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The Socio-ecological Influences of College Bullying Behavior: A Phenomenological

Study of Student Perceptions

by

Sean P. Wernert

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Educational Psychology

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An Abstract of

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Using Urie Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model of development as a

theoretical framework, the purpose of this qualitative, phenomenological study was to

examine how college students perceive and understand the bullying phenomenon— as

well as the influences and consequences— on campus at University X; a private,

religiously affiliated, large, research university. A total of fifteen students representing

each undergraduate academic class and college at University X were interviewed using a

single interview protocol. The semi-structured interview consisted of open-ended

questions allowing the participants to describe their own understanding and perceptions

of what constitutes bullying as well as what they perceive to be its influences and

consequences. Using a constant comparative analysis of transcribing, coding and

analyzing the interviews, the researcher found that college students at University X

closely define bullying in the same way research has but exclude the concept of repetition

from their understanding. In addition, the participants understand all four forms of

bullying— physical, verbal, relational, and cyber— as bullying behavior, but see only

verbal and relational forms as the primary types on campus. Participants also primarily

understand immediate micro-system and cultural macro-system influences—including

the 2016 U.S. election of President Donald Trump—as impacting bullying behavior.

Recommendations for prevention and intervention methods are also discussed.

For Mom & Dad.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without the help of my family and friends who have supported me over the course of my entire education. Additionally, nothing would have been possible without the guidance of my dissertation committee: Lisa Pescara-Kovach, Ph.D., Florian Feucht, Ph.D., Gregory Stone, Ph.D., and Robert Salem, J.D. My committee chair in particular, Dr. Pescara-Kovach, has been instrumental in guiding my coursework as well as my research interests.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Accounts of bullying and violence in school settings have become more common, but less understood is the connection between the two, particularly on college campuses. This connection has been substantiated in research conducted by the United States Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Department of Education (Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2002). While targeted shooting incidents in schools, college campuses, and other public places receive significant media attention, bullying that takes place on a day-to-day basis can be the tipping point that leads to more tragic events (Pescara-Kovach, 2005).

Three significant cases illustrate the need for research and programming development in the area of bullying and school violence at the college level: Virginia Tech University, Rutgers University, and Santa Barbara. The incident at Virginia Tech has been called one of the worst incidents to impact a college campus. According to the Virginia Tech Review Panel's post-incident report (2007), the sole perpetrator, Seung Hui Cho, had a difficult upbringing and a rough transition during his family's move to the United States when he was eight years old. Cho suffered from mental issues such as selective mutism and anxiety, as well as isolation over the course of his school years, resulting in the need for therapy. Rather than following the advice of counselors by choosing a smaller college, Cho opted to attend Virginia Tech (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007). The report indicated that in his time at Virginia Tech, several red flags were missed or not pieced together in the months leading up to the attack. The panel's report

further indicated that by April 16, 2007, Cho had purchased several weapons and ammunition and had created videos of himself explaining his subsequent actions. In his videos, Cho described how he felt forced into his heinous act because he perceived that he was being bullied and discriminated against by those around him. Cho said:

> When the time came I did it, I had to. You had a hundred billion chances and ways to have avoided today. But you decided to spill my blood. You forced me into a corner and gave me only one option. The decision was yours. Now you have blood on your hands that will never wash off. You had everything you wanted. Your Mercedes wasn't enough, you brats. Your golden necklaces weren't enough, you snobs. Your trust fund wasn't enough. Your vodka and cognac weren't enough. All your debaucheries weren't enough. Those weren't enough to fulfill your hedonistic needs. You had everything (Cable News Network, 2007).

The report continues by describing how the events unfolded. Cho began the day by killing two students in West Ambler Johnston Hall at approximately 7:15 a.m. He returned to his dorm room and prepared for more assaults. At approximately 9:40 a.m., after having chained the doors shut at Norris Hall, Cho began shooting in classrooms and killing students, faculty, and staff. The panel reported that in total thirty-two people were killed by Cho and another seventeen wounded. Another six were injured attempting to escape the building by jumping out of a second story window. Cho killed himself after police broke through the barricade, ending the rampage.

Tyler Clementi, a first-year student at Rutgers University, committed suicide after being bullied by his roommate. Clementi, who had begun college in the fall of 2010, had asked his roommate, Dharun Ravi, if he could leave for the evening so he could have the room to himself. Ravi agreed and before he left, set up a web-based video camera pointed at Clementi's bed in hopes of recording Clementi's interactions with an invited guest

(Byers, 2013). Ravi then went to the room across the hall, turned the camera on, and watched Clementi having a sexual encounter with another man. Ravi took to Twitter saying, "Roommate asked for the room till midnight. I went into Molly's room and turned on my webcam. I saw him making out with another dude. Yay" (Kaplan & McClure, 2011, p. 100). Verbal abuse began via the Internet, which led to embarrassment and fear that it would happen again. In fact, when his guest was invited over for a second evening, Clementi found out that Ravi had organized a watch party in the hall (Byers, 2013). Fortunately, Clementi was able to disconnect the video camera before his friend came over. On September 22, 2010, under the pressure of having been outed as gay to his classmates before he was ready, feeling bullied by Ravi and rejected by his classmates (Schweber, 2012), Clementi took his own life by jumping off a bridge.

The final and most recent account is the attack by college student Elliot Rodger on May 23, 2014. Rodger shot and killed six people and injured thirteen others in a tragedy near the campus of the University of California Santa Barbara. According to news reports (Mozingo, Covarrubia, & Winston, 2014; Lovett & Nagorney, 2014; Stelloh, 2014), Rodger, a student at Santa Barbara City College, felt rejected by society and, in particular, by women. Rodger's family had been worried about him to the extent that they had asked law enforcement to check on him. The news (Mozingo, Covarrubia, & Winston, 2014) indicated that his 141-page manifesto and videos posted online showed the rage and disregard Rodger had toward women and the fact that he was a virgin at age twenty-two. He fixated on and alluded to the rejection and bullying he felt he had endured at the hands of others. These feelings led him to perpetrate these acts.

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Rodger began his assault by killing his roommates, also students, and then sought out other victims in what he called his "day of retribution." According to the news reports (Mozingo, Covarrubia, & Winston, 2014; Lovett & Nagorney, 2014; Stelloh, 2014), after killing his roommates, he targeted a sorority house near the campus of the UC Santa Barbara, and when no one answered the door, he began shooting people nearby. He then fled the scene and attacked more people at a convenience mart two blocks away from the sorority house. He continued in his car and began firing at people as he drove. Eventually, his car crashed following an exchange of gunfire with officers. The news reports indicated that Rodger died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head. Seven people, including Rodger, were killed and thirteen others wounded.

These three accounts do not represent an exhaustive overview of targeted shootings in the last decade in the United States, as new incidents can be found in newspapers virtually every week. They are, however, illustrative examples of the incidents that can occur if bullying in schools and on college and university campuses goes unchecked. A common thread among the three events is that bullying, or the perception of having been bullied, was a precursor to the violent acts. In fact, the term 'targeted violence' is used instead of 'random shooting' for such incidents because there is typically a connection between the target, location, and the perpetrator. By extension, the perpetrator selects target(s) prior to the incident (Reddy, Borum, Berglund, Vossekuil, Fein, & Modzeleski, 2001). For the purposes of this dissertation, a working definition of bullying will be used. As research continues, the definition may be altered as a result of new data. Throughout this document, bullying is defined as behavior that hurts or harms

another individual or group, is persistent or repeated in nature, is intentional or purposeful, and creates an imbalance of power favoring the bully over the victim (Olweus, 1993; Monks & Smith, 2006; Horne, Stoddard, & Bell 2007; Pellegrini & Van Ryzin, 2011; Underwood, 2011). This pattern is common among incidents of escalating violence, which shows that prevention of targeted shooting and violence begins with the root of the problem (Spivak & Prothro-Stith, 2001). In many cases, school-related bullying is a precursor and can be the impetus to escalating violence as a means of revenge (Tremlow, Fonagy, & Sacco, 2001; Chapell et al., 2004; Gaertner & Iuzzini, 2005, Pescara-Kovach, 2005; Horne, Stoddard, & Bell, 2007; Klein, 2012; Copeland et al, 2013; Sommer, Leuschner, & Scheithauer, 2014).

With careful attention and cooperation among interested parties, prevention strategies should be developed and implemented. Additionally, appropriate training must be provided to teachers, administrators, and students. This should include teacher education programs preparing pre-service teachers at the college level. Further, prevention plans and procedures that address how bystanders react to bullying and violence should be put in place on an institutional and building level. The plans are a necessity at institutions of higher education, as bullying continues well into the college years (McDougall, 1999; Hughes, 2001; Simpson & Cohen, 2004; McDonald, 2010, Young-Jones, Fursa, Byrket, & Sly, 2015; Gibb & Devereux, 2016). Effective procedures or prevention plans empower observers to respond appropriately to bullying or incidents of violence (Olweus, 1996; Green Dot, 2016).

The Olweus Bully Prevention Program (Olweus, 1993; Limber, 2011), Bully

Busters program (Horne, Bell, Raczynski, & Whitford, 2011), and other common anti-bullying programs have been widely used in primary and secondary school settings and were initially believed to be effective. New research by Bradshaw (2015) shows, however, that these programs may not be as successful as first thought. Specifically, Bradshaw points to cultural and community contexts as factors that impact a program's effectiveness. For example, central to many prevention programs is the idea of reporting bullying incidents, but in some communities, those who report the incidents may be shunned by other community members. Bradshaw (2015) indicates that this can reduce the number of incidents reported and therefore the effectiveness of the program as a whole. The author concludes that more research evaluating contextual factors, such as determining reasons why some are reluctant to report bullying incidents, is needed.

Though there are other factors that play a role in incidents of mass violence, bullying—or the perception of having been bullied—is consistently identified as a catalyst (Gaertner & Iuzzini, 2005; American Educational Research Association, 2013). For this reason, this study will examine how college-aged students understand and perceive the concept of bullying as well as its influences, causes, and consequences.

The common perspective is that bullying takes place only in the primary and secondary school years. It is not necessarily thought of as problematic when it comes to colleges and universities (McDougall, 1999; McDonald, 2010, American Educational Research Association, 2013). The fact is, however, that forms of bullying occur throughout life as evidenced by the plethora of research on bullying and aggression in early childhood (Olweus, 1978; 1993; 1996), adolescence (Underwood, 2011), college

(McDougall, 1999; Hughes, 2001; Simpson & Cohen, 2004; McDonald, 2010, Young-Jones, Fursa, Byrket, & Sly, 2015; Gibb & Devereux, 2016), and the workplace (Cowie, Naylor, Rivers, Smith, & Pereira, 2002; McKay, Arnold, Fratzl, & Thomas, 2008).

Aside from the disastrous consequences of unchecked bullying that have come in the form of carnage and violence (i.e., school shootings), there can be significant psychological and physical impacts of bullying on an individual that may go undetected but have future repercussions. Copeland and colleagues (2013) demonstrated longitudinally that the psychological effects of being bullied by peers during childhood and adolescence can carry into adulthood with higher levels of diagnosed mental and emotional disorders. In addition, Copeland et al. found that the same individuals experience a higher rate of suicide and violence. Due to the detrimental effects of bullying across the lifespan, it is important to examine how college students perceive and understand the phenomenon—as well as its influences and consequences— in order to begin to address it appropriately.

Additionally, there is often a disconnect between how students know and understand bullying and how teachers, administrators, and researchers do (Madsen, 1996; Naylor et al, 2006; Vaillancort et al, 2008; Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall, 2010; Allen & Madden, 2012; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012). These differences in perception are an important part of this particular study, as the primary goal is to determine how college students perceive and understand the concept as well as its influences and consequences. Cuadrado-Gordillo (2012) concluded that, as individuals grow older, their perception of what constitutes bullying and violence becomes more inclusive aligning more closely

with definitions codified in the research. For example, at a young age, students may not consider unkind mimicking or teasing as bullying behaviors. But, when they get older, they begin to understand the ramifications of those behaviors and begin to understand it as bullying behavior. Additionally, the bully's support and the victim's damage—real or perceived— are key considerations (Hong and Espelage, 2012). For the authors, peer support, or lack thereof, plays a role in a bullying relationship because if bullies perceive support for their actions from peers, they are more likely to continue the aggressive action. Similarly, if victims sense that peers are not supportive, then they may feel as though the aggression is warranted. Conversely, peer support or its perception for the victim, can have positive effects on the prevention or limitation of bullying. This is considerably important when it comes to incidents of more significant violence. Among other factors, Seung Hui Cho's and Elliot Rodger's perception of having been bullied by their peers, combined with their belief that there was no way to stop the bullying, led them to their horrific actions (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007; Stelloh, 2014). Tyler Clementi perceived himself to have been harmed or damaged irreparably by his roommate and by the reaction of his classmates, which led him to take his own life (Byers, 2013). Because of incidents like these, it is imperative that student perception and understanding of the concept of bullying be addressed.

Physical injury from a physical form of bullying (Monks & Smith, 2006; American Educational Research Association, 2013), psychological impacts of having been teased or purposefully excluded (Espelage, Mebane, & Swearer, 2004; Gaertner & Iuzzini, 2005; Sommer, Leuschner, & Scheithauer, 2014), and the mental fatigue impact

the individual. In addition, the consequences later in life resulting from years of having bullied or been bullied over the course of a lifetime (Copeland, Wolke, Angold, & Costello, 2013) also have a significant effect. These bullying-related actions, real or perceived, can negatively affect an individual's psyche, mental and physical well-being, and social standing in a group. This can lead to drastic action on the part of the victim as demonstrated by the Virginia Tech, Rutgers, and Isla Vista anecdotes described above.

Theoretical Framework

To begin to understand the ways in which bullying is understood by college students, it is necessary to have a basic theoretical understanding of how an environment can have an effect on and be affected by the individual. Because bullying does not happen in isolation and there are multiple individuals involved in each bullying situation, it is important to recognize the impact that surrounding influences (friends, people, family, institutions, society, culture, time, etc.) have on the individual. This section will look at the details and definitions of Urie Bronfenbrenner's (1979; 1994) ecological model of development. Bronfenbrenner's model will serve as the framework used to describe how the surrounding environment impacts an individual's perception and understanding of the world around them, including the concept of bullying.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) introduced the ecological theory of development, which shows how personal, social, and moral development is influenced by factors or systems surrounding the individual. The model places the individual at the center and examines environmental influences. These influences are better understood as concentric circles surrounding the individual, with the closest having the most influence on development,

and the farthest having the least. Each system (figure 1.1) (Eggen & Kauchak, 2010) also

provides influence on the others and ultimately all need to work in an interconnected way

for healthy development to occur. This model provides a framework within which one

can understand how bullying can influence the individual and the surrounding

environment as well as the individual's perception of the concept.

Figure 1.1. **Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model.**
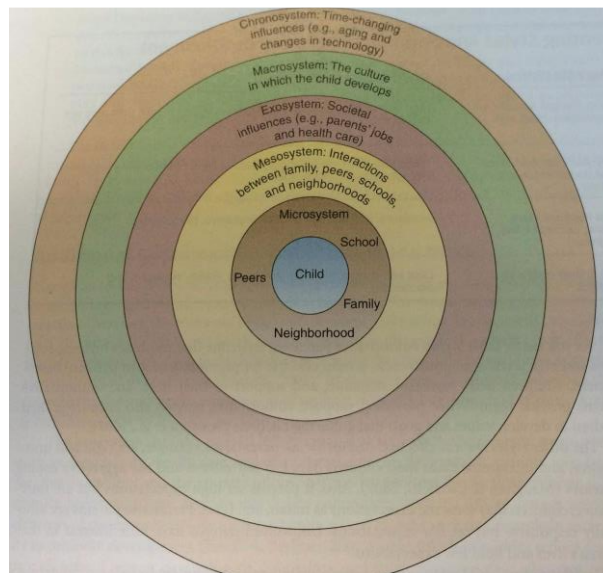
Bronfenbrenner's ecological model has developed since its introduction in the

1970s. The series of systems within which the individual lives begins with the micro-

system, which encompasses the most immediate surroundings of the developing person.

"A micro-system is a pattern of activities, social roles, and interpersonal relations

experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular

physical, social, and symbolic features that invite, permit, or inhibit engagement in

sustained, progressively more complex interaction with, and activity in, the immediate

environment" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 39). Examples of influences that exist in the

micro-system would include family, friends, school, and the workplace. Essentially, these are the influences with which the individual interacts the most in an ongoing, day-to-day basis and are routine parts of an individual's surroundings. It is within this system that bullying relationships are often formed. According to Hong and Espelage (2012), the part of the micro-system that is the most influential to a bullying relationship is the parent-youth relationship. Negative adult influences as well as inter-parental violence, lack of parental involvement, and poor parental support are also associated with bullying behavior and understanding of that behavior. Finally, given that negative relationships with peers and a deficiency in peer support are risk factors for bullying behavior (Hong & Espelage, 2012), peer relationships also play a significant role in the micro-system influences when it comes to bullying and the perception of bullying.

The meso-system, the second layer in the model, consists of interactions and links *among* those immediately surrounding the individual creating a network of micro-systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). In this system, Bronfenbrenner is signifying the importance of roles within an environment that may be different in another context— an individual, for instance, can be a student, daughter, or friend. The links between those roles and systems make up the meso-system. If the link, also recognized as written or spoken communications, meetings, and interactions, is broken or limited, the individual can compartmentalize the systems and inconsistencies result. For example, if the definitions of bullying and hazing provided by a college or university administration are different than that of parents, peers, and families, problems can arise. In other words, an individual's understanding and perception of bullying and hazing becomes inconsistent

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because there are differences in how they are defined by the diverse influences surrounding the individual. The linkages Bronfenbrenner describes exist at all levels of development including in a bullying relationship. For Hong and Espelage (2012), the school environment and individuals' connection to their school also play a factor as part of the meso-system. Since the "meso-system level requires an understanding of the inter-relations among two or more micro-systems, each containing the individual" (p. 317), frequent interactions among fellow students, university faculty, and staff involving the individual are an important factor in connecting to the institution.

The third layer of the model is the exo-system, which consists of "one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in that setting" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 237). Examples of the exo-system include links between the parent's place of work and the family, or between the higher education institution and the parents. The primary way in which exo-systems have an impact on the developing person is via connections through the family or peer groups (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The exo-system looks at aspects of the environment beyond the immediate system.

Hong and Espelage (2012) argue that exposure to media violence is a key component of this system that influences bullying behavior and perception. They also contend that an "unsafe neighborhood environment can influence bullying behavior due to inadequate adult supervision and peer influences" (p. 317). In both cases, though the individual may not interact directly with the neighborhood surrounding a college or university campus or directly with the makers of film and media, both have an influence

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on individuals and their perception.

The macro-system, the fourth layer in the model, consists of overarching themes and patterns between the other systems that create cultural norms, systems of beliefs, knowledge, opportunities, hazards, and life options. "The macro-system may be thought of as a societal blueprint for a particular culture or subculture" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 40). Cultural influences and normative social behaviors, perceived or real, within a bully-victim relationship fall within this system. For Hong and Espelage (2012), two factors of the macro-system are relevant to bullying: cultural norms/beliefs and religion. Cultural norms speak to how bullying is perceived by the campus community and society as a whole. Religion might have an impact on the cultural norms of a college campus, particularly if the institution has a religious affiliation.

After developing the initial model, Bronfenbrenner (1994) added the chrono-system, which was initially thought to be synonymous with age and the passage of time; but, research has shown that time is actually a characteristic of the developing person. According to Bronfenbrenner, "A chrono-system encompasses change or consistency over time not only in the characteristics of the person but also of the environment in which that person lives" (p. 40). Settings or influences that would be included within this system include changes in socioeconomic status, degree of stress or instability in one's life, place of residence, employment, or transitions in levels of schooling. Hong and Espelage (2012) indicate that graduating from high school and entering college, changes in family financial status, or increased stress are examples of influences affecting college-aged students within the chrono-system. These influences have the power to impact

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bullying behaviors and perception of the concept because they place an individual in new social settings, can impact an individual's self-confidence, or influence how others view an individual, for example.

Providing a theoretical context to the present study is an important step in researching how students understand and perceive bullying. In short, individuals cannot be separated from their surroundings and it is, therefore, impossible for the individual to avoid influence from those surroundings. The individual's perception is key to development; an individual's perception of the world is shaped by the influences impacting the individual. In other words, the systems surrounding individuals impact their development including how they perceive the world in which they live. Applying this to the concept of bullying, how an individual perceives bullying is influenced by the systems surrounding the individual.

