

LINKING SELF-ESTEEM AND SPEAKING ABILITIES: THE BULLIES AND VICTIMS' EXPERIENCE

Dr. Jovelyn, M. Cantina and Janet Grace R. Sarzuelo

Abstract

Bullying and victimization are serious problems in schools due to their high rates of occurrence and their potentially devastating consequences. One hypothesis that needs to be examined regarding the causation of this problem is whether being a bully or a victim may affect self-esteem and performance of the students. The study aims to establish determine the relationship between the bullying/victimization and the self-esteem and speaking capabilities among the freshman criminology students of JRMSU System during the second semester of the academic year 2015-2016. The correlational research method is employed in the study which administers The Bullying and Victimization Questionnaire (BVQ) Rosenberg Self-Esteem Survey (SES), and speaking capabilities. The statistical tools used are frequency count, mean computations, t-test, Man-Whitney U-test, and Spearman Rank. The Findings accepted the hypothesis that self-esteem does not significantly correlates with students' speaking abilities. This study recommends for further researches in determining the factors that affect the speaking abilities of the students. Also, a study that surveys not only freshmen criminology students, but also students from other programs regarding the negative impact of bullying experiences will be conducted as this would help to provide a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between bullying behaviors and self-esteem, and speaking abilities. Moreover, gender and age differences will also be considered as variables in future study to identify what group of students had bullying experiences and victimization.

Keywords: bullies, victims, experience, self-esteem, speaking abilities

Introduction

Bullying is a common problem faced by children and adolescents in schools throughout the world. This may involve physical abuse, verbal ridicule, or shunning of students who are perceived as vulnerable, submissive, or different by peers who are in a dominant role, either by virtue of their strength or by virtue of being in the majority. It tends to be intentional and repeated and can be carried out either by an individual or a group. (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000).

According to Olweus, as cited by Kokkinos (2004), bullying may predict future anti-social behavior and aggression. One approach to examining the roots of this problem has been to study the personalities and socio-demographic characteristics of children who bully and become victimized, in order to identify pathological and other distinctive features that will help recognize the problem before it escalates. For instance, according to some research findings, more boys than girls are involved in bullying and found that although children from different socio-economic situations are at equal risk of being involved in bullying at some point, disadvantaged children are more likely to remain involved in bullying in the long term.

Other results from this socio-demographic approach are also of interest: Boys tend to be involved in more direct and physical bullying, while girls tend to engage in more indirect bullying such as spreading rumors and isolating others. Generally, male bullies are believed to be low school achievers, come from families with high conflict, and have parents who use physical punishment and are cold and authoritarian. Victims also tend to be low school achievers and are likely to have overprotective mothers and distant fathers [Baldry and Farrington, 2000].

With regards to personality characteristics, victims have been described as insecure, quiet, submissive, and introverted, while bullies are described as aggressive and dominant with little empathy (Olweus, as cited by Kokkinos, 2004). While some victims have not been able to withstand the pain and torture of bullies and end up committing suicide in their youth, other victims harbor their fears into adulthood, suppressing hatred toward their bullies until they violently strike back at other innocent victims (Spade, 2007).

The effect of bullying continues to be a problem for millions of students who experience Olweus (2003) reported that an estimated one out of every seven children are either bullied or have been the victim of a bully.

While many studies have been conducted to explore why students bully others or are involved in acts of bullying, these studies are not specific to the effects of bullying upon student self-esteem and, therefore, create a gap of pertinent information that would be helpful to school administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers seeking to understand the effects of bullying on student's self-esteem and speaking capabilities and reduce the bullying and violence within their schools.

Along this context, this study aimed to determine the relationship between the self-esteem and speaking capabilities among the freshmen criminology students of JRMSU System who are taking English 21 (Speech and Oral Communication) during the second semester of the academic year 2015-2016. It also aimed to determine the extent of bullying experiences as a victim and as the bully. It aimed to determine the level of the student's self-esteem and speaking capabilities of the respondents. Moreover, it aimed to determine the difference of the students' self-esteem and speaking capabilities between

bullies and victims. In so doing, research-based findings will be established regarding the experiences as bullies and victims and how it affects the self-esteem and speaking capabilities of the students. Findings of the study will provide insights to GAD focal persons, counselors and instructors to consider the ramifications of bullying behaviors upon their students' self-esteem and how they can work progressively to address and reduce these effects in order to improve the speaking capabilities of the students.

