

IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING A PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR SECONDARY TEACHERS AND STAFF IN A RURAL LOUISIANA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Bullying is a growing problem throughout the country that contributes to depression, low self-esteem, poor academic achievement, and suicide among secondary school-age students. Yet, adults and students trust that schools are to provide a safe haven at all times. In society, life-threatening behaviors have cautioned administrators, adults, parents, and students that the violence of bullying is not considered a predictable behavior. Adults and students must receive assistance in understanding and recognizing how to intervene at the school level. Therefore, it is imperative that rural schools observe the rising epidemic of victimization and provide interventions that generate a bully-free atmosphere for all students. As a result, programs such as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and Bully Busters have continued to improve as an evidenced-based intervention constructed utilizing the whole school approach. The focus of this study was to implement and evaluate an anti-bullying prevention program that would bring about the awareness of different forms of bullying and train adults and students on characteristics of bullying. In addition, this study will identify the effects of implementing bullying prevention and intervention that can be assessed.

Key Words: bullying, cyber-bullying, direct bullying, indirect bullying.

INTRODUCTION

The problem addressed in this study were implementing and evaluating a bullying prevention program for secondary school teachers and staff in a Louisiana school district. A related concern is the effects of a bullying prevention program upon perceptions of bullying by secondary school teachers and staff.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study were implementing and evaluating a bullying prevention program in an effort to reduce bullying and victim problems and to prevent or decrease the growth of any new problematic behaviors that occur in American schools more often. Additionally, educators and school personnel are required to enroll in comprehensive training sessions with regard to bullying responsiveness and remediation. Though many school districts have funding that can address this serious issue (Craig et al., 2011) some educators and school personnel were raised as young children may have an impact in terms of how they respond to bullying incidences that they might themselves thrust into. In many instances, their racial, religious and personal views, and opinions may serve as a deterrent to getting involved when such incidences occur (Craig et al.,). The intent of this investigation was to comprehend how educators perceive the occurrence of bullying and remedial actions. Additionally, to assess the extent to how educators and school district personnel respond to the actions of bully's in terms of self-efficacy and the skills of educators at a high school in Louisiana.

The problem addressed in this study were implementing and evaluating a bullying prevention program for secondary school teachers and staff in a Louisiana school district. A related concern is the effects of a bullying prevention program upon perceptions of bullying by secondary school teachers and staff.

LITERATURE REVIEWED

Bullying is a problem in rural school districts. Despite efforts geared toward decreasing bullying behaviors, it continues to occur (Maunder & Tattersal, 2010; Mason, 2008). Bullying has a negative impact on individual's self-esteem, academic performance, and students' absenteeism which adversely impacts their learning environment. Rising to epidemic proportions nationwide, bullying poses significant issues with regards to the student's ability to comprehend daily lessons, his/her physical development and maturity as well as his/her overall well-being and health. Therefore, it is essential that the issue be recognized as critical by school administrators, parents, teachers, and students in the effort to deter and eradicate bullying from the classroom.

Aware of the presence of bullying in school districts, educators must be knowledgeable and responsive in

their actions (Craig, Bell, & Leschied, 2011; Maunder & Tattersall, 2010). Additionally, to bolster the responsiveness of educators and school district personnel, many school districts are establishing bullying, remedial and abolishment programs that take into account the opinions and beliefs of school district educators as a means of making the program more effective (Maunder & Tattersall, 2010). Interacting with the student population on a daily basis, educators often bear witness to incidents more so than other school district employees. Hence, educators are instrumental in the intervention and prevention of bullying (Craig et al.; Novick & Isaacs, 2010).

Moreover, educators have the ability to initiate proactive and progressive remedial responses as means toward achieving a desired end result and *“are central in shaping the values and attitudes of children because they are seen as role models”* (Maunder & Tattersall, 2010, p. 117). It is critical that educators have the ability to perceive behavior that is indicative of bullying and intervene immediately.

Educators and school staff must respond to incidents of bullying in an unequivocal fashion which conveys authority and respect as a means towards stating that there will be no tolerance for bullying in their school (Craig, Bell, & Leschied, 2011). It is essential that educators be well versed of all aspects of victimization as well as taking the role of a counselor in response to the victim in response to the incident. Most educators are unable to comprehend the short and long term consequences that bullying places upon its victims in addition to the bully themselves (Bender, & Losek, 2011; Bowes, 2009; National Education Association, 2014; National Association of School Psychologists, 2012). When educators are not present in the classroom or hallways, this is the most opportune time for a bully to inflict trauma upon their victim. Educators can alleviate this rate of occurrence by enlisting the assistance of students to inform a school staff of bullying occurrences (Craig et al., 2011).

According to Louisiana state law (R.S. 17:416.13), all school districts must develop and implement an anti-bullying policy that forbids bullying of any students while in school or any school activity, which includes, but is not limited, to school bus transportation, selected school bus stops, and school events (sports activities or school assemblies). A requirement of the policy is that all faculty, staff, and school administrators are required to attend four hours of training on how to identify and stop bullying. Additionally, the law requires employees of the schools to apply various prevention and intervention methods to produce safe school climates for each and every student (see US Dept of Education, 2009; US Health and Human Resources, 2011; Young et al., 2009; Yudin, 2013).

