

Perceptions of Bullying and Intervention in Relation to Personality

by

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The undersigned recommend acceptance of the thesis “Perceptions of Bullying and
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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate people's perceptions of bullying and whether their stated willingness to intervene in a bullying situation was related to gender and personality.

The hypothesis was that participants with high Extraversion along with low Agreeableness and Conscientiousness scores would be more likely to report having engaged in bullying behaviors. It was assumed that people would prefer not to intervene in a bullying scenario. One hundred and twelve university students (14 men, 95 women, and 3 other) who range in age from 18 to 42 filled out an online survey consisting of three sections assessing: (a) personality; (b) attitudes toward, and experience with, bullying; and (c) demographics. A series of logistic regressions, discriminant function analyses, and multinomial logistic regressions were conducted on the data collected.

Overall, 16.1% of participants saw or heard direct bullying in the last two weeks.

Furthermore, 11.6% reported that they had been bullied through mobile phone use and

7.1% reported that they had been bullied through internet use in the last two weeks.

People who were more Agreeable and more Extraverted were most likely to report that they would intervene in a direct bullying scenario. However, personality did not predict whether people were more likely to report that they would intervene in indirect bullying or cyberbullying scenarios. This result may be due to the perception that direct bullying is more aggressive and has more of a physical impact on an individual, as opposed to indirect and cyberbullying scenarios. Intervention may be more likely reported for a direct bullying scenario because the witness can visualize the physical harm imposed upon the victim.

Perceptions of Bullying and Intervention in Relation to Personality

Bullying has been a part of many people's lives and has radically altered their social interactions, experiences in school, and psychological well-being. Bullying has three specific characteristics: more than one occurrence, the intention to hurt, and an asymmetric power relationship between the bully and the victim (Fossati, Borroni, & Maffei, 2012). There are different forms of bullying, such as direct or indirect bullying. Direct bullying involves physical contact, such as hitting, shoving, kicking, holding someone back, or pinching, whereas indirect bullying can be expressed in words, such as threats, teasing, name calling, or mocking (Fossati et al., 2012).

The internet and other forms of communication technology pose the risk of people being bullied online (Mishna, Cook, Gadalla, Daciuk, & Solomon, 2010) through social media websites, text messages, emails, or mobile phone calls (Ortega et al., 2012). Cyberbullying is intentional and repeated aggression through the use of communication technologies (Erdur-Baker, 2010) with the intention of harming others (Fossati et al., 2012). Cyberbullying may include hostile behaviour by an individual or group. Online environments might be perceived as a liberating platform, but it is one in which people can sometimes too openly express themselves (Erdur-Baker, 2010). Gender and personality have been associated with both direct and indirect bullying, with their association with cyberbullying presently uncertain.

Gender differences have been found to be associated with bullying behaviors and intervention. Male students were verbally and physically bullied significantly more than were female students in elementary school and high school (Chapell et al., 2006). Frisé et al. (2007) found that approximately the same number of boys and girls reported that

they bullied others during more than one time which seems interesting due to the perception of many that more boys than girls are involved in bullying. Males attending college have a tendency to directly and indirectly bully others more than do female college students (Chapell et al., 2006). In regards to cyberbullying, females were more likely to report cyberbullying experiences in both adolescence and young adulthood in comparison to males (Annenberg Public Policy Center, 2010 as cited in Lindsay & Krysik, 2012). Intervention was more common by males than by females (Hawkins, Pepler, & Craig, 2001). Therefore, there is evidence regarding gender differences in relation to bullying.

Olthof and Goossens (2008) suggested that the motive underlying human behavior is the need to belong, including being accepted and being recognized by others within a peer group. It has been proposed that people who desire to be accepted may try and behave in a similar way as someone else, thus, trying to increase their chances of being accepted by that person (Olthof & Goossens, 2008). Boys' bullying and following behaviour is related to their desire to be accepted by children of the same sex and behavioural style, whereas, girls' bullying/following behaviour was related to their desire to be accepted by children of the opposite sex (Olthof & Goossens, 2008). Thus, girls may have a more general desire to get access or acceptance of the other sex (Olthof & Goossens, 2008).

Bullying seems to be associated with selected personality traits. It has been suggested that adolescents with bullying behaviours show low scores for Agreeableness (Fossati et al., 2012; Tani, Greenman, Schneider, & Fregoso, 2003) and

Conscientiousness (Fossati et al., 2012). High school students who show bullying behaviours describe themselves as placing their self-interest before getting along with others (Fossati et al., 2012). These students are generally unconcerned about others' well-being, are suspicious, uncooperative, not very friendly, and are less likely to offer to help other people (Fossati et al., 2012). Students who bullied were also likely to describe themselves as having a tendency to seek out stimulation (high Extraversion) but with poor impulse control and poor self-discipline (Fossati et al., 2012). Elementary aged children who bullied were thought to show a lack of sympathy for others and be preoccupied with their own goals and interests (Tani et al., 2003).

Interestingly, students who scored high on a victim scale had a tendency to describe themselves as self-centered, unfriendly (low Agreeableness), suspicious, prone to experience negative emotions including anxiety, depression, or anger, and less involved in the social world (low Extraversion; Fossati et al., 2012). Similarly, teachers rated victims low on friendliness (Agreeableness) but also low on Conscientiousness, and high on Emotional Instability (Tani et al., 2003). These findings suggest that victims may protect their own interests more than other children and might be less strong-minded (Tani et al., 2003). Repeated victimization makes children more prone to protect themselves while their low friendliness could inadvertently invite victimization from others (Tani et al., 2003).

Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and Perceptions of Bullying

Attachment styles differentiate bullies from victims (Williams & Kennedy,

2012). Bullies tend to describe themselves as being comfortable without companionship or close relationships and they consider it to be important that they feel independent (Williams & Kennedy, 2012). They do not express dependence on others, and do not want the dependence of others on them (Fossati et al., 2012). The joy in laughing at others (katagelasticism) is associated with the role of the bully (Proyer et al., 2013). Females who scored higher on measures of attachment avoidance to their mothers and higher on measures of attachment anxiety to their fathers were more likely to report engaging in physically aggressive behaviours (Williams & Kennedy, 2012). Males were more likely to report engaging in physical aggression when they scored higher on measures of attachment anxiety towards their fathers (Williams & Kennedy, 2012). Bullies reported having a high number of romantic relationships, although the relationships are likely to have little romanticism (Fossati et al., 2012). When adolescents were asked why some adolescents bullied others, the most common response was because they perceived that bullies suffer from low self-esteem (Frisén, Jonsson, & Persson, 2007).

In contrast, victims of bullying showed a tendency towards an insecure attachment style, which suggests that bullies may tend to choose victims who are particularly insecure (Fossati et al., 2012). Victims reported a lower number of romantic relationships as well as a low number of friends (Fossati et al., 2012), consistent with an avoidance of peer involvement. Females who reported high measures of anxiety towards their relationship with their mothers were more likely to report that they had been a victim of peer bullying during childhood (Williams & Kennedy, 2012).

Predictors of both direct and indirect victimization were peer loneliness and a negative perception of the school climate (Brighi, Guarini, Melotti, Galli, & Genta, 2012). Those students who felt high loneliness in peer relationships were more likely to be victims of traditional (direct or indirect) bullying (Brighi et al., 2012). Lower self-esteem and a younger age were significant predictors for males' indirect victimisation (Brighi et al., 2012).

Social acceptance and rejection are related to self-esteem and may be predictors of whether a person is included or excluded by others (Brighi et al., 2012). There was a strong continuity between being either a direct or indirect victim of traditional bullying and being a victim through cyberbullying (Brighi et al., 2012). Therefore, experiences of traditional bullying and cyberbullying overlap strongly, such that victimized adolescents may be highly vulnerable to further bullying (Brighi et al., 2012). Parent-adolescent communication can have a moderating role in the relationship between cyber victimization and self-esteem (Ozdemir, 2014). Victimized adolescents who had a high amount of communication with their parents compared to victimized adolescents with less parental communication, reported higher levels of self-esteem (Ozdemir, 2014).

Emotional responses are linked to the type of bullying that one experiences (Ortega et al., 2012). Across traditional bullying (both direct and indirect forms) and cyberbullying (through mobile phones and the internet), the most commonly reported victim emotion was anger (Ortega et al., 2012). Anxiety and shame are emotional responses associated with increased gelotophobia (the fear of being laughed at; Proyer, Meier, Platt, & Ruch, 2013) which can be a common feeling for the victim in a bullying

situation. Interestingly, the emotions that were least frequently reported were feeling defenseless and embarrassed (Ortega et al., 2012). Victims seemed to have less negative emotions towards cyberbullying as opposed to traditional bullying (Ortega et al., 2012). With regards to embarrassment, it has been suggested that cyberbullying can be perceived as being distant in the sense that victims are not confronted (face-to-face) with the aggressors, which may explain why victims have lower levels of embarrassment (Ortega et al., 2012).

Frisén et al. (2007) found that most of the victims that were bullied, were bullied at younger ages (7-to 9-years), whereas, the bullies often showed their bullying behaviors at a later period (10-to 12-years). Interestingly, in a study conducted to investigate bullying in schools or colleges of nursing, experiences of bullying were reported by 169 of the 473 respondents (Beckman, Cannella, & Wantland, 2013). There were 15 individuals who reported experiencing physical bullying, with senior faculty members being the perpetrator 83% of the time. Verbal abuse was reported by 227 of the 473 respondents (Beckman et al., 2013). Although the naive public might consider the frequency of bullying by faculty in schools of nursing to be low, this evidence suggests otherwise.

Adolescents who were asked what they thought makes bullying stop most commonly reported it to be the bully becoming more mature (Frisén et al., 2007). Many victims reported that bullying stopped when they were no longer unique or when they did not deviate so greatly from their peers, for example by losing weight (Frisén et al., 2007).

Intervention in a Bullying Situation

Peer bystanders can play an essential role in a bullying situation by either watching the bullying behavior take place, or intervening to help the victim. It has been proposed that people who assist or reinforce aggressive behaviours, or people who do nothing about the bullying situation in respect to stopping the bully, may do so out of fear of losing peer esteem for themselves (Tani et al., 2003). Latané and Darley (1968) described the bystander effect: the bystander is likely to look at the reactions of other people who are present and be influenced by their reactions. Latané and Darley (1968) indicated that the sight of other people would lead the individual to judge the situation as not serious and, in turn, lead him or her not to act on the situation but rather to watch, and so fail to assume the responsibility to take action.