Hong and Eamon (2012) indicate that family members, peers, teachers, administrators, the media, and cultural expectations have an impact on how a person perceives the concept. Along those lines, college students are influenced by their surrounding systems: peers, classmates, professors, residence hall environments, campus culture, media, and overall society. These influences shape a college student's understanding of the concept of bullying. Finally, as discussed and written in greater detail in chapter two of this dissertation, research has already indicated that perception of bullying by students is different than that of what has been described and codified in literature (Cowlin, 2010; Cuandro-Gordillo, 2012; Hopkins, Taylor, Bowen, & Wood, 2013). It is necessary to describe and understand how college students perceive bullying

in order to develop effective systemic prevention methods as a way to address more escalated violence.

Theoretical Application

   With a base understanding of Bronfenbrenner's model, one can apply it further to a bully-victim-bystander relationship. From this perspective, Swearer and Espelage (2004; 2011) have diagrammed the bullying relationship model (figure 1.2) that is derived from the ecological model of development. "In a nutshell, bullying does not occur in isolation. This phenomenon is encouraged and/or inhibited as a result of the complex relationships between the individual, family, peer group, school, community, and culture" (p. 3). Utilizing the ecological model and applying it to the bully-victim-bystander relationship, the individual is at the center, as a bully, victim, bully-victim, and/or bystander, and the multiple social systems interact with and influence that individual.

Figure 1.2. **Swearer & Espelage's (2004; 2011) bullying relationship model.**

4   *Susan M. Swearer and Dorothy L. Espelage*

Culture Community School Peers Family Bully, Bully-Victim, Victim, Bystander

Figure 1.1 An expanded social–ecological framework of bullying among youth.
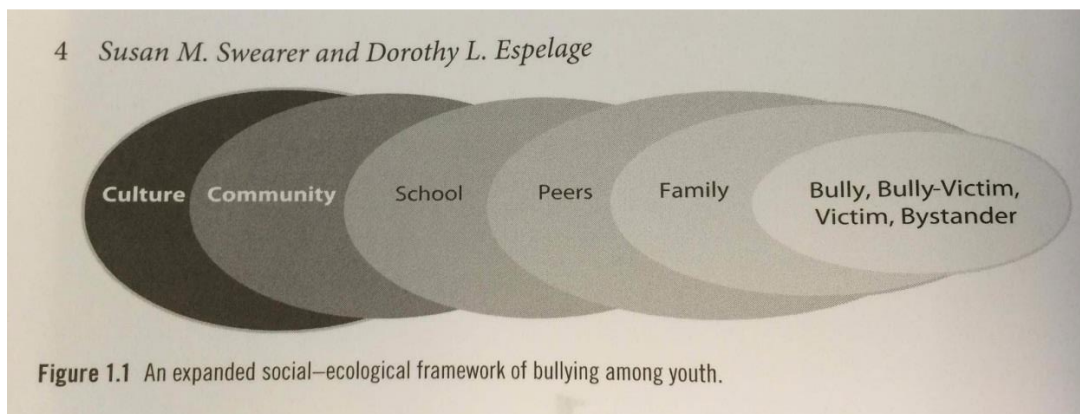
   The immediate environmental surroundings of the student create a series of micro-systems, which include the college or university campus, residence hall, home, and

family. In college, particularly residential colleges with traditional-aged college students (age 18-22), students are often living on their own for the first time with very little or no daily parental involvement (Light, 2001). While college campuses provide a safe environment in which students can learn and grow, they are not free from crime and aggression. Violence comes in many forms on campus including bullying, hazing, sexual assault, physical harm, and, in some instances, death (Waits & Lundberg-Love, 2008). As a part of the campus environment, violence is also a part of an individual's micro-system. Other elements of the micro-system within a collegiate bullying relationship could include the residence hall, classrooms, peer relationships, family life, relationships with faculty and staff, dining facilities, job locations, and other parts of campus or off campus where the individual participates regularly. All these elements can influence how students perceive and understand bullying as well as its influences and consequences; for example, bullying, sexual assault, teasing, hitting, punching, and the like can happen in the locations mentioned and between peers. In other words, it can occur in an individual's micro-system.

The meso-system in a bullying relationship can be shown, for example, in how the post-secondary institution and home interact when it comes to responding to bullying. Differences between them will have an effect on individuals and their perceptual understanding. Elements of the mesosystem on a college or university campus within Bronfenbrenner's (1979; 1994) framework include student interactions between classmates or residence hall mates that are influenced by conversations with parents and family. Similarly, conversations with one faculty or staff member could have an effect on

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behavior in the classroom, or residence hall directors could influence student behaviors in student activities outside the residence hall. For example, if a bullying or violent incident occurs in the student's residence hall, it can affect how professors or other staff members respond to an incident elsewhere on campus.

The exo-system would be linkages that do not directly include the individual at the center, but still have an effect on the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1994). For example, how a parent's place of work handles bullying behaviors in the workplace may have an influence on how the parent perceives and responds to aggressive behavior at home. This, in turn, will affect the individual and the other environments in an individual's microsystem. Elements of the exo-system within a collegiate setting could be similar to those discussed in a general sense: the workplace setting of family members or friends, classroom environments of peers for classes in which the individual is not enrolled, classmates' residence halls and other elements where the individual is not an active participant, but could still be influenced. For example, if one student experiences bullying or violence on a college campus, this experience can affect how a friend or sibling might respond to a similar incident in a different setting or at a different institution altogether.

Cultural influences, such as portrayal of bullying in the media as well as society's perception of bullying, have an effect on the individual in the macro-system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1994). The macro-system includes the culture of the college or university as a whole when it comes to campus violence or aggressive behavior, media influences, and the like. While, generally speaking, the macro-system is a societal

blueprint, as Bronfenbrenner puts it, the macro-system within a collegiate setting would include the community blueprint of the college or university, which is impacted by the cultural and social norms of society. For example, the recent shift in support for gay rights in the United States has an impact on how individuals understand those issues and can positively influence how they respond to other students who are different.

Finally, the chrono-system affects the individual in different yet still influential ways. This system encompasses attributes that change over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1994) including changes in how bullying and violence is understood and defined by individuals as they grow and develop. The chrono-system is of particular importance when discussing bullying and violence. Colloquially, there is an impression that bullying and violence among adolescents is a newer phenomenon growing in recent decades. However, the change is much less the behavior of students and more the perception of that behavior as something that needs to be addressed (Madsen, 1996; Naylor et al., 2006; Vaillancort et al., 2008; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012). This change can be attributed to the general public's evolving definitions of bullying behavior.

Hopkins et al., (2013) point to the differences in research-based definitions and bullying types compared to what students perceive to be bullying. As the conversation grows, the gap between perception and reality is closing, giving the impression that the problem is expanding. In other words, the changing expectations and cultural evolution of the recognition of bullying is an element of the chrono-system. Additionally, mainstream media attention as well as increasing portrayal of violence on television and in movies has hastened along the cultural changes and changes in expectations, including

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desensitization to violence (Fanti, Vanman, Henrich, & Avraamides, 2009). In college-aged students, behaviors that in the past may have been seen as acceptable forms of treatment for classmates are now being viewed in a different light. Given that college and university campuses serve not only as places of higher learning but also as the temporary homes for thousands of students, identifying how those students understand and react to bullying is important to begin to understand and change a phenomenon that can have a significantly detrimental impact.

The Current Study

Utilizing the socio-ecological theory of development as a framework, the primary purpose of this research is to demonstrate how students describe the bullying phenomenon in college. One overarching question is asked: How do students perceive and understand the concept of bullying on campus at University X? In order to answer this question, three objectives have been identified: (a) to describe the differences between how college-aged students at University X perceive and understand bullying and the research definitions; (b) to describe what forms of bullying occur from the student perspective at University X; and (c) to describe the perceived influences and consequences of bullying on campus at University X.

The overarching question is the broader driver of the goals of this study while the objectives are more specific and support, or operationalize, the overarching question (Herron, 2001). The overarching question is designed to examine how students perceive and understand bullying on campus and it aims to examine the student beliefs about the influences, causes and consequences of the phenomenon. In order to answer that question

in a logical way, the objectives are more specific and pinpoint a more detailed aspect that supports the answer to the overarching question.

Utilizing Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development as a theoretical framework, the question and objectives are addressed using a qualitative, phenomenological research design approach. According to Creswell (2007), this approach looks to describe a phenomenon based on the experiences of those interviewed. In this case, the phenomenon being described from the student perspective is bullying. From this perspective, the essence of the bullying experience in college will be developed. Creswell notes that this type of methodological approach is often used to begin to understand a phenomenon when other research is minimal. Using this approach will provide a foundational description of how students at University X understand bullying. Future studies can then duplicate this study at other, discernibly different institutions in order to compare how students at different institution types perceive understand the concept. Since the available research on collegiate bullying is minimal, it is important to begin to understand how students perceive the concept.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter addresses the multiple facets of bullying addressed in the literature. This includes the identified types and definitions of bullying, roles played in a bullying relationship, documented causes and consequences, societal influences, and the prior studies that have looked specifically at bullying on the college level, as well as the connections between bullying on campus and college-level hazing.

Definition of Bullying

Specific types of bullying and definitions have been codified through research in the last two decades, though not all literature is necessarily in complete agreement on these definitions. When it comes to the definition of aggression alone, according to Underwood (2011), there are over 200 definitions in the available research literature with some being more far-reaching than others. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the definition of violence is "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation" (World Health Organization, 2002, p. 4). Underwood points out that in all the definitions available, there are two common features: (a) the aggressor must have the intent to harm; and (b) the victims must feel harmed. For the author, these features apply to all forms of aggression. Underwood's summation of aggression and violence, as well as the definition supplied by the WHO, provide an

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effective starting point from which the definitions and types of bullying can be described.

Pellegrini and Van Ryzin (2011) describe two types of aggression common in bullying relationships: proactive and reactive. Proactive aggression refers to students who use aggression, often in the form of bullying behaviors, to establish themselves within a social hierarchy. Proactive aggressors use their aggression in a more calculated way to provide themselves with an advantage in social situations. Reactive aggression, on the other hand, takes the form of a threat response that is real or perceived by the individual. This type of aggression usually has a negative impact on students' social statuses making it more likely that they will be perceived as weak by more dominant proactive aggressors (Pellegrini & Van Ryzin, 2011).

Bullying, a subsection of aggression, is even more challenging to define given the multitudinous definitions of aggression. In reviewing the literature, Monks and Smith (2006) defined bullying as "behaviors that hurt or harm another person with the intention to do so." Horne, Stoddard, and Bell (2007) add that bullying behavior is purposeful, hostile, destructive, and intentional in nature that is persistently perpetrated by the aggressor, can be directed at an individual or group, and has a primary purpose of creating a power imbalance between the aggressor and victim. Olweus (1993) argues that bullying has three hallmark components: (a) it is harmful and has the intention to harm another person or persons; (b) it is repeated and done over a period of time; and (c) there is an imbalance of power so great that the victim does not feel that he or she can change the situation.

Other arguments, however, take a position that aggression does not need to be

persistent to be harmful or considered bullying. Monks and Smith (2006) make the case

that a single instance of aggression can be considered an act of bullying because the

effects can be lasting both psychologically and physically. However, a single act does not

necessarily create a repeated power imbalance, which is why bullying has been referred

to as persistent in nature. For the purposes of this paper, bullying will be defined as

behavior that hurts or harms another individual or group, is persistent or repeated in

nature, is intentional or purposeful, and creates an imbalance of power favoring the bully

over the victim.

Bullying Roles

There are three roles consistently referred to in the literature that a person can

play in a bullying situation: the bully, victim, or bystander. Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and

Wakita (2010) describe these roles and the characteristics of each. The bully, or the

aggressor, is the one perpetrating the aggressive behavior. "Bullies have aggressive

personalities, positive attitudes toward aggression, and trouble restraining their

aggressive impulses (p. 416). Bullies tend to hold a form of power over the person they

are bullying and can cause great harm to the victim. This is harmful because bullies take

advantage of victims in physical, verbal, or relational ways with an intent to harm them,

according to the authors. Finally, for Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita (2010), the bully

may want to maintain or raise his or her own social status or be included in a social

group. According to Pellegrini and Van Ryzin (2011), the bully may perceive the victim

to have harmed him or her in some way and is acting in response, or bullies may simply

feel like they can take advantage of victims. This perception held by bullies can be real or

imagined. Whatever the case, bullies use their aggressive nature to attack an individual or group.

Victims are the individuals or groups who are being bullied, or toward whom the aggressive behavior is directed. For Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita (2010), victims are often passive in nature and are insecure, weak, and submissive when it comes to peer group social interaction making them easier targets for bullies. These students also tend to have lower self-esteem and higher levels of stress related to being victimized. Individuals who demonstrate reactive aggression are also more likely to become victims (Pellegrini & Van Ryzin, 2011). Reactive aggressors tend to be perceived as having a lower social status in a peer hierarchy and are more likely to be seen as weak, making them more likely to be targeted by a bully.

Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita (2010) define the bystander as the witness to a bullying situation. These individuals, while not directly involved in the bullying, can be affected emotionally by the aggressive behaviors they witness (Martocci, 2015). When bullying occurs, bystanders' inaction may be for a multitude of reasons including wanting to avoid being bullied themselves, damage to their own social status, fear or possibly tacit endorsement of the bullying behavior (Frey, Jones, Hirschstein, & Edstrom, 2011). Bystanders can change their role by injecting themselves into the situation as a defender of the victim or choose to take part in the bullying. When bystanders intervene, their role is no longer as a bystander; they have become directly involved in the situation and have the same risks, effects, and issues related to any other bully or victim (Respect for All Project, 2004; Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano, 2009; Hilton, Anngela-Cole, & Wakita,

2010; Martocci, 2015).

In addition to the bully, victim, and bystander roles, a hybrid role occurs: the bully-victim (Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano, 2009; Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita, 2010; Martocci, 2015). Here, a person may be a victim in one social situation, but turn into the aggressor in another. Alternatively, the individual can play both roles in the same micro-system in differing social contexts. For example, while at home, individuals may be the victim of bullying and aggressive behavior from siblings, neighborhood friends, or even parents. When they are in school, they may take out their aggression on classmates, perhaps as a response to not being able to do it at home or in emulation of behaviors modeled in a different environment. In another example, the individual may be the bully in the school setting by tormenting other students or classmates who are younger, smaller, or perceived to be weaker than the individual. However, within that same school context, this same individual can be the victim of older, bigger, or perceived stronger students.

The concept of a bully-victim is an important distinction because these individuals can suffer the effects of bullying from both perspectives making them much more susceptible to psychological, emotional, and physical harm. Copeland, Wolke, Angold, & Costello (2013) show longitudinally that long-term psychological effects of bullying are more protracted and more common among people who are classified as bully-victims. "Bullying-victims are insecure, easily provoked, quick to anger, less likable than their peers, and they are a distinct group that is at high risk for adjustment problems" (Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita, 2010, p. 416). In the aftermath review of

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the Virginia Tech and Isla Vista incidents, substantial evidence was found that indicated

that Cho and Rodgers were bullied significantly, or perceived themselves to have been

bullied, and that may have been a contributing factor that drove them to commit their

heinous actions. In Clemente's case, it was obvious that bullying played a role in his

suicide. When analyzing bullying behaviors at any level, it is important to recognize that

a bully-victim is someone who could be in need of help on multiple levels.

Figure 2.1. **The four-square relational model of bullying roles.**
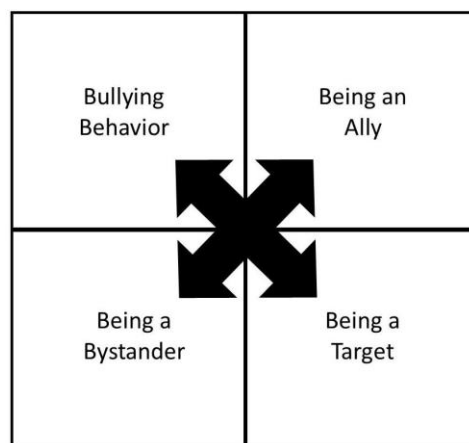
Finally, Swearer, Espelage, and Napolitano (2009) describe the four-square

relational model of bullying roles (figure 2.1) that demonstrates how individuals may

move in and out of different roles in various bullying relationships. This model,

developed by the Respect for All Project (2004), is used "to illustrate that it is common

place for students to move among the roles of bully, victim, bully-victim, and bystander.

We do not want to perpetuate the stereotype that some students should be labeled

'bullies' and some as 'victims'" (Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano, 2009, p. 1). The

authors conclude that the roles played in bullying relationships are fluid. For example, in

one relationship or social setting, an individual may be a bystander. But, in another, the

individual may be a victim. The roles are not stationary, and as time goes by and social settings/dynamics change, so too can the roles individuals play.

Types of Bullying

Four individual types of bullying are commonly identified: physical, verbal, relational, and cyber (Pescara-Kovach, 2015). Each of these has distinct characteristics that fit within the context of the definition of bullying but are different from one another and will be treated individually.

Physical bullying is likely the most recognized type of bullying. Swearer and Espelage (2004) define this as physical, aggressive behavior directed at an individual or group with the primary purpose of maintaining power over the victim. Examples of this include, but are not limited to, punching, hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, or damaging property. This type of bullying can take place in any location and does not have to happen on campus. College students are less likely to participate in this type of bullying, as physical aggression tends to decline with age (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007). On college and university campuses, physical bullying shows up most in the form of hazing for entrance or acceptance into a group or clique (Fanti, Vanman, Henrich, & Avraamides, 2009). While hazing is commonly banned by college and university codes of conduct, it can still take place in overt and secretive ways. A greater conversation on hazing will take place later in this chapter. However, at this time it is important to note that physical forms of hazing— beating, paddling, whipping, striking, burning, forced extreme physical exertion, forced over-consumption of drugs and alcohol, and in even more extreme cases, sexual assault— are connected to bullying in that the physical acts are

similar and can have similar lasting effects on the victim (Fanti, Vanman, Henrich, & Avraamides, 2009).

Verbal bullying is more common in college-aged students and is the most common form of bullying in the United States (Hilton, Anngela-Cole, & Wakita, 2010). This is best defined as audible statements directed at an individual or group. Like other forms of bullying, verbal bullying is persistent or repeated in nature with a purpose of creating a power imbalance between the aggressor and the victim (Swearer & Espelage, 2004). Verbal bullying is direct and relatively easy to recognize by a bystander. Examples of verbal bullying include, but are not limited to, name calling, teasing, verbal harassment, intimidation, and disparaging remarks. In contrast to the physical type, verbal bullying tends to increase with age from childhood to adulthood (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007).

On college and university campuses, verbal bullying can easily be recognized. Anecdotally, it is easy to imagine a student or group of students teasing or verbally assaulting another student or group from across the quad.

Verbal humiliation may be one of the most mentally jarring forms of bullying and hazing because it is often perpetrated in a public or group setting and can damage an individual's psyche and self-worth; especially if a group of people target the same individual or group repeatedly (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007).

The third type of bullying can be direct in nature but can also be subtler and indirect. Relational bullying is aggressive behavior concentrated on an individual or group in the form of ostracism, social manipulation or non-physical attacks with the

purpose of harming the victim's social relationships and/or status with the intent to maintain a power imbalance (Espelage, Mebane, & Swearer, 2004). "Direct forms would include telling someone that they cannot play or join in with a group. Indirect relational bullying would include the spreading of nasty rumors or telling a group to ignore a particular individual" (Monks & Smith, 2006, p. 802). While the attacks are not physically damaging in nature, they can cause significant psychological trauma. Some of the literature incorporates relational bullying into the verbal bullying category (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007; Hilton, Anngela-Cole, & Wakita, 2010) and others separate it out as a distinct form (Monks & Smith, 2006; Espelage, Mebane, & Swearer, 2004). Pescara-Kovach (personal communication, January 21, 2017) indicates a clear distinction, as verbal bullying can be heard by the victim, while relational bullying is subtler and cannot be heard. An example of verbal bullying is a group of students *telling* a classmate that they are not sitting by her at lunch because she is wearing the 'a weird, creepy outfit,' while relational bullying would take the form of students gossiping about the student behind her back linking her outfit to her being a potential school shooter. Because of its unique nature, that it can be direct or indirect and can have subtle tendencies, this study will keep relational bullying separate from verbal bullying.

In a college setting, relational and verbal bullying are more predominant than the physical form. Hazing can be connected to this, particularly if the victim has chosen to forego entry into a group or is seen as being too weak to be a member. Fanti, Vanman, Henrich, & Avraamides (2009) show that within the context of hazing, this can come in the form of humiliation, group taunt, and rumor spreading. According to the authors,

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humiliation is among the prevalent types discussed in the literature; among other forms of relational bullying, social exclusion is common on college campuses particularly for those who have not 'followed the crowd' or participated in group functions.

