TEACHERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES
OF BULLYING

By

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DEDICATION

This piece of writing is lovingly dedicated to my two sons,
Scott and Todd Bassett, who taught me
the meaning of caring, conflict resolution, empowerment, and trust.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is far easier to blame music, poverty, welfare, politicians,

teachers, schools, collapse of the family structure, and profit-

hungry businesses than to look for the real reasons behind

the behavior that grows into violence, just as it is far easier

to make such behavior and violence the responsibility of

others rather than ourselves. (Burns, 1995, p. 19)

Bully behavior has been evident around the world in one form or another throughout

history. Obviously, bullying is not a new phenomenon, nor is it a behavior that is likely to

disappear altogether no matter how many methods are employed to extinguish it.

Students, parents, teachers, and society as a whole have expressed concern over bullying

for generations. Although many definitions have been written concerning bullying

among children, one of the simplest ways to describe it is "when one child or several

repeatedly tease, taunt, threaten or physically abuse another child" (Bullying Behavior,

2001, ¶1). Put another way, "bullying is cruelty deliberately aimed at others with the

intent of gaining power by inflicting psychological and/or physical pain" (Middleton-

Moz & Zawaski, 2002, p. xiv). There is a growing concern, even at the primary grade

levels, of students who are physically and verbally abusive to others and who exhibit this

classic bully behavior. Bullying is a complicated act which reflects not only behaviors

and attitudes, but also social expectations and control issues. It is not easily understood

nor easily prevented. How bullying impacts an individual's relationships and actions both as a child and as an adult is worth examining regardless if the person was the bully, the victim or a bystander.

Bullying tends to be more aggressive in social settings in which teachers and parents are generally unaware of the extent of the problem and in places to which adults are not privy (playground, halls, restroom, back yard, sports event, and mall). In fact, a leading bullying prevention program recommends that supervision of students be increased in these "hot spots" to reduce incidents of bullying (Olweus, Limber, & Mihalic, 1999). "Typically the action (of bullies) is unprovoked and the bully is perceived as stronger than the victim" (Batsche & Knoff, 1994, p.167). Victims are often reluctant to go to an adult for help for fear of further retaliation by the bully, and witnesses to the bullying hesitate to get involved or do not know how to help (Charach, Pepler, & Ziegler, 1995). Although many approaches from physical punishment to peer mediation have been implemented to reduce bully behaviors, most of these efforts have concentrated on extinguishing the outward symptoms of bullying, not getting to the root of the problem.

Bullying behaviors can be found in children of all ages and continue into adulthood in the form of victimization, road rage, sexual harassment, political assaults, and other negative behaviors such as overly controlling bosses, coaches who use put-downs to intimidate players, teachers who humiliate students, and parents who are severely punitive. One of the most unfortunate things about bullying is that if it happens to a person on a continual basis, it can leave lifelong scars. Thompson (1997) contends that childhood victims may not recover until their early twenties from chronic bullying

and that they may be prone to developing depression in their adult lives due to the early

trauma. "Furthermore, research has shown that bullying can extend across the

generations; the children of bullies often become bullies themselves" (Barone, 1997, p.

81). The above factors should trigger great concern in our schools and our society in

regard to the violence evidenced by school shootings and teen suicides, abuse situations

in homes, and new high level security requirements throughout the world to prevent

terrorist action (Barone, 1997).

Statement of Problem

"Bullying in schools is a worldwide problem that can have negative consequences

for the general school climate and for the right of students to learn in a safe environment

without fear" (Banks, 1997, p.1). Finding and implementing strategies to dramatically

decrease bullying incidents is, indeed, a problem of great magnitude. Schools have long

tried to find solutions to this age-old dilemma. Traditional methods of the past, which

were often consequence oriented and punitive in nature, appear to have little or no lasting

effect on students who demonstrate inappropriate behaviors (Kohn, 1996). The results of

punitive measures generally bring about only temporary compliance and "works only for

as long as the punisher is around" (Kohn, 1996, p. 25). The fact that the same students

may have to be corrected over and over again leaves a question as to how effective the

correctional methods may be (Kohn, 1996, p. 26).

Typically, when a bullying incident occurs at school all students implicated are

brought in and cross-examined to try to "get to the bottom of it." Often the facts gathered

are contradictory and the teacher or administrator assumes the roles of lawyer, judge, and

jury. If a punishment is meted out to the bully, revenge at a later time may ensue. The

victim may be mollified for a short period of time, but often reverts back to fear and worry about the bully's next move. Current means of control have dealt very little with the underlying causes and the effect that intervention through education may have on the serious problem of bullying that permeates all schools.

The American public has experienced a shocking escalation of bullying to the highest degree in the last two decades -- students killing or trying to kill other students on school campuses. Related reports (Brown & Merritt, 2002; "Violence Goes to School", 1999; Oklahoma State Department of Health, 2002) have supported the theory that the students committing violent acts were often either victims of bully behavior themselves or exhibited bully behaviors prior to these violent episodes. These lethal acts should be a catalyst for all adults who work with children to examine circumstances surrounding bullying across the nation. There appear to be many causes and few positive resolutions to decrease these behaviors in our society. Indeed, the incidents of verbal and physical abuse that fit the category of bully behavior seem to be more prominent than ever among children and young adults in today's classrooms (Beane, 1999).

Purpose of Study

Little, if any, attention has been focused on the impact of teachers' personal experiences with bullying in their own childhood, and how this may or may not influence the choices they make in handling bully behaviors in their own classrooms. Having spent sixteen years as a classroom teacher prior to being an administrator, I began to ponder how bullying incidents in my childhood may have influenced my response to bullying in my own classroom. I questioned whether my staunch defense of victims and thorough cross-examination of bystanders was connected in some way to the taunting and

ostracizing my siblings and I experienced on a regular basis due to our attending a small parochial school rather than the local public school. In a small town that was predominantly of a different faith that lacked understanding of our faith expression, this issue clouded many interactions with our public school counterparts on the shared busses and during the joint extracurricular activities. After reviewing studies by Olweus (1994) and Barone (1997) regarding how the effects of bullying can carry on into adulthood, I also reflected on how my role as the victim and, at times the bystander, may have colored my views and reactions to students who were the bullies in my classes and affected how I chose to handle bullying situations that occurred. I thought about the times I may have been less than empathetic with a bully in my classroom or from another classroom in our building and considered how my classroom rules, interactions with students, and disciplinary measures could have been impacted by my childhood bullying experiences.

Later when I became the principal of a large urban elementary school I found myself dealing with bullying on a different level and on a more frequent basis than in my own classroom as a teacher. As I became aware of the incidents of bullying increasing in my school, as indicated by referrals to my office and to the counselors' offices, my desire to significantly reduce bullying among students led me to begin research on bully behaviors and interventions. Upon contemplation, I questioned again if my biases related to bullying in my childhood might have had an effect on my decisions as a principal regarding students who were bullies, victims, and bystanders. Through this research study I examined existing research and sought related data that contributed to the reduction of bullying in school environments and I analyzed the influence of teachers' lived experiences of bullying.

The purpose of this study was to determine how teachers' lived experiences of childhood bullying influences their classroom environment (discipline methods, promotion of autonomy or heteronomy, power relations, sociomoral education, ethic of caring, and other related issues) and what intervention strategies they use in their classrooms to manage bullying in a school setting.

Significance of Study

The collection and analysis of data related to teachers' lived experiences of bullying and its relationship to classroom management may help respondents gain insight as to how their own lived experience of childhood bullying (when they were in elementary or secondary school) has influenced their decisions regarding their present classroom environment and the intervention strategies they have selected as a teacher to manage bullying incidents. The possibility exists that childhood bullies or victims will not connect those labels with themselves because they did not have a perception of themselves as a bully or victim. Since this study relies on self-disclosure, this fact may not be relevant. The self-revelation in this study may help the teachers involved to discover how to deal more effectively with bully behaviors in individual classrooms and in the school as a whole, thereby creating a more appropriate school environment for children. With the prevalence of violence in our schools and American society, reduction of bullying seems to be a good place to start the process for a more peaceful future one class, one school at a time.

Research Questions

The primary question, "In what ways do teachers' lived experiences of bullying influence the choices they make in handling bully behaviors in their own classrooms?" leads to many secondary queries, which have some potential for shedding more light on the main research question, and will be examined throughout the study:

- How does memory work related to early bullying experiences impact how teachers handle bullying incidents in their own classrooms?

- How does a teacher's lived experience of bullying impact classroom power relations?

- How is a teacher's approach to classroom management influenced by past personal incidents with bullying?

- What is the relationship between student autonomy and heteronomy in the classroom and a teacher's background with bullying behaviors?

- How do gender issues that surface in the context of bullying relate to a teacher's personal experience with bullying?

- If a teacher was a former bully, victim, or bystander, what, if any, intervention occurred to change the teacher's actions or thinking about bullying in his/her own classroom?

- How does a teacher describe his/her classroom structure and environment in regard to impacting bullying in either a positive or negative way?

Meaning of Terms

For purposes of this research the following terms will be used to provide consistency of meaning throughout the study and will be defined as follows:

Autonomy: According to Kamii (1994), autonomy is "the ability to make decisions for oneself, about right and wrong in the moral realm and about truth and untruth in the intellectual realm, by taking all relevant factors into account, independently of reward and punishment" (p. 675). Autonomy in the moral sense means self-governance or self-regulation and involves choice, as well as "an attitude of reflective understanding" (DeVries & Zan, 1994, p. 31). Autonomy is the opposite of heteronomy (see definition).

Constructivism:

Constructivism is a scientifically researched theory that explains learning as a physically and mentally active process. The theory takes into account experience, growth, and development over time (maturation), social interaction with peers, being puzzled about things that don't fit with what is already known (disequilibration), and autonomy (moral and intellectual). A basic premise of constructivism is that each of us constructs our own knowledge through observing, questioning, documenting, and reflecting (Branscombe, Castle, Dorsey, Surbeck, & Taylor, 2000, p. 7).

Constructivist education is based on the theory of constructivism.

Epistemology: The term epistemology refers to the "nature of knowledge, its possibility, scope and general basis" (Hamlyn, 1995, p. 242). In research, epistemological stances influence the methodology selected, which will determine how the researcher will go about doing the study. Michael Crotty (1998) cites three main

epistemological stances for researchers: objectivism (meaningful reality exists apart from consciousness), constructionism (meaning only exists as a result of interaction with the realities of the world around us), and subjectivism ("meaning does not come out of an interplay between subject and object but is imposed on the object by the subject" (Crotty, 1998, p. 9).

Hermeneutics: Max van Manen (1990) defines hermeneutics as "the theory and practice of interpretation" (p. 179). A number of leading researchers have shared differing views on the interpretive nature of hermeneutics. Schleiermacher's "aim was to understand an author as well or even better than he or she understands himself or herself" (van Manen, 1999, p. 179), while Dilthey's (1985) emphasis was on the "lived experience" based on expression and understanding -- when "life understands itself." Heidegger's notion of hermeneutics was "not aimed at re-experiencing another's experience but rather the power to grasp one's own possibilities for being in the world in certain ways" (van Manen, 1990, p. 180). For Hirsch the interpretation of the text deals with "reconstructing the intended message" (p. 180) and Ricoeur believed that "to interpret a social situation is to treat the situation as text and then to look for the metaphor that may be seen to govern the text" (p. 180). Dilthey's concept of "lived experience" best exemplifies the nature of interpretation that this thesis will rely on, as interpretive/constructivist researchers "should attempt to understand the 'complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it' "(Mertens, 1998, p. 11).

Heteronomy: DeVries and Zan (1994) refer to heteronomy as "an attitude of mindless

obedience...to authority" and as a "moral and intellectual regulation by others" (p.

31). Heteronomy is the opposite of autonomy since "heteronomous people are

governed by someone else" (Kamii, 2000, p. 57). When people are basically

heteronomous they are unable to regulate themselves and choose appropriate

actions based on what is right because they rely heavily upon external controls.

What is morally right is decided by an outside source, which can be risky,

depending on who is modeling the values being taught.

Naturalistic Inquiry: For centuries the "scientific method" of research was the only

valid and acceptable method that dominated the field of scholarly research. In the

1970s, Guba and Lincoln (1981) pursued a new paradigm to generate knowledge

and research in the field of education (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen,

1993) which they referred to as "naturalistic" inquiry. This approach to research

is often associated with the constructivist model. Scientific research is thought of

as the traditional approach, but naturalistic research has slowly and steadily come

to be accepted as the alternative to this. The "prevailing scientific paradigm

assumes that there is a single objective reality" whereas the new naturalistic

paradigm proposes that "all aspects of reality are interrelated" (Erlandson, et al.,

p. 11) or, in other words, there are multiple realities. The research proposed in

this paper will follow the naturalistic inquiry approach.

Phenomenology:

Phenomenological research is the study of lived experiences...

...phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the

nature of our everyday experiences... it differs from almost every

other science in that it attempts to gain insightful descriptions of

the way we experience the world pre-reflectively, without

taxonomizing, classifying, or abstracting it (van Manen, 1990, p.

9).

 "Phenomenology is a school of philosophical thought that underpins all of

qualitative research" (Merriam, 1998, p. 15). It emphasizes the "essence

or basic structure of experience" (p. 16). "The process involves a blending

of what is really present with what is imagined as present from the vantage

point of possible meanings; thus a unity of the real and the ideal"

(Moustakas, 1994, p. 27).

Qualitative Research: A method of "research that captures holistic pictures using

words" is referred to by Mertens (1998, p. 3) as qualitative research, as opposed

to quantitative research which measures variables in a way that is quantifiable.

The interpretive/constructivist paradigm is most closely linked to qualitative

research. "The basic assumptions guiding the interpretive/constructivist paradigm

are that knowledge is socially constructed by people active in the research

process" (p. 11). "Qualitative research is an umbrella concept covering several

forms of inquiry that help us to understand and explain the meaning of social

phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible" (Merriam,

1998, p. 5). A "characteristic of all forms of qualitative research is that the

researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (p. 7).

Qualitative research methods will be employed in this study on bullying.

Sociomoral Development: The concept of "sociomoral development rests on three

parallels in Piaget's theory of sociomoral and cognitive development" (DeVries &

Zan, 1994, p. 2). The first parallel contends that psychosocial knowledge must be

constructed in the same way that cognitive knowledge is constructed by a child.

The second parallel indicates that "socioaffective bonds (or their lack) motivate

social and moral development" just as affect is a "motivational element in

intellectual development" (p.2). The third parallel involves self-regulation

(equilibration) and suggests that this can be as much an element in social and

moral development as it is in cognitive development. Sociomoral education is a

critical component of constructivist education, which looks at all aspects of a

child's development in terms of construction of knowledge by the child.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Use of the literature review to plan and conduct a study requires

that you critically evaluate the research that you read. This

critical analysis can form the basis for your rationale or for your

choice of data collection procedures. The review of literature

can be seen as an end in itself, either to inform practice or to

provide a comprehensive understanding about what is known

about a topic. (Mertens, 1998, p. 35)

A careful examination of the professional literature including journal articles, books, papers, and other sources revealed several emergent themes related to my research question, In what ways do teachers' lived experiences of bullying influence the choices they make in handling bully behaviors in their own classrooms? The themes identified were (1) bullying, (2) power relations, (3) discipline, (4) gender issues, (5) intervention by agencies, (6) character education, (7) sociomoral development, (8) autonomy, (9) memory-work, (10) resiliency and (11) caring. The above themes are primary concerns although many secondary themes arise from the literature as well (e.g. victimization, personality types, bullying prevention programs, fight or flight reaction). My main goal in examining multiple sources is to determine if there is a significant relationship

between bully behaviors and various classroom environments in which bullying

intervention strategies are employed that can be ultimately related to teachers' personal

lived experiences with bullying.

Bullying

Bullying can include many aggressive behaviors including name calling, insults,

humiliation, constant teasing or taunting, threats, harassment, scapegoating or blaming,

rejection, making ethnic or gender slurs, hitting, shoving, kicking, or taking items valued

by another (Middelton-Moz & Zawadski, 2002). It is important to note that not all acts of

aggression are considered bullying. Maines and Robinson (1994) clarified that a bully is

an "individual or group behaving in a way which might meet needs for excitement, status,

material gain or group process and does not recognize or meet the needs and rights of the

other people/person who are harmed by the behaviour" and the victim is a "person or

group that is harmed by the behaviour of others and who does not have the resources,

status, skill, or ability to counteract or stop the harmful behaviour" (¶2). This

differentiation between bullying and other types of aggression (gangs, wars, angry

outbursts, sibling rivalry, peer conflicts) becomes significant when examining bully

behaviors in school settings and in regard to interpreting a teacher's lived experience of

bullying in the analysis phase of this research.

As indicated previously, bullying is not limited to children. Adults often

experience bullying in the form of aggression aimed at controlling their actions or their

thinking. Physical abuse, intimidation in the home and work place, fear-producing

threats to gain power over others, violent sexual acts, shootings, and other forms of

coercion are employed by adult bullies to victimize others. Although available

information in the literature may suggest that there is a specific profile of a bully, there is

much variance. Bullies can be found in slums as well as country clubs, in factories and

law firms, on playgrounds and in professional sports, and in cities as well as rural areas.

The majority of bullies develops aggressive tendencies at a young age and without proper

guidance can become violent adults (Burns, 1995). Middelton-Moz and Zawadski (2002)

suggest that:

> Contrary to the belief that the bully will stop his/her behavior given time
>
> (the "boys will be boys" adage), bullies don't stop without consistent
>
> intervention, compassionate confrontation and consequences. Bullies fear
>
> being required to face their own insecurities through confrontation and
>
> being forced to be accountable for their behavior and its consequences.
>
> However, without compassionate confrontation and accountability, they just
>
> become better over time at what they do (p. 9) by becoming more savvy at
>
> selecting targets, more clever at covering their tracks, and more covert in
>
> their choice of locations.

One of the questions this proposed research study will seek to answer is, If a

teacher was a bully/victim/bystander at school in their childhood, did any interventions

occur to change his/her actions or thinking? This question may shed some light on what

interventions may be appropriate and valuable in decreasing incidents of bullying,

increasing resiliency, or impacting decision-making and the development of autonomy.

Bullying, according to Olweus (1995), a leading Norwegian psychologist, is like a

poison to the educational environment and has an effect on the learning of every child

involved. Olweus developed one of the first school-based bullying programs as a result

of three young boys who committed suicide due to extreme bullying by their classmates. He tested the program on over 2,500 students in Bergen, Norway, and found that incidents of bullying dropped more than 50 percent after the implementation of his anti-bullying program. Key elements of the prevention techniques included: restructuring of the school environment to create a supportive climate with positive adult role models, firm and fair limits, and consistent consequences (non-corporal) for bullying behaviors. Professional development, increased supervision, regular home/school communication, surveys and a program management team were recommended for the success of this program. Olweus (1995) firmly believes that a community of caring adults that takes a clear moral stand against bullying is critical to the reduction of these destructive behaviors.

Teachers who have personally been involved in their childhood with incidents of bullying may view interventions in their classrooms or schools from varying perspectives depending on whether they experienced bullying from the standpoint of the bully, the victim, or the bystander.

Alarming statistics indicate the following concerning young people who either repeatedly bully others or are victims of bullies:

- 60% of those who were identified as bullies in 6th through 9th grades had at least one criminal conviction by the time they were 24 years old (Olweus, 1993).

- Chronic peer abuse puts adolescents who are victimized at an additional risk for suicidal behavior according to a study of students in the United States (Hodges, 1999).

- Bullying appears to be linked to poor academic performance, high absentee rates, high drop out rates, incarceration, youth suicides and school shootings (Fried & Fried, 1996).

- The majority of school-age bullies are incarcerated by their mid-20's and often have multiple felony convictions by this time (Olweus, 1993).

- 37 of the recent school shootings in the United States involved shooters who felt bullied, threatened, attacked, or persecuted prior to their crime (Oklahoma State Department of Health, 2002).

- Approximately 30 percent of American teens (over 5.7 million) are involved in bullying each year, either as the bully, the target, or both (Nansel, Overpeck, Pilla, Ruan, Simons-Morton, & Scheidt, 2001).

Considering these facts, it should be clear that not only the victims should receive assistance and support, but also the offenders. An investment of resources, time, and support for both the target and the perpetrator should have a positive pay-off for all.

Power Relations

According to Banks (1997), school bullies have a real need to feel powerful and in control. They appear to derive satisfaction from inflicting pain and suffering, either physical or emotional, on others and have very little empathy for their chosen victims. They may even feign innocence and act as if the victims did something to provoke them. Intimidation and threatening words and actions frequently accompany bullying behaviors. Students who engage in these behaviors can be oppositional in the classroom and be defiant with authority figures. It is not generally believed that they victimize others

because they feel bad about themselves (Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Olweus, 1993). In fact, they can possess high degrees of self-esteem and self-confidence.

Victims, on the other hand, may be insecure or anxious, have "intense feelings of vulnerability, fear, shame and low self-esteem" (Middelton-Moz & Zawadski, 2002, p. x) and be reluctant to defend themselves or retaliate when bullied. Charach, Pepler, and Ziegler (1995) found that student bystanders considered victims to be "weak," "nerds," and "afraid to fight back." Victims can be lacking in social skills, be annoying and obnoxious or painfully shy, have few friends, or may come from an overprotective home. Physically, victims may be weaker, but research indicates that bullying can also be triggered by other "perceived" differences among students especially in the areas of class, age, ethnicity, gender, or race (Olweus, 1994). In a recent study, the National Mental Health Association reported on a 2002 national survey involving teens that the most commonly targeted victims of bullying are students who are overweight, gay or perceived to be gay, or children with disabilities (NMHA, 2003). It will be interesting to see if respondents in this research study indicate any of the above descriptors if they were the bullies or the victims in their childhood.

Manke (1997) in her book, *Classroom Power Relations,* contends that in our American culture childhood may be viewed "as a time of non-compliance, a time in which children find and develop spaces in their lives that are not under the control of adults" (p. 10). Because of this a student's agenda can include resisting authority, by either subtle or obvious means, which can lead to power struggles when an adult tries to control the student's actions. Implementation of a shared-power model in the classroom

that allows for negotiation may create a viable model for student-to-student interactions that has implications for reducing bullying, as well.

Discipline

In his research, Kohn (1996) questions the traditional methods of discipline, which are generally based on rewards and punishments, that permeate most school settings and is concerned that these methods are based on teacher control and student compliance. Through actual stories of real classrooms around the country, Kohn looked at a classroom management approach that is "beyond discipline." Rather than relying on control, he believes teachers should work together with students to create caring communities that use a shared decision-making process to solve problems. According to Kohn (1996), social, moral, and academic growth flourish better in an environment based on community, rather than compliance. World history has repeatedly demonstrated that people controlled by external punitive sources (Hitler's Germany, Chinese rebellion, Hussein's Iraq) can often lead to negative results.

Classrooms that practice positive discipline techniques, such as class meetings, help students build better interpersonal and intrapersonal skills as well as increase coping strategies and good judgment (Nelsen, Lott, & Glenn,1993). These class meetings are non-threatening in nature and allow students to learn how to separate their feelings from their actions through class feedback and reflection. This problem-solving process promotes sharing and listening as well as cooperation, conflict resolution, and negotiation. Such constructivist methods have an additional bonus in that they keep students from feeling isolated and left out which are often underlying causes of bullying and other violent behaviors.

Three classroom models were identified by DeVries and Zan (1994) in their book, *Moral Classrooms, Moral Children*. The effects of these different models on sociomoral development, academics and discipline are examined at length by the authors. In the "Boot Camp" model the teacher is characterized as a "drill sergeant," in the "Factory" model the teacher plays the role of "manager," and in the "Community" model the teacher is perceived as a friendly "mentor." Each model uses discipline tactics that reflect the teachers' basic philosophy and their chosen role in the classroom. In the "Boot Camp" classroom there is "strong pressure for obedience" (p. 10) and "the children are kept under strict teacher control" (p. 11). With the teacher continually regulating the students there is little opportunity for students to develop self-control and make progress toward personal autonomy. The "Factory" model creates a sociomoral atmosphere that exerts "pressure for obedient production of class work" (p. 18). This emphasis on production often creates an environment that is limited in terms of social interactions while using rewards and consequences to elicit correct behaviors, but autonomy is still stifled. Mutual respect, fairness, and choice are typical features in the "Community" model. Children are given a voice in the creation of classroom discipline guidelines and negotiation and cooperation are employed to solve problems. The development of autonomy is a goal of this type of classroom.

The various models described here may contribute to diminished or increased bully behaviors. Because the boot camp and the factory model discourage autonomy and encourage heteronomy, it is possible that students in these types of classroom environments do not learn to make decisions based on right and wrong, but rather depend on an authority to tell them what to do. Bystanders during bullying incidents often do not

act in an autonomous manner and allow the bully to dictate their actions while demonstrating hesitancy in reporting the incident to adults in charge. This may possibly be related to the punitive actions that may be taken by the teacher. Victims are not taught to be assertive and express themselves with confidence, but rather to do what they are told regardless of the consequences.

On the other hand, students in a community model classroom may be able to learn to resolve conflict in a more peaceful manner and to respect each other's differences. Since bullying victims are often taunted because they appear not to fit the norm (Charach, Pepler, & Ziegler, 1995) learning to value differences in others may help to decrease bully behaviors. As suggested by Middelton-Moz and Zawadski (2002), bullies do not stop victimizing others without consistent intervention, compassionate confrontation and consequences. In community-centered classrooms this is done through open dialogue and honest sharing of feelings as well as brainstorming of solutions to create a win-win solution for all involved.

Gender Issues

Most adults have at least one memory of a bullying incident from their own school days. Participants in this research study will be asked to write about such an incident. Through memory-work they will be asked to recall this event using rich descriptive language. Some of these experiences may be related to gender issues.

When examining the history of other countries and America's past, it is clear that the phenomenon of school bullying has been around as long as children have been going to school (Greenbaum, Turner, & Stephens, 1989). In many cases, parents, teachers, and older students have exhibited violent tendencies in their reactions to children's

misbehavior. Stories of extremely punitive headmasters, cruel punishments meted out by students in upper grades, and overly strict teachers and parents abound in past centuries. Some adults have viewed bullying as a normal part of social interaction, especially for boys. Confronting a bully and "toughing out" the consequences have even been encouraged as a "rite of passage" in some groups (gangs, hazing, sports, clubs). In a society that has been notoriously dominated by males, it is little wonder that the pecking order has been a long established practice with women and weaklings often being the "featherless wretches" at the bottom. Male dominance is evident throughout history in many areas of society, such as: rights of women, family structures, education, economics, careers, competitive sports, politics, and wars. Oppression of others in order to derive power for self is at the root of not only the above gender issues, but also bullying, as the need to dominate through words and actions is typical of bully behavior (Stein & Sjostrom, 1996).

Although most acknowledged bullying in the past has been done by males, females employing bullying behaviors are now widely recognized in our schools, as well. Current research indicates that the most common ways boys bully is through physical attacks, verbal intimidations, threats and putdowns (verbal slurs), while girls tend to use verbal intimidation, social exclusion and manipulation, spreading rumors, gossip, lies, and putdowns (Olweus, 1994). The fears of humiliation, isolation, and loneliness are often more harmful than physical acts (Greenbaum, et al., 1989). Whether males or females are involved, the results are similar in that the victims carry the scars and "wounded" hearts long after the bullying incident occurs.

Intervention by Agencies

Due to the increased incidences of bullying behavior portrayed in the media and elsewhere (Barone, 1997), some agencies are now taking a more serious look at these rising numbers. "Some experts have suggested that prevention of bullying may become a legal obligation of schools" (Hoover & Oliver, 1996, p. 14) and funding is now being dedicated to this purpose. Many states have enacted Bullying Prevention Acts (Tibbs, 2002) to counteract bullying on school campuses. This was prompted by statistics revealing that victims of bullies often feel unsafe and unhappy at school (Banks, 1997) and by increased violence amongst students. Research studies have revealed that approximately 30% of students are either bullied regularly or are initiators of bully behaviors (Olweus, 1993). In fact Fried and Fried (1996) contend that as many as 160,000 students miss school on a regular basis in the United States due to fear related to bullying. A study by Weinhold & Weinhold (1998) showed that ten percent of school drop-outs are those who have been victims of repeated bullying.

Some non-government organizations have also come forth to speak out against bullying, as well. In June, 2002, the American Medical Association (AMA) adopted an anti-bullying policy that encouraged doctors to help change attitudes which demonstrated tolerance towards bullying. Symptoms, which doctors and parents were warned to watch for, included "increased school absences, frequent crying, low self-esteem, lack of empathy and unexplained bouts of rage or sullenness. Physical symptoms indicated recurrent sleep problems, bed-wetting or headaches" (Peaceworks, ¶1). Although there may be no direct correlation between these symptoms and bullying incidents, the need for bullying prevention acts throughout the nation due to excessive school violence in the last

two decades has led to implementation of programs involving character education to deal with bullying. Youth programs in churches and schools have also sought to engage children in positive social experiences in an attempt to decrease inappropriate interactions.

Character Education

Character education, though not always referred to by this term, has been a part of human social development for thousands of years. In the books of the bible (Jerusalem Bible, 1968), which include the ancient Jewish scriptures of the Pentateuch (Torah), there are numerous references to how a good and upright person should act. Among the most famous of the Old Testament teachings are the Ten Commandments and the book of Proverbs, and in the New Testament the Sermon on the Mount with its Beatitudes. Not only were the ancient Israelites and the early Christians influenced by the Torah and the Bible, but today's Jewish and Christian populations still turn to these books for guidance on building character in young and old alike. Likewise other religious groups turn to key written documents and traditions (writings of Confucius, teachings of the Dahli Lhama, Zen Buddha writings) for guidance, as well. Religion has played a key role in character formation both individually and within societies for centuries.

Throughout history a popular method of character development was through fables whose short narrative sought to illustrate a hidden message which often related to morals. During the sixth century B.C., a Greek fable writer named Aesop wrote a great number of fables which centered on morality. Although Aesop's fables quite likely came from more than one source, Aesop was credited for all of them (Temple & Temple, 1998). Children through the ages were taught "the moral of the story" through such tales

as: "The Grasshopper and the Ant" (responsibility and work ethics), "The North Wind and the Sun" (persuasion versus force), "The Hare and the Tortoise" (steadfastness and persistence), and "The Lion and the Mouse" (kindness and fairness).

Literature has often been a source of moral instruction. Every genre has been utilized to express moral themes. An early source of literature related to character traits was the McGuffey Readers. In 1841 Rev. William Holmes McGuffey published his first reader to introduce children to his ethical code. This book included fifty-five lessons that were designed to mold children into good and honest people. He went on to publish five more "eclectic" readers by 1885. Each of the six readers was very moralistic in its tone and these texts became standard schoolbooks in thirty-seven states (Vail, 2005). Their themes included Scripture, history, behavior towards family, religion, philosophy, and even table manners. These lessons were used to exert influence over students of that era. Interestingly enough, some private religious schools have returned to these readers as a moral text and are currently using modern copies of them in their classrooms.

In the early 1900s informal character education programs surfaced in other parts of the world as well. In her "Children's Houses," Maria Montessori was in the process of improving young people's minds and character through her efforts at providing disadvantaged children a safe, structured environment. Her curriculum included lessons in discerning good and evil, housekeeping, plant care, manners, and other responsibilities along with constructivist academic approaches (Paciorek & Munro, 1999).

Immigration at the turn of the last century was a catalyst for the first published public school curriculum packaged program for character education (Elkind, 2000). This type of education was "supposed to combat the lawlessness and immorality of the so-

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called ignorant hordes" (p. 15). The rationale for this curriculum program was by far more social than educational, as were most of the early character education programs. Published basal readers that promoted character traits were widespread from the 1930's to the 1960's. One of the most well-known of these readers was the <u>Dick and Jane</u> series by the Scott Foresman Company. The characters in the stories modeled family values, respect, choosing right over wrong, helpfulness, citizenship and many more virtues that reflected acceptable society norms of that time period. Morals were not learned by impressionable children through only parental influence, church, and schools. With the onset of television middle-class values and character development were seen in family shows throughout the 1950s and 60s, but in the next several decades new media material began to portray self-centeredness, greed, sexual gratification, lack of respect, and violence. Students of today must sift through excessive hours of television watching and decide which of the current values modeled are worthy of being assimilated into their own value system, whether positive or negative.

<div align="center">**Sociomoral Development**</div>

As social justice issues began to change family roles in the 1960's and 70's, and multiculturalism and gender equity emerged as issues, a resurgence of moral education was seen in the schools (Elkind, 2000).   Leading educational theorists began to delve into the sociomoral aspects of learning and how they could apply to character education in the school setting. Jean Piaget, a Swiss epistemologist, examined sociomoral formation through stages of development in children (Kamii, 1979). He contended that only when children are able to construct their own knowledge of how to handle real life experiences will they be autonomous in their decisions. When a person demonstrates

autonomy they choose what is morally right regardless of popular opinion or the reward system involved. Taking this into account, children who are given an opportunity to develop autonomy would seem less likely to bully others and more likely to take action as bystanders to interrupt the bullying and support the victim.