According to Bowllan (2011), bullying is a form of abuse that produces harm. The author further noted the following:

Bullying is considered a paramount act of intimidation and abuse. Bullying behavior places students in harm and fear on a daily basis. Individuals who employ bullying tactics often pose characteristics that demonstrate aggressive behavior which in many instances charts a path towards criminal misconduct, excessive absenteeism and substance abuse. Although there are negative consequences associated with an individual that is a bully, the abuse he/she renders is not isolated to just those that are victimized; it displays a cloud of discomfort and negativity amongst the student population. Yet, many individuals are directly intimidated and abused by bullies; many other students fear from the action they witness, which casts feelings of apprehension and loss of confidence. (p. 167)

Adopting the characteristics of bullying it appears to begin in early childhood (Verlinden et al., 2014). While victims of bullying possess no common denominator in terms of being bullied, research has shown that depending on the school setting, (an inner city, or rural area) certain groups of students have a higher probability of falling victim to bullies. These groups include; disabled individuals, the socially withdrawn and those that see themselves affiliated with groups that have a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Trans-gender preference (Napolitano, 2011).

The impact of bullying and the emotional and physical abuse endured by its victims are often overlooked or entirely dismissed by many individuals. Bullying behavior tarnishes the environment of schools and breaks the students' spirit (Craig et al., 2011). Therefore, it is essential that administrators, educators, staff personnel, students, and parents are aware of the elements and impact of bullying and how to deter and respond to the actions of a bully. Research conducted by Bauman, Rigby, and Hoppa (2008) emphasized how administrators are not educated or properly trained in responding to bullying. Fostering a safe and nurturing environment for students to learn and engage in social interaction is imperative as well as a mandate for all educators and administrators. A district wide initiative must be enacted by administrators in a collaborative effort to eradicate bullying (Schoen & Schoen, 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2013).

Additional literature reviewed looked into historical interventions about how to address bullying such as Types of Bullying, Victims of Bullying, and Characteristics of a Bully to mention a few. It also looked into the Effects of Bullying, Olweus Bullying Prevention, Program Positive Behavior Support, Bullying Busters, and Best Practices. It should be noted that the complexities associated with bullying cannot and must not be undermined.

For example, according to nationwide statistics, the primary targets for those who are harassed during the school days are those that acknowledged that they are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered students (Patrick et al., 2013). A published survey in 2009 indicated that nearly 75% of those individuals who claim that they are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans-gendered students indicated that they were subjected to homophobic comments at school. Of this 75%, approximately 19% contended that the school staff interceded when such comments were made before them (Kosciw, Geytak, Diaz, & Bartkiewicz, 2010).

In addition, approximately 83% of students that claim they were Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Trans-gender contended that they were victims of verbal taunting due to their sexual preference, while 44% indicated that they were physically assaulted (Kosciw et al., 2010). Research conducted by Sheridan (2010) contends females that were victimized by bullies indicated that approximately twenty-six percent (26%) demonstrated signs of suffering from depression in comparison to only eight percent (8%) of females who demonstrated signs of suffering from depression but were not bullied. In research with males, approximately sixteen percent (16%) who were bullied experienced bouts of depression, while approximately three percent (3%) of males that were not victims of bullies demonstrated signs of depression. Aside from suffering from depression at the expense of bullies, victims also experience episodes of anxiety (Sheridan, 2010). The author further contends that sustained periods of bullying can bring about chronic depression in victims which can lead to thoughts and visions of suicide. In addition, there are long term risks of abnormal behavior and issues with alcohol and drugs as well as a potential risk for spousal and/or child abuse (Sheridan, 2010). Such afflictions and risk factors are not limited to the victim as the bully is equally susceptible to such symptoms, afflictions and behaviors.

METHODOLOGY

The research conducted in this study was steered by a mixed method approach, which included quantitative and qualitative research methods. Qualitative data was gained through focus groups and face to face interviews with teachers and staff. In addition, quantitative data was assessed by the utilization of surveys/and or questionnaires. To implement this investigation and assessment, a concurrent triangulation strategy was utilized, which is comprised of quantitative and qualitative data collection methodologies. Data could be deemed as equally important, while one method may be viewed as more relevant than the other. The investigation and assessment employed used a “side by side” comparison in which the quantitative data were initially examined followed by the qualitative data (Creswell, 2009, p. 213).

This study hypothesized five major hypotheses which were;

Research Questions

- Q1.** What are the characteristics of bullying among secondary school students in a rural Louisiana school district?
- Q2.** What are the best practices in anti-bullying or bullying prevention programs established in the literature to be evidence based or promising?
- Q3.** What is the best practices from bullying prevention programs that could be included in a bullying prevention program for secondary school students in a Louisiana school district?
- Q4.** What are the effects of implementing an evidence-based bullying prevention program upon the number of bullying incidents in a Louisiana school district?
- Q5.** What are the effects of implementing an evidence-based bullying prevention program upon the perceptions of bullying among secondary school teachers and staff? To what extent will the BBP training has on skills, knowledge and self-efficacy of educators?