The fourth and final form of bullying discussed in the literature is cyber-bullying, or bullying done via electronic means (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007; Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano, 2009; Tennant, Demaray, Coyle, & Malecki, 2015). This is a newer form of bullying that has gestated with the development of social media and technology being easily accessible through the Internet on a computer, smartphone, or tablet device. Raskauskas and Stoltz (2007) define this form of bullying as attacks that are done through the Internet, cell phone texting, social media, etc. for the purposes of hurting feelings, damaging relationships or friendships, or social manipulation. In keeping with the definition of bullying used for this paper, the aggressive action through electronic means creates a power imbalance between the bully and victim (Monks & Smith, 2006). Examples of cyber-bullying include, but are not limited to, harassing text messages, creating defamatory web pages or social media sites, or deliberate exclusion in social media networking. According to Raskauskas and Stoltz (2007), this form of bullying is easy to involve multiple people and to prolong the behavior because of its public nature. Virtually anyone can see cyber-bullying, including teachers and family members, which can make it severely psychologically harmful for the victim. Ybarra and Mitchell (2004), Crosslin and Golman (2014), Gibb and Devereux (2014), Martocci (2015) among others support the notion that physical bullying is a significant predictor of students who experience cyber-bullying, showing that in some ways, cyber-bullying can be an

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extension of another form of bullying. Raskauskas & Stoltz' (2007) research indicated that "traditional victims and bullies... were likely to retain their roles across the contexts of school and the cyber world" (p. 570). Gibb and Devereux (2016) concur in their study on cyber-bullying in college-aged students, which shows that both repetition and intent of cyber-bullying is an aspect of online behavior. In other words, there is a link between forms of bullying, which implies that victims are likely to experience more than one type. With the expansion of social media in the last decade, from social networking sites like Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YikYak, and other easy and free ways to create personal web spaces, cyber-bullying has grown exponentially. In electronic form, people are more apt to behave in ways that would be outside of their normal character. Termed the "online disinhibition effect" (Suler 2004), this refers to how people, both in benign and toxic ways, do or say something in an electronic environment that would not otherwise be said. For Suler, two explanations, although not excuses, for this kind of behavior are (a) the anonymous nature of online interaction; and (b) communication is asynchronous meaning that it is not done in real time. When individuals communicate online, the participants may feel more removed from the actual deed, which provides a reason for why they may be willing to behave differently than they would in person. The online disinhibition effect does not just apply to cyber-bullying, of course, but provides one explanation as to why it has grown and why more people engage in it.

Social media and electronic communication are now as ubiquitous on college campuses as textbooks and examinations. With smartphones, tablet computers, laptops, and online social media integrated into the everyday life of students, it is easy for

individuals to utilize these media as mechanisms for social manipulation, humiliation, and social exclusion. Since learning and perceptual understanding stems from social interaction surrounding the individual, as described by Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1994), it is clear that college-aged individuals, who are extremely well-versed in electronic forms of communication, would choose to use social media as a place to continue their social interaction both positively and negatively (Turan et al, 2011). The Internet becomes part of an individual's microsystem when it is used for social interaction.

Table 2.1

Behaviors that could be considered bullying

Physical Bullying	Verbal Bullying	Relational Bullying	Cyber-bullying
-Punching	-Name calling	-Social	-Harassment via
-Hitting	-Verbal harassment	manipulation	electronic means
-Kicking	or abuse	-Covert, unkind	-Mocking or fake
-Pushing	-Picking or teasing	mimicking	web pages
-Shoving	-Taunting	-Social exclusion or	-Abusive texts
-Smacking	-Threats	encouraging others	-Nasty gossip or
-Tripping	-Insults	to exclude	rumors online
-Throwing objects	-Intimidation	-Lying about	-Deliberate
-Spitting	-Homophobic or	someone	exclusion in social
-Unwanted	racist remarks	-Negative facial	media
touching	-Slurs	expressions	-Using someone's
-Threats of physical	-Epithets	-Pranks or nasty	log-in to change
violence	-Verbally	jokes	their social media
-Damaging property	embarrassing	-Menacing looks	pages
or possessions	someone in public	-Damaging	-Cyber-stalking
-Stealing		someone's social	-Uploading
		reputation through	embarrassing
		gossip	photos
		-Emotional	-Online threats or
		harassment	humiliation
		-Isolation	

Each of these bullying types shares the main characteristics of bullying described earlier in this paper. However, each is also distinctive in that the manner in which the

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bullying occurs is different. Table 2.1 provides an expansive list of behaviors described here and in the literature (Olweus, 1993; Madsen, 2004; Espelage, Mebane, & Swearer, 2004; Monks & Smith, 2006; Underwood, 2011; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012) that can be interpreted as bullying behaviors separated by bullying types. The purpose of this list is to provide an inclusive list of aggressive behaviors that could be considered bullying. In the end, the effects, both short and long-term, are impactful on the individuals involved.

Prior Studies on College Bullying

A minimal number of studies examine bullying at the college level as a phenomenon distinct from hazing. This is supported by the report from the American Educational Research Association on bullying prevention in schools, colleges and universities (2013). The report indicates that there is some neglect when it comes to research on bullying in higher education. Of the studies that do exist, many are older and predate the more recent literature on bullying overall, but it is reasonable to conclude that because bullying occurs in primary and secondary school (Swearer & Espelage, 2004; 2011; Olweus, 1978; 1993; Horne, Stoddard, & Bell, 2007) and in the workplace (Cowie et al., 2002; Smith, Singer, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003), it also occurs on college campuses outside of hazing and initiation rituals. This section will outline several studies that focus on bullying in higher education.

McDougall (1999) conducted a study on bullying in education beyond high school. In it, she points out that there is a lack of literature available on bullying in further education and conducted a survey to gauge the frequency, causes, and solution strategies to bullying on campus. It is important to note that further education in the United

Kingdom (U.K.) refers to students sixteen to eighteen years of age and is distinguished from higher education in that students are not at a traditional institution of higher education. However, further education is not compulsory in the same way primary and secondary education are in the United States (U. S.). This study, though focusing on students of the traditional high school age in the U.S., is relevant to bullying at colleges and universities because neither further education in the U.K. nor higher education in the U.S. are compulsory.

To participate in McDougall's study, the students needed to be sixteen to eighteen years of age and needed to be taking a full-time course load. The goals of the questionnaire were six-fold: (a) to determine the frequency of bullying and to compare findings to research at other institutions; (b) to determine where bullying takes place; (c) to determine how many students experienced bullying; (d) to determine strategies students used to stop or prevent bullying; (e) to determine if students were reluctant to report bullying; and (f) to gather suggestions from students on how to prevent bullying that could be adopted by the college as a whole.

McDougall found that 9.6% of further education students surveyed self-reported having been bullied, which is comparable to findings at the secondary level, according to the author. She also found that over 80% of students surveyed self-reported having been bullied at one point in their lives. McDougall notes that the amount of bullying reported in the survey contradicts previous research and ideas that bullying decreases with age. The primary location where bullying takes place, as reported by participants, is in the corridor near an entrance. McDougall writes, "This is not surprising being students

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congregate around the entrances, socializing and smoking. This may suggest that there should be more provision of areas within college for students to go to during free periods other than the library and learning centers" (p. 34). Further, the study showed that students who were bullied in primary school were also more likely to be bullied in college, supporting the idea that certain personality types are prone to bullying. In a few cases, students reported having attempted to stop the bullying upon seeing it, but more often, the bystander simply ignored the issue. Moreover, among the 9.6% of respondents who self-reported having been bullied in college, nearly 70% of those indicated that they did not report it to a professor or authority figure, believing that nothing would be done if it had been reported. Finally, the respondents overwhelmingly suggested that the best way to stop it was to suspend or expel the bully. The author, however, notes that this is not necessarily a viable option and provided alternative suggestions including increased security and more training to curb the incidence of bullying in college.

McDougall's study is a good first start in looking at bullying at this level. A shortcoming is its limited generalizability due to the participants being the equivalent of United States' high school students. The primary similarity between McDougall's study on bullying in further education and bullying in higher education is that the schooling is not considered compulsory and students are living on a residential campus. The students who are on campus want to be there and have the option to attend or not attend, which contrasts to compulsory American secondary education.

Hughes (2001) builds off the work of McDougall by conducting a qualitative study of bullying in both further education and higher education. The author chose to

conduct a qualitative study because he wanted to identify a multitude of responses to the problem of bullying. He notes that while a quantitative study can be descriptive in nature, it can be too "positivist" and the human element can get lost. Using a qualitative approach allowed Hughes to maintain the human element of the bullying descriptions to provide a more realistic picture of the participants' experiences. The researcher interviewed a variety of people in a collegiate setting including students, teachers, tutors, staff, and managers.

Hughes' findings reveal that all the participants were aware of different forms of bullying and most identified physical bullying as the primary type. One participant described an incident of exclusion used as bullying, a connection to relational, less direct bullying. Additionally, many participants described a situation in which the bullying was dealt with successfully. Hughes noted, like McDougall (1999), that his findings are similar to that of the work done on primary and secondary schools.

In 2004, Chapell and colleagues conducted a study of teacher and student bullying in college. This study asked participants to complete two questionnaires— one that collected general demographic information including age, class, sex, socioeconomic status, and grade point average (G.P.A.); the second collected information on bullying and was constructed specifically for this study and based off the pattern established by the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire, which asks questions related to bullying perpetrated by both students and teachers. The questionnaires were administered by students trained by the researchers in an effort to prevent bias among the responses, particularly among the questions regarding bullying by teachers. In a sample of 1,025

students (151 freshmen, 250 sophomores, 295 juniors, and 329 seniors) over 60% of those surveyed witnessed students bullied by other students on campus and also found that male students significantly bullied more often than female students. Additionally, the authors found that nearly 20% had seen students bullied by teachers. The authors note that these findings do not follow previously held patterns that bullying decreases with age and conclude, "Bullying by students and teachers is a fairly common problem in college" (p. 61).

The Chapell et al. (2004) study provides a foundation for the work proposed here by showing that bullying, in fact, happens at the college level. Unlike the McDougall study, this study focuses solely on college students and adds the dynamic of bullying by teachers or professors. However, both studies utilize a quantitative approach to determining the extent of bullying beyond traditional primary and secondary schools. The missing element in the Chappell study is the description of the emotional impact on the students as well as the student perspective of the perceived causes, both individually and culturally, of bullying at the collegiate academic level.

McDonald (2010) conducted a study primarily utilizing quantitative methods in the form of a survey and found that 18.5% of students self-reported having been bullied by another student "at least once or twice," 27.5% reported seeing another student being bullied, and 18.7% reported bullying another student. In addition, 20% of students reported having been bullied by a teacher while 45% reported having seen a teacher bully a student. This particular study is weak in its findings due to the fact that McDonald does not describe his statistical methods or provide much background on the foundations of his

study in the article. He does describe, in simple terms, that students were provided a definition of bullying based on the work of Olweus (1996) and that students were then asked to participate in a survey on their bullying experiences in college. The data is limited in that the author does not describe the number of students surveyed or the instrument used. However, the data provided does help to paint a picture consistent with that of the other studies described.

Another study at a university in Istanbul looked at electronic forms of bullying. Turan and colleagues (2011) surveyed 579 university students who volunteered at three different law schools in Istanbul. The authors found that two-thirds of students surveyed reported that at least one person around them experienced unwanted or undesired electronic behavior defined by the authors as being "disturbed by electronic means." More than half reported having been disturbed themselves. The importance of this study is that it indicates a shift in the ways and manners in which bullying is occurring, as technology and social media have exploded in the last decade. The authors point out that college-aged students are often advanced in their technological abilities and some have found avenues to utilize those abilities to continue bullying electronically, providing a means for the bully to include more people and make it more public. Lastly, the authors point out that the effects of cyber-bullying are similar to verbal or relational bullying in that the student feels scared, angry, excited, or embarrassed.

More recently, several studies have been conducted on the nature and amount of cyber-bullying that takes place in college. In 2010, MacDonald and Roberts-Pittman conducted a study of 439 college students asking them questions on bullying while in

college. More than a third indicated that they had known someone who had been cyber-bullied and one-fifth indicated that they had been cyber-bullied themselves. Crosslin and Golman's 2014 qualitative study looked specifically at the reasons for cyber-bullying in college indicating that it is often part of retaliation in a relationship and that it most often occurs when anonymity is available. Bauman and Baldasare (2015) showed that experience with cyber-bullying can vary based on group (i.e. members of Greek organizations or the LGBT community). Also in 2015, Tennant, Demaray, Coyle and Malecki connect social support, both real and perceived by students, as an important factor in college-aged bullying behavior. The authors show that both cyber-victimization and lack of social support are related to depression. And, Gibb and Devereux (2016) indicate that while a power imbalance is not recognized as an aspect of bullying for college-aged students, intentionality and repetition are a factor. These studies all indicate that while bullying behaviors may look different than the colloquial types traditionally recognized, bullying behaviors do occur on college campuses with regularity.

Finally, Williams (2008) conducted a qualitative study for his dissertation at Virginia Tech University that closely aligns with both the goals and procedures of the proposed study. The goal of his study was to determine how college students understand bullying that took place during their K-12 school years. In other words, the author was looking for how students retroactively viewed bullying experiences while in primary and secondary school. Using a constant comparative analysis approach— transcribing, analyzing, and coding as the interviews were conducted— Williams interviewed 41 college freshmen about their experiences and developed a narrative of those experiences.

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The author found that students could retrospectively define bullying in all forms and that these definitions "are in keeping with prior research" (p. 212). One finding the author notes as unique to his study is that students who had identified as having been the bully expressed regret at having done so, showing growth and maturation. This study is particularly important to the current study because the interview protocol used by Williams will be used and adapted for this one. However, the primary difference between the current study and Williams' is that the current study will ask questions that pertain to their collegiate experience with the bullying phenomenon rather than retroactively looking at the primary, middle, and secondary school experiences.

There are several common themes among the studies described including the notion that bullying occurs outside of primary and secondary school, it can have an effect physically, emotionally, and psychologically, and victims tend not to report it to authorities at this stage in their development. As shown by the studies described, bullying in higher education can take a different form than that of the physical bullying colloquially seen and described in primary and secondary schools. It occurs on college and university campuses in different forms including cyber-bullying, verbal, and relational bullying, as well as in acts of hazing. Additionally, the effects of having been bullied can carry further into the development of the individual, particularly and more significantly for the bully-victims as described by Copeland and colleagues (2013). Finally, students reported that they were worried that reporting bullying behavior by their classmates would be a sign of weakness or they would be embarrassed at being a victim. Others claimed that they did not believe that anything would be done about it if they did

report it (McDougall, 1999; Kasen, Berenson, Cohen, & Johnson, 2004). While bullying

in primary and secondary school is widely accepted as prevalent, it does not stop when

high school ends.

Connection to College Hazing

Some bullying in college, though not all, occurs in the form of hazing, which is

the focus of much of the research and literature available on college-related bullying and

violence. Hazing is best defined as "a form of bullying in which candidates for

acceptance into a group or organization are obliged to endure humiliating and sometimes

dangerous treatment as a requirement— rite of passage— for group membership"

(Thomas, 2006, p. 147). In college and university policy definitions, the common theme

is initiation into a group, particularly as it relates to fraternities, sororities, or athletic

teams. These policies tend to reject the notion that those being hazed consent to the act.

Those perpetrating the hazing will be held accountable even if the victim says he or she

consented. This is important to note because unlike bullying, hazing is done as part of

initiation.

To be clear, this research is drawing a distinction between bullying and hazing as

two separate and distinct acts that are subsets of aggression. This distinction is important

because both are considered acts of aggression (Lipkins, 2006; Underwood, 2011;

Hawley, Stump, & Ratliff, 2011). However, because there is significant research on

hazing and a widespread focus on preventing hazing on college and university campuses,

it is relevant to discuss here and distinguish from bullying. Hazing takes a very similar

form to bullying— physical aggression, humiliation, repetition of humiliating acts, a

power imbalance between the hazer and hazee, psychological degradation, and the like (Allen & Madden, 2012). In addition to standard bullying-like behaviors described earlier in this chapter, forced alcohol or substance consumption or abuse, including excessive consumption as part of a drinking game, sexual assault, forced humiliation in a public setting, and more are additional acts of hazing identified by Allen and Madden. In their article "The Nature and Extent of College Student Hazing," the authors show through survey results that "students recognize hazing as a part of campus culture" (p. 87), but they also indicate that there is a gap between what students and college or university administrators identify as hazing. In the study of students who experienced hazing, as identified by the definitions provided to them, 90% of respondents did not consider themselves to have been hazed. Students tend to identify hazing as physical force of an activity but do not see other forms of hazing to be harmful and did not identify it as such. In addition, college-aged students do not see an activity as hazing if the primary purpose is group bonding or tradition. The work of Allen & Madden is consistent with other research on college-level hazing that shows that the physical and mental acts of hazing, as well as the mental and physical consequences of the behaviors, are similar to those described as bullying behavior.

As Lipkins (2006) argues, there are distinct differences between bullying and hazing. First, the author points out that victims in a bullying situation are not given a choice to participate and are usually chosen by the bullies based on their vulnerability. This is not necessarily the case with hazing. Hazing is confined to a group that is identifiable—pledges to a fraternity or sorority, freshman members of a team or club, and

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the like. Those being hazed can walk away from the group to stop the activity—an option not necessarily available to a victim of bullying. Second, Lipkins points out that bullies are usually in search of something—power, money, attention, etc.—and may only be interested in the appearance of being tough or respected by their peers. Hazers, however, are acting on behalf of a group—as part of tradition, hierarchy, and/or initiation—and are not necessarily in search of attention or anything tangible. Hazing may not contain both components of Underwood's (2011) definition of aggression. The first component— intent to harm— exists within hazing. However, the second— the victim must feel harmed—may not align with students' perceptions. This, of course, does not mean hazing should be permitted, but it provides an indication of the difference between hazing and bullying. When hazing extends beyond initiation as entrance to a group, the acts can no longer be considered hazing and are more accurately classified as bullying and assault.

Though bullying and hazing can take similar forms, the intent is vastly different. Bullies often operate alone or in small groups and usually target an individual or small group of individuals that are perceived as vulnerable, weak, or different (Hilton, Anngela-Cole, & Wakita, 2010). Whereas, hazing involves entrance into a group. Those who are hazed and gain admission become part of the group that collectively perpetuates the hazing, maintaining the hierarchy among the group (Lipkins, 2006). The connection between bullying and hazing is weak because of the differences in the intent. In other words, the focus on initiation, and an eventual conclusion to the aggression once the victim is accepted marks a clear and distinct difference between bullying and hazing.

Student Perception of Bullying

While there appears to be growing consistency among researchers on the definitions and types of bullying, students' perspectives and definitions differ substantially. Prior studies have indicated that students do not simultaneously apply the same criteria to bullying behavior that research-based definitions include, such as the concepts of intent to hurt, repetition, and power imbalance (Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012).

In a study to understand how students define bullying, aggression, and violence, Hopkins, et al. (2013) revealed that students see bullying and violence similarly— that they are "purposeful actions intend(ing) to cause harm" (p. 690) while aggression is seen as "anger, which could lead to physically or verbally reactive behaviors" (p. 690). Students see a distinction between the three terms giving each a unique place in their minds.

In several studies, repetition is not identified as a primary component to bullying behaviors, with fewer than 10% of students identifying it as a part of their perceived definitions (Madsen, 1996; Naylor et al., 2006; Vaillancort et al., 2008; Gibb & Devereux, 2016). Trying to isolate the foundational causes of bullying behavior, Gibb and Devereux's study looked directly at college student behaviors. The authors found that repetition and intent to cause distress were important aspects of cyber-bullying but were not necessarily identified as such by the participants. Additionally, in each study, the concept of power imbalance as a primary characteristic of bullying was not identified. Only a small percentage in each study indicated that intent to hurt was a criterion for being classified as bullying. Maintaining a power imbalance was identified more by students than intent to hurt, according to the authors. Fewer than 40% of students

identified power imbalance as a part of bullying. According to Cuadrado-Gordillo (2012), students' perception of bullying behavior, in most cases, is limited to only physical and verbal forms. "Nevertheless, the older the young, the more complex their perceptions of bullying and the better they discriminate situations of abuse from other forms of aggression" (p. 1891). So, as students grow older, they may identify more and more behaviors as bullying than they might have when they were younger. It follows logically that college students may see more behaviors as bullying than they may have identified when they were in primary or secondary school.