Theoretical/Conceptual Consideration

The theoretical perspectives of this research study included two separate, but closely related theories that work together to form a relationship. Though student bullying and self-esteem are individual perspectives, both have a fundamental principle based upon childhood experiences.

The first theoretical perspective which was considered was student bullying of Olweus as cited by Spade (2007). Specifically, he began by looking at "dominance hierarchy," or the pecking order, and found parallel patterns of social relations to those of bullies. He noted that aggressive tendencies in bullies are often displaced behaviors of aggression upon those who are innocent victims, similar to the "scapegoat theory". He also noted that there are relatively stable personality characteristics of each individual (i.e., genetics, relationship to one's parent, and childhood experiences) that help to determine personalities and typical situational reaction patterns.

Republic Act 10627, or the *Anti-Bullying Act* also supported this investigation. It aims to protect children enrolled in kindergarten, elementary, and secondary schools and learning centers (collectively, "Schools") from being bullied. It requires Schools to adopt policies to address the existence of bullying in their respective institutions. Bullying, as defined under the Act, is any severe or repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of actually causing or placing the latter in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or damage to his property; creating a hostile environment at school for the other student; infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school

In addition, students with special characteristics (psychological or physical) may be predisposed to becoming either a bully or a victim. Prior experience to aggression or violence also plays an important role in how individuals react to conflicts, including subgroups such as bystanders. In the school environment, other influences that impact the reactions of individuals and, thus, their educational learning opportunities, are the climate of the group, the size and composition of the class, the manner in which the teacher conducts the class, and the teacher's personality traits. These concepts of social structures, characteristics, experiences, and learning circumstances laid a solid foundation for his theoretical sketch and continued interest in bullying.

The second theoretical perspective of the present research study pertained to the concept of self-esteem by the social psychologists, like world-renowned Rosenberg as cited by Spade (2007). Rosenberg examined how social structural positions such as race and ethnicity and institutional structures such as schools and families are closely related to self-esteem. However, self-esteem makes up only one component of the self-concept. The other components are self-efficacy or mastery, and self-identities (Department of Sociology at University of Maryland, 2006). Self-concept is shaped by a characteristic set of individual experiences that create a pattern, thus forming one's self-esteem. Reflected appraisals

suggest that one's self-esteem is a product of how he or she believes others see him or her. Social comparisons occur when people compare themselves to others.

Rosenberg defined self-esteem as “a positive or negative attitude toward a particular object, namely, the self”. However, it does have two different connotations. The first is that a person may think that he/she is “very good”; the other is that of thinking he/she is “good enough.” More simplistically, a person can feel superior to others, but inadequate to him or herself, depending on the certain standards that he/she has set for him or herself. Further, she claimed that it is perceived and experienced reality that affects the individual's self-esteem. If we are to understand people's reactions, *we must understand the contexts in which they live*, for it is these perceived and experienced worlds that shape their feelings toward themselves and toward life.

According to Taylor et al as cited by Howcroft (2013), people with high-self esteem have a clear sense of their own personal qualities. They think well of themselves, set appropriate goals, use feedback in a self-enhancing manner, savour their positive experiences and cope successfully with difficult situations. These individuals also tend to remember their daily experiences more favorably- a memory bias that may itself strengthen high self-esteem. On the other hand, People with low self-esteem however, have a blurred self-concept, think poorly of themselves, often select unrealistic goals or shy away from goals altogether, tend to be pessimistic about the future, remember their past more negatively and wallow in their negative moods. People with low self-esteem also tend to have more adverse emotional and behavioural reactions to criticism or other kinds of personal negative feedback. These individuals are less likely to generate positive feedback for themselves, are more concerned about their social impact on other people and are more vulnerable to depression or rumination when they encounter setbacks or stress.

Methods and Materials

This study utilized a correlational research design to determine the extent to which a relationship exists between bullying experiences and the levels of student self-esteem speaking capabilities among the freshmen criminology students of JRMSU System enrolled during the Second Semester of Academic Year 2015-2016.

