province of Ontario (http://www.edu.gov.on.ca).

3.6 Data Analysis

Discourse analysis has no fixed method as traditional experimental or content analysis do. "What we have is a broad theoretical framework concerning the nature of discourse and its role in social life, along with suggestions about how discourse can best be studied (Potter

& Wetherell, p. 175). Similarly, Cheek (2008) also highlights that different understandings are allowed in doing Foucauldian discourse analysis:

> Indeed, rather than specifying one way of doing discourse analysis, it is Foucault's theoretical work that provides us with a number of understandings that underpin both the framing and the conducting of research using this approach, including the type of question(s) or issue(s) being explored, as well as the way in which data are thought about and analyzed. (P. 2)

Although the approaches to analyzing data through Foucault-informed discourse analysis are seemingly flexible, flexibility doesn't mean anything goes. A proper approach entails a sound understanding of which tools to choose from Foucault's toolbox to apply to a specific field within his theoretical framework. In this study, I seek to explore how anti-bullying policies shape the problem of bullying, how discourses on bullying operate, and what are the contextual effects, drawing upon Foucault's concepts of discourse and power-knowledge relation. Taking into consideration Ball's (2015) concern that much of the Foucauldian policy analytic work in educational studies centers too much on language, I am committed to analyzing the texts in anti-bullying policies with the "three extra-textual factors (history, materiality, conditions of possibility)" to avoid mere "markings of textuality" (Hook, 2007, p. 543).

The data of this study are analyzed using Foucauldian discourse analysis with the assistance of policy archeology (Scheurich, 1994) and the WPR approach (Bacchi, 2009), both of which are informed by Michel Foucault. These two methods are consistent with each other in nature, challenging the traditional problem-solving paradigm and giving insights in social and education policy domain wherein this study is positioned.

Drawing upon the four arenas of focus of policy archeology (Scheurich, 1994) and the six questions of WPR approach (Bacchi, 2009), the data analysis of this study follows these

procedures:

1. The problem representation

   To examine what the bullying problem is represented to be in current anti-bullying policies.

2. Opening up discourses

   To find out how the bullying problem come to be seen as a problem by identifying the disciplinary/governing techniques operating within the policy and the grids of social regularities that constitutes the problem representation.

3. The effects

   To identify subjectification effects and discursive effects in the way bullying problem is represented.

4. Possibilities

   To interrogate how "the range of possible policy choices is shaped by the grid of social regularities" (Scheurich, 1994, p. 303).

   To discuss how the problem representation of bullying be questioned, disrupted and replaced and the way to address possible resistance.

While following the above analytic procedures in the data analysis of this study, I am fully aware that policies are not static or straightforward for analysis. Policies "often contain tensions and contradiction", and therefore, "it is important to recognize the interpretive dimension of the analytic process" (Bacchi, 2009, p, 20). The constructed and contested nature of policies contributes to the complexity and uncertainty in multi-layers of policy analysis.

3.7 Constraints and Trustworthiness

Like any other methodology, there might exist some constraints in the Foucault-informed discourse analysis being deployed in my study. Firstly, Foucauldian discourse analysis is a

"plural term" and Foucault's work "does not represent a linear, homogenous body of work" (Cheek, 2008, p. 4). Foucault's thinking is not stereotypical and has experienced development and evolvement over time. "Foucault frequently rethought his methods and avoided systematizing them, possibly because he was opposed to all totalizing conceptions or grand narratives that seek to justify claims to knowledge and truth" (Springer & Clinton, 2015, p. 88). Indeed, Foucault's rejection of systematization and totalization makes it a demanding task for researchers to "clearly situate" the specific study, "not only in terms of it being discourse analysis that draws from Foucauldian understandings, but also in terms of which understandings, derived from which parts and emphases in Foucault's work" (Cheek, 2008, p. 4). Foucault's thoughts related to the concept as well as methodology of discourse is "complex, difficult, nuanced and, at times, flawed and contradictory" (Hook, 2007, p. 543). Ball (2015) puts it this way: "Foucault does not so much offer us positions we might want to take up, as pose problems that we are then left to struggle with and perhaps solve, for ourselves" (p. 309). We then need to embark on a journey that takes us through "his discomforts" (Charles Taylor, as cited in Ball, 2015, p. 309) to confront ourselves "at the center of our discomforts" (p. 310). What is to be appreciated during this journey is the "powerful and imaginative attempts to do policy analysis and theorize policy using post-structural sensibilities" (pp. 311-312).

Secondly, when conducting discourse analysis, there is a risk for researchers to "impose meanings on another's text" (Cheek, 2008, p. 3). Ball (1993) highlights from a Foucauldian perspective that "**[w]e are** the subjectivities, the voices, the knowledge, the power relations that a discourse constructs and allows" (p. 14, emphasis in original). Inescapably constructed by discourse, analysts themselves are both the products of discourse and the "producers of discourse" (Parker & Burman, 1993, p. 159). Further, Cohen, Manion, Morrison, and Bell (2011) argue that research itself also produces discourse, which the dominant impacts that research is supposed "to expose and interrogate" thread through (p. 450). Recognizing this issue, Cheek (2008) reminds analysts to make

explicit this position throughout the research. Moreover, a better way for discourse analysis to avoid falling into the trap of imposing meaning on the text is to, according to Hook (2007), "move both *in* and *out* of the text instead of remaining *within* the text" (p. 543, italics in original). The "textual analysis findings" must be corroborated "with reference to certain extra-textual factors", that is, "history, materiality, conditions of possibility" (p. 543) as three "pivotal conditions of discourse" (p. 542). This important understanding of Foucault's conception of discourse analysis lays the foundation of the theoretical framework this study relies on. Although discourse analysis "often refer[s] to partial or situated reality" and "are not necessarily aiming to seek closure" (Cheek, 2004, p. 1147), such "[t]heoretical consistency" (Bardach & Patashnik, 2016, p. 22) is likely to help me better identify the construction of bullying problem in anti-bullying policies, and more importantly, to help readers better understand "the constitutive grid of conditions, assumptions, forces which make the emergence of a social problem, and its strands and traces, possible" (Scheurich, 1994, as cited in Walton, 2010, p. 138).

Additionally, Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) assert that although objectivist demands for validity are not applicable to discourse analysis, this does not mean that validity is paid no attention to in discourse analytic work. "One way in which the validity of a discourse analysis can be determined is by focusing on *coherence*" (p. 125, italics in original). By "coherence", what Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) underscore is "the presence of aspects of the analysis" must be in line with "the discourse analytical account" (p. 125). The aspects of analysis of this study and its analytical claims are within both the theoretical and methodological framework informed by Michel Foucault. This accordance will provide this study with a better chance of achieving validity. Another method to grant validity is "to evaluate the *fruitfulness* of the analysis", which means the focus should be "the explanatory potential of the analytical framework including its ability to provide new explanations" (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, as cited in Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 125, italics in original). This accords with what Cheek (2008) identifies as "one of the attractions

of the approach [of Foucauldian discourse analysis], which is "the possibility of illuminating the effects of power Foucault posited as being exercised from innumerable points within a given context (p. 3). For Foucault, power is always "a discursive relation" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 21). School bullying can be understood as "a construction embedded in discursive practice that arises from a network or system institutional, historical, social, and political relations" (Walton, 2005, p. 61). These discursive practices "not only produce texts but also constitute the conditions of possibility for reading" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 23). In this sense, to interrogate how school bullying is constructed as a problem in anti-bullying policies at the level of both "text" and the conditions for "reading" as modes of discourses has the potentiality to offer a new way of thinking, actions, or new reflection on the actions.

3.8 Summary

This chapter has mainly discussed the methodology of this study. Given that Foucauldian discourse analysis per se does not have specific requirements on how to do it, research using this approach relies heavily on Foucault's theoretical work (Cheek, 2008). As the concept of bullying can be considered as a form of discursive practices (Walton, 2005), the recognition that "texts are both product of and in turn, produce, discursive-based understandings of aspects of reality" (Cheek, 2008, P. 3) is an important theoretical premise in doing Foucauldian discourse analysis of anti-bullying policies.

This study also adopts policy archaeology and the WPR approach as two policy study methods that help analyze the data from the Foucauldian perspective. Both methods draw upon Foucault's work and are consistent with the theoretical framework on which this research is based. They are similar in shifting the focus of policy analysis "from "problem" *solving* to problem *questioning*" (Bacchi, 2009, p. vii, italics in original). Policy archaeology offers a new way of thinking about specific education and social problems

such as school bullying by critically examining how it was made "manifest, nameable, and describable" (Foucault, 1972, as cited in Scheurich, 1994, p. 300). The WPR approach, with its emphasis on methodology and application, provides a further articulated method for analyzing polices, particularly drawing upon Michel Foucault and his concept of "governmentality", which is a significant focus of my analysis.

Based on my understanding of the methodologies, I have designed the data collection methods and a four-step data analysis procedure. I have also discussed the constraints and trustworthiness of Foucauldian-influenced discourse analysis to be used in this study.

Chapter 4

Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce the historical context of province-wide bullying-related prevention and intervention policies that have come into force in Ontario from 1994 to date, and explain why certain policy documents (i.e., PPM 144 (*Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012*), PPM 145 (*Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012*), and the Model Plan (the *Working Draft: Safe and Accepting Schools Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, 2013*) are selected for analysis. Here I would like to make it clear that since anti-bullying policies in Ontario haven't clarified if there are any differences in policy contents between Elementary and Secondary schools, the selected policy documents are meant for both Elementary and Secondary schools in Ontario. I then look closely into the policy documents, drawing upon Foucauldian discourse analysis and two Foucault-informed policy analysis approaches, namely the policy archeology (Scheurich, 1994) and the WPR approach (Bacchi, 2009). I conclude by discussing the possibility of how the bullying problem could be questioned and disrupted by researchers and school administrators and educators.

