TEACHER LIVED EXPERIENCES: EFFECTS OF ARTS INTEGRATION ON

DETERRING BULLYING BEHAVIORS IN FOURTH- AND FIFTH-GRADE

STUDENTS

by

Ivy Maxwell

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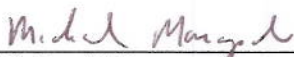
TEACHER LIVED EXPERIENCES: THE EFFECTS OF ARTS INTEGRATION ON DETERRING BULLLYING IN FOURTH- AND FIFTH-GRADE STUDENTS

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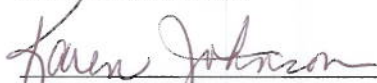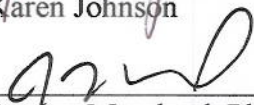
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ABSTRACT

Bullying behaviors among primary school-aged children are underreported, which communicates to the children that the issue is not important to the adults who should be promoting a safe and healthy environment. The purpose of this qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of a purposeful sample of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade elementary teachers concerning the possible effect of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ Model strategies (an arts integration program) on bullying behaviors of fourth- and fifth-grade students at an arts magnate school. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade teachers, using an interview guide with open-ended questions, about their perceptions of bullying at the research site and the effects of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model on bullying behaviors. The study results indicated use of the model has the potential to help deter bullying behaviors. Participants believed the model's community-building component and strategies helped decrease bullying and aggressive behaviors. This study provides educational leaders with a demonstration the efficacy of an arts-integration program in deterring bullying behaviors among elementary students.

DEDICATION

I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me. Philippians 4:13 (KJV)

This dissertation is dedicated to my Lord and Savior, Jesus, who made the completion of this journey possible. Lord, thank you for undergirding and carrying me through this entire process.

This dissertation is also dedicated in memory of my father, Eddie S. Tossie, Sr., in abstentia. You always believed in the power of a good education and instilled that belief in me.

This dissertation is also dedicated in memory of my uncle, Dr. Elmer R. Tossie, in abstentia. You inspired me by being the first in our family to receive his doctorate's degree. You always encouraged me to go higher and do more.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My principal: Thank you for allowing me to conduct this study. I would not have been able to complete this process without you.

My assistant principal: Thank you for your help and encouragement.

To my colleagues: Thank you for continually encouraging, pushing, cheering me on, and holding me accountable for completing this journey.

Finally, to all my participants: This would not have been possible without your willingness to be vulnerable, open, and honest with your responses.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Educators often engage in discussions about the prevalence of bullying in U.S. schools (Holt, Finkelhor, & Kantor, 2007). Bullying is repetitive aggressive physical or verbal behaviors as well as threats of behavior toward others who the aggressor considers to be weaker (Aluede, Adeleke, Omoike, & Afen-Akpaida, 2008). Scheckner and Rollin (2003) asserted that early intervention during the elementary years is an important factor in circumventing the chain of events that occur because of bullying. Campus shootings, bullying behaviors, and victims-turn-perpetrators of horrendous violent acts are reported with increasing regularity (Beaubien, 2007; Ricchiardi, 2007).

During the 2005–2006 school years, American schools' enrollment was 54.8 million students in pre-kindergarten through high school (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007). Of the 54.8 million students, 17 suffered school-related violent deaths. Of the 17 deaths, 14 were homicides and three were suicides. In addition, 86% of American schools reported at least one crime during that school year. Of the students in Grades 9 through 12, 8% reported receiving threats or injuries with a weapon and 28% of students between the ages of 12 and 18, experienced bullying in their schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007).). Scheckner and Rolling believed the high rate of bullying created fear among educators, parents, students, and the community. Chapter 1 of the study includes a discussion of the importance of the research problem, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, and the significance of the study to research. Chapter 1 includes the nature of the study, research questions, the

theoretical framework of the study, definitions of operational terms, assumptions, the

scope, limitations, and delimitations of the study, and a summary of the chapter.

Background

Bullying is a persistent problem in American schools (Werle, 2006), and

manifests in different forms. Kulig, Hall, and Kalischuk (2008) included name-calling,

spreading rumors, and victim separation in the act of bullying. Kulig et al. also found

that bullying is not always perpetrated by individual children, but by groups of children.

Bullies often single out children who do not fit in, or those who are different from the

majority (Kulig et al., 2008).