To continue this discussion, Maunder, Harrop, and Tattersall (2010) documented differences in perceptions between staff and students in secondary schools as well as the seriousness of individual types of bullying. They found that students tend to have a more minimal understanding and perceive bullying to be less serious than faculty and staff. Teachers, on the other hand, see bullying as more serious and held perceptions that are more closely aligned with established literature definitions. Like students, however, teachers perceived varying degrees of seriousness depending on the type of bullying, according to the authors. Physical bullying was seen as more serious, and relational was seen as less serious. The authors also note that differences in school climate may influence teachers' and students' perceptions of bullying and its seriousness. Yoon (2004) supports the work of Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall particularly as it pertains to the perception of seriousness in bullying incidents. She found that the perceived seriousness of the bullying behavior was the largest predictor of whether teachers or administrators responded to the behavior. In a more recent study in the United Kingdom, Hopkins,

Taylor, Bowen, and Wood (2013) conducted a qualitative study that asked three focus groups, divided by age, how they define the terms bullying, aggression, and violence. The analysis of the data showed that the participants carried a shared definition among the three terms, particularly when it comes to the actions involved, with aggression being singled out because "of the level of personal control they perceived the perpetrators to have over their behavior" (p. 690).

As mentioned earlier, for college-aged students, perceptions about hazing are more narrowly defined than that of research-based definitions. Allen and Madden (2012) point out that while college-aged students understand that hazing and bullying are harmful, they differ in what they perceive as actual bullying or hazing and hesitate to use the term "hazing" outside of extreme versions of it. In other words, what a researcher, professor, or administrator might term bullying or hazing is not perceived as such by students. For hazing, there appears to be a "code of silence" relating to behaviors that could be illegal among those perpetrating the aggressive behavior and the victim (Lipkins, 2006). This silence prevents administration officials and law enforcement from knowing about and responding to possible incidents on college campuses. Students, according to Lipkins, may view this silence as a way of bonding and becoming closer within the group, but "the closeness is out of fear of being discovered, not out of friendship, respect, or true camaraderie" (p. 23). In other words, students who maintain the code of silence are more likely to be doing so because of fear of punishment by officials and retribution from the group. The actions students take in response to a bullying or hazing situation can be determined by their perception of what the incident is

and how serious they perceive it to be. Students need to identify an incident as bullying or hazing and perceive it to be serious in order to intervene.

The concept of student perception of bullying behaviors is an important piece to this research as an objective is to discover if students at the college level more closely align their perceptions of bullying behaviors with what has been described in the literature or by their own, possibly less inclusive, definitions. Evidence from prior research on this subject on the secondary and high school levels as well as work done on the perception of campus hazing, shows that student perceptions and definitions of bullying behaviors are far less inclusive and more narrow than that described in the literature.

Causes and Consequences

After discussing bullying as a phenomenon in general, it makes sense to look at the causes and effects of bullying behavior. Much of the research currently available is focused on social causes and solutions for violence and bullying. As already described in chapter one, Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model of development shows that the different systems and layers have a direct (or indirect) social effect on the individual. Bronfenbrenner provides significant support for the idea that social groups create a framework in which an individual can develop aggressive behavior. On the flip side, the aggressive behavior of others can also have an influence on those at whom it is directed.

Kasen et al. (2004) discuss how bullying in the classroom environment (part of an individual's micro-system) can create an atmosphere of fear among students and school administration. Specifically, research by Tremlow, Fonagy, and Sacco (2001) shows that

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when bullying takes place in a school setting, quality of life is reduced for students and faculty alike. Additionally, Kasen and colleagues (2004) show that there is increased bullying activity in schools where there is little-to-no administrative response to it. The results of Kasen's study show that primary and secondary schools can have a significant effect on the social climate of a school. With programming designed to prevent bullying, the school can become a useful agent of change. Colleges and universities can have a similar effect by utilizing a similar strategy.

Olweus (1978) reports that most victimization and bullying takes place in the school setting, which doubles as the primary social setting for adolescents. Students in primary and secondary school spend a large percentage of their time in school, and it is often the place where students make friends. It is reasonable to connect this same principle to college campuses, particularly residential campuses, where students spend significant time. Since social support for the bully, real or perceived, goes a long way toward shaping the environment for all students (Malecki & Demaray, 2011; Tennant, Demaray, Coyle, & Malecki, 2015), it is vital to recognize college campus social settings as mechanisms of influence of student behavior. In addition to a culture of prevention, social support for the victim can show bullies that aggressive behavior is not acceptable.

The concept of real or perceived social support is important to discuss. The notion being presented here is two-fold: (a) social support for victims increases the likelihood that the effects, particularly the mental effects of bullying, will be more insulated if victims feel that they are supported by those within their micro-system; or (b) social support, real or perceived by the bullies, can increase bullying behavior because the

bullies feel as if their behavior is endorsed. Lee Jussim (1991) introduced a new model that addresses the notion that perception can shape an individual's reality. This is important when it comes to bullying behavior because if bullies perceive that they are supported by those in their micro-system, the behavior may not cease. However, if victims perceive support, the effects may be more insulated as victims may have someone with whom they can relate and empathize.

Greater societal and cultural influences have an impact on bullying and violence, too (Ketti, 2001). Guns, violent video games, television shows and movies, as well as gang activity and negative social interactions have influence on the social development of an individual. "While it is clear the real experience of violence through assault or family abuse is far more severe than that experienced through the media, it is evident that the sheer volume of violent entertainment consumed by America's children is not beneficial" (p. 62). Larger cultural elements, like media—which exists in the macro-system—may not exert as much direct influence on the individual, but still have power to provide justification and support for aggressive behaviors.

In addition to environmental and cultural influences, being bullied has both short and long-term consequences for bullies and victims. The short-term consequences for victims can be wide ranging from physical injury from being hit, punched, or kicked to psychological injury including depression and anxiety (Olweus, 1978; 1993; Espelage, Mebane, & Swearer, 2004; Underwood, 2011, Espelage & Swearer, 2011). Psychological issues can lead to substance abuse, violent outbursts or reactions, or even suicide (Underwood, 2011; Martocci, 2015). Copeland and colleagues (2013) in their

longitudinal study on the adult outcomes of being bullied by peers in childhood and adolescence found both victims and bully-victims to be at risk for later psychological issues like anxiety, depression, and panic disorders. However, according to this study, bully-victims were most at risk for these types of psychological stresses and were more likely to contemplate suicide than victims.

Ttofi, Farrington, and Losel (2012) support the long-ranging impact. They showed that school bullying behavior is also a predictor of violence later in life. The authors said, "The strong association of bullying (perpetration and victimization) with violence, delinquency, offending, and other externalizing behaviors and, above all, the many risk factors they share, is an important finding in that it suggests possible intervention initiatives in the future" (p. 416). Finally, there is support for the idea that being bullied and victimized, directly and indirectly, can have an effect on an individual's academic motivation and academic success (Young-Jones, Fursa, Byrket, & Sly, 2015). Bullying behaviors can have an effect on graduation rates, retention, and overall college satisfaction.

The effects of bullying can be far-reaching. Socio-ecological influences from peers and campus culture are evident. However, there are time-changing influences, or chrono-system influences, that are also persuasive. As discussed earlier, Copeland et al (2013) shows that the effects of bullying in adolescence can have more far-reaching effects over the course of time and can have an influence into the future. The recognition that bullying can have a lasting effect beyond the incident is an important piece to developing a culture free of bullying behaviors.

The development of individuals, including their perceptual understanding, is affected by the individual's surroundings according to Bronfenbrenner's model, and the effects of bullying on the individual can be traced within the context of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model. The current study provides a contrast to the studies described earlier in this chapter in that it will use Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model as the theoretical framework in determining how students perceive and understand bullying as well as its influences and consequences.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Since it is clear that the surrounding environment influences development including perception and understanding, this study attempts to describe how college students understand and perceive bullying on campus at University X. It utilizes a qualitative design approach to answering the research question. Specifically, a phenomenological approach is used in which several people who have experienced a phenomenon are interviewed as a way to develop a description of that phenomenon from the perspective of the participants (Polkinghorne, 1989; Creswell, 2007). Creswell notes that "a phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon" (p. 57). The primary goal of phenomenological research is not to develop statistical data that is generalizable to the greater population. Rather, the goal is to be specific in the description of the phenomenon (Polkinghorne, 1989).

In this case, the lived experience is that of students living on a residential college campus who may or may not have experienced or witnessed bullying on campus at University X. The institution where this study is conducted is a large, co-educational, highly-selective, Midwest, religiously-affiliated university that grants bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees. The name University X will be used throughout this dissertation to describe the institution in place of the institution's actual name. The name alteration aims to protect the participants and University X itself.

Purpose and Rationale

The primary purpose of this phenomenological study is to describe how students perceive bullying on campus at University X. This is an important first step in determining how college students understand and define the concept. The timing of this study is appropriate as it is necessary to better understand the nature of bullying on college campuses and how those behaviors impact students. The importance of using a qualitative approach is that the research reflects more of the overall impact of bullying in the words and described actions of the students at this stage in life and provide more qualitative and subjective data that is more difficult to gather in a quantitative study (Hughes, 2001).

This dissertation describes student perception as it relates to bullying. The student participants, through an interview process, provide their own beliefs, insights, and responses to bullying on campus that they have experienced, witnessed, or believe to have happened. Identifying college student perceptions of the bullying phenomenon is important to the research process because the ways in which college administrators approach prevention methods may be different than those used in high school and those in the workplace. Additionally, as noted in prior studies on student perception within the primary and secondary school years (Madsen, 1996; Yoon, 2004; Naylor et al., 2006; Vaillancort et al., 2008; Maunder, Harrop, and Tattersall, 2010; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012), students often have a different conception of bullying than teachers, administrators, and researchers, making it more challenging to implement effective prevention programs. This concept can apply to institutions' responses to bullying and hazing incidents as well as how they educate the student body when it comes to rules and

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codes of conduct on campus.

Qualitative research, according to Aiken-Wisniewski (2010) is focused on attempting to answer the question through the words, actions, and emotions of the participants. In this case, this is done through individual conversation and analysis of the interview transcript. After the interview is transcribed, it can be analyzed for significant meaning as a way of answering the research questions (Aiken-Wisniewski, 2010). The qualitative approach provides the ideal framework and method to determine the meaning behind the words and actions of the participants in order to develop a solid description of the bullying phenomenon on campus at University X from the student perspective.

Research Questions & Objectives

This study answers the following overarching question: How do students perceive and understand the concept of bullying on campus at University X? In order to answer this question, three objectives have been identified: (a) to describe the differences between how college-aged students at University X perceive and understand bullying and the research definitions; (b) to describe what forms of bullying occur from the student perspective at University X; and (c) to describe the perceived influences and consequences of bullying on campus at University X.

Much, but not all, of the work that has been done on bullying has been quantitative in nature. Additionally, the work done on hazing and student perception of hazing does not fully connect to bullying as defined by the literature. The importance of the primary research question is that it allows the researcher to see how college students perceive bullying on campus. In this study, the overarching question provides a clear and

concise way of establishing what is occurring from the student perspective. Research questions that are descriptive in nature often start with the words 'what' or 'how' as a way for the researcher to determine what is occurring (Rojon & Saunders, 2012). The overarching question here does not ask 'why' because the answer to that may be splintered in multiple directions and would likely be a question of its own study.

In addition to the overarching question posed, three more specific objectives give a clear indication of the ways in which the research question is answered (Rojon & Saunders, 2012). Rojon and Saunders argue that while "the research question indicates the topic of issue of the study, research objectives operationalize the questions, in other words they state precisely what needs to be researched" (p. 57). Hernon (2001) supports this by saying, "Study objectives narrow the investigation by selecting the aims of the research activity and, conversely, screening out what the study will not examine. Objectives operationalize those components of the logical structure that the study will explore" (p. 82).

Each of the three stated objectives is necessary in answering the overall question because they "operationalize" an important component of the overarching question with each one describing a component related to bullying. The importance of the first objective—to describe the differences between how college-aged students at University X perceive and understand bullying and the research definitions— is that it sets a baseline for what students on campus at University X perceive bullying to actually be in comparison to how the literature defines it. The second objective—to describe what forms of bullying occur from the student perspective at University X— contributes to the

overarching question by looking for the types of bullying that the participants perceive to have occurred on campus and helps the researcher identify which types of bullying may be more prominent on campus. The third objective— to describe the perceived influences and consequences of bullying on campus at University X—goes deeper by allowing the participants to describe from their perspective what the perceived influences and/or consequences, if any, are of on-campus bullying. This is important because identifying the influences, from the student perspective, can help administrators better address it and provide solutions. Additionally, if the consequences are perceived as minimal or nonexistent, there is no incentive for students to report it or for the perpetrators to change their behavior. These three objectives all support the primary research question by operationalizing pieces of the overarching question into more specific, succinct pieces that help logically answer the question.

Design

Utilizing a phenomenological paradigm (Creswell, 2007), this study looks at a single point in time, using a set of singular interviews to describe how college students at University X perceive and understand bullying on campus as well as its influences and consequences. For this study, the phenomenon being researched is the college experience as it relates to bullying. The primary characteristics described are the students' perceptions of the nature and context of bullying as well as their perceptions, beliefs, and understanding about the causes and consequences of the behaviors.

Participants

The participants have been chosen on a volunteer basis. The author initially

contacted University X administration to seek permission to send an email message to a group of 781 students, asking the students to voluntarily participate in a research study on bullying in college. Permission was subsequently granted by the administration to contact via email the students requested. These potential participants were chosen out of convenience based on the accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Of the group of 781 students, 188 were taught by the same professor and 593 were advised by one of two first-year academic advisors when they were college freshmen. The group consists of students from each academic class level to include first-year students, sophomores, juniors, and seniors so as to include experiences from all class levels. The breakdown of students' major (based on their admissions applications) is 20% in the arts and humanities, 28% in business, six percent in the sciences, 22% in engineering or architecture, and 24% current first-year students.

Current first-year students are listed separately as first-year students because at University X, these students participate in a first-year program and officially choose an academic college after the first year. As students grow and experience collegiate level courses, they will change their minds in their academic college choice which provides for even greater diversity among the participants. As a point of reference, undergraduate makeup of University X consists of 23% students in the arts and humanities, 15% in architecture or engineering, 23% in business, 14% in the sciences, and 24% in the first-year program.

Students who have experienced bullying as a bully, victim, or bystander, and those who have already formed opinions on the subject were encouraged to volunteer.

Students were not asked specifically if they have been bullied, only if they have experience in any role in a bullying relationship. In addition, only undergraduate students who live in a campus residence hall were chosen for this study. This is not to say that bullying behavior does not happen to commuter students who live off campus. However, since this study is exploring bullying related to campus life at University X, campus residents are better candidates for participation because they spend most, if not all, of their day on campus.

A total of fifteen volunteer participants were interviewed. In a phenomenological study, it is suggested that researchers interview five to fifty individuals who have experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). The number of participants used here fits within the number suggested. Polkinghorne (1989) notes that the number of participants in a phenomenological study varies significantly depending on the study. The ultimate goal, however, is "to generate a full range in variation in the set of descriptions to be used in analyzing a phenomena, not to meet statistical requirements for making statements about the distribution with a group of subjects" (p. 48). In following Polkinghorne's recommendation, the precise number used was determined as data was collected and analyzed. Interviews stopped when no new themes or relevant information emerged from the interviews as determined by the researcher.

Once students volunteered to participate, the researcher attempted to select participants from varying backgrounds to ensure that the volunteer sample was diverse. However, given the nature of a qualitative study, the participants are not an exact campus representation because a limited number of participants were selected based on those who

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volunteered.

The volunteers were asked to fill out a demographic form electronically, which includes gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, academic college, major, and whether or not the student has experienced any bullying role on campus as the aggressor, victim, or bystander. Students who identified as having experienced a bullying role in some form on campus were given priority. This was done because in a phenomenological study, it is important to interview multiple people who have experienced the phenomenon so that the researcher can develop a deeper understanding of that phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Once participants were identified, they were contacted to schedule an individual interview with the researcher.

Interviews

Each participant was interviewed using an interview protocol (Appendix A) adapted from Williams' (2008) qualitative dissertation on bullying experiences prior to college. Williams' work focused on college-aged students who were asked to retroactively describe their experiences with bullying during their K-12 years. In contrast, this study focuses on college-aged students who were asked to describe their bullying experiences in college. The protocol is semi-structured and consists of multiple free response questions that allowed the participant to provide ample information and the researcher to ask follow-up questions (Cresswell, 2007). Since this study is focusing on the perceptions and beliefs students have on the nature and consequences of bullying on campus at University X, using interviews to collect the description of the lived experience is the most appropriate way to collectively describe student perceptions of the

concept and their perceptions of the magnitude of the phenomenon.

Based on the suggested design from Creswell, and with input from the suggested practices of Pugh (2013), Quinn (2005), and Kilborn (2006), the interview protocol was the same for each interview. A total of at least eighteen questions were asked during the semi-structured interview. The protocol questions were tied to the overall research question and objectives of this study; the interviews were approximately sixty minutes in length and were audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. Each question asked in the interview protocol is specifically seeking participants' perceptions or beliefs about bullying on campus at University X. Each question aligns with one of the objectives supporting the overarching question.

There are several key points to be made regarding the adapted use of Williams' protocol. First, Williams interviewed college-aged students, primarily freshmen and sophomores. This age group closely matches the age group targeted by the current study. Second, the study conducted a pilot study to test the interview protocol prior to conducting the primary study. When the questions returned useful data in the pilot interview, he proceeded with the primary study. These first two points are important to the current study because it demonstrates that the interview protocol is effective and appropriate for this age group. The final key point is that while this study has adapted Williams' interview protocol and the type of research he conducted, it is different in that this study is seeking information related to bullying experiences in college rather than K-12 experiences, an important distinction in that the experiences in college may differ from those in primary, middle, or high school.

While the interviews were audio-recorded for transcription purposes, the interviewer also took notes during the interview process. The purpose of these notes, as Creswell (2007) suggests, is to write down the interviewer's initial impressions of the participant. Additionally, the interviewer can write down facial expressions, voice inflection and other data that may not appear in the final transcripts. This information is useful in interpreting and coding the data during the analysis process.

Because of the sensitive nature of the subject matter being discussed, the researcher made available the University X counseling center materials, hours, location, and warm-line number (a non-emergency number to help with psychological and emotional distress) as ways to support the participants if an emotional or psychological reaction to the discussion took place. While this precaution was necessary to ensure adequate support, it was not needed by the participants.

Finally, it is important to discuss the reliability and validity of the interview protocol. Golafshani (2003) refers to validity as the concept that the data collected, in this case the interviews, is trustworthy and provides valuable information that helps to answer the research questions. In other words, a valid interview protocol provides data that actually answers the questions that the researcher intended. Reliability refers to the idea that the interview protocol provides valid data in a consistent way (Golafshini, 2003). Since the interview protocol was adapted from a previously used study that answered the questions intended using a constant comparative data analysis, the reliability and validity of the data to be collected for this study is comparable to Williams's (2008) work. The primary method of data analysis used by Williams begins with the initial data collection

and compares it with emerging categories (Creswell, 2007). Williams used a method of constant, comparative analysis, meaning that the interpretation of the data was done as the interviews were conducted so the collected data can "inform the collection of further data" (p. 69). This study followed a similar pattern.

Data Analysis

After conducting each interview, the conversation was transcribed and analyzed following the guidelines offered by Creswell (2007). For a qualitative study, there are six steps the researcher should take in interpreting and representing the data: (a) data managing; (b) reading and memoing; (c) describing; (d) classifying; (e) interpreting; and (f) representing and visualizing. For a phenomenological study in general, each of these steps is done by first creating and organizing the files of data. Second, reading through the texts, in this case transcripts, and making note of initial impressions creating initial codes. Third, the "essence" of the phenomenon should be described through the experiences of the participants. Fourth, significant statements should be grouped together with like meaning. Those meanings can also be put together in groups or "meaning units." Fifth, the analysis of the data is done in the form of a text description of what happened and how it happened. Again, the "essence" of the overall experience can be described and/or visualized through the use of charts, graphs, tables, or images (Creswell, 2007).