4.2 Historical Context of Policy/Program Memoranda (PPM) 144 & 145 and the Model Plan (1994-2013)

Issued in 1994, the *Violence-Free Schools Policy, 1994* was Ontario's first Provincial policy concerning school safety (Winton & Tuters, 2015). It required that information about serious incidents which leads to reports to police as well as to suspension or expulsion should be maintained in a student's OSR (Ontario Student Record). On May 16, 2011, the

Violence-Free Schools Policy, 1994 was revoked by *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 120, 2011*, which also replaced *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 120, 1994*. According to the Ontario Ministry of Education, Policy/Program Memoranda (PPMs) are directives which are issued to Ontario district school boards and school authorities to "outline the Ministry of Education's expectations regarding the implementation of ministry policies and programs" (Ontario Ministry of Education). They are guidelines for how school boards and authorities should carry out the ministry policies and programs. In PPM 120, 2011, directions are provided on the development of procedures for reporting incidents relating to violence to the Ministry of Education, and several specific behaviours (i.e., possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm, physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention, sexual assault, robbery, using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person, extortion, hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences) are listed as typical in such violent incidents (Ontario Ministry of Education).

In April 2000, a *Code of Conduct* for Ontario schools was released by the Ministry of Education. One month later, the *Safe Schools Act, 2000* was introduced, which "proposed amending the *Education Act* to give force to the *Code of Conduct* and provide principals and teachers with more authority to suspend and expel students" (Bhattacharjee, 2003, p. i). Put into effect in 2001, the *Safe Schools Act, 2000* "mirrored many of the zero-tolerance policies introduced throughout the US since the 1990s" (Winton & Tuters, 2015, p. 130), receiving much criticism because of "a disproportionate impact on racial minority students and students with disabilities" (Bhattacharjee, 2003, p. i).

In 2005, an official group established by the government, Safe Schools Action Team, whose aim was to "make schools safer through a province-wide bullying prevention plan" (Safe Schools Action Team, 2005, p. 2), undertook a review of the *Safe Schools Act, 2000* as well as its related policies and programs. After the review, the Safe Schools Action Team submitted a report named *Safe Schools Policy and Practice: An Agenda for Action* in 2006

and made considerable recommendations. These recommendations played a role in the new amendments to the safe schools provisions of the *Education Act*, which were made with Bill 212 (*An Act to amend the Education Act in respect of behaviour, discipline and safety*) in 2007. Changes included the removal of the compulsory suspensions and expulsions, the assignment of special programs for suspended and expelled students, and the responsibility of the principal to conduct an immediate investigation to recommend to the board whether a suspended student should be expelled. In addition, Bill 212 added "bullying" to the list of behaviours for which suspension must be considered. At the same time, the Ministry's *Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) No. 144, 2007* provided an explicit definition of "bullying".

In 2012, Bill 13, *Accepting School Act*, (*An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to bullying and other matters*) was released and has now been passed into law. Reflecting the most recent changes to Ontario's Safe Schools Strategy, Bill 13 aims to creating "a safe, inclusive and accepting" school, which "is essential for student achievement and well-being" (*Creating Safe and Accepting Schools: Information for Parents about the Accepting Schools Act Bill 13, 2012,* p. 1). In the same year, new versions of Policy/Program Memoranda regarding school bullying were issued to replace the older versions. These Policy/Program Memoranda include PPM 144 (*Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012*) and PPM 145 (*Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012*).

PPM 144 serves to guide school boards in establishing their revised policies and strategies on bullying prevention and intervention in accordance with the implementation of Bill 13 (*Accepting Schools Act, 2012*). It provides detailed instruction that school boards must comply with to develop their bullying prevention and intervention plans. PPM 145 gives school boards guidelines on progressive discipline, defined as "a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of prevention programs, interventions, supports, and

consequences to address inappropriate behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote and foster positive behaviour" (PPM 145, 2012, p. 3). The objective of PPM 145 is also to support Bill 13 in helping create "a positive school climate" and promote "positive student behaviour" (PPM 145, 2012, pp. 1-2). The emphasis on "mandatory" disciplinary measures in the *Safe Schools Act, 2000* has been shifted to an adoption of the progressive discipline approach.

PPM 144 and PPM 145 collaborate with each other, guiding school boards to generate pivotal strategies with respect to school bullying. These two Policy/Program Memoranda are two significant policies in Ontario that school boards must adhere to when enacting and implementing current anti-bullying policies and programs.

Furthermore, as requested in Bill 13, the Minister shall develop a provincial model bullying prevention and intervention plan to assist school boards in making their own plans (Bill 13, 2012). Accordingly, in January 2013, the *Working Draft: Safe and Accepting Schools Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, 2013* (the Model Plan) was developed by the Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network (PREVNet) in collaboration with the Accepting Schools Expert Panel. It functions as a model plan for school boards to follow in preparation of bullying prevention and intervention plans. The Model Plan contains necessary elements in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Education Act* as amended with Bill 13.

Other policy documents related to school bullying are in force in Ontario, but PPM 144 and PPM 145, as well as the Model Plan, have been the most relative and comprehensive ones which bolster the amendments concerning bullying in the *Education Act* with Bill 13 since 2012. Anti-bullying policies form a constituent part of institutional curriculum within the education system, where they are not separate from other education policies. Indeed, policies at the institutional level "are complexly inter-related and can

dominate or are subordinated within these relations" (Ball et al., 2011, p. 1). Meanwhile, policies are not independent of agents, institutions and discourses. Rather, as ongoing processes, they are complexified by dynamic interactions between actors, knowledges and their own spaces in historical and social contexts (Viczko & Tascón, 2016). Anti-bullying policy is one of the prevalent behaviour-related policies. "[W]hen 'behaviour' becomes an issue", "policy texts and imperatives are translated into action, or plans for action, which are taken up in whole or part by different actors, in different situations and at different 'moments'" (Ball et al., 2011, p. 8). In recognition of the multifaceted and contested nature of bullying prevention and intervention policies and programs, I now turn to a close examination on PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan.

4.3 The Problem Representation

The main research question of this study is how the problem of school bullying is represented in current anti-bullying policies and programs in schools in the province of Ontario. Accordingly, the analysis begins by identifying what the problem is represented to be in the selected policy documents PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan.

In 2012, Bill 13, *Accepting School Act*, amended the *Education Act*. One of the principal amendments is that the definition of "bullying" was first included. Under the Definition of *Bullying* section, Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144 *(Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012)* states:

"bullying" means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where,

(a) the behaviour is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of,

(i) causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or

(ii) creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and

(b) the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education; (p. 5)

In the above statements, it is explicit that bullying is described as a problem caused by an individual whose character is deficient, targeting another individual who is in a disadvantageous position. In other words, here bullying is traditionally defined "as repeated inhumane actions directed at target individuals, who are disadvantaged or less powerful than those who repeatedly harass or attack them" (Thornberg, 2015, p. 162). This definition is informed by the field of the international school bullying research that "has its origin in developmental psychology and was initiated by the work of the Scandinavian psychologist Dan Olweus" (p. 162). The field of research on school bullying is still dominated by developmental and educational psychology (Thornberg, 2015). In this model, school bullying is explained in terms of individual personality traits: bullies are most often "aggressive and impulsive", "having a positive attitude towards violence, a need to dominate and little empathy with their victims"; victims are "passive, submissive, anxious, insecure and weak" (Schott & Søndergaard, 2014, p. 2). Filtered through a Foucauldian screen, bullying definitions "carry the *status* as an outcome of relations concerning the hegemony of science as the most legitimate knowledge" (Walton, 2005, p. 60, italics in original). According to the dominant developmental and educational psychology, bullying as "aggressive and typically repeated behavior by a pupil" is subdivided in PPM 144 (*Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012*):

Aggressive behaviour may be intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect. It can take

many forms, including physical, verbal, and social. If aggressive behaviour is physical, it may include hitting, pushing, slapping, and tripping. If it is verbal, it may include name calling, mocking, insults, threats, and sexist, racist, homophobic, or transphobic comments. If it is social, or relational, aggression, it is more subtle and may involve such behaviours as gossiping, spreading rumours, excluding others from a group, humiliating others with public gestures or graffiti, and shunning or ignoring. Social aggression may also occur through the use of technology (e.g., spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of e-mail, cell phones, text messaging, Internet websites, social networking, or other technology). (p. 4)

These detailed subdivisions further individualize school bullying by emphasizing individual specific acts. It is because of such individualization that current anti-bullying policies rely heavily on evidence-based measurement (Schott & Søndergaard, 2014). In its Introduction part, Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145 (*Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012*) highlights:

Building and sustaining a positive school climate is a complex challenge requiring evidence-informed solutions. A whole-school approach involving all education and community partners is needed to bring about necessary systemic change. (p. 1)

A positive school climate is defined in PPM 144 (*Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012*) as "the learning environment and relationships found within a school and school community", and it is "a crucial component of bullying prevention" (p. 1). PPM 144 (*Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012*) declares:

Providing students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate is a shared responsibility in which school boards and schools play an important role. Schools that have bullying prevention and intervention policies foster a positive learning and teaching environment that supports academic

achievement for all students and that helps students reach their full potential. (p. 1)

According to Bacchi (2009), "looking at what is proposed as a policy intervention will reveal how the issue is being thought about" (p. 3). In these policies, bullying prevention and intervention policies are mandatory because they contribute to "a positive learning and teaching environment", which guarantees students' high level of "academic achievements". To put it another way, the problem of bullying is indicated as a "behaviour for learning" problem (Ball et al., 2011, p. 2) that undermines students' learning outcomes. The term 'behaviour for learning' refers to "attempts by schools to raise achievement via a sustained effort to ensure a 'safe and secure' learning environment for all children" (DCSF, 2009, in Ball et al., 2011, p. 2). "Behaviour for learning" has become a crucial focus of policy initiatives in the UK (Ball et al., 2011). Likewise, Winton and Tuters (2014) note that in Canada, it is also the case that anti-bullying policies overtly highlights the reduction in school bullying as a way of improving students' test scores.