Lawrence Kohlberg's work on the stages of moral development was influenced by Piaget (Barger, 2000). Kohlberg, a professor at Harvard, did research in moral education in the 1970's. He believed that moral reasoning could be seen in a series of developmental stages which he identified as Pre-Conventional (obedience compelled by punishment and individualism), Conventional (law and order and approval of others), and Post-Conventional (principled conscience and interest in the welfare of others). Kohlberg discovered that very few adults actually reach the highest stage of moral development. In his extensive research he also found that people moved through these stages one at a time and did not tend to skip stages. His introduction of moral dilemmas for discussion to encourage people to see the possibility of the next stage of development is still a common technique used in leading character education programs such as the "Character Counts"(Josephson, 2002) approach, "The Bully Free Classroom" (Beane, 1999) strategies, and the "Positive Action" program.

DeVries and Zan (1994) concentrate on the sociomoral aspects of constructivism as it relates to moral development. Through numerous examples of contrasting sociomoral classroom atmospheres (boot camp, factory, and community models) and techniques implemented in these, the authors attempt to demonstrate that a constructivist atmosphere (community model) in early childhood classrooms better promotes positive sociomoral behaviors in children than traditional behaviorist classroom environments.

According to DeVries and Zan (1994), character traits must be modeled by the teacher, rather than just taught, for children to demonstrate positive traits in their everyday interactions. In authoritarian classrooms, which are under strict teacher control, children remain heteronomous and can exhibit more aggressive and controlling behaviors. On the other hand, children who are in community based classrooms where negotiation and collaboration are utilized, become much more autonomous and exhibit respect and responsibility more often.

A few decades ago groups of concerned parents, who believed morals and values should be the responsibility of the parents and not the school, fought the inclusion of any kind of character instruction. Fear of values being taught in schools conflicting with their own belief systems drove them to legally fight against curriculum offerings that clarified values in the classroom (Hinely & Ford, 1994). Others believed that education on morals was crossing the line of separation between church and state. However, as violence, bullying and other unacceptable behaviors became more prominent in society and in our schools, communities began to revisit the teaching of morals. The search for common threads or middle ground between church, school, and community began to shape a new curriculum based on values that were agreed upon by all concerned participants. Some of these agreed upon character traits included: respect, honesty, responsibility, caring, sportsmanship, kindness, cooperation, honesty, compassion, and perseverance. These and other lifeskills are now readily accepted as part of school curriculums across the country and are generally marketed as character education programs or bullying prevention programs. Anti-bullying curricula have sprung up across the country in

response to the state-adopted bullying prevention acts that have generated new interest in finding ways to thwart bullying in the schools.

Autonomy

In their research findings, DeVries and Zan (1994) refer to a "Community Model" classroom, which promotes negotiation through collaborative strategies and the use of shared experiences and shared power. According to these authors, students in this type of social climate are more likely to display autonomous behavior (self-regulation). When a person demonstrates autonomy they choose what is morally right regardless of popular opinion or the promise of a reward. According to Branscombe, Castle, Dorsey, Surbeck, and Taylor (2000), "Autonomy is evident when you consider others' perspectives, coordinate your own views with theirs, and then make a reasoned and informed decision based on that coordination" (p. 7). When appropriate behavior is constructed internally rather than controlled externally by others, students are able to make better choices whether or not adults are present. Since it has been noted that many bullying incidents take place when adults are not present (Olweus, Limber, & Mihalic, 1999), it appears that the increased development of autonomy in students could have a direct bearing on reduction of bullying in schools.

Autonomy is not synonymous with freedom or independence as some may think. Bullies are often very independent, choosing to inflict pain on others without regard for the victims. The opposite of autonomy is heteronomy. Kamii (1982) discusses Piaget's understanding of this term as meaning, "being governed by someone else" (p. 73) and Devries and Zan (1994) state that "heteronomous morality is conformity to external rules that are simply accepted and followed without question" (p. 2). Students in "Boot Camp"

classrooms (DeVries & Zan, 1994) learn to follow moral rules out of obedience to a

coercive authority figure. In these behaviorist classrooms, students have little social

interaction with each other and teachers dole out rewards and punishments which may

prolong a child's heteronomy and hamper the emergence of autonomy (Kamii, 1979) thus

impacting bully, bystander and victim by minimizing their ability to resolve conflict in a

positive manner.   On the other hand, sociomoral atmospheres, which encourage caring,

acceptance, mutual respect, and autonomy provide a safe climate for all students to

express needs and emotions and perhaps decrease the need for bullies to dominate others

and increase the self-esteem of victims. The difference between the traditional discipline

methods of approval and disapproval and a constructivist approach in which children

form their own values and judgments through real experience may be significant to

bullying prevention since the first prolongs heteronomy while the latter fosters autonomy.

Memory-Work

"Memory -work is a social constructionist and feminist research method that was

developed in Germany by Frigga Haug and others explicitly to bridge the gap between

theory and experience" (Onyx & Small, 2001, p. 773).   It first became well established in

Australia and New Zealand and is now being used with increased frequency as a

qualitative research method. Memory-work (Haug, 1987) involves using a person's lived

experiences as a focus of the research and can evoke a wide range of emotions. Memory-

work was originally developed by a collective of women, but is now used by both men

and women as a methodology for individual research (Ingleton, 2000).

According to Castle and Bryant (2000) "memories that have not been reflected

upon can lead teachers to reproduce their own past negative experiences in their students"

(p. 20). This may have some serious implications with respect to bullying, especially if a teacher was a bully during childhood, but also may have some implications if the teacher was a victim or a bystander.

Other research concerning the function of memory adds additional credibility to the use of memory-work in this research study. According to Yow (1994):

> Beginning in their 40's and continuing through the rest of their lives,
> people reminisce. Memories of childhood, adolescence and early
> adulthood may be more easily recalled than those from middle and
> late years. If the event or situation is significant to the individual, it will
> likely be remembered in some detail, especially associated with feelings.
> However, the interpretation may reflect current circumstances and needs.
> (p.21).

Resiliency

After World War II when the horrors of the Holocaust were more fully revealed, it became clear that some of the Holocaust survivors were more resilient than others and this ability to use their inner resources to cope with the atrocities of their situations quite possibly was the root of their survival. Resiliency may also have an impact on how victims and bystanders effectively or ineffectively deal with bullying. Lack of coping skills can even be the catalyst that increases the tendency to turn to bully behaviors in children who have not learned how to handle frustration and anger in times of conflict. How then do people learn to be more resilient and thus better deal with the pitfalls of life?

Burns (1995) refers to resiliency as the "C" factor or "Coping" ability. If individuals are able to resolve conflict "through verbal interaction to attain mutual understanding and satisfaction," then they "possess strong coping skills" (p. 33). However, if people involved in conflict "argue, cuss, fight or walk away" when they don't get their way, then their coping skills "need growth and guidance" (p. 33). Resiliency comes from within and is a product of our experiences as well as physiological factors (anxiety, clinical depression, and related disorders can weaken coping skills). The ability to recover quickly from life's disappointments and to successfully contend with conflicts is a skill most often learned in childhood. Observations of how parents, teachers, peers and other role models deal with frustrations and conflicts combined with a person's own negative or positive self-image contribute to the development of resiliency or the opposite -- the inability to cope effectively.

The type of family structure that a child grows up in according to Coloroso (2003) has a definite impact on resiliency. She contends that there are "three basic kinds of families: brick-wall, jellyfish, and backbone (p. 76) and states,

> Both the brick-wall family and the jellyfish family help create bullies, bullied kids who when attacked have few inner resources to fend off the bully, and bystanders who aid and abet the bully or stand on the sidelines, powerless to act. Backbone families, in contrast, provide the support and structure necessary for children to develop their innate ability to care and their desire and will to do good. Backbone families help children develop inner discipline, and even in the face of adversity and peer pressure, they retain faith in themselves and in their ability to make a difference (p. 77).

What then are the characteristics of these three kinds of families? The brick-wall family is characterized by "a concern for order, control, obedience, adherence to rules, and a strict hierarchy of power….the parents direct, supervise, mini-lecture, order, threaten, remind and worry over the kids" (p.77). This is a type of dictatorship and is akin to the "boot camp" model classroom described by DeVries and Zan (1994). Fear of punishment or ridicule and keeping feelings inside are the common responses of children raised in this type of environment. All of the power comes from the top and in essence gives the child a feeling of powerlessness and a lack of self-worth which can cause children to model this same behavior in the form of bullying others or promotes a lack of inner resources to cope with being bullied, to defend others who are victimized, or to seek help.

The jellyfish family on the other hand "lacks a firm structure...and stifles the healthy display of feelings and emotions" (p. 85). In the jellyfish family "a permissive, laissez-faire atmosphere prevails" and the "children are either smothered or abandoned, humiliated, embarrassed, and manipulated with bribes, threats, rewards and punishments." The children in jellyfish families often become "spoiled and/or scared and vindictive" (p. 85). Parents in these kinds of families enforce little discipline until things are really out of control and have few parameters for behavior. They tend to smother the child and become rescuers as well as catering to every whim of their child. By not allowing the child to try to resolve their own conflicts, the child gets the message that the parent does not believe them to be capable of handling problems. Lack of structure in the jellyfish home can lead to chaos which then leads parents to resort to threats and punishment. A popular television show featuring "The Nanny" often deals with this type of family by setting up routines and consistent consequences to give children reasonable

expectations and necessary structure. Children raised in jellyfish families will turn to

peers "including cults and gangs of bullies" who are "willing to give them a sense of

belonging and some kind of security and consistency" (p. 86). Children from these

families can also become manipulative, needy, or mow down anyone who gets in the way

of their wants. In regard to bullying they either have "no resources to fend off a bully" or

will "join with the bully just to join with someone. Others will stand back, too helpless to

intervene…too hopeless to think it would matter if they did" (p. 90).

Backbone families are "characterized not so much by what they do or don't do as

by how they balance the sense of self and the sense of community in all that they do" (p.

91). Parents in backbone families help their children to "learn to question and challenge

authority that is not life-giving" as well as demonstrate respect and compassion. By

learning "to love themselves and have empathy for others," these children don't feel

compelled "to control or manipulate others, hold anyone in contempt, or subjugate

themselves to a bully" (p. 91). Backbone homes are consistent and parents are firm and

fair. These families generally experience a sense of calm and provide the support needed

for children to develop positive social and moral codes. The children develop a strong

sense of self-worth and feel accepted, loved, and valued. They become resilient and

develop "optimism" which "is critical to dealing effectively with setbacks, mistakes, and

negative social interactions" (p. 92). The "community model" classroom (DeVries &

Zan, 1994) promotes these same tenets in students. The cycle of violence doesn't take

root in backbone families, rather "an ever growing circle of caring" (p. 91) is planted.

Caring

If there was one word that summarized all of the needs within our homes,
schools, and businesses today the word would be "care." We as people
must care for one another. One of the most discerning denominators
among those who commit violent acts in the home, school or workplace
against a spouse, child, teacher, fellow student, co-worker or employers is
the overwhelming feeling of not being wanted, needed or appreciated by
those around them (Burns, 1995, p. 169).

The sociomoral aspects of constructivism (responsibility for actions, cooperation,
conflict resolution, peer interaction, mutual respect, and an emphasis on community
building) as defined by DeVries and Zan (1994), may be useful in creating a caring
classroom atmosphere in which bullies, victims, and bystanders can be nurtured and
valued. These characteristics are key elements used to define a moral classroom in which
caring about others is a priority (DeVries and Zan, 1994). Much of DeVries' and Zan's
initial interest in constructivist education was inspired by Piaget, a Swiss epistemologist,
who developed the concept of constructivism (Fosnot, 1996). Piaget advocated a
cooperative relationship among children and between teachers and children for the
development of positive social relations and mutual respect (DeVries, 1995). As
previously mentioned, Kohn (1996) also believes teachers should create caring
communities that use a shared decision-making process to solve problems. It stands to
reason that bullying would have a harder time flourishing in an environment that
encourages appropriate social and moral interactions in an environment of caring and
positive communication.

In his *PeaceBuilders* program, Krupnick (Viegas, 2000) encourages students to begin each day with a "peace pledge" in which they agree to give no put-downs, praise others, make things right with those they offend, and turn to wise adults if a problem occurs. In many instances, these are the very attributes that bullies lack. Krupnick believes that praise curbs violent behavior, builds self-esteem, and promotes respect for others and that children should be shown compassion and understanding both at school and at home in order to "build a bridge toward a peaceful, productive future" (p. 122). Although it is often difficult to change the home life of a child, schools should be focusing on reducing bullying through helping students find peaceful solutions to problems.

Themes of caring permeate Noddings (1995) work in the 1990's. Noddings believes that"wholeness in education" (p. 676) must be created by not only teaching academic subjects, but also the arts and social sciences. Caring for selves, others, strangers, the natural world, the human-made world, and for ideas are all areas of concern for her. Her curriculum of care is aimed at producing caring, competent, loving and lovable people through expanding their knowledge of cultural literacy and sharing common experiences. She promotes character education through encouraging teachers to carefully select appropriate curriculum that leads to helping children care for themselves, others, and the world around them.

Noddings believes that in this age of violence among school children, as evidenced by recent statistics on the increase of bullying and aggressive behaviors demonstrated by students of all ages, it is necessary to teach themes of care, not just materialistic and egotistic messages. Her integrated themes often focus on matters of

controversy (crime, "gansta rap," war, poverty, racism, sexism) where students are

encouraged to look at these topics from a perspective of caring in a positive sociomoral

atmosphere. When possible, Nodding believes themes should be in response to the lived

experiences of the students (conflicts, death in a family, drug pressure, abuse, bully

behaviors, teen pregnancy,). Noddings contends that students who are cared for and

learn to care will also be in a position to function more productively in the social and

academic arena. This may have implications for the reduction of bullying, as well.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

A good phenomenological description is an adequate elucidation of some

aspect of the lifeworld – it resonates with our sense of lived life…a good

phenomenological description is collected by lived experience

and recollects lived experience -- is validated by lived experience and

it validates lived experience. (van Manen**,** 1990, p. 27)

My research study attempted to use thick description to reveal the lived experience or the "lifeworld" (van Manen, 1990, p. 2) of teachers in regard to bullying incidents in their personal lives and in their classrooms. This naturalistic, descriptive, phenomenological study communicates the experiences of the participants to the reader through a narrative approach. "Phenomenological text is descriptive in the sense that it names something. And in this naming it points to something and it aims at letting something (in this case, the phenomenon of bullying) show itself" (vanManen, 1990, p. 26).

Methodology

In this research effort I chose to do a naturalistic, descriptive study employing qualitative methods. Unlike quantitative methods from a positivistic paradigm found in the natural sciences, this approach "looks for culturally derived and historically situated

interpretations of the social lifeworld" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). Qualitative research is most often associated with the interpretive/constructivist paradigm, which relies on social construction of knowledge (Mertens, 1998). This paradigm is descriptive of the type of research I pursued throughout this study.

The epistemological stance, which supports the methodology selected, draws from constructivist theory. This stance acknowledges that all reality is a social construction and that social interaction is the basis for meaning, which exists as a result of interaction with the realities of the world around us (Crotty, 1998). My research topic concerning the extent to which teachers' lived experiences of bullying affect the choices teachers disclose that they make regarding bullying intervention strategies focuses on a perspective that clearly deals with social interactions or human science.

A hermeneutic phenomenological methodology (van Manen, 1990), which focuses on human science, has been used to derive meaning from lived experiences. According to van Manen (1990),

Hermeneutic phenomenological research may be seen as a dynamic interplay among six research activities:

(1) turning to a phenomenon which seriously interest us and commits us to the world;

(2) investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it;

(3) reflecting on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon;

(4) describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting;

(5) maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon;

(6) balancing the research context by considering parts and whole (pp. 30-31).

Every effort was made to stay true to the methodical structure described above all the while acknowledging that with phenomenology there is no set method. Rather, "phenomenological scholarship can be considered as a set of guides and recommendations for a principal form of inquiry that neither simply rejects or ignores tradition, nor slavishly follows or kneels in front of it" (van Manen, 1990, p. 30).

As the researcher, I accept that I was the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, which is "characteristic of all qualitative research" (Merriam, 1998, p.7). I also recognize that I was operating from a "working hypothesis" (Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 59) with a preconceived notion that teachers' lived experiences of bullying during their childhood influence their choice of bullying intervention strategies as a teacher. Although this gave direction to my research, "unlike traditional hypotheses, though, they (working hypotheses) genuinely interact with data collection and analysis, modifying and being modified as the research process continues" (Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 61).

Identification of Participants

Random sampling, which lends itself better to quantitative research, was not deemed appropriate in this research study since the goal in this instance is not to generalize the findings of my study to a broad population, but rather to examine an issue in-depth. Purposive sampling was used instead to "seek both typical and divergent data"(Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 33) which provided insight into the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt;* van Manen, 1990) of the participants. I specifically sought to recruit nine teachers (K-12) who had experienced bullying in childhood either as the bully, the

victim, or a bystander.   I had hoped to make a final selection of two representatives in

each category and an equal balance of male and female participants. Due to the difficulty

I had in recruiting participants, this was not feasible. In the end eight participants were

involved (2 male, 8 female; 6 elementary; 2 secondary; 1 rural, 3 urban, 4 suburban; 8

public, 0 private; 1 northeasterner, 3 southwesterners, 4 from south central United States).

Participants were sought through the Oklahoma State University Writing Project

(OSUWP) and the National Writing Project (NWP) (see Appendices A and B).   These

two writing projects were selected as sources for soliciting participants because all

members have been involved in numerous writing experiences in the Summer Scholars

training program, in their own personal writings, and as Teacher Consultants in the

Writing Project. As trained teacher consultants in the writing projects they have written

about their own lives and are familiar with protocol writing, making them good

candidates for my research since they are comfortable with this approach. Although the

teachers selected as participants may not be typical of the majority of classroom teachers

in regard to their affinities in the area of writing because of their more extensive

experiences of writing through their work as teacher consultants with the Writing

Projects, their bullying incidents and current classroom environments will reflect

personal experiences not related to their writing ability.

After obtaining permission from these writing projects, a solicitation letter (see

Appendix A) was sent out on the OSUWP and NWP listservs to locate potential

candidates to participate in this research study. After initial contact, all subsequent

correspondence with selected respondents was conducted through the researcher's private

e-mail account on a stand-alone computer (not on a shared network) or by telephone.

Since these participants were critical in shaping the research, I was very thorough and thoughtful in the selection process by screening protocol writing samples for rich descriptive accounts of the bullying incidents, checking completion of the questionnaire, and tailoring the interview questions to each individual in order to connect meaning between the written piece and the questionnaire.

Procedures

The procedures selected for this research guided the "process of discovering essential questions, gathering data and analyzing it to answer those questions" (Hubbard & Power, 1999, p. 1) and were used to establish trustworthiness concerning the outcome of the study. Since "there is no standard format for reporting qualitative research" (Merriam, 1998, p. 227), the procedures were carefully chosen to suit my purpose as an investigator and to meet the needs of a broad audience (teachers, parents, administrators, politicians, pastors) that may be interested in the end results.

First I sent the participants a consent letter to obtain permission for the study. After receipt of their signatures I forwarded the instructions for the writing prompt to them and once their written experiences were received, I sent out the questionnaire via zoomerang.com. I then compiled interview questions based on their childhood experience of bullying as remembered by them and their returned questionnaires. These questions focused on clarification of their lived experiences and their current classroom practices. Next I carefully transcribed the interviews and using multiple data sources began the process of analysis.

Protocol Writing

In this research study memory-work (Haug, 1987) was a key element in the protocol writing submissions from the participating teachers about their lived experiences of bullying. The results of these submissions were used, in conjunction with the teachers' current classroom management practices, to suggest connections between bullying experiences in youth and the way the teachers handled bullying in their classrooms as adults.

The research of human science is based on human experience. In protocol writing the participants were asked to write down their lived experience. It is understandable and expected that perfect recall is not feasible, but more importantly it is the description of the experience as the person lived through it that is of the essence (van Manen, 1990). Teacher participants in this study were requested to write an accounting of a personal experience with bullying during their school years (see Appendix C). Each participant wrote about this experience from one of three perspectives: (1) as a bully, (2) as a victim, or (3) as a bystander. Recognizing that this type of reflection may elicit deep feelings, it was imperative to spend time prior to the writing experience clarifying what lived experience is (descriptive and personal) and is not (interpretive and explanatory). This phenomenological reflection gave insight into the experience of bullying in the life of each teacher and led to rich discussion during the interview process.

Questionnaire

Following the collection of a protocol writing submission, a researcher-designed questionnaire was distributed to each respondent through http://www.zoomerang.com, a global online survey software (see Appendix D). This particular service was selected due

to its security and privacy policies as well as being cost free if the survey results are

retrieved from the site within 10 days of the survey launch. This website was used to

gather information pertaining to the teacher's classroom environment and interventions

regarding bullying incidents, as well as perceived frequency of bullying involving

students in their classroom. This questionnaire utilized a closed format checklist with an

optional comment section at the end of most questions. This comment section permitted

the respondent to include additional information not included in the "response options"

(Mertens, 1998) which assisted the researcher in getting more accurate information

pertaining to each individual situation.

Interviewing

After the identified teachers wrote down their reflections about bullying behaviors

in their personal lives through protocol writing and about their current classroom

experiences on the questionnaire, interviews were conducted individually by phone.

Originally I intended to conduct some interviews electronically through www.epals.com,

a secure educational website providing password protected, private chat rooms to

members, but all participants were agreeable and comfortable with phone interviews.

These personal interviews relied on the participants' lived experiences as expressed in

their written submission and on the questionnaire responses as guides for the discussion

(see Appendix E). Throughout this dialogue process, teachers were encouraged and

guided to reflect on how the situation involving bullying of which they wrote was

handled (or not handled) and the implications this may have had on their classroom

management and intervention strategies in relation to bullying. These interviews were

tape recorded/documented and then transcribed by me. Meaning was extracted from

these as categories emerged. The importance of the interviewing process as a source of

data to generate information and gain perspectives is critical. This interaction between

the researcher and respondent, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) set the stage for

reconstructing the past, interpreting the present, and predicting the future.

Emergent Themes

Data gathered from multiple sources was sorted into categories or themes using an

"emergent category designation" (Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 118) procedure. This

particular technique involves several steps:

(1) Read the first unit of data and start a pile.

(2) Read the second unit of data and place it with the first unit if it fits that same

theme. If not, create a new pile.

(3) Continue with all pieces of data and place each piece in a pile that appears to

have a common theme. Those units that do not seem to fit the themes, place

in a miscellaneous file to review at the end of the process to determine the

feasibility of including it in the study.

(4) Tentatively choose a category title or descriptive sentence to differentiate

emergent themes.

(5) Start over and regroup according to the selected themes.

By following this tedious procedure, a reconstruction of the realities of the life experience

occurred and lent credibility to the study.

Analysis of Data

Data were derived from the review of literature, protocol writing, questionnaires,

interviews, audio tapes, member checks, audit trail and other documents and artifacts

related to the research. Analysis of data was ongoing throughout the research process. The primary purpose for using phenomenological research in this study is to ask the question, "What is the nature of this phenomenon (bullying in school settings) as an essentially human experience?" (van Manen, 1993, p. 63). In light of this, the analysis of the data required thoughtful reflection about the information gathered and a rigorous effort to "grasp the essential meaning" (p. 77) of the lived experience was necessary. As thematic aspects of the research surfaced it was important to apply pedagogic understanding to them. However, it was not the thematic aspects that defined the structure of the data analysis, but the careful and pedagogical interpretation of the lived experiences that supplied the meaning derived from the data.

Establishing Trustworthiness

All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in
an ethical manner. Being able to trust research results is especially important
to professionals in applied fields, such as education, in which practitioners
intervene in people's lives. (Merriam, 1998, p. 198)

Like quantitative research, qualitative research must be conducted professionally and in a manner that establishes trustworthiness so that others have confidence in the results of the study. Guba and Lincoln (1981) believe that in a qualitative study you can still "talk about the validity and reliability of the instrumentation, the appropriateness of the data analysis techniques, the degree of relationship between the conclusions drawn and the data upon which they presumably rest, and so on" (p. 378). The ways in which the data are collected, analyzed and interpreted must be well defined, yet focused on understanding the lived experience and presented to the audience in such a way as to

bring meaning to the data. Internal validity (how research findings match reality), external validity (the extent to which the findings can be applied to other situations), and reliability (replication of findings) are all components of trustworthiness in research. According to Merriam (1998), in qualitative research internal validity can be enhanced by triangulation, member checks, long term observation, peer examination, using an audit trail, participatory or collaborative modes of research, and identification of researcher's biases. Likewise external validity and reliability can be strengthened by rich, thick description, typicality of the individual, program or event, and the use of a multi-site design (examining a variety of sites, cases or situations).

<div align="center">**Triangulation**</div>

This research study used triangulation to "elicit the various and divergent constructions of reality that exist within the context of a study" (Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 31). Merriam (1998) defines triangulation as "using multiple investigations, multiple sources or data, or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings" (p. 204). Differing points of view were sought to construct "plausible explanations about the phenomena being studied" (Mathison, 1988, p. 17). By using triangulation, data were cross-checked for validity. This study employed multiple sources by using protocol writing, a survey questionnaire, and a personal interview with each participant as well as seeking participants from various regions of the country (not just local), tailoring interview questions to each participant's individual experience, and examining related literature.

Peer Debriefing

Peer review or peer debriefing was used to examine the researcher's findings and "review perceptions, insights, and analyses" (Erlandson, et. al, 1993, p. 31). Another professional who has closely followed the evolution of this study and has a general understanding of the essential questions was asked to provide feedback and give insights related to the research in order to "pose searching questions to help the researcher confront ... her own values and to guide next steps in the study" (Mertens, 1998, p. 182). This process helped me to refine or redirect the process of inquiry. Comments from colleagues were sought throughout the study, not just at the conclusion, to help shape the research and provide validity.

Member Checks

Another important aspect of establishing trustworthiness is checking back with research subjects to verify that what has been perceived by the researcher is indeed what the member experienced. Sharing data and written interpretations of the information gathered with the participants was invaluable in validating this qualitative research. This also established credibility between the researcher and the persons involved in the study. All participants were asked to verify data, interpretations, and conclusions giving them "a chance to indicate whether the reconstructions of the inquirer are recognizable" (Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 142). If the participant reviewed the data and determined that they were uncomfortable with what they said, they were once again reassured that confidentiality will be maintained. Since none of the final participants persisted in not wishing to have their information used, all continued in the study throughout the entire process.

Audit Trail

To ensure dependability protocol writing submissions, transcriptions of interviews, actual responses from the questionnaire surveys, and member check comments are included in this final report. Audio tapes will be available for review until the dissertation is approved and published.

Researcher Bias

The principal investigator recognizes and acknowledges that researcher bias exists in regard to all research efforts and should be identified. This bias resulted in selective abandonment of data (non-inclusion of information that was not deemed by the researcher as important to the overall study), some misinterpretation (inability to accurately pinpoint the participants' exact meaning of shared experiences in some cases), and unintentional skewing of conclusions (interpretation of data based on my own teaching and administrative experience rather than objective view). The research question itself stems from presumptions on the part of the researcher and can be classified as bias. The researcher used a process of personal reflection and discussion with peers to identify any biases that may impact the study.

Reflexive Journal

The researcher regularly used a reflexive journal to record insights, information, ideas, clues, questions, etc. related to the research. In this way the researcher reflected on the data at intervals and formulated concerns or determined what gaps existed in the findings. This technique served to reveal insights that could have been missed during the data analysis process and consequently the process was adjusted accordingly.

Ethical Considerations

Many ethical considerations emerged during the research project. Guarding participant privacy and protecting them from harm, the researcher's intentions and motives, the actual purpose of the study, the use of the computer and internet in data collection, employing covert research tactics, selective abandonment of data based on researcher bias, dissemination of the final product to interest groups, subsequent use of data, appropriate interactions with the respondents, responsible legal intervention (reporting to proper authorities) when abuse or illegal practices were revealed by participants or observed by the researcher placed a burden of responsibility on the researcher. "While policies, guidelines, and recommendations for dealing with the ethical dimensions of qualitative research are available to researchers, actual ethical practice comes down to the individual researcher's own values and ethics" (Merriam, 1998, p. 218). Sensitivity and integrity are of utmost importance while doing qualitative research. Every effort was made in this research study to uphold a high standard of ethical practices and professional codes.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The naturalistic paradigm affirms the mutual influence that

researcher and respondents have on each other. Nor are the

dangers of reactivity ignored. However, never can formal methods

be allowed to separate the researcher from the human interaction

that is the heart of the research. (Erlandson [et al.], 1993, p. 15)

Participant Selection

In trying to determine the audience for this research study, serious

consideration was given to locating a group of teachers who would be willing to

do a protocol writing assignment that would serve as an "experience-narrative"

(Thomas, 2003, p. 38) where I, as the researcher, would compile and organize the

narratives and "point out common themes, similarities, and contrasts which

appear in the several accounts" (p. 39). Keeping this process in mind, I made the

decision to send my initial request for participants to the Oklahoma State

University Writing Project (OSUWP) Listserv after attaining approval from the

director of the Writing Project. Not only was I myself an OSUWP teacher

consultant, but also I believed that other OSUWP members would find writing

about a personal experience an easier task than someone who did not have this

writing connection. I originally narrowed the participant pool criteria to current

elementary school teachers who experienced a bullying experience (as a bully, victim, or bystander) while in elementary school. After multiple attempts (three Listserv queries) to seek participants through this source, I sent out two further requests for participation to the National Writing Project (NWP), after attaining approval from the national Project Manager, in hopes of adding to the number of respondents to consider for the study. The results of these two Listserv inquiries were as follows (16 total responses):

(a) OSUWP (first attempt) – 3 responses (One met the criteria and eventually completed the process which included a signed consent form, protocol writing, questionnaire, and phone interview.)

(b) OSUWP (second attempt) – 2 responses (Neither met the criteria although one returned the consent form and the questionnaire before I discovered she was a university professor, not an elementary school teacher.)

(c) OSUWP (third attempt) – 4 responses (One met the criteria and completed the process.)

(d) NWP (first attempt) – 5 responses (Two met the criteria and returned the consent form, but did not return the protocol writing even after follow-up requests.)

(e) NWP (second attempt) – 2 responses (One met the criteria, but did not follow through; one did not meet the criteria.)

After seven months and only two completions, I met with my doctoral committee and expressed my concern over not getting enough participants to satisfy the requirements of my IRB approved proposal (six to nine participants).

While discussing this dilemma with them I made a decision to do an IRB Modification that included a title change (removal of the word "elementary"), methodology changes (recruitment of subjects to include personal contacts through purposive sampling with the sample population incorporating secondary school teachers, as well as elementary, and the allowance of bullying experiences from preschool through high school), and all documents were changed to reflect these new guidelines.

These modifications to the IRB were approved and made a significant difference in obtaining participants for my research study. Over the next five months, several additional research participants agreed to become involved and completed the required steps for the study. Overall twenty-three teachers responded to the queries through the three different sources (OSUWP, NWP, and personal contacts). Out of these, nine respondents became viable candidates for participation, but in the final selection only eight were used in the study. After the written consent was secured, repeated reminders were given to obtain the protocol writing submission, but due to incompletion of required documents, one male subject was eliminated.

Final participants included:

(a) 6 women, 2 men

(b) 6 elementary (4 males and 2 females), 2 secondary (one middle school female and one high school female)

(c) 1 rural, 3 urban, 4 suburban

(d) 8 public, 0 private

(e) 1 from northeasterner United States, 3 from southwestern United States, 4

from the south central United States

Data Collection

Once teachers responded to the call for research participants, their contributions to

the data collection were a three-fold process:

(1) They were sent a writing prompt (Appendix C) with instructions to write about a

personal experience involving bullying when they were in elementary or secondary

school. This experience could be from the perspective of being the bully, the victim

or the bystander.

(2) After the writing prompt was returned, a questionnaire (Appendix D) was sent via

Zoomerang.com. The participants had 10 days in which to complete and return the

survey. This questionnaire asked for demographical information as well as sought

responses related to how the participants perceived the rate of bullying incidences in

their current classrooms and school sites, along with how the respondents dealt with

bullying incidents compared to other teachers in their schools.   Participants were also

asked to describe their classroom environment.

(3) I then reviewed the responses to the writing prompts and the questionnaires and

formulated individualized guided interview questions (Appendix E) based on general

questions that I had generated for the study. A phone interview lasting between thirty

five minutes to an hour was then conducted in which probing questions were used to

further extend information.

After all of the above information was gathered from a participant, I began a

process of analysis to interpret the data for the purpose of unveiling the meaning of the

lived experiences as they related to bullying in childhood and dealing with bullying as a classroom teacher. This wholistic approach involved multiple readings of the teacher's protocol writing and transcribed interview script, and careful scrutiny of the questionnaire responses. Throughout this process emergent themes were sought to later be examined for common threads among the participants that defined the essence of bullying. This "emergent category designation" (Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 118) technique allows for data gathered from multiple sources to be sorted, ordered, and made meaningful.

I first analyzed each individual participant's responses, then combined these to look at a comprehensive overview of all responses, the emergent themes of bullying, and the meaning derived from these lived experiences as shared by the participants. As a researcher, I must "reflectively ask what is it that constitutes the nature of this lived experience" (van Manen, 1990, p.32) and make every effort to establish trustworthiness in presenting the data.

