

Abstract

Bullying experiences and weapon carrying among adolescents is a growing public health concern in our society today. The adverse effects of these actions impact a variety of individuals, including other peers, families, communities, and schools. The purpose of this study aims to explore the relationship between bullying and weapon carrying. Additionally, it also aims to identify if parental support influences this relationship. The design of the current study is a secondary analysis from the Health Behavior in School-Aged Children (HBSC), 2009, a cross-sectional, school-based research study. Researchers gathered information by obtaining 12,642 participants from different grade levels and school that include participants from 7th 8th and 9th grade to complete a self-administered survey. The key implications of these findings indicate that social factors, including parental relationships, do impact an individual. Understanding how these factors, such as how parental relationships impact an individual, is essential for researchers to conduct further research that can potentially design policies and programs to prevent bullying and weapon carrying in schools, communities, and in our society.

Introduction

Significance of the Study

- Bullying commonly occurs in the school settings where 1 in 4 students state they have been bullied (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2019).
- Research states that bullying negatively impacts a victim's mental health and can ultimately lead to them experience distress, which can result in psychosis, self-harm behaviors, and suicidality (Rettew & Pawlowski, 2016).

Purpose of the research

- The purpose of this current study is aimed to determine if there is a relationship between different types of bullying and weapon carrying in schools.
- This study also aims to identify if parental support influences the relationship between bullying and weapon carrying in schools.

Research Question

- “What is the relationship between different types of bullying (physical, verbal, social, cyberbullying) and weapon carrying in schools?”
- “How does parents support influence the relationship between bullying and weapon carrying in schools?”

Hypothesis

- My first hypothesis is that school-aged children who experience different types of bullying are more prone to weapon carrying.
- My second hypothesis is that if school-aged children have stronger parental relationships, they are less likely to weapon carrying in schools.

Literature Review

Bullying

- In a national survey that was conducted, 75% of teachers reported a student being verbally abused, 58% reported relational bullying, 50% reported physical bullying, and 14% reported cyberbullying (O'Brennan et al., 2014).

Weapon Carrying

- Research indicates that boys had higher rates of fighting and weapon carrying than girls (Perlus, Brooks-Russell, Wang, & Iannotti, 2014).
- Caucasians are more prone to weapon carrying compared to other ethnicities (Schapiro et al., 2014; Perlus et al., 2014).

Parental Support

- Prior research indicate that those individuals with lower parental attachments is a factor that indicates they are more prone to weapon-carrying in schools (Stickle, Gottfredson, Gottfredson, Kirk, Mackenzie & McGloin, 2009).

Gaps

- Studies did not take into consideration the different family dynamics (single-parents, same-sex parents) that can vary within each child resulting in possible inaccurate responses (Hong, et al., 2019).
- Single informant single method approach is commonly used in research studies

Methods

Research Design and Data Collection Procedures:

- The current study uses the original data of the Health Behavior in School-Aged Children (HBSC) self-administered survey conducted in 2009.
- A total of 1,302 PSUs were created, and 94 of those PSUs were selected for school sampling. Private and Catholic schools were included in the selected PSUs. Finally, 314 schools were selected from the 94 PSUs.

Sample and Sampling Method:

- The current study utilized the entire sample from the original 2009 study (N = 12,642).
- Population: The current study consist of participants ranging from 10-17 years old which includes 6,502 males and 6,132 females.

Measures:

- Independent Variables: bullying/victimizing, supportive relationships
 - Bullying/Victimizing was measured by using six number of items
 - Parental support was measured by using four number of items
- Dependent Variables: Weapon carrying
 - Weapon carrying was measured by using two items

Data Collection:

- Students are asked to the the (HBSC) self-administered survey which takes approximately 45 minutes to complete.
- This study will be conducted as a single measurement point and as a result, there will be no follow up.

Results

- A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test results indicated a significant difference between bullying experiences and an individual's grade, race, families financial stability, social economic, and bullying.
- A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test indicated a significant difference between parental support and an individual's grade, race, and family's financial stability.
- A Chi-square test showed a significant relationship between weapon carrying and an individual's grade, race, and family well off.
- A correlation test was utilized, indicating a statistically significant and negative relationship, ultimately demonstrating that the less parental support an individual has, the more correlation with bullying.
- Additionally, a T-Test indicated a significant difference was found between weapon carrying and bullying experience and a significant difference between parental support and weapon carrying .