As such, students' "success" as the main objective of schools is highlighted repeatedly in these policy documents. For example, when introducing the research findings of bullying, PPM 144 *(Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012)* states:

A safe and positive learning environment is essential for student success. The impact of bullying can be severe, and can include anxiety, physical ailments, absenteeism, diminished academic performance, and depression. (p. 3)

Similarly, the Introduction of PPM 145 *(Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012)* emphasizes:

On September 1, 2012, Bill 13, the Accepting Schools Act, which amends the Education Act, came into force. It sets out expectations for all school boards to provide safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environments in which every student can

succeed. (p. 1)

And under the Promoting and Supporting Positive Student Behaviour Section of PPM 145 *(Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012)*:

A positive school climate also includes the participation of the school community, including parents and the broader community, which can have a positive impact on the success of all students in the school. (pp.2-3)

The theme of "success" merged with "learning environment" leads to the implication that, for students, reaching a high level of academic achievement can be recognized as having the potentiality of "success". The terms of "success" and "behaviour for learning" are not separate from one another, rather, they are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, working together to render the "production of knowledge through language" (Hall, 1996, p. 201). In this way, school bullying is constructed in anti-bullying policies as an individual behaviour problem which gets in the way of learning and thus impede students' progress towards academic achievement and "success". This conceptualization of bullying is "definitional (stable, ahistorical and apolitical)" instead of "the discursive, the contingent, the contextual and the ideological" (Walton, 2005, p. 61). To find out what underpins this model, there is a need to study the origins, mechanisms, constitutive conditions, and forces which make its emergence.

4.4 Opening Up Discourses

This analytic step focuses on scrutinizing the "grids or networks of social regularities that constitutes what becomes socially visible as a social problem" (Scheurich, 1994, p. 301). The regularities are not intentionally or consciously created by a particular individual or group, and yet social orders are "continuously reestablished or reproduced through the network of regularities" (p. 302). Social regularities do not work from outside either,

instead "they constitute rather the set of conditions in accordance with which a practice is exercised" (Foucault, 1972, as cited in Scherich, 1994, p. 302). Scheurich states that "preconceptual glasses or frames through which human actions and categories…are socially defined", and social regularities shape people's "frames of knowing" and "nature of reality" (p. 302). In this important sense, social regularities can be considered as what Bacchi (2009) terms "conceptual logics" (p. 5), including "deep-seated epistemological and ontological assumptions" (p. 274).

Bacchi (2009) contends that to uncover the deep-seated presuppositions entails recognizing that "policies are elaborated in discourse" (p. 7). Discourse is "a group of related statements, signs and practices that created the object/s and domains it purports to describe, giving those objects and domains status as 'truth' or 'knowledge'" (p. 275). In other words, discourses are socially constituted forms of knowledge that impose restrictions on what one can think, write, or speak about a "given social object or practice" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 31). Policy doing and making in educational settings is the result of discourse (Cataldi, 2004). Such understanding is the groundwork for the analysis at this step, which is to open up discourses on bullying by means of identifying and interrogating the keywords, concepts, and binaries (Bachhi, 2009), as well as disciplinary techniques (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005) operating within the selected anti-bullying policies.

4.4.1 The concept of safe school. The bullying prevention and intervention policies, as is already noted above, lay stress on a positive school climate. As PPM 144 *(Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012)* explains:

The school climate may be defined as the learning environment and relationships found within a school and school community. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted, and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. (p. 1)

And PPM 145 *(Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012)* declares:

> The Ministry of Education is committed to supporting boards in building and sustaining a positive school climate that is safe, inclusive, and accepting for all students in order to support their education so that all students reach their full potential. (p. 1)

A positive school climate is considered as the pivotal factor in preventing and reducing bullying incidents in the school. To this end, an array of initiatives is being launched at the institutional level. As is shown in the report *Promoting a Positive School Climate: A Resource for Schools, 2013*, the following diagram illustrates how various initiatives that Ontario Schools are involved in to promote a positive school climate.
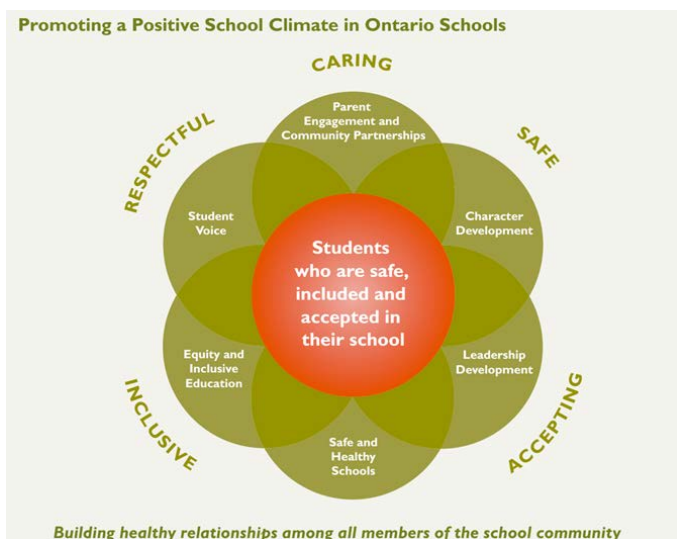
Figure 1: *Promoting a Positive School Climate: A Resource for Schools* [Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2013, p. 3]

It is evident that to make students feel safe, included, and accepted is foregrounded in current policy proposals. The concept of safety in terms of school environment has been prevalent in bullying research and educational policy since almost a decade ago (Walton, 2011). In Ontario, the Canadian Safe School Network (CSSN) was established and launched by Government of Ontario's Safe School Task Force in 1997 "with a mandate to

reduce youth violence and make our schools and communities safer" (https://canadiansafeschools.com/about/). "Achieving this common sense goal [of safety] has become a central and organizing policy initiative in schools" (Ball, et al., 2011, p. 2).

4.4.1.1 Social panic. The currently dominant discourse on "safety" in these policies is based on the premise that students are "unsafe" because they risk being harmed by school violence (Walton, 2006). In fact, the public panic and fears towards bullying have been circulated through media and journalism for decades. The 1999 Columbine shootings and other school violence tragedies further raised extreme public concern about school bullying in North America (Valentine, 2014). For example, a news report titled "Province asked police for proposals to combat school bullying" was issued in Ontario in 2010, saying that "police and local schools will team up to educate students on such topics as anger management and safe usage of social networking" (National Post, 2010). Under the Safe Schools Grants program, this plan is funded by a $1.68-million provincial investment. The government's appeal to involve police can aggravate social panic about school bullying. Walton (2005) also observes the role media reports play in fueling public panic about bullying, citing the headline in a Canadian national newspaper "Bullying widespread, study finds: One in four Ontario students say they have been the victims of intimidation" (Yourk, 2002, p. A11, cited in Walton, 2005, p. 92). Valentine (2014) points out that "[w]here our bully/murderer/murderer-maker could be *anyone*, we are the surveillers and the surveilled, and in our 'trap' of visibility (Foucault, 1977, as cited in p. 87), we are disciplined by fear to the near-death of reason" (p. 87). The written and vocal forms of news reports, can be considered as language, which is "the major avenue for the production of knowledge and is tied to the cultural codes of those who create its forms" (Cannella, 1997). In this way, bullying "emerges as a problem related to a broader moral panic about youth violence" (Walton, 2006, p. 157). As Galitz and Robert's (2014) put it, anxiety and control are impartible: "a heightened consciousness of danger goes hand in hand with a demand for additional punishment, especially when the danger in question is reduced to a matter of

individual actions" (p. 192).

The "the collective and anxious gaze" (Walton, 2006, p. 17) upon school bullying endorses punitive responses. Current authoritarian strategies on safe schools carry both the "political and public relations clout" (Walton, 2010, p. 147). These strategies appeal to educational administrators because it appears that regulating student behaviours helps maintain order in schools, and in the meanwhile, social panic and anxieties about school bullying can be "quelled", or "at least managed" (p. 147). This commitment of "doing something" by employing authoritarian approaches serves the public appeal as a response to bullying and other forms of youth violence. Public fear, in Valentine's (2014) words, "supports a discourse in which knowledge and power are divorced from reason and disciplinary authority is wielded over presumed-to-be aberrant forms" (p. 88).

4.4.1.2 Professionalization. According to Rose (1999), the apparatuses of the mass media serve to disseminate language and values with which individuals act upon themselves and their families. Professionalization, which refers to "the proliferation of professions armed with credentials to manage citizens" (Walton, 2006, p. 155), can exert power on individuals by making the language and values available to them (Rose, 1999). Social problems are perceived in specific ways as problems by people who have power to produce and disseminate legitimatized knowledge (Walton, 2011). Thornberg (2015) points out that current bullying research has its origin in developmental and educational psychology. Hence, it is not surprising that school bullying has become "defined, objectified, categorized and psychologized" "through the lens of scientism" (Walton, 2005, p. 57).