Data Collection

Data were collected from a local secondary school. Pre-test and post-test were utilized to collect data from a single group of participants. Surveys were distributed to all secondary school employees. Focus groups reflected the perceptions and experience which are representation of the participants (staff). Participants in the study were encouraged to openly discuss their experience. Once the consent was granted from the school district, focus groups were formed and conducted. All of the teachers/staff who participated were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any explanation.

Field Test

Professional surveyors with no affiliation to the study were given the opportunity to pose questions. Individuals from the local school district that includes but not limited to supervisors, social services sector, school administration, and counselors made up the panel and assessed the questions that were posed to determine if they were viable and easy to understand.

Descriptive Statistics Preparation Prior To Data Analysis

Data were entered into SPSS 21 as faculty reported receiving bullying training in general ranging from 2010 to 2014 to begin the statistical analyses process. Thereafter, the general data were classified into two major categories of *pre-tests* and *post-tests* as shown below. **General classified data distributions were consisted in Tables 1, 2, and 3...and Figures 1, 2, 3 ...** as shown below. The *pre-tests* and *post-tests* classified data began from Table 4 as shown below to establish equalities or inequalities of the comparison of *pre-tests* to *post-tests* analyses in this study (see Creswell, 2009).

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Table 1
Faculty Reported Receiving Bullying Training
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Varian ce
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statisti c
All	40	2.00	1.00	3.00	1.2750	.09465	.59861	.358
Valid N (listwise)	40							

Table 2
Statistics

N	Valid	40
	Missing	0
Mean		1.2750
Median		1.0000
Mode		1.00
Sum		51.00

Table 3
Pre-Test

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Some Training	32	80.0	80.0	80.0
Valid Bully Buster	5	12.5	12.5	92.5
None	3	7.5	7.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 4
Teacher and staff perception of responsibilities to intervene (Pre-Test/PostTest) Statistics

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
N Valid	40	40
Missing	0	0
Mean	1.7750	2.6000
Std. Error of Mean	.13629	.11767
Median	1.5000	3.0000
Mode	1.00	3.00
Std. Deviation	.86194	.74421
Variance	.743	.554
Skewness	.464	-1.540
Std. Error of Skewness	.374	.374
Kurtosis	-1.511	.714
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.733	.733
Range	2.00	2.00
Percentiles		
25	1.0000	2.2500
50	1.5000	3.0000
75	3.0000	3.0000

Table 5
Pretest

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
The Responsibility of administrators	20	50.0	50.0	50.0
The Responsibility of teachers	9	22.5	22.5	72.5
The Responsibility of everyone	11	27.5	27.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 6
Post-Test

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
The responsibility of administrators	6	15.0	15.0	15.0
The responsibility of teachers	4	10.0	10.0	25.0
The responsibility of everyone	30	75.0	75.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 7
Perception of Confidence before and After Training (Pre-Test/Post-Test)
Statistics

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
N Valid	40	40
Missing	0	0
Mean	1.2000	1.9000
Std. Error of Mean	.06405	.04804
Median	1.2000 ^a	1.9000 ^a
Mode	1.00	2.00
Std. Deviation	.40510	.30382
Variance	.164	.092
Skewness	1.559	-2.772
Std. Error of Skewness	.374	.374

Kurtosis	.451	5.979
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.733	.733
Range	1.00	1.00
25	. ^{b,c}	1.4000 ^c
Percentiles 50	1.2000	1.9000
75	1.7000	.

- a. Calculated from grouped data.
- b. The lower bound of the first interval or the upper bound of the last interval is not known. Some percentiles are undefined.
- c. Percentiles are calculated from grouped data.

Table 8
Pre-Test

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat Confident	32	80.0	80.0
	Very Confident	8	20.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0

Table 9
Post-Test

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat Confident	4	10.0	10.0
	Very Confident	36	90.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0

Table 10
Perception of Bullying Behavior/Intimidations (Pre-Test/Post-Test)
Statistics

		Pre-Test	Post-Test
N	Valid	40	40
	Missing	0	0
Mean		1.5750	.9250
Std. Error of Mean		.18218	.11540
Median		1.6316 ^a	.8571 ^a
Mode		2.00 ^b	1.00
Std. Deviation		1.15220	.72986
Variance		1.328	.533
Skewness		-.140	.950
Std. Error of Skewness		.374	.374
Kurtosis		-1.410	1.857
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.733	.733
Range		3.00	3.00
Percentiles 25		.5556 ^c	.2857 ^c
Percentiles 50		1.6316	.8571
Percentiles 75		2.5909	1.5357

a. Calculated from grouped data.

b. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

c. Percentiles are calculated from grouped data.