Older and more aggressive children were less likely to intervene in a bullying situation to help the victim, and more likely to remain passive bystanders (Pozzoli & Gini, 2010). Passivity was related to the tendency to distance oneself from the negative experience of the victim by trying to forget the bullying situation, or telling oneself that it does not matter (Pozzoli & Gini, 2010). This high level of distancing may be personal reassurance to the bystander that he or she made the right decision to remain passive. Similarly, Chekroun and Brauer (2002) had some participants observe a male confederate drawing graffiti on the walls of a shopping mall elevator. It was found that the more people who were in the elevator, the smaller the individual probability of intervening (Chekroun & Brauer, 2002). However, when participants observed two female confederates littering in a park, there was no evidence of a bystander effect, meaning that

the individual probability of intervention was unaffected by the presence of others (Chekroun & Brauer, 2002). Bystanders may feel personally more implicated when the counter normative behaviour occurs in a small neighbourhood park than when it takes place in a large shopping center (Chekroun & Brauer, 2002), because there are more people in the shopping center. The more people who watch and do not intervene, the less likely that someone will step out of that norm.

Hawkins et al. (2001) examined peer intervention in bullying through a naturalistic observational approach on school playgrounds, including observing the frequency, nature, and effectiveness of peer intervention. In this study, 88% of peers who were present suggested that bullying commonly takes place within the context of a peer group. Peers only intervened 19% of the time in the 306 bullying episodes that were observed, with boys intervening more often than did girls. Observers rated 47% of the peer interventions as being aggressive, and 53% as nonaggressive. Boys were more likely to intervene when the bully or victim was male, and females were more likely to intervene when the bully or victim was female (Hawkins et al., 2001). Lastly, boys and girls were equally effective in their intervention efforts to stop bullying (Hawkins et al., 2001), suggesting that intervention is an important aspect of bullying situations in that a person who takes personal responsibility to stand up for the victim can ultimately stop the situation and prevent any physical or psychological harm to the victim.

Current Study and Predictions

There is a lack of information regarding the perceptions of university students on

bullying. The purpose of the present study was to investigate people's perceptions of bullying and whether people would intervene in a bullying situation. More specifically, this study investigated whether gender and personality were related to people's perceptions of bullying and intervention.

Consistent with previous research, it was hypothesized that participants will most often not intervene in a bullying scenario. Also, it was hypothesized that participants with high Extraversion scores along with having low Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, would be more likely to engage in bullying behaviors.

Method

Participants

One hundred and seventeen university students (14 men, 95 women, 2 transgender, and 6 with no gender response) attending a small Atlantic Canadian University Campus in a rural setting, participated in an online questionnaire (Mean age of participants was 20.18, ranging in age from 18 to 42). Students had been informed about this questionnaire through social media. Also, short pamphlets were handed out in classes to undergraduate students explaining the purpose and methodology of the study and how to find the study online if they wished to participate.

Materials

The study utilized one questionnaire with three sections assessing: (a) personality, (b) attitudes toward, and experience with bullying, and (c) demographics. The personality section (see Appendix A) consisted of the 50-item set of International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) Big-Five Factor Markers (Goldberg, 1992). All 50 questions of the Big-Five personality markers reflected one of the Big-Five personality factors of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Intellect or Imagination. Each Big-Five personality factor consists of 10 items. Each item was measured on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*very inaccurate*) to 5 (*very accurate*).

The internal consistencies of the IPIP scales in 3 samples of people (students, general population volunteers, and members of the Lothian Birth Cohort-1921) have been found to be acceptable to high, with the lowest being .72 (Gow, Whiteman, Pattie, &

Deary, 2005). The concurrent validity of the IPIP scales has been measured in relation to the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) and the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (EPQ-R) Short Form scales (Gow et al., 2005). The IPIP-NEO Extraversion scales correlated $r = .69$, while the IPIP-EPQ-R correlated $r = .85$ (Gow et al., 2005).

With regards to the Emotional Stability/ Neuroticism scale scores, the IPIP-NEO correlated $r = -.83$ and the IPIP-EPQ-R correlated $r = -.84$ (Gow et. al., 2005). The negative direction of the IPIP correlations is due to the fact that it is scored towards the emotionally stable pole, as opposed to the emotionally labile pole in the NEO and EPQ-R (Gow et al., 2005). The IPIP-NEO Agreeableness scales correlated $r = .49$, the IPIP-NEO Conscientiousness scale correlated $r = .76$, the IPIP and the NEO Intellect and Openness scales correlated $r = .59$ (Gow et. al. 2005). Therefore, this means that concurrent validity is apparent for the IPIP because the IPIP Big-Five factor markers correlate moderately to highly with the appropriate scales of the NEO-FFI and the EPQ-R (Gow et. al., 2005). Guenole and Chernyshenko (2005) indicated that the reliabilities of the IPIP Big Five scales ranged from .78 to .88.

Included in the attitudes towards, and experience with, bullying section of the questionnaire (see Appendix B) were three scenarios, each representing either face-to-face physical bullying, face-to-face verbal bullying, or cyberbullying. Each scenario had 4 questions measuring what the participant perceived that he or she would do if witnessing the scenario, why the participant would intervene or not, and whether the participant thought the scenario was a form of bullying. The measurement scales used consisted of one multiple choice question, one open-ended question, and two questions that involved yes or no answers for each scenario. The section regarding experience with

bullying contained questions relating to direct forms of bullying such as, "Have you been directly bullied in the last two weeks?", cyberbullying questions including "How did they bully you through mobile phone use in the last two weeks?", and questions regarding bullying through internet usage such as "Have you bullied anyone else using the internet in the last two weeks?". Questions from this section came from the DAPHNE questionnaire (an internationally used instrument to investigate performed and received direct bullying, indirect bullying, and cyberbullying of participants) with some questions modified to fit the purposes of this study. This section includes multiple choice questions with three questions where the participant can choose more than one option. The final section included demographic questions concerning age, gender, and year of study (see Appendix C).