The school bullying "professionals" (e.g., researchers, school counsellors, social workers, psychological therapists, etc.) have more credentials and access than the public to claim "scientific and objective" knowledge on bullying, and to shape the bullying problem

in policies. Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that experts and their expertise are heavily relied on when measures of dealing with bullying are taken. For example, PPM 144 requires that when establishing bullying prevention and intervention plans, supports for school boards may

> be provided by school-based employees of the board, through board programs and resource personnel, or through community-based service-providers, including social service agencies and mental health agencies. (p. 7)

PPM 145 requires that to facilitate the building of partnerships, every school board should:

> direct schools to work with community-based service providers, mental health agencies, or other organizations that have professional expertise in the areas of bullying, discrimination, violence, and harassment to provide appropriate support to students, parents, and teachers, and other school staff in addressing these issues; (p. 13)

Underpinned by the conceptualization of bullying as individual behaviour that "is associated with a range of physical and mental health problems, as well as educational problems, antisocial problems, and relationship problems" (the Model Plan, 2013, p. 1), these policies focus on finding the "cure" for individuals. Students involved in bullying are portrayed as needing support and healing. "The complex of actors, powers, institutions and bodies of knowledge that comprise expertise have come to play a crucial role in establishing the possibility and legitimacy of government" (Rose & Miller, 2010, p. 286). These bodies of knowledge are disseminated throughout every aspect of people's lives at the micro levels, leading to the discourse of norm and normality, to which people are subjugated and subjugating themselves to conform.

Professionalization is one of the social regularities "that comprise dominant liberal social order, that constitute that which becomes visible and acceptable within that order"

(Scheurich, 1994, p. 307). It contributes to shape the conditions for the construction of a problem and for the emergence of the practices related to the problem (Walton, 2010). Speaking from the perspective of the preschool field, Dahlberg and Moss (2005) point out that "the scientific discourses of developmental psychology provide a way of understanding children, teachers and their work by representing, classifying and normalizing them through its concepts" (p. 7), as is also the case within an school bullying research within educational system. Through such professionalization, the "practices of labelling, treating, and categorizing" (Walton, 2009 p. 141) are made possible, and the predetermined outcomes of how children fit in the school can be guaranteed. The behaviours and thoughts of the students involved in bullying are modified and constrained accordingly.

The language-induced fear of school violence, "articulating bullying in generic ways" (Walton, 2009, p. 147), and the seeming "objectivity" of bullying knowledge, "providing a basis for achieving order" (Dahlberg and Moss, 2005, p. 6), both located in a neoliberal political context, contribute to the disciplinary power now exercising through anti-bullying policies.

4.4.2 Disciplinary/Governing techniques. Disciplinary power is "the application of a range of 'techniques of power' that work principally on the body, which is approached primarily as an object to be analyzed and separated into its constituent parts" (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 16). With Gore (1998), Dahlberg and Moss (2005) note eight disciplinary techniques that are often taken for granted in the field of early childhood education, namely normalization, surveillance, exclusion, classification, distribution, individualization, totalization, and regulation. As such, they can also be applied to education in its broad sense. In the following section, I examine some of the techniques utilized within the anti-bullying policies to interrogate how they contribute to shaping dominant discourses on school bullying.

4.4.2.1 Individualization and regulation. Winton and Tuters (2015) identify that Ontario's *Safe Schools Act, 2000* had similar characteristics to the zero-tolerance policies introduced across the US since the 1990s. Since PPM 145 *(Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012)* was issued in 2012, there has seemed to be a shift from the zero-tolerance policies to the progressive discipline approach. The purpose of this memorandum is "to provide direction to school boards on required revisions to their existing policies and guidelines on progressive discipline (PPM 145, p. 1). It claims:

> When inappropriate behaviour occurs, disciplinary measures should be applied within a framework that shifts the focus from one that is solely punitive to one that is both corrective and supportive. (p. 3)

The terms "corrective" and "supportive" are used to emphasize the comparison from the term "solely punitive". Nevertheless, the nature of the regulatory function of the progressive discipline remains the same. On the one hand, rules are still strictly applied to keep control of student behaviours. On the other hand, "corrective" and "supportive" implies that bullying is "curable" through remedial measures targeting individuals. These words are not detached from their particular context, rather, they are integral elements working together with the conceptualization of bullying as a mere behaviour problem. As Dean (1999) highlights, "we should not underestimate the role of language in constructing worlds, problems and persons as governable entities" (p. 64). To see policy as "both text and discourse" (Ball, 2015) helps unpack the "discursive limits" (Hepburn, 1997, p. 37) reproduced in everyday life by language. Policies are "embodied philosophies, values and ideals" (Yanow, 2000, as cited in Galitz & Robert, 2014 p. 182), and thus, they reflect how power/knowledge relation produces and constrains the reality.

> Regarding the consequences of suspension and expulsion, PPM 145 states:

> Under recent amendments to the Education Act, principals must suspend a student for

bullying and consider referring that student for expulsion if (1) the student has previously been suspended for bullying, and (2) the student's continuing presence in the school creates, in the principal's opinion, an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person. When both of these conditions are met, the principal must suspend the student and consider referring the student for an expulsion hearing. (p. 4)

It can be inferred that students engaging in bullying shall be punished by suspension and expulsion. Thus, it can be said that the progressive disciplinary approach still follows the same dominant theme of safe school strategies that zero-tolerance policies focused on, which is "to root out students who are labeled as 'bad' because of their unruly, non-conforming, or violent behaviours" (Walton, 2011, p. 134). This is what Hepburn (1997) terms "punishment culture", where "children like a structure" discourse is embedded:

Once the structure is in place, then it becomes the pupil's choice, if they overstep the boundaries they can expect to be punished, they only have themselves to blame, and cannot expect that 'factors around' them will let them off the hook. (p. 37)

Such culture of punishment parallels the "traditional punishment rationale of the criminal justice system" (Galitz & Robert, 2014, p. 192). Within this system problems are individualized without the wider causes being addressed (Galitz & Robert, 2014). In the case of bullying prevention and intervention policy, the straightforward punitive logic still sustains. Approaches are taken "to manage individual behaviour as if it is something to be managed with a focus on external pressures to let children behave in a way that is considered 'good'" (Ball et al., 2011, p. 12). The discourse of behaviour management centers on "making people act in certain ways for extrinsic reasons, for example, avoiding punishments or gaining rewards, but does not offer understanding of why particular ways of behaving are preferred" (p. 12).

Detailed strategies are further introduced in PPM 145:

A progressive discipline approach promotes positive student behaviour through strategies that include using prevention programs and early and ongoing interventions and supports, reporting serious student incidents, and responding to incidents of inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour when they occur. (p. 4)

And

Some examples of such strategies include ongoing communication with parents, verbal reminders, review of expectations, and/or written assignments with a learning component that require reflection. (PPM 145, p. 4)

Besides these suggestions, PPM 145 also provides guidelines of other discipline approaches, such as responding to incidents, notifying parents, and reporting to the principal. These strategies explicitly indicate that the solution to bullying lies in individuals, and that they only "account for the actual moments of bullying" (Walton, 2011, p. 135). According to Schott and Søndergaard (2014), "the type of methods that are used to acquire knowledge about bullying" is based on the nature of "epistemological commitments" (p. 3). The fact that bullying is considered as situated merely in the interpersonal relationship between individuals endorses such one-off methods that are simply understood through individual culpability. Bacchi (2009) notes that in some criminal justice and policing policies, there exists an assumption that "the best way to reduce crime is to reduce the *opportunities* for crime to occur" (p. 103, italics in original). This is the case with bullying prevention and intervention policies. The underlying logic here is that "altered perceptions of risk, effort and reward will affect the decisions of those who might otherwise offend" (p. 103). However, it is the wider social dynamics and power relation that are "threaded throughout bullying moments and episodes" (Walton, 2005, p. 113). Such personalization of the situation decontextualizes bullying incidents and leaves structural elements unquestioned.