The research instrument used in this study consisted of four parts. The first part dealt on the Profile of the respondents as to age, gender, and campus. Second part dealt on The Bullying and Victimization Questionnaire (BVQ) as used in the study of Kokkinos (2004). It consisted of 24 items (12 measuring bullying and 12 victimization). Questions covered a wide range of behaviors, including direct negative physical actions, negative verbal actions commonly associated with bullying [Olweus, 1993], and subtle forms of bullying. The BVQ incorporated all the 12 items from the Austin and Joseph [1996] scales, and enriched them with the addition of another 12 items drawn from the Olweus [1991] Bullying Questionnaire. The third part dealt on Rosenberg Self-Esteem Survey (SES) which measured the levels of student self-esteem. This survey is consisted of 10 items that revealed student self-worth, attitude, and satisfaction with oneself. The fourth part dealt with the speaking abilities of the respondents. The respondents were asked to pick one topic among the topics on prostitution, child labor, human trafficking, drug addiction, violence against women and children, corporal punishment, bullying, and cyberbullying and spoke on this topic. The recorded speech through video was rated using a rubric. Two faculty who had mastered the language helped in assessing the performance of the respondents.

Parent permission to administer the surveys was not necessary because the data used from the surveys did not include student names or require information that would violate student privacy issues. The statistical tools used were frequency count, mean computations, t-test, Man-Whitney U-test, and Spearman Rank.

Results

Table 1 Extent of Bullying Experiences of the Respondents as Bullies

Items		Weighted Mean	Description
1	Bullying other children	2.01	Rarely
2.	Calling others bad and nasty things	2.10	Rarely
3.	Hitting or kicking other children	1.74	Never
4.	Stealing other's belongings	1.47	Never
5	Mocking others because of one's descent	1.73	Never
6	Leaving out games and other activities	1.94	Rarely
7	Mocking others because of one's family	1.64	Never
8	Mocking other's appearance	1.72	Never
9	Mocking other's gender	1.65	Never
10	Mocking other's financial standing	1.56	Never
11	Mocking because of one's high school achievement	1.58	Never
12	Mocking because of one's low school achievement	1.58	Never
AWM		1.71	Never

Table 1 presents the extent of bullying experiences of the respondents as bullies. As shown on the table in almost all of the indicators, the respondents never experience bullying except on the three indicators in which it was rated as rarely. This means that the freshman college students of JRMSU did not experience kicking or hitting other students, steals someone's belongings; mock others because of their appearance, gender, financial standing, educational achievement, and family. However, they bully other children, calling others bad and nasty things and leaving out games and other activities but were done in long intervals of time.

This finding supported the results of Sullivan (2000) shows that the largest group in the young adult sample was bully-victims (those who are both bullies and victims of bullying). This group included more than half of the participants (57%). Victims were the second largest group in the sample, with almost a third (31%) of the participants falling into this category. Bystanders (those who are neither bullies nor victims of bullying) made up approximately one tenth (9%) of this sample, whilst very few of the young adult participants were classified as bullies (3%).

According to Sullivan (2000), bullying incidents tend to involve three different groups of learners: bullies (those who carry out the bullying behaviours), victims (those who become the target of bullying behaviours) and bystanders (those who are neither bullies nor victims but are present during the bullying incident).

This implies that among the respondents, a little percent only can be classified as bullies.

Table 2 Extent of Bullying Experiences of the Respondents as Victims

Items		Weighted Mean	Description
1	Having been bullied by other children	2.25	Rarely
2.	Having been called bad and nasty names	2.25	Rarely
3.	Having been hit or kicked by other children	1.73	Never
4.	Having belongings stolen	1.80	Never
5	Having been mocked because of one's descent	1.81	Rarely
6	Having been left out of games and other activities by other children.	1.90	Rarely
7	Having been mocked because of one's family	1.75	Never
8	Having been mocked because of one's appearance	1.88	Rarely
9	Having been mocked because of gender	1.64	Never
10	Having been mocked because of financial standing	1.71	Never
11	Having been mocked because of one's high school achievement	1.71	Never
12	Having been mocked because of one's low achievement	1.81	Rarely
AWM		1.85	Rarely

Table 2 presents the bullying experiences of the respondents as victims. As shown on the table, six indicators were rated by the respondents as never which means that the freshman college students of JRMSU did not experience being kicked or hit by other students, no belongings have been stolen; never been mocked because of their gender, financial standing, educational achievement, and family. However, they experienced being bullied by others, having been called with bad and nasty things, and having been mocked because of one's descent, appearance and low achievement in school but were done in long intervals of time.

Moreover, the average weighted mean of 1.85 which was described as nearly manifests that bullying is not rampant in the University.

Spade (2007) on his study revealed that the most frequent kinds of bullying behaviors as reported by 11.3% of the victims included being called names, being made fun of or being teased in a hurtful way. This was followed by 9.8% of victims who were bullied with mean names, comments, or gestures with a sexual meaning. The lowest frequencies of bullying behaviors reported were 3.1% and involved extortion, or having had money or other things taken away from them or damaged. Bullying behaviors of being threatened or forced to do things they did not want to do was also reported at 3.1%. When students were asked to respond with a written answer if they had been bullied in another way, 9% of the students responded. While most of the student responses listed the names that they were called, other students wrote that they were "spit on," had their "hair pulled," and were "made to play on the girl's team."