The IPIP scales are a public domain personality measure and so no permission for use was required. Permission for the use of the DAPHNE questionnaire was given upon contacting the international coordinator of the DAPHNE European projects.

Procedure

Participants were invited to participate in completing a questionnaire consisting of three sections that was conducted for an Honours Project in Psychology. Participants were told through a pamphlet that was given to them in a classroom setting that the questionnaire examined perceptions of bystanders in a bullying situation and whether personality has an affect on a participant's willingness to intervene. The pamphlet informed the participants that the study would take approximately 15 minutes to complete, that their responses would be anonymous and confidential, and that the participants could withdraw from the study at any time. The pamphlet also informed

participants that all information was to be analyzed and reported on a group basis where individual responses could not be identified and that this study might also be used in a larger research project and might be published in the future. The pamphlet also included contact information for the study's faculty supervisor, and also for the campus counselling services, should participants have any questions or concerns regarding the study. The participants were thanked for participating in the study.

Results

Five participants were excluded from the analyses. Three participants were excluded because they left several questions unanswered, while the other two participants were removed because they were the only individuals associated with their identified gender, resulting in a sample size too small for analysis. Therefore, all of the data analyses were based around 112 participants in total (14 men, 95 women, and 3 other) and an alpha level of .05 was used for all analyses. The three participants who did not specify gender were omitted from the regression analyses.

Direct Bullying (Scenario 1)

When participants were asked “What would you do if you witnessed this,” 48.2% (54 people) reported that they would intervene in the direct bullying scenario, 23.2% (26 people) reported they would walk away and ignore the situation, 10.7% (12 people) reported they would watch and ignore the bullying situation, and 15.2% (17 people) chose the “other” option. When participants were asked whether they considered direct bullying (scenario 1) to be considered a form of bullying, 83.9% (94 people) of participants reported that it was a form of bullying while 14.3% (16 people) reported that it was not a form of bullying. Furthermore, when participants were asked whether they thought Jamie was male or female, 77.7% (87 people) reported that they thought Jamie was a male while 20.5% (23 people) reported that they thought Jamie was a female.

For direct bullying (scenario 1), a discriminant function analysis was used to test the relationship between personality, gender, and whether participants would intervene or ignore a bullying situation. Three discriminant functions were found. The first explained

63.0% of the variance, canonical $R^2 = 0.22$; the second explained 26.5% of the variance, canonical $R^2 = 0.10$; whereas the third explained only 10.6% of the variance, canonical $R^2 = 0.04$. In combination, these discriminant functions significantly differentiated the response groups, $\Lambda = 0.67$, $X^2(18) = 40.58$, $p = .002$. The discriminate function analysis correctly classified 59.3% of the participants. However, removing the first function indicated that the second function did not significantly differentiate the response groups, $\Lambda = 0.86$, $X^2(10) = 15.78$, $p = .12$. Also, removing the first and second function indicated that the third function did not significantly differentiate the response groups, $\Lambda = 0.96$, $X^2(4) = 4.61$, $p = .33$. Thus, only the first function significantly differentiated the response groups. Agreeableness ($r = .79$) and Extraversion ($r = .68$) loaded highly onto the first function. People who were more agreeable and more extraverted were most likely to report they would intervene.

A hierarchical binary logistic regression was performed to ascertain whether gender and personality factors predicted the likelihood that participants considered scenario 1 a form of bullying, with main effects entered into the model before the entry of interactions. The overall model was not significant, $X^2(6) = 4.98$, $p = .546$, $R^2_L = .05$. Thus, neither gender, personality, nor their interaction was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants considered scenario 1 a form of bullying.

A binary logistic regression was performed to ascertain whether gender and personality factors predicted the likelihood that participants considered Jamie to be male or female in scenario 1. The hierarchical method was used with main effects entered into the model before the entry of interactions. However, the overall model was not

significant, $X^2(6) = 5.95$, $p = .428$, $R^2_L = .05$. Thus, neither gender, personality, nor their interaction was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants considered Jamie to be male or female in scenario 1.

Indirect Bullying (Scenario 2)

When participants were asked what they would do if they witnessed scenario 2, 58.9% (66 people) reported that they would intervene in the bullying scenario, 13.4% (15 people) reported they would walk away and ignore the situation, 2.7% (3 people) reported they would watch and ignore, and 21.4% (24 people) chose the “other” option. When participants were asked whether they considered this scenario a form of bullying, 97.3% (109 people) reported that they considered this scenario a form of bullying while 0.9% (1 person) did not consider this scenario a form of bullying.

For scenario 2, a discriminant function analysis was used to test the relationship between personality, gender, and whether participants would intervene or ignore a bullying situation. Three discriminant functions were found. The first explained 78.2% of the variance, canonical $R^2 = .16$, the second explained only 12.0% of the variance, canonical $R^2 = .029$, whereas the third explained only 9.8% of the variance, canonical $R^2 = .02$. In combination these discriminant functions did not significantly differentiate the response groups, $\Lambda = 0.80$, $X^2(18) = 22.98$, $p = .19$. Thus, neither gender nor personality was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants said they would intervene or ignore an indirect bullying situation.