Table 11
Pre-Test

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bullying is a problem	10	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Bullying is not a problem	8	20.0	20.0	45.0
	Bullying is not reported	11	27.5	27.5	72.5
	Bullying is reported	11	27.5	27.5	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 12
Post-Test

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Bullying is a problem	10	25.0	25.0	25.0
Bullying is not a problem	25	62.5	62.5	87.5
Valid Bullying is not reported	3	7.5	7.5	95.0
Bullying is reported	2	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 13
Perception of Bullying Training (Pre-Test/Post-Test)
Statistics

	Perception of Bullying Training (Pre)	Perception of Bullying Training (Post-test)
N Valid	40	40
Missing	0	0
Mean	1.7500	1.7750
Std. Error of Mean	.12274	.13150
Median	2.0000	2.0000
Std. Deviation	.77625	.83166
Variance	.603	.692
Skewness	.476	.453
Std. Error of Skewness	.374	.374
Kurtosis	-1.163	-1.407
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.733	.733
Range	2.00	2.00
Sum	70.00	71.00
Percentiles		
25	1.0000	1.0000
50	2.0000	2.0000
75	2.0000	2.7500

Table 14
Perception of Bullying Training (Pre)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid knowledge of bullying	18	45.0	45.0	45.0
awareness of bullying	14	35.0	35.0	80.0
skills	8	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 15
Perception of Bullying Training (Post-test)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid knowledge of bullying	19	47.5	47.5	47.5
awareness of bullying	11	27.5	27.5	75.0
skills	10	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 16
Bully Buster Training (Before/After)
Statistics

	Bully Buster Training (Before)	Bully Buster Training (After)
N Valid	40	40
Missing	0	0
Mean	1.7250	1.8250
Std. Error of Mean	.11869	.13815
Median	2.0000	2.0000
Std. Deviation	.75064	.87376
Variance	.563	.763
Skewness	.508	.358
Std. Error of Skewness	.374	.374
Kurtosis	-1.026	-1.620

Std. Error of Kurtosis		.733	.733
Range		2.00	2.00
Sum		69.00	73.00
	25	1.0000	1.0000
Percentiles	50	2.0000	2.0000
	75	2.0000	3.0000

Table 17
Bully Buster Training (Before)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid knowledge of bullying	18	45.0	45.0	45.0
Valid awareness of bullying	15	37.5	37.5	82.5
Valid skills	7	17.5	17.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 18
Bully Buster Training (After)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid knowledge of bullying	19	47.5	47.5	47.5
Valid awareness of bullying	9	22.5	22.5	70.0
Valid skills	12	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 19
ANOVA
Pre-Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
(Combined)	37.935	3	12.645	32.892	.000
Between Groups	Unweighted	1	17.599	45.778	.000
	Linear Term Weighted	1	31.854	82.858	.000
	Deviation	2	3.040	7.908	.001
Within Groups	13.840	36	.384		
Total	51.775	39			

Table 20
ANOVA
Post-Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
(Combined)	14.230	3	4.743	26.088	.000
Between Groups	Unweighted	1	12.460	68.531	.000
	Linear Term Weighted	1	12.782	70.300	.000
	Deviation	2	.724	3.981	.027
Within Groups	6.545	36	.182		
Total	20.775	39			

Table 21 T-Test
One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Test	40	1.5750	1.15220	.18218
Post-Test	40	.9250	.72986	.11540

Table 22
One-Sample Test

Test Value = 0					
t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
8.645	39	.000	1.57500	1.2065	1.9435
8.016	39	.000	.92500	.6916	1.1584