For this study, initial impressions of interviewees statements were collected during the interview. After the interview was transcribed, it was read and re-read carefully and coded. Key words, important phrases, and sections were highlighted and

coded so similarities and differences between the interviews, actions, thoughts, processes, concepts, and other observations could be identified and categorized (Gilgun, 2014). Items that are found to be relevant to the research question were coded in a way that denotes the significance of the data to the overall study and to the research questions/objectives. Words or phrases that were repeated, noted as important by the participants or by the researcher, surprising items, items that relate to prior research, theories, concepts, or other items that stand out as relevant— as determined by the researcher— were coded and grouped with like items. For example, in reading the transcripts, words and phrases like hitting, punching, pushing, shoving, rough housing, fighting, or other like words or phrases have been coded as 'physical bullying.' Words and phrases like mimicking, use of sarcasm, social exclusion, or the like have been coded as 'relational bullying.' Descriptive words related to feelings or emotions are coded as an effect of bullying behaviors. Underlying patterns and issues were searched for and identified within and between the interviews. This coding and categorization allows the researcher to identify patterns, connections, recurring themes, and important issues relevant to answering the research question and objectives and help the researcher develop the essence of the bullying phenomenon on campus at University X.

Data Saturation

A total of fifteen students were interviewed for this qualitative, phenomenological study. The primary goal for this kind of study is to reach data saturation. As such, a constant comparative method of analysis was used, meaning that as interviews were conducted, they were transcribed, analyzed, and coded. When no further new information

is being gleaned from the subsequent interviews, data saturation is reached. Table 3.1

indicates the number of new codes that were presented in each interview.

Table 3.1

Number of New Codes Developed by Participant

Participant	Gender	Number of New Codes Developed
Participant #1	F	40
Participant #2	F	9
Participant #3	F	9
Participant #4	F	5
Participant #5	M	3
Participant #6	F	0
Participant #7	M	1
Participant #8	F	0
Participant #9	F	0
Participant #10	F	0
Participant #11	F	1
Participant #12	F	0
Participant #13	M	0
Participant #14	F	0
Participant #15	M	0

Of the fifteen participants, four were male and eleven were female. This could

present a limitation on the reliability and validity of the study given the sheer number of

women participants compared to men. Some literature supports the notion that a

limitation might exist, while others do not, which demonstrates inconsistency. For

example, Simpson & Cohen (2004) indicate that there are some gender differences in

perception of *who and how* students are bullied, but little difference in other factors.

Maunder, Harrop, and Tattersall (2010) indicated that females can see bullying behavior

as more serious than males. Bauman and Baldasare (2015), on the other hand, did not

detect gender differences among college-aged students in relation to cyber-bullying. In the current study, data saturation indicates that there was no yield in diversification of the of the construct. In other words, the final two male participants did not present new data that had not already been presented in prior interviews providing support for ending data collection. The data collected from both male and female participants provides a saturated picture of the bullying phenomenon on campus at University X.

In the case of the current study, the final four interviews did not produce new coded data during analysis. In fact, of the final eight interviews, only one presented new data that had not been presented in previous interviews. Further interviewing would not be a productive use a time and resources as it is not likely that new information will be presented and the researcher determined that data saturation was reached. As an example of studies using a minimal number of participants for a qualitative study, Mishna's (2004) qualitative study on bullying also interviewed fifteen participants while Lam and Liu (2007) interviewed just eight. Some qualitative bullying studies, such as Burns et al. (2008) and Thornberg (2010), utilized more participants. Alternatively, Hopkins, Taylor, Bowen, and Wood (2013) utilized a total of fifty-seven participants in their qualitative study, breaking the participants up by age to participate in one of three focus groups. However, the method used to achieve data saturation is modeled after the approach William's used in his 2008 qualitative study on how college-aged students understand bullying behaviors retrospectively in middle and high school. Cresswell's (2007) target number of participants in a phenomenological study is between five and 50 participants. A standard that researchers support is that one has reached the point of data saturation

when themes, data, and coding are no longer new (Fusch & Ness, 2015). "A large sample size does not guarantee one will reach data saturation, nor does a small sample size— rather, it is what constitutes the sample size… If one has reached the point of no new data, one has also most likely reached the point of no new themes; therefore, one has reached data saturation" (p. 1409).

Limitations

While this study provides a solid look into the insights of college students' perceptions of bullying on campus, there are some limitations to the study. First, as in all qualitative studies, the influence of the researcher as an integral part of the interview process brings his own inherent biases to evaluation and reporting. The researcher must be aware of this and acknowledge these biases during the evaluation and reporting process and make every effort to limit those (Hurt & McLaughlin, 2012). Additionally, because the interviewer is engaged in conversation with the participant, the interviewer brings with him the risk of introducing his biases to the conversation. This has been recognized and every effort was made to limit how much the interviewer's or researcher's biases were exposed by adhering explicitly to the interview protocol.

Another limitation to this study is that it is not longitudinal and only covers a snapshot in time. As discussed in the review of literature, there are differences in perceptions of what constitutes bullying between teachers (and researchers) and students (Maurnder, Harrop, and Tattersall, 2010; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012; Hopkins, et al., 2013). As students age over the course of their four years in college, the views an individual student holds of what constitutes bullying behavior may change over time.

Additionally, as societal expectations change, often with significant media influence, what college-aged students perceive as bullying may also change. Participants may retroactively see bullying behavior as bullying well after they leave University X.

Finally, the students participating in the study have been chosen in a sample of convenience. Each student had either the same professor in a class or the same first-year advisor during their freshman year. Because advising assignments are made at University X based on the student's admission application and students taking a class did so voluntarily, in some way students have self-selected into the study by their initial choice of major and initial choice to take a class. This provides a limiting factor in the study because students who choose to take a specific class or chose a specific major during the admissions process may be of like mind or characteristics. However, after a student's first year, students will often change their minds in major and college choice providing greater academic diversity within the participants.

Overall, the information outlined in this chapter provides the step-by-step procedure for how the study was conducted. In describing the design of the study, participant selection process, interview protocol, and data analysis, this chapter provides the necessary and pertinent information required to understand how the study was administered and data collected. It is also important to identify and recognize the limitations of it so as not to over-generalize the results and conclusions found during the data analysis. It is through the process and protocol described here that the study was completed.

Chapter 4

Results

After several months of contacting and interviewing students who live on campus at University X, the interviews were transcribed, analyzed, and coded in order to develop answers and descriptions asked by the overarching goal and study objectives. This chapter will report the findings related to the research question by describing in detail using the words, thoughts, and concepts identified and used by the participants.

Data Coding

As outlined in chapter three, coding of the individual transcripts was done as the interviews were completed. Items within the text that pertained to the research question and objectives were highlighted and provided an initial code. After the interviews were completed, the transcripts were reviewed again in order to more carefully organize the codes to avoid redundancies and eliminate data not relevant to the research question. For example, the first participant discussed in detail her participation in clubs and activities on campus and a code was created to reflect this. However, participation in these activities as part of the collegiate experience does not provide data relevant to the bullying phenomenon. As interviews were conducted, more codes were added as participants presented new data. Data that are similar in nature (for example, aspects of relational bullying) were grouped together into a single "relational bullying" code. The first five participants each presented new data that required a new code be added. Only two of the final ten interviews required a single new code each. Eight of the last ten

Figure 4.1. **Visual analysis of coding data.**

List of Codes	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	Totals
Aggression	6		2		1						1	2			2	14
Anonymity	6	1		1		1	1			1			1	2	1	15
Behavior: Changes	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1		3	22
Behavior: Conform to Social Norms	1	1	1	2		1	3	2					4	3	3	21
Behavior: Extroverted (Cool kids)					1		1				1	1	2	1		7
Behavior: Groups (Clicks, etc)			3	4		5			1	3	1		4	8	5	34
Behavior: Introverted (Nerds, geeks, etc.)			3	2		4	1		1	2	1		2	1	1	18
Behavior: Lonely				1						1						2
Behavior: Retaliation	1				1	1	1						1		2	7
Bully: Excuses/ No Intent to Harm	2	1		1	4	3	1		2	2	3	2		4		25
Bullying: Cyber	3	1	3	1		2	4	2	3	3	2	1	2	3	2	32
Bullying: Direct behavior	4			1	1	1	2	2				2		2		15
Bullying: Faculty as Bullies											2					2
Bullying: Group Targeting	1		1				2	1	1	1			1	1	1	10
Bullying: Indirect behavior	6		3	3	1			1		1	2	2	2	1		22
Bullying: Intent to harm		5									2	1		1		9
Bullying: None Recognized		3		1				1		1				1	3	10
Bullying: Physical		2	1		1	1	1	2			1		1	1		11
Bullying: Relational	1	3	5	4	3	5	6	4	6	9	7	4	7	5	4	73
Bullying: Repetition							2				1					3
Bullying: Verbal	4	6	2	1	3	1	2		2	1	4	4	2	4	1	37
Campus Culture: Inhibits behavior	1			1						1		1			2	6
Campus Culture: Promotes behavior			1	2	1	1	3	2		3			3	2		18
Comparison: To Another Environment	1		1	3	2	1	1				4	1		1		15
Diversity: Lack of Diversity	2		1	2	1	1		1						2		10
Effects: Academic	1	1	1				1	1	1		2			1		9
Effects: Mental	1	3	2	2	1	2		1	1	1		1	2	3	1	21
Effects: Other				1				1								2
Effects: Physical					1								1			2
Effects: Social	1									1	1	1	1	1	1	7
Hazing					1		1	1						1		4
Influences: Developmental (Microsystems)	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	22
Influences: Faith		2	2		1	1	3		1	2	1				1	14
Influences: Politics/National culture/values	1	1	2			2	1	2	1	1		1	2	1	2	17
Influences: Social Media	1					1				1				1	1	5
Influences: Social Norms		1		5	3	5	1	1		3		1			1	21
Interaction: Negative/ Unwelcoming	1	2	2	1		7	5	1		6	5		1	1	2	34
Interaction: Positive/ Welcoming/ Community	3	9	3	4	5		5	3	7	6	8	6	5	5	11	80
Intervention: Direct	1	1	1	1			1	1		1	2	1	1	2	1	14
Intervention: Indirect				1			1		1				1	1		5
Location: Classrooms			1			1			1	1	1		1		1	7
Location: Dining Halls	2	1				2	1	1	1				1		1	10
Location: Other				1		1		1		2		1	2	1		9
Location: Outside			1													1
Location: Residence Hall/ Dorm	3	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	3	26
Location: Student Center	1	1		1					1	1				1	1	7
Motives: Being Different	1		3	1	1	1			1	3	2		7	5	3	28
Motives: Cultural (homophobia, racism, politics etc.)	2		2				1		1				1	2		9
Motives: Faith			2			1								1		4
Motives: None	1															1
Motives: Other		2				1		1								4
Motives: SES	1									1		1	1	1		5
Motives: Social Power	2		1	8	2	4	12	2	3	6	3	4		3	4	54
Power	3				2	1			3	1				1		11
Reporting: Nothing will happen			1		1	2	4	1			1			1		11
Reporting: To Authority/ Others	3	1	1		1		1	2			1					10
Role: Bully				1		1				1			1			4
Role: Bystander	2	2	1	1	1	1	1			1		1	2	1		14
Role: Victim			1		1		1			1		1	2	1		8
Rules: Inhibits Bully behavior	2	2	1	1		1	1	1						1	1	11
Rules: Men's vs. Women's Halls (Enforcement)		1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	4	2	1	1	3	3	26
Rules: Promotes Bully behavior	1		1	2									1			5
Rules: Unwritten		4	2	3	1	2	1		2				1	1		17
Rules: Written	2		1	1	3	2	1	2	3	2	1	2	3	2	1	26
Social Support: For Bully	1			1										1	1	4
Social Support: For Victim			1										1	1		3
Training: Culture Change		1				1	2	1	1	1	1		1	1		10
Training: Prevention/ Awareness	2		1	1					1	1	4	2	1	1		15
TOTALS	80	63	63	75	52	74	81	49	54	83	71	50	74	92	74	1035

Color Key: ▢ First time this code appeared

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interviews, including three of the four male participants, presented no new data relevant to the research question.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the codes identified by carefully reviewing the transcripts and the number of times the coded data appears in the interviews separated by participant number. As a code appears for the first time, it is highlighted in grey. This provides a graphic representation of the number of new codes per interview and visually demonstrates data saturation. Appendix F provides the data in table form. In addition, table 3.1 shows the number of new codes developed from each participant interview.

Summary of Connections Between Participants

While there was diversity among the participants including representatives from multiple socioeconomic, racial groups, ethnic groups, academic class, major, and gender diversity, the participants were similar in ratio to that of the makeup of University X with the exception of gender. Of the fifteen participants, eleven are female, four male; there were two freshmen, seven sophomores, five juniors, and one senior; one participant is African-American, two are Hispanic (non-white), and twelve are white (non-Hispanic). Each college within the university was represented: six from the arts and humanities, three from science, four from engineering or architecture, and two from business. Finally, each family income group was also represented from under $50,000 to over $500,000 per year. Appendix B provides the demographic data of each participant. In analyzing the transcripts and coding the data, substantial similarities were found.

First, when it comes to types of bullying, participants collectively identified bullying behaviors on campus at University X as primarily relational but also included

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verbal and, to a lesser extent, cyber-bullying on campus. Participants

identified physical bullying behaviors as bullying, but did not recognize physical bullying

as occurring with any regularity on campus. Both verbal and cyber forms of bullying,

however, do occur. According to the participants, verbal bullying primarily takes the

form of name-calling, picking, and teasing that is not wanted and exceeds the normal

behavior among friends. Cyber-bullying also occurs but primarily in forms where

anonymity can be maintained. In every interview, participants specifically mentioned the

application YikYak as a primary mechanism for online or electronic forms of bullying.

Another form of cyber-bullying discussed by five of the participants was exclusion from

electronic chat rooms or text messages as a way of socially excluding people from group

gatherings. This is similar to the most common form of bullying described by the

participants— relational bullying. The participants consistently described forms of

aggressive behavior that included social exclusion, gossiping, social manipulation, and

mimicking or mocking.

Second, participants noted that bullying takes place in the social spaces on

campus rather than in the classroom. This is consistent with research by Fekkes, Pijpers,

Verloove-Vanhorich (2005) who found that most forms of school-aged bullying took

place in social places in school such as the playground and in the hallways rather than in

the classroom environment. The primary places where bullying behaviors occur are in the

residence halls, dining halls, and similar social places. Classrooms, the library, and other

academic places on campus had limited bullying activity. Three of the participants

reported that students were singled out in the classroom through mimicking and subtle

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social ostracism for asking too many questions in classes thereby extending the class period in the view of the other students. This type of relational bullying is done very subtly in the form of complaints by other students after the fact or via electronic means through anonymous applications like YikYak.

Third, the primary effects of bullying behavior on those involved were mostly mental or academic in nature. Thirteen participants mentioned mental effects twenty-one times for those involved in bullying. These effects ranged from feelings of isolation and depression to one participant describing a classmate who was hospitalized for mental health issues related, in part, to the verbal and relational bullying he endured. Participant five said:

> It has had an effect on his [college experience] because he has a little bit of depression and [bullying] really isn't helpful. He's had to go to the hospital twice. So that's definitely had an effect on him.

Eight of the fifteen participants described academic effects including lower grades, dropping a class, or classmates withdrawing from school altogether. Participant three discussed how her enthusiasm for school has dwindled by saying, "I used to be more excited about school and now I'm less excited about it because there has been lack of interesting conversations with other students." This is an example of a minor effect on students who are bullied. This same participant also said, "I'm not as comfortable asking questions myself in class because it makes me wonder if I will also become a target for that. I just really don't want to be noticed in class. I don't want to be identifiable." Participant thirteen discussed struggling academically as a result of not taking advantage of learning disability accommodations available to him out of fear of being targeted.

Social effects were also described, although less consistently, by the participants. Participant six described:

> It's made me less satisfied with the overall experience. I had always thought that that changed in college. That was what I was expecting coming here. It's certainly a different social dynamic than high school. Because there are so many different groups with so many different values, it's hard. You're not going to be getting picked on by huge groups of people, but it's still disappointing.

Participant one also described the "disheartening" effects of anonymous posts on YikYak, "What's really disheartening, really crushing, are the YikYak posts, because so many people will up-vote them. It makes, at least for me, feel alienated on this campus when you see that." Finally, only two participants noted any sort of physical effects of bullying, but described them as minor.

Fourth, the most common reasons someone might target another and/or be targeted, based on the participant interviews, include differences, not necessarily fitting into the social norms on campus, and jockeying for social position or power within a social hierarchy. Eleven of the participants directly discussed being different in some way as a reason for being targeted. These differences include, but are not limited to, sexual orientation, race, socioeconomic status, major, religion, family background, legacy status (mother/father/family members also attended University X), residence hall, personality differences, and drinking behavior. Participant fifteen described the differences by saying, "The perceived majority followed by perceived difference just makes bullying happen." Participants also described conforming to social norms as a motive for bullying behavior. This can manifest itself in two ways: (a) students conform to the social normative behavior so as not to be seen as different and not stand out; (b) students point

out and target those who are not conforming to the social norms as perceived by a social group. Participant three discussed this issue by saying, "People are often very hesitant to say their true feelings here and everyone's expected to feel the same way about certain issues. I thought it would be more diverse than it is." This connects to the third factor described by the participants as a motive for bullying behavior: jockeying for social power. Participant eight discussed power by saying, "I think that a lot of the people who [bully], I could understand because they're very dramatic people, they just might like being in power over someone and in control." In discussing the role of power changes, participant one said, "Now some are more on top than others who were always at the bottom, so they find it more acceptable to think, 'Now I have the power.'" This idea of power as a motive to bully, consciously or subconsciously, connects with prior work demonstrating how when people are placed into new social settings, aggression increases as they try to jockey for social power within the social hierarchy (Klein, 2006; Pellegrini & Van Ryzin, 2011).

Fifth, seven of the fifteen participants specifically said that they would be willing to report bullying behavior to an authority. However, five of those seven also indicated that nothing would happen if they did. For example, participant seven noted that turning the behavior into an authority, like a residence hall director, might be a good way to begin to stop the behavior, but at the same time, he was worried that the responsibility for following up on that report makes the process more burdensome. He noted that turning it in can be "embarrassing" because it can show the authority that he and his hall mates cannot fix the problem on their own. This indicates a couple of consistencies with prior

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research. First, students are worried about their own self-image and the power hierarchy within the social construct (Klein, 2006). Second, students worry that reporting the behavior may not yield any results (Kasen, Berensen, Cohen, & Johnson, 2004).

Sixth, the majority of participants indicated that the best way to change the behavior was to influence culture change through increased training and awareness. Nine of the fifteen interviews indicated that the climate or culture on campus in some ways promotes bullying behavior. Participant four identified two ways in which campus culture promotes bullying behavior: (a) many students may have been bullied in high school and they don't want to also be bullied in college. Therefore, they become the aggressor; and (b) the standard University X student model— intelligent students from families with significant financial means who dress, act and think in the same way—can encourage bullying of those who do not fit that mold. When asked what the university administration can do to prevent bullying behavior, these nine participants suggested the idea of changing the campus culture in some way to prevent campus violence.

Another example of how campus culture promotes bullying behavior is the perception of how male residence halls enforce behavior rules versus how female residence halls enforce those same rules. Unanimously, the participants all indicated that the female residence hall directors and staff are much stricter than the male halls' staff. Party behavior is more condoned within the male halls, which can be a breeding ground for bullying incidents and aggressive behaviors. As an example of this phenomenon, participant fourteen said, "Men's dorms tend to get away with everything and take a blind eye to the rules; women's dorms are seen to be very strict and women are held to a

different standard than men on campus." Similarly, participant five said, "Everything in the girls' dorms it's so much stricter, there's so much more adherence to the rules because of the potential consequences." In an attempt to provide a reason behind the enforcement, participant eight said, "I think it's just traditional sexism. Girls dorms are not expected to make super loud noises or be super rowdy; no parties or anything. Guys dorms can be rowdy or are free to have parties." Clearly, there is a phenomenon or perception whereby men's and women's residence halls are treated differently by those within the school's administrative structure.

Bullying Description

Overall, fifteen students were interviewed for this study and each one reported that bullying behavior exists on campus in some way. When analyzing and coding the transcripts, some broad-based themes emerged that were consistent across the participants interviewed. First, each participant described behaviors that fit within the model of bullying as defined in chapter two. The participants described relational bullying behaviors a total of seventy-three times, far more than any other form of bullying, and all fifteen participants described a form of relational bullying multiple times. Verbal bullying was described by the participants a collective thirty-seven times, nearly half as frequent as relational bullying and was discussed by fourteen of the fifteen participants at least once. Cyber-bullying was discussed thirty-two times and by fourteen of the fifteen participants at least once. Physical bullying, the most commonly recognized form or bullying (Swearer & Espelage, 2004), was only described eleven times in total by nine of the participants. This is not to say that these participants, college-aged students,

do not recognize physical bullying as a form a bullying. On the contrary, it is recognized as bullying but from their perspective, it rarely occurs on campus.