Table 2.0 One-Way Analysis of Variance for Bullying and Parental support

	Bullying Experience M	SD	Parental Support M	SD	F-Statistic	P-value
Grade					16.29	.000
Grade 5	1.33	.69	2.75	.35		
Grade 6	1.29	.62	2.83	.29		
Grade 7	1.29	.64	2.56	.51		
Grade 8	1.23	.53	2.47	.52		
Grade 9	1.19	.49	2.41	.55		
Grade 10	1.21	.52	2.38	.54		
Race					10.00	.000
Black	1.31	.68	2.45	.54		
White	1.22	.52	2.52	.50		
Asian	1.23	.50	2.27	.58		
American	1.31	.57	2.32	.56		
Native	1.46	.90	2.32	.58		
Two	1.30	.62	2.40	.55		
Hispanic	1.25	.59	2.40	.55		
Family well off					34.51	.000
Very well off	1.28	.65	2.70	.43		
Quite well off	1.21	.49	2.53	.47		
Average	1.24	.55	2.42	.52		
Not very well off	1.35	.66	2.09	.62		
Not at all well off	1.56	.95	2.17	.71		

Table 3.0 T-test on Weapon Carrying, Bullying, and Parental Support

Weapon Carrying	N	Parental Support Mean	T	P	Bully Mean	N	T	P
No	7141	2.49	10.48	.000	1.19	7261	-17.00	.000
Yes	1182	2.31	9.54		1.47	1223	-11.401	

Table 1.0 Demographics of Sample (N=12,642)

	f	%
Age		
10 or younger	1157	9.2
11	1828	14.5
12	2229	17.7
13	2473	19.6
14	2143	17.0
15	1888	15.0
16	772	6.1
17 or older	133	1.1
Gender		
Male	6502	51.4
Female	6136	48.6
Race: Computed		
Black or African American	2167	17.9
White	5803	48.8
Asian	469	3.9
American Indian or Alaska Native	222	1.8
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	111	.9
Two or More Races	828	6.8
Hispanic	2392	19.8
Grade in School		
Grade 5	1717	13.6
Grade 6	2050	16.2
Grade 7	2421	19.2
Grade 8	2475	19.6
Grade 9	2072	16.4
Grade 10	1907	15.1
Family Well off		
Very well off	2130	17.9
Quite well off	2833	23.9
Average	5582	47.0
Not very well off	1028	8.7
Not at all well off	303	2.6
Daily Average: Computer Use		
None at all	1967	16.2
1 to 1.99 hours	1385	11.4
2 to 2.99 hours	3182	26.1
3 to 3.99 hours	2292	18.8
4 to 4.99 hours	1424	11.7
5 to 5.99 hours	810	6.7
6 to 6.99 hours	503	4.1
7 or more hours	607	5.0
Adult Responsible for your care (main home)		
Both mother and father	7103	57.0
Mother only	2631	21.1
Father only	396	3.2
Mother/stepfather	1387	11.1
Father/stepmother	304	2.4
Grandparents(s)	220	1.8
Other arrangements	411	3.3

Figure 1. Weapon Carrying by Grade
*Fifth graders were excluded from this graph because they were only two respondents

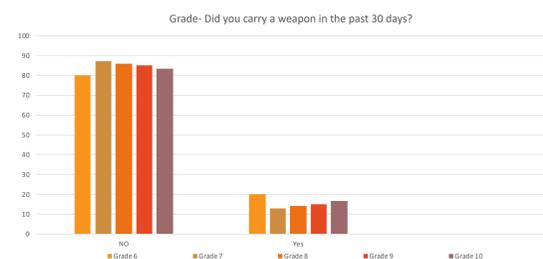
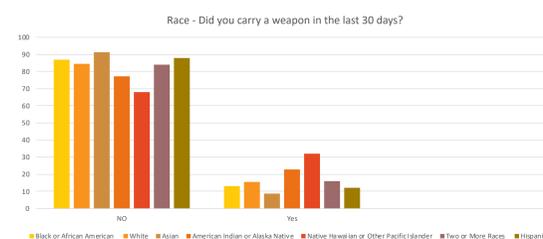


Figure 2. Weapon Carrying by Race



Discussion

Implications

- This study supports previous research that indicates ethnic minorities have a higher risk of peer victimization
- Parenting is important in an adolescent's life, since the current studies indicated that a weak family support is correlated with bullying and with mental health problems
- More attention focus on parenting skills is needed, since this study indicates that individuals with lower parental attachments are more prone to weapon carrying

Strengths:

- The current study include having a variety of family dynamics (single-parent households or those that involve stepfamilies) that were taken into consideration
- Another strength of this study includes the large sample size and the variety of schools that were utilized including private and catholic schools
- Lastly, the diverse ethnicities utilized in this study is also another strength

Limitations:

- A limitation observed in this study is the use of self-reported measures, future research can utilize multiple informants.

Future Direction

- These findings will be helpful in the field of social work in order to further identify, intervene, and prevent bullying and weapon carrying
- Social workers can help families by educating them, help identify problems and finding solutions.
- Overall these findings will also help develop programs and policies to prevent bullying and weapon carrying in schools, communities, and in our society

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