Personal Descriptors

Each teacher in this research study was asked to select a descriptor on the questionnaire that best described his or her classroom environment or they could enter their own descriptor if none of the others fit. In the interview process they were then asked to share why they chose the particular descriptor that they did. Below are the results of this process:

- Brittany selected "between constructivist and teacher directed" because as a doctoral student she became familiar with the constructivist style of teaching and strives to be a constructivist teacher in her classroom. She feels hampered by her district and the pressure of the state tests to do more teacher direction to prepare

for these. She does not believe she has enough support in her district to have a strictly constructivist classroom. She indicated that if she was in a different atmosphere she would like to pursue this. Brittany hopes to teach at college level eventually and intends to encourage students to be constructivist teachers because "it's the way to go."

- Paula chose "constructivist" as the term that best described her classroom. She selected this because in her words "I try to provide as many opportunities as I can for the children to generate and to construct knowledge, so I have lots of hands-on materials and hands-on activities that we do as well as computer-generated stuff where they can sit there and figure things out." Paula wants her students to have to figure out how things fit together and how things work. She often uses cooperative learning groups and encourages them to discuss what they're doing. She uses flexible seating arrangements which allow students to move if they are having an issue with someone and she does many community building activities.

- Rebecca sees her classroom as "student choice oriented." The decision to give many choices in her classroom stems from the fact that she "didn't like a feeling of powerlessness as a student" herself. Any time that Rebecca believes "there is two equally good options" and she "really doesn't care which way they go with it" she lets them choose. She further explains it like this: "I give them a little bit of power, give them a little bit of ownership, and a little bit of … I had a little bit of say in this." She strongly believes students should have a say in what goes on. She offers them the choices that meet the curriculum needs and ask them what they would like to do next. She finds this works for her and for her students.

- Monica believes making connections is the crux of learning and for this reason she chose "constructivist" as a descriptor. She continually tries to help her students see connections in all subject areas. She perceives this as a "constructivist view of learning." She tries to tap into prior knowledge before she begins a lesson and connects it to what has already been learned. She also gives her students choices and responsibilities. She uses a "big concept" system to enhance learning and make it more meaningful to the students.

- For Shelly a "learning center approach" best describes her classroom environment. She is "attuned to what they're interested in and providing them with opportunities to become autonomous in their learning and to step away from me telling them what they should do." She encourages her students to tell her what "they've learned from a situation or what they want to know more about." This give and take allows for choice, is based on their interests and works well in the gifted class that Shelly teaches.

- David's descriptor, "primarily teacher directed," is based on his belief that that he needs "to know what all of the students are doing at any given time." Although he allows for time for them to get up and move, he feels responsible for what they are doing during this time. He does not see himself as having an "extremely traditional teacher directed situation." He does do direct teaching, but also uses cooperative learning and brain friendly techniques (water bottles, exercise bike, paired sharing). Although an onlooker would see lots of movement, verbal interaction, and a variety of activities taking place, David knows that "every bit of

it is under (his) control." At times it is very teacher directed and controlled and at other times consists of free choice.

- Linda, who founded and works at a school for troubled adolescents, chose "alternative/strength based" to describe her program. Although it is an "at risk" school she feels like she is working with the "undiscovered talented and gifted kids." It is an alternative to a regular classroom setting for students who have dropped out or come from prison. The class sizes are smaller and a lot more structured. She wrote in "strength based" because the students will "have to have some successes because they've never been acknowledged for any good. They've only been acknowledged for the bad." Also, strength based refers to the fact that protective factors are built into the program because these students are vulnerable and need specific boundaries so that they will be "less likely to take part in those high risk behaviors."

- Marcus aptly described his approach as "primarily teacher directed" because he is "the center of the classroom" and wants things to "flow through" him. He is cognizant that this is related to the fact that he is a male and that it is a part of his personality. His desire "to direct and order things so that everything runs smoothly and the learning environment is not disturbed by unnecessary emotions or [other] factors" is also related to the need for his students to have order in their lives because in their homes order is not prevalent. The structure he provides creates a stable environment in which children can be successful.

Rate of Bullying

On the questionnaire sent out to the teacher participants, they were asked to rate the frequency of bullying in their own classroom as well as on their school campus. During the interview process they clarified why they chose a particular rating and cited reasons if the rate of bullying in their classroom was different from that in the school overall. The rating scale they could choose from was: (a) Very often (almost daily), (b) Often (1 to 3 times a week), (c) Occasionally (less than once a week), and (d) Rarely (once a month or less.) The responses were as follows:

(1) Brittany Class = Often School = Very often

Comment about class rate: "We have a high poverty level and I think the kids are looking for a way to be better than someone else."

Comment about school rate: The high poverty level coupled with "the principal and vice-principal are not consistent with the discipline policy."

Additional information: Brittany sees parent neglect as part of the problem because it leads students "to want attention whether it's negative or positive." She is hopeful that the new change in administration in her building will be effective in reducing the bullying rate and believes "in my heart of hearts that there are (helpful) programs out there and if there's enough caring people that they can show these kids that it's not the way to succeed in life."

(2) Paula Class = Rarely School = Occasionally

Comment about school rate: "The school has a strict policy about bullying. We can't catch all of the problems, but when we do, we really "pounce" on them. I

also overtly teach that bullying is not okay and how to handle someone who is bothering you."

Comment about class rate: Teacher vigilance and uniform enforcement of a no tolerance policy keeps the bullying rate down.

Additional information: Paula added that another reason that the bullying rate in her classroom and school is low can be attributed to the fact that "the principal has iron clad balls so we know if we take something to her, she's going to do (something about) it. So the kids …and teachers…and parents know there's a final authority. If somebody bullies somebody, then that's the end of it."

(3) Rebecca   Class = Often   School = Often

Comment about class rate: "A big part of it is the age. (Middle School) students are hitting puberty and the nastiness of the girls and trying to find masculinity for the boys is popping out all over…along with the hormones. We also rotate classes, so I have a lot of kids."

Comment about school rate: "It's not every classroom where the bullying occurs, but it happens in many. Most of the time it is in the lunchroom, at recess, or before and after school bullying though."

Additional information: Rebecca noted that middle school kids push the limits and that when the limits are clear "they can respect that and respond to that." She believes her teaching style, cooperative learning and hands-on activities have reduced bullying incidents. She also supports a zero tolerance policy at her school.

(4) Monica   Class = Rarely   School = Rarely

Comment about class rate: "Bullying rarely happens. We discuss daily the Tribes philosophy and building community."

Comment about school rate: "The entire school operates under the Tribes philosophy."

Additional information: Monica believes that Tribes "builds a safe environment" and that the use of a community circle every morning and a closing circle every afternoon allows them to talk about the day, what's going on in the classroom, "get problems out in the open, and share concerns, questions, and comments." This has helped to build a community of trust and friendship.

(5) Shelly   Class = Often   School = Often

Comment about class rate: "My students are very close. They are more like family and they know how to "get each other's goat." They vie for attention in often inappropriate ways. I notice behaviors in which they exclude others and use put-downs…which I attribute to a lack of self-worth."

Comment about school rate: "The children in high poverty households live in circumstances that are often out of control. They see bullying behaviors at home. They want to have control over something or to make themselves feel better, so they try to make others feel worse than themselves."

Additional information: Shelly acknowledged that the rate of bullying in her own classroom has decreased since she switched to teaching gifted children who do not all come from the same low socioeconomic level as in the surrounding community. According to Shelly, many of the students in her school live in chaos

with one of the parents in jail or prison. She believes children from these homes have little self-worth and that their need to feel some control in their lives tends to lead them to want to "try to drag others down."   Many of the students live in Section 8 housing (low income) and bring problems from the apartments between adults to school with them.

(6) David   Class = Occasionally   School = Often

Comment about class rate: "These students often live in close quarters. There is public assisted housing in apartments and quadplex units. They are too often unsupervised on their housing grounds and learn aggressive behaviors to survive."

Comment about school rate: "Due to close housing quarters and surviving while unsupervised." (see above)

Additional information: David cites two reasons why he believes the rate of bullying is less in his classroom than in the school overall: (1) There is vigilant adult supervision and a "clear boundary as to who is in charge" and "that takes away any vying for power or position." (2) There is always "something specific (and constructive) to do" and during times that students are working on assignments "there's not a chance for a student to try to dominate or intimidate another student" because David knows "what all of the students are doing at any given time."

(7) Linda   Class = Rarely   School = Rarely

Comment about class rate and school rate: Linda believes rates of bullying are so low because of the restorative justice intervention techniques and the Aggression Replacement Training (ART) program that are implemented in her school. The

restorative justice piece acknowledges students and their feelings through a "Peace Circle," communication that brings healing between people and making amends. The ART program focuses on "anger management, social skills, and character education."

Additional information: The "Say It Straight" curriculum is also a part of the social piece at Linda's school. It assists students with communicating their needs in ways that honor both themselves and others. There is also a very strict point system of discipline that provides structure and boundaries within a much smaller environment than a regular classroom which helps to reduce conflicts.

(8) Marcus   Class = Occasionally   School = Often

Comment about class rate: "Some students want attention even if it is negative attention because of their home environment. Some students are socially immature."

Comment about school rate: "Discipline and expectations for behavior is inconsistently applied at home and in some classrooms."

Additional information: In regard to the rate in his classroom being less, Marcus noted in his interview: "I look for certain aggressive behaviors from kids, especially if they're mine, because I want to prevent those from being a distracter in the classroom." He believes he has an advantage because he has his childhood bullying experiences to guide him in bullying prevention, but teachers who have not had similar experiences in Marcus' opinion "they don't see a need to correct…things before it gets out of hand and becomes a physical confrontation, even a verbal confrontation, in the classroom or outside of the classroom."

Proactive Stances

Not only did each teacher describe the type of classroom environment that they provide for their students and the rates of bullying in their classroom and school, but each also discussed what s(he) did in the classroom that is proactive or preventative when it comes to bullying, rather than reactive. More than one uses the Tribes approach (Monica, Shelly and David). This community building program was designed by Jeanne Gibbs (1995) and has been instrumental in providing strategies to create a healthy classroom environment that is non-threatening and supportive. Children are grouped in small learning communities for part of the day and use cooperative learning techniques to achieve learning goals. Community circles are also employed to do group activities which build positive feelings and a sense of inclusion for all. Classroom meetings were implemented in each classroom to resolve conflict and promote positive discipline. This will be discussed more at length in a later section in this paper involving power relations and discipline. Conflict resolution in one form or another is implemented by most of the teachers in this study. Some use a scripted format while others use a conversational approach, but all aim at letting each voice be heard, brainstorming solutions, and bringing healing between the bullies and victims when possible.

Several programs or methods were noted that were used by individual teachers in an effort to be proactive (to curtail bullying and foster a positive classroom environment) that bear mentioning:

- Brittany connected with her local "Women's Health Center" and set up a series of classes called "Life Lessons" that she added to her curriculum and included all sections of her grade level in this effort. These classes focus on assertiveness

training and anti-bullying and other areas that promote a safe environment for all. Since all students at the same grade level receive the same information, the teachers have a common language that can be used when working with the students on the playground, cafeteria and other shared areas to offset bullying behaviors. Brittany believes this interactive approach has lessened bullying in her grade level because it helps children "realize that bullying gets them nowhere" and gives them good information to help them for life.

- In Paula's district of Valley Dale a program titled, "Capturing Kids' Hearts" has been implemented district-wide to deal with bullying and to promote positive social interactions. Teachers across the district attend a three-day workshop in which they are encouraged to discuss their own personal experiences from childhood that were troubling and reflect on what can be done to validate the feelings of children while maintaining a positive classroom environment. One of the main tenets of the program is "the discipline system which is to ask the child four questions, (a) What are you doing?, (b) What are you supposed to be doing?, (c) Are you doing that?, and (d) When are you going to start?" The other component is the formulation of a social contract that is created by a group process based on "(a) How do I want to be treated by my peers?, (b) How do I want to be treated by my teacher?, (c) How do I want to treat my peers?, and (d) How do I want to treat my teacher?" Each child and the teacher sign the contract and throughout the year this is referred to when someone does not abide by the contract. At that point a "foul" is called and the person who has broken the contract must give the other person "two sincere compliments and an apology."

This program's goal is to reach a point where kids "behave in an appropriate way when nobody else is around" or in other words to promote autonomy.

- Rebecca has "always had a propensity to cheer for the underdog" and in an effort to support students who fit this category she finds someone in every class she teaches and makes them her "special project kid." The students she selects generally have self-esteem issues or have been the victim of bullying. Each day she tries to find something special about this child that she can share with them in an effort to let them hear reaffirming and positive comments to build their self-esteem and give them "a little bit of power" to offset others who are trying to take "that personal power away from them." She sees herself as their cheerleader and believes that it has made a difference and gives her a way of helping children who are likely to end up victims of bullying.

- The restorative questions technique for resolving issues between students is used by Monica in her classroom setting to restore relationships and "make things right" again between students (similar to conflict resolution). Her school also uses peer mediation in which the counselors train a select group of the older students in the school as peer mediators to help resolve conflicts during recess and other free times. The students have specific steps they follow and "very strict peer mediation guidelines." These students are taking responsibility in helping with problems and are required to turn in paperwork after they have mediated a situation.

- In her alternative school, Linda uses several programs to build social skills in her students that come from troubled backgrounds. "Restorative Justice Intervention

techniques" are implemented to increase respect and "create a culture that is safe."   The first part of the restorative justice peace is the "Peace Circle" in which an object is used as a focal point (e.g. seedling tree to represent grounding them, peace rock, candle, or feather) and this is passed around the circle. Whoever is holding the object "is the only person that can talk." There is a "peacekeeper" or "circle keeper," who generally is one of the adults, and they ask a question such as "What are you most proud of yourself about?" After the adult has answered the question first, then each student is given an opportunity to respond to the question. Linda shared that this helps them to focus on the "similarities of (their) emotions versus the differences," restores the culture, and brings "about healing between people." Making amends to the other person in a conflict is the second part of restorative justice. This is accomplished through a very structured process using a facilitator who first interviews those involved in a conflict separately and then goes back and forth until the students are able to be brought together to sign a contract and shake hands. Parents are often involved in the process as well and in the end the hope is that respect is established and a level of safety is created in regard to future interactions of the families. In Linda's situation the conflicts are often very serious and range from gang issues to knife fights and other violent actions, so Linda sees this type of mediation as critical in maintaining a positive school environment.

At this point I believe it should be acknowledged that in reviewing the above remarks from the questionnaires and in sifting through the participants responses during the interviews, very little is revealed about any negative experiences in their classrooms.

The way in which bullying is handled by these teachers seems to be very positive and in line with current practices. However, little evidence of frustration over failed attempts, loss of control, unresolved conflict, or times when the teachers resorted to punishment or negative verbal exchanges was present. In other words, much of what was shared about classroom strategies and results appeared to be "candy coated" and may not represent an accurate portrayal of what is really happening. The telling of only the good parts could be done for several reasons. My own propensity to see mainly the good in situations could have colored the wording of the questionnaire and the questions on the interview scripts. Perhaps a rewording of questions may have led to different responses. Also, for this same reason my summarizing of their statements may lean toward picking out the information that supported the prior research in this area.

On the other hand, the participants may have chosen to only share what they were comfortable revealing and did not choose to tell me about incidents or strategies that were less successful. This may have been a protective gesture on their part if they knew me personally or a cautious maneuver if they did not know me and wanted to "put their best foot forward" even though they were each assured that confidentiality would be maintained. The final reason could simply be that they are master teachers who have dealt with bullying through the period of time when it has been highlighted across the country and have had numerous training opportunities in the best techniques to handle it.

A limitation of the study is that I am only privy to what was shared and have limited knowledge of knowing if the participants would have operated their classrooms in the same way now even if they had not had the bullying experiences they did, or if the strategies they revealed were accurate and successful. In the final analysis the meaning

that was derived concerning the phenomenon of bullying is not only from the interpretations of what they actually revealed to me, but from multiple sources (literature, documents, peer debriefing, member checks) "to confirm the emerging findings" (Merriam, 1998, p. 204).

Participant Profiles

Since the protocol writing assignment relied on memory-work, (Haug, 1987) the participants were asked to write a detailed account of a personal experience as they lived through it without looking for possible explanations or interpretations. They were asked to describe their feelings, moods and reactions as they remembered it. All were encouraged to include descriptive detail, but to not be concerned with creating a polished document. I have attempted to capture these reflections of their lived experiences of bullying, as well as their personal responses on the questionnaires and in the interviews, in the profiles below to give the total picture and wholistic view of their past and current stories as shared by them. In order to maintain confidentiality, all names and locations have been changed to protect the privacy of the participants.

Participant A – Brittany

Brittany, one of six female participants, teaches fourth grade in an urban district in the northeastern part of the United States. She was a victim of bullying (in her later elementary school years) that was related to her brother's sexual orientation which eventually led to self-doubt and self-image problems for her.

When she was twelve years old Brittany was riding her bike home from an errand for her mother when a group of older boys cornered her and shouted at her that her older brother was a "queer." She somewhat understood the meaning, but this was the first time

she heard it used in the context of making fun of someone she loved. She didn't know how to respond to this situation and decided to ride as fast as she could to get out of there all the while listening to the taunts of the boys yelling, "Buddy is queer!" as she went past them. When Brittany got home she decided not to tell her parents in order to protect her brother from getting in trouble with her parents or causing problems for him. In fact, Brittany never shared this incident with anyone until she was an adult in a support group for family members of gay persons, and then never spoke of it again until she wrote about it for this research study.

Her decision to keep this to herself by no means minimized the repercussions from this revelation. After Brittany heard her brother Rick's nickname, "Buddy," shouted in such a derogatory way, she would no longer use this family nickname for him. She began to go blocks out of her way to avoid running into the older kids when going to the store or coming home from school. She ignored their taunts and quickly escaped the ridicule, but not the emotional pain. In her reflections she noted that she had always known her brother was different, but the revelation by mean-spirited bigger kids finally put a name to her wondering and caused her embarrassment, worry and fear.

Brittany internalized that if the bullies liked her they wouldn't have said things to her about her brother, so she began to question herself and to think that there might be something wrong with her, as well. Her self-image was marred by this. She began to feel that she wasn't pretty enough or skinny enough. She perceived that she was fat and worried that she would do something clumsy in front of others and be teased. Fear also gripped her when she thought of running into this group of bigger kids again because she worried that they would do something other than yell and somehow hurt her.

Keeping this bullying incident and her brother's sexual orientation a secret appeared to take its toll on Brittany's adolescent years. After she recalled this memory and wrote about it for this study, she finally talked to her brother about it and discovered that he, too, had suffered at the hands of those who taunted and made fun of him. In her interview session, Brittany shared that she had experienced feelings of embarrassment, inadequacy, shame and worry and rationalized that by suppressing the information she was doing the right thing since her family believed that projecting an image that "everything was just fine" regardless of the circumstances was the best stance to take with those outside the family circle.

In retrospect, Brittany believes that if she had told an adult she would have felt safer and more protected.   She pointed out that now in her classroom she repeatedly says, "In our classroom everybody is safe and if you don't feel safe, then you need tell me or another adult." Brittany shared that some children will tolerate bullying and won't tell an adult because they want to be accepted so badly in the group.

When questioned about the impact of gender on bullying, Brittany shared that she did not see a lot of difference in terms of the number of incidents involving boys and girls. She did note that around puberty there seems to be more separation of groups based on culture and race regardless of previous bonding with those outside of their circles. Brittany believes that gender played little part in her being bullied as a child other than the cause (her brother's sexual orientation). The childhood bullies were all boys, but she felt they would have still taunted her even if she were a brother rather than a sister of Rick. The fact that Brittany and her siblings attended a strict private school as

children may have deterred some of the bullying that might have occurred, in relation to her brother, in a different type of school setting.

Brittany describes her teaching methods as a blend of constructivist and teacher directed.   In her classroom Brittany attempts to create an environment where everybody accepts each other whatever their shortcomings or disabilities. She tries to arm her students with information about respecting those who may be different from themselves. She also gives a clear message that bullying won't be tolerated. Brittany has even gone so far as to set up a series of "life lessons" as a part of her grade level curriculum. She sets up sessions, one of which is assertiveness training, through a local wellness center. This has not only empowered the victims and bystanders, but has disempowered the bullies. In her northeastern urban school, Brittany sees parent neglect and poverty as contributing to her students' needs to seek attention whether it is negative or positive. These needs can include domination of others to feel powerful. She continues to seek ways to help her students to succeed without bullying others to get their way or to use bullying as a way to put others down to make themselves feel more important.

Brittany and her colleagues have not enjoyed the support of the school's administration. There has been much inconsistency and lack of rule enforcement by the administrators. This has led Brittany and her fellow teachers to ban together and handle their own issues. They have shared concerns and made joint decisions so that when students travel from one classroom to another bullying is handled in a similar manner. This has been effective in lowering bullying incidents. Brittany believes that bullying can be decreased by caring people who are consistent and have a plan in place.

Participant B – Paula

Paula is a fifth grade teacher in a rural town situated in the southwestern part of the United States. She was a victim of bullying in elementary school, but in middle school experienced bullying from the perspective of a bystander. Both stances involved taunting and shunning by the bullies due to Paula and the other victim being different and not fitting the mold acceptable to the popular crowd.

Paula experienced bullying as a child from both the victim and bystander perspectives. In elementary school, she was often made fun of and picked on by the "cool" girls. She was called names and made to feel beneath them. When this group of girls went on to the same middle school with her, Paula was grateful and relieved that she became less of a target because another girl, Loretta, was even further down the pecking order than she. Loretta was aptly described by Paula as having "brillo pad" hair, pale skin, freckles, dirty clothes, torn hosiery, and repulsive body odor. As an adult, Paula reflected that Loretta was probably biracial, but she didn't realize it in Junior High. Loretta appeared to be a "ready-made victim," especially during gym class where she was mercilessly made fun of for her developing breasts and early pubic hair when the towel covering her after showering was ripped away by one of the "cool" girls. Paula never took part in these forays, but while hiding her "chubby body" behind the skimpy towel, she gave thanks for not being the butt of the joke herself as she had been in the past.

One day Paula was put in a situation where she felt compelled to take a stand in yet another bullying incident during a softball game in gym class. After living through the typical degrading process of being picked toward the end of the team selection (which she felt was due to her being overweight), she and Loretta ended up together in the

"purgatory of the outfield." She witnessed the popular girls hazing Loretta over and over during the game. Finally, Paula could not take watching this scenario any longer and she told the other girls to go pick on someone else. After she stood up for Loretta, she was ostracized by the rest of the girls. She lived in fear that her towel would be yanked off, she no longer was allowed to sit with them at the lunch table, and was generally ignored. She actually never became a friend to Loretta, but believes that by taking a stand in favor of right she became a stronger person, found it easier to intervene on behalf of others, and was less afraid of the bullies.

Paula, who teaches upper elementary grades in a rural school in the Southwest, shared that during her youth bullying was not treated as an important thing by the adults. Girl bullying was not even acknowledged as such. The adults expected the kids to take care of conflicts themselves and if you didn't take care of it successfully, then basically you were the one at fault for not handling it well. This put a lot of stress on the victims of bullies and allowed bullies free range in most instances. Paula's experiences as a victim and bystander conjured up feelings of apathy, relief, embarrassment, disgust, fear and anger. She summarizes the impact of the bullying and subsequent feelings in this way:

(1) She became reluctant to enter into new situations and became the wallflower when in a group.

(2) She became fearless about defending others, as she realized the worst that happened is that she was shunned by the group she had no respect for anyway.

(3) These experiences opened the door for her as a teacher to address students' perceived and real problems in a different way because she was willing to believe that something could be going on underneath the surface.

Paula believes that her constructivist style of teaching is partly a result of her early experiences with bullying. She strives hard to create an environment that builds community between her students. Through silly games and songs, outreach to those in need, classroom discussions of matters of concern and a multiple intelligences approach, Paula's students develop a bond that allows them to interact with each other in positive ways. When there are problems, Paula uses conflict resolution techniques designed to validate each child's feelings. She works with the students involved in a private session, letting them both talk and helps the victimized child verbalize what happened and how it felt. Paula finds that this is what most often helps to change the bully's behavior in the future. She also helps her students learn to negotiate with each other and if they cannot come to a viable resolution for the problem, she employs methods (such as assigning them to throw cotton balls at a wall when they are angry) that often end with the students involved going away giggling.

Paula stated that she overtly teaches that bullying is not okay and instructs her students on how to handle someone who is bothering them. Her administrator is in full support of a zero tolerance policy on bullying and the teachers are empowered by the principal to ferret out the bullies and to bring them to her or to the counselor when there are repeated incidents. This allows the school to have a unified plan which according to Olweus (1994, 1995) is the preferred method of controlling bullying in a school setting. Paula shared in her survey that the low incident rate of bullying in her school is due to the vigilance of the teachers and the enforcement of the zero tolerance policy throughout the campus.

Paula further notes that the environment can play a significant part in increasing or decreasing bullying. She points out that overcrowded classrooms where personal space is a premium, attention from the teacher is limited, and resources overall are stretched are breeding grounds for bullying to "rear its ugly head."   In a discussion about gender differences in bullying, Paula has concluded after dealing with bullies over the years that bullying for girls is very relationship driven. Shunning the victim, controlling who plays with whom in the class, and censuring others is the modus operandi of a female bully. Based on Paula's experience, tomboys, or girls who are more apt to play with boys and enjoy more male-oriented activities, have an even harder time fitting in as "girlie girls" tend to make little shy and sly jabs at trying to control the tomboy's behavior which then can turn into bullying. Upon further reflection, Paula acknowledged that the personal bullying incidents she wrote about for this study were driven by girls trying to exert pressure on the victim so she (the victim) would be more like them (the bullies).

Unfortunately, bullying is not only limited to children, but is also manifest in adults whom Paula has dealt with in the form of abusive parents. Paula concluded the interview with a self-revelation that she is a "mama lion" and once a child has crossed her path and is in her pride, they are forever one of her cubs and she will be their strong defender when it comes to bullying and other areas.

Participant C – Rebecca

Rebecca is a sixth grade teacher in a suburban middle school in south central United States. Rebecca's move to a new town and school system at the end of her first

grade year triggered repeated incidences of bullying, many of which she perceived were

related to jealousy of her high academic achievement.

From second through eighth grade, Rebecca had a miserable school experience. Prior to second grade, she attended a small independent school district and had only six children in her class. When she moved to a new location she experienced isolation and loneliness and compensated for the lack of friends by turning to books for solace. She is convinced that a big part of the bullying resulted from her being smart and having a desire to learn and the fact that the other students didn't like someone new to assume this role in their class. On the bus she was made fun of and was often ignored by the other girls as is typical in girl bullying (Olweus, 1994). Over time "uneasy truces" were formed with the other girls in her class, but when Rebecca had a slumber party or birthday party, these same girls were her bosom buddies. The hypocritical nature of this did not get by Rebecca, but the pain of rejection outweighed the truth.

Not only did the other students impact Rebecca's school experiences by taunting her, but in her memory of bullying Rebecca recalls that her teacher humiliated and embarrassed her on more than one occasion. In the first incident, after spelling a word incorrectly the teacher herself wrote it wrong on purpose using Rebecca's spelling and she remembers being teased and laughed at by the other students for this. On another occasion Rebecca remembers that she was told by the teachers on duty not to tattle again when at recess or she would have to sit out, so when she was the brunt of another joke and felt harassed, she went and hid by the entry door, acting as if she had gone in to tell on the students involved. Because she opened and closed the door as if entering the building, the teacher believed she had gone in to tattle and made her sit with her head

down on her desk as the other students came in from recess, which was yet again a humiliating experience. These recollections of embarrassment and bullying by students and teachers, only served to reinforce Rebecca's feelings of pain and rejection at a very impressionable time in her life.

The primary reason for the family move to her grandparent's farmhouse before Rebecca entered second grade was so her parents could better care for her grandparents. During the first year after the move both of her father's parents died, creating emotional stress in the household. Rebecca was held out of school to spend time with her out-of-state cousins the week of the funeral which caused her to miss her mid-week spelling test. When she returned to school on Friday, she asked the substitute teacher to let her take the make-up test with the rest of the class who had not received 100% on the mid-week test. Her own teacher had recorded a grade of "0" for the week because she counted Rebecca's absence to be with her cousin as unexcused. When the teacher returned to school the next Monday and found that Rebecca had told the sub that she needed to take the make-up test, the teacher demanded that Rebecca write 100 sentences saying, "I will not tell a lie." This upset both Rebecca and her parents and they came for a conference to try to resolve the issue. However, the next day the teacher informed the class that Rebecca didn't like the writing the sentence about being a liar, tore up Rebecca's first set of sentences, and changed the sentence to, " I will never tell a lie to my teacher again as long as I live." By the end of her second grade year, Rebecca had concluded that "you can't depend on teachers to take care of you when others pick on you because they will pick on you, too." This mistrust of teachers lasted for many years.

Rebecca remembers only one occasion when the adult in charge, in this case the bus driver, understood what she was going through in terms of being bullied and he supported her. In seventh grade a boy who had repeatedly tormented Rebecca on the bus began to bully her younger brother on a daily basis, as well. Rebecca snapped one day and vaulted over the seat of the bus, grabbed the bully in the midsection and gave him a painful "horsebite" (squeezing and twisting of the skin until the person cries out from pain). When Rebecca looked up to meet the bus driver's eyes in the mirror, he just gave her a wink and kept driving while her tormentor cried for several miles after she let go. This quiet understanding on the part of the driver gave Rebecca some sense of satisfaction. Not only did the bully stay away from her for quite awhile, but he stopped taunting her little brother altogether.

Finally in high school Rebecca had some reprieve from the miserable years she spent in the younger grades. Her mother served as a guidance counselor at her high school and, in an effort to provide some level of protection, adjusted her schedule so that she was not in class with any students who had caused her grief. Also, her father was a teacher at her school and was able to keep an eye on things. Rebecca was somewhat shy which she believes may have been interpreted by others as her being stuck up. She participated in band and sports as extracurricular activities and these helped to provide an avenue for friendship. The last bullying incident Rebecca recalls did occur in high school, however. In an advanced math class, a fellow student hid her books and papers, stole her pencils and messed up her assignments that she labored over. Rebecca did not perceive this to be due to a crush, but saw it as harassment due to fierce competitiveness (he later was co-valedictorian with her). According to Rebecca's perception of the

situation, the teacher offered no support and knowingly allowed this to go on. Rebecca believed she should not tell her parents since they were co-workers of this person. She resolved the issue by switching to a teacher's aide position instead of taking an additional math class.

Fortunately for Rebecca college was uneventful in regard to bullying, but the painful memories from her earlier years influenced her in a number of ways. She cannot conclusively say that she chose teaching as a career due to her early classroom experiences because, with both of her parents being in education, there was a strong influence already present. However, upon reflection she added that at one point she would liked to have looked at a medical career or other field, but the fact that she had not gone further in math, due to the bullying incidents in her last math class, hampered her. Her lack of confidence in this area turned her away from a math-related major in college.

After becoming a teacher in her own classroom, she admits that she is overly protective of kids who are the brunt of bullying. She separates them from their "tormentors" and tries to place them in groups with those who will support them if something happens. She has little tolerance for bullying and helps her students to understand that bullying is a choice. She sees her job as helping her class make the right choices in their actions towards others. In the south central suburban school district where Rebecca teaches middle school, bullying occurs often (one to three times per week) in both her classroom and the school overall. She believes that puberty with its raging hormones has a great influence on bullying at this age. The boys are trying to test their masculinity and the girls are going through a "nasty" phase of social interactions. She also points out that because the classes travel to numerous subject areas, the teachers

end up seeing many students every day. An implication of this is that the students do not bond as closely as a class or with the teachers who work with them. Also noted is the fact that many of the bullying incidents occur during less supervised times such as the lunchroom, recess, and before and after school.

In her interview, as Rebecca reflected on the impact her bullying experiences in school has had on her as a teacher, she admitted that it has made her hypervigilant and protective, especially with the girls who are being taunted by boys over grades or taking a girl's supplies. These are triggers to an immediate reaction from her because she knows from her own past experience that she didn't like it and doesn't want anyone else to have to experience similar feelings. On the playground Rebbeca finds herself being very alert and demonstrating understanding to students who come to her for assistance when they are being picked on. She makes it clear to all students that she will not tolerate bullying and hands out consequences for those who do not heed her warning. The students at her school know that when she's on duty bullying in any way will be stopped. Basically, she finds that she handles situations in the way she would like to have had it handled on her behalf when she was a student.