A binary logistic regression was performed to ascertain whether gender and

personality factors predicted the likelihood that participants considered scenario 2 a form of bullying. The hierarchical method was used with main effects entered into the model before the entry of interactions. The overall model was not significant, $X^2(6) = 11.36$, $p = .078$, Cox and Snell R square = .10. Thus, neither gender, personality, nor their interaction, was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants considered scenario 2 a form of bullying.

Cyberbullying (Scenario 3)

When participants were asked what they would do if they witnessed scenario 3 online, 42.0% (47 people) reported they would scroll down and ignore the situation, 33.9% (38 people) said they would intervene, and 22.3% (25 people) chose the “other” option. When participants were asked if they considered scenario 3 to be a form of bullying, 96.4% (108 people) reported that they considered this scenario a form of bullying while 0.9% (1 person) did not consider this scenario a form of bullying.

For scenario 3, a discriminant function analysis was used to test the relationship between personality, gender, and whether participants would intervene or scroll down and ignore a bullying situation. Two discriminant functions were found. The first explained 83.0% of the variance, canonical $R^2 = .12$, whereas the second explained only 17.0%, canonical $R^2 = .02$. In combination these discriminant functions did not significantly differentiate the response groups, $\Lambda = 0.87$, $X^2(12) = 14.09$, $p = .30$. Thus, neither gender or personality was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants said they would intervene or scroll down and ignore a cyberbullying situation.

A binary logistic regression was performed to ascertain whether gender and personality factors predicted the likelihood that participants considered scenario 3 a form of bullying. A hierarchical method was used with main effects entered into the model before the entry of interactions. The overall model was not significant, $X^2(6) = 11.34$, $p = .079$, $R^2_L = .00$. Thus, neither gender, personality, nor their interactions was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants considered scenario 3 a form of bullying.

Direct Bullying (Experience)

When participants were asked if they have been directly bullied in the last two weeks, 88.4% (99 people) reported that they had not been directly bullied in the last two weeks, 8.0% (9 people) reported being bullied once or twice in the last two weeks, and 0.9% (1 person) reported being bullied several times a week or more.

Sequentially, when participants were asked if they had directly bullied someone else in the last two weeks, 94.6% (106 people) reported they had not directly bullied anyone in the last two weeks, 1.8% (2 people) reported bullying someone else once or twice in the last two weeks, and 0.9% (1 person) reported bullying others two or three times in the last two weeks.

When participants were asked “What did you do when you saw, or heard about, someone else being directly bullied in the last two weeks,” 83.9% (94 people) had not heard or seen any direct bullying in the last two weeks, 1.8% (2 people) completely ignored the direct bullying, 3.6% (4 people) tried to get a friend or group of friends to help the person, 8.9% (10 people) tried to stop the bully, 10.7% (12 people) comforted the person being bullied, 1.8% (2 people) watched but did not do anything, and 0.9% (1

person) chose the “other” option (note that participants could choose more than one response).

A multinomial logistic regression was used to ascertain whether personality and gender predicted whether someone reported being directly bullied in the last two weeks. A stepwise model was used to enter main effects into the model before the entry of interactions. However, the overall model was not significant, $X^2(12) = 4.65, p = .969$. Thus, neither gender, personality, nor their interactions was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants reported being directly bullied in the last two weeks.

A multinomial logistic regression was performed to ascertain whether personality factors and gender predicted whether participants reported they directly bullied someone else in the last two weeks. A hierarchical model was used to enter main effects into the model before the entry of interactions. However, the overall model was not significant, $X^2(12) = 10.27, p = .592$. Thus, neither gender, personality, nor their interactions was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants reported directly bullying someone else in the last two weeks.

Bullying Through Use of Mobile Phone

When participants were asked if they have been bullied through mobile phone use in the last two weeks, 90.2% (101 people) reported that they had not been bullied through mobile phone use in the last two weeks, 5.4% (6 people) had been bullied once or twice in the last two weeks, 0.9% (1 person) reported being bullied once a week, and 0.9% (1 person) reported being bullied several times a week or more.

When participants were asked “How were you bullied through mobile phone use

in the last two weeks,” 88.4% (99 people) reported that they had not been bullied through mobile phone use in the last two weeks, 6.3% (7 people) were bullied using text messages, 1.8% (2 people) were bullied by the use of multimedia texts (multimedia, photos, videos), and 1.8% (2 people) were bullied through mobile phone use in another way (i.e., they chose the ‘other’ option).

A multinomial logistic regression was performed to ascertain whether personality factors and gender predicted the likelihood that participants reported whether they have been bullied through mobile phone use in the last two weeks. A stepwise model was used to enter main effects into the model before the entry of interactions. However, the overall model was not significant, $X^2(18) = 19.27, p = .375$. Thus, neither gender, personality, nor their interactions was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants reported being bullied through mobile phone use in the last two weeks.

Bullying Through the Internet

When participants were asked if they had been bullied on the internet in the last two weeks, 93.8% (105 people) reported they had not been bullied, 3.6% (4 people) reported they have been bullied once or twice in the last two weeks, and 0.9% (1 person) reported being bullied two or three times in the last two weeks.