Unanimously, the participants indicated that physical bullying did not occur on campus. Participant one noted, "In general, on our campus, I don't think physical abuse is the biggest problem because I think people would be more inclined to stop that." This is a consistent sentiment described by all participants across all interviews. In some cases, however, the participants actually described behaviors that would fall under the definition of physical bullying, but did not describe it as such. Participant six noted, "One night, people kept spilling their drinks on my friend. She thought, 'Everyone is just drunk. It just happens. I'm just getting unlucky.' At the end of the night, these girls came up and said, 'We're so sorry. We thought you were our friend's ex-boyfriend's new girlfriend so we had our friends purposely spilling their drinks on you.'" While this may not be the same type of physical bullying behavior that is stereotypically described (Swearer, Espelage & Napalitano, 2009), it falls within the definitions of physical bullying described in chapter two of this paper.

Also consistent among the participants is the description of aggressive behavior in terms of social exclusion, gossiping, social manipulation, sarcasm, and other forms of indirect behaviors defined as bullying in prior research (Espelage, Mebane, & Swearer, 2004; Monks & Smith, 2006) and in chapter two of the current study. Participant four describes the bullying she sees on campus by saying:

> From what I've seen in college, I think that [bullying has] been social manipulation. I would also say some are gossip[ing] negatively about people and then perpetuating that along as it's shared with more people. I think it probably starts with that thought in your head where you're annoyed that the kid has just

asked the third question in class today and then you share that [annoyance] with somebody and then it builds from there.

This description is consistent with the works of Monks and Smith (2006) as well as Espelage, Mebane, and Swearer (2004) who have indicated that this kind of behavior constitutes an indirect form of bullying. Some participants also described verbal bullying that included name calling, verbal harassment, and intimidation. Participant twelve supports this notion by saying, "I feel there's not too much physical bullying around campus, but [there is] definitely teasing or maybe a bit of verbal abuse." As described by the participants, the primary forms of bullying behavior found are relational and verbal in nature. While there were a few reports of physical bullying behavior found when asked for specific examples, the participants indicated that physical bullying occurred infrequently.

The fourth form of bullying, cyber-bullying, was discussed by all but one of the participants. However, the participants also noted that it was not a type of bullying that runs rampant on campus. Participant six said, "I don't see it as much but yes. I guess it's less pointed just because a lot of times it's more anonymous. And, when I do see it, it's not necessarily making fun of or bullying one specific person, but it's larger groups of people. So, I think the dynamic of it is a little bit different." The primary concerns related to cyber-bullying are: (a) computer applications like YikYak, which provide an anonymous way for people in a common location to make disparaging remarks at a person or group; (b) exclusion from group chats or social media pages can impact an individual in the same way as in-person social exclusion (Fanti, Vanman, Henrich, & Avraamides, 2009); and (c) aggressive cyber behavior is not the primary way in which

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college students are bullied.

Motives

When the participants were asked to describe the motives behind bullying behavior, several themes emerged. First, all but two participants discussed in some form the notion of social power or social hierarchy as a motive. As evidence, participant twelve reflected, "I think that [bullying] comes when people are trying to gain social standing when they're trying to make themselves look better." In addition, participant ten discusses the role of attempting to gain social power through aggressive behavior:

> It can stem from insecurity or too much narcissism. You think you're safe from the world and you can do whatever you want and nobody is as good as you, so why does it matter what you do to them? Versus insecurity—you put others down to make yourself feel better or exclude others so that you feel like you are in a group because you have the power to do that. I think power is a big thing because you can connect those two regardless. And, if you can make somebody feel a certain way regardless of how you feel about yourself then you feel powerful and you feel like you're kind of untouchable. Then, you feel like you can't really be bothered by anything.

The role of social power in a social hierarchy and social dominance, as described by Pellegrini and Van Ryzin (2011), demonstrate that in social settings, individuals may attempt to dominate others through bullying behaviors as a way to gain or maintain higher social status. This is particularly true, according to the authors, when individuals are placed in a new setting where established hierarchies may be challenged. The shift from a high school setting to a collegiate one can be of significant transition for individuals entering the first year (Light, 2001) and can include aggressive behaviors among students who are jockeying to maintain or attain higher social standing than they did in high school. In the descriptions of how they perceive and understand bullying

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behavior, the participants make note of power and social standing as an important aspect of bullying behaviors on campus at University X.

A second motive that was highlighted significantly by nine of the fifteen participants is the notion of being different from the normative students on campus. Students who do not fit the "University X mold" can be singled out and targeted by their classmates who do conform to the social norms. For example, when asked to describe victims of bullying, participant eight responded:

> I think it's definitely the people who really want to fit in. And, I don't think they have any other socioeconomic or other defining features; I just think that they're the kind of people that really want to fit in and think that there's a certain way to have your college experience. They want to be part of it and they're willing to put up with some of that stuff just so that they can be accepted or have the friends who they think are friends that are not really the best kind of people.

Participant fourteen provided similar insight:

> There is the person that is completely an outsider… So, just people that are different. Then, there are people that can be within your social group that may not want to go out and do every single thing that you want to do and they get judgment for that or get left out because of that. So somebody that is just considered different in any way.

Participant one also supports this notion, but looks at it more from a physical perspective. She said, "I find that in appearance they tend to be people who are smaller in stature, usually thinner than other students. They also tend to be ones who are less social and they are part of clubs and stuff, but they are more focused on studies than the social aspect." Each of these quotes highlights how differences, large or small, from appearance to opinions, can be a reason for being targeted for relational bullying.

A third, and somewhat surprising theme that emerged in all fifteen interviews is that the University X campus culture promotes bullying behavior in some ways according

to the participants. Within the interviews, this concept manifested itself in two ways. First, nine participants mentioned directly that the culture and social norms of campus promotes targeting of those who are different or those who do not fit the mold of the standard University X students. For example, participant thirteen noted, "You're trying to fit in, like peer pressure. I think it's definitely a culture thing." Participant three connected this to the religious nature of the school saying, "It's dangerous, too, including the LGBT community because [the campus is] so gender binary and just all this idea that there's only two genders that's really hurtful. I have heard of transgender students who don't get to go to the dorm they should which is just really wrong." Noting that the cultural norms of University X has, in some ways, promoted aggressive behavior towards students who may be different than the social norm, the participants are suggesting that aggressive and bullying behavior is, at least, tacitly endorsed culturally by University X.

Second, all fifteen participants pointed to a difference in the way in which written campus rules are enforced between the male residence halls and the female residence halls saying that men are more likely to get away with partying and boorish behavior within their residence hall than women are within their dormitories. As an example, participant eight said, "I think it's just the traditional kind of sexism of it. Girls dorms, you're not expected to make super loud noises or be super rowdy, no parties or anything. Guys dorms can be rowdy or are free to have parties." Supporting this notion, participant fourteen said, "Men's dorms tend to get away with everything and take a blind eye to the rules versus women's dorms that are seen to be very strict and women are held to a different standard than men on campus." Participant three added, "Then there's the

unwritten rules that guy's dorms can do certain things and girls dorms can't do the same things which is definitely noticed playing into the interactions."

The way in which written rules are enforced differently between men's and women's residence halls, as noted unanimously by the participants, can create a cultural imbalance that can promote more aggressive behavior, especially in the men's halls. This is important to note because the climate of a school can be impactful in how its students react and respond to that aggressive behavior (Kasen, Johnson, Chen, Crawford, & Cohen, 2011). In other words, enforcing the rules differently between residence halls can be tacit endorsement of aggressive behavior within the men's halls. Some participants cited the religious nature of the school as to why the campus supports more traditional gender roles.

According to the participants, individual differences and failure to conform to social norms are primary reasons some student are victimized. This was noted as a reason for both why the bully targets the victim and why the victim is targeted. Along these same lines, the concept of social power, which creates a difference in the social construct, was discussed by all but two of the participants. Participant five said that college-aged bullies do so "to seem cool because they're better than the person that they're teasing. I think in most cases that I've seen it happening, it's so other people laugh and think they're funny or cool." As noted in the literature review, people, consciously or subconsciously, will bully others in order to attain or maintain higher standing within a social group or clique. Another example of this was identified by participant seven who commented that the differences can be based on socio-economic status or even a difference in clothing

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brands or clothing types. He said:

> Freshman year, the kids who were more well off wore the fratty clothes. They would take on the kids who wore cargo-shorts. It's a stupid thing, but those were the only shorts those people had, myself included. They would say, "Oh, nice shorts, dude." I get what the joke is, "Cargo-shorts carry everything except the conversation with a girl."

Differences and power were both highlighted among the participants as a significant reason for bullying behavior on campus.

Interventions

While all participants recognized, in some way, that bullying behavior occurs on campus, what to do about it remains murky among the participants. Seven participants indicated that they would report bullying behavior on campus. Participant thirteen noted, "I've talked to different friends in the building about how I disapprove of how these friend groups speak of different people or I'll talk to my rector about how someone's acting out of line." However, five of the seven indicated that despite reporting the behavior to authority figures, they were not confident that anything would be done about it. As an example, participant six said:

> If I went to my rector, I have some sense there'd be some little hand slap. But I don't think that does anything because it's not going to make the person getting bullied feel better. And I don't think it's going to meaningfully change the behaviors that are leading to that bullying.

Additionally, another two participants indicated that because nothing will happen to rectify the situation, they were hesitant to report bullying behavior. In support of this notion, participant fourteen said:

> People are way less likely to speak out about it than they are in high school, because it's not something that's talked about like it is in high school. I even have friends who have stated to me that bullying does not exist.

In other words, while half of the participants would report bullying to the authority, half also indicated that nothing would happen. This finding is not different from previous findings by other scholars, who found that students were often reluctant to report behavior in fear of retaliation from the bully or that nothing would be done by the authority figure to solve the problem. (McDougall, 1999; Kasen, Berenson, Cohen, & Johnson, 2004).

Identified Bullying Types

The study participants unanimously recognized relational and indirect forms of aggressive behavior as bullying that occurs on campus. Participant one sees bullying as more indirect saying, "Our students are very passive aggressive and if they can get away with saying something that they believe or want to do while being anonymous, they will do it." Participant four supports this notion saying:

> I think that it's been social manipulation definitely. I would also say some are gossiping too, negatively about people. Then, they perpetuate that along as you share that with more people. I think it probably starts with that thought in your head where you're annoyed that the kid has asked the third question in class today and then you share that with somebody and then it goes and builds from there.

And, participant eight describes the types of bullying she sees on campus by saying, "I think there are more psychological [types], anything except physical. I feel like the fighting doesn't obviously happen as much. Definitely the excluding or manipulating their feelings and emotions."

The types of behavior that have been described by the participants are indirect relational, direct and indirect verbal, and, to a lesser extent, cyber-bullying. Physical bullying was nearly unanimously rejected as a form of bullying that takes place on

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campus but is identified by the participants as a bullying type. As an example, participant

one said, "I don't really think anyone would say bullying on our campus is physical

because we don't have as much physical violence. I think they would agree our students

are being passive aggressive and using anonymous forms to do that." However, there are

also behaviors and acts described by the participants that would fit into the physical

bullying definition defined in the literature review. One such instance described the

purposeful spilling of drinks on another individual as noted by participant six. Instances

like this may not be seen as physical bullying by the participants because their personal

definitions of physical bullying behavior are more limited to traditional physical

aggression (punching, hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, etc.). In other cases, students

would specifically recognize physical bullying as a type. As another example, participant

eight noted the existence of physical bullying by saying:

> I think that the most overt would be physical fighting or roughing
> someone up, but obviously I do think that the psychological manipulation is just
> as damaging, even if you don't see the physical bruises or whatever, but I think it
> can definitely have a larger impact on someone.

This shows that students know and understand this type of aggressive behavior as part of

the bullying phenomenon, but have not consistently seen this type of behavior happen on

campus. This aligns with Underwood's (2011) notion that as individuals age, the physical

aggression diminishes but other forms— social, relational, verbal, etc.— remain.

Some students, despite understanding that bullying can be both direct and

indirect, did not recognize it actually happening on campus. However, each of these

students proceeded to describe incidents of behavior that under definitions codified in the

research would be classified as bullying behavior. The behavior was recognized as

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happening on campus, but some students were reluctant to call it bullying based on their own perception of what constitutes bullying behavior. For example, participant two said:

> Honestly, I feel like I haven't noticed it that much on this campus at all. In general, if I ever hear about something like that happening it seems like everybody says something and speaks up about it, which is really good.

However, later in the interview, this same participant described a form of cyber-bullying saying, "I will say that would be where I would see the most actual insults occurring and I feel like it being anonymous makes it the main reason why it comes out there." He also described a form of verbal bullying based on students' majors where students of one type of major were picked on more because their major is seen as too easy. "I feel like one thing with the picking and teasing that I have seen personally as to when it comes to different majors." This shows that even if the students do not perceive it to be bullying, it is still occurring.

Identified Bullying Roles

All fifteen participants understood and could describe the roles of bully, victim, and bystander. Eleven of the fifteen also understood the role of bully-victim as a part of the bullying phenomenon. A total of four of the fifteen participants identified themselves as bullies in at least one situation on campus, eleven identified themselves as bystanders, and seven identified themselves as victims of bullying behavior. Of the seven who identified as victims, two also identified themselves as bullies in a different social context; these two participants would be considered bully-victims.

Participant twelve discussed being a victim of bullying, noting that there are times when others have "taken advantage" of her willingness to be agreeable, especially in

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social situations, when she does not feel she has the social power to avoid being targeted by classmates' aggressive verbal and relational behaviors. Participant thirteen indicated that the reason she was bullied by others was because she "did not fit in" the social norms of University X. He also mentioned that he has been in a position where others have "taken advantage" of him because classmates "feel more comfortable picking on" him since he does not fight the ridicule. In both contexts, the participants discussed the motivation for being targeted because they were different than the social norms as noted in this chapter.

The two bully-victims, participants ten and thirteen, described themselves playing all three roles in a bullying situations— sometimes the victim, sometimes the bully, and sometimes the bystander. Both participants discussed ways in which they felt like they fit into each role. Participant ten discussed being the victim of relational and verbal bullying behavior when she was purposefully excluded from social activities, called names, or given dirty or disapproving looks from classmates. She also described her own behavior targeting others in the same way. Finally, she also pinpointed times when she witnessed friends and classmates doing the same thing to others. On some occasions as a bystander, she would intervene; in others, she would not. The distinction between when she would intervene (directly or indirectly) and when she would not depends on the already established social relationship with the victim; if there was already a positive relationship, she would be more likely to intervene. Participant thirteen, on the other hand, experienced all three bullying roles in a more significant way. At first, he described ways in which he participated in the bullying behavior as part of a group social dynamic

that would target an individual or group. After realizing what he was doing, he stopped

and became more of a victim himself. He said:

> At first I participated in that and then towards the end of the year, I just said, "enough is enough" and I separated myself from that. And the moment I did that, all of a sudden I became like the total outsider of the group and that amplified the bullying towards me.

This description ties to the research on the role of power and hierarchy within social

groups as described by Pellegrini and Van Ryzin (2011). When social groups are

forming, to maintain status or to achieve higher status, aggressive or bullying behavior

occurs as a way to build or maintain a level of power or support from the group. It also

connects with Klein's (2006) work on cultural capital among adolescents where social

hierarchies are formed as a way of attaining cultural capital to achieve or maintain a

higher social standing within a hierarchy.

Participants ten and thirteen described forms of bullying that are more indirect.

This type of bullying was commonly described by all the participants, in general, and is

often masked or excused as joking behavior. Participant six describes a type of indirect

bullying that she witnessed by saying, "It's just any random thing that they find funny or

strange that is amusing for them to kick around and play with and that can manifest itself

into conversations about a person that aren't so charitable or making fun of a people

behind their backs and making jokes about them."

On twenty-five occasions within eleven of the participant interviews, the notion of

joking as an excuse for the bullying behavior without the intent to harm was mentioned.

Three of the participants who discussed it brought it up as a way to excuse verbal and

relational bullying they witnessed and did not think of the joking behavior as bullying.

Conversely, eight discussed it as a way for the bullies to rationalize their behavior while the victims and bystanders might see it otherwise. Participant two sums up this position by stressing that the victim's perception is important:

> I know a lot of friend's tease and they do it joking and nobody is hurt about it, but I think as somebody becomes hurt by it, I would describe it as bullying. They have to be aware of how people see it, which is very hard to do and is why you have to watch what you say.

Holt and Espelage (2007) discussed the nature of perceived social support among bullies and victims. If bullies feel supported, it is interpreted as tacit endorsement of aggressive behavior. If the victims feel supported by peers, the bullying behavior may have less of an impact. This support can be real or perceived, so the way in which participant two describes it aligns with the idea that the victim's perspective is a crucial variable in the equation.

Perceived Influences

When participants were asked about which factors influence behavior, several items were identified but the most consistent response related to an individual's micro-system. All fifteen participants indicated that friends, classmates, and families were the primary influences in their lives, including aggressive, bullying behavior. As an example, participant four said, "It's I think it probably is a bit of your background and where you came from and what was normal there." Participant six agreed saying, "Friends, yes; actually parents as well. I know some of my friend's parents are really mean, and it's something that they struggle with. Maybe unconsciously those behaviors from their parents have sunk into their own behaviors." Participant seven noted, "If you grow up in a family that your parents are bullies, you are going to be a bully." Participant twelve

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agreed by saying:

> I've seen it personally how people are brought up. Maybe by how their parents interact with the child growing up or where a person is from— like socio-economic standing or how wealthy they are. They're not as sensitive to different things that they don't understand. So they are not aware that some things may impact people more.

Last, participant fourteen noted, "I would say your friends, who you become friends with right away whenever you first come to campus during [orientation] weekend that influences your behavior on campus." These are each examples of how the participants indicated that the microsystem, the most influential system in Bronfenbrenner's model, has an impact on bullying behavior.

In addition, several of the participants identified macro-system influences as factors that influence their behavior. Participant one said, "TV influences for me I think are a big one. I think current events also play a huge role." Participant three noted religious views as being important at University X saying:

> It's so hard here to have a different kind of opinion— to have a pro-choice opinion or to have a different point of view about non-Catholic ideas. Even if you disagree with the Pope, but you still think of yourself as a Catholic, there's not a lot of room for that kind of person here.

Participants also mentioned politics as an influence of campus bullying behavior. Participant fourteen said, "Politics is a big thing, especially here. It's really more of a conservative campus." Much of this study was conducted during the 2016 United States Presidential election. The eventual winner, Donald Trump, was mentioned by two participants as having a profound impact on racist, sexist, and derogatory behavior towards minorities and women. This is supported by work from the Southern Poverty Law Center (Costello, 2016) which noted that there has been an increase in school

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bullying behavior during this election and cited political rhetoric and Donald Trump's behavior specifically as one of causes.

Chapter 5

Discussion & Conclusions

In light of the results discussed in chapter four, several themes and conclusions can be discussed. In this chapter, the term bullying will be defined from the perspective of the participants. In addition, comparisons to prior research are be made. The fifteen interviews provide enough data to answer the overarching question supported by the objectives of this study. This chapter will discuss the results in a larger context in order to answer the research question.

Answering the Research Question

The primary purpose of this study is to understand how college-aged students perceive and understand the concept of bullying on a college campus. Three objectives were identified to support the research question: (a) to describe the differences between how college-aged students at University X perceive and understand bullying and the research definitions; (b) to describe what forms of bullying occur from the student perspective at University X; and (c) to describe the perceived influences and consequences of bullying on campus at University X.

Objective One

Defining bullying. This study demonstrated that college students perceive the terms bullying and aggression in similar fashion to what was revealed in Cuadrado-Gordillo's (2012) work—as people age, their perception of what is considered bullying expands. The participants consistently indicated that bullying can be both direct and indirect, as well as physical, relational, verbal, and electronic. At younger ages, students

primarily noted the direct forms (physical and verbal) as bullying behavior (Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall, 2010). College-aged students, however, are more inclusive with their definitions and recognize the indirect forms of bullying as well as the direct. The participants noted, in near unanimity, that it is the indirect, relational form of bullying that occurs with greater frequency on campus at University X. This key distinction reveals that college-aged students are able to identify and discriminate between direct and indirect bullying.