In response to the problem of bullying in schools, one strategy recommended is

building a sense of community to change the climate in the school and classroom (The

Governor's Prevention Partnership, 2013). The Institute of Education Sciences (2007)

published a yearly *What Works Clearinghouse* report. In the report, the writers posited,

"The program was developed based on research-supported claims that students'

academic, social, and ethical development benefit from: caring school communities,

having their psychological needs for autonomy, belonging, and competence met; having a

better sense of 'connectedness' to school" (Institute of Education Sciences, 2007, p. 2).

In other words, the teacher develops an atmosphere that helps the students feel safe and

part of the class.

The Bernstein Artful Learning™ model may provide insight into how to further

deal with the problem of bullying of American students. One of the components of

Bernstein's Artful Learning Model is community building (The Leonard Bernstein

Office, 2008–2009). The units allow students to work in collaborative groups as they

explore and make sense of the world around them (The Leonard Bernstein Office. 2008–2009; Lynch, 2007; Trent & Riley, 2009). The Bernstein Artful Learning™ model is a school reform model that uses arts integration as its driving force. Teachers develop units based on an arts masterwork. Griffin and Miyoshi (2009) noted the Masterwork included musical selections, paintings, or literature. However, Griffin and Miyoshi also posited Masterworks can also encompass any significant manifestation of a group of people's culture. Masterworks in schools using the Artful Learning™ model often include events, plays, sculptures, architectural designs, and monuments.

The teachers structure each unit so that students experience, inquire, create, and reflect on the masterwork as they rotate through the inquiry centers. In addition, students collaborate in small groups as they work through several inquiry centers, which help build a sense of community among students. Each inquiry center focuses on an academic subject as the students learn about the masterwork. The students develop a sense of community as they work together toward a common goal (The Leonard Bernstein Office, 2008–2009).

The exploration of the perspectives of the teachers, in reference to the observed bullying behaviors by their students, provided insight on their experiences. Conducting the study captured the educators' underlying emotions and perspectives as they recounted their first-hand experiences with students. Extracting the lived experiences of teachers provided a full portrayal of the phenomenon studied (Finlay, 2009).

Problem Statement

The general problem is that bullying behaviors by students in U.S. schools are a serious problem (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2012). According to the data

received from the 2010 National Crime Victimization Survey, the occurrences of victimization were higher in schools than away from schools. The data revealed 828,400 occurrences of victimization in schools in contrast to 652,500 occurrences of victimization away from school. The 2011 report also revealed 17 school-associated homicides of children, ages 5-18.

The specific problem is that bullying behaviors among primary school-aged children are underreported, which communicates to the children that the issue is not important to the adults who should be promoting a safe and healthy environment (Akiba, 2008; Safe Supportive Conditions for Learning, 2012). Waseem, Ryan, Foster, and Peterson (2013) asserted that bullying is often incorrectly diagnosed and underreported because the symptoms are not specific and the victims are not willing to disclose the source of their injuries. Bradshaw, Sawyer, and O'Brennan (2007) found only 37.2% of elementary school staff members reported observed incidents of bullying and were unlikely to intervene or report these occurrences to administrators or guidance counselors. Bradshaw's et al. (2007) study results revealed educators, especially at the primary school level, miscalculate the pervasiveness of students recurrently engaged in bullying.

This qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological study explored the lived-communication experiences of 15 elementary school fourth- and fifth-grade teachers located in an elementary arts school in central Florida. The data gathered in this study provides leaders with crucial insight into the possible relationship between learning models that develop a sense of community and deterring student bullying behaviors.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of a purposeful sample of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade elementary teachers concerning the possible effect of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ Model strategies on bullying behaviors of fourth- and fifth-grade students at an arts magnate school in central Florida. Developers of the learning model created a strong community-building component in the structure of the model. Elementary fourth- and fifth-grade teachers at the arts magnate school participated in an audiorecorded interview exploring the teachers' lived experiences to determine if a possible relationship between arts-integration learning strategies and student bullying may be determined. The Artful Learning™ program was implemented in 2008 and is in continued use. Bullying was generally defined as repetitive aggressive physical or verbal behaviors as well as threats of behavior toward others who the aggressor considers to be weaker (Aluede, Adeleke et al., 2008).

Significance of the Study

The results of the study provide leaders with a better understanding of teachers' experiences and perceptions of arts integration and the deterrence of bullying. The arts magnate school implemented Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model with members in the field of education. The study provides a foundation for the future development and implementation of learning strategies that may help build school community through the arts and in individual schools across the district, and may deter behaviors that erode school community. The study helped fill a gap in the literature by exploring the possible role of arts-integration programs in deterring bullying behaviors.