The reliance on personalized approaches also reveals one of the modernist discourses that Derrida would term "logocentrism" (as cited in Hepburn, 1997). Logocentrism describes

> the tendency to see the world as ordered by the operation of some centered reason or *logos*. Because this is centered on the person, the reified 'individual', it is conceptualized as something which one exudes from 'within'. (p. 33, italics in original)

Thus, students engaging in bullying are assumed to be able to "take in" the "received wisdom" (Hepburn, 1997, p. 40), behaving in the way they are reminded or expected to behave.This assumption complies with what Dahlberg and Moss (2005) name "the hegemony of a particular *rationality*", which is "a way of thinking about the world and justify actions in a systematic manner" (p. 5, italics in original). This rationality is one of the two significant conditions on which "the particular social construction of preschools [and other schools] - as producers of predetermined outcomes" – is contingently built (p. 5). (The other condition is the scientific and objective knowledge, the application of which to the study of bullying has been discussed above.) In this vein, as Hepburn (1997) puts it, "[t]he end product of education is to 'become' one of these rational autonomous individuals" (p. 40). These individuals should take personal responsibility for their behaviours, and "turn the gaze of authority inwards" (Hepburn, 1997, p. 36). If they fail to do so, they are to blame for the wrong decisions they have made. In other words, for students engaging in bullying, it is a matter of personal choice whether to bully others or not. Helping students make the right choice is what the implementation of progressive discipline aims to do. PPM 145 requires:

> Schools should utilize a range of interventions, supports, and consequences that are developmentally and socio-emotionally appropriate and include learning opportunities for reinforcing positive behaviour while helping students to *make better choices*. (p. 3,

emphasis added)

PPM 145 requires the following statement to be included in each school board's progressive discipline policy:

The range of interventions, supports, and consequences used by the board and all schools must be clear and developmentally appropriate, and must include learning opportunities for students in order to reinforce positive behaviours and help students *make good choices*. (p. 6, emphasis added)

It also requires that opportunities to learn certain knowledge and skills should be provided to students:

Ontario's curriculum provides many opportunities for students to develop an understanding of these topics [such as bullying, violence, inappropriate sexual behaviour, bias, stereotyping, discrimination, prejudice, and hate; critical media literacy; and safe Internet use] and the skills to *make safe and healthy choices*. (PPM 145, p. 6, emphasis added)

Individuals are considered to be responsible for their own "moral development", and should focus on themselves "as the source of bad behaviour" (Hepburn, 1997, p. 36). This "individual as free-choosing decision-maker" (p. 36) reveals the assumption that students are "inherently rational, capable of evaluating future risks and making calculated choices", which is "a rationality of government" (Galitz & Robert, 2014, p. 184). In Rose and Miller's (2010) words, this rationality of government targeting personal life is entailed by neoliberalism. Under the gaze of neoliberalism, the understanding of citizenship has shifted "from an emphasis on *rights* to an emphasis on *responsibilities*", and "from *socialized* management of risk to *individualized* risk management" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 83, italics in original). This citizenship is "to be manifested not in the receipt of public largesse, but in

the energetic pursuit of personal fulfilment and the incessant calculations that are to enable this to be achieved" (Gordon 1987; Meyer 1986, as cited in Rose & Miller, 2010, p. 298). As such, bullying participants are portrayed in these prevention and intervention policies as individuals who are free and active, and thus the reason for them to be involved in bullying is that they must *not* be responsible for their own behaviours.

Viewed from this standpoint, students are supposed to have the responsibility of self-development. Failing to do this leads to the assumption that they lack social, emotional, or self-regulation skills. Accordingly, they need educating or training in order to improve these skills. PPM 144 states:

In the course of a day, there are many "teachable moments" when issues appear to arise. Prompt intervention with a few moments of coaching and support at these critical times can help all children and youth, including those who may be at risk, to develop the skills and understanding that they need to maintain positive relationships with others. Such interactions that students have with their teachers, other school staff, and fellow students, as well as with principals, vice-principals, their parents, and others, can be used to help them improve their social skills. (p. 5)

And in the description of progressive discipline:

Progressive discipline is an approach that makes use of a continuum of prevention programs, interventions, supports, and consequences, building upon strategies that build skills for healthy relationships and promote positive behaviours. (PPM 145, p. 6)

Likewise, the Model Plan requires schools to "strengthen prevention measures" by identifying and supporting

[a]wareness raising strategies for students, e.g., social emotional learning, empathy,

developing self-regulation skills. (p. 3)

These statements underline the significance of promoting skill learning of students with the preoccupation of individual as the cause of bullying. The improvement of social and emotional skills is suggested as an important strategy to prevent and reduce bullying. More importantly, such skill training not only helps "bullies" maintain "positive relationship with others", but makes "victims" more confident to confront possible bullying. Students who are bullied "are portrayed as individuals with agency" (Galitz & Robert, 2014, p. 188). They appear to, at least to some extent, have the capability and responsibility to regulate themselves and lower the risks of being bullied. In this way, individuals are constructed as if they have absolute autonomy, free from power relations, and thus what they need is sufficient training and education. However, "an age of unparalleled individualism, choice and freedom is also an age of unparalleled government, discipline and control" (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 50). Seen in this light, the seemingly personal autonomy is "not the antithesis of political power, but a key term in its exercise, the more so because most individuals are not merely the subjects of power but play a part in its operations" (Rose & Miller, 2010, p. 272).

These discourses of punitive logic, rationality, personal responsibility, and self-management, functioning "in relation to *power relations*" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 39, italics in original), are exercised by the disciplinary techniques of individualization and regulation within anti-bullying policies. Disciplinary techniques do not act in separation, but "connect up to contribute to the formation of dominant discourses or regimes of truth" (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 17). In terms of school bullying, besides individualization and regulation, other practices, namely normalization and classification, are also worth examining.

4.4.2.2 Normalization and classification. Normalization is vital to disciplinary

practices. It operates with "the capacity to identify, measure, instill and regulate through the idea of the norm", as "a key technique of government" as Rose (1999) terms (Dahlberg &Moss, 2005, p. 17). Schools are important sites of normalizations, among other institutions (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005). The progressive discipline approach is one form of normalizing strategies, "identifying the abnormal [the aggressive and deviant, in the case of bullying] and setting normality as an outcome or purpose" (p. 17). Valentine (2014) draws on Foucauldian concepts and reveals that "the 'school bully' as a long-standing mechanism for identifying difference and enforcing exclusion" is "now co-opted by policy-makers, educators and parents to legitimate a Panoptic reshaping of the culture of childhood" (p. 80). PPM 144 requires that when establishing bullying prevention and intervention plans, school boards should

> consult with their Special Education Advisory Committee and with community partners, including social service agencies, mental health agencies, members of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, and other appropriate community groups. (p. 5)

And board policies

> should also be aligned with other relevant ministry strategies and initiatives, such as Student Success and character development, as well as with Ontario's mental health and addictions strategy. (p. 6)

Similarly, the Model Plan states:

> School boards should also consider the availability of supports and resources related to mental health and public health issues that have been developed by the board or by community agencies such as the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). (p. 2)

One can infer "what is seen as in need of 'fixing'- from the plan of action that is proposed" (Bacchi, 2009, p. xi). When developing their bullying prevention and intervention policies, school boards are required to cooperate with groups related to special education, social services, mental health, and First Nation communities, and school boards' strategies must comply with the initiatives regarding students' success and character development. Statements can be understood "not as fixed components, but only via the *rules* which govern their functioning" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 38, italics in original). These rules "have to do with historically variable bodies of knowledge" and are "rules for what it is possible to know" (p. 38). What is implied in these statements is that students from these specific backgrounds (i.e., who need special education, who need character modification, who need psychological treatment, and who are from First Nation communities) are more likely to be involved in bullying, or at least, must become the focus of attention. To put it another way, the policies construct them as the "problem groups" with an implication that they are more inclined either to bully others or to be bullied. In doing so, what is created are "*people* categories" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 9, italics in original). The creation of people categories has a great impact on how governing takes place, and on the way people think about themselves and about others (Bacchi, 2009). Valentine (2014) points out that there are multiple ideals of socialization in the school system with an enthusiasm to identify risk factors

> such as the presence of multiple racial groups, special needs children, family disharmony, violence in the home, obesity, parenting styles, gender identities, and playground power relationships. The purpose is to identify 'bullies' and 'victims' before their behaviour manifests in harmful ways, allowing for the development of preventative strategies that focus on these students at risk. (p. 88)

However, "[w]hen aspects of observable difference are constructed as risk factors", "which are then attributed to social identities, or types of children, those children so labeled are

often unable to (re)define themselves as less destructive forms" (Dei, 2008; Jacobson, 2013, as cited in Valentine, 2014, p. 91). The contextualization of risk as an "individual risk" reflects the neoliberal regimes of governmentality (Bacchi, 2009).

Further, in these policies, mental health agencies are relied on as important part of community-based service-providers who might give solid support to school boards in helping preventing and intervening in bullying. It must be noted that the relationship between bullying and the issue of "mental health" is indicated throughout these policy documents, which is not surprising since bullying research has its origin in developmental psychology according to Thornberg (2015). Foucault has interest in scrutinizing such knowledges [as economics, medicine, and the human sciences] because "they are less stable and far more difficult to control" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 58). Systems of knowledge create "the condition required for the production of truth" (p. 58). In this sense, developmental psychology as "the knowledge" creates the necessary conditions for the "truth" related to bullying to be produced. Nevertheless, child development contains "cultural messages and actions" (i.e., multiple forms of privilege and subjugation, social regulation as intrinsic, the creation of quality hierarchy among human beings, and a deficiency model of humanity) "that lead to social inequity and injustice" (Cannella, 1997, p. 59). In deconstructing the normalization of bullying represented in anti-bullying policies, each message has fundamental significance.

Firstly, these policies perpetuate the social and school norms of students who are capable of avoiding bullying and being bullied. These students are assumed to promote a positive learning and teaching environment with good social and life skills to maintain healthy relationship with others; they are able to control their emotions, foresee consequences, and avoid risks; they can always make sensible choices. In a word, they accord with the social order and represent the idealized social norms. "A normalized vision of the child creates privilege for those who fit that vision and places in the margin as

deficient, wrong, or abnormal, those who do not fit the vision" (Cannella, 1997, p. 60). Thus, privilege on one side and subjugation on the other side reinforce the pathologized conceptualization of "bullies" that underpins anti-bullying policies.

Secondly, development psychology functions as a tool of expecting and regulating children's behaviours (Cannella, 1997). Students who do not fit the norms (e.g., not obedient, not responsible) are then assumed to need regulating "toward avenues that would lead to the fulfillment of developmental expectations" (p. 61). Compulsory anti-bullying measures "arise in the context of a generalized notion of control as shaped by neoconservative ideology, that human actions and interactions necessitate such regulation" (Walton, 2005, p. 110).