When participants were asked if they bullied anyone else using the internet in the last two weeks, 97.3% (109 people) reported they had not bullied anyone else using the internet in the last two weeks, while 0.9% (1 person) reported having bullied someone else several times a week or more. When participants were asked “How were you bullied using the internet in the last two weeks,” 92.9% (104 people) reported that they had not

been bullied using the internet in the last two weeks, 1.8% (2 people) were bullied through instant messages, 2.7% (3 people) were bullied through social networking websites, and 0.9% (1 person) through a blog in the last two weeks.

A multinomial logistic regression was performed to ascertain whether personality factors and gender predicted the likelihood that participants reported whether they had been bullied through internet use in the last two weeks. A stepwise model was used to enter main effects into the model before the entry of interactions. However, the overall model was not significant, $X^2(12) = 10.38, p = .583$. Thus, neither gender, personality, nor their interactions was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants reported being bullied through internet use in the last two weeks.

A multinomial logistic regression was performed to ascertain whether personality factors and gender predicted the likelihood that participants reported whether they had bullied others through internet use in the last two weeks. A stepwise model was used to enter main effects into the model before the entry of interactions. However, the overall model was not significant, $X^2(6) = 11.37, p = .077$. Thus, neither gender, personality, nor their interactions was found to be a significant predictor of whether participants reported bullying others through internet use in the last two weeks.

Discussion

Although the majority of participants in the current study did not see or hear bullying in the last two weeks, and reported to have not engaged in bullying behaviors in the last two weeks, there were still 16.1% of participants who reported hearing or seeing direct bullying in the last two weeks. Furthermore, 11.6% reported that they had been bullied through mobile phone use and 7.1% reported that they had been bullied through internet use in the last two weeks. Bullying is an issue that still needs to be addressed in the university population to prevent such occurrences.

Looking first at personality as being a predictor of intervening in a direct bullying scenario, participants who were more extraverted and agreeable were more likely to report that they would intervene in a direct bullying scenario. Extraverts interact more with others in day-to-day life and have a tendency towards assertiveness, spontaneity and energy, dominance and confidence (Carver & Scheier, 2012). With these personality subtraits, it is not surprising that they would envision intervening in this serious situation. High Agreeableness is often characterized as reflecting a concern with the maintenance of relationships, tendency to nurture, and providing emotional support to others (Carver & Scheier, 2012). These individuals would envision intervening because inhibition of negative affect seems to occur automatically with people high in agreeableness (Carver & Scheier, 2012). Therefore, participants high in both Extraversion and Agreeableness may intervene more often in a direct bullying situation because of a tendency towards action and maintaining relationships.

Previous literature has suggested that children who were older and more

aggressive were less likely to intervene in a bullying situation to help the victim (Pozzoli & Brauer, 2002), which contrasts the results in this study in which undergraduate students reported that 48.2% (54 people) would intervene in a direct bullying scenario and 58.9% (66 people) would intervene in an indirect bullying situation. University students may think they would be more likely than children to intervene because university students are generally more knowledgeable about the impact or effects of bullying on the victim and might feel more compelled to help.

Hawkins et al. (2001) found that among children, boys intervened more often than did girls. Hawkins et al. (2001) found that males were more likely to intervene when the bully or victim was male while females were more likely to intervene when the bully or victim was female. This act may be due to the relatability of someone of the same sex being bullied, opposed to witnessing someone of the opposite sex. Also, it was found that males tend to intervene more than females (Hawkins et al., 2001). However, the current study found that gender was not a significant predictor of whether participants would intervene or ignore direct, indirect, and cyberbullying situations. It is quite possible that no gender differences were found because the majority of the sample of participants in this study were female, whereas Hawkins et al. (2001) had more male participants than female participants. This could suggest that female participants may report that they would intervene more than males. In addition, the present study used self-report scenarios, while Hawkins et al. (2001) observed intervention through bullying episodes on a playground. Therefore, participants may report that they would intervene because it is not an actual bullying situation. However, when confronted with an actual

bullying scenario, participants may not be so willing to take action to intervene (Hawkins et al., 2001). Consistent with the current study, Balakrishnan (2015) found that there were no significant gender differences in regards to cyberbullying among young adults and their experiences with cyberbullying. This consistent finding suggests that age could be an important predictor of bullying and intervention. Young adults might not engage in bullying as much as adolescents because of increasing maturity or more education on the impacts and effects that bullying has on other people's well-being.

The current study suggested that people would scroll down and ignore a cyberbullying scenario more than they would intervene. This may be due to victims having less negative emotions towards cyberbullying than traditional bullying (Ortega et al., 2012). Cyberbullying may also be perceived as being distant, such that the person being bullied is not being confronted with the aggressors (Ortega et al., 2012). Therefore, frequency of intervention may be lower because it feels more distant than a face-to-face act of bullying behavior. However, it has been reported that college students underrate their involvement in acts of cyberbullying and so it is seen as a hidden side of college students because they do not report it accurately (Francisco, Simao, Ferreira, & Martins, 2015).

Therefore, the first hypothesis was partially supported. The assumption was that people will most often not intervene in a bullying scenario. This study found that the majority of participants said they would intervene in the direct and indirect bullying scenarios, but not in the cyberbullying scenario. Participants may have felt more inclined

in a direct bullying scenario to report they would intervene due to the visualization of physical harm inflicted upon the victim, whereas, the cyberbullying scenario, may not have been perceived as being harmful to the victim. Other gender differences prevail in relation to experience with bullying, including females being more represented as victims of cyberbullying in comparison to males (Brighi et al., 2012).