Figure 1 Pre-Test

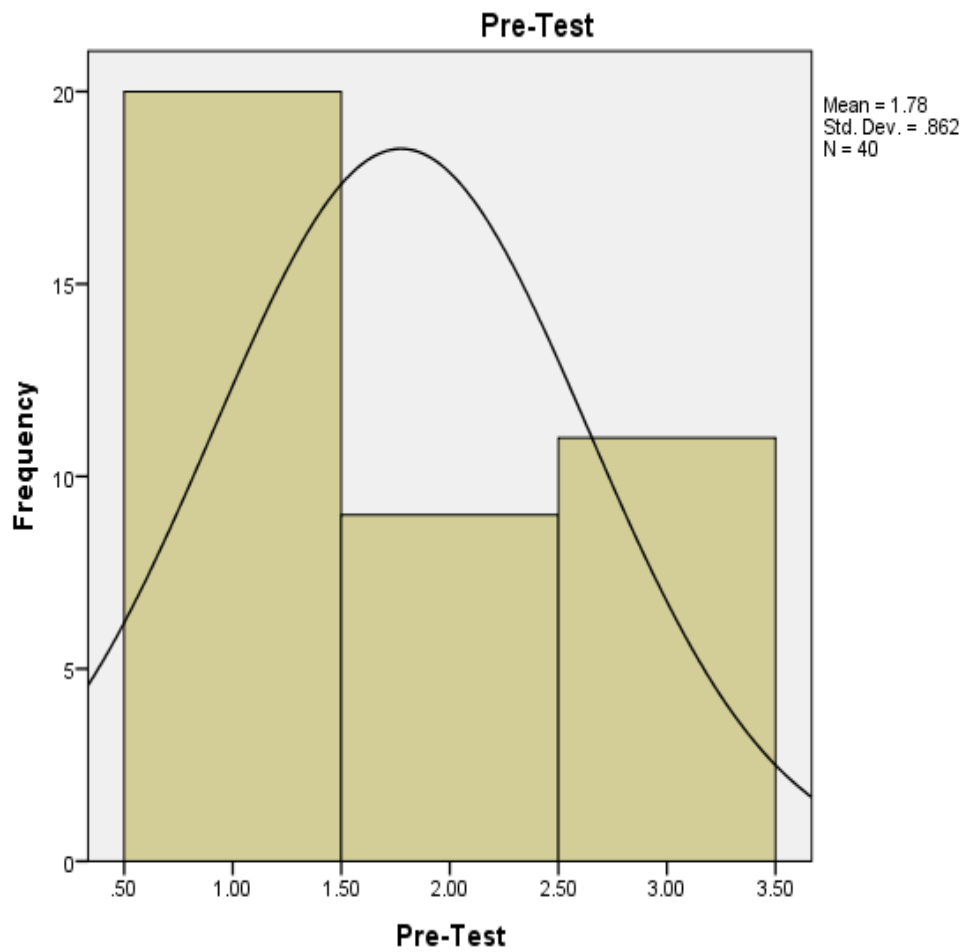


Figure 2 Post-Test

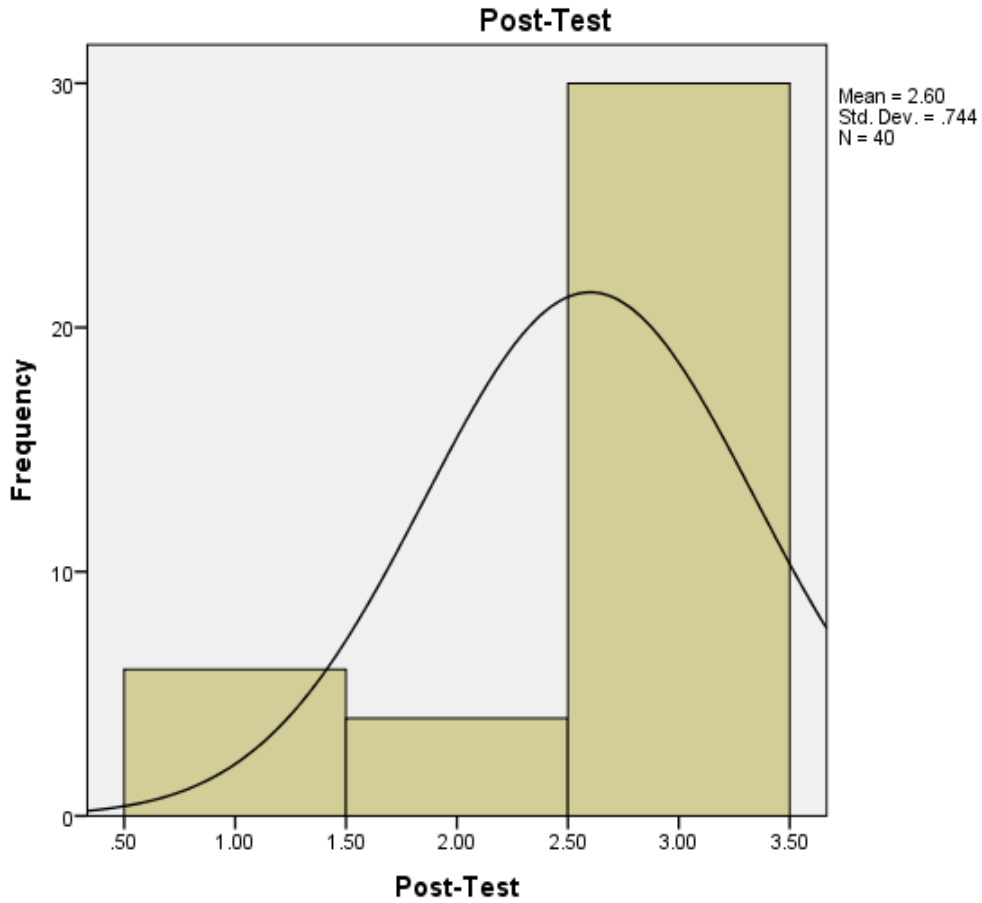


Figure 3. Pre-Test about the Perceptions of Bullying

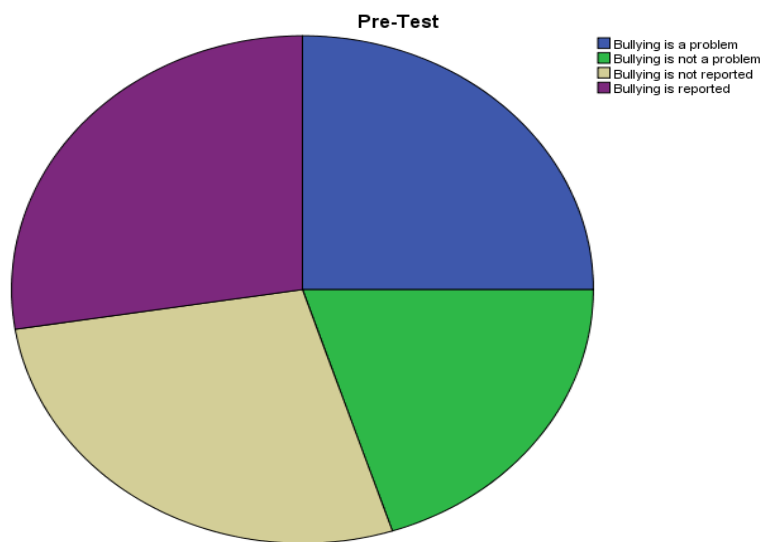
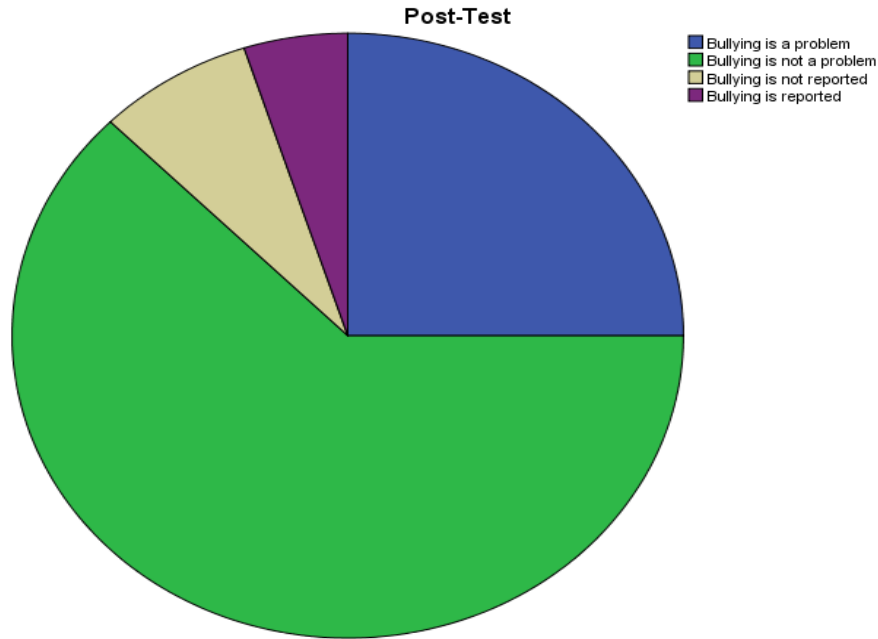


Figure 4. Post-Test about the Perceptions of Bullying



Contrarily to table 3, table 4 (*post- tested*) indicated overwhelmingly that bullying is not