Thirdly, since children as "the most inferior" are placed at the lowest level of the development hierarchy, they are continually observed and surveilled without any privacy (Cannella, 1997, p. 61). PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan enables and encourages the all-around observation and surveillance. However, such actions should be put into question if this "superiority/inferiority perspective" manifests the dominant human hierarchy in the society (pp. 61-62).

Lastly, child development places the child in a "always progressing" position and consider the child as "a shadow of his/her future self" (Cannella, 1997, p. 62). "This focus on ever-continuing progress and development establishes a context in which many of us will never be satisfied, never feel worthy, never have advanced enough" (p. 63). It is this discourse of progress that bolster "to help students reach their full potential" (see PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan) as a pivotal objective stated in these bullying prevention and intervention policies.

Child developmental psychology has been the foundation in the field of education and social welfare (Cannella, 1997), including the school anti-bullying policy regime. The

norms conveyed by these policies, which are grounded in developmental psychology, permeate every facet of our lives. People achieve normality "through working on themselves, controlling their impulses in their everyday conduct and habits, inculcating norms of conduct into their children, under the guidance of others" (Rose, 1999, p. 76). The processes of normalization play a crucial role in generating particular discourses that "carry public authority" in "shap[ing] identities and regulat[ing] bodies, desires, selves and populations" (Seidman, 1998, as cited in Dalberg & Moss, 2005, p. 18) as a form of governance. In this way, discourses can achieve "the construction of bully, victim, and deviant personalities" (Hepburn, 1997, p. 34). "[A]ll languages, all signs, concepts and so forth are produced as and by relations in specific practices. These practices therefore produce and read children as 'the child'" (Walkerdine, 1988, as cited in Hepburn, 1997, p, 34). Such educational practices therefore "enable systems of classification of this reified 'child' to emerge" (Hepburn, 1997, p. 34).

Classification functions as another important governing technique by differentiating groups or individuals from one another (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005). In classifying practices in relation to bullying, the most salient is the creation of binaries, which always have an implication of hierarchy and privilege one side than the other side (Bacchi, 2009). Bacchi (2009) reminds us that "invariably binaries simplify complex relationships", and thus "we need to watch where they appear in policies and how they function to shape the understanding of the issue" (p. 7). The main objective of the anti-bullying policy is "to foster a *positive* learning and teaching environment that supports academic achievement for all students and that helps students reach their full potential" (PPM 144, p. 1). It elucidates:

A *positive* school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted, and actively promote *positive* behaviours and interactions. Principles of equity and inclusive education are embedded in the learning environment

to support a *positive* school climate and a culture of mutual respect. A *positive* school climate is a crucial component of bullying prevention. (p. 1, emphasis added)

While repeatedly underscoring how significant "positive" is, PPM 144 describes bullying as "creating a *negative* environment at a school for another individual" (p. 4, emphasis added). In addition, the following statement must be included in school board policies:

Bullying will not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstances (e.g., online) where engaging in bullying will have a *negative* impact on the school climate. (p. 6 emphasis added)

This positive/negative dichotomy, like other binary oppositions such as good/bad, complying/aggressive, and responsible/irresponsible, is usually produced within anti-bullying policies and programs. In Derrida's term, this "binary logic" is "symptomatic of Western theorizing" (Hepburn, 1997, p. 32). It is "not merely a benign mode of description", rather, "it forms ideas, meanings, and perspectives, while also limits possibilities of seeing situations differently" (Walton, 2011, p. 133).

In PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan, the binary of bullies/victims is also explicit, with an implicit emphasis that the roles of students recognized as bullies and victims are static, opposed to each other, and mutually exclusive. In a variety of Canada's anti-bullying policies, the bully is constantly caught and punished, and the victim is constantly identified and counselled (Valentine, 2014). This process creates, sustains, and reinforces the dichotomy of "students who bully" and "students who are bullied", and thus the "bullies" and the "victims" are produced as mutually exclusive and morally categorized (Galitz & Robert, 2014). Such dichotomy constrains the alternative understanding of bullying as a complex social phenomenon within which the roles of bullying participants are overlapped with the ongoing "identity struggle" (Thornberg, 2015, p. 313) and undermines the opportunities for researchers to examine the fundamental social dynamics in bullying

practices (Schott & Søndergaard, 2014). It also perpetuates the distinction and conflicts between students involved in bullying, resulting in extreme public concern. "The rise of current discourse, in media reports, educational literature, and provincial legislation on 'safe schools' is partially fueled by such concern" (Walton, 2014, p. 94). Indeed, policies, strategies and programs contribute to the evaluation and classification of people and their behaviours, the creation of hierarchies, and the legitimization of specific courses of action (Galitz & Robert, 2013).

These discipline/governing practices found in these bullying prevention and intervention policies, such as individualization, regulation, normalization and classification, not only serve as "a big stick, with the threat of punishment if practices stray from what is expected", as is in Dahlberg and Moss's (2005) words, "work directly *on* us", but more importantly, they "also work *through* us, acting on our innermost selves, reaching to the innermost qualities of being human: our spirit, motivations, wishes, desires, beliefs, dispositions, aspirations and attitudes" (p. 19, italics in original). In this way, governmentality acts as "a pattern of power in which the self disciplines the self" (Fendler, 2001, as cited in Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 8).

4.5 The Effects

Instead of evaluating the "outcomes" as conventional policy approach does, Foucauldian-influenced policy analysis examines the effects that accompany specific problem representations (Bacchi, 2009). In this section, the overlapping effects (i.e., subjectification effects and discursive effects) linked to the way bullying is represented in PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan are weighed up.

4.5.1 Dividing practices and subjectification effects. Disciplinary technology as "techniques of power" aims to forge "a docile [body] that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (Foucault, 1977, cited in Dahlberg &Moss, 2005, p. 16).

Hepburn (1997) highlights how the individual student can be confined within certain practices and "'becomes' a subject – preferably a passive confirming one, although often a troublesome or bullying one –through [his or] her interaction in a complicated set of discourses and education practices" (p. 34). These anti-bullying policies, namely PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan, are the products of and producing such discourses and education practices, exerting certain effects on children.

School bullying is conceived to be relevant to a range of problems, such as physical and mental health problems, educational problems, antisocial problems, and relationship problems (the Model Plan, 2013). The subject is "either divided inside himself or divided from others" (Foucault, 1983, p. 208). On the one hand, by segmenting the specific expert fields, the policies portray bullying participants as component parts (e.g., physical health, mental health, and intelligence) to be more effectively identified, trained, and surveilled. This is a form of a dynamic that Foucault terms "dividing practices". The other main form of dividing practices is to divide one human from another (Jacobson, 2010). Policies often set groups of people as opposed to each other in their problem representations (Bacchi, 2009). PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan, as is noted, explicitly and implicitly identify opposite groups of students. For example, there are "those who create negative school climate" versus "those who help maintain positive school climate", "those who are irresponsible for their behaviours" versus "those who are responsible for their behaviours", and "those who make bad choices" versus "those who make good choices". In short, there are "the minority 'marked' groups" - the bullies, and "the majority 'unmarked' groups" – those who are characterized as complying with orders (Bacchi, 2009, p. 93). The dominant problem presentation in anti-bullying policies construed the "marked" groups as disruptive, as troublesome.

Following Foucault, Bacchi (2009) argues that "this stigmatizing of targeted minorities serves a useful governmental purpose, indicating and encouraging desired behaviours

among the majority" (p. 16). The implication is that the "unmarked" majority is composed of rational and responsible students, "who need only to be 'informed' [of the information about bullying) in order to be 'in control'" and behave well (p. 93). This shows "a distinction between 'political subjects' who 'control' their bodies and those 'controlled' by their bodies", undermining the civic entitlement of the "marked" group (p. 93). This dichotomy can result in the "Foucauldian 'vicious circle' of police-prison-delinquent" (Hepburn, 1997). Students who engage in bullying are placed in fixed categories as "deviant, aggressive or evil-minded" (Horton, 2011, p. 274), and tend to misconceive their identities as unchangeable. Via the dividing practices, students are continually constructing themselves and placing themselves within a certain "subject position" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 16). They are subjected to the bullying discourses (e.g. the aggressive personality, the poor mental health conditions, and the lack or acquisition of skills) constituting this position.

Moreover, dividing practices also "create members of targeted groups as themselves (responsible for) the 'problem'" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 17), implying that individual students *themselves* are the problems, or should face *their* problems and bear responsibility for bullying consequences. This implication disguises the "political implication" (Walton, 2006, p. 21) and further perpetuates the status quo of the larger society.

4.5.2 Discursive effects. Discursive practices are "characterized by the delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories" (Foucault, 1977b, p. 199). Following Foucault, Walton (2006) states that how "the notion of bullying is articulated in journalism, research, and educational policy" is a form of discursive practices (p. 87). Such discursive practices "become normalized through repetition and legitimization" (Walton, 2010, p. 137). When statements from speakers conveyed through an abundance of texts cohere or make core repeatable claims of knowledge, they form discursive practices" (Bourke & Lidstone, 2015, p. 836). In this vein, anti-bullying policy is part of the "network

or system of institutional, historical, social, and political relations" (Walton, 2006, p. 84) where discursive practices are embodied.