Significance of the Study to Leadership

The use of the data from the study may provide important information to school leaders about the efficacy of building school community through arts integration in individual schools. Leaders may be able to make decisions concerning program implementation, professional development, and interventions from an informed position about the role of an arts-integration program in building school community and curtailing bullying behavior. The study results demonstrated the efficacy of an arts-integration program in deterring bullying behaviors among elementary students.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of a purposeful sample of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade elementary teachers concerning the possible effect of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ Model strategies on bullying behaviors of fourth- and fifth-grade students at an arts magnate school in central Florida. A hermeneutical phenomenological research approach was chosen as the most appropriate design for this study. In his discussion of qualitative research designs, Moustakas (1994) posited that hermeneutical phenomenological studies involve the exploration of lived experiences. The participants recount their lived experiences, which allows the researcher to interpret and draw meaning from those experiences (Flood, 2010; Lindseth & Norberg, 2004, and Moustakas, 1994). This study explored the lived experiences of the participants, which facilitated the interpretation of the meaning of those experiences and extraction of the themes that emerged from the experiences.

An inherent component of a phenomenological study is gaining the lived experiences of the participant. The researcher gets an insider (Finlay, 2009) view of participants. Finlay (2009) further asserted that researchers obtain a subjective understanding of the phenomenon instead of the objectivity one might gain from a scientific study. The researcher gets a view of the lifeworld of the targeted population's lived experiences.

Ethnography was not appropriate because the researcher obtains data in the field by observing the interactions, dynamics, and communications of the participants. The researcher becomes immersed in the culture or setting (Moustakas, 1994). Likewise, grounded theory was not appropriate for this study because researchers use this design to construct theory from the participants' responses (Moustakas, 1994). An evaluative case study was not appropriate for the study because case studies require multiple modes of data collection (Neale, Thapa, & Boyce, 2006). Interviews were used for data collection instead of surveys to encourage the participants' willingness to be a part of the study and in order to gain a more rich response to the survey questions. Observation was not an option because collection of data took place after the phenomenon occurred. Finally, the design of the Artful Learning™ model was not specifically created to address bullying and aggressive behavior.

The design of the study was an interview design using an interview-question guide composed of open-ended questions. An experimental research study design would require control and manipulation of the population and variables (University of New England, 2000). A quantitative research design was not appropriate for the study because a quantitative design would not provide data that recounts teachers' lived experiences or

their perceptions of those experiences. The interviews for this study required the recall of

perceptions and observations prior to and after 3 years of program implementation. The

interview guide for the study was the only data-collection tool used in the study.

The sample population for the study consisted of any available teachers who

taught students in the fourth and fifth grades prior to 2008 through the 2010 school year.

The population also included resource teachers who interacted with students between

2008 and 2010. Teachers were chosen because of their association with students in the

grade level involved in bullying behaviors.

The data-collection process for the study was qualitative interviews. The

instrument for the study was a 12-question interview guide. The semi structured

interview guide helped provide credibility and rigor to the study (Brod, Tesler, &

Christensen, 2009). The interview questions were open-ended, allowing the participants

to reflect and freely express their perceptions and experiences about the phenomenon.

Participants also introduced new ideas about the phenomenon. In response to teachers'

answers and new themes or ideas that emerged during an interview, the interview guide

was adjusted between interviews.

Prior to conducting the interviews, a pilot study was administered to a small group

of five teachers from the research site, not selected as sample members, to gain feedback

on the wording of the questions. The pilot study participants did not indicate the need to

change the interview question. The interview guide remained the same as originally

designed. The interviews were recorded and a professional transcriptionist transcribed

the audio files. The transcriptionist provided 155 pages of text in both hard copy and

digital form.

The raw data were examined, providing an understanding of themes garnered from the data and formulating some initial ideas about the data, as the first step in the analysis process. The next step involved coding the data, which was a three-stage process that helped organize the data into categories. The three stages of the coding process were open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The coding process is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. Analyzing the questions involved investigating the data, finding emerging themes, and describing the information learned from the data. Creswell (2005) posited, researchers use the answers to research questions and seek to fully understand the phenomenon by rich descriptions and emerging themes. The presentation of the results in Chapter 4 includes a description of data with accompanying charts.