Class meetings provide a medium for Rebecca to teach her students about lifeskills and conflict resolution. She helps the students look at feelings and helps them to develop empathy for others. If two individuals are involved in a situation, she meets with them privately and helps them resolve their problem with a mediation approach, but makes it clear that if the negative behaviors continue she will take it to the next level (the principal). Rebecca believes that setting limits and making sure the students understand and adhere to these parameters reduces bullying and other unacceptable behaviors. Her

student choice oriented classroom, cooperative learning experiences, and hands-on activities further discourage inappropriate student actions by providing engaging work and models for working together productively with a positive ebb and flow of interactions. Rebecca is also careful to not create embarrassing situations when she intervenes in bullying situations. For instance, she understands an eighth grade boy's need to "save face" with his group when confronted by a teacher, and finds ways to handle the situation in a private manner, but with a straightforward, pull no punches approach in which the student is quite clear that on her watch she will not tolerate bullying behaviors. When the student discontinues the bullying, Rebecca feels empowered and thankful that the situation has been resolved. Rebecca has strong feelings that bullying can be reduced in schools through early and consistent intervention and favors a zero tolerance policy.

Participant D – Monica

Monica is a teacher of third graders in a suburban school in the south central portion of the United States. She is a self-professed bully who shunned a new student and caved in to her classmates' opinions of this child in her early elementary school years. Monica was also a bystander of bullying when the same child was teased by her friends for being unkempt and from a different social class.

Monica was not a typical bully who repeatedly tormented her victims. In fact, Monica originally did not perceive that what she did was bullying, but the way she handled a childhood situation has "bothered her for a long, long time" and she has thought about it many times during her life. It was only through a gradual realization of the different ways in which people bully that she realized what she did could be labeled

bullying. Once she accepted this, she could better understand why it had such an impact on her dealings with people the rest of her life. When she first wrote about the incident of bullying during a writing retreat and shared it with some colleagues, she couldn't stop sobbing and was overwhelmed with feelings of guilt. In her interview she described her writing experience as an "exorcising of evil" because it was a great relief to "get it out of her."

When Monica was in first grade she lived in a very small, tight knit neighborhood where the parents all knew each other and everyone was basically the same socioeconomic level. There wasn't an issue with haves and have-nots since her friends came from similar backgrounds. The school she attended was quite small and the students moved from grade to grade with each other so there were strong bonds of friendship. Since Monica was an only child, her friends' acceptance of her and their opinions meant a great deal to her.

Approximately three weeks before Monica's birthday that year a new girl moved to the area and was placed in her class. This newcomer didn't fit in with the rest of the students and was not well accepted. She was viewed as different because she was dirty in appearance, dressed poorly, and socioeconomically was from "the other side of the tracks." Although Monica never made fun of her as some of the others did, as a bystander she was part of the silent majority who did nothing to stand up for the girl.

That year for her birthday Monica's mother allowed her to invite all of her classmates to her party. As Monica passed out the invitations at school to her friends, without her mother's or teacher's knowledge, she gave one to everyone except the new girl. The teacher encouraged the class to make a giant birthday card for Monica where

every student designed their own page as in a book. When the teacher fondly presented the card to her, Monica cheerfully and methodically read each page and was excited about the colorful crayon pictures and the simple birthday wishes. However when she came to the page submitted by the new girl, she felt like she had been "kicked in the gut" when she reluctantly read "Do you have to have an invitation to come to your party?" It "hurt her heart" to read this after she knowingly and deliberately did not invite the new girl because she believed they not only would make fun of the new girl, but also make fun of her if she invited her to the party. In worrying about her friends' reactions if she invited this student, who was different and perceived as inferior, she compromised her own values and became burdened with long lasting feelings of guilt. In ignoring this implied request to come to the birthday party with everyone else, Monica was using social exclusion which is typical of how girls often bully (Olweus, 1994; Banks, 1997). The little girl who was excluded ended up moving again shortly after Monica's birthday. Through the years whenever Monica recalls the incident, she wishes that after she read the new girl's page in the book she would have said to her, "No, you don't have to have an invitation. You can just come. Everyone can come." She has played that scenario in her mind over and over again. It was only in writing the incident down on paper as an adult that she was able to forgive herself and with the wisdom of maturity understand that she was only a child with limited experience in the social domain.

Monica strongly believes that this exclusion incident was instrumental in shaping how she treated other people in the future. In fact, she eventually shared the class birthday card with her mother and when she got to the page from the new girl became stressed and told her all about it. Through the years when Monica purposefully does

something to make sure someone is included in an activity, whether in her teacher role or with her family, her mother has said, "You still think about that little girl, don't you?" When Monica reflected on the impact of this incident on her, she shared some areas that she believes are in some way related to the feelings she experienced regarding this childhood bullying incident:

(1) For the rest of her school days, she made it her personal mission to make every new student feel welcome. She always made an effort to befriend them and her mother commented to her that she "brought home every stray friend from here on out."

(2) If a new student is placed in her classroom, she makes sure she initiates a friendship with another student by "hooking them up" in various ways.

(3) She uses Tribes, a community building program, to encourage positive bonding and trust in her classroom thus minimizing exclusion and other bullying behaviors.

(4) She supports a constructivist view of learning that encourages real life connections through which empathy and caring can be fostered in the classroom.

(5) She spends a lot of time helping children identify their feelings and how their actions impact the feelings of others.

(6) Monica looks out for the new teachers that come to her building to ensure that they are not overpowered by the established teachers who expect them to conform because they're told, "This is the way we do it here!"

Monica's participation in this research study was a healing and cleansing experience for her in which she allowed her feelings to surface and was able to reflect on the incident

from an adult perspective. This experience highlights the importance of the social and emotional aspects of bullying by exclusion for not only the victim, but the perpetrator as well.

Participant E – Shelly

Shelly's multiage class of gifted elementary students that she teaches is located in a small urban school in southwestern United States. When Shelly entered fifth grade her days of feeling accepted and respected ended with an influx of wealthier students and she became victimized by these newcomers over a period of several years.

Life in the small, rural area in the American southwest where Shelly grew up in the 70's in a frugal, but adequate, home environment was quiet and stable until Shelly's fifth grade year. Her fourth grade year was the best she ever had. She loved her teacher's hands-on approach, she loved her friends she had grown up with, she loved school overall. In fact she loved it so much that she stated that when she grew up, she wanted to become a fourth grade teacher which is precisely what she did. These very positive feelings about school changed dramatically when Sally entered fifth grade and became the victim of repeated bullying due to demographic changes in her community. As a result of "white flight" Shelly's rural hometown became suburban in nature over a short period of time when the population increased rapidly as new families settled there to avoid desegregation issues in the city they left behind. In a span of ten years the high school graduation numbers went from a senior class of 100 to a class of 700. With this rapid increase, a shift in socioeconomic levels and attitudes occurred.

To accommodate the influx of students with varying abilities, Shelly's school decided to level the classes in a tracking system which ranged from slow learners to gifted range.

Due to her past achievements and intellectual ability, Shelly was placed in the gifted class that was mainly comprised of "white flight" students who came from a much more privileged background and different social class. She became ostracized because she could not compete with them socially and economically. While her classmates wore the latest fashions in clothing and lived in spacious and expensive homes, Shelly made do with her wardrobe which consisted of her cousin's hand-me-downs and her one pair of run down shoes and she returned home each day to a moderate and simple house.

She no longer "fit in" with her classmates, although she was of similar academic ability. She suffered daily from their ridicule as they made fun of her clothes and called her ugly. She felt very alone and detached. For the first time in her school experience she felt inferior and unworthy. She revealed during her interview for this study that writing about her bullying experiences as a victim dredged up very painful memories. When she was going through this difficult period of time, she never understood why her parents would not buy her some stylish clothes even though she perceived that they could afford it. She later came to realize that her parents, who grew up in the Depression, had the money earmarked for college. It was their dream that all their children have an opportunity to earn a degree. Four out of the five children did so, but these long term plans were difficult for Shelly to cope with as a student craving acceptance. She even feigned illness so that she didn't have to attend school.

Shelly's experience as a victim due to social stigmas and economic differences led her as a teacher to gravitate toward Title I schools (as indicated by high numbers of free and reduced lunches). Her desire is for "children in poverty to have a sense of importance and accomplishment" regardless of their backgrounds. Her current school

made a decision as a faculty to create a gifted school for students from lower socioeconomic levels who often do not qualify for the extra services of the gifted program when in competition with a higher socioeconomic student body. She describes her gifted classroom as a learning center approach in which she uses the students' interest to provide opportunities for them to become autonomous in their learning rather than depend on her to tell them what to do. She values their uniqueness and teaches them through multiple intelligences strategies and accommodates their learning styles. Her school is quite diverse and Shelly believes that providing purposeful, non-threatening activities in a teamwork setting is beneficial in learning to respect those differences.

Prior to implementing the gifted program that draws students from across the district, the rate of bullying in Shelly's classroom was often (approximately 3 times per week). She attributes this to children living in poverty conditions where it was not unusual for one of the parents to be in jail or prison and the home environment was chaotic. These children feel powerless and want to feel they have control over something or somebody. This often leads to feelings of low self-worth and the desire to drag others down too. Shelly believes this need to feel more powerful is often the catalyst for bullying. She counteracts these problems by using conflict resolution and role playing to deal with bullying situations. She uses the Tribes community building approach to teach her students to communicate their feelings, cultivate empathy, and develop an awareness of what bullying actually is and how to deal with it more effectively. She has discovered that many students only think of bullying as physically "picking on" someone, but she helps them understand that any form of social alienation, verbal and non-verbal put

downs, and covert or overt attempts to make others feel inferior are forms of bullying that will not be tolerated.

Shelly's participation in this study led her to contemplate the fact that her faculty has no campus-wide plan for consistent enforcement of anti-bullying policies. She plans to approach her school's Affective Domain Committee to address this. She also has an interest in examining the different types of play exhibited by the gifted students on the playground compared to the regular education students and the possible reasons for a lower bullying rate in the gifted classrooms.

Participant F – David

David was a victim of bullying and a bystander to bullying when he was in middle school. Most of the bullying was done by the "mean kid" in the neighborhood who ridiculed and taunted David and his friends. He currently teaches fifth grade in a suburban elementary school located in the south central United States near his hometown.

David grew up in the time period when "Father Knows Best" and "The Andy Griffith Show" were seemingly the benchmarks for family life in that era. Problems on these shows surfaced and were resolved in thirty minute segments and were not carried over to the next week. Life should be so wonderfully simple! This was not so with the bullying behaviors David experienced as a victim and a bystander in his neighborhood and school as a child. Bullying was not generally discussed and, if it occurred, kids were expected to handle it on their own. Some children were basically just viewed as "mean kids" and everyone simply dealt with it. These mean kids would "taunt and tease for any

little infraction such as a short haircut or new shoes" and made others feel uncomfortable around them.

In David's neighborhood one particular boy named Kevin fell into this category and was the "thorn in the side" of David and his playmates. Kevin always had a scowl on his face and would brag about doing destructive things to others. While David was not often teased by others, which he felt was due to his being tall for his age, Kevin was not intimidated by David's height and would "charge in and mock" whatever David was doing with his friends in the neighborhood. Kevin would cuss and ridicule and ruin whatever they were doing by making them feel silly and dumb for choosing to play a particular game or activity. Kevin changed the whole atmosphere causing David and his friends to stop what they were doing to avoid his criticism and just try to tolerate his presence until he finally left. They were always relieved when he departed and they could resume their own play if there was any time left to do so. Although Kevin was not in any of David's classes, David would see him in the halls at school and make a point to avoid him because if he didn't he would be "ridiculed and laughed at in some way." This mean-spirited behavior even carried over to David's first job since the restaurant he worked at was across the parking lot from Kevin's house. Kevin made a point to come by the first day David was on the job and make some rude remarks to the other employees about David.

As a bystander David learned what it was like to be in the "hot seat." One day after lunch in his Junior High School he and his classmates returned to shop class before the teacher arrived. One of the boys noticed that a tool was broken and started indicating that someone was going to be in big trouble when the teacher returned. Since David had

used the tool recently (but not broken it) his classmates decided he should be named as the offender so they wouldn't get in trouble. David felt like he was in a "mock trial" and when another boy's name, who had also used the tool, was brought up David whole-heartedly agreed that it was the other boy who must have broken the tool and accused him even though there was no evidence to prove it. David was relieved that someone else would take the blame, but felt badly that he had not shown a sense of understanding for the one accused since he knew what that felt like to be innocently blamed as he had been when the broken tool was first discovered. He knew he had betrayed the other student by then blaming him to protect himself.

As David reflected on this incident in his protocol writing he noted that he "took the low road as one caught up by the mob" and is aware through his teaching experiences that this shifting of the blame is not uncommon for bystanders. Students who witness bullying can be very vulnerable and know that at any moment the bully can shift his/her focus and start picking on them instead. In his interview David shared that bystanders can get wrapped up in a bullying incident quickly and will look for ways to deflect the situation and get the focus off them. David believes that most people are fearful of being teased or taunted by others and because of this can be hesitant about fully exposing who they are to others until they get to know them well. For this reason David understands how vulnerable his students can feel and tries to bridge this issue by creating a safe environment in his classroom where children can be themselves. He counteracts this and bullying in his classroom in these ways:

(1) David stays in touch with parents and listens to their concerns about issues their child may be having with another student. He then implements a plan to

resolve conflicts between students. This entails teaching children how to

vocalize a sincere apology and how to accept an apology in the right way. He

has found this type of conflict resolution to be effective in his classroom and

he sees honest communication as the heart of this mediation.

(2) Bullying occurs rarely in David's classroom because he sets clear boundaries

as to who is in charge (himself) and believes this takes away "any vying for

power and position." He is very vigilant in his supervision and provides

engaging activities in a structured environment. Although the students have a

range of choices, he is aware of what each child is doing at any given time and

they are aware of his expectations. His theory about keeping students busy to

avoid problematic interactions is akin to the old English proverb, "An idle

mind is the devil's workshop."

(3) Class meetings are used to give appreciations to others and to build

community. This is part of the Tribes approach that his school implements.

David's hope is that by emphasizing bullying as an ongoing problem and looking

for ways to more effectively intervene in bullying situations, children can grow up to be

more successful adults who are healthy emotionally and able to meet their potential

without the scars that bullying can leave behind.

Participant G – Linda

Linda is one of two secondary teachers in the research study. She works in an

alternative high school in the southwestern United States that serves at risk students.

Her suburban campus draws students from detention centers as well as truants. She was

a middle school bully who covertly and persistently taunted another girl to the point of

the victim seemingly having a nervous breakdown at school as a result of this bullying.

When asked in the interview process if Linda had any trouble recalling a bullying

incident for her protocol writing, she immediately stated that she had no difficulty

because she remembered it "very, very well." She began her relentless victimizing of her

classmate, Patricia, in her seventh grade year after becoming more and more frustrated

with her since the summer between sixth and seventh grades. When Patricia invited

Linda that summer to spend a few weeks with her family at a house they were building

on the east coast, Linda saw it as a way to relieve the stress in her own life due to her

parents being in the process of divorce. She looked forward to getting away on vacation

and being with her then friend, Patricia, but things did not turn out well. Patricia's father

had passed away when she was younger and her mother was trying to make a better life

for her family by going to college. That summer Patricia "cried incessantly" and had

constant conflicts with her mother and older sibling. Linda felt as if she were "trapped in

a very chaotic situation" and prayed that her family would pick her up early. Coupled

with Patricia's "bizarre and needy" behavior and the isolation and disappointment that

Linda felt on this trip, she returned to school in September with different feelings toward

Patricia. Jealousy and resentment of Patricia's amazing artistic talent and her

attractiveness welled up in Linda as it never had before and this, along with the failed

friendship, resulted in Linda slowly and methodically targeting Patricia.

Linda began passing notes to her closest friends that commented on Patricia being

a "weirdo" and indicating that she had no friends. She was very calculating about whom

she gave notes to so that she could "create allies with the persons sitting directly next to

and behind her in every class." Linda and her friends tried to increase Patricia's anxiety by whispering to each other in her presence and creating private jokes about her. When Linda could tell by Patricia's body language that she was uncomfortable, Linda felt powerful and more popular. When a group of girls approached Linda to talk to her about "toning down her antics" with Patricia, this "fueled her fire" even more and soon after this Linda created a bond with one of her close childhood friends, Heather, and between the two of them the bullying intensified even more. Heather added a physical element to the bullying by intentionally bumping Patricia in the hallways on the way to lunch or during passing periods. Although Patricia looked mad she would not react and Linda and Heather felt fabulous because they knew they were getting to her. As the semester progressed Linda's notes became more vicious. To this day she remembers a note she gave Patricia that she thought was particularly clever. It read, "Patricia, your pants are so far up your a** that I think it may be the reason why you cannot think."

This constant abuse went on for weeks until it came to a "screeching halt" one day in art class. Heather and Linda passed what ended up being the final note to Patricia and she snapped. She became hysterical and began "crying and screaming as if someone were stabbing her" and she collapsed to the floor and had to be removed from the classroom. Patricia refused to reveal what had been going on. That day in class Linda and Heather looked at each other and non-verbally acknowledged that the bullying was over – their mission had been accomplished. A few weeks later Patricia moved away and neither girl ever heard what happened to her.

Interestingly, these girls were in the honors classes and the adults (teachers and parents) were unaware of the situation. As in many bullying situations, it was a very

covert operation. Linda, who is now the founder and teacher in an alternative high school for kids that have not been successful elsewhere, can relate to these behaviors. She believes that because of her early bullying experience she has special insight about "both sides of the coin." The students she serves are a mixture of truants, felons, sex offenders and violent offenders who are learning to co-exist in a non-threatening and safe school environment created by Linda and her staff.

Linda has spent her entire career in the field of prevention and intervention work. She has written curriculum on non-violence and lectures on bullying. Although she is unsure as to whether or not this career choice was prompted by her bullying of Patricia and the ending result (Patricia's nervous breakdown), she does know that the rush and the power she felt is often what kids who make bad choices in life are looking for when they are trying to overcome the helplessness they feel over traumatic home situations and failed relationships. She uses restorative justice intervention techniques and a program called Aggression Replacement Training as well as protective factors to minimize risky behaviors and to teach positive communication and interactions. According to Linda, restorative justice, which involves mediation and conflict resolution to restore the positive community culture, has been a successful tool in working with troubled students.

However, Linda believes that the most powerful piece in reducing bullying is training the bystanders on how to defuse a bully or acknowledge the victim's feelings. She sees the bystanders as a silent majority who by their silence are saying that it's okay. On the other hand they often choose to encourage the bully out of nervousness and to deflect the focus away from them. Linda teaches them how to advocate for themselves

and how to intervene in a peaceful manner when possible or at the very least to seek assistance when it's out of hand.

Linda is excited that more attention is being given to bullying in the last decade because she believes that focusing on the school climate is critical in reducing bullying. Her program spends the majority of time focusing on social emotional learning and once stress is removed from the classroom, the academics naturally follow. Although Linda found it difficult to "talk about her demons" and admit to being a bully in her childhood, she readily agreed to participate in this study because she is convinced that all children are good and that they can learn to make better choices given the right environment and tools.

Participant H – Marcus

Marcus is one of two male participants in the study. He teaches fourth grade in a large urban school in south central United States. His experiences as a victim while in elementary school left him feeling insignificant and powerless when he and his friends repeatedly gave in to the demands of the bullies.

Lunch recess during Marcus' fifth grade year was full of frustration, anger, and defeat when day after day the sixth grade boys led by Larry, a well-known bully in the school, forced Marcus and his friends off the outdoor basketball court where they were enjoying their favorite pastime -- basketball. Each day Marcus and his classmates would rush from the lunchroom, pick their teams, and start their game only to be all too soon interrupted and ousted by Larry and his buddies. Rather than share the court and let each grade level use one half of the court so that all could play, the sixth graders wanted the court to themselves and intimidated the fifth grade boys into leaving because as Marcus

put it, they were "scared of Larry and the other sixth grade boys beating us up if we defied them and we did not want to get in trouble with the teachers or the principal for fighting at school." Marcus and his friends knew that not only would they get in trouble at school by being suspended, their parents would be "extremely upset" with them and would have "to leave their jobs early to deal with the problems at school."

Eventually the bullying incidents began to take their toll on Marcus and one day he became "fed up with the sixth grade boys taking over our basketball game and in essence our recess every day" after lunch, and he made the decision to stand up to Larry and his followers. Marcus believed that since he was "the biggest fifth grade boy at the school" and in his opinion "the toughest boy in fifth grade," he should be the one to confront Larry. After he told the older boys that he and his friends wanted to be left alone and that he would tell the teachers if they didn't let them have part of the court, he was threatened and called names and Larry told him that if he told the teacher he would "kick his butt." Cuss words were shouted at him as he dejectedly turned and walked away from the area while anger built up in him with each step toward the teacher on duty. At that point Marcus' friends surrounded him and convinced him with pleading voices not to tell the teacher and "to let the whole situation go" mainly because they feared retaliation from the sixth graders. Although he was still upset, Marcus didn't tell and left the scene feeling "small and insignificant."

As an adult Marcus reflected on his friends' lack of support and unwillingness to back him up and realized that this showed him where he stood "in the scheme of things" in his school. He deduced that he was powerless outside of the fifth grade domain where

he did have some say in things. He accepted "the hand that he was dealt" and understood that he was "a little fish in a big pond."

During the interview for this study Marcus further shared that he believed the teachers on duty were well aware of what was going on, but deferred to "school yard rules." They "didn't want to make waves" with the older kids and didn't want "the hassle of officiating the turf of who played basketball where." In hindsight Marcus would like to have had the teachers intervene and talk to the sixth grade boys about how to share the court and made a "win/win situation out of it." He thinks it was a reflection of the era in which he grew up where students were expected not to be tattletales and to handle things on their own. In Marcus' estimation, now that bullying has become a national concern as an element that can lead to further violence, teachers have a greater awareness and are more likely to intervene.

In his own classroom, Marcus is vigilant and quick in stopping bullying situations. He tries to prevent bullying situations from escalating once he becomes aware of any behaviors that could lead to bullying. He is "always on the lookout for bullying type behavior" where he "sees kids treating other kids…unfairly." He uses conflict resolution techniques to help bullies and victims resolve their differences and create a truce. Marcus doesn't want students in his class to go through what he did as a child because he knows how "helpless and frustrating" it became for him. He wants his "kids to feel secure and safe the moment they step on the school grounds."

While Marcus reports that bullying occurs often in his school, he also shared that in his classroom there is only occasional bullying. When asked to account for this differential, he noted that other teachers in the building weren't always consistent in

watching out for bullying incidents or in the way they handled bullying when it occurred.

Marcus believes his own experiences with bullying as a child have helped him to

recognize aggressive behaviors and deflect them. He clearly believes that bystanders can

help or hinder a bullying situation by either backing the bully, which gives the bully more

power, or by helping to alleviate the bullying by verbally intervening.

In Marcus' concluding remarks during the interview he discussed the importance

of getting parents, the counselor, and the administrator involved early on in bullying

situations. The goal of this intervention is to help students realize that there are "other

adults concerned about them" and to help "the situation heal itself better and quicker."

All in all, Marcus' participation in this research study was a "learning revelation"

for him on what bullies were like when he grew up compared to how they are now and

how his own childhood bullying experiences impact him as a teacher.

Emergent Themes

In order to organize the overwhelming amount of data gathered from multiple

sources, I employed an "emergent category designation" (Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 118)

procedure to sort the information into categories or themes. In doing so, I began to see

not only commonalities between some lived experiences of the selected teachers, but also

gained further insight into the nature of the phenomenon of bullying in school settings

from the perspective of the participants and how it plays out in the real world of their

classrooms. The lifeworlds of these teachers were revealed both implicitly and explicitly

as they recalled childhood bullying incidents and examined their current classroom

practices.

Theme Development

In an effort to "grasp the essential meaning" (van Manen, 1993, p.77) I have thoughtfully reflected on the information gathered from these lived experiences and have identified several overarching or primary themes to which I will apply pedagogic understanding in the analysis of the data related to the research study. It will not be the themes that define the structure of the data analysis, but the careful and pedagogical interpretation of the lived experiences that will supply the meaning derived from the data.

According to van Manen (1990) "the insight into the essence of a phenomenon involves a process of reflectively appropriating, of clarifying, and of making explicit the structure of meaning of the lived experience" (p.77). While meaning is "multi-dimensional and multi-layered," (p. 78) a human science researcher must communicate it textually "by way of organized narrative or prose" (p. 78). Analysis of the themes that surfaced in the teachers' lived experiences and responses to interview questions and on the survey served as a springboard for deriving meaning in regard to the phenomenon of bullying and assisted in bringing a semblance of order to the process.

Primary Themes

Making sense or meaning out of the collection of data pertaining to this research study was a daunting task. The identification of themes during the analysis phase required repeated sifting, shifting, rethinking, selective abandonment, and copious notes. Many of the themes overlapped causing me to refine my selection process and make decisions that seemed to make the most sense in the context of the study regarding the phenomenon of bullying as it related to the teachers lived experiences of childhood bullying and the choices the teachers chose to disclose as to how they handle bullying in

their classrooms. As the principal investigator I was faced with making judgments that knowingly or unknowingly could skew the conclusions and felt the full weight of those decisions. van Manen (1990) aptly described this dilemma when he stated that "We come up with a theme formulation but we immediately feel that it somehow falls short, that it is an inadequate summary of the notion" (p. 87). Thomas (2003) gives further insight in working with "experience narratives" (p. 38) when he shares that it is not only the common themes that should be sought, but also the similarities and contrasts that appear in the accounts of the participants. These will be addressed in the analysis phase of this research study. Taking into account the theme identification process described above, the primary themes of bullying associated with the protocol writings, questionnaires, and interviews that will be explored are: (a) Emotional Aspects, (b) Resiliency, (c) Power Relations, (d) Support Systems and (e) Perceptions.

Each of the primary themes are further broken down into secondary themes as follows: Emotional Aspects (Memories of Bullying, Writing Experiences, Dealing with Feelings, Fear Factors); Resiliency (Acceptance, Vulnerability, Conflict, Social Skills); Power Relations (Pecking Order, Control, Discipline); Support Systems (Students, Parents, Colleagues, Administration, Programs); Perceptions (Effects of Experiences, Curtailing Bullying, Participation in the Study).

A.   Emotional Aspects

The skills related to becoming emotionally competent begin in infancy.
At their simplest, the skills involve recognizing cues from the faces,
postures, and vocal tones of others, followed by labeling and verbalizing
emotions…Children come to school with a range of emotional skills

and a range of consistency in the use of these skills…The ability of

children to learn, access, and apply their learning is interwoven with

their emotional skills. (Elias, et al., 1997, p. 27)

The participants in this study expressed a number of emotions experienced in a

variety of settings. Some of these emotions related to their personal experiences of

childhood bullying and their memory of how they felt at the time. Other feelings came as

a result of actually sitting down as an adult and recalling and writing about their

childhood bullying experiences, while even more emotions surfaced as the participants

shared their experiences of dealing with bullying incidents in their schools. Emotional

expression can either help or hinder a bullying situation. In this study bullies expressed

emotion as anger, aggression, resentfulness, exhilaration and intimidation leading to

feelings of fear, doubt, embarrassment, worry, guilt, rejection, discomfort and misery on

the part of victims and bystanders. Ironically, the bullies themselves may be operating

under the same emotions expressed by their victims (Beane, 1999), but rather than find a

healthy way to express them (communication, counseling, mentor, journal), they resort to

overpowering others.

Memories of Bullying

A range of emotions were expressed in regard to the bullying incidents

themselves. Emotions listed by participants and the number of people who mentioned a

particular feeling included: fearful/scared (3), embarrassed (6), doubtful, worried (4),

relieved (2), guilty (4), pain/hurt (3), isolated (4), rejected (3), humiliated, frustrated (3),

awkward, miserable (2), inferior, worthless, uncomfortable/uneasy (3), powerful, shame,

disgusted, envious, jealous, exhilarated, defeated (2), helpless (2), disappointed (3), angry (2), threatened (2), disappointed, and insignificant.

Powerful, envious, jealous and exhilarated were shared only by a bully. Embarrassed, worried, isolated, and guilty appeared to be the most frequent descriptors. Embarrassment was generally related to being taunted or teased in front of others and worry most often was associated with concern on the part of the bystander that they could be the next victim or by the victim concerned that the bully would strike again. Guilty was used by the bystanders for not helping a victim or for shifting the blame to an innocent person and by the bullies after the incident occurred and they reflected on it, but not by the victims. Four of the teachers in the study shared a feeling of isolation because they felt they could not share the bullying behaviors with their parents for several reasons. Brittany didn't tell about her brother's homosexuality because she didn't want to get him in trouble and because the message she got from her family was "make sure that nobody knows anything is wrong with the family kind of thing." Monica didn't tell her mother for a long time because she was embarrassed that she didn't invite the new girl to her party and concerned about what her mother would think. Shelly withheld the information about her continuous ridicule from parents and teachers because she didn't want to be labeled a "snitch." David remained silent about the neighborhood bully because in his family "you just didn't bring about anything that might be perceived as a downer or negative…just think about positive things."

It should be pointed out that each individual incident generated feelings that were easily identified in the memory-work and for some the emotions were still so strong that they caused sobbing and tears when the incident was recollected as an adult. This data

tends to confirm Thompson's (1997) conclusion that if bullying happens to a person on a continual basis it can leave lifelong scars and that the victims may not recover until their early twenties.

Feelings happen. There is no real control in keeping them from surfacing. There is no right or wrong when it comes to feelings, rather it is the actions that are taken related to the feelings that can become problematic. These actions are often regulated by the social and emotional skills a person has acquired prior to the onset of the emotion (Elias, et al., 1997). The teachers who participated in this study experienced bullying as victims, bullies, or bystanders at different developmental ages (from six through 12 years old). This factor and the environments in which they were raised may have impacted their emotions related to their own bullying experiences. In many of the cases, these teachers experienced several negative emotions related to their childhood experiences of bullying, but took no action to alleviate the situations, such as telling an adult or standing up to the bully, which allowed the bullying to continue. This passivity may have had many causes ranging from the type of home environment they were raised in (oppressive, punitive, unstable, overprotective, secretive) to their innate personality type (shy, overly sensitive, melancholy) to fear of retaliation by the bully (either physical or verbal). Inaction on the part of the participants when they were childhood victims and bystanders appeared to be the catalyst for the bullies to engage in unjustly repeating their hurtful actions and getting away with it.

Writing Experiences

Not only were feelings associated with the recalled incidences of bullying, but also emotions were generated by participants as they worked on the protocol writing

assignment. The welling up of emotions years later as they related to the past experience of bullying is testimony to the fact that strong emotions become imbedded in the memory and when the memory is called forth either voluntarily or triggered unexpectedly additional emotions can surface. These emotions are not necessarily the same ones experienced during the original event. The participants' reflections on childhood experiences of bullying as adults aroused new emotions connected with the bullying. This came as somewhat of a surprise to some of these teachers.

Brittany and Monica found it to be a freeing experience to finally put their story down on paper, but Paula and Rebecca felt frustrated because they couldn't get started due to the strong emotions whelming up in them related to their childhood bullying incidents. In Rebecca's interview she admitted, "It was kind of like thinking I was just going to barf," and that she "didn't realize the pain was still there." Both Rebecca and Monica shed tears as they tried to put their experience into words and Shelly shared that it was very painful to write about being ostracized as a child. David, who wrote from the stance of a bystander, didn't find the experiences painful to recall, whereas Linda, a self-proclaimed childhood bully, wrote, "It was such a long time ago…I thought it would be fine, but you know as I was finishing and right before I sent this it definitely wasn't a good feeling." Later she clarifies this by stating that it wasn't easy to "talk about her demons" and share with someone that she was "nasty at one time." Marcus had a number of bullying incidents that he could have shared, but chose the one he "thought would be relevant to (himself)" and to the study." He believed that writing about his experience was a "learning process" and a "revelation."

Several shared that writing about their childhood lived experience of bullying was a cathartic experience in the end. Brittany had no problem identifying the time she found out her brother was gay as the incident she wanted to write about since it was "imprinted on my mind" and something "she never forgot." Monica indicated that writing about her shunning of a classmate helped her resolve the guilt she had carried for years and allowed her to forgive herself for what she did as a child of six and Rebecca felt better after writing her story of being victimized even though it was not easy to do.

The written word was a powerful tool for the participants that helped to unlock hidden feelings related to bullying. Further written reflections by the participants may reveal more insights as to why they reacted in the ways they did to the bullies when they were being victimized or as bystanders when they watched others being bullied. Also, those who were childhood bullies may be able to understand more clearly why they chose to victimize others as children. Without a doubt, bullying from any perspective (victim, bystander, or bully) elicits intense emotions that do not always go away with time or maturity.

Dealing with Feelings

Another area where feelings surfaced was in relationship to teaching and handling bullying situations in a school setting. All teachers in the study in one way or another expressed that they use a variety of techniques to allow children to express their feelings in bullying situations and at other times. This was accomplished through community circles, classroom meetings, private conversations, and conflict resolution/mediation sessions. In contrast to this, none of the subjects shared that they were afforded this opportunity as children in the bullying situations they experienced. This may be due to

the era in which they grew up, when children were expected to handle situations on their own, or because there is a new awareness of the need for children to share their feelings in an effort to openly communicate their needs when resolving conflict. If the participants in the study had been able to express their emotions openly as children regarding their bullying incidents, would the bullying have had less of an emotional impact? Possibly so because the bullying may have been shorter in duration for some or non-existent for others as they would have been more confident in resisting the bully. The bullies may have felt satisfied that they were listened to and had less need to control.