Foucault expresses that discursive practices "set parameters around that which can be talked about by legitimating only certain agents of knowledge and sites of knowledge production and not others" (Walton, 2010, p. 137). Discursive practices impose limits on "what can be thought and said within particular problem representations", and thus produce what Bacchi (2009) terms "discursive effects" (p. 69). Specifically, to look into discursive effects, one must identify certain "truths" generated by dominant discourses (Bacchi, 2009).

The declared objective of the Model Plan is to assist school boards in preparing their bullying prevention and intervention plans that aim at building "a safe, inclusive and accepting school environment" because such an environment "is essential for student achievement and well-being" (p. 1). Similar statements are repeatedly highlighted in PPM 144. PPM 145, and the Model Plan. For example:

Schools that have bullying prevention and intervention policies foster a positive learning and teaching environment that supports academic achievement for all students and that helps students reach their full potential. (PPM 144, p. 1)

The Ministry of Education is committed to supporting boards in building and sustaining a positive school climate that is safe, inclusive, and accepting for all students in order to support their education so that all students reach their full potential. (PPM 145, p. 1)

And one of the important elements of a bullying prevention and intervention plan is to:

Understand a whole school approach and the essential importance of a positive school climate for student achievement and well-being. (the Model Plan, p. 3)

On the one hand, the "truth" here is that to reduce bullying incidents is mainly for the purpose of optimizing academic achievement levels in the school so that students can achieve success in their lives. Discourses of success, in Cloete and Duncan's (2016) words, are "acts of legitimation that regulate what is said, done and what counts in a given system", and as such, students' success and failure "exist within a system bounded by rules of hierarchy and distinction, which have implicit and explicit power relations" (p. 34). They are about "[t]he markers of the discipline, the level of study and the institutional standards operate as an explicit set of criteria and manifest as a student passing or failing and eventually, graduating or not" (p. 33). In this aspect, discourses of success speak a language of quality. This language of quality

> is not only a technology of normalization, establishing norms against which performance should be assessed, so shaping policy and practice….it is a technology of regulation, providing a powerful tool for management to govern at a distance through the setting and measurement of norms of performance. (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 2006, p. ix)

In this important sense, the idea that these anti-bullying policies associate the reduction of bullying with students' academic achievement reflects neoliberal values, and reinforces "the narrowing of the focus of purposes and aims of schooling in favor of preparing students to become part of the workforce" (Joshee 2012, as cited in Winton & Tuters, 2015, p. 135). Such association insidiously distracts administrators, educators and parents' attention to bullying prevention from humanity to utilitarianism, and warrants the focus on the standardized approaches of "behaviour modification and regulation to help achieve those academic goals" (Winton 2008, as cited in Winton & Tuters, 2015, p. 135).

On the other hand, in the above context, children's "well-being" also becomes a contestable term. Governmentality as a kind of governmental rationality equates "the well-

being or happiness or productiveness of individuals with behaviours that reinforce the social order" (Scheurich, 1997, p. 306). By putting stress on "the aggressive intentionality of bullying" (e.g., in PPM 144), these bullying prevention and intervention polices consider bullying "as a breakdown in the social order" (Horton, 2011, p. 269). In effect, the emphasis on "student achievement and well-being" is a covert means of social control and regulation. That is why these policies set a goal to reduce bullying, and yet "the goal merely *contains, regulates, and manage*s violence rather than *addresses* it" (Walton, 2006, p. 67, italics in original).

Moreover, the "truth" that school bullying is merely a matter of students' behaviour is overtly stated in these anti-bullying policies (e.g., in the definition of bullying in PPM 144). While it is clearly the case that bullying takes place between individuals in the school, this phenomenon mirrors the boarder society as a manifestation of the "co-constructing differentness" (Thornberg, 2015, p. 318). Thornberg notes that students recognized as bullies usually hold an illusion that they are superior to the victims, and interviews with these students also indicate how they socially contrast themselves with the victims and define themselves as normative. Students engaging in bullying have difficulty in reconsidering their identities because they are constantly involved in the process of co-constructing the "normal us" (p. 310) and blaming the victims for violating "important social taken-for-granted norms of the social group, culture or society" (p. 311). For students who are bullied, in their identity struggling for "recognition, acceptance and inclusion", "being 'normal'" are "associated with value and social acceptance", while "being 'deviant'" are "associated with worthlessness and social rejection" (p. 316).

Decontextualizing and individualizing school bullying can mean neglecting that individual student's acts of power acquisition "are pathologized as psychosocial deviance toward the political ends of obscuring the fact that they are behaving just like us" (valentine, 2014, p. 95). Valentine points out that the current school bully "reflects the aggressive,

competitive, destructive, and status-oriented behaviours that we – the adult stakeholders in Canadian public education, and the culture of which we are inextricably a part – continue to demonstrate" (p. 96). In this sense, the constitution of bullying in these anti-bullying policies as an individual problem of students who need support and healing leaves unclear and unproblematized social and political issues such as social injustice, socially constructed difference, and the neo-liberalistic values that give rise to bullying behaviour (Walton, 2010).

4.6 Possibilities

Currently, evidence-based policy approaches have "near-hegemonic status" in a wide range of policy fields, including education (Bacchi, 2009, p. 252). PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan rely heavily on evidence-based solutions and practices. For example, it is underscored in PPM 144 that to build and sustain a positive school climate is "a complex challenge requiring evidence-informed solutions" (p. 2), and school boards "should draw upon evidence-informed practices that promote positive student behaviour" (PPM 145, p. 5). As is listed in PPM 144 (under the section of School Board Policies on Bullying Prevention and Intervention from page 5 to page 12), there are detailed evidence-informed approaches of bullying prevention and intervention that mostly center on individual students and response to discrete moments of bullying. An evidence-based approach, in Schott and Søndergaard's (2014) words, may be appropriate for measuring a phenomenon that remains the same across different contexts or groups", but it "may be poorly suited to understanding social complexities and complicated interactions", which "are central in bullying dynamics" (p. 7). According to Schott and Søndergaard, it appears that the body of research [on school bullying] is limited "by its focus on measuring the 'fidelity' to one-size-fits-all programs" (p. 417). In evidence-based policy, "objective 'problems' are presumed to exist, separate from power and contestation, waiting only upon 'evidence' about what works" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 253). Consequently, the complexity in bullying

dynamics can be oversimplified, and the processes of the anti-bullying policy-making can be depoliticized. That is why space needs to be created "for reflecting on how we are governed" (p. 253).

One way in which we are governed is "the representation of policy as neutral, technical and as separate from politics" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 253). In fact, seemingly neutral policy theory is "*highly political* and politically dangerous, encouraging quiescent behaviour among citizens" (p. 254, italics in original). Depoliticization can remove politics from political issues and transform them into "neutral issues of expertise and management, summed up in the familiar question "What works?" (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 127). Through depoliticization, "public policy formation is removed from the field of contestability into the field of consensual rationality" (I. Young, 1990, as cited in Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 127). In this sense, it is significant to recognize the "political ramifications" of the construction of the bullying problem within these anti-bullying policies and the "inherent contestation" in policy making and doing (Bacchi, 2009, p. 254). Those who are involved in bullying prevention and intervention (e.g., researchers, principals, teachers, administrators, and other school staffs, etc.) can contribute to what Dahlberg and Moss (2005) term "a process of *re*-politicization", "contributing to the opening up to politics of large areas of life [in this case, anti-bullying practices] through making them subject to contestation" (p. 122, italics in original). What is crucial to this process, according to Dahlberg and Moss's discussion about politics in preschool education, is critical thinking and a confrontation of injustice. These two areas are also important to be applied to school bullying in order to look at it through a different angle.

Critical thinking is "a matter of introducing a critical attitude towards those things that are given to our present experience as if they were timeless, natural, unquestionable" (Rose, 1999, p. 20). It helps researchers and school staff working on bullying "make the familiar seem strange, make visible invisible assumptions and values, remove the 'taken-for-

granted' practices" (Dahlberg & Moss, pp. 138-139). Once these assumptions and taken-for-granted practices embedded in the construction of bullying in policies are unpacked, it is time for researchers and school staff to demand the 'right to the problems' (Deleuze, 1994, as cited in Bacchi, 2009, p. 255). In addition, regarding justice, what researchers and school staff can do is far beyond these evidence-informed anti-bullying approaches. Justice "requires participation in public discussion and processes of democratic decision-making" (I. Young, p. 91, as cited in Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 147). Schools as public spaces can become loci "where issues of social justice as oppression and domination can be confronted" (p. 148). There is a need to "challenge the growing tendency in the research community to provide 'evidence' for *pre-defined* 'problems'" and a need to open up for discussion and debate the "assumed shapes of those 'problems'" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 271, italics in original). This is also the case with the 'problem' of school bullying constituted in anti-bullying policies such as PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan. For educators, participating in discussions and debates in schools is the first step to confront injustice in the constitution of bullying in current anti-bullying policies. In doing so, there might exist the possibility to "invigorate imaginations to consider alternative futures", and "to speculate on how we could be *governed* differently" (p. 254, italics in original).