The hypothesis that participants with high Extraversion along with low Agreeableness and Conscientiousness scores are likely to engage in bullying behaviors was not supported in this study. This failure to find an affect of personality on bullying was not consistent with previous research. It has previously been found that adolescents who bully show low scores of Agreeableness (Fossati et al., 2012; Tani et al., 2003) and Conscientiousness (Fossati et al., 2012). Fossati et al. (2012) found that participants less likely to aid other people and be concerned about others well-being, along with participants having a tendency to seek stimulation were predictors of bullying behaviors. The present study did not find the effect that Fossati et al. (2012) found because bullying occurrences were not frequent within the duration of this study. However, Fossati et al. (2012) might have found these effects because stimulation seeking and low concern for others would be qualities associated with a higher likelihood for participants to engage in bullying behaviors.

The third hypothesis which assumed that people would perceive the bully in the direct or physically aggressive scenario as being a male, was supported. Thus, 77.7% of participants perceived the bully to be male, rather than female. People hold the perception that males are more involved in aggressive behaviors and bullying (Frisén et

al., 2007). This perception results from society's stereotypical views regarding male gender. Males tend to be associated with violent things such as video games, and more physically aggressive behaviors and, therefore, are perceived as more violent and more likely to engage in bullying behaviors.

Limitations and Future Research

This study had limitations concerning the samples, measurement, duration of bullying, and generalization. There was a small sample size consisting of only 112 participants and there were far more female participants than male participants.

Consequently, this imbalance in gender could have affected results regarding gender.

The sample also consisted of undergraduate students with the majority of participants being 18 years of age, which may not be generalizable to society in general.

Measurement was made by self-report measures which could be problematic due to social desirability bias in which respondents answer questions in a manner that will be viewed favorably by others. Therefore, participants may not answer truthfully about bullying situations because they fear they should behave in a certain way, and they could be judged if they do not answer in that perceived, acceptable manner.

The questions within the online survey addressed bullying situations and experiences within two weeks previous to the completion of the survey. Therefore, bullying occurrences may have been less frequent during that particular time period. The online survey was available for student participation towards the beginning of the semester when the stress associated with undergraduate students tends to be lower than during the exam period. Pressure and stress could contribute to frequency of bullying

occurrences. However, some may view this two week time span to be more favorable due to less memory failures regarding prior experience with bullying. Future research may want to use a longitudinal study because researchers could gain data over a longer time span than two weeks, and may be able to gain more insight into perceptions and experiences with bullying. Most literature regarding bullying is aimed towards younger children and more studies should examine perceptions of bullying in young adults in settings such as university and workplace locations. More research in this area would allow better targeting of intervention and prevention methods for victims of bullying.

Future studies could not only examine people's perceptions of bullying and their experiences, but also investigate predictors other than personality and gender, such as age, culture, education, and overall well-being. People's background may also have an influence on bullying such as being from an urban or rural town, or other factors such as the way people were raised. Lastly, further research examining people's emotions (particularly their emotional intelligence) may also be helpful in deciphering the impact of bullying in their lives, especially if it is a common occurrence. Although this study indicated that bullying was not an issue for the majority of participants, there still remain some individuals who are bullied several times a week. Any research to gain insight into further intervention and prevention methods might make the university experience for them more pleasant and enjoyable.

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Appendix A
Questionnaire

The Personality Section

50- Item Set of IPIP Big- Five Factor Markers (Goldberg, 1992).

Please describe yourself as accurately as you can.

1. I am the life of the party.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

2. I feel little concern for others.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

3. I am always prepared.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

4. I get stressed out easily.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

5. I have a rich vocabulary.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

6. I do not talk a lot.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

7. I am interested in people.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

8. I leave my belongings around.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

9. I am relaxed most of the time.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

10. I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

11. I feel comfortable around people.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

12. I insult people.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

13. I pay attention to details.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

14. I worry about things.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

15. I have a vivid imagination.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

16. I keep in the background.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

17. I sympathize with others' feelings.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

18. I make a mess of things.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

19. I seldom feel blue.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

20. I am not interested in abstract ideas.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

21. I start conversations.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

22. I am not interested in other peoples' problems.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

23. I get chores done right away.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

24. I am easily disturbed.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

25. I have excellent ideas.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

26. I have little to say.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

27. I have a soft heart.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

28. I often forget to put things back in their proper place.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

29. I get upset easily.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

30. I do not have a good imagination.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

31. I talk to a lot of different people at parties.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

32. I am not really interested in others.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

33. I like order.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

34. I change my mood a lot.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

35. I am quick to understand things.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

36. I don't like to draw attention to myself.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

37. I take time out for others.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

38. I avoid or neglect my duties.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

39. I have frequent mood swings.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

40. I use difficult words.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

41. I don't mind being the center of attention.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

42. I feel others' emotions.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

43. I follow a schedule.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

44. I get irritated easily.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

45. I spend time reflecting on things.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

46. I am quiet around strangers.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

47. I make people feel at ease.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

48. I am exacting in my work.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

49. I often feel blue.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

50. I am full of ideas.

Very Inaccurate	Moderately Inaccurate	Neutral	Moderately Accurate	Very Accurate
1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

Attitudes Towards, and Experience with, Bullying Section

For each of the three bullying scenarios presented below, please answer the questions that follow.

1. Jamie is at a party on a Saturday night with some friends. While at the party, Jamie gets pushed by someone which starts an argument. This has been a repeated occurrence for Jamie in the last two weeks. Things get heated and a fight breaks out.