Individual teachers also shared feelings they had concerning students or situations. Brittany expressed sadness over not being able to convince a child to let her know when she was bullied. The little girl wanted to be accepted so badly that she would not tell that she was being bullied. She also expressed disappointment when the principal would not back her up in a sexual harassment case involving some boys and girls in her classroom and feelings of hope when a new principal was assigned. Brittany was unhappy as well about children who were friends in the younger grades abandoning those friendships due to cultural and ethnic reasons when they go through puberty, but had feelings of satisfaction when she was able to change a bully's actions and demeanor. Paula felt a sense of reward, satisfaction and relief when she resolved an ongoing feud with two boys and was uncomfortable dealing with parents who bully their own children. Rebecca felt empowered when she handled a difficult bullying situation on the playground and was "thankful that it worked because I'm not sure what would have happened if it didn't work." Monica's heart breaks and Shelly gets upset when any child feels excluded in their classrooms and Monica has a great fondness for middle school

students because "they have a wonderful sense of humor, but they have a horrible meanness about them" at the same time. Shelly tries to get her students to recognize daily how their attitudes and feelings affect them and impact others. Along the same lines, David confers with parents regularly to see "how their child's feelings are towards their classmates" and then finds ways to work with any problems that surface. He also expressed his feelings of vulnerability and believes that everyone is vulnerable in new situations and can be a "split second away from (being picked on) in a crowd of people."

Coming from the perspective of a childhood bully, Linda feels "savvy" about the special insight she has on being able to see both sides of the situation in the crisis work she does with adolescents. She and her staff talk about their feelings in debriefing sessions so that they can keep a healthy perspective about their role and decompress to remain solid emotionally for the students. Linda is also excited that more attention is being given now to social emotional learning and the climate of a school. Marcus doesn't want students to feel "helpless and frustrated" like he did as a child. He tries to meet his students' emotional needs so that things will run smoothly in his classroom and feels concern when students treat each other unfairly in ways that could lead to bullying.

Fear Factors

The feeling of fear can be a very motivating factor. It can cause both children and adults to make decisions and choose actions that are out of character for them. This was evidenced by the numerous school shootings that were motivated by the perpetrators being repeatedly bullied by classmates and finally "snapping" and by the number of teen suicides caused by feelings of hopelessness after being repeatedly picked on (Olweus, 1994; Middleton-Moz, 2002). These students lived with fear on a daily basis. They

knew before they ever left the house each morning that someone somewhere would find a way to put them down and that they would have to try to find a way to deal with it.

Participants expressed fear of being hurt as victims and as bystanders they felt fearful that they would be the next target. As a child, Brittany was afraid for her brother and what the bullies might do to him for being gay. Shelly "feigned illness so as not to have to go to school" and she and Paula both lived with the fear of being ostracized by classmates. David was fearful of being criticized and teased by others which made him hesitant to expose who he really was. He also experienced anxiety/fear as a bystander when he was wrongfully accused causing him to innocently blame someone else to deflect the focus from him. Linda's relentless bullying of Patricia originally stemmed from a fear of Patricia's bizarre behavior and unpredictable moods. Marcus and his friends were scared that Larry and the other older boys would beat them up if they didn't cooperate and they were scared to tell the teacher on duty about the bullying because they feared retaliation.

On the whole, emotions enter into every activity and every interaction we have whether they are expressed verbally or nonverbally. Many current programs being implemented by various teachers in this study [Tribes, Say It Straight, Aggression Replacement Training, Positive Discipline (classroom meetings), and restorative justice techniques] emphasize the importance of recognizing and honoring feelings in order to build stronger bonds in the classroom and to resolve conflicts before they turn into bullying situations.

B.   Resiliency

"Our children set off for school carrying a lunch bag, paper, pens and a developmental toolbox carefully assembled from thousands of interactions with adult caregivers" (Middleton-Moz & Zawadski, 2002, p. 94).   Some of these toolboxes may be equipped with the wide variety of tools that children need to cope effectively with daily academic and social demands, while others may only carry the basic tools to do simple tasks and to barely survive. Some may even be missing critical tools that would allow them to accomplish their job at school. According to Middleton-Moz and Zawadski (2002) "children from healthy, functional families" who have been raised "in a supportive atmosphere of unconditional love" can better handle "difficult situations" (p. 94) and make responsible choices. On the other hand, children who have been overprotected or have not had healthy limits set for them often do not develop internal control and "may feel victimized by any new situation or by life in general" (p. 95). Others have been "allowed to be bigger than the adults in their lives" (p.96) and have had excuses made for them over and over again as they treated people and things disrespectfully. The last group discussed by Middleton-Moz and Zawadski (2002) are children raised in abusive homes who fear punishment and violence. "They learn to keep secrets in an effort to protect their families" or "from fear of being taken away" (p. 97) from their home by authorities. These children often put on a brave front and throw themselves into their studies, but often their fearfulness leads them to "the only behavior they have learned can protect them: bullying, anger and aggression" (p.97). Given the previous scenarios, it is little wonder why some children are able to develop resiliency to cope with life's twists and turns and others do not.

The participants in the study eventually overcame their childhood bullying experiences and achieved college degrees to become teachers. These are the survivors whose toolboxes have been filled along the way with the necessary tools to become resilient, even if they may not have been so as children as evidenced by their childhood bullying experiences.

- Brittany used avoidance to deal with her taunters and kept the secret of her brother's homosexuality which took a toll on her. She found she lacked joy and developed self-image issues.

- Paula was ostracized by the "cool" girls when another girl became the victim instead of her and Paula ended up intervening on her behalf. This responsible choice helped Paula become more resilient and strengthened her resolve to protect the underdog.

- Rebecca's lack of trust in others left her feeling unprotected and vulnerable. She turned to her studies as consolation and turned inward rather than finding ways to cope successfully with the bullies who humiliated her.

- Monica let her friends' opinions control her actions which led her to shunning the new girl. She later became the champion of new students as a child and adult.

- The ridicule Shelly experienced from the privileged newcomers led her to fake illness to stay home and to see herself as inadequate compared to others.

- David attempted to stay in the shadows to avoid being teased and ridiculed. As a bystander he chose actions to avoid getting in trouble even though he knew they were wrong.

- Linda turned on a former friend becoming verbally abusive toward her and turning others against the girl. Fear of the victim's emotional state and anger at the failed friendship impacted Linda's bad choices.

- Marcus allowed himself to be bullied repeatedly on the playground. When he finally took a stand, he was not supported by his friends and felt powerless and insignificant.

Acceptance

Related to resiliency is the area of acceptance. Children who do not feel accepted by their parents, family, friends, or teachers often lack the ability to cope with difficult situations. They may become withdrawn and passive or they may turn to anger and aggression. They also can be less accepting of others who may be different from them. Other research studies (Olweus, 1994; Beane, 1999) contend that unusual mannerisms, physical appearance, gender, ethnicity, and other characteristics that cause someone to "not fit in" can lead to children being victimized. The lack of acceptance played a role in the bullying experiences of several of the participants in this study:

- Brittany didn't feel accepted by the older boys because of her brother's sexual orientation. She then began to think something was wrong with her. She felt she wasn't accepted because she "wasn't pretty enough or skinny enough" and her self-image was poor. As a teacher she felt strongly about "everybody accepting each other" and tried to help her students fit in.

- Paula's fear of rejection led her to try to be accepted by the "cool" girls. She hung out on the fringes of their circle and tried to avoid confrontation with them. She finally stood up for another girl who was not accepted by them and became

ostracized from the group. In her own classroom, Paula took the stand that "kids are different, but each is worthy." She became a "mama lion" with her students to buffer them from bullying.

- When Rebecca moved to her new school in second grade, she was not accepted by the local students because of her intellectual ability and her desire to achieve. She spent years being ignored, taunted and friendless. Memories of these school years still cause anger and pain. She finds herself being "hypervigilant" in her classroom and a staunch supporter of the smart kids who are put down for wanting to be a serious student.

- Monica's desire to be accepted by her friends caused her to ostracize the new girl for being different (unkempt, poor, old clothes). Monica's non-acceptance of the new child eventually caused deep feelings of guilt which led to her being the "champion of underdogs and strays" in her adulthood.

- Through fourth grade Shelly felt accepted, loved, and content in her school life. With the onset of "white flight" and an influx of numerous "privileged children" entering her gifted class, Shelly no longer fit in. Everything from her hand-me-down clothes to her worn-out shoes to her family's simple lifestyle increased her isolation and humiliation. As a teacher Shelly helped to spearhead a gifted program for low socioeconomic students so that they would not have to be rejected as she was, and encourages her students "to accept others for their own uniqueness."

- Although David felt accepted by his friends, the neighborhood bully did all he could to make David's group feel immature and embarrassed. David also dealt

with non-acceptance in terms of his parents' unwillingness to allow negative issues to be shared in the household. Unknowingly, their stand that only positive things should be talked about at home, led David to feel scared, worried, and incapable of telling them about the bullying he and his friends experienced. This lack of support regarding anything troublesome made David more vulnerable to bullying and less able to stand up for himself. As an adult David "realizes the value of being able to share both the positive and the negative" and gives his students an opportunity to do this during community circle time.

- Linda had a great deal of trouble accepting the changes in her former friend's demeanor. She turned her uncomfortable feelings and envy into a vendetta against this girl and coaxed others to become her allies in tormenting and breaking down her victim. She made sure the victim was no longer accepted within the group and alienated her in every class. As the teacher in an alternative school for troubled students, Linda now using restorative justice techniques to bring about "healing between people" and to help her students create a "peaceful culture" where all are accepted for their uniqueness.

- The repeated bullying Marcus experienced on the basketball court was at times unbearable, but the fact that Marcus' friends did not support him when he took a stand with the bullies made him finally accept that he had no power and was insignificant. This was difficult for him to come to terms with. In his own classroom he honors differences and is vigilant about stopping children from being bullied for not being accepted by classmates for whatever reason.

Bean (1999) pointed out that children who demonstrate "intolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes" (p. 13) have the potential for turning this non-acceptance of others into bullying behaviors if no intervention is provided.   Those who intensely dislike others "based on racial, ethnic, religious, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, physical appearance…disabilities or health problems" (p. 13) often victimize these individuals. They may even associate with gangs or hate groups "that support antisocial values and behaviors" in order to find support from others who share their prejudices. Finding ways to build acceptance of others may deter these behaviors and decrease bullying.

Vulnerability

In this study vulnerability appears to be a common characteristic of the victims, bystanders and bullies. All were wounded or injured by others in some way, but each handled it in a different manner. The bullies acted out and tried to usurp the power of others before they could be hurt again, whereas victims appeared to have limited internal resources to cope with the pain of verbal or physical attacks. As shared by David and other participants, bystanders were fearful that they may be the next victim and because of this they took no responsible action to intervene in the bullying situation. To be vulnerable as a child or an adult is to be open to humiliation and hurt or, in the case of bullies, to intimidate others to become untouchable and powerful. Finding ways to reinforce a child's inner strength in order to decrease vulnerability may be a key factor in lessening incidents of bullying in homes and schools. This inner strength is being developed from infancy and is the result of multiple social and emotional interactions within and outside of the family. Building coping skills to decrease vulnerability may

benefit all children as vulnerability opens the door to potential bullying and increases the feeling of powerlessness in both victims and bullies.

Conflict

Being resilient while dealing with conflict situations is crucial to the healthy resolution of problems. Conflict whether external or internal creates a sense of imbalance or disequilibrium and harmony can be restored only after a satisfactory resolution is found. Children and adults who have few coping skills in their social and emotional toolbox experience feelings of failure and frustration when faced with conflict, which can lead to becoming targets for victimization or displaying of bullying behaviors.

Not only was there obvious conflict evident in the bullying situations shared in the protocol writing submissions and interviews, but inner conflict was apparent in several cases. Some of these centered on the childhood bullying incidents, such as:

- Brittany struggled with the need to tell someone about her brother being gay and her desire to talk to her brother about it, but not acting on this need for fear that brother would fall out of grace with their parents. She also wrestled with her own self-image believing that the bullies wouldn't have said such ugly things about her brother if she had been thinner and they had liked her better.

- Paula berated herself for not defending the new girl who was from a different socioeconomic background in order to keep herself from being ostracized, too. She felt guilty for watching someone else be bullied with relief that it wasn't her.

- In Rebecca's case she felt frustrated when her family moved to a new town and she was shunned for being smart and confused by the teachers' non-supportive stances.

- Trying to stay in favor with her friends rather than invite the new, unacceptable girl to her birthday party caused Monica emotional grief for many years.

- Shelly's need to fit in to the gifted class after the school was restructured to accommodate an influx of students to her town due to "white flight," caused her to want to put image before intelligence which led to resentment of her parents' decisions.

- David was unhappy that he allowed the neighborhood bully to disrupt his time together with his friends, but didn't do anything to stop it. He also felt conflicted about passing the blame on to an innocent victim so he would not be the target himself.

- Marcus struggled with confronting the school yard bullies or letting it go to avoid retaliation. He also felt inner conflict related to his own classmates non-support of his decision to stand up to the bullies.

Other situations revolved around present day dilemmas that some of the teachers faced:

- Brittany has a desire to be more constructivist, but feels inhibited by school policies. She has to compromise what she feels is best for children to accommodate demands of her district.

- Paula feels torn about how to support two students that she has tutored for many years when she suspects the mother is verbally abusive and neglectful. This has caused her to give her phone number to students so they can call for help if needed.

- Linda tries to balance the numerous emotional needs of her alternative students with the need for herself and her staff to remain emotionally solid and not become

vulnerable. She has to allow for debriefing and decompression to accomplish this.

In all of the situations involving inner conflict, choice enters in. The struggle to make the right decision for the right reasons is apparent. In some of the instances it is a matter of heteronomy (regulation by others) versus autonomy (self-governance). Children who are raised in "brick wall" families (Coloroso, 2003, p. 76) or attend school in "boot camp" classrooms (DeVries & Zan, 1994) where "control, obedience, adherence to rules, and a strict hierarchy of power" (Coloroso, 2003, p. 77) are the norm tend to be more heteronomous and become followers who have difficulty making appropriate decisions in conflict situations. Children from "jellyfish" families (p. 85), characterized by suppressed emotions, overprotection, lack of limits, and inconsistent punishments react in much the same way. In this chaotic environment where "emotions rule the behavior of parents and children" (p. 88) the development of autonomy is stifled. On the other hand children who experience support in a "backbone" family (p. 91) or in a "community classroom" (DeVries & Zan, 1994, p. 14) where they are listened to, respected, and treated firmly and fairly are often more autonomous, resilient, and able to resist peer pressure.

Conflict in the participants' classrooms in which they teach is dealt with using various techniques. Seven out of the eight participants (all but Brittany) use some form of conflict resolution to resolve issues peaceably between students who are having negative issues with each other. The techniques for this ranged from a very scripted format (Linda) in which students are led through a specific process to just pulling the two students together and having them hear each other's side and vocalizing an apology

and an appropriate acceptance of this (David and Paula). In all instances conflict resolution represented a means of problem solving in lieu of the use of punitive measures or referrals to administration or counselors. Teachers recognized that dealing with conflicts in this manner would not normally result in friendships being established or healed immediately. The primary goal is to let each person be able to express their feelings without blaming and to find a way through mediation to forgive and/or accept an apology so that harmony could be restored and the problem between those involved could be put aside without further conflict thus adding to their toolbox of strategies for dealing with bullying and other conflict situations.

<p style="text-align:center">Social Skills</p>

The development of effective social skills in children is imperative for giving them successful ways to cope with conflict situations and thus increase resiliency. The acquiring of lifeskills is necessary for managing every day interactions with others in an appropriate manner. The term "lifeskills" was coined by Susan Kovalik (1995) in her book on Integrated Thematic Instruction. Kovalik saw these lifeskills as parameters to guide students and give them an opportunity to learn about and practice social behaviors that would help them to be successful in the real world. These character traits complemented the brain-compatible curriculum designed by Kovalik and served to create an enriched environment, free of threat, in which students could work collaboratively and be productive. She believes these lifeskills are a vital component in empowering students to be contributing members in their schools, homes, and communities. Many schools across the nation have implemented character education programs that incorporate these lifeskills. It is evident that participants in this study often modeled these lifeskills and

made an effort to teach these important social skills in class meetings, community circles, and Tribes activities. A few examples of these shared by the participants were:

Empathy

- Brittany understood how a boy with a tumor behind his eye and facial blotches and a girl with seizures felt, and made an effort to work with the parents and her class to inform them through literature and a class meeting. This successful effort brought acceptance and respect for these two students.

- Paula teaches children to think beyond themselves and value others. She wants her students to listen to their "heartstrings."

- Rebecca cheers the underdog because she doesn't want them to be humiliated or embarrassed.

- When a new student arrives, Monica fosters a friendship between them and another person so they will not feel isolated. She helps her students have empathy for others and to respect their feelings.

- Shelly strives to make the world of gifted children from underprivileged homes better by teaching understanding of others feelings.

- Linda uses "Peace Circles" to create a format for teaching empathy.

Caring

- Paula does an outreach in the community by having her classes make quilts for a local shelter that serves abused children.

- Shelly greets children at the door each morning, shakes their hands, and finds out how they are doing to let them know she cares.

- Through class meetings David provides opportunities to let his students show they care about each other through giving statements of appreciation.

- Linda's students are encouraged to acknowledge the good actions of each other.

- Marcus intervenes in potential bullying situations that are brought to his attention because he cares about his students and wants them to find ways to resolve their differences peaceably.

Acceptance

- Brittany helped her students learn to accept the multi-handicapped students in her classroom through modeling and informing.

- Paula teachers her students that even though people are different, they are each worthy.

- Rebecca is careful to make sure students aren't set apart because of their intellectual level, whether gifted or struggling.

- Shelly teaches all her students to accept others for their own uniqueness.

- Linda has based her entire career on acceptance of troubled kids through her intervention/prevention work. She believes they must learn to accept others to reduce bullying.

Respect

Respect for themselves, respect for other students, respect for the classroom and respect for adults is emphasized daily in the classrooms of these teachers. If students do not start by respecting themselves, this will not carry over in their relationships.

Friendship

Many of the teachers in this study felt that friendship related issues were at the heart of their childhood bullying experiences (being new and not being able to make new friends, victimizing a former friend, being wrongfully blamed by friends, being moved away from friends when a tracking system was implemented in the school, being ostracized by friends, not being backed by friends when a stand was taken against the school yard bully). Because of this they put much emphasis on helping children fit in, healing relationships through restorative justice methods, using cooperative learning, and facilitating conflict resolution sessions. By doing so the participants provided ways for children to become more resilient and increase their repertoire of strategies in dealing with bullies.

C.   Power Relations

The need to have power over others is at the root of bully behaviors. Whether it is in the socioeconomic or the social arena, the cultural or the physical, usurping power from others is the focus of bullies. Teachers mentioned the following as factors that often led to bullying incidents: dysfunctional home life, poverty, parental neglect, attention seeking, controlling others through fear, cultural backgrounds, being different and not fitting in (size, gender, disability, new to group, intelligence [smarter or duller], wrong clothes), anger, idleness, and fear of inadequacy and vulnerability (get the other person before they get you). When bullies can use tactics to make their victims feel demeaned they elevate themselves to a position of power and radiate the message, "Don't mess with me or you'll be next." This intimidation can influence bystanders to side with the bully so as to stay in good favor with the bully even if they know it is wrong. Meanwhile the

victims are led to believe that the world is against them and that even those they thought were their friends have overpowered them by joining with the bullies who thrive on power and exert influence on others to get their way. Often when someone tries to stand up to them, they turn the tables and cause the other person to feel inferior and in the wrong. Their need to feel powerful and be in control drives many of their decisions (Banks, 1997). Oppression of others in order to derive power for self is at the root of bullying, as the need to dominate through words and actions is typical of bully behavior (Stein & Sjostrom, 1996). Issues with power relations were expressed by participants through the secondary themes of: pecking order, control, and discipline.

Pecking Order

Pecking order originally referred to the way in which a flock of poultry related to each other in the barnyard. It was noted by observers that one bird pecks another of lower rank and in turn is pecked by a bird of higher rank. This type of social order is not limited to poultry as seen in several situations shared by the teachers that were interviewed and in general. Older students bullied younger students as in the case of Brittany in regard to her brother's homosexuality, on the bus when Rebecca finally retaliated when the taunting older student started picking on her little brother, and on the basketball court when Marcus and his fifth grade friends were bullied by Larry and the other sixth grade boys. Older children "mommied" younger students in Monica's multi-age classroom to the point of bossing them around and giving them no choices. David noted that boys who were smaller in size tended to be at a disadvantage and were often picked on.

Popular students put down or "pecked on" others who didn't fit their mold and students with lower socioeconomic status were ostracized by others as was seen in the case of the new student in Paula's class with the "brillo hair" and pertaining to Shelly's lack of a fashionable wardrobe due to the frugality of her parents. Established students excluded new students and those who were smarter were put down due to jealousy of their good grades. In the case of the alternative school where Linda works the pecking order involved parents abusing their children and those students would then dominate others to feel powerful and overcome the feeling of helplessness in their chaotic home lives. Even an incident of established teachers trying to control new teachers and make them conform to their ways was noted by Monica.

In these accounts the bully perceived the victim as weak and used verbal or physical aggression to build themselves up. This system of pecking order can be prevalent in not only schools, but workplaces and other social units. Middleton-Moz (2002) contends that "bullies are often attracted to organizations that reward aggressive behavior or deny bullying behavior and its effects" (p. 158). She also believes that bullies have an "inner instinct about whom they can and cannot bully" (p. 159). Since fear of inadequacy and vulnerability are driving factors in bullying, pecking order is often a natural reaction of victims who then target a featherless wretch at the bottom of the heap to dominate and in doing so create a false sense of regaining their power.

Control

While power was addressed by the teachers mainly in the context of the interactions between bullies and their victims, control was also discussed by them as it related to their classrooms. Brittany disempowers bullies by creating a safe place where

her students can come to her and let her know if there is a problem with bullying. She treats students with respect but does not allow bullying in her classroom and on the playground is "known as the mean teacher" because she is in control and won't let bullies operate while she is on duty. By the time some students get to her in fifth grade, they have been bullied since kindergarten because the administration has not controlled bullying on the campus and this is upsetting to her. The safe haven she provides allows all students to learn in a non-threatening environment. Paula wants students in her class to internalize control for the right reasons…"to be able to behave in an appropriate way when nobody else is around (autonomy)." Rebecca, like Brittany, won't let bullying happen "on her watch." She won't let other people "knock the legs out from under them." Because she felt powerless as a child, she does not want her students to experience this.

Shelly gives students choices because she believes that "kids who feel powerless need to feel they have control over something." The lower socioeconomic conditions in her school leads to powerlessness which in turn can cause feelings of lower self-worth increasing the chance of victimization. David, Linda and Marcus believe that it is imperative to work with bystanders who can have a good deal of control over how bullying incidents escalate or deescalate by the way they discourage or encourage the bully. These three teachers are strong supporters of the teacher being extremely vigilant and setting clear boundaries as the authority in charge. They believe this creates a sense of security and safety for their students. For the most part, teacher participants indicated that there needs to be a balance of external control by the teachers and administrators, while at the same time helping students develop inner control or self-control.

Shared power relations between the students and the teacher were evident in classroom meetings. This technique was listed as present in all but one of the participant's classrooms (Marcus') as a means to discuss issues with the group and find ways to resolve problems together. This method is designed to create a climate of mutual respect where teachers "allow students to become involved in ways in which they can listen to one another, take each other seriously, and work together to solve problems for the benefit of all" (Nelsen, Lott & Glenn, 1993, p. 2). This "positive discipline class meeting" (p. 29) process allows for dialogue about real issues and concerns of the student. Although there was no way to tell from the data if the class meetings mentioned by the participants follow the same format suggested by the originators (Nelsen, Lott & Glenn, 1993), each teacher (except Marcus) believed that class meetings helped to build stronger community bonds among their students. It was also mentioned that classroom meetings were effective to identify behaviors, feelings and motives and help children examine these issues to solve problems. Other classroom meetings were used to make connections to real life, build respect, deal with feelings, and build community. Communication was a key element in classroom meetings and conflict resolution sessions. (Note: Marcus used conflict resolution techniques with individual students when confrontations happened.)

Discipline

Discipline is an often misunderstood terminology. Many interpret it as meaning punishment, but it goes beyond this. Discipline in a sense even goes beyond management techniques. From the perspective of some teachers the very heart of discipline in a classroom is the development of autonomy, that is, increasing the ability of children to

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make the right decisions with or without an adult present in regard to interactions with others and academic work. If this goal was achieved, a decrease in bullying and other negative behaviors would naturally follow. Other teachers prefer "heteronomous obedience" (Branscombe, et al., 2000, p. 147) in which children mindlessly succumb to the authority and follow the rules of the person in charge rather than develop self-regulation. "Heteronomy can range on a continuum from hostile and punitive to sugar coated control" (DeVries & Zan, 1994, p. 46) and can stifle problem solving and lower self-esteem when children are exposed to only this type of discipline on a continuous basis either at home or in school. In some instances (health, safety, and necessary routines) adults must regulate children to protect and govern them. Regardless of the management style used by parents and teachers, power relations comes into play between the child and adult. Manke (1997) contends that "teachers are never totally in control of their classrooms" and that "students have agendas that they are enacting just as much as the teacher has hers" (p. 133). These interactions by teachers and students cause the power to shift back and forth in a continuous flow and can lead to conflict if the power relations are not centered on respect and choice.

DeVries and Zan (1994) define a "sociomoral atmosphere" as the "entire network of interpersonal relations that make up a child's experience of school" (p. 22). According to these authors the primary parts of this network are the teacher-student relations and the student's peer relations. These relationships impact the sociomoral development of children and this in turn influences their propensity to become more autonomous or heteronomous (Kamii, 1994). As the participants shared their management techniques for handling bullying in their classrooms, I found myself trying to categorize these

teachers' exercise of power according to the three models suggested by DeVries and Zan (1994): the "Boot Camp" model where the teacher is characterized as a "drill sergeant" who is emotionally abusive, the "Factory" model where the teacher plays the role of "manager," but is emotionally absent, and the "Community" model where the teacher is perceived as the friendly "mentor" and is emotionally present. After looking at the similarities and differences between these three models and the classroom elements related to discipline described by the participants, I found that mutual respect, fairness and choice, typical features of the "Community Model," were explicit goals in all of the classrooms.

There is no better way to highlight these findings than to share these teachers' perceptions of their role in the classroom as defined by them in the interview process.

(1) Brittany

- Create a safe space for children that is non-threatening in all aspects.
- Help children accept differences by modeling.
- Arm kids with information about bullying to make better choices.

(2) Paula

- Be a "mama lion" to protect children from bullying. (Once you're in her "pride," you're always one of her kids.)
- Use a global village concept to impact bullying.
- Use community building to increase empathy.
- Be a strong defender of children.
- Provide a support system and encourage children to think beyond themselves.

(3) Rebecca

- Protect children from being treated wrongly.

- Listen to children with your head and heart.

- Be a cheerleader for kids, especially those who are targeted.

- Give children power through choice.

(4) Monica

- Be a cheerleader for leaders.

- Build community through interactive discussions and activities.

- Intervene in bullying situations through mediation.

- Be proactive in teaching students how to relate to each other appropriately.

(5) Shelly

- Value uniqueness in all people.

- Give a feeling of power through choice.

- Provide a purposeful, non-threatening environment.

- Use positive intervention to deter bullying.

- Teach communication strategies.

- Give children a sense of importance and accomplishment.

(6) David

- Remember what it's like to be a child.

- Set clear boundaries and be vigilant.

- Teach children to vocalize and accept apologies during mediation.

- Provide engaging activities.

- Communicate frequently with parents about child's feelings.

(7) Linda

- Be a facilitator of learning.

- Reduce high risk behaviors through protective factors.

- Remain solid emotionally to provide support for students.

- Provide a classroom management structure for success.

- Encourage positive behaviors and teach responsibility.

- Create a safe environment.

- Provide social skills training.

(8) Marcus

- Allow students to tell their story then help them talk to each other to find a solution.

- Let them tell you how they feel and impart advice.

- Help kids figure out the real issue and find resolution before it gets worse.

- Create order so kids can feel secure and safe.

- Encourage them to be fair to each other.

In this study, teachers had varying views on discipline as it related to bullying. On the questionnaire for this study, teachers were given the following choices as to what policies or consequences their school used to deal with bullying incidents: zero tolerance policy, conflict resolution sessions, peer mediation, public verbal reprimand, counseling intervention, administrator referral, punitive measures (detention, suspensions, time-out), and corporal punishment. Results indicated that zero tolerance policies, referral to counselors and administrators, and punitive measures were used most often. Participants were also allowed to write in additional information, if desired. Those strategies written

in by teachers included: classes from the Women's Health Center, Tribes reflections, Aggression Retraining Techniques, and Restorative Justice Intervention.

Teachers were also asked to tell me how they dealt with bullies, victims, and bystanders in their own classrooms. In these sections they were asked to only select three that represented what they used most frequently. Choices selected most often included conflict resolution, private verbal reprimands, and counseling intervention. Measures written in were: community circle, restorative justice techniques, and calling parents.

Although "public verbal reprimand" was not chosen by any of the participants, it would strike me as very unusual that this technique was not employed at times, even though the intention of most teachers is to not use this type of discipline. Having been involved in teaching and administration for many years, I find that at times of great frustration it is quite easy to slip into a public reprimand especially on the playground, in the cafeteria, in the gym or in the hallways when there are more students present than normally would be found in one classroom. I surmise that the teachers in this study would not select this as a technique because they believe this is not the best method, or they actually do this at times but did not choose it as one of their top strategies.

The top three choices selected by teachers to deal with students who were victims are as follows: showing empathy by comforting, referring to a counselor or an administrator, and using conflict resolution. The main responses for dealing with bystanders in this study were: give a consequence for encouraging the bully, question the bystander's part in the incident, seek details from bystanders about the incident, and provide training to disempower the bully. Other methods mentioned included restorative justice techniques and class discussions.

Power relations play a part in all of the above choices. The way a teacher handles the bully, victim, or bystander can have an impact on what choices children will make in the future. If teachers simply punish the miscreant to halt the bullying, retaliation by the bully often follows thereby extending the bullying incident. When teachers comfort the victims but do nothing to strengthen their resiliency, the cycle goes on. Giving bystanders the skills they need to help control the situation by intervening on the behalf of the victim resolves conflict far better than their siding with the bully out of fear or the fleeting feeling of power.

Regardless of the management strategies employed, teachers repeatedly indicated the need for consistency. Schools that had campus wide programs in place emphasized the need for all teachers to follow the same guidelines so that there was consistency for students in every class and in all areas of the school. Once parameters for behaviors are set, teachers believed that you must stick with these to get the results desired. It was also noted that when zero tolerance policies are in place, if teachers, counselors, and administrators, are not consistent with expectations bullying rates will increase, but on campuses where the policy is strictly followed, bullies know the teachers will stop the bullying immediately if it is discovered and this has reduced bullies at some school sites. Overall consistency was seen by all to be critical to good discipline procedures and reduction of bullying.

D.   Support Systems

Support was discussed by participants in several areas: students, parents, colleagues, administration, and programs. Teachers felt that support in these areas did much to help offset bullying behaviors.

Students

Support or lack of support of students was brought up time and again in the protocol writing submissions by participants. In all instances of the childhood bullying experiences regardless from what perspective (victim, bystander, or bully), none of the participants told an adult (parent, teacher, or other). According to them, this left them feeling vulnerable, alone with their problem, frustrated, helpless, hopeless, and in the case of the bully caused the situation to escalate even more. Perhaps because of this or because of the increased emphasis that has been placed on curtailing bullying in the last decade, the teachers all provided avenues in their classrooms for students to come to them or to the group circle if bullying was occurring. The format for reporting could be going directly to a teacher on duty, speaking privately with the teacher, bringing problems to a class meeting or community circle, requesting conflict resolution or peer mediation, or including parents in the resolution process.

Parents

Although no participant remembers telling their parents about the bullying that was taking place in their lives as it occurred, some were able to share their experiences at a later time with their families.

- As an adult Brittany was eventually able to share the pain and fear she experienced when she learned as a child about her brother being gay with both her parents and her brother. When she finally wrote her story down she recognized the need she and her brother both had for support as children.

- Rebecca didn't share her continual ridicule and harassment with her parents until an issue with a spelling grade in which her parents intervened only to make the

situation worse by causing the teacher to assign an even longer sentence to write one hundred times.

- In not talking with her mother or teacher about inviting the new girl to her birthday party, Monica ended up having years of pent up feelings regarding the exclusion of this child. Monica, being an overly sensitive child, never forgot her feelings of guilt, embarrassment, and shame for hurting the other child. Some time later when Monica finally showed her mother the birthday card and the page the new girl made about coming to the party without an invitation, she felt stressed and regret.

- Although Shelly did ask her parents for better clothing and was reminded that the extra money was being saved for college educations, she never told her parents about the struggle she was having in the gifted class with feeling hurt and ridiculed. Rather than receive support from her parents, she feigned illness to stay home and avoid the taunts.