The study took place in an arts-magnate school located in central Florida. The school of study became an arts-magnate school in 1999 because of its failure to comply with the consent decree law. In compliance with the consent decree, which mandates that the racial make-up of a school's student and teacher population must be the same as the city in which the school is located, district officials transferred many teachers and students to another area of the school district. The district uses a lottery system to assign students to a particular magnate school. The school is located in a low socioeconomic neighborhood. In addition, gang activity is prevalent and bullying has been an ongoing problem in the neighborhood. Some of the third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students have demonstrated bullying behaviors, which led to discussions with the school resource officers and parents.

In 2007, the school's leadership team wrote and applied for a grant to implement Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model from Magnate Schools of America. The school received the grant in 2007 and implemented the program in May of 2008. Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model is an arts-integration-learning model in which classroom teachers use Bernstein's arts-based learning strategies to teach academic subjects. The model also incorporates community-building activities in each unit. The principal chose a leadership team that received introductory training in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The remaining faculty received training at the beginning of the school year. During the training sessions, trainers assisted teachers in developing units for implementation of the program during the last quarter of the first year of implementation. Each grade level chose an arts masterwork and developed units that addressed state standards for academic subject areas, as well as state standards for subject areas related to the arts.

Research Questions

The overarching question of this study is, What are the perceptions of the faculty from a central Florida elementary school using an arts-integration strategy with regard to student aggression and bullying behaviors? A second question is, How have the instances of aggression or bullying changed since the implementation of the arts-integration strategies? Both questions were addressed during the interviews, using a researcher generated interview guide as a starting point.

Theoretical Framework

The basis for the study is Vygotsky's (1978) social development and zone of proximal development theory (ZPD). Vygotsky asserted, children's cultural advancement occurs two times: initially as they interact with people (interpsychological),

and farther along, on their own (intrapsychological). The same concept applies

intentional consideration given to rational recall, and to the development of broad

principles that affect their perceptions and behaviors.

In ZPD, children develop cognitively through their interactions with each other.

Vygotsky's learning theories was used in support of the current study of the impact of the

Bernstein learning strategies on bullying behaviors. In the Bernstein Artful Learning

Model, students explore and formulate significant questions as they move through the

various inquiry centers. Students also work together to develop original creations that

demonstrate their understanding of the concept they have explored. Vygotsky's theory

supports the cognitive development that takes place during the students' interactions with

each other. The students' social interaction with each other during the learning process

creates a sense of community. In order to successfully complete units, students must learn

to respect each other's ideas and contribution to the groups' project. The students learn

from each other and, in the process, become more connected, which would help reduce

the amount of bullying (Haner, Pepler, Cummings, and Rubin-Vaughan, 2010).

Definitions

Provided are definitions of terms used in the study:

Arts integration: Arts integration is a method of teaching and learning academics,

using the arts as the vehicle (Gullatt, 2008; LaJevic, 2009).

Artful learning model™: The Artful Learning Model™ is a school-reform model

that uses the arts as a conveyance for teaching academic subjects (The Leonard Bernstein

Office, 2008–2009).

Bullying: Bullying is repetitive aggressive physical or verbal behaviors, as well as threats of behavior toward others who the aggressor considers physically or emotionally weaker (Aluede et al., 2008).

Bystanders: A person who witnesses another person being bullied (Oh & Hazler, 2009).

Masterwork: A masterwork is the arts, such as included musical selections, paintings, or literature, or any significant manifestation of group of people's culture. (Griffin & Miyoshi, 2009).

Ringleader: A ringleader is a student who leads and influences a group of bullies to target a vulnerable student.

Social Rejection: Social rejection is undesirable response from an equal (Schafer, Korn, Brodbeck, Wolke, & Schulz).

Assumptions

The first assumption was that the participants in the study provided sufficient representation of the targeted population. The participants for the study were a purposeful sample and were the only choices for completing the study. The second assumption was that participants, based on education level and state standards for educator licensing, understood all of the survey questions. A pilot test of five non-participants helped determine that the participants understood and were able to respond to all of the interview questions. The final assumption was that the participants provided honest responses to the survey questions. It was assumed that the interview process was effective in extracting the desired information from the participants (Creswell, 2005).

Scope of the Study

This qualitative study explored the effectiveness of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model strategies in deterring the incidents of student bullying at a public elementary school of the arts and public elementary school campus located in central Florida. To accomplish this, a purposive sample from the targeted population, who had intimate knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation, was chosen for the study. A purposive sample helps achieve representativeness. However, the use of a purposeful sample limits the ability to generalize the study results to larger populations (Teddlie and Yu, 2007).