According to Espelage et al. (2003) bullying mostly occurs out of the sight and hearing of an adult such as in the hallways, cafeteria, locker rooms, restrooms, during recess, in class, during passing periods, and outside of the school. Primarily, bullying can take place anywhere, but generally in unstructured areas where adult supervision is lacking. Moreover, motivation behind most acts of bullying are wanting to feel superior over another, to be "cool" or popular, to give in to peer pressure, to get attention, to show a dislike for the victim, to manipulate the victim, to just have fun, and/or to get revenge.

Table 3 Level of Self-Esteem of the Respondents

Items		Weighted Mean	Description
1	I feel that I'm a person of value, equal to others	2.30	Agree
2.	I feel that I have several good qualities	2.45	Agree
3.	I feel that I am a failure	3.21	Neutral
4.	I am able to do things as well as most other people	2.66	Neutral
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of	3.08	Neutral
6	I have a positive attitude about myself	2.34	Agree
7	I am satisfied with myself	2.31	Agree
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself	2.40	Agree
9	I feel useless at times	3.00	Neutral
10	At times I think I am no good at all.	2.97	Neutral
AWM		2.68	Neutral

Table 3 presents the level of self-esteem of the respondents. The table above shows that students' self-esteem was not neither high nor low with an average weighted mean of 2.68 which is described as neutral. Such findings supported the results of the study of Johnsen and Lewis as cited by Spade (2007). These results confirmed the hypothesis that adolescents displaying bullying behaviors scored higher on measures of self-esteem than did their peers of non-bullying behaviors. However, those same adolescents displaying bullying behaviors scored generally somewhat lower in the area of scholastic self-concept, though not significantly.

While Johnson and Lewis found bullies to have a high self-esteem of themselves, another study conducted by O'Moore and Kirkham (2001) disputed those findings. From this study, they reported that children of primary and post-primary school age who had been victims of bullying had significantly lower global self-esteem than those who had not been bullied.

Rosenberg as cited by Spade (2007) believed that high self-esteem expresses the feeling that one is "good enough," a person of worth with respect for him or herself. The person or student with high self-esteem does not necessarily consider him or herself superior to others. While they know their virtues and deficiencies, they are confident to learn, grow, improve and overcome. Contrary to high self-esteem, low self-esteem implies self-rejection, self-dissatisfaction, and contempt for one's self. He or she does not respect him or herself and dislikes the picture of the person that he or she sees, wishing it were different.

Table 4 Level of Speaking Abilities of the Respondents

Speaking capabilities variables	Weighted Mean	Description
Delivery	1.96	Satisfactory
Pronunciation	1.96	Satisfactory
Language	1.85	Satisfactory
Fluency	1.75	Needs Improvement
Average Weighted Mean	1.88	Satisfactory

Table 4 presents the level of the speaking abilities of the respondents. As shown on the table, the freshman college students obtained a “satisfactory” level on delivery, pronunciation, and language. On the other hand, their language fluency needs to be improved as they obtained the mean of 1.75. This means that the respondents had difficulty in expressing their ideas fluently. The speech is very slow, stumbling, nervous, and uncertain with response. It is very difficult for the listener to understand. Overall, they obtained the average weighted mean of 1.88 which is described as Satisfactory. This means that the respondents were slightly unclear with pronunciation at times but is generally fair, pauses are too long with unnecessary movements, and they used simple grammatical structure and vocabulary. Moreover, sentences may be left uncompleted, but the student is able to continue.

This implies that these students need more opportunities to practice their speaking skills so as to develop their speaking capabilities.

Wood, as cited by Ali, et. al (2013) found that students with high self-esteem participate enthusiastically in the learning process. Such students are more confident, active and motivated towards learning. On the other hand, with low self-esteem do not participate actively in the teaching and learning process. They remain silent, passive and have a withdrawal attitude towards learning activities. Moreover, Maruyama et al (2008) have found that students who generally feel confident show better performance in all areas of their studies and those who demonstrate less confidence show low performance.