- Because David's family only wanted to discuss positive things in the household and did not want negative issues brought up, David kept the neighborhood bully issues to himself and endured them along with his friends. He used avoidance at school to handle the teasing rather than tell an adult. In shop class when he was wrongfully accused, he shifted the blame to a classmate rather than tell the adult in charge that the other boy didn't really do it.

- Linda never shared with her parents the disappointment and anger she felt toward Patricia over a spoiled summer vacation. She let her feelings overcome her

reason and began a calculated campaign to break Patricia down. Her resentment of Patricia's talent added fuel to the fire.

- Marcus did not want to confront the playground bully for fear that his parents would have to leave their jobs to come to school and handle the problem if a fight ensued. He knew it would upset them if he got suspended for fighting, so he allowed the bullying to go on without telling teachers.

Including parents in problems with conflict appears to be more prevalent in today's schools. Parents are considered part of the support team for the child in David's, Linda's, Monica's, Marcus' and Paula's classrooms and I suspect in some of the others as well although no mention was made of this.

Colleagues

The necessity of having colleagues that shared ideas, philosophies, strategies and students was pointed out by several of the respondents.

- Brittany's grade level team discusses students, curriculum, and strategies and supports each other. She is also fortunate that her teaching partner has the same philosophy about not allowing bullying as they share a classroom of fifty students.

- In Paula's school all of the teachers have the same discipline plan (Capturing Kids Hearts). Paula shared that when some don't do their job, others have to pick up the slack. She also believes that a good counselor is important in helping to work through student issues.

- Monica believes teachers on her staff have found success in working with bullying behaviors because the have all been trained in the same techniques and

work together to be consistent with these (Tribes, conflict resolution, and peer mediation).

- The faculty and administrator at Shelly's school made a joint decision to become her district's gifted school for children from lower socioeconomic levels. They have worked together to provide a successful environment for all students.

- David holds to the belief that every classroom in the school should be non-threatening and use the same boundaries in order for children to thrive. This takes a supportive stance from colleagues to accomplish this.

- Linda's alternative school that serves very troubled kids could not be successful without the support of the staff for one another and for the students. Linda believes she works with a capable staff who are all on the same page and consistently work together to create a safe environment for the students.

- Inconsistency among the teachers in Marcus' school on the awareness of bullying problems and in the way bullying is handled is cause for concern for Marcus. He believes his childhood bullying experiences have made him more sensitive and more observant when it comes to detecting bullying among students.

Administration

The support of the administration as shared in the interviews appears to have positive results whereas lack of support caused frustration and a perceived increase in bullying.

- Brittany is grateful and relieved that her school is getting a new administrator because the former principal did not back up teachers. In Brittany's opinion both the principal and the vice-principal were ineffective and had no special plan to

deal with offenders. She believes an administrator has a great impact on the atmosphere of the school.

- Paula was proud of her principal's "iron clad balls" because when a teacher brought a known bullying problem to the principal, she was not "wishy-washy," backed the teacher up, and took care of the problem immediately. All in the school know the principal is the final authority and respect her for it.

- When Rebecca's daughter was having a problem with bullies, Rebecca felt very confident that she could go to her daughter's principal and discuss this. Rebecca values this open communication in administrators.

- Monica's school is spread out in several buildings on one campus. Each building has their own principal and one administrator acts as a site principal over the entire campus. She believes this structure is a deterrent to bullying because the administrators are all trained in the same strategies. Monica likes to handle problems in her own classroom, but would not hesitate to go an administrator.

- Both Shelly and David expressed that the counselors in their schools and the administrators provide support through intervention and enforce the zero tolerance policy.

- Marcus relies on his administrator as part of the support team for students. He believes a child needs to know that more than the classroom teacher is concerned about him or her.

Programs

A number of different programs were discussed as they related to bullying in schools. These were defined in other sections of the paper and included: Life Lessons,

Capturing Kids Hearts, conflict resolution and peer mediation techniques, Tribes, community circles, classroom meetings, Aggression Retraining Techniques, and Restorative Justice. It was clear that professional development to provide training on how to use these programs effectively was imperative if the programs were to support the bullying policies of the school or district. In many cases supportive programs are only as good as the teachers who implement them. Without proper training and "buy in" from the teachers, the programs can be ineffective. In most cases the programs were district driven, but in some cases faculty selected the programs themselves. In all cases if a program was established in a school and the entire faculty did not adhere to the guidelines, this inconsistency made it more difficult to reduce bullying behaviors. The teachers in this study that responded to my query and fit the parameters for the research all appeared to come from schools that used anti-bullying prevention programs of one kind or another. It seems unlikely that all schools would offer these types of innovative programs which lead me to believe that the teachers who participated in the study may have sought other professional development opportunities in this area or could have been instrumental in arranging for these kinds of workshops at their schools.

E.   **Participant's Reflections**

The teachers in this study shared many thoughts on how they viewed the phenomena of bullying. This section on the participants' reflections will focus on how teachers perceived the effects that their personal bullying experiences as a child may have had on the choices they disclosed that they make regarding the handling of bullying in their classrooms, their beliefs about how bullying can be curtailed in schools today, and how their participation in this research affected them personally. Through memory-work

and subsequent reflection, this study encouraged the teachers involved to look backward to the past, to look forward to their own classroom practices, and to finally look inward for future implications.

Effects of Experiences

When teachers were asked if they believed their childhood bullying experience impacted them as a teacher, although the responses varied, each one perceived that there was some carry over as a result of experiencing bullying as a child regardless of whether is was from the viewpoint of the victim, the bystander or the bully.

- Brittany stated, "I never really thought about…that whole thing and then I thought, 'What do I do?' And without even thinking about it…I've always said something to the effect of, 'In our classroom, everybody is safe and if you don't feel safe, then you need to tell me or another adult.' And I have even said to parents, 'A lot of times they are afraid to tell me, but if they happen to say something at home, please call me because we need to put a stop to it.'" Brittany believes this is a result of not feeling safe after the bullying incident. She also focuses on the idea of everybody accepting differences in each other. On a personal note, this is a critical issue for Brittany because after dealing with her brother's homosexuality as a child, her daughter shared with her that she was a lesbian. She believes her lived experience of bullying helped to make her a stronger person to deal with not only her brother's, but also her daughter's sexual orientation. It led her to seek help through a support group and literature.

- Paula's junior high experience with being ridiculed and then later defending a new girl who was not accepted, caused her to become "somewhat fearless about

defending others" and to be "more willing to believe that something is going on underneath the surface" when students come to her and to be "more willing to address kids' perceived and real problems." Paula further stated that her early bullying experience influenced her to not go with her initial reaction of, "That couldn't possibly be happening," to "acknowledging what they're saying and saying it back to them" to validate their concern. She wants to recognize students' problems with bullying, validate their feelings, and give them techniques to resolve the conflicts.

- Rebecca's painful school memories from second through twelfth grades of being humiliated and losing trust in teachers affected her in several ways. She believes she "almost overreacts" to bullying incidents in her classroom because she thinks to herself, "This will not happen to one more child" since she didn't like the way it made her feel as a child and "I sure didn't want anybody else to feel that way." Rebecca is hyper-vigilant and protective of especially the girls in her classroom and the smarter students who are not accepted by others because of this. She is "always very alert for any type of bullying" on the playground so that she can stop it. She tries to handle the situation the way she would have liked someone to handle it for her when she was experiencing it.

- Monica's memory of excluding the new child from her birthday has troubled her for a long time. She believes this early incident shaped how she has treated people throughout her adult life. She makes it a "personal mission to make new kids feel welcome" in her classroom as well as new teachers in her school. She shared that "it still breaks my heart and it makes me sad if there's a little child that

has to come to school and feel like she's excluded." She remedies that by using community circles to build trust and friendships and to help her students develop an awareness of the feelings of others.

- Shelly's recollection of her experience of being ostracized at school and feeling inferior to others made her realize that "as a teacher I'm very intolerant of anybody making judgments of their classmates." She works very hard on building community and developing self-worth in her students because she believes she can be that one person in a child's life that makes a difference. She also perceives that her decision to work only in Title I (low socioeconomic) schools during her career is a result of her early experiences with bullying. She wants children in these circumstances to feel valued and have a sense of accomplishment. Shelly's desire to provide gifted classes for children experiencing the effects of poverty and to do community building to avoid children facing isolation are other areas that may relate to her own ostracization as a child.

- When David was asked to reflect on his memories of bullying and how it affects him as a teacher, he related it more to the lack of open communication with adults and his efforts to work with parents "to make the child's world better in some way that parents can control that may not have been there in the 60's" when he was growing up. Because he felt his parents were not receptive to hearing negative experiences shared in the home, David kept his feelings and worries to himself. As a parent with his own children he made sure they knew they could talk to him about things that troubled them as well as positive happenings. He believes this

carries over to his classroom in the way he works with the social aspects and makes sure children have a chance to express their feelings through class meetings and private mediations or conversations. His goal is to create a positive and peaceful environment in his classroom.

- Having had an experience of being a bully in a school setting has made Linda "pretty savvy about both sides." She thinks being a bully for even a short time gave her "special insight" considering the fact that she has been "on both sides of the coin." She also feels it gives her a greater perspective with the troubled students she works with. Although, Linda does not believe her choice to work in intervention/prevention and crisis work is related to her isolated bullying incident, she can feel empathy for students who are going through similar situations and strives hard to find ways to strengthen her students' resiliency and achieve success.

- The childhood bullying experiences that Marcus endured on the playground made him a "more cautious" person who doesn't use "an outburst of emotion to handle a situation." It also caused him to be a thinker who "judged people by watching and looking and thinking before [deciding] what kind of response [to] take with a certain situation." In his classroom this translated to him as being "more observant of children" and finding ways to prevent bullying because he doesn't want his students to experience the amount of frustration and helplessness that he did as a child.

Curtailing Bullying

As I sorted through data and listened to teacher participants sharing their stories from childhood and giving me information about their classrooms, I began to see that each teacher had their own perspective of how to best curtail bullying in schools. Below I have listed what I gleaned from them in regard to this:

- Although Brittany was raised in a strict private school environment, she believes that a constructivist approach to classroom management in which students are encouraged to accept differences in each other is a way to offset bullying.

- Paula sees helping kids work through problems in a conflict resolution session that allows negotiation and healing between students to be effective in reducing bullying. She also uses humorous approaches to problems (e.g. throw cotton balls at wall, hold hands until ready to discuss problem) and finds this can be successful in some instances.

- Rebecca believes that offering choices and using cooperative learning and hands-on activities reduce negative interactions. She sets attainable limits, is consistent, and adheres to a zero tolerance policy.

- Monica's perception of what works in deterring bullying is to use community building activities to discuss feelings. She is a firm believer in helping children feel empathy for others and in conflict resolution techniques that allow her to interview the students and build bridges between them.

- Communication is a key issue for Shelly as well as valuing individuals for their uniqueness. She is convinced that if children have choice and an opportunity to build autonomy they will feel less powerless and by the same token have less

need to bully others. She uses purposeful, non-threatening classroom activities to achieve this.

- David attributes his low rate of bullying in his classroom to the students having clearly defined authority (himself) and keeping them actively engaged in purposeful tasks with limited unstructured time. His vigilant awareness of the interactions of his students further deters bullying incidents.

- Linda is adamant that the most powerful piece in controlling bullying is to train bystanders how to intervene in a peaceful manner or to seek assistance when necessary. She believes that this training in non-violent intervention techniques can turn bullying around.

- Creating a sense of order and directing all facets of the classroom are deterrents to bullying that Marcus employs in his classroom. He also believes that being very observant and using preventative conflict resolution sessions can decrease bullying incidents.

Participation in the Study

When teachers responded that they would participate in this research study, they agreed to share a personal experience with bullying as a child, to fill out a questionnaire, and to go through an interview process. In the process of doing these things, they recognized that they reaped some personal benefits from being a part of the study.

- Brittany found that it very freeing to write about the incident involving her brother's sexual orientation. As a result of this she reconnected with her brother about this issue and they were finally able to offer each other mutual support.

- Paula recognized that by doing the self-reflection required for the study she clarified for herself her constructivist stance in classroom management techniques.

- Rebecca believes that being a part of this study helped her to analyze what she does and why she does it. She found this to be an interesting process that is beneficial to her and her students.

- The healing and cleansing that Monica experienced from writing down her childhood bullying incident made her face her past head on and forgive herself. It caused her to allow feelings that had been bottled up to surface and to come to an understanding that this happened when she was just a child when she did not have the benefit of maturity to make a better decision.

- From her conversation during the interview, Shelly developed an interest in examining the proactive bullying policies in her school to increase consistency across campus in the area of bullying. She plans to take this idea to her school's Affective Domain committee.

- David was faced with examining and reflecting on his home environment when he was growing up. He concluded that it's healthier to allow children expressions of both the positive and the negative feelings that they experience in their home and school lives.

- Linda took away from the study a new excitement that bullying is being looked at in terms of school climate because she believes that academic success for her at-risk students is directly linked to the social skills. She felt the study made her

"face her demons" related to being a childhood bully and she expressed an interest in "googling" her victim to try to locate her and apologize.

- Marcus found his participation in this study to be a "learning process" in which he could "go back and see how things turned out and why they turned out to be" that way. He saw how the bullying experiences affected his life now and realized that it shaped his responses to other situations. His participation was also a revelation to him of how the teachers must have known about the childhood bullying and did nothing about it, as well as how the significance of bullying has changed through the years.

In summarizing the findings in this chapter, the theme analysis revealed several common threads even though each participant experienced unique bullying circumstances. Emotional aspects of bullying, resiliency in dealing with conflict, power relations both inside and outside of the classroom, support systems (students, parents, colleagues, administration, programs), and participants' reflections about childhood bullying experiences, as well as classroom practices, all permeated this research study.

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS

"The analysis of data is not a distinct stage of the research. In many ways, it begins in the pre-fieldwork phase, in the formulation and clarification of research problems, and continues through to the process of writing reports, articles, and books. . . . And in these ways, to one degree or another, the analysis of data feeds into research design and data collection." (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 205)

In Chapter IV time was spent identifying and analyzing the emergent themes derived from the data: (a) Emotional Aspects, (b) Resiliency, (c) Power Relations, (d) Support Systems and (e) Perceptions. These themes represent the essence of bullying as they related to the information shared by the participants. No research findings prior to this study examine any connections between the teachers' own lived experiences of childhood bullying in the past and their current classroom practices in regard to how they handle bullying situations now. This study attempts to fill this gap.

Throughout every phase in this research study the process of analysis was ongoing in one form or another. Whether it was simply a thought process going on in my head, the jotting down of notes, an additional piece of information added to a spreadsheet, a discussion in a peer debriefing conversation, information gleaned from

literature or other media sources, or a concerted effort to analyze a piece of information on which to formulate a conclusion, data analysis was occurring even without my being cognizant of it in many instances. The recording of findings in Chapter IV constantly challenged me to reflect on the explicit and implicit information being shared by the teacher participants and to try to understand how their childhood memories and revelations about their current classrooms fit in with prior knowledge, as it related to other research concerning bullying, and my own personal experiences as a long time educator. Analyzing the data, therefore, has been much more than the analysis of multiple sources to address the phenomenon of bullying as it relates to the lived experiences of teachers. It has been a process of interpretation in which I have delved into the "lifeworld" (van Manen, 1990, p.6) of the teachers in the study and attempted to "gain a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning" (p. 9) of their experiences. In doing so, I have drawn conclusions in this research study that will be presented in this chapter. These conclusions do not represent results that can be generalized to the broader population, but have implications that may shed light on how lived experiences of childhood bullying may affect today's classrooms.

Emotional Aspects

Emotions played a significant role in how victims, bullies or bystanders perceived themselves regarding the bullying incidents. While victims felt embarrassed, helpless, scared and rejected, bullies felt powerful, significant, and superior to others. On the other hand, bystanders were scared, wary, and uncertain as to whom to side with during the incidents. Several of the participants shared that the recalling of these early emotions caused the pain to resurface even to the point of producing tears or sobbing while writing

down the incidents. This led me to wonder how these particular teachers were able to get past the emotionally charged experiences of bullying in order to go on and eventually lead productive lives and become teachers. Since none of them went to an adult for help with the bullying, it leaves an unanswered question in my mind as to how they coped with the bullying and carried on leading me to further examine the issue of resiliency.

Resiliency

Resiliency appears to play a role in the participants' recovery as well as the fact that retaliation on the part of the victims and bystanders was minimal. So many variables exist that it would be difficult to pinpoint how these teachers coped, but glimpses of family support and positive relationships with friends surfaced. It also led me to ponder new questions. Could it be possible that people who were bullied to the point of defeat or who repeatedly bullied others in violent ways are not attracted to the teaching profession? If this is the case, then it may help explain why it was very difficult to secure participants with a history of victimizing others. The other reason may be related to the reluctance of teachers to reveal that they were at one time a bully with other children. This may be very difficult for some teachers to admit.

In one form or another most teachers in the research study recognized their desire to empathize with the underdog and to cheer them on to success in dealing with bullying situations in the classroom or on campus. This could be a direct reflection on their childhood desire to have some adult stand up for them and help them cope with bully related issues. Many expressed a desire to intervene in bullying as teachers so that their students would not have to suffer the same indignities, the helplessness, and fears they themselves faced as children. Those who were childhood bullies realized at a later time

that their lack of empathy for the victim had dire results in regard to the victim's pain and humiliation (in one case even leading to the victim having a nervous breakdown and subsequent removal from the classroom). In recognizing that the ability to empathize with their students was a critical component in understanding the need for children to have strong coping skills, these teachers appeared to make a mental and emotional connection between their lived experience of childhood bullying and their current classroom practices.

Role of Gender

When teachers in this study were asked to respond to the differences they saw between the ways boys bullied versus the way girls bullied, their answers were very similar. Boys were seen to be more aggressive and physical and likely to put on a "tough" mask, but generally got over things fairly quickly. Two teachers shared that, until they learned through experiences in teaching that girls bullied in a different way, they always thought of bullies as being boys. As David explained, "I pictured a big boy who was a leader of a gang and terrorized the playground in a world without much supervision." After working with students for many years he now describes bullies as "not the big person (but) as being the littler one, the one that's got to build themselves up and tough themselves up in order to bring other people down."

Girls on the other hand were described by participants as using "sly jabs to control the behavior of others," being more manipulative and more covert, and leaving longer lasting scars. Girl bullying was seen as relationship driven while boys wanted to be seen as powerful. Girls tended to use shunning (exclusion), gossip, social alienation, and emotional ploys to intimidate, but both boys and girls used "trash talk" and verbal put

downs to hurt others. These statements fall in line with Olweus' (1994) and Greenbaum's (1989) research on the way boys and girls appear to differ in their techniques. Regardless of what form bullying takes, the pain caused is still considerable as indicated by the feelings of embarrassment, rejection, humiliation, worthlessness, shame, helplessness, defeat and others experienced by the participants.

Gender in this study not only played a role in the type of bullying experienced by participants, but also in the descriptors chosen by respondents to identify the type of classroom environment they provided for their students. Both of the men in the study selected "primarily teacher directed," both cited a need for always knowing what was happening minute by minute in their classrooms, and both believed it was important for them to be seen as the central authority. The men in the study were vigilant in scanning the room/playground/halls for potential problems and quick to extinguish them, while neither was overly punitive or emotionally absent in dealing with the students. Both of these males were focused on order and the smooth running of the classroom as in DeVries' "factory model." (1994), yet there were elements of the "community model," as well, which were exemplified more by David, but Marcus also used conflict resolution techniques. Interestingly, Linda, a self-proclaimed childhood bully, was also very teacher-directed. She established herself as the authority and used a strict point system that earned privileges for students, but cared deeply for her kids. The other females in the study chose a variety of descriptors, but mainly constructivist was selected. Their classrooms appeared to be structured to allow for cooperative groups, processing of feelings, and building of community.

All bullies, whether male or female, seek power but in different ways and may need to be dealt with using different approaches. Considering the way girls and boys differ in the ways they bully, it may be that interventions with girls should focus on relational aspects, while techniques with boys should allow for resolution that is win/win. The female participants in the study noted that much of the bullying they endured or "dished out" involved social exclusion and verbal humiliation. Keeping this in mind, it would be imperative to provide classroom situations in which girls were encouraged to be involved in well supervised and structured cooperative groups where they worked toward a goal in which success could be achieved. In this way positive experiences could be shared and remembered. Also, girls should have the opportunity in a safe, non-threatening environment to verbalize feelings, share appreciations or compliments with each other and receive supportive feedback. This could easily be accomplished in community circles or Tribes activities. Boys on the other hand focused on the demonstration of power and "king of the hill" behaviors. They need to have opportunities provided that allow them to demonstrate mastery in positive ways, such as contests in which they work as a team to do a physical task or solve an interesting problem together, or community outreach activities in which they could more closely empathize with others who may need assistance. Although both boys and girls can and should participate in a wide variety of activities that foster cooperation, respect, and caring, the students should be a part of the decision-making and selection in order to build autonomy.

Interventions

Many teachers in the study reported that their schools used zero tolerance policies to increase safety on their school campuses although there were variations on how consistent teachers across the campus were in regard to enforcing the policies. Fewer incidents of bullying were reported by schools who implemented anti-bullying programs consistently throughout the school which is in line with the studies done by Olweus (1994;1995). Teachers in the study refused to let children "on their watch" experience bullying. They wanted them to feel safe and created a safe space in their classrooms in a variety of ways. Some took a more structured, systematic approach (David, Linda, Marcus) while others aimed at developing autonomy versus heteronomy (Brittany, Paula, Monica) or believed that student choice offset bullies by offering them some control (Rebecca, Shelly). Regardless of the approach taken, each had the same goal – to take a proactive stance in reducing bullying in their classroom environment. Schools who had very low bullying rates also had set parameters, students felt safe and experienced positive relationships, and they knew that someone who cares was in charge.

Implications for Teachers

When I first generated the primary question for this study, "In what ways do teachers' lived experiences of bullying affect the choices teachers make in handling bully behaviors in their own classrooms?" I was uncertain as to whether or not an early experience of bullying would indeed have any impact at all on their current classroom practices as they related to bullying. After interviewing each participant, it became evident that every teacher emphatically believed that their lived experience of bullying in their childhoods did affect the choices they disclosed that they make in the handling of

bullying in their own classrooms. In taking a closer look at how these experiences shaped classroom interventions some common threads emerged.

Teachers in the study acknowledged that they tended to be hypervigilant in ferreting out potential bullying situations and attempted to intervene through a variety of techniques (conflict resolution, peer mediation, counselor, administrator, private reprimand, or classroom meetings) to extinguish the behaviors before they took root and caused a child to be bullied. This appears to be a result of the emotional aspects that these teachers shared that was associated with their childhood bullying experiences.

Creating a safe and non-threatening environment was a critical piece for many of the teachers in the study as a result of their not feeling safe and secure in their childhood bullying experiences. They felt vulnerable and unprotected by the adults in their lives or they felt uncomfortable going to their parents or the adults in charge to seek assistance. There appeared to be a noticeable distance between the adults and the children in the childhood incidents. Later as teachers they attempted to close this distance by promoting open communication through conflict resolution, class meetings, Tribes activities, and individual conferences. They encouraged children to report bullying so intervention could take place and they implemented programs in their classrooms that taught respect and other social skills to aid students in personal interactions.

According to Banks (1997) bullying can have "negative lifelong consequences for both the students who bully and for their victims" (p. 1). In light of this teachers need to do all they can to create safe, non-threatening environments and teach children how to manage anxiety in positive ways. Finding ways to promote autonomy in students would do much to offset bullying by giving students the tools they need to make moral decisions

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with or without an authority figure present. This in part involves allowing students to make choices in their behaviors and academic work and reviewing the outcomes to determine if the end results achieved were satisfactory and positive. If not, helping students to brainstorm what could be done to get better results would be necessary. Teachers also need to be consistent in the way bullying is handled not only in their own classrooms, but across campus. A united front appears to be a major deterrent to the proliferation of bullying on school campuses (Olweus, 1994; Beane, 1999).

Support Networks

Teachers in the study shared that the support of colleagues, parents, administrators, and the community was important and helpful in reducing bullying in schools. When teachers take a stand together against bullying and determine to deal with the bullying behaviors when they are present rather than turn their back to it, students learn that bullying will not be tolerated and consequently fewer incidents occur. Administrators can reinforce this decision by supporting the teachers in their efforts through providing training, making counselors available, dealing with students who repeatedly bully others, holding parent meetings, purchasing any needed materials, and using intervention strategies when they encounter bullying on the campus. Administrators must model the same consistency they expect from their teachers in order to decrease bullying behaviors.

It is imperative for parents to understand that children need healthy emotional environments at home in order to develop appropriate lifeskills for success in social and academic situations. Families that share mutual respect, have clearly stated rules that are enforced with firmness and fairness, set sensible boundaries, foster cooperation, promote

autonomy, allow children to be responsible for their actions and accept reasonable

consequences, and demonstrate unconditional love and acceptance will raise children

who are "capable of responding assertively in a variety of confrontations, and willing to

ask for help when they don't know what to do" (Coloroso, 2003, p.92). These children

have little need to overpower others because they feel valued and loved.

Communities can bond together and look at common values and expectations for

their children. At the state and national level, agencies have recently (since the

Columbine massacre) appropriated money and time to delving into the nationwide issue

of bullying prevention. This needs to continue on an ongoing basis if progress is to be

made in curbing violence on school campuses.

<div align="center">**Professional Development**</div>

The importance of professional development opportunities related to bullying

prevention cannot be underrated. Programs and interventions implemented by teachers in

the study either individually or campus-wide required extensive training and

understanding of the importance of consistency and fairness.   The programs also

reflected current research strategies, brain-based techniques, and developmental

appropriateness. These proactive stances included: (a) classes on "Life Lessons," (b)

assertiveness training, (c) "Capturing Kids Hearts," (d) Tribes, (e) community circles, (f)

restorative questions, (g) class meetings, (h) multiple intelligences approach, (i) conflict

resolution, (j) peer mediation, (k) restorative justice intervention techniques, (l) and

Aggression Replacement Training. Schools that provided training for all teachers in a

specific intervention technique or program benefited by having a built-in support system

for teachers, so they could assist each other in maintaining consistency in handling

bullying issues. Teachers felt empowered by administration to make decisions regarding classroom interventions when they had training and felt confident with intervening. Considering the impact that professional development has had on increasing teachers' knowledge about bullying, every effort should be made to supply them with information about anti-bullying through inservices, conferences, and literature.

Schools may also benefit from providing teachers opportunities for self-reflection on childhood bullying incidents they may have experienced and how these past events may be impacting their current role in the classroom. This process of reflection may give teachers a new perspective on the original incidents and can have a cathartic effect on some teachers. Memory-work in this area may not only bring healing to the teachers, but also help them to have greater empathy for what students in their classroom may be experiencing with regard to bullying.

Concluding Remarks

Although the transferability of results concerning the lived experiences of teachers in this research study cannot be generally applied to other settings, the implications regarding the impact of childhood bullying experiences on teachers' classroom environments may provide a basis for other teachers to examine their current practices, whether negative or positive, and seek to find connections to their own childhood experiences. In doing so, they may be able to break a chain of emotions or behaviors that are subconsciously influencing their classroom decisions, philosophies, or their basic approach to classroom management. It is frightening to think of the impact that even one traumatic incident can have on a person's future and how we are shaped by our experiences as well as the perceived memory of them.

The following suggestions are a compilation from the participants' bullying intervention strategies and reflect advocated practices from the professional literature:

- Support the need for more openness in communication and encourage students to share concerns, fears, perceived bullying incidents and hopes for the future with other students and caring adults.

- Encourage better communication between parents and teachers to gather information on what may be troubling students and ensure that action is taken to improve the situation.

- Emphasize the role of the bystander in reducing bullying incidents and the provision of intervention strategies to teach bystanders how to deescalate situations rather than escalate them. Empowerment of bystanders was deemed more important by some participants than peaceful resolution of bullying incidents by bully and victim.

- Acknowledge the importance of children being allowed to share both negative and positive feelings in a safe environment in order to validate their feelings and build trust.

- Understand the importance of community building and bonding between students and their peers and between students and teachers to deter bullying. Develop empathy and compassion towards others in order to thwart victimization and apathy.

- Recognize the need for anti-bullying intervention strategies implemented by caring people in a consistent manner.

- Provide opportunities to increase self-worth through the development of autonomy in a sociomoral atmosphere.

- Increase professional development opportunities in the area of anti-violence and bullying prevention programs. Knowledge gives power to reduce bullying and to seek community building opportunities.

In conclusion, I am satisfied that my original quest to determine if childhood bullying experiences, as recalled by teachers through the process of memory-work, had any perceived impact on classroom environment and intervention strategies was fulfilled. It has given me the impetus to consider examining my own experiences with bullying as a child and to investigate the possibility that these incidents may influence how I handle bullying as an administrator of a school, but then that's another study in itself. Other possible research questions related to this one include:

(1) Are certain intervention programs more effective with one type of school culture than another (e.g. low income, rural, high socioeconomic, alternative, early childhood, art or science focused, secondary)?

(2) Do male teachers have a greater positive impact on reducing bullying in boys than females and vice versa? Why?

(3) How can parent communities have the greatest impact on decreasing bullying in their children's schools?

(4) Do childhood bullying experiences have any bearing on career choices by adults?

(5) Do the participating teachers own students see them as the anti-bullying crusaders they portrayed themselves to be?

(6)　Does the number of years of experience in the classroom have any bearing on choice of strategies for handling bullying?

(7)　Would recruiting participants from other areas of the country not included in the study (northwest, west coast, east coast, southeast, midwest) change the results?

(8)　What impact would various cultures (poverty, other countries, work places, materialism, competition) have on the frequency and handling of bullying behaviors?

So many questions still seem to be unanswered. For instance, the teachers who agreed to be a part of this study concluded that their early experiences with bullying led to understanding, empathy, and a desire to reduce bullying. Why? Why didn't it cause them to become bitter and retaliate? Why did they choose teaching as opposed to other fields? How did low self-esteem (or the need for power as was the case of the bully) affect them academically? Did the need for power transfer to leadership abilities in later life for the bully? Did some teachers who experienced bullying as a child choose not to participate in the study because they harbor resentments regarding this and rely on more punitive measures to control bullying in their classrooms?

Also, in most instances, there is no way of knowing if the incidents of childhood bullying were more isolated in nature or ongoing over a period of time. In either case, how did the victims overcome rejection, overcome being different, overcome hurts, overcome fears? What catalyst for change causes bullies to give up their power and become empathetic? The more I reflect on the information gleaned from the study the

more I realize how much I still do not know about the lives of these teachers and about the phenomenon of bullying itself.

Clearly the queries could go on and on because bullying has no boundaries, no visible parameters, no limitations on who can be affected by it. It occurs in every facet of society to all ages in all economic groups. Its impact varies in degree from annoyance to rage to murder. The toll it takes in our schools may be beyond measure, but there is hope. Hope for a future filled with more resilient individuals, of mentally healthier adults, and of peaceful resolutions to problems. This hope lies with the students in today's classrooms. May the conscientious interventions by their teachers cause their memories of bullying to be few and far between.

EPILOGUE

The Dissertation Process

Topic Selection

Regularly during this dissertation process I have questioned myself as to how I ever ended up selecting the topic of bullying for my area of research. It has been a winding road of continued discovery that has led me to look at teachers' experiences of bullying in childhood and the impact, if any, on their career as a teacher in their adult life. When I began my doctoral coursework, I was the principal of a large (almost 700 students) urban elementary school where over 60% of the students were from poverty level homes. When reviewing behavior referrals and suspensions related to bullying at the end of each year, it became apparent to me that incidences of bullying were increasing on our campus. At about the same time, the general public was clamoring for schools to include the teaching of core values in their curriculum offerings. Cities across the country were having open forums with their citizenry to establish common core values that were acceptable across religious and cultural lines. Because of these stirrings, my district charged each school with the task of incorporating character education into their school curriculum. My staff and I looked at a number of available programs on the market and rather than purchase one of these, decided to embark on developing our own character education program that would provide each teacher with a guide that included a common vocabulary that defined lifeskills to be taught, activities, and a timeline for instruction. This project was the catalyst for my initial research in looking for ways to

increase appropriate social skills and decrease inappropriate interactions among students, especially bullying.

Not too long after the completion and implementation of the character education program at my school, the Columbine High School massacre occurred in April 1999. This shocking event had many educators questioning the motives of the perpetrators and looking at a possible catalyst for their actions. The information surfaced that these boys had been victims of repeated bullying both in and out of school. This was cause for concern throughout the country as more and more school shootings made national news. The meaningless deaths of students at the hands of classmates gave credence to the growing concern about bullying in the nation's schools that resulted in anti-bullying legislation being passed in various states.

I participated in the OSU Writing Project's Summer Scholar program in 2000 at the height of concern over bullying. When we were asked to pair off for a joint presentation with another student in the class, I found I shared a common interest in looking at bullying prevention with a fellow student. We began to examine current programs available for bullying prevention and to look at bullying related research. I became very passionate about this theme as it had direct bearing on my role as principal and my efforts to reduce bullying in my school. My topic became more refined with an assignment in another graduate class, Pedagogical Research, early in my doctoral course work. During a cooperative learning assignment, my team chose to focus on social skills, or lack of, in today's students. We examined many aspects of this which led to further exploration concerning the development of lifeskills in children through character education programs. I was able to contribute to this effort based on the character

education program I had written with my teachers. In this class I began to speculate on what impact classroom environment had on bullying. If lifeskills could be taught, practiced and internalized would this decrease bullying behaviors?