a problem. However, some participants less believed that bullying is not reported and bullying is periodically reported (see table 4 above).

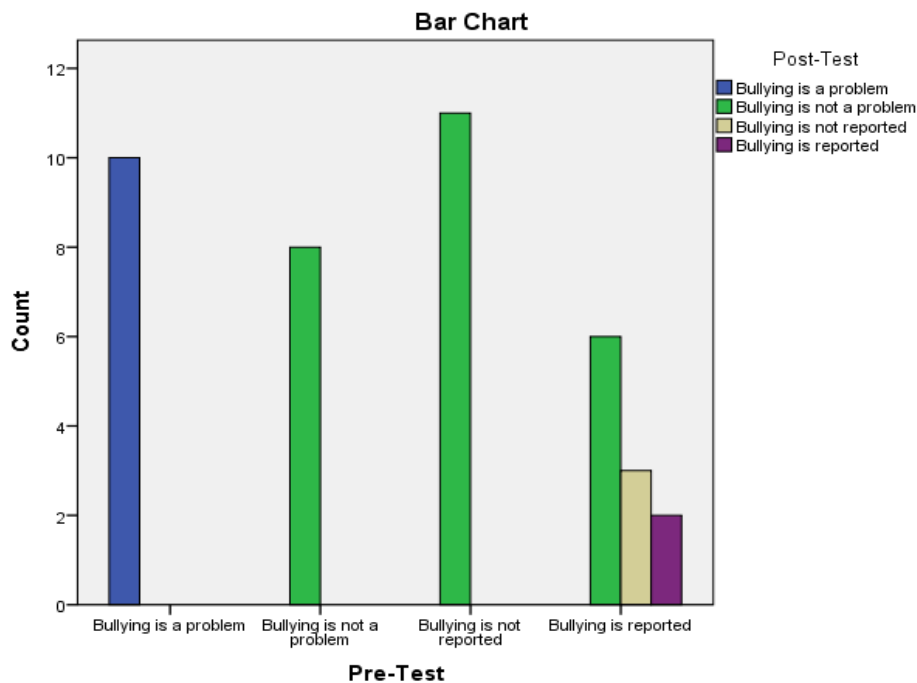


Figure 5 is a visual joint (*pre-test*) analysis that indicated that majority of participants believed that bullying is not reported; but bullying is a problem. However, some believed that bullying is a problem as shown above.

INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY'S FINDINGS

As to provide accuracies in responding to research questions 4 and 5, the below enlisted analyses were comprehensively completed and reviewed repeatedly as to eliminate quantitative statistical errors. Analyses such as quartiles, percentages values, central tendencies, dispersion such as standard deviation, variance, range, means, minimum, maximum, standard error (SE) means, distributions, skewness, kurtosis, pre- test Anova, post- test Anova, dependent and independent variables' T-Test were all completed. These analyses dealt with parametric and nonparametric statistical calculations. It should be noted that the results and findings of both parametric and nonparametric were absolutely statistically associated with providing accurate analyses of results and findings to the prevailing research questions.

Research Question 4 What are the effects of implementing an evidence-based bullying prevention program upon the number of bullying incidents in a Louisiana school district?

All the nonparametric tests indicated the facts that there were direct or indirect effects of implementing an evidence-based bullying prevention program upon the number of bullying incidents in a Louisiana school district. The measurements showed that research question 4 was in an overwhelming alignment with the findings of the study's investigations that there were direct or indirect effects of implementing an evidence-based bullying prevention program upon the number of bullying incidents in a Louisiana school district (see Tables for specific results). The effects of implementing the bullying prevention program included: teachers being able to identify students who are being bullied by others, how to effectively handle bullying incidents, as well as his or her level of confidence in reporting and dealing with bullying occurrences.

Consequently twenty-five percent (25%) of respondents indicated that bully training is meaningful and increased their overall comprehension of bullying as well as their level of skills concerning bullying. More importantly, teacher's demonstrated the ability to educate students on what constitute bullying behavior and how to identify when it is happening to other student's. Upon successful completion of the bullying training they received, educators indicated that their awareness and knowledge of bullying increased immensely. Although there were different responses to the question posed, all of those participating agreed that the bullying training they received was constructive (see tables 1 to 22 and figures 1 to 5 above) **for additional individualized results and findings.**

Research Question 5 What are the effects of implementing an evidence-based bullying prevention program upon the perceptions of bullying among secondary school teachers and staff?

To what extent will the BBP trainings have on skills, knowledge, and self-efficacy of educators?

A more comprehensive data analyses were conducted to highlight the statistical discriminations between pre-tests and post- tests results which outlined the differences teachers and staffs exposures to evidence-based BBP treatments. The documented statistical pre-tests and post-tests discriminated variances whereas followed. For example, when teachers and staffs' perceptions of responsibilities to intervene during bullying, both pre-tests and post-tests showed some significant differences. The variances of pre-post tests were comparison of teachers and staff perception of responsibilities to intervene (*pre-test & post- tests*). The mean (*M*) pre-posts were 1.77, 2.60, the (*Std.EM*) .136 and .117 while the (*Med*), (*Mod*), and the (*SD*) were 1.5, 3.0, 1.00, 3.00, .861, and .744 respectively (see table 4 above).

Furthermore, the Perception of Confidence before and After Training (Pre-Test/Post-Test) showed variation from the variance for pre-test was .164 while the post test was .092. Skewness (*S*) for were 1.56 and -2.77, (*Std. ES*) were .374 and .374 while Kurtosis (*K*) were .451 and 5.98 as shown above. Above shown, table 7 indicated that there were significant differences between *pre-tests* and *post-tests*. Above all, there were more than significant visual illustrated shifts between pre-tests and post-tests.

Additionally, ANOVA showed in Table 19 and 20 indicated the results of a between Groups and within Groups ANOVA (participants *pre-tests* as compared to *post-tests*). The mean square between Groups were 31.854, 3.040, and .384 compared to 12.782, .724, and .182 respectively. The *f* was 32.892 while the (*P-Value*) *Sig.* was .000 < .05 but > .95. These numbers were higher than (<0.5 or >.95) degree of freedom. *S* compared to table 20 below differences and similarly were *f* was 26.088 while the (*P-Value*) *Sig.* was .000 < .05 but > .95. These numbers were higher than (<0.5 or >.95) degree of freedom or collected significant confidence level associated with the samples. This showed insignificant statistical differences between and within groups.