4.7 Summary

How the bullying problem is constructed in anti-bullying policies, that is, how the problem is identified, how problem groups are defined, and what solutions are offered, is the social process through which people re-learn the "right" way of thinking, knowing, and doing, and continually governed (Bacchi, 2009). In this chapter, I have studied the historical context of province-wide bullying-related prevention and intervention policies that have come into force in Ontario from 1994 to date, and explained why PPM 144 *(Bullying Prevention and Intervention, 2012)*, PPM 145 *(Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, 2012)*, and the Model Plan (*Working Draft: Safe and Accepting*

Schools Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, 2013) are selected for analysis. Drawing upon policy archeology (Scheurich, 1994) and the WPR approach (Bacchi, 2009), I have closely examined these policy documents by identifying the way bullying is constructed in these policies, interrogating the concept of "safe school" as the most salient objective of bullying prevention and intervention. I have also attempted to open up the dominant discourses encompassing certain social regularities (such as governmentality and professionalization) that establish the conditions for bullying knowledge to be legitimized and disseminated by examining the disciplinary techniques (i.e., individualization, regulation, normalization, and classification) embedded in anti-bullying policy-making. The subjectification effects as well as discursive effects produced by the bullying problem represented in these policies have been identified. I conclude this chapter by looking into possible ways to question and disrupt the construction of the bullying problem in these policies. The current evidence-informed anti-bullying policy proposals need to be reconsidered and the depoliticization of public policies needs to be challenged. Vital to this process is researchers' and school staff's critical thinking and confrontation of social injustice.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Through the lens of Foucault, I have conducted a study into current bullying prevention and intervention policies (i.e., PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan) implemented in schools in the Canadian province of Ontario. This study interrogates the way school bullying is represented in these policies. By taking a step back, this study tried to identify a range of disciplinary techniques applied to human bodies. These techniques of governing, namely individualization, regulation, normalization, and classification, working collaboratively in these policies, function to form the dominant bullying discourses.

Drawing upon Foucault's observation, Pinar (2016) argues that "power produces reality and domains of objects and rituals of truth" (p. 187). The dominant discourses on bullying, as "a set of strategies which are part of social practices" (Foucault 2000c, cited in Ellwood & Davies, 2010, p. 95), shape the regimes of truth and construct the subject. What can be said about bullying and how teachers, students and parents can treat bullying are normalized, and alternative ways of understanding it are excluded.

In PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan, school bullying is perceived as a problem of behaviour resulting from individual personality traits and interpersonal relationships, impeding students' academic achievement and creating a negative learning and teaching environment in the school. Both the "bullies" and the "victims" are portrayed as needing healing, although in different ways. Thus, school bullying is constructed as specific individual acts to be fixed by supportive policy solutions.

Under the gaze of neoliberalism, individuals are defined as "active agents seeking to maximize their own advantage", and "are encouraged to strive to optimize their own

quality of life and that of their families" (Rose & Miller, 2010, p. 296). In bullying prevention and intervention policies, the "bullies" and "victims" are both assumed to have agency to make a difference on their own. The premise is that students have freedom to manage their own affairs and calculate their "actions and outcomes" (p. 296). Another paralleling premise is the "rational cognitivism" invested in children, which is "created by the invention of a 'natural childhood'" (Hepburn, 1997, p. 34). Children are to be constantly adjusted and corrected towards an ideal model, especially with the help of their teachers and parents.

Correspondingly, anti-bullying strategies are mainly focusing on "autonomy on one side" (e.g., mental, emotional, and communicative skill training), and "control on the other" (e.g., progressive discipline approaches) (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 20). Such individualized initiatives are hardly surprising given that school bullying is conceptualized as problem behaviour, wherein the discourse of individualism is evident. This discourse of individualism "breaks down the complex phenomenon of bullying into simpler components with the expectation that somehow this process will lead to a better understanding by virtue of a simpler level of explanation. (Ryan & Morgan, 2011, p. 24)

In Foucauldian discourse analysis, an individual is understood as a "subject that constitutes itself within history and is constantly established and reestablished by history" (Foucault 2000c, cited in Ellwood & Davies, 2010, p. 95). The subject is not only made, but continually makes the self, and in the process of constituting the self, he/she is "strongly influenced by dominant discourses and practices of power" (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 20). Indeed, "problem behaviour is not a consistent feature of individuals themselves, but of individuals in context" (Ellwood & Davies, 2010, p. 89). Hence, it is significant "to bear in mind that the contexts in which bullying takes place are characterized by ever-changing social conditions, shifting actors and continuously emerging dilemmas and social manoeuvrings" (Schott & Søndergaard, 2014, p. 390). Valentine (2014) expresses a similar

concern:

> We cannot resolve the behaviours we mark as anti-normative against idealized models of student behaviours inside our schools without interrogating the powerful and pervasive normalizing discourses celebrating competition, aggression, and exploitation in the broader neoliberal society of which our schools are a part. (96)

Attributing the responsibility for the bullying problem as well as the bullying solution to individuals "is counterproductive and fails to appreciate either the social context of bullying or the power relations involved" (Ryan & Morgan, 2011, p. 32). Neglecting the "social structure factors in shaping people's lives" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 92) leads to the decontextualization of bullying incidents and the depoliticization of bullying prevention and intervention policies, exerting interconnected and overlapped kinds of effects, including subjectification and discursive effects.

Policy as "a creative exercise" created "problems" and "political subjects" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 93). Through dividing practices operated in anti-bullying policies, the "bullies" and "victims" are defined and categorized to be made "socially and legally recognizable" (Forman, 2015, p. 158). Thus, bullying participants are constituted and constituting themselves in binaries (e.g., good/bad, complying/aggressive, and responsible/irresponsible). The "binary logic", as Derrida terms it, sets limitations on how students understand themselves and make sense of the world. Following Foucault, Jacobson (2010) contends that "for students to create a sense of self they must be allowed to create such a self" (p. 276). Schools should be the place where students are offered subjectivity not through "dominance, hierarchy, or comparison" (Jacobson, 2010, p. 275), but through constant negotiation and interaction. More importantly, dividing practices also serve the governmental purpose to make the target groups – for example, students having "character deficiency", students receiving special education, and students from Aboriginal

communities - consider themselves as "problems" (Bacchi, 2009).

Furthermore, the notion of bullying is a form of "discursive practices" (Walton, 2010). By legitimating certain social norms and knowledge but excluding others, these practices can "have devastating effects for certain people" (Bacchi, 2009). Emphasizing students' academic achievement and well-being reflects social control and regulation that create "the grids of value regarding student progression toward standardized objectives" (Jacobson, 2010, p. 276). This emphasis also closes off the consideration of the connection between bullying and socially constructed difference, silencing students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The fact that bullying is a complex social phenomenon entails a recognition of the insufficiency of the "standardized techniques and a fixed set of behavioural rules" (Schott & Søndergaard, 2014, p. 390) as proposed in PPM 144, PPM 145, and the Model Plan. By making this point I am not denying the good intention of the researchers and policy makers to ameliorate bullying and violence in the school, nor the need for the techniques and rules to be enacted. What I suggest is that, as educators, there might be more to reflect on than to merely accept the existing way bullying is constructed in these policies. It is important to "think about the means through which particular problem representations reach their target audience and achieve legitimacy" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 19). Dahlberg and Moss (2005) describe that preschools "are inscribed in particular discourses, they are places for the exercise of discipline and governmentality, they participate in shaping subjectivities" (p. 22), as is the case with other schools.

Educators play a key role in the processes of schooling. According to Deacon's (2006) research on Foucault's oeuvre, Foucault offers "a number of key educational themes" (p. 177). From a Foucauldian perspective, education centers on "the actual processes, techniques, and effects which come into play when some individuals teach, or are taught

by, others" (p. 185). In terms of bullying prevention and intervention, spaces can be created in the school for actions beyond discipline, behavioural treatment, psychological counselling, and skill training. Jacobson (2010) suggests that "our anti-bullying efforts, rather than [being] focused upon control and training of student populations, must instead allow students spaces of self-construction, self-expression, and self-meaning which discursively and practically value differences of aptitude, ability, insight, and perspective" (p. 275). Instead of judging, identifying, reporting, and reforming faulty individuals, educators might "be working *with* the children, learning to open up in themselves, in relation to the children, their own capacities to become different, and being willing to open themselves to what they do not yet know" (Davies, 2011, p. 285, italics in original). Schools are one of the institutions with their potential purposes and the choices confronting educators: "as sites for governing or for emancipation, for conformist or transformative action, for transmitting or constructing knowledge, for reinforcing or reconstructing discourses" (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005, p. 191). For educators who are committed to working *with* children in current anti-bullying campaigns, it is imperative to reflect on these purposes and choices. Future research is needed to consider the role of educators involved in anti-bullying policy implementation, and how they can help open up the possibility of "being governed less by dominant discourses and through governmentality; resisting processes of subjectification; and confronting injustice" (p. 141).

This analysis takes a poststructuralist perspective with a recognition that politics are "involved in the shaping of meaning" and that power is involved in producing dominant discourses "as an important part of political processes" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 267). I am fully aware that I am also constituted within the problem representation I have identified and discussed in this paper. Analysts "are not only readers but also producers of discourse" (Parker & Burman, 1993, as cited in Cheek, 2004, p. 1146). As *a* reality, rather than *the* reality proposed here, this analysis does not seek closure to produce the only possible reading (Cheek, 2004).

The annual Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week, during which "school staff and parents are encouraged to learn more about bullying and its effect on student learning and well-being" (http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/prevention.html), still focuses on bullying as an individual problem that needs remedying and fixing. Walton (2011) uses the metaphor of wheel-spinning to illustrate the current situation of school bullying research. A great deal of energy has been consumed and considerable efforts have been made to turn the wheel, and yet the car remains stationary and bullying persists. By looking closely at how "our very ideas" about bullying (p. 131) is constructed in anti-bullying policies in schools in Ontario, my expectation is that this study would, to some extent, contribute to the endeavor to set the wheels in motion.

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