With each class I took after this, I tried to focus my attention whenever possible on bullying-related topics and on reading literature centered on this theme. I began to ask even more questions: How could we be proactive about bullying? What could students do to disarm bullies and support the victims? What kind of classroom environment would best curtail bullying behaviors? Does the teaching style of the teacher impact bulling in any way either positively or negatively? What role does gender, race, disability, or size play in students being targets of bullies? The list of questions went on and on in my head, but the answers were not readily available. When making the decision regarding my dissertation topic, I knew the connection of bullying to teaching would somehow play out. After several attempts to narrow the topic, I finally settled on "Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying" which was influenced by Max van Manen's (1990) work in the area of researching lived experience and the direction provided by my doctoral committee chair and other colleagues.

Methodology Issues

Even though I had enrolled in and completed several research classes, when it came to selecting a methodology and defining procedures for my research study, I arrived at a standstill. I considered going into a school to observe children in two classrooms for comparison and to interview teachers and the principal about classroom management and bullying. One classroom would represent a "boot camp" model (DeVries & Zan, 1994) while the other would represent a community/constructivist model. I concluded that this

would not be a feasible way to conduct the research because there were far too many variables in identifying the schools and the teachers for the research. Furthermore, my role as a principal would have made it difficult for me to remain neutral while observing bullying incidents. The instinct to intervene in some way would have been very strong and would have tainted the results of the study. I made the decision instead to do a naturalistic, descriptive qualitative study rather than using a quantitative method as it lent itself much more to phenomenological research. I eventually determined that a protocol writing assignment, questionnaire, and input from an interview would provide me with a solid foundation to produce a rich, descriptive narrative for my study and dismissed the idea of doing actual classroom observation. From the standpoint of time involvement, this allowed me to include more participants and to participate in an interactive process, but not be an observer-participant (Erlandson, et al., p. 97).

Participant Solicitation

I never counted on how difficult the task would be to get participants for my research study. When I first conceived of the idea to use the OSU Writing Project and the National Writing Project as sources for soliciting subjects for my research study, I believed that since many teachers were involved in these Listservs, had such a comfort level with writing, and were so supportive of each other that I would have no problem getting six to nine participants from this group. Easier said than done! After several months of repeated requests and pleading and encouragement by others on the site to help me out, I still only had two participants that I could follow to completion as participants. It is not as if I didn't get replies, but more to the point, the respondents didn't fit the narrow parameters I had set for the study.

I originally stated that I was only seeking current elementary teachers who had experienced bullying as a victim, bystander, or the bully when they were in elementary school themselves. Several respondents either had the bullying experience in elementary school, but now taught in secondary or higher education settings, or they were elementary teachers currently, but had the bullying experience in middle or high school. My frustration grew as I had to turn down candidates one after the other due to their experiences and job positions not matching the criteria for the study. I met with my doctoral committee to discuss my first three chapters and to seek their advice on how to remedy the problem of not getting enough participants for the study to move forward. After much deliberation, it was clear that I had to broaden my parameters and seek other avenues of contact outside of the Writing Projects.

Modifications

I made a decision to submit an IRB Modification form to allow me to recruit both elementary (including preschool) and secondary teachers through not only the Writing Projects, but also through personal contacts. This produced immediate results as I was able to go back and contact some of the earlier respondents that now fit the new criteria and ask them if they would still be interested in taking part in the study. Between them and personal contacts I made through friends and professional means, I was able to add an additional seven subjects within a four month period bringing the total to nine participants for the research study.

Once the participants were identified and the letters of consent mailed to them, it required persistent follow up and encouragement to have all respondents return the consent form, forward the protocol writing, and complete the questionnaire. This was

mainly done through email correspondence. However, the setting up of the interviews

was done primarily by telephone and this appeared to expedite the process. My

speculation is that arranging the interviews was much easier because (1) the subjects had

already done the memory work and put down their thoughts in the writing process,

getting the more difficult task out of the way and (2) when setting up the interview by

phone there was actual contact with a live human being and not just an impersonal

interaction via technology.

Interview Process

The written experience and the questionnaire/survey were examined very closely

in order to formulate interview questions that would help me gather necessary data for the

study, but also would follow a specific format that would give me adequate information

regarding the participants for later analysis. In the journal I kept during this dissertation

process, I stated, "How am I going to pull all of the interview information together for

interpretation purposes, if the individual interview questions end up being too different

because of the varying experiences of the participants?" I tried to resolve this issue by

first formulating a set group of questions that I believed would be general enough to have

cross over for all participants, but give me pertinent information related to my study.

Then I used a variation of each question in the individual interviews that kept the

common thread, but personalized it for the participant by drawing on information that had

been shared in their protocol writing and questionnaire. Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and

Allen (1993) refer to this as a "semistructured interview that is guided by a set of basic

questions and issues to be explored, but neither the exact wording nor the order of the

questions is predetermined" (p. 86). With each subsequent interview after the first one,

this became a smoother process and it became easier to discern what was necessary to "tweak" to generate an insightful response from the interviewee. It also became easier to have a true dialogue with a conversational tone, rather than a stiff, overly structured interview.

During the interview process I sometimes struggled to keep my opinions and responses from becoming too personal. At times I felt compelled to comment or embellish on what the person shared to include pertinent information that I knew about bullying or to relate a personal experience of my own that was similar to their experience. I had to work hard to keep these responses to a minimum and rather to allow the participant more time for self-reflection. I tried to be very observant throughout the interview so that I could ask probing questions to get more information from the respondent. Sometimes this required just being tuned into their voice inflection or to the mood of the conversation and not necessarily to the specific words they were sharing. In order to "maintain productivity during the interview" (Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 93) I also tried to avoid "yes/no" questions which could lead to a dead end, and to be aware in the course of the dialogue if I began to ask a leading question that might skew the data. I also found myself frequently interjecting a "Mmm-hmm," "Uh-huh," or "Right" to keep the flow of the conversation moving and to acknowledge the interviewee's responses. The give and take of the interviews became second nature by the time I completed the last one.

During the transcription process, I was surprised to discover that I got much more out of the interview when I had to intently listen and transcribe the interview word for word. When I was in the midst of the actual interview I think I was more focused on

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listening for cues, asking probing questions, staying on task, and keeping up with the ebb and flow of the conversation, than really concentrating on the meaningful responses of the interviewee. However, while I was transcribing the recorded tape, I could better pick up on the emotions of the person, the ways in which I phrased a question that may or may not have been clear to the respondent, the voice inflection that indicated feelings, and the general tone of the interview. I found transcribing to be a very tedious and long, drawn out process, but a fruitful one that would assist me in the analysis phase because while I was listening and transcribing I was asking myself questions, sorting data, organizing thoughts and reactions, and identifying emergent themes.

Analysis of Data

I struggled with this process even more than with the methodology and procedures. The amount of data was overwhelming. With eight participants who each had completed a protocol writing, a questionnaire, and an interview, the amount of available input was great. I could not seem to figure out how to actually get started on sorting through all of this information in order to analyze it and make meaning from it regarding the research. I spent days highlighting sentences for theme identification, reading and rereading the memory-work stories, surveys, and interview transcriptions. After weeks of deliberation and stress, I devised a plan to create a graph of pertinent facts for each participant that would include all of the snippets of information that I had accumulated. This spreadsheet was invaluable to me in identifying themes and pulling information together for various categories in one easily readable location. The greater task was to analyze the data and make meaning from what I had before me. After turning in my first complete draft to my doctor committee chairperson and meeting with her to

discuss this, I ended up reorganizing all of Chapter Four because of problems with defining the themes that defined the essence of bullying. I went "back to the drawing board" and narrowed my primary themes as well as rethinking my secondary themes. Even though this took hours of scrutinizing and processing, the end product had a much better flow and made more sense in the scheme of things.

I found the entire process of writing this dissertation to be incredibly challenging but rewarding when I realized in my conclusions that I had achieved my goal of answering the initial research question as thoroughly and pedagogically as possible.

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APPENDIX A

Oklahoma State University Writing Project
Solicitation Letter

2713 S. 111 East Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74129
(918) 627-1322
February 6, 2006

Mrs. Pat Mumford, Project Manager
National Writing Project
8938 E. 100th St.
Tulsa, OK 74133

Dear Mrs. Mumford:

As a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University, I am currently in the process of working on my dissertation titled, *"Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying."* I am interested in making use of the National Writing Project listserv to find interested participants for this research study.

The procedure for locating participants will involve sending out an informational message on the NWP listserv seeking a limited number of elementary or secondary teachers (PK-12) who have experienced bullying in their childhood or adolescence from the perspective of being the bully, the victim, or a bystander in an elementary or secondary school setting. I have enclosed a copy of the listserv release for you to preview.

Following the initial search, respondents will be asked to: (a) write about a personal experience involving bullying when they were in elementary or secondary school, (b) fill out a questionnaire about their present classroom environment, (c) participate in an interview conducted either by phone or electronically, and review data, analysis, and conclusions for the purpose of validity. Participation will be on a voluntary basis and all responses will be kept confidential. The identities of the respondents will be carefully protected.

I am requesting approval from you, as the NWP Project Manager, to send the enclosed solicitation letter to the listserv members by e-mail. After initial contact, all subsequent correspondence with selected respondents will be conducted through the researcher's private e-mail account on a stand-alone computer (not on a shared network). If approved, I anticipate sending this screening survey to members in mid- to late Februrary 2006 and will gather data for the study through May 2006.

I greatly appreciate your consideration of this request. I am enclosing a letter of consent and a return envelope for your convenience. For further information concerning this research study, you may contact me at (918) 627-1322 (H), (918) 746-4251 (W), or at janetbassett@cox.net.

Respectfully,

Doctoral Research Study
NWP Listerv Solicitation Letter

Dear Mrs. Mumford,

As stated in my enclosed letter requesting permission to utilize the NWP listserv to seek participants for my doctoral research study, I would like to send the revised message below as soon as I have obtained approval both from you and the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board (IRB). I am also currently seeking permission from the OSU Writing Project listserv to release the same information.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Sincerely,

SOLICITATION LETTER FOR NWP LISTSERV:

Dear NWP listserv members:

I would like to gratefully acknowledge Mrs. Pat Mumford, NWP Project Manager, for granting me permission to use the NWP listserv to locate persons who may be interested in participating in my doctoral research study.

My dissertation topic is "Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying." I am seeking elementary or secondary school teachers (PK - 12) who have experienced bullying incidents in their own childhood or adolescence while in elementary or secondary school. This experience can be from the perspective of being the bully, being the victim, or witnessing bullying as a bystander.

All participants in this study will be asked to (a) write about a personal experience involving bullying when they were in elementary or secondary school, (b) fill out a questionnaire about their present classroom environment,(c) participate in an interview conducted either by phone or electronically, and (d) review data, analysis, and conclusions for accuracy. Participation in this study will be on a voluntary basis and all responses will be kept strictly confidential. The identities of the respondents will be carefully protected.

If you are interested in participating in this research or if you have questions concerning this, please e-mail me at janetbassett@cox.net. (Please do not respond to this query on the listserv.) Please indicate in your response to me from which perspective (bully, victim, or bystander) you will be doing your writing. Thank you.

Respectfully,

APPENDIX B

National Writing Project
Solicitation Letter

2713 S. 111 East Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74129
(918) 627-1322
February 6, 2006

Dr. Britton Gildersleeve, Director
OSU Writing Project
205 Morrill Hall
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74078

Dear Dr. Gildersleeve:

As a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University, I am currently in the process of working on my dissertation titled, *"Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying."* I am interested in making use of the OSU Writing Project listserv to find interested participants for this research study.

The procedure for locating participants will involve sending out an informational message on the OSU listserv seeking a limited number of elementary or secondary teachers (PK-12) who have experienced bullying in their childhood or adolescence from the perspective of being the bully, the victim, or a bystander in an elementary or secondary school setting. I have enclosed a copy of the listserv release for you to preview.

Following the initial search, respondents will be asked to: (a) write about a personal experience involving bullying when they were in elementary or secondary school, (b) fill out a questionnaire about their present classroom environment, (c) participate in an interview conducted either by phone or electronically, and review data, analysis, and conclusions for the purpose of validity. Participation will be on a voluntary basis and all responses will be kept confidential. The identities of the respondents will be carefully protected.

I am requesting approval from you, as the OSU Writing Project Director, to send the enclosed release to the listserv members by e-mail. After initial contact, all subsequent correspondence with selected respondents will be conducted through the researcher's private e-mail account on a stand-alone computer (not on a shared network). If approved, I anticipate sending this screening survey to members in early to mid- to late Februrary 2006 and will gather data for the study through May 2006.

I greatly appreciate your consideration of this request. I am enclosing a letter of consent and a return envelope for your convenience. For further information concerning this research study, you may contact me at (918) 627-1322 (H), (918) 746-4251 (W), or at janetbassett@cox.net.

Respectfully,

Dear Dr. Gildersleeve,

As stated in my enclosed letter requesting permission to utilize the OSUWP listserv to seek participants for my doctoral research study, I would like to send the revised message below as soon as I have obtained approval both from you and the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board (IRB). I am also currently seeking permission from the National Writing Project listserv to release the same information.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Sincerely,

SOLICITATION LETTER FOR OSUWP LISTSERV:

Dear OSUWP listserv members:

I would like to gratefully acknowledge Dr. Britton Gildersleeve, OSUWP Director, for granting me permission to use the OSUWP listserv to locate persons who may be interested in participating in my doctoral research study.

My dissertation topic is "Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying." I am seeking elementary or secondary school teachers (PK - 12) who have experienced bullying incidents in their own childhood or adolescence while in elementary or secondary school. This experience can be from the perspective of being the bully, being the victim, or witnessing bullying as a bystander.

All participants in this study will be asked to (a) write about a personal experience involving bullying when they were in elementary or secondary school, (b) fill out a questionnaire about their present classroom environment, (c) participate in an interview conducted either by phone or electronically, review data, analysis, and conclusions for accuracy. Participation in this study will be on a voluntary basis and all responses will be kept strictly confidential. The identities of the respondents will be carefully protected.

If you are interested in participating in this research or if you have questions concerning this, please email me at janetbassett@cox.net. (Please do not respond to this query on the listserv.) Please indicate in your response to me from which perspective (bully, victim, or bystander) you will be doing your writing. Thank you.

Respectfully,

APPENDIX C

Writing Prompt and Instructions

WRITING PROMPT AND INSTRUCTIONS

Title of Dissertation: **"Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying"**

Thank you for your willingness to become a part of this new research study. Your honest and descriptive written reflection concerning a bullying experience during your school years will be a valuable contribution to this project.

Writing Prompt:

Please use the prompt below to assist you in getting started.

Write about a personal experience involving bullying when you were in elementary or secondary school. This may be from the perspective of being (a) the bully, (b) the victim, or (c) the bystander.

Please write a detailed account of a personal experience as you lived through it. In memory work it is not important if you do not remember every single detail exactly as it happened. Rather write about the experience as you remember it happening.

Helpful Tips:

(1) Describe the experience as you lived through it without looking for possible explanations or interpretations.
(2) Describe a specific experience from the inside (your mood, your feelings, your emotions, your reactions, etc.)
(3) Do not be concerned with creating a polished document.
(4) Think of this writing in terms of a personal journal entry; a reflection of a lived experience.
(5) This may include descriptive detail using the five senses.

Instructions:

For ease of reading please use standard margins (1.25" for left and right; 1" for top and bottom), double spacing and no smaller than 12 point font.

There is no set number of words. Please continue writing until you have captured the experience to your satisfaction (approximate time for writing = 30 minutes to 1 hour).

After you complete your written response to the prompt, please save it in a file as a Microsoft Word document and email it as an attachment to janetbassett@cox.net or imbed it in the body of an email response.

You will receive a reply response indicating that it has been received and then you will be sent the questionnaire electronically through zoomerang.com.

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire Format

Bullying Questionnaire

1

Please type the name below that you used on the informed consent document and on your protocol writing submission:

[   ]

2

What gender are you?

○ Female

○ Male

3

In what region of the country do you live?

○ Northeast

○ Northwest

○ Southeast

○ Southwest

○ North Central

○ South Central

4

Where is your school located?

○ In a metropolis (one million plus people)

○ In an urban area

○ In a suburban area

○ In a rural area

○ Other, Please Specify

[   ]

5

What type of school is this?

○ Public

○ Private

○ Charter

○ Other, Please Specify

[   ]

6

What grades do you currently teach? (Please select all that apply.)

○ Preschool

○ Kindergarten

○ First Grade

○ Second Grade

○ Third Grade

○ Fourth Grade

○ Fifth Grade

○ Sixth Grade

○ Seventh Grade

○ Eighth Grade

○ Ninth Grade

○ Tenth Grade

○ Eleventh Grade

○ Twelfth Grade

○ Other, Please Specify

[   ]

7

At what rate do bullying incidents occur that involve children in your class (either in your classroom or on the school grounds)?

○ Very often (almost daily)

○ Often (1 to 3 times a week)

○ Occasionally (less than once a week)

○ Rarely (once a month or less)

8

Why do you think bullying incidents involving your students occur at the rate you listed in the previous question?

[   ]

9

From your perception, on the average at what rate do bullying incidents occur at your school?

○ Very often (almost daily in every classroom)

○ Often (1 to 3 times a week per classroom)

○ Occasionally (less than once a week per classroom)

○ Rarely (once a month or less per classroom)

10

Why do you think bullying incidents involving students in your school overall occur at the rate you listed in the previous question?

[text box]

11

What kind of policy/consequences does your school use to deal with bullying incidents involving students? (Mark all that apply.)

○ Zero tolerance policy

○ Conflict resolution sessions

○ Peer Mediation

○ Public verbal reprimand

○ Private verbal reprimand

○ Counseling intervention

○ Administrator referral

○ Punitive measures (detention, suspension, time-out)

○ Corporal punishment

○ Other, Please Specify

12

How do you primarily deal with students in your class who bully others? (Choose no more than 3.)

- ⚪ Conflict resolution

- ⚪ Peer Mediation

- ⚪ Public verbal reprimand

- ⚪ Private verbal reprimand

- ⚪ Counseling intervention

- ⚪ Administrator referral

- ⚪ Punitive measures (detention, suspension, time-out)

- ⚪ Corporal punishment

- ⚪ Other, Please Specify

13

How do you primarily deal with students in your classroom who are victims of bully behavior? (Choose no more than 3.)

- ⚪ Show empathy by comforting

- ⚪ Support them by taking their side

- ⚪ Encourage them to ignore the bully

- ⚪ Encourage them to move to a different location

- ⚪ Encourage them to not be overly sensitive (toughen up)

○ Teach assertiveness techniques

○ Counselor or administrator referral

○ Conflict resolution

○ Peer mediation

○ Other, Please Specify

[   ]

14

How do you primarily deal with a student or students who are bystanders during a bullying incident? (Choose no more than 3.)

○ Request they leave the scene

○ Consequence for encouraging bully

○ Consequence for taunting victim

○ Question their part in the incident

○ Seek details from them about the incident

○ Provide training to disempower the bully

○ Conflict resolution

○ Peer mediation

○ Other, Please Specify

[   ]

15

How would you describe your classroom environment?

● Constructivist

○ Traditional

○ Authoritarian

○ Student choice oriented

○ Learning center approach

○ Primarily teacher directed

○ Other, Please Specify

16

Please use the space below to tell me anything else that you would like to share about your perspective of how to best handle bullying in a school setting.

SUBMIT

APPENDIX E

Guided Interview Questions

Guided Interview Questions

Procedures:

- Interviews will be conducted either by phone or electronically after respondents have submitted both their protocol writing assignment and the online questionnaire. No interviews will be done in person.
- Interviews will be based on each individual participant's response to both the protocol writing and the questionnaire.
- For validity purposes a follow-up check will be conducted in which participants will be asked to review data, analysis and conclusions.

Interview Script

Hello, this is Janet Bassett, the doctoral student at Oklahoma State University that sent out the letter on the listserv seeking participants for my research study on teachers' lived experience of bullying and the impact on classroom environment.

First of all, let me thank you for participating in this research project and for submitting your writing assignment and your questionnaire as requested. You are one of six to nine elementary or secondary teachers selected for this study that I will be interviewing.

If participant elects to conduct this interview by phone: I plan to tape this interview by speaker phone in a private room to assist me in maintaining accuracy. I will be the only one who will listen to these tapes in order to transcribe them. Once I have transcribed these, I will share the written document with you and ask you to review them for accuracy of information. I will keep the tapes and written documents only until my dissertation has been approved and published, at which time I will destroy/delete all evidence of these. Until final approval I will secure all documents and tapes in a securely locked file cabinet in my home.

If participant elects to conduct this interview electronically: This interview is being conducted in a secure private chat room (ePALS.com). I plan to print out the information at the conclusion of our online discussion. I will share this printed document with you and ask you to review it for accuracy of information. I will keep the computer files and written documents only until my dissertation has been approved and published, at which time I will destroy/delete all evidence of these. Until final approval I will all secure electronic documents in a password protected file and written documents in a securely locked file cabinet in my home.

Although I will need to keep all respondents names and phone numbers during the dissertation process, I will delete these after publication of my dissertation. All names and identifying information will be changed to protect the privacy of participants.

Interview Questions

1. Let me begin with asking you what it was like for you to write about your lived experience of bullying?

2. How difficult or easy was it to recall a specific bullying incident from your elementary school years?

3. You chose to write about a bullying incident in which you were the (bully, victim, bystander). Tell me about how this was handled by any adults who were involved? Do you think the incident could have been handled more effectively by the adult(s)? (If "No" go on to next question; if "Yes" ask the following question: In your case how do you think it should have been handled?)

4. I noticed as I read through your protocol writing, that you experienced feelings of _____ in regard to the bullying incident. How do you think this impacted your emotional reactions to other situations either as a child or an adult?

5. How does your experience of bullying as a child affect you as a teacher? Can you give me any examples?

6. How do you deal with bully behaviors in your own classroom?

7. How do you handle bullying incidents outside your classroom on the school campus involving your students or others?

8. Do you think bullying can be reduced in schools today? How?

9. On the questionnaire you described your classroom as (traditional, constructivist, etc.). Can you tell me why you chose that descriptor?

9. Do you think your classroom environment influences bullying in any way? How?

10. You indicated on the questionnaire that your classroom has a (high, moderate, low) percentage of bullying incidents. To what do you attribute that?

11. Do you see any specific gender differences in bullying at your school? Do you believe that gender issues were involved in your own original bullying incident?

12. If you could go back in time and change the bullying incident you described in your writing, how would the new outcome look?

13. Can you think of an example when your intervention as a teacher in a bullying incident changed the outcome?

14. Is there anything else you would like to add before we conclude this interview?

Thank you so much for allowing me to interview you today. You have my email address and phone number if you wish to contact me about anything concerning this research study. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Once I have transcribed this interview, I will forward it to you for your review. Then I will analyze the data gathered from the protocol writing samples, questionnaires, and interview information. I will check with you again to make sure I am accurate in my interpretation of the bullying incident and your current classroom environment as it relates to bullying. Once the findings are complete and the dissertation is approved, you may obtain a summary of the findings from me at your request.

I hope you have a good (week, weekend, vacation, etc.). Thanks again.

APPENDIX F

Protocol Writing Submission

(Sample)

Bullying   9-10-06

The meaning of a bully when I was school-aged seemed old-fashioned. I pictured a big

boy who was a leader of a gang and terrorized the playground in a world without much

adult supervision. It's hard for me to reflect in that light because there usually was an

adult not far on the school grounds. I do remember others who made me feel

uncomfortable being around them. I saw them as mean kids. There would be taunting

and teasing for any little infraction such as a short haircut or new shoes. Growing up in a

large school in Tulsa, it was possible to avoid them, and I do believe being on the tall side

gave me an advantage.

I do remember a tall boy named Jeff who wasn't in any of my classes, but he lived about

3 blocks away from my house. He was mean. He had a scowl on his face and would talk

about doing destructive things to others. (Toy Story -- the neighbor boy next door). He

wasn't very intimidated by my height so he would charge in and mock what I was doing

in the neighborhood. Of course he knew cuss words and the kids I played with really

wanted him to leave and I was always glad when he did. Seeing him in the school halls

meant I would not acknowledge him (get in his way, say anything) or I would be

ridiculed or laughed at in some way. Even in high school, I took a job at a near-by

restaurant washing dishes. Jeff's house backed up to the parking lot and he knew the

other employees and came by my first day. (Just great!) He told everyone he knew who

I was (sneer), I could hear that, but I couldn't hear everything and I assumed it was

something rude.

I remember doing something that made me feel like I was a mean kid. In jr. high, we had

a metals/shop class. Since it came near lunchtime, we would come back to the shop after

lunch before the teacher was through eating (I guess like an inside day). Someone

noticed that a tool that we had been using was broken and some of the kids made a big

deal out of somebody getting into big trouble when the teacher got back, so they had to

come to an agreement as to who to blame. Somehow, I got named as the first offender

who had been seen with that particular tool and I was in some kind of a mock courtroom

trial. I really felt in the hot seat. Suddenly, someone mentioned some other boy who had

perhaps more recently had that tool. Well, I used that as an opportunity to agree whole-

heartedly and point all accusations on him (although I knew I had no idea). I was out of

the hot seat and someone else could innocently take the blame as far as I was concerned.

It wasn't long before I really felt badly about that and saw myself as a mean person. I

had quickly been on both sides of the court and should have felt a sense of understanding

for the one accused, but I took the low road as one caught up by the mob.

APPENDIX G

Interview Transcript

(Sample)

Janet (J.): Hi, G. (Hi) This is Janet Bassett, the doctoral student from Oklahoma State University that sent out the letters on the Listserv and first of all I want to thank you so much for participating in the research project and submitting your writing assignment and your questionnaire as I requested. I plan to tape this interview on a speaker phone and I'm in a private room right now and that will help me maintain accuracy. I'll be the only one who will listen to the tapes in order to transcribe them. (Okay) And once I transcribe them I'm going to share the written document with you and ask you to review it for accuracy of information. And then I'm going to keep the tapes and the documents only until my dissertation is approved and published and then I'll destroy all evidence of it. (Okay) Until final approval these documents are locked in a secure file in my home. All of the names and identifying information that you will use, uh, in any of your submissions will be changed to protect your privacy and the privacy of anybody you mention. Okay! (Alright) Are you ready to begin with the actual questions?

Respondent: Sure. (Okay)

(J.): First of all, I do want to thank you for your willingness to share some personal incidents from your own childhood with me and I was wondering if you could share with me how difficult or easy it was for you to recall the specific bullying incident from your school year that you wrote about?

Respondent: How difficult or easy…is that what you said?

(J.): Yes, it is.

Respondent: Um, you know, it was fine in terms of remembering the details of it or are you talking about emotions related to it?

(J.): Um, just when you thought about an incident that you were going to write about…a bullying incident…did it come to mind right away or did you have to really, you know, think about…

Respondent: Yeah, I remember it very, very well.

(J.): Ah, that's what I was getting at. So it was easy very clear to you. You had a good memory of it. Okay, are we there? (Yes) *(problems with phone connection due to winter storm)*   Okay, that's kind of what I was getting at. And now the next part might get into the feelings you were talking about (Okay) because I wanted to ask you if you could describe for me what it was like for you to write about that experience of childhood bullying.

Respondent: Um, you know I thought that I was going to be fine, but as I was writing it was an uncomfortable feeling. (Mmm-hmm) It wasn't a kind of pleasant feeling at all. It was such a long time ago, but I really, um, didn't feel great. I thought I would be fine, but you know as I was finishing and right before I sent this it definitely wasn't a good feeling. (Mmm)

(J.): And, um, you know I can see how hard it would be to go back and recapture that. Um, you indicated in your writing that as a seventh grader you began targeting the victim, M., (Mmm-hmm) who had actually been a friend before. (Right) What do you think was the catalyst that led you to behave in that manner?

Respondent: I think it was a combination of things. I had gone on vacation with her and it wasn't a good experience. (I remember that.) Um, I went to *(name of state)* with her and I don't know if I ever wrote about that.

(J.): You did. You put a little bit in there.

Respondent: Yeah, I went to *(name of state)*. She invited me to go to *(name of state)* and I was, um…my parents were in the process of a divorce and we were living out of our house in another home and I remember it was like a relief to go on vacation with her, you know, and then it was so disappointing. It was so bizarre. (Mmm) When we were on vacation it was very isolating. She cried all the time. And, um, we got back from vacation and we weren't as close friends. (It put a wedge?) Yeah, it was the summertime that we went between our sixth and seventh grade year that I went to *(name of state)* with her and her family. (Mmm-hmm) Then in September, when we got back she scared me because she was emotional and hysterically crying…really bizarre and needy (Mmm-hmm) I remember. (Mmm-hmm) (Mmm-hmm) (So you…) And I… (Go ahead)

(J.): So you…it sounds like if I can kind of summarize that, you feel that particular incident is what probably caused you to start having, uh, feelings toward her that were more negative. Your bullying was maybe a reaction to all of that.

Respondent: It may have been and I think the combination of things and the fact that she was incredibly talented. (Mmm-hmm) She was an amazing, amazing artist. I've never met…and so I think it was a combination of maybe some resentment and disappointment about that (Mmm-hmm) and a level of jealousy around her gifts. (Oh)

(J.): Mmm-hmm. I think you brought that up a little bit in your writing, too. (Right)

Respondent: I think it was both.

(J.): Thanks for sharing that. Why do you think, Me., the other girl went along with the bullying of a classmate? Have you any idea?

Respondent: Um, it was… why do I think she did? Me. was a pretty even-tempered and, and you wouldn't…she wasn't a super…I don't know how to explain this. She was

a nice person (Mmm-hmm) which is so bizarre, you know, that she wasn't a person that people thought, "Oh, God, that girl's mean." (Mmm) (Mmm-hmm) Um, and I think she saw the bizarre behavior as well. (Mmm-hmm) Like if there was…yeah…and she was kind of strange. (Mmm-hmm)

(J.): Sounds like you were almost afraid of how she would react.

Respondent: You're going to have to repeat that. You cut out. *(problems with phone due to ice storm)*

(J.): Sounds like you were almost afraid of how M. was going to react or something to different things and…

Respondent: No, not really. She was strange. (Yeah) She cried a lot. Um, she wasn't really stable. Like she didn't give the impression she was emotionally stable. (Mmm) But it made us feel uncomfortable. I don't know why.

(J.): Yeah. I hear that. Well, do you have any idea of why no adults intervened during any of the incidents?

Respondent: Um, no.

(J.): Do you think they didn't know about it? Um…*(long pause)* I don't…I remember my teacher and he was a very serious, like a…he was a scientist. (Oh, uh-huh) But I think he handled this probably the way that just said, "knock it off" kind of thing, but not a really processing teacher to find out…to really look into it, so kids in other classes…I mean it was so much more intimidating and she said "knock it off" and you stopped. That kind of thing. (Right) I think it was more he either ignored it or we were just really covert about it.

(J.): Yes. I was going to say it sounded like the note passing was covert. (Yeah) Well, um…

Respondent: The other thing was that we were in the honors class (Mmm) so these were all like…we were all grouped based on gifted and talented kind of kids (Oh, my) which was interesting. (Yeah) So, um, we were pretty slick! *(chuckle by both)* (It sounds like it!) We were kind of slick! (Oh my, isn't childhood charming!) But in a good way, but…(Yeah, childhood is something else.) I think we were probably a lot more covert than we meant to be.

(J.): That's what I imagined. Yeah, I kind of…I just wanted to check. But it sounded like it was a lot of note passing and things where an adult didn't see it.

Respondent: I think it was a lot of non-verbal stuff. I think it was covert kind of things. (Right) More of the intimidation and the social alienation kind of stuff. (Mmm-hmm)

(J.): Well, you know, after the experience ended when M. left and she had that breakdown and left the classroom, did you and your friend, ah, who did the bullying with you discuss it openly afterward about the bullying?

Respondent: No, I think we were kind of done…like "mission accomplished" kind of thing. (Uh-huh) There was also like…Wow! You know like…I think it was a nonverbal…like looking across at each other in the art room. Kind of like, "Well, okay, we're done." (Okay, yeah) *(laughter)* You know she snapped and even to this day… I've worked in expulsion and crisis work and to this day I have never seen anyone snap like that. (Wow!) Yeah.

(J.): Yeah, and again that probably relates to her own stability as you said earlier.

Respondent: I mean she collapsed. She lost her legs. (Oh, my goodness!) Yeah.

(J.): That would have been a shock to seventh graders and you and your friend just to see that happen. (Yeah) Well, if you could go back in time, what would you change about that bullying situation with M.?

Respondent: Um…*(long pause)*…(Rhetorical question, I know.) I'm trying to think. We were very focused on her. She was really the center of attention for awhile. (Mmm) I mean that was our mission. (Right) You know and I think if I could change it, that we wouldn't have…I mean we were relentless. (It's what it sounded like.) If I had been like really…I wish that I didn't have that…I don't know…I…

(J.): Well, and you were children.