Based on the participant interviews, bullying from their perspective can be defined as aggressive behavior—direct or indirect—that is verbal, physical, relational, or cyber in nature, that intentionally hurts an individual or group so as to create a power imbalance in the bully's favor. College-aged students at University X also see all three roles in a bullying situation—the bully, the victim, and the bystander. Most students, eleven of the fifteen participants, acknowledged and understood the fourth role—bully-victim. The respondents believe that role manifests as a complex mixture of previous victim-hood in one social setting followed by aggressive behavior in a different sphere. This closely aligns with the definition described in chapter two of this dissertation with one significant exception: it does not include the notion of repetition. In the participant interviews, repetition was consistently omitted as an aspect of bullying behavior. Given previous research already discussed, it is not surprising that college-aged students perceive and understand bullying more closely to research than do younger individuals.

The concept of repetition as a component of bullying behavior was discussed by only two of participants. Though college-aged students recognize a wider range of

behavior as bullying than younger students, repetition of that behavior was discussed in minor ways. In each case, the participants discussed how bullying is accentuated—not defined—by repetition. This contradicts the work of Gibb and Devereux (2016), who indicated that repetition is an important aspect of cyber-bullying behavior among college students. The authors identified repetition as a factor of the cyber-bullying phenomenon, but did not indicate whether college-aged students recognize it as such. However, this finding is consistent with the work of Madsen (1996), Naylor et al. (2006), and Vaillancort et al. (2008), who demonstrated that this component of bullying is not recognized by students in the primary and secondary levels. For this study, most of the participants—thirteen of fifteen—did not discuss repetition as an integral part of the phenomenon and this finding is not altogether different than prior research by Cowlin (2010), who showed repetition is not a recognized aspect of bullying at the primary and secondary school levels. This contrasts with most research definitions where repetition is included (Olweus, 1993; Monks & Smith, 2006; Horne, Stoddard, & Bell 2007; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012). It is possible another study would clarify this apparent discrepancy.

Although prior work showed that intent and power were not always seen as primary components of bullying at younger ages (Vaillancourt et al, 2008; Allen & Madden, 2012; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012), this study reveals that intent and power are important aspects in college-aged students' understanding of the concept. In thirteen of the fifteen interviews, participants discussed social power, manifested in different ways, as a motive for bullying. First, as stated by Lipkins (2006) and Pellegrini and Van Ryzin

(2011), when people are placed in a new social setting, individuals are more likely to

jockey for social position to either attain or maintain social power. For the participants,

particularly at the start of their freshman year, this was a reality. Some students at

University X had attained high social standing in high school and wanted to maintain it.

Others who lacked high social stature have attempted to attain a new level of standing. In

both scenarios, jockeying can lead to more aggressive behavior among students from the

participants' points of view. This aggression or bullying behavior is much more likely to

be indirect in nature—verbal or relational—rather than a physical conquest and

participants identified name calling, excessive joking, social exclusion, and social

manipulation as power-shifting variants of bullying.

A student's academic class also can play a role as upperclassmen are likelier to be

perceived as leaders of a social group and the underclassmen; freshmen in particular, are

viewed as less powerful. The participants noted both positive and negative effects of this

phenomenon. Positively, upperclassmen can model behavior and use their power to

reduce, eliminate, or at least discourage bullying behavior in their social setting. This is

particularly effective within the residence hall setting where students spend a majority of

their social interaction time. Conversely, upperclassmen can utilize their social power to

assert their own dominance (Lipkins, 2006; Hilton, Anngela-Cole, & Wakita, 2010).

To illustrate this, participant seven noted that he and some of his friends within the

residence hall were hesitant to report bullying behavior among the underclassmen

because it may reflect poorly on their own leadership. Participant seven said:

> Honestly, it can be embarrassing to say, "I need your help to deal with it." When I
> was talking with my friends about it, we're all in the same situation; we're all

juniors; we're not an authority necessarily, but we are because it's just based on being upperclassmen. We have the chance to change it. So, if we were to go to authorities, we'd get the feeling, "Why didn't we fix this ourselves? Why do we need this help?" It's kind of an embarrassment and we think, "Why should we need help?" We should be able to do this on our own.

In this example, though the upperclassmen are not aggressors, their hierarchical status prevented them from reporting to an authority who may be able to more effectively respond to the bullying behavior. Similar behavior has been observed when it comes to hazing. The power of the upperclassmen, or established members of a social group or organization, directly or indirectly allows the aggressive behavior (Lipkins, 2006; Allen & Madden, 2012). That social power grants them the authority to either encourage or curb/stop aggressive behavior.

Prior research has shown that an individual's definition of bullying tends to become more inclusive of indirect behaviors as students age (Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012). There were some participants who indicated that no bullying occurs on campus from their perspective; however, these participants also later described behavior that fits the research definition of bullying. The behavior described is more indirect in nature and may not be understood as bullying by the participant because it is not viewed as a serious, aggressive act. This is consistent with prior literature (Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall, 2010; Cuadrado- Gordillo, 2012) that demonstrated that indirect forms of bullying, particularly at younger ages, are not included in an individual's definition and not considered as serious. It is reasonable to believe that this notion carries over to at least some college-aged students, especially underclassmen, as they are not far removed from their formative schooling years. It is also consistent with literature related to hazing

discussed in chapter two. Lipkins (2006) and Allen and Madden (2012) show that college-aged students are less inclusive in their definitions of hazing than are researchers and the policies in place at post-secondary institutions.

In summation, there are three pieces of information that are important to note related to the definition of bullying from the student perspective: (a) the way in which college-aged students in general perceive and understand bullying more closely aligns with the research-based definition compared to younger individuals; (b) power and intent are identified more as aspects of bullying for college-aged students than younger individuals; and (c) repetition is not included as a significant factor in defining the term by college-aged students.

Objective Two

Types of bullying identified. The participants in this study recognized all four types of bullying—physical, verbal, cyber, and relational—though they may not use these specific words. As noted in chapter four, they acknowledged physical bullying as part of the bullying phenomenon, but did not perceive it as a regular occurrence on campus. Isolated incidents of physical bullying were reported by the participants, but fourteen of the participants explicitly stated that they did not see it occurring and would be surprised if it happened with regularity. Among those who described incidents of physical bullying, they were either hesitant to call it such or didn't recognize it as physical bullying. The participants discussed bullying at University X as primarily relational and verbal in nature and revealed that it takes indirect forms more frequently than direct manifestations. Social exclusion, social manipulation, picking and teasing, and like

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behaviors were described by the participants. This is consistent with research on the changing perception of bullying (Madsen, 1996; Cowlin, 2010; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012) and also aligns with research on bullying in the workplace (Cowie et al., 2002; Smith, Singer, Hoel, & Cooper, 2003). Workplace bullying is rarely physical and is primarily indirect (Cowie et al, 2002). It follows that bullying behavior in college would occupy a space somewhere between primary school-aged and workplace bullying. As students age, they become more mature and learn that physical aggression is less socially acceptable. Indirect, passive forms of aggression become more prevalent (Underwood, 2011), which explains why bullying behavior transforms as people age.

The participants also recognized cyber-bullying as a part of the bullying phenomenon but, like physical bullying, they do not recognize it as a regular occurrence. From their point-of-view, cyber-bullying occurs primarily when anonymity is available. The social networking application YikYak was discussed by fourteen of the fifteen participants as the primary cyber-bullying mechanism on campus. This application provides users with anonymity as well as a public platform from which to direct disparaging words towards individuals or groups (Schuman, 2015). This validates the notion of online disinhibition (Suler, 2004), where anonymity can spur a person into words or behavior that is outside the realm of what that person would say or do when directly faced by the target of his disparagement. This is a contrast between the types of cyber-bullying that have been described in prior work (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007; Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano, 2009; Gibb & Devereux, 2016) where anonymity is not a disqualifying factor for individual participation. This study, however, does align

with Gibb and Devereux's (2016) work showing that electronic forms do, in fact, occur. The authors found that over 50% of students in college experienced some form of electronic bullying. In this study, however, participants did not describe it as prevalent; especially when lacking anonymity. Fourteen of the fifteen participants discussed cyber-bullying, but recognized it as a small part of the bullying phenomenon on campus at University X. They expressed more concern over the indirect forms of bullying already discussed. Electronic harassment or online aggressive behavior sans anonymity was not perceived as occurring on campus with regularity.

The participants also described electronic forms of social exclusion which can be interpreted as indirect bullying. Three of the participants discussed group online chats where certain students had been excluded. Participant thirteen specifically mentions being left out of group chats as a form of social exclusion. These chats are a method by which social groups plan activities, meals, and discuss subjects so a large number of people can be involved in the discussion. Being purposefully excluded from these chats leads to being purposefully excluded from other social activities, and this social manipulation erodes a victim's standing within the social hierarchy.

In summary, four items are important to note related to the types of bullying identified by the participants: (a) college-aged students perceive and understand all four bullying types as bullying; (b) physical bullying, while recognized as a type of bullying, is not recognized as occurring with any regularity on campus; (c) cyber-bullying is much more likely to occur when anonymity is available; and (d) the primary form in which bullying occurs on campus at University X is indirect relational or verbal bullying.

Objective Three

    Influences. Determining the perceived influences and consequences of bullying on campus at University X is challenging based on the participant interviews. The participants identified factors in both the micro- and macro-systems as influences of college-aged bullying behaviors. Many discussed the behavior in terms of how it is directly learned from or influenced by others. For example, parents, immediate family members, and political figures, were identified specifically as primary influences by the participants. Several participants also discussed their faith, church, and individual members of those organizations as possible influences. This is not surprising given the religious affiliation of University X. For some participants, these influences have positively impacted their behavior, helping them to become active bystanders (or up-standers) in fulfillment of their faith. In other cases, participants discussed how faith has had a negative impact, particularly for those who do not carry the same beliefs as those in the majority on campus.

    This is not altogether different than what has been described in prior research in that personal influences such as family and friends have the largest impact on behavior (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It also supports the model, presented by Swearer and Espelage (2004; 2011) and adapted from Bronfenbrenner, that bullying does not happen in isolation. Of the multiple influences surrounding the individual, those within the micro-system are the most influential. Participants validate this theory in how they described what has influenced their own and their classmates' behavior, by describing friends, relatives, and classmates as primary influencers. Additionally, influences at the macro-

level, such as politicians, movie stars, athletes, or culturally-related items have an impact

on behavior. Little or no discussion of items in the exo-, meso-, and chrono-systems took

place. It may be that the meso- and exo-system influences are not recognized because the

participants relate those influences more to the micro- or macro-levels. In other words,

participants not familiar with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model may see influences as two-

fold: (a) close influences such as family and friends described by Bronfenbrenner as the

micro-system; and (b) cultural influences such as politics and media described as the

macro-system. As Bronfenbrenner shows us, the micro-system is influenced by others'

micro-systems in which the individual is both included and excluded. So, it is possible

that influences that Bronfenbrenner would include in the meso- and exo-systems are

described by the participants in ways that Bronfenbrenner would include in the micro- or

macro-systems.

Since the interviews for this study took place during the 2016 U.S. Presidential

election primary season, participants noted that support for certain candidates led to more

aggressive behavior and more strained relationships among classmates based on a

student's preferred candidate. Work done by the Southern Poverty Law Center (Costello,

2016) shows that presidential politics has influenced bullying and aggressive behavior

among students at lower grade levels. The influence may be more pronounced as college-

aged students become involved, support, and vote for a presidential candidate for

possibly the first time.

Consequences. There was no consensus among the participants with regard to

consequences. Some were reluctant to report bullying to those of authority which may

limit the view of more readily visible consequences. In some cases, bullying behaviors were excused as jokes or insults among friends rather than behavior aimed at purposefully hurting or degrading an individual or group. Most participants indicated that this type of joking is common among friends and that the victims may view it differently than the perpetrators. Again, this may limit whether or not consequences are readily visible to someone who is not the victim. This reveals that the intent of the bully and how the victim receives the behavior are vitally important. Allen and Madden (2012) as well as Lipkins (2006) discuss similar issues related to hazing on college campuses. Students understand, according to the authors, that hazing is part of college culture and is influenced by that culture. Similarly, participants in this study understand bullying is a part of schooling, but are less inclusive in what they identify as bullying. In other words, there is a connection between what students perceive as bullying and hazing which correlates with their expectations of the consequences of the behavior.

A major consequence discussed among the participants is the academic effect on the victim. Eight of the fifteen participants indicated the bullying phenomenon had academic impacts, ranging from lowered enthusiasm for class, lower grades, and withdrawal or dismissal from the university. These findings align with Young-Jones, Fursa, Byrket, and Sly's (2015) work that shows that students' academic experiences are influenced by bullying— including academic motivation and overall educational outcomes. For colleges and universities, these consequences affect graduation and retention rates. Addressing campus bullying and aggression may be an uncommon approach for increasing those ever-important numbers.

Suggested Interventions

The participants suggested that creating culture change may be the most effective way of inhibiting bullying behavior on campus at University X. Most students indicated that new policy or procedures created by the institution would be met with skepticism on the part of the students. However, culture change initiated by the student body at large with support from the university to limit or eliminate aggressive and violent behavior may have a better chance at success.

One program that can be implemented on college campuses is the national Green Dot program, which focuses on creating culture change to limit or end relationship violence (Green Dot, 2016). This data- and research-driven program focuses heavily on sexual assault on college campuses, but can be adapted to include indirect forms of bullying described by the participants. The main goal of the Green Dot program is to create culture change on college campuses through bystander awareness. It trains students, faculty, and staff that violence is not okay and that everyone has to do their part to end it. The training focuses on acts of violence, no matter how small, and labels them as red dots. Green dots are the opposite; acts that either inform others of behavioral expectations or that actively intervene in a potentially violent situation. To date, hundreds of colleges, universities, schools, and organizations have instituted the Green Dot program (Green Dot, 2016) to influence and possibly catalyze change. This program can be a mechanism for changing campus culture through attitudes and actions of community members rather than modifying rules, regulations, and enforcement through administrative action.

Other solutions similar to the Green Dot program may be effective in curtailing the indirect bullying behavior described by the participants. Given this study and the sum of literature referenced herein, it is unlikely that direct intervention on the part of the institution will be effective. It follows that programs used in primary or secondary school will be less effective in limiting college-aged bullying, especially in light of newer work by Bradshaw (2015) on the effectiveness of prevention programs at lower levels. However, programs that create culture change and grow from student initiative may have better odds for success.

Future Studies

With a better understanding of how students on campus at University X have experienced the bullying phenomenon, this study has set the stage for future research on college-aged bullying behavior. Three suggestions for future studies have emerged, with the first being replication of this study on other campuses of different types. Similar studies at places with a different profile than University X such as state institutions, two- and four-year schools, non-research universities, commuter institutions, and schools with students of nontraditional age would reveal similarities and differences in how students from different institution types perceive and understand the phenomenon as well as the influences and consequences. Further study would add value to the literature because it would provide a better understanding of how bullying is perceived at varying types of post-secondary schools.

Second, a more exhaustive, quantitative study spanning several campuses of multiple types would provide more data in quantity and type to compare with the

experiences described in this phenomenological study. By doing this, researchers could

apply the knowledge gleaned from this study to a survey created to measure college

students' experiences and perceptions of the bullying phenomenon. As described by

Creswell (2007), phenomenological qualitative studies gather the essence of an

experience. This lays the foundation for more in-depth, quantitative studies that can more

precisely measure and describe the phenomenon in a generalizable way. This gives

researchers an opportunity to better understand college students' perceptions of the

matter so that more effective and precise interventions can be developed and

administered.

As we know from examining Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological model, the

campus community is not limited to students. Therefore, a study examining how faculty,

staff, and administrators view and understand bullying among college-aged students

would supplement literature by identifying how those charged with the care and teaching

of students understand and respond to victims. This comparison can provide valuable

insight to better understand not only how students perceive bullying, but how

administrators, faculty, and staff respond to help those in need.

Conclusion

At the start of this dissertation, larger-scale violent incidents were discussed as a

way of illustrating how unchecked bullying behavior can lead to horrific acts of violence

that may be preventable. These incidents, while they gain national attention when they

happen, are considered rare (Fox & Savage, 2009). None of the participants in this study

discussed that level of violence or suicide as a normal part of campus culture. However,

they did point to behaviors and effects of bullying such as depression, academic transfer, and feelings of being ostracized that have been identified as one of many precursors to large-scale tragedy (Virginia Tech Review Panel, 2007; Byers, 2013).

Bullying on college campuses looks and is understood differently than it is in primary and secondary schools. The direct forms of bullying commonly recognized at lower grade levels (Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall, 2010) are not prevalent at the college level. But, indirect behavior not recognized as bullying at the lower levels (Maunder, Harrop, & Tattersall, 2010) is recognized as such in college. The indirect nature of bullying in post-secondary education makes it more difficult to see and respond to expeditiously. Initiatives that promote culture change and awareness will be more effective in limiting or ending bullying behavior on college campuses which can be for the betterment of the entire campus community.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

The following are the questions to be used in the interviews adapted from Williams'
(2008) study. Additional prompts are in parentheses.

1. What is college life like for you? Have your expectations changed since you
   arrived on campus? (What is your campus community like? How would you
   describe the student population on campus?)

2. How do you feel about going to class every day? (Why? Have your feelings
   changed or gone through different phases since you've arrived on campus? If so,
   can you tell me about it?)

3. Where do you hang out on campus? (Why?)

4. What are your interactions like with other students? With faculty or staff? (Can
   you tell me about it? Do you interact with some students/faculty/staff differently
   than you do others? Why?)

5. What is it like walking on campus in the halls or on the quads? (What is it like
   between classes? In the residence hall? In the dining facility? In the student
   union?)

6. Are you aware of any rules related to student conduct/behavior on campus?
   (Whose rules are they? Professors, deans, residence directors, university,
   unwritten?)

7. What are your thoughts on students who pick on, tease, or verbally/physically
   abuse other students on campus? (Have you shared those feelings with anyone?)

8. What does picking/teasing/verbal or physical abuse look like? (What were the reasons for the picking/teasing?)

9. Can you describe those who have done the picking/teasing/verbal or physical abuse? (Did they have a motive? Are there any defining characteristics?)

10. Can you describe those who are the victims of the picking/teasing/verbal or physical abuse? (Are there any defining characteristics? How did they become targets?)

11. Have you ever witnessed, been a target of, or perpetrated picking/teasing/verbal or physical abuse on campus? (If so, can you tell me about it? What were the circumstances? Who was involved? Where did it occur?)

12. Have these incidents affected your college experience? (If so, how?)

13. How would you define or classify bullying?

14. Are there degrees of bullying from your perspective? (Can you describe those degrees? Are there different types of bullying?)

15. In your opinion, is there anything the university can do to reduce bullying?

16. How would your classmates define bullying? (Would it be similar or different than your definitions? How? Why?)

17. What do you think causes or influences bullying, picking, or teasing? Are there situations (physical or social) that are more conducive to it? (Does campus culture promote or inhibit these behaviors?)

18. Do you think your or your classmates' behavior is influenced by outside factors at all? (Parents, Friends, Church, TV, Social Media)

19. If a participant brings up the topic of campus violence during the discussion, the
    following questions would be asked:

    a. You mentioned campus violence earlier in our conversation. What do you
        think of campus violence, how would you describe your understanding of
        it?

    b. Have you ever witnessed (or experienced) campus violence? If so, can you
        tell me about it?

    c. How do you distinguish between bullying and campus violence?

    d. Do you have any thoughts on the relationship between campus bullying
        and campus violence?

Appendix B

Participant Demographics

Part. No.	Class	Gender	Race	Family Income	Primary College	Major	Bullying Experience	Role
1	So	F	Black or African American	$150,000 — $249,000	AL	Psychology	No	By, V
2	Jr	F	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$100,000 — $149,999	AL	Psychology	No	None
3	Sr	F	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$50,000 — $99,999	AL	Medieval Studies	Yes	V
4	So	F	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$100,000 — $149,999	SC	Neuro-science & Behavior	Yes	By
5	Fr	M	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$150,000 — $249,000	EG/AR	Aerospace	No	None
6	Jr	F	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	Under $50,000	AL	Art History	Yes	By, B
7	Jr	M	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$100,000 — $149,999	EG/AR	Chemical Eng.	Yes	By
8	So	F	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$100,000 — $149,999	AL	Psychology	Yes	By
9	Jr	F	Hispanic or Latino, White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$150,000 — $249,000	EG/AR	Electrical Eng.	No	None
10	So	F	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$150,000 — $249,000	AL	Political Science; Pre-med	Yes	By, V

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Part. No.	Class	Gender	Race	Family Income	Primary College	Major	Bullying Experience	Role
12	So	F	Hispanic or Latino	$150,000 — $249,000	SC	SCPP	Yes	By, B
13	So	M	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$50,000 — $99,999	BA	Marketing and Visual Communications Design	Yes	B, By, V
14	Jr	F	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$100,000 — $149,999	BA	Management Consulting	Yes	By
15	Fr	M	White (Non-Hispanic or Latino)	$100,000 — $149,999	SC	Neuroscience & Behavior	No	None

Sample Participant Consent Form

ADULT RESEARCH SUBJECT - INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Project Title: *The Socio-ecological Influences of College Bullying Behavior: A Phenomenological Study of Student Perceptions*

Purpose: You are invited to participate in the research project entitled *The Socio-ecological Influences of College Bullying Behavior: A Phenomenological Study of Student Perceptions* which is being conducted at the University X under the direction of **[Researcher name redacted]**. The purpose of this qualitative study is to describe the lived experiences of college students in relation to the bullying phenomenon on college campuses.