This meant that there were positive relationships between the implementation of BBP and the perceptions of the skills, knowledge, and self-efficacy of educators. Based on the findings and results from table to tables as shown above, it was clear to conclude that there were statistical significant effects of implementing an evidence-based bullying prevention program BBP upon the perceptions of bullying among secondary school teachers and staff. Furthermore, there were statistical significant effects of the BBP trainings have on the skills, knowledge, and self-efficacy of educators. In summation, there were overwhelming statistical significant differences between pre-tests and post-tests in all data statistical analyses, As such, it is fair to sum that there were overwhelming statistical significant effects of implementing an evidence-based bullying prevention BBP program upon the

perceptions of bullying among secondary school teachers and staff. Fundamentally statistically, there were unprecedented effects of the BBP trainings have on skills, knowledge, and self-efficacy of educators in Louisiana school district (see tables 1 to 22 and figures 1 to 5 above) for **additional individualized results and findings**.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The populations of teachers were taken from a secondary high school in Louisiana that was included in the study which may have limited the generalization of the study addressed. Each participant was interviewed on the high school campus in the counselor's office and several interviews were conducted in the principal's conference room which may have generated a proper tone. However, staff being interviewed on his or her job could make the individuals feel as if they must answer the questions in a certain way in order to avoid any consequences because of their responses. In light of the results and the findings of the study, it cannot be generalized to other school districts in Louisiana and the US in general.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In an attempt to reduce acts of bullying, educators may sometimes interject themselves into a potential bullying environment and assist those students who they feel may be susceptible to bullying, in an effort towards finding friends with common interests. Such assistance at the early grade levels is viewed as a viable action that in many instances will carry over for the student into the next grade level and progression of grades thereafter. Educators would have a more definitive response to bullying at various grade levels if they were aware of students opinions, and viewpoints towards bullying at each grade level. What may be thought of as 'playful actions' in the third grade might be thought of as 'bullying' in the fourth grade. Conversely, various styles of apparel worn in junior high school and high school are seen as '*making a statement*' and an '*avenue towards making friends*'. The same does not hold true in the elementary school grades. How students view bullying varies at each grade level and is influenced by the social circles of friends and classmates they keep and the situations that they participant in or encounter.

Additionally, in an endeavor to uncover new methods, tactics and techniques to thwart the actions associated with bullying, it is believed that contemporary research should focus on the development of effective, zero tolerance bullying prevention protocol. Those that may counter such an initiative will contend that there are viable programs in place without any demonstrated results, and that further research with regard to bullying is a waste of time and effort. However, bullying prevention programs do work when they are properly implemented. Yet, the issue is that educators and administrators are not properly administering the programs as they were

designed to be, which hinders all efforts towards eradicating bullying. For whatever reasons, educators and administrators chose not to follow the protocol of the program or have their own personal reasons for not participating to the fullest extent.

Training and educating educators with regard to all aspects of bullying is critical to its eradication based on research that was performed for this paper. It is essential that educators and administrators understand the implications of bullying and the need to collaborate with others, such as parents and community organizations to carry out prevention programs in a sustained manner.

Moreover, with guidance counselors and social workers at the forefront of bullying intervention, it is a fair assumption that they should take the reigns of being the 'teacher to the teachers' in training a core group of educators who in turn can educate other educators of the focal points of the bullying prevention program. Providing counselors and social workers with the opportunity to attend conferences and workshops allows them to expand their knowledge and comprehension of the various facets of bullying in an attempt to rid school environments of its toxic effects on the student body. These toxic effects are not just limited to verbal and physical assault and abuse, but include intimidation, aggression and humiliation.

Additionally, professional development of educators and social workers can enhance their influence and impact on the students that could be deemed as victims. They can work with victims in dealing with these traumatic situations and take assertive action to respond to and prevent them in the future. Professional development, in conjunction with bullying prevention programs, engage educators and administrations to take a proactive approach towards understanding who potential bullying victims maybe and respond in a manner that fosters a safe environment for those individuals within the parameters of the learning environment. As with all problematic issues in a school environment, resolution is achieved by determining the root of the problem. It is critical to understand how students define bullying and with that understanding administrators and educators are better positioned to respond in an effective manner.

By acknowledging students viewpoints towards bullying, it will fortify educators and administrators efforts in integrating all the complexities and kinetics that bullies employ. Employing the old cliché, *'Knowledge is Power'* is appropriate in the realm of bullying prevention. Administrators and educators must be well informed of all aspects of bullying and be made aware of circumstances that may or may not be categorized as bullying. The collaborative understandings of students, administrators and educators can be the first steps on the pathway

towards developing practical solutions to a national issue that has embraced the concern of educators, students, parents and their community.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUDY

1. To assess the efficacy of the program, it has been determined that subsequent investigation and assessment is necessary towards modifying the behavior of individuals deemed as bullies in a high school environment.
2. More importantly, engaging educator participation and acceptance is instrumental towards a higher percentage rate of success. It is essential that the implementation of the program adhere to the parameters of the program.
3. Educators should participate in supplemental training sessions with scheduled follow- up to confirm that they are implementing the program in accordance with the program parameters and standards.
4. Providing a forum for students to discuss their interaction with bullying and incorporating and it into the Bully Busters program can become an instrumental element in the re-teaching and reviewing the process.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We share no conflict of interest in this study.

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