Limitations

The first limitation of this study involves receiving open and honest response form the participants. Some participants may not have wished to portray a negative view of their institutions, which may have led to inaccurate responses. Another limitation was the possibility of not being able to capture all employees from the past. The targeted sample size for the study was 20. However, changes in administration led to many human-resource changes at the study site as well as some changes in location because of family situations. Some of the targeted participants no longer worked at the research site, which made contacting the potential participant quite difficult, and in some instances impossible. In addition, the move to another state of one targeted participant required sending the informed-consent letter by e-mail and receiving the signed document through a facsimile machine. Therefore, the sample size was smaller than initially planned. Instead of the projected 20-sample size, the sample size was reduced to 15.

Employment at the research site and conducting the interviews was also a study limitation. The research required encouragement for open and honest responses from the interviewees without interjecting personal biases. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed by a professional transcriptionist. Participants were encouraged to review their transcriptions for accuracy. The participants were encouraged to make corrections, if necessary. The most evident limitation of this study was that the study results were based on the participants' perceptions of their lived experiences instead of data collected from observations.

Delimitations

The first delimitation of the study is that the study was limited to a targeted population of 15 participants. The original targeted population was 20 participants. A change in administration, as well as, teachers only provided an accessible population of 15 participants. The research only involved interviews of fourth- and fifth-grade elementary teachers at one school. The study only targeted the perceptions of district employees, and did not address the perceptions of all stakeholders. Children were not included in the research process because of research restrictions. In addition, the perceptions of all stakeholders such as parents, PTA members, volunteers, and community members were not addressed in the study. Because the study did not address individual students and only addressed teacher and administrator perceptions, these stakeholders did not receive notification of the study. Personal lived experiences in relationship to the possibility of a relationship between arts integration strategies and bullying behaviors in students were not recounted because of personal involvement in the arts and the desire to avoid interjecting personal biases.

Summary

The qualitative phenomenological study explored the perceptions and lived experiences of a purposeful sample of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade elementary teachers concerning the possible effect of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model strategies on bullying behaviors of fourth- and fifth-grade students at an arts magnate school in central Florida. Included in this chapter were the introduction/background, a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the identification of the method, and design of the study. This chapter also included the significance of the study, the significance of the study to leadership, research questions, the theoretical framework, the scope of the study, and limitations and delimitations of the study. Chapter 2 included a historical and current review of relevant studies using keywords derived from Chapter 1.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Chapter 2 includes an historical overview of the origin of research on bullying and the first attempts to develop a program that would help prevent bullying in schools. The overview includes a discussion of the evolution of the earlier attempts to create a bully-prevention program to the most prominently used program to date. Chapter 2 also includes an examination of recent literature on bullying in schools. The description includes discussion of the literature addressing the various roles associated with bullying. Also included in Chapter 2 are discussions of the literature found in Bernstein's Artful Learning™ school-reform model, lived experiences, the arts and bullying, and arts-integration programs. The review provides the basis for the purpose of the qualitative phenomenological study. The purpose of the qualitative hermeneutical phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of a purposeful sample of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade elementary teachers concerning the effect of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model strategies on bullying behaviors of fourth- and fifth-grade students at an arts magnate school in central Florida.

Documentation

The search for information related to the topics and keywords associated with this study included 173 peer-reviewed journals from the University of Phoenix's EBSCO*host* database, ProQuest database, Sage Full-Text Collections, Gale PowerSearch, Google Scholar, and Dissertation and Theses: Full-Text databases. The search also included 25 scholarly books; statistical data retrieved from websites such as the U.S. Department of

Health and Human Services, the National Center for Education Statistics, the National

Association of School Psychologists, and university instructional articles.

Historical Overview

Student bullying has been a problem in schools for many years (Kim, 2004).

Olweus, a psychology research professor from Norway, was the first researcher to

conduct formal studies of bullying (Aluede et al., 2008; Hazelden, 2011). The results of

these studies were published in Sweden, in a book entitled *Aggression in Schools: The*

Bullies and the Whipping Boys. The book was published in the United States in 1978

(Hazelden Foundation, 2011). Olweus fought for students to have the right to attend safe

schools. In 1981, Olweus proposed the enactment of a law against bullying in school. In

1981, Norway was the first country to create legislation that established an ombudsman

for children. The legislation made Norway the first country to promote the progression

of children's rights (Austin, 2006). Sweden, however, led the to way, by establishing

legislation that mandated linking the Children's Ombudsmen to the Convention of the

Rights of the Child (Austin, 2006).