A. What would you do if you witnessed this?

- a) Walk away and ignore.
- b) Watch and ignore.
- c) Intervene.
- d) Other.

B. Why?

C. Do you consider this a form of bullying?

Yes ____

No ____

D. When reading this scenario, did you think Jamie was:

Male ____

Female ____

2. Jamie is in the hallway when people repeatedly start calling Jamie names (such as loser, dumb, etc.) just on the basis of Jamie's appearance and actions. Jamie does not respond but soon rushes away.

A. What would you do if you witnessed this?

a) Walk away and ignore.

b) Watch and ignore.

c) Intervene.

d) Other.

B. Why?

C. Do you consider this a form of bullying?

Yes _____

No _____

3. Jamie logged on to a computer and signed in to a social media website where several notifications appeared. These notifications all consisted of rude comments towards a status that was posted by Jamie which seems to be a common occurrence.

A. What would you do if you witnessed this online?

a) Scroll down and ignore.

c) Intervene.

c) Join the other people and comment something rude.

d)Other.

B. Why?

C. Do you consider this a form of bullying?

Yes _____

No _____

The next three questions are about direct forms of bullying, which include hitting, tripping up, taking belongings, name calling and taunting (perhaps about race, gender, sexuality or disability) to someone in person, face to face.

1) Have you been directly bullied (such as hitting, being tripped up, belongings being taken, name calling, taunting, etc.) in the last two weeks?

I haven't been directly bullied in the last two weeks

It has only happened once or twice

Two or three times in the last two weeks

About once a week

Several times a week or more

2) Have you directly bullied (such as hitting, being tripped up, belongings being taken, name calling, taunting, etc.) someone in the last two weeks?

I haven't directly bullied anyone in the last two weeks

It has only happened once or twice

Two or three times in the last two weeks

About once a week

Several times a week or more

3) What did you do when you saw, or heard about, someone else being directly bullied (such as hitting, being tripped up, belongings being taken, name calling, taunting, etc.) in the last two weeks? You can check either the first answer:

I haven't seen or heard of any direct bullying in the last two weeks

Or, you can check several answers:

I completely ignored the direct bullying

I tried to get a friend or group of friends to help the person being directly bullied

I tried to stop the bully

I comforted the person being directly bullied

I made fun of the person being directly bullied

I watched but didn't do anything

Other (Please write here)

The next questions are about your experiences with cyberbullying. First, we will ask you about bullying through mobile phone use and then we will ask you about bullying using the internet. Examples of bullying using a mobile phone are:

- sending or receiving upsetting phone calls (e.g., malicious prank calls).
- taking, sending or receiving unpleasant photos and/or videos using mobile phones (e.g. sexting, recording an incident or assault, etc).
- sending or receiving abusive text messages by mobile phone.

1) Have you been bullied through mobile phone use in the last two weeks (such as malicious prank calls, taking or sending unpleasant photos using mobile phones, or sending or receiving abusive text messages by mobile phone)?

I haven't been bullied through mobile phone use in the last two weeks

It has only happened once or twice

Two or three times in the last two weeks

About once a week

Several times a week or more

2) How were you bullied through mobile phone use in the last two weeks (such as malicious prank calls, taking or sending unpleasant photos using mobile phones, or sending or receiving abusive text messages by mobile phone)?

For this question you can check all that apply.

I haven't been bullied through mobile phone use in the last two weeks

Using text messages

Using multimedia texts (multimedia, photos, videos)

Using phone calls

In another way (Say how - please write here)

Now, we need to know if someone has bullied you using the internet. Examples of bullying through the internet are:

- Malicious or threatening emails directly to you, or about you to others
- Intimidation or abuse when participating in chat rooms
- Abusive instant messages (MSN; Yahoo; AIM etc)
- Websites where secret or personal details are revealed in an abusive way or where nasty or unpleasant comments are being made.

Examples of websites are:

- Social networking websites (myspace, facebook, bebo, piczo etc)
- File sharing websites (YouTube, flickretc)
- Blogs (blogger, blogspot, LiVEJOURNALetc)

1) Have you been bullied on the internet in the last two weeks (such as threatening emails, intimidation or abuse in chat rooms, abusive instant messages, or websites where nasty or unpleasant comments are being made, etc.)?

___ I haven't been bullied on the internet in the last two weeks

___ It has only happened once or twice

___ Two or three times in the last two weeks

___ About once a week

___ Several times a week or more

2) How were you bullied using the internet in the last two weeks (such as threatening emails, intimidation or abuse in chat rooms, abusive instant messages, or websites where nasty of unpleasant comments are being made, etc.)?

For this question you can select several answers.

I haven't been bullied on the internet in the last two weeks

Through emails

Through chat rooms

Through instant messages

Through social networking websites (myspace, facebook, bebo, piczo etc)

Through file sharing websites (YouTube, flickretc)

Through a blog (blogger, blogspot, LiVEJOURNALetc)

Other (Please write/specify here)

3) Have you bullied anyone else using the internet in the last two weeks (such as threatening emails, intimidation or abuse in chat rooms, abusive instant messages, or websites where nasty of unpleasant comments are being made, etc.)?

I haven't bullied anyone else on the internet in the last two weeks

It has only happened once or twice

Two or three times in the last two weeks

About once a week

Several times a week or more

Appendix C

Demographics Section

Background Information

Age _____

Gender _____

Year of study: 1st _____

2nd _____

3rd _____

4th _____

5th _____