Table 5 Test of Difference in the Self-esteem between the Bullies and Victims

Variables	Mann-Witney U-test	P-value	Decision on Ho
Bullies	3605.50	0.761	Accept Ho
Victims			

Table 5 presents the test of difference in the self-esteem between the bullies and victims. As shown on the table, the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the self-esteem among the respondents when they were categorized into bullies and victims. This means that the bullying experiences of the respondents do not affect their self-esteem.

According to Wiggins as cited by Ali, et. al (2013) that there are other variables which contribute towards self-esteem and increased rate of participation in learning activities by students such as, quality of family life, appreciation from teachers and parents, participation in co-curricular activities and positive peer relationships.

Table 6 Test of Difference in the Speaking Abilities between the Bullies and Victims

Variables	Mann-Witney U-test	P-value	Decision on Ho
Bullies	3605.50	0.761	Accept Ho
Victims			

Table 6 presents the test of difference in the speaking abilities between the bullies and victims. As shown on the table, the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the speaking abilities among the respondents when they were categorized into bullies and victims. This means that the bullying experiences of the respondents do not affect their speaking abilities.

Duncan as cited Howcroft and Stoud (2013) stated that victims of bullying, when compared with other children, tend to manifest the following conditions: low self-confidence, low self-esteem, poor self-worth, depression, anxiety, insecurity, incompetence, hypersensitivity, experience the feeling that they are unsafe, nervousness, panicky behaviour at school, recurrent memories of bullying to the point that concentration becomes impaired, rejection by peers, socially avoidant behaviour, more introverted behaviour and fewer friendships. In addition, victims of bullying often bring home their frustrations at school.(Selekman & Vessey, 2004).

Table 7 Test of Relationship between Self-esteem and Speaking Abilities of the Respondents

Respondents	Variables Computed	Spearman Rank Value	P-Value	Decision on Ho	Remarks
Bullies	Self-esteem	-0.035	0.737	Accept Ho	Not Significant almost negligible correlation
	Speaking capabilities				
Victims	Self-esteem	-0.017	0.880	Accept Ho	Not significant almost negligible correlation
	Speaking Capabilities				

Table 7 presents the significant relationship between self-esteem and speaking abilities of the respondents. Findings revealed that the self-esteem is not significantly related to the speaking abilities of the bullies and victims with a p-value of 0.737 and 0.880 respectively which accepted the hypotheses. This means that self-esteem does not affect the speaking capabilities of the respondents.

This goes to show that though students had obtained low level of speaking abilities, their self-esteem have nothing to do with it. This implies that there are other factors which affect their performance in speaking. The degree of relationship of the students is conditioned by the level of self-esteem either positively or negatively. Positive high self-esteem enables students to develop positive relationship with peers, teachers and even with a common man. Low self-self-esteem breeds in students feelings of deficiency and inability. Such students feel rejected which dangerously affects the performance of the students in the process of education (Supple, 2000). High level of self-esteem facilitates the students to achieve the goals of life whatever, because it develops in an individual coping skills, confident and feelings of worthiness. Similarly, Grantham and Ford (2003) elaborate that students with high self-esteem set higher goals in life and strive to achieve them with determination, commitment and steadfastness. Such students do not lose hope even in the face of failures. Because, such students have never ceasing belief and the will to attain the goal and they achieve it ultimately.

According to Miraei (2005) students who feel inadequate or shy cannot participate in the learning activities more actively. Such students often remain hesitant and dejected which ultimately lowers their level of self-esteem. This lowered self-esteem does not allow them to excel in life (Baumeister et al. 2003). Students with low self-esteem not only feel dejected or discouraged, rather such students cannot solve their problems at school whenever they face it, whether it is academic or social (Zeinvand, 2006).

On the other hand, Pullmann and Allik (2008) explain that a positively high self-esteem among students leads to success academically and socially.

Discussion

Research conducted within this study utilizing the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (BVQ) and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Survey (SES) has demonstrated that no significant negative relationship does exist between student self-esteem and speaking capabilities for both the victims and the bullies. Thus, self-esteem has no significant negative impact on student speaking abilities. This goes to show that though students had obtained low level of speaking abilities, their self-esteem has nothing to do with it. This implies that there are other factors which affect their performance in speaking. Moreover, there is no significant difference on the self esteem and speaking abilities between bullies and victims.

Thus study recommends for further study in determining the factors that affect the speaking abilities of the students. Also, a study that surveys not only freshmen criminology students, but also students from other programs regarding the negative impact of bullying experiences as this would help to provide a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between self-esteem, and speaking abilities. Moreover, gender and age differences will also be considered as variables in future study to identify what group of students had bullying experiences and victimization.

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