The 1983 suicidal death of three boys as a result of extreme bullying precipitated

the Ministry of Education's movement against bullying in schools (Hazelden Foundation,

2011). The national campaign led to the development of the Olweus Bullying Prevention

Program. After many revisions, the program was implemented in all elementary and

lower secondary schools throughout Norway (Hazelden Foundation, 2011).

After the success of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in other countries,

Olweus brought the program to the United States. In the early 1990s, Olweus, along with

Clemson University professors, Limber and Melton, collaborated on implementing and evaluating the program in the United States (Limber and Olweus, 2003).

Bullying Overview

      Bullying. Bullying is a growing problem in schools of the United States (Maunder & Tattersall, 2010). Herbert and Veeh (2012) found that the United States is on the lower spectrum of countries with a prevalence of bullying in schools. Herbert and Veeh attributed the United States with a 29.9% rate of bulling. However, countries in Asia and Africa had higher prevalence rates: India 31.4%, South Korea, 40%, South Africa 36.3%, Taiwan 31.4%, and Australia 47.3%.   On the other had, Scandinavian countries had significantly lower bullying prevalence rate ranging between 6% and 15.2%.

      Bullying was defined as the repetitive aggressive physical or verbal behaviors as well as threats of behavior toward others who the aggressor considers to be weaker (Aluede et al., 2008). Researchers conducted studies to develop theories of the reasons children become bullies. Cunningham (2007) posited, "Bullying is an act of social aggression" (p. 459). Pepler and Craig (2008) theorized that bullying is a distortion of the relationship process and the key to rectifying this distortion is helping children increase their ability to interact and build long-lasting relationships with their peers. A distinction between types of bullies and victims involves differentiating between them by labeling them as aggressive victims, pure victims, and pure bullies.

      Roles in bullying. When exploring the characteristics of students involved in bullying, four categories of children are usually involved, defined below: the bully, the victim, the bully victim, and the bystander. Georgiou and Stavrinides (2008) posited that

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the students in each of the first three categories have different psychological and social summaries and classifications. Georgiou and Stavrinides asserted that of the three groups of children, bully victims are most likely to suffer from depression. Murphy and Faulkner (2012) investigated the communication of children during dyadic computer tasks and identified a bullying role that differed from Georgiou and Stavrinides roles. Murphy and Faulkner's categories were the bully (the child who initiates the bullying), the defender (the child who helps the victim), and non-role (the child who does not fit in any category or is equally a part of more than one category). Murphy and Faulkner posited, non-role children were swayed by the role of the person with whom they work (bully, defender, or non-role).

Bullies. Bullies are the students who consistently exhibit aggressive behavior toward another student who they consider weaker or different. Schafer, Korn, Brodbeck, Wolke, and Schulz (2005) defined a bully as a child who demonstrates repeated and organized aggressive behavior toward a peer for 3 months or more. Bullies maintain their roles as bullies throughout primary school (Schafer et al., 2005). Schafer et al. (2005) found students' roles, as bullies in primary school, were strong indicators that they would maintain the roles of bullies in secondary school. Therefore, Schafer et al. determined that the role of bully had high stability. Bullies externalize their problems and are often very vulnerable and unsure of their abilities (Cunningham, 2007; Georgiou & Stavrinides, 2008; Wienke Totura et al., 2009). To offset these insecurities, bullies use aggression to create a façade of being dominant over others.

A leader often emerges among the children labeled bullies called the ringleader. The ringleader has the ability to understand how others think and manipulate them into

mistreating a child the bully identifies as the most weak and vulnerable (Caravita, DiBlasio, & Salmivalli, 2010). The ability to understand how others think is called theory of mind (ToM), or the understanding of the mental state of others (Caravita et al., 2010). Caravita et al. (2010) found they could use ToM to predict who would be a ringleader among bullies. However, research results revealed that ToM worked to determine ringleader bullies in boys, but did not work for identifying girl ringleaders (Caravita et al., 2010).

On the other hand, ToM skills were a predictor of those students who understood how others felt and were willing to help those who were being victimized. However, if the student had low status with peers, fear of retaliation might prevent them from intervening. In contrast, if students with high ToM skills were popular with peers, they were willing to intervene without fear of retaliation (Caravita et al., 2010). Bullies with ToM