Description of Procedures: This research study will take place on campus at the University X. Participants will be interviewed once for about 60 minutes in an office setting in **[Redacted]**. You will be asked to describe your perceptions of bullying behaviors on campus and to describe your experiences, if any, with bullying on campus.

When the study is completed, that data will be analyzed and written for publication. The raw data (audio recordings and interview transcripts) will be kept confidential once publication is completed.

Permission to record: Will you permit the researcher to audio record during this research procedure?

YES   NO   Date:_____
Initial Here   Initial Here

After you have completed your participation, the researcher will debrief you about the data, theory and research area under study and answer any questions you may have about the research.

Potential Risks: There are minimal risks to participation in this study, including loss of confidentiality.

Additionally, answering questions during the interview might cause you to feel uneasy or anxious. If so, you may stop at any time. Should you need any treatment related to your experiences in the interview, University counseling is available free of charge. Any additional, outside treatment would be at your own expense.

Potential Benefits: The only direct benefit to you if you participate in this research may be that you will learn about how social science research is run and may learn more about bullying. Others may benefit by learning about the results of this research. Down the road, this research may lead to better bullying identification and prevention measures on college campuses.

Confidentiality: The researchers will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you provided this information, or what that information is. The consent forms with signatures will be kept separate from responses, which will not include names and which will be presented to others only when combined with other responses. Although we will make every effort to protect your confidentiality, there is a low risk that this might be breached.

Voluntary Participation: Your refusal to participate in this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled and will not affect your relationship with University X or any of your classes. In addition, you may discontinue participation at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits.

Contact Information: Before you decide to accept this invitation to take part in this study, you may ask any questions that you might have. If you have any questions at any time before, during or after your participation or experience any physical or psychological distress as a result of this research, you should contact the researcher: **[Researcher contact information redacted]**

If you have questions beyond those answered by the researcher, on your rights as a research subject or on research-related injuries, the research office at University X may be contacted at **[Redacted]** or via email at **[Redacted]**.

Before you sign this form, please ask any questions on any aspect of this study that is unclear to you. You may take as much time as necessary to think it over.

<center>SIGNATURE SECTION – Please read carefully</center>

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature indicates that you are 18 years of age or older, you have read the information provided above, you have had all your questions answered, and you have decided to take part in this research.

The date you sign this document to enroll in this study, that is, today's date must fall between the dates indicated at the bottom of the page.

Name of Subject (please print)		Signature		Date
Only those 18 years of age or older may participate in this study.				

This Adult Research Informed Consent document has been reviewed and approved by the University X IRB for the period of time specified in the box below.

<center>Approved Number of Subjects: 50</center>

Appendix D

Glossary of Terms

Aggression— "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation" (World Health Organization, 2002, p. 4). There are two components of aggression: (a) The aggressor must have the intent to harm; and (b) the victim must feel harmed (Underwood, 2011).

Bully— The person or persons who perpetrates the act of aggression toward the victim (Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita, 2010).

Bullying—Behavior that hurts or harms another individual or group, is persistent or repeated in nature, is intentional or purposeful, and creates an imbalance of power favoring the bully over the victim (Olweus, 1993; Monks & Smith, 2006; Horne, Stoddard, & Bell, 2007).

Bully-victim— A person who is a bully in one social setting but is the victim in another (Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano, 2009; Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita, 2010; Martocci, 2015).

Bystander— The witness of a bullying situation (Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita, 2010)

Chrono-system— The outermost layer of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) socio-ecological model of development that "encompasses change or consistency over time not only in the

characteristics of the person but also of the environment in which that person lives"
(Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 40).

Cyber-bullying— Bullying attacks that are done through the Internet, cell phone texting, social media, etc. for the purposes of hurting feelings, damaging relationships or friendships, or social manipulation (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007).

Exo-system— The second layer of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) socio-ecological model of development where "one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in that setting" (p. 237).

Hazing— "A form of bullying in which candidates for acceptance into a group or organization are obliged to endure humiliating and sometimes dangerous treatment as a requirement— rite of passage— for group membership" (Thomas, 2006, p. 147).

Macro-system—The fourth layer of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) socio-ecological model of development that is "thought of as a societal blueprint for a particular culture or subculture" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 40).

Meso-system— The second layer in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) socio-ecological model of development. It consists of interactions and links *among* those immediately surrounding the individual creating a network of micro-systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

Micro-system— The first and most influential layer of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) socio-ecological model of development that "is a pattern of activities, social roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical, social, and symbolic features that invite, permit, or

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inhibit engagement in sustained, progressively more complex interaction with, and

activity in, the immediate environment" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 39).

Physical Bullying— The most recognized type of bullying, this is physical, aggressive

behavior directed at an individual or group with the primary purpose of maintaining

power over the victim (Swearer and Espelage, 2004).

Proactive Aggression— A type of aggression, often in the form of bullying behaviors,

used to establish a person within a social hierarchy. Proactive aggressors use their

aggression in a more calculated way to provide themselves with an advantage in social

situations (Pellegrini & Van Ryzin, 2011).

Reactive Aggression— Aggression that takes the form of a threat response that is real or

perceived by the individual. This type of aggression usually has a negative impact on

students' social statuses making it more likely that they will be perceived as weak

(Pellegrini & Van Ryzin, 2011).

Relational Bullying— Aggressive behavior concentrated on an individual or group in

the form of ostracism, social manipulation or non-physical attacks with the purpose of

harming the victim's social relationships and/or status and with the intent to maintain a

power imbalance (Espelage, Mebane, & Swearer, 2004).

Social Power— Power or social capital achieved by rising through the social hierarchy

(Pellegrini & Van Ryzin, 2011). In social settings, individuals may attempt to dominate

others through bullying behaviors as a way to gain or maintain higher social status.

Socio-ecological Model— A model of development developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner

which shows how personal, social, and moral development is influenced by factors or

systems surrounding the individual. The model places the individual at the center and examines environmental influences. These influences are better understood as concentric circles surrounding the individual, with the closest having the most influence on development, and the farthest having the least (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1994).

Up-stander—A type of bystander that is not initially directly involved in a bullying situation, but witnesses it. The individual then inserts him/herself in defense of the victim (Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano, 2009).

Verbal Bullying— Audible statements directed at an individual or group. Verbal bullying is persistent or repeated in nature with a purpose of creating a power imbalance between the aggressor and the victim (Swearer & Espelage, 2004)

Victim— Individuals or groups who are being bullied, or toward whom the aggressive behavior is directed (Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita, 2010).

Appendix E

List of Codes

Aggression— Includes mentions by the participants of the word "aggression" or behaviors that match the definition of aggressive behavior that does not fit as bullying.

Anonymity— Coded as such when a participant specifically discussed anonymity as a part of bullying behavior.

Behavior: Changes— Items coded here included participant discussion of changes in behavior in response to a bullying incident, to avoid being bullied, or to increase social power.

Behavior: Conform to Social Norms— This code includes items when the participants mentioned not conforming to social norms as a reason for bullying behavior or as a reason for changing behavior.

Behavior: Extrovert— Behavior described by the participants that is outgoing and more social. Items coded here refer either to the participants themselves or someone in their social circle.

Behavior: Groups— Behavior described by the participants where they socialize in groups where their actions and choices are influenced by the group.

Behavior: Introvert— Behavior described by the participants that is internal and less social. Items coded here refer either to the participants themselves or someone in their social circle.

Behavior: Lonely— Behavior described by the participants as their own feeling of loneliness or behavior they witness in those whom they described as victims.

Behavior: Retaliation— Behavior described by the participants that includes retaliation by the bully for being reported to an authority figure. This also includes victim or bystander fear of not reporting to an authority figure to avoid retaliatory bullying.

Bully: No intent to harm— Behavior described by the participants that may fit the definition of bullying, but is not described as such by participants because the bully was joking or did not intend to harm the victim.

Bullying: Cyber— Bullying behaviors that fit within the definition of cyber-bullying or bullying done by electronic means.

Bullying: Direct— Bullying behavior that is direct in nature, usually physical or verbal.

Bullying: By Faculty— Bullying behavior described by the participants that is perpetrated by University X faculty.

Bullying: Group Targeting— Bullying behavior described by the participants that is perpetrated by a group or target a group.

Bullying: Indirect— Bullying behavior that is indirect in nature, usually verbal or relational.

Bullying: Intent to harm— Bullying behavior described by the participants where the bully intends to harm the victim.

Bullying: None Recognized— This includes mentions by the participants of no bullying behavior being recognized as *occurring on campus* at University X

Bullying: Physical— Bullying behavior described by the participants that is physical in nature.

Bullying: Relational— Bullying behavior described by the participants that is indirect and relational in nature.

Bullying: Repetition— This includes discussion by the participants of repetition being an aspect of bullying behavior.

Bullying: Verbal— Bullying behavior described by the participants that is verbal in nature.

Campus Culture: Inhibits behavior— As described by the participants, this includes rules, behaviors, social norms, or parts of campus culture that reduces or inhibits bullying behavior on campus at University X.

Campus Culture: Promotes behavior— As described by the participants, this includes rules, behaviors, social norms, or parts of campus culture that encourages or promotes bullying behavior on campus at University X.

Compare to Another Environment— Descriptions or discussion of bullying behavior or social norms from another social setting, often the participant's high school, home life, or other environment not related to University X.

Diversity: Lack— Discussion by the participants on the lack of diversity on campus at University X.

Effects: Academic— Effects of bullying that are academic in nature including lower grades, trouble studying, transfer, dismissal, and the like.

Effects: Mental— Effects described by the participants that are mental or psychological in nature such as depression or mental anguish or pain.

Effects: Other— Other effects described by the participants that do not fit into the other coded data.

Effects: Physical— Effects of bullying that are physical in nature such as pain, bruising, or other physical effects.

Effects: Social— Effects of bullying described by the participants that change or manipulate an individual's social situation including social standing, relationships with others, friendships, and the like.

Hazing— Behaviors described by the participants that are done for initiation purposes.

Influences: Micro— Behavioral influences described by the participants that fit in Bronfenbrenner's micro-system including family, friends, residence hall, classes, and the like.

Influences: Faith— Behavioral influences described by the participants that are faith or religion based.

Influences: Politics/National Values— Behavioral influences described by the participants that focus on national values, politics, or other items at the macro-system level of Bronfenbrenner's model of development.

Influences: Social Media— Behavioral influences described by the participants that emanate from social media such as Facebook, YikYak, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

Influences: Social Norms— Behavioral influences that are dictated by perceived social and cultural norms.

Interaction: Negative— Described interactions by the participants on campus at University X that are viewed as negative.

Interaction: Positive— Described interactions by the participants on campus at University X that are viewed as positive.

Intervention: Direct— Items or discussions by the participant that describe intervening in a bullying situation in a direct manner.

Intervention: Indirect— Items or discussions by the participant that describe intervening in a bullying situation in an indirect manner.

Location: Classroom— Bullying behavior described by the participants that occurs in the classroom or classroom building.

Location: Dining Halls— Bullying behavior described by the participants that occurs in the dining facilities.

Location: Other— Bullying behavior described by the participants that occurs in other locations on campus not included as its own code.

Location: Residence Hall— Bullying behavior described by the participants that occurs in the residence halls.

Location: Student Center— Bullying behavior described by the participants that occurs in the student center building.

Motives: Being Different— Those who are different than the social or cultural norms, or different from the social group, including wearing different clothes, acting different, having different interests, or other behavior seen as different and are reasons why a victim may be targeted.

Motives: Cultural— As described by the participants, cultural aspects of an individual that do not match the social norms of University X are highlighted as a reason for being

targeted for bullying. This code also includes those who use their own cultural belief as a motive for bullying others.

Motives: Faith— As described by the participants, the faith of a victim is used as a motive for bullying others. This also includes descriptions of those who use their own faith beliefs as a reasons to bully others who do not conform to those same beliefs.

Motives: None— As described by the participants, this includes descriptions of bullying that have no described motive— the bullying is simply perpetrated for no apparent reason.

Motives: Other— Motives for bullying described by the participants that do not fit in one of the other motive codes.

Motives: Socio-economic Status— As described by the participants, bullying that is motivated by socio-economic status.

Motives: Social Power— As described by the participants, bullying that is perpetrated for the purpose of gaining, or maintaining social power.

Power (Other)— Items discussed or highlighted by the participants related to power that is not social in nature. This includes hierarchal power between students and faculty/staff/university administrators.

Reporting: Nothing will Happen— Discussion by the participants that if someone reports bullying behavior, nothing will happen, no punishment will occur. This code also includes discussion of a limited response to reporting such as a "wrist slap."

Reporting: To Authority— Reporting to an authority figure bullying behavior as described by the participants.

Role: Bully— Participants describing their role in a bullying situation on campus at University X as being the bully.

Role: Bystander—Participants describing their role in a bullying situation on campus at University X as being a bystander.

Role: Victim—Participants describing their role in a bullying situation on campus at University X as being a victim.

Rules: Inhibit behavior—As described by the participants, rules or procedures of University X that stop, curb, or inhibit bullying behavior.

Rules: Promotes behavior—As described by the participants, rules or procedures of University X that encourages or promotes bullying behavior.

Rules: Men's vs. Women's Halls—Rules or procedures and enforcement that is described as being applied differently between men's and women's residence halls. This also includes descriptions by the participants of differences between how rules are enforced in men's halls versus women's halls.

Rules: Unwritten—Descriptions of rules that are abided by students on campus at University X that are not written in an official document. These rules may be culturally or socially based.

Rules: Written—Descriptions of rules that are written and enforced by the University X administration.

Social Support for Bully—As described by the participants, support for the bully in a bullying situation.

Social Support for Victim—As described by the participants, support for the victim in a bullying situation.

Training: Cultural Change—Discussion of training methods, as described by the participants, that would encourage and promote cultural change on campus at University X.

Training: Prevention/Awareness—Discussion of training methods and procedures to help curb or stop bullying behavior on campus. This also includes discussion of promoting awareness of bullying behaviors on campus at University X.

Appendix F

Codes and the Number of Times They Appear in Participant Transcripts

Code	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8
Aggression	6	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
Anonymity	6	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
Behavior: Changes	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2
Behavior: Conform to Social Norms	1	1	1	2	0	1	3	2
Behavior: Extrovert	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Behavior: Groups	0	0	3	4	0	5	0	0
Behavior: Introvert	0	0	3	2	0	4	1	0
Behavior: Lonely	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Behavior: Retaliation	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Bully: No intent to harm	2	1	0	1	4	3	1	0
Bullying: Cyber	3	1	3	1	0	2	4	2
Bullying: Direct	4	0	0	1	1	1	2	2
Bullying: By Faculty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bullying: Group Targeting	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	1
Bullying: Indirect	6	0	0	3	3	1	0	1
Bullying: Intent to harm	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bullying: None Recognized	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	1
Bullying: Physical	0	2	1	0	1	1	1	2
Bullying: Relational	1	3	5	4	3	5	6	4
Bullying: Repetition	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Bullying: Verbal	4	6	2	1	3	1	2	0
Campus Culture: Inhibits behavior	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Campus Culture: Promotes behavior	0	0	1	2	1	1	3	2
Compare to Another Env.	1	0	1	3	2	1	1	0
Diversity: Lack	2	0	1	2	1	1	0	1
Effects: Academic	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
Effects: Mental	1	3	2	2	1	2	0	1
Effects: Other	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Effects: Physical	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Effects: Social	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hazing	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1

Code	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8
Influences: Micro	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1
Influences: Faith	0	2	2	0	1	1	3	0
Influences: Politics/ National Values	1	1	2	0	0	2	1	2
Influences: Social Media	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Influences: Social Norms	0	1	0	5	3	5	1	1
Interaction: Negative	1	2	2	1	0	7	5	1
Interaction: Positive	3	9	3	4	5	0	5	3
Intervention: Direct	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
Intervention: Indirect	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Location: Classroom	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Location: Dining Halls	2	1	0	0	0	2	1	1
Location: Other	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Location: Residence Hall	3	3	1	2	1	1	1	1
Location: Student Center	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Motives: Being Different	1	0	3	1	1	1	0	0
Motives: Cultural	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
Motives: Faith	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0
Motives: None	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Motives: Other	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1
Motives: Socio-economic Status	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Motives: Social Power	2	0	1	8	2	4	12	2
Power (Other)	3	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
Reporting: Nothing will Happen	0	0	1	0	1	2	4	1
Reporting: To Authority	3	1	1	0	1	0	1	2
Role: Bully	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Role: Bystander	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	0
Role: Victim	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Rules: Inhibit behavior	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	1
Rules: Promotes behavior	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
Rules: Men's vs. Women's Halls	0	1	2	2	1	2	1	1
Rules: Unwritten	0	4	2	3	1	2	1	0
Rules: Written	2	0	1	1	3	2	1	2
Social Support for Bully	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Social Support for Victim	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

Code	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8
Training: Cultural Change	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	1
Training: Prevention/ Awareness:	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1

Code	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	Totals
Aggression	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	14
Anonymity	1	0	0	0	1	2	1	15
Behavior: Changes	2	2	2	1	1	0	3	22
Behavior: Conform to Social Norms	0	0	0	0	4	3	3	21
Behavior: Extrovert	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	7
Behavior: Groups	1	3	1	0	4	8	5	34
Behavior: Introvert	1	2	1	0	2	1	1	18
Behavior: Lonely	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Behavior: Retaliation	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	7
Bully: No intent to harm	2	2	3	2	0	4	0	25
Bullying: Cyber	3	3	2	1	2	3	2	32
Bullying: Direct	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	15
Bullying: By Faculty	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Bullying: Group Targeting	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	10
Bullying: Indirect	0	1	2	2	0	2	1	22
Bullying: Intent to harm	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	9
Bullying: None Recognized	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	10
Bullying: Physical	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	11
Bullying: Relational	6	9	7	4	7	5	4	73
Bullying: Repetition	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Bullying: Verbal	2	1	4	4	2	4	1	37
Campus Culture: Inhibits behavior	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	6
Campus Culture: Promotes behavior	0	3	0	0	3	2	0	18
Compare to Another Env.	0	0	4	1	0	1	0	15
Diversity: Lack	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	10
Effects: Academic	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	9
Effects: Mental	1	1	0	1	2	3	1	21
Effects: Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Effects: Physical	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Effects: Social	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	7

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Code	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	Totals
Hazing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Influences: Micro	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	22
Influences: Faith	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	14
Influences: Politics/ National Values	1	1	0	1	2	1	2	17
Influences: Social Media	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	5
Influences: Social Norms	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	21
Interaction: Negative	0	6	5	0	1	1	2	34
Interaction: Positive	7	6	8	6	5	5	11	80
Intervention: Direct	0	1	2	1	1	2	1	14
Intervention: Indirect	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	5
Location: Classroom	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	7
Location: Dining Halls	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	10
Location: Other	0	2	0	1	2	1	0	9
Location: Residence Hall	2	1	2	1	2	2	3	26
Location: Student Center	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	7
Motives: Being Different	1	3	2	0	7	5	3	28
Motives: Cultural	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	9
Motives: Faith	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
Motives: None	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Motives: Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Motives: Socio-economic Status	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	5
Motives: Social Power	3	6	3	4	0	3	4	54
Power (Other)	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	11
Reporting: Nothing will Happen	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	11
Reporting: To Authority	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	10
Role: Bully	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	4
Role: Bystander	0	1	0	1	2	1	0	14
Role: Victim	0	1	0	1	2	1	0	8
Rules: Inhibit behavior	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	11
Rules: Promotes behavior	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Rules: Men's vs. Women's Halls	2	4	2	1	1	3	3	26
Rules: Unwritten	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	17
Rules: Written	3	2	1	2	3	2	1	26
Social Support for Bully	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4

Code	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	Totals
Social Support for Victim	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Training: Cultural Change	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	10
Training: Prevention/ Awareness:	1	4	2	1	1	1	0	15

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