Respondent: Yeah! I wish I could change that she wasn't our focus. (Mmm-hmm) You know what I mean? (Uh-huh) I mean for so long. And then I've lost time, so I don't know if it was a month, if it was a week (Sure) that we did this, but it was non-stop (Right) until she snapped. I have a feeling that it probably wasn't as long as I think. It probably went on for maybe a week, a month. I don't know how long it went on. I don't think it went on for a month. Whatever, we were pretty determined.

(J.): And this is memory work, J., so in memory work it doesn't matter if it is correct. (Right) What you're capturing is the feelings of the event in your own time frame, not…you know, you can't go back and have it exact, but you know you're really helping me understand your feelings and things that you were having. (Right) And you know one more question about this. If you could talk to M. as an adult now, what would you want to say to her about how you and your friend bullied her?

Respondent: Um, I think that there was a level of jealousy about how gifted she was. (Mmm) But, I think, um, as kids you don't know how to process that. (Sure) You know. (Uh-huh)

(J.): And you know always with hindsight you wish you could go back and fix something, you know.

Respondent: Right, but you wonder where she is now. (Mmm-hmm) You do.

(J.): You never had anything more about her?

Respondent: No, she disappeared. I mean I don't know if she moved from here or if their house was finally built in *(name of state)* and her family moved out there. (Mmm-hmm) But, no, no one ever heard from her again. (Mmm)

(J.): I wondered about that. Going on from there and related to that, do you think that bullying experience carried over to any other situations or relationships in your school years?

Respondent: No, not at all. (Okay) It was interesting because, um, I feel it was very isolated. (Mmm-hmm) It wasn't, um, it was really out of context, out of character for myself and this other girl, (Mmm-hmm) except there wasn't a kind of pattern that we had over the years. It was really somewhat isolated and just with one person (Mmm-hmm) which was really interesting.

(J.): And you probably go back and think, "How did that ever happen, you know, that it happened that way?" (Yeah!)

Respondent: It was a rush! I mean I'm not going to pretend it wasn't. It was a rush and I don't know if it was an experiment or to see if we could do that or being…to have that much power over someone, but it definitely was a rush at that time. (Mmm-hmm)

(J.): Well, um, did that experience of bullying just during that short period of time…do you think that affected you at all as a teacher in the way you handle things as a teacher?

Respondent: Um, I'm pretty savvy about both sides. I lecture on bullying. (Mmm) I get paid to do that. (Wow, that's great!) So I have very formal presentations about that. It's probably why my willingness to help you in your doctoral (Thank you) because this is what I do for a living. I work with kids that are super violent and when I'm not doing that I do crisis work and lecture on bullying. (Wow, isn't that interesting.) So I think it gave me special insight being the fact that I have been on both sides of the coin. (Right, right) Yeah. (That's interesting!) It probably to a great extent it's just because I understand why and why not. (Mmm-hmm)

(J.): And it probably gives you a greater perspective with the kids, too. (Oh, sure.) Mmm-hmm. And on your questionnaire you shared that you were actually the founder of an at-risk school, the one you're involved with I'm assuming. (That's right.) And can you tell me what led you to working with this kind of a student as opposed to you know in a regular school?

Respondent: Do you want the history of it and the evolution of it? Do you want a long version (No) or did you want the shorter?

(J.): Just more or less the shorter, the personal…what led you to…(Why you think I ended up doing this?) do that. Yes.

Respondent: Um, where it came from I believe is that I think that there's a lot of labels on children. (Mmm-hmm) And I think that all kids are good. They just make bad choices. (Mmm-hmm) And then seeing…I don't believe in the damaged goods syndrome (Mmm-hmm) and I feel a little puzzled. I think that's how I started working with these kids. (Right) Um, I believe that many people wear masks and I think I'm very interested in peeling it away to get to the really good stuff. (Mmm) And that's probably why. (Mmm-hmm)

(J.): Did you actually start out in a regular classroom? And then a little bit of the history of it…did you start in a regular school and then…?

Respondent: I've always done prevention work…prevention/intervention work. So from grad school I was a researcher (Oh) for a national prevention team and they did substance abuse kind of things. And then I came out to *(name of state)* and starting doing…writing curriculum on non-violence and bullying curriculum for elementary as the director of prevention education (Oh my goodness) at a small private school, then moved into where I am now and in *(name of county)* just south of *(name of city)* right next to *(name of city)*. Then instead of doing bereavement and crisis work and overseeing grants. So there is a…I've always worked in prevention and intervention services.

(J.): So it's just been a progression to that it sounds like. (Yeah) I sure wish I had had your bullying research that you've done. That's great! (Yeah…I…) Go ahead.

Respondent: Yeah, that's probably it.

(J.): And thanks because that really does help me understand that. But you mentioned that bullying rarely occurs in your school due to restorative justice intervention techniques that you employ. (Correct) Could you tell me more about that? I'm not familiar with that.

Respondent: Restorative justice is about…I mean for us, the way that we use it is that, um, first of all we're very…our center is based in strengthening approaches and respect and creating a culture that is safe. (Mmm-hmm) So we're very, very tight in a lot of ways and let me give you and example. We're a "G" rated facility. We don't allow kids to swear for any reason. (Oh) We have a laundry list of words and disrespectful words that are not to be used and it's kind of interesting when you have kids that are felons and…that are brought up around certain language that we don't allow certain language. (Right) So any kind of derogatory term in reference to drugs or things that are not safe for people, we don't allow them to use. We have a really strict level system and it's very

interesting that our culture is extremely safe. We never have any violence and we have probably the worst kids in the district. (Wow) And so when there's a conflict, um, it's all about mediation. (Mmm-hmm) (Mmm-hmm) And we do this on two levels. Every week we do something called the "Peace Circle" and this is one part of the restorative justice piece. It's about creating culture again (Okay) where we have a centerpiece that represents something. So we might have a little seedling tree and that represents grounding us together. (That's neat.) Or some sort of focal point…a candle, something in the center of the circle, and then we all sit in the circle and there are certain rules of the circle where either we start off with a peace rock or a feather or whatever and whoever has the stone is the only person that can talk. And so there's always the peacekeeper or the circle keeper (Mmm-hmm) which is usually an adult and they start with the first question. The circle keeper always has to answer the question first and then…so it might be a question of, "What were you most proud of yourself about?" and then the circle keeper …whoever asked the question…has to answer about themself or you're allowed to pass. And so it's just kind of an activity (Oh) that we do for about an hour to kind of focus on the similarities of our emotions versus the differences. (That's wonderful!) Um, and so that's one of the activities we do then that helps with restoring the culture or, for example, next week I have somebody coming and all my staff are pretty into restorative justice, but actually because this is, um, a gang kind of situation and we're very connected to the kids that are involved in the conflict right now we are actually bringing someone else in to do this, but we basically…the restorative justice peace is that it's about healing between people. And so what they do is you bring in whoever is connected to an incident and you kind of pick a script, and it is very scripted. (Okay) Then you interview a kid…what happened and so forth. What would you like to have happen (Mmm-hmm) and it's very scripted. Then the facilitator will go and talk to the other people involved and then eventually you bring them together and sign a contract and are able to process back and forth. And there is some very, very guided practice around that and usually what happens is the kids will end up shaking hands, the parents will end up shaking hands, and you kind of have some ground rules when you leave about what's going to happen. We don't need them to be friends. They may end up being friends, but we don't push that. What we want to be able to do is establish some respect and let bygones be bygones in many ways. (Oh, that's really neat.) There are certain things that they have to do to make amends to one another in order to create a level of safety again.

(J.): And that's the restorative piece?

Respondent: That's the restorative piece and the amends piece and I think that's probably what it stands for in terms of that, but… (Mmm-hmm) I will give you and example. This week we have, uh, two kids who are gang members and are part of the Bloods. (Mmm) Two brothers and another set of brothers who are twins and the twins cornered these other Blood kids (Oh) and held a knife to one of the brothers while the other ones beat the crap out of the other brother. Two brothers against two brothers with a very, very huge background of violence (Oh my goodness!) and a huge background in gang stuff.   Both sets of boys have agreed to do this mediation. They're going to the same vocational school (Oh, no) starting in two weeks and so instead of me…you know,

both their parents are going, "Oh, you know what, if they don't see them they're not going to worry about it." We're not taking that chance. (That's right.) And so that's what we're going to do. And so what's really interesting is that you watch the body language of kids and go with that. We just don't want you to have to constantly be looking behind your back. We want to make you all feel comfortable (Yeah) You don't have to be friends. We just need to take the air out of the room that you're not always looking behind you. And when you approach that even with gang members they go…you're right, there are certain areas that are safe. School is one of those things. (Yeah) And, no, I don't want to keep worrying about if someone is going to stab me (Oh) or hold me like…you know. And so what's interesting is that all four of them have agreed to do this mediation.

(J.): I hope it goes really well.

Respondent: I think it will. Most of the kids are beautiful and what's really great is my staff is really solid and if we talk highly about kids then they start getting a higher level of respect and so, um, each of these sets of kids have gone here at different times and so these are two that have graduated that we're bringing back in to be with the new kids. (Hmm) It's kind of complex, but…(Hmm) Yeah.

(J.): It sounds effective.

Respondent: Yeah, they're not scary at all. They're beautiful. They look a lot worse on paper than they are in person. (Yeah)

(J.): Well, J., it sounds like they are so blessed to have you and your staff (Yeah, thank you) as part of their lives because there is very, as you know, very limited resources like that for a lot of them and they never get that help. (Yeah) So I…I admire you for that and I just…(It's a lot of fun!) Oh, I imagine.

Respondent: I just feel like I have the greatest kept secret in the world (Ohhhh) because people think that you're an angel and the fact is you work with angels every day and you're the one that's the lucky one (Yeah) and all of my staff feel that way, too. So you get all these accolades from people and they don't understand that you have the best job in the world! That's how I feel.

(J.): Oh, what a great way to have a job that you can feel so good about. (Yeah, I work with great people though.) Well, and that makes a big difference, but I'm sure your leadership has impacted that.

Respondent: Well, more than anything I think when you're in this work, we have *(garbled words)* because we debrief. (Mmm-hmm) I think that's the critical thing to communicate to people is when you're working and brokering it's really important to kind of decompress and talk about (Uh-huh) your own feelings so that…because the minute that you start needing them more than they need you is when you start to lose yourself. Or if they sense any kind of vulnerability because how they survive is through

attachment and needing people… (Right) and so you really have to be solid emotionally yourself so that you can be fully present for them because if they sense that you're needy or you're doing this because, you know, you need kids to love you and like you is when (Yeah) everything is going to go haywire.

(J.): Well, it sounds like you've got it figured out! *(laughter by both)*

Respondent: We're trying so I hope we do!

(J.): I want to ask you a little bit about gender, J. (Okay) What differences have you observed between the way boys bully and girls bully? Can you address that?

Respondent: Okay, I want to try and separate this from the experience versus what the research says so this is going to be hard for me. (Yeah, okay) I do think that girls are a lot more covert, um, and it's about the gossip and intimidation. (Mmm-hmm) It's about social alienation. I do believe that. It's about planting seeds of nastiness. Boys, in terms of bullying, are really…or at least the children that I work with…um, are definitely more physical. (Mmm-hmm) They use a lot more *(garbled word)* behavior whether that's more like non-verbal cues or (Mmm-hmm) out and out verbally.

(J.): So you basically see what the research (I do.) is seeing…you know, that the research proposes that… (I do. I do. I think that's so. Yeah.) Okay. I want to ask you about bystanders (Sure) to bullying. How do you think bystanders to bullying either impact or are impacted by being witnesses to the incidents?

Respondent: Um, I think…I mean…I think it's the most important piece (Hmm) that I know. Granted, I teach victims how to advocate for themselves and how to shut bullies down and kind of…but most of my training is around the silent majority and (Mmmm) so I try and train those kids around how to advocate and I think they are the most critical piece of the people that are standing and watching. Either by…in their silence saying that it's okay or laughing and encouraging that behavior inadvertently, I think, (Right) through nervousness or just because they're just praying to God that it's not them. (Yeah) So…I think the bystanders are the most critical piece in terms of working with bullying. (Uh-huh) I think it's the most powerful piece to stop bullying is to train those kids…how to intervene in a peaceful manner, (Mmm-hmm) um, or to seek assistance, you know, (Mmm-hmm) (Mmm-hmm) if it's unsafe or to even acknowledge the victim first. (Yeah) I try and train kids to acknowledge the victim even if they're not going to respond to a bully, but try and get them to acknowledge the victim and their feelings so they'll feel human, you know. (Yeah)

(J.): I appreciate that statement because it makes a lot of sense. (Mmm-hmm) I want to talk a little about your classroom now itself or your school, I guess, overall. On the questionnaire you described it as alternative/strength based. Can you tell me why you chose that descriptor?

Respondent: Well, because I don't like calling it the "at risk" school. (Oh, okay) As I said before, I feel like I have reached the GT school, the gifted and the undiscovered talented and gifted kids. (Mmmmm) My kids are the barometers for emotions so they read people and they see adults and kids that have dropped out and kids that are coming from prison, so alternative in the way that, um, they really need a smaller environment that's a lot more structured. (Mmm-hmm) And strength based meaning that they have to have some success because they've never been acknowledged for any good. They've only been acknowledged for the bad. (Okay) And so that's why I would call it that.

(J.): Oh, good, that helps me to understand more what you meant by that. And we just have two more questions.

Respondent: The other thing that makes it strength based…let me go back to that. (Okay, okay) We believe in protective factors. We believe that all kids are exposed to a certain level of risk in their lives. You know whether it's a divorce or (Mmm-hmm) drugs in their family or that's what life is…there's really, really poor boundaries in this world. (Uh-huh) And we believe that all kids are exposed to those things, but if you insert specific aspects of protective factors into their lives they are less likely to take part in those high risk behaviors. (Mmm-hmm) So that's what we mean by strength based is because we are always focused on inserting those kind of protective factors into their lives because all kids are going to be exposed to the risk factors. Our kids are a little bit more vulnerable because most of them have some home trauma. (Right, okay).

(J.): Um, I think you've already answered most of this, but I want to give you a chance to add anything to it that you want. To what extent do you think your school's environment influences bullying in either a positive or a negative way?

Respondent: Okay, it influences bullying because 90% of the day is spent on using a curriculum called ART which stands for Aggression Replacement Training. So the main core of that curriculum is around anger management, social skills and character education. (Oh, good) We also use another curriculum called "Say It Straight" w hich is another communication which is how we communicate your greatest wish in a peaceful way that honors yourself (Mmm-hmm) and honors the other person. (Uh-huh) And so in terms of…I mean that's the majority of our focus in teaching kids a different way to gain power in a positive way (Wow) that's not going to hurt themselves or other people. I think, um, (That's fabulous!) what's interesting is that we have a strange mix of children. We have kids that are truants, but we also have very, very violent offenders as well as sex offenders (Mmm-hmm) and those kids get along just fine. So we have kids who have been victims (Uh-huh) of crimes and are truant because they've been bullied and we have kids who have been the offenders and they get along just fine. And the reason why is because we have created a culture that is very, very steeped in respect (Mmm-hmm) and setting those really clear boundaries. And the other thing, too, we've a very high view of the kids. We're watching them every moment and nothing slips through. They're even graded at lunch around their behavior and how they're expected to treat one another.

(J.): Is that how you maintain the zero tolerance policy basically by just monitoring?

Respondent: Yeah, and we're constantly…I mean even the smallest thing…say, sarcasm, um, and again language and when you control language…when you don't allow kids to say the word "faggot" for any reason (Mmm-hmm) and if they say certain words they're dinged points. Their points go down (Ohhh) and then they don't have as much freedom.

(J.): Ah, so it's like a privilege kind of.

Respondent: It's a privilege kind of a system where they get…they have a certain amount of points and they get a rating every day. As they get more and more points there's a level test that they have to take. They have to come in front of a board which means me and some of my staff to say why they deserve to move up a level. (Oh) And as they move up levels, they get more and more freedom, but they also get more and more responsibility. (Oh, that is great. What a good way…) By the time they're on a level 4, which is the highest level, they co-teach with us. (Wow) They're actually writing lessons about non-violence, leading groups, and facilitating and modeling from their own experience on how they've overcome and how this is more positive.

(J.): Man, how I wish I could come and observe your school! It sounds like just a…the most effective environment for those kids. I just am…just am blown away by it! (Thanks) And here is the last question: Is there anything else you'd like to add before we conclude the interview?

Respondent: Only that I'm really excited that you chose to do your doctorate on this. I think it's a really good topic. (Thanks) One of the things is that we only take two hours of academics a day and the rest of the time is spent on social emotional learning and getting language skills and an opportunity to practice those skills. And we have, you know…last year we did pre and post academic work and kids made good scores and sometimes four grade level jumps (Oh, boy!) in a twenty week period of time, at the end of twenty weeks (Oh, goodness!) I think when you start focusing on the climate of schools…people don't understand that once you remove that stress and those barriers, kids are much more available for learning and you're going to see a lot more academic success. (Mmm-hmm) What I'm really excited about is when your research comes out or your dissertation is I'm really excited that more and more articles and more attention is paid to climate because (I agree) kids won't achieve until we create environments where they feel safe and not distracted (Mmm-hmm) and, you know, that's where we're going to see very high achieving academic environments. And for us we've hit the curve. Like the one thing that is holding kids back is if we're as high achieving as…is that social piece because we've kind of ceilinged out. (Right) I'm just hoping for you. I'm really excited. (Thanks) I've got to tell you though I get lots of phone calls (Oh) and I think this is really important, so that's why I wanted to help you. (Oh, that's so nice.) And it's not fun to talk about that you were nasty at one time! *(laughter by both)*

(J.): And you turned out good!

Respondent: I tried to suck it up and say, "Alright, this is for the greater good." (Yeah) *(more chuckles)* And talk about my demons!

(J.): And, J., we all have them! We all have those demons. *(big laughter)*

Respondent: Yeah, for sure. I'm really tempted to google this girl. Only now I forget her name, so…

(J.): Yeah, but you know I, uh, have found the research to be very interesting. And in answer to your comment, it's really opened my eyes to a lot of things and it's been interesting to work on (I bet) but I'll be glad when I'm finished! It has had a very, um…many different perspectives. And so I just want to thank you for allowing me to interview you today. And you have my email address and phone number if you wish to contact me about anything concerning the study and I will maintain confidentiality at all times. And once I transcribe the interview I'm going to forward it to you. Again, (Right) I'm going to let you look at it and then I'm going to analyze the data that's gathered from your writing and your questionnaire and your interview and then I'm going to send it back to you again just to see if it's an accurate interpretation of it. (Okay) And then once it's all finished I'll be able to give you a summary of the findings if you want it.

Respondent: That would be really interesting. (Okay) What exactly is the…what is your thesis…what are you looking at?

(J.): Actually I am looking at teachers who have had bullying experiences as a bully, bystander, or a victim (Okay) and having them reflect on that and then looking at what their classroom environment is like now as a teacher and how they deal with bullying.

Respondent: That sounds great! Good luck.

(J.): Thanks. Bye. Have a great rest of the year.

Respondent: Thank you. Bye.

APPENDIX H

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

A.   AUTHORIZATION

I, _____, hereby consent to participate in the research
study being conducted by Janet Bassett and explained below. My signature at the end of
this document indicates my intent to fully participate.

B.   DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH AND ASSOCIATED RISKS/BENEFITS

- (1.)   <u>Project Title</u>: Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying
- (2.)   <u>Investigator</u>: The principal researcher is Janet M. Bassett, a doctoral student in the School of Teaching and Curriculum Leadership in the College of Education at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma.
- (3.)   <u>Purpose:</u>   The purpose of this research is to study the extent to which elementary or secondary teachers' lived experiences of bullying while in school influence the intervention strategies they use to manage bullying in their current school settings.
- (4.)   <u>Procedures:</u> As one of the six to nine preschool through high school teachers selected through responding to a solicitation letter on the Oklahoma State University Writing Project (OSUWP) or National Writing Project listserv sites or recruited through personal contact, you will be asked to (a) write about a personal experience involving bully behaviors when you were in elementary or secondary school from the perspective of being the bully, the target or the bystander (about 1 hour) from which the principal investigator will determine final selection of participants for the study, (b) fill out a questionnaire about your present classroom environment that will be received, completed and submitted electronically (about 10 to 15 minutes), (c) participate in an interview (about 45 minutes to an hour) that will take place electronically or by phone and will be audio taped or documented electronically, and (d) take part in a member check in which you will be asked to review all data, analysis, and conclusions for validity purposes (about 20 minutes). The interviews, questionnaires and member checks will not be conducted in person for any of the participants.
- (5.)   <u>Risk of Participation:</u> The risk to participants during this research study is considered minimal, but due to the personal and sensitive nature of the protocol writing and the memory work involved, respondents may experience some emotional reaction. If this should occur and the participant feels the need to obtain assistance to deal with the emotional discomfort, the National Mental Health Association (NMHA) website can be accessed at <u>http://www.nmha.org</u>. This site can help participants find state and local NMHA Affiliates and helpful support information. Once you access the NMHA website, click the "Locate" button under the "Locate Your Local NMHA Affiliate" and select your state and city to find the names of medical professionals available in your area.

(6.) <u>Benefits:</u> Respondents may gain insight as to how their own lived experience of bullying when they were in school has influenced their decisions regarding their present classroom environment and the intervention strategies they have selected as a teacher to manage bullying incidents.

(7.) <u>Confidentiality:</u> Teachers' identities will be protected by using fictitious names and by removing identifying elements and descriptions from all written reports. Solicitation letters, interview questions, audio tapes, protocol writing, electronic correspondence, questionnaires and other related materials will be kept in a securely locked file in the home of the researcher. Password protection will be used for all computer files related to the research and, after final committee approval, all evidence pertaining to personal information will be destroyed/deleted. Security utility programs (Webroot and Norton Anti-virus) have been installed to further protect confidentiality and the use of a firewall on the router for the home computers is in place. The OSU IRB has the authority to inspect consent records and data files to assure compliance with approved procedures.

(8.) <u>Compensation:</u> There will be no compensation, monetary or otherwise, for participation in this research study.

(9.) <u>Contacts:</u>
    (a.) For questions about this research study please contact Janet Bassett at 918-627-1322 (H) or 918-808-1461 (C). This investigator may also be reached at <u>janetbassett@cox.net</u>. For further information call Dr. Kathryn Castle, Doctoral Adviser, at 405-744-7125.

    (b.) For information on subjects' rights, contact Dr. Sue Jacobs, IRB Chair, 415 Whitehurst Hall, at 405-744-1676.

C.   VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

I understand that participation in this research study is strictly voluntary and that I will not be penalized if I choose not to participate. I also understand that no information collected in this study will be shared with school administrators, nor will anyone be made aware of teachers' participation in this research. I further understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and end my participation in this project at any time without penalty by notifying the principal investigator, Janet Bassett. I may contact her by phone at 918-627-1322/918-746-4251 or by e-mail at <u>janetbassett@cox.net</u>. I further understand that respondents may be removed from the study by the investigator for inability to participate in the designated procedures or at any time the submissions by the participant do not match the needs of the study (inadequate protocol writing sample, incomplete questionnaire, failure to return documents, lack of response during interview or member checks).

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. An additional copy of this form has been given to me for my files.

_____   _(_____)_____
Name of Participant (Please Print)   **Phone No.**

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   **Date**

I certify that I have offered to personally explain this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

_____   _____
Signature of Researcher   **Date**

APPENDIX I

IRB FORM

and

MODIFICATION FORM

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Tuesday, June 28, 2005

IRB Application No   ED05120

Proposal Title: Elementary Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying

Reviewed and   Expedited
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): **Approved**   **Protocol Expires:**   6/27/2006

Principal
Investigator(s

Janet M. Bassett   Kathryn Castle
2713 S. 111 East Ave.   235 Willard
Tulsa, OK 74129   Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

☑ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Sue C. Jacobs

Sue C. Jacobs, Chair
Institutional Review Board

APPLICATION FOR REVIEW OF HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

MODIFICATION

Submitted to the
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Please complete, sign, and date this form. Submit one copy of this form plus one copy of any revised materials to the Office of University Research Compliance, 415 Whitehurst, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-5700 (ph), (405) 744-4335 (fax), irb@okstate.edu. Modifications may not be implemented until they have received approval. *The approval of this modification does not change the original period of approval of your IRB application.*

Title of Project: **American Elementary Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying**

Current IRB Approval Number: __ED05120__   *Expiration Date:*   __June 27, 2006__

Principal Investigator(s):   *I acknowledge that this represents an accurate and complete description of my research.*

Janet M. Bassett		**February 8, 2006**	**fjbassett@cox.net**
Name of Primary PI (typed)	Signature of PI	Date	E-Mail
School of Teaching and Curriculum		**College of Education**	
Department		College	
2713 S. 111 East Ave. Tulsa, OK 74129		**918 - 627 - 1322**	**fjbassett@cox.net**
PI's Address (Street, City, State, Zip)		Phone	E-Mail
Name of PI (typed)	Signature of PI	Date	E-Mail
Department		College	
PI's Address		Phone	E-Mail

Adviser (complete if PI is a student):   *I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to ensure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are properly protected.*

Dr. Kathryn Castle			**kca1084@okstate.edu**
Adviser's Name	Signature of Adviser	Date	E-Mail
School of Teaching and Curriculum		**College of Education**	
Department		College	
235 Willard Hall Stillwater, OK 74078		**405 - 744 - 8019**	**kca1084@okstate.edu**
Adviser's Address (if applicable)		Phone	E-Mail

Concurrence:

Signature of Department Head   Date

Signature of College/Division Research Director   Date

1

1. Describe in detail the proposed changes, to include any change in title, methodology, sample size, sample population, assent or consent form, recruitment of subjects, principal investigator(s), research sites, etc.

- *New Title:* **Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying** (Original title: *American Elementary Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying*)

Remove "American" from Original Title:

I originally planned on doing some comparison of bullying in American schools to schools in foreign countries. I have narrowed the study to only include schools in the United States.

Remove "Elementary" from Original Title:

I have been unable to get enough elementary teacher participants and would like to expand the study to preschool through high school educational settings. In retrospect, the original research questions are not restricted to elementary teachers and information collected from respondents regarding bullying experiences of preschool through secondary teachers, rather than just elementary teachers, should lead to similar results.

- *Methodology Changes:* (1) recruitment of subjects (2) sample population

Change in recruitment of subjects:

Purposive sampling will be used to personally solicit initial respondents from which additional information-rich sources for the study will be sought and to seek active participants through contacts with other teachers who can direct me to possible subjects. (Original study solicited only Teacher Consultants from the Oklahoma State University Writing Project and the National Writing Project Listservs.) By originally narrowing the study to only Teacher Consultants involved in the Writing Project Listservs, I have not been able to get enough participants for data collection to complete the research. After seven months of repeated appeals online only two subjects (both females, no males) have completed the study procedures. Several respondents completed the writing protocol only, but did not follow through with filling out the questionnaire even after reminder emails were sent. This type of impersonal solicitation online appears to be limited in seeking active participants. The proposed change in purposive sampling would allow me to continue use of the Listservs, but also to make initial contacts with known teachers who in turn could lead me to future subjects for completion of the research.

Change in sample population:

I am requesting that the population for this study be changed from strictly elementary teachers to preschool through twelfth grade teachers. Likewise, I am asking approval to allow bullying experiences to have taken place in any grade (preschool through high school), not only when the subject was in elementary school.

- *Document Changes:* (1) Questionnaire (2) Protocol Writing and Interview Script (3) Informed Consent Form (4) Listserv Permission Letters (5) Signed Permission Forms (6) Solicitation Letters (7) Email

Change on questionnaire:

The new title, "Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying" will be used. Survey question number 6 ("What grades do you currently teach?") gives choices through sixth grade only. Seventh through twelfth grades will be added to this to include secondary respondents. All other questions will remain the same.

Change on protocol writing and interview script:

The new title, "Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying" will be used. The words "or secondary" will be added to the writing prompt instructions and interview script to reflect that the bullying experience may have taken place in either the elementary or secondary school years.

2

Change on informed consent form:

The new title, "Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying" will be used. The words "or secondary" will be added to the section labeled "Purpose" to reflect the change in subject solicitation. Under the "Procedures" section the wording will be changed from "nine elementary teachers" to "six to nine preschool through high school teachers" and the word "elementary" on line four will be deleted. The words, "or recruited through personal contacts" will be added after "OSU and NWP listserv sites" to reflect the change in recruitment of subjects.

Change on Listserv permission letters to the OSU Writing Project Director and the National Writing Project Manager:

Change the date in the letterhead to Feb. 6, 2006. Delete the word "Elementary" in the title. Change "elementary teachers (K - 5)" to "elementary or secondary teachers (PK - 12)." Add "and adolescence" to the sentence explaining when the bullying was experienced. Change the anticipated time frame for sending out the new request from "early to mid-May" to "mid- to late February 2006." Change the time frame for gathering data from "early July" to "May 2006."

Change on the signed permission forms for the OSU and National Writing Project Listservs:

Change the date of request to Feb. 6, 2006. Change the title to "Teachers' Lived Experiences of Bullying" (Originally was "The Impact of Teachers' Lived Experience of Bullying on Classroom Environment.")

Change on solicitation letters to Writing Project listserv members:

Change "elementary teachers (K - 5)" to "elementary or secondary teachers (PK - 12)." Add " or adolescence" to the sentence explaining when the bullying was experienced. Add "or secondary" in instances when "elementary" school alone is mentioned.

Change in email address:

On all documents involved change fjbassett@cox.net to janetbassett@cox.net.

2. Explain the reason for the request if it involves the methodology/study design.

    As explained above, the original plan to recruit subjects solely from the Oklahoma State University and National Writing Projects has not resulted in enough participants, nor has it yielded a gender balance between male and female subjects. Also, narrowing the study to elementary teachers who had bullying experiences in elementary school has not yielded a significant number or participants for the study. Therefore, I need to modify the procedure for recruitment of subjects as well as modify the time period when the bullying incidents took place. In requesting to change from elementary only to preschool through secondary in both of the above areas, I believe I will be able to recruit the required number of participants for the study (six to nine) and have a better gender balance.

3. Do these requested changes pose additional risks to subjects? ____Yes   ____No   If yes, describe.

4. Submit all materials that are being revised, and highlight changes.

    Please find these documents enclosed with this Modification form.

    Thank you for your consideration of the changes that I believe are necessary to complete my research.

3

VITA

Janet Marie Bassett

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: TEACHERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Biographical:

   Personal Data: Born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on January 4, 1949, the daughter of
      Floyd and Mary Scott.

   Education: Graduated from Dexter High School, Dexter, Michigan in June 1967;
      received Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from
      Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan in June 1971;
      completed the requirements for Master of Arts degree with a major in
      Elementary Education at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti,
      Michigan in June 1981; received Administrative Certification at
      Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma in May 1994;
      fulfilled the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in
      Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in Early Childhood
      Education at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May
      2007.

   Experience: Taught for 16 years with time spent in Hartford, Michigan, Pinckney,
      Michigan, Claremore, Oklahoma, and Tulsa, Oklahoma; served as a
      Teacher Consultant (2 years) and a Principal (10 years) for Tulsa Public
      Schools in Tulsa, Oklahoma; currently employed as a principal (3 years)
      for the Early Childhood Learning Center at Monte Cassino School in
      Tulsa, Oklahoma.

   Professional Memberships: Phi Kappa Phi, Association for Curriculum and
      Development, Okalahoma Association of Elementary School Principals,
      Oklahoma Education Association, Oklahoma Conference of Catholic
      Schools Accrediting Association

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Name: Janet Marie Bassett   Date of Degree: May 2007

Institution: Oklahoma State University   Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: TEACHERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING

Pages in Study: 229   Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction with an Emphasis in
              Early Childhood Education

Scope and Method of Study: This descriptive, naturalistic study examined teachers' lived
        experiences of bullying as children and how these incidents affected their choices
        of strategies in handling bullying situations in their classrooms as adults. Eight
        participants completed a protocol writing submission, a questionnaire, and an
        interview from which themes emerged and were analyzed. The epilogue in this
        study is a reflective narrative by the primary investigator on the lived experience
        of writing the dissertation from inception to completion.

Findings and Conclusions: The major themes related to the phenomenon of bullying that
        emerged from this study were: emotional aspects, resiliency, power relations,
        support systems, and reflections. Conclusions drawn indicated that teachers'
        lived experiences of childhood bullying appear to have an effect on the choices
        they make as teachers in the handling of bullying behaviors. Although the
        transferability of results concerning the lived experiences of teachers in this
        research study can not be generally applied to other settings, the implications
        regarding the impact of childhood bullying experiences on teachers' classroom
        environments may provide a basis for other teachers to examine their current
        practices, whether negative or positive, and seek to find connections to their own
        childhood experiences. In doing so, they may be able to break a chain of
        emotions or behaviors that are subconsciously influencing their classroom
        decisions, philosophies, or their basic approach to classroom management.

        The reflexive journaling in the epilogue may be of interest to other educators or
        researchers who wish to gain knowledge of the dissertation process from the
        writer's point of view. This unique self-reflection reveals some of the struggles
        and successes that researchers may face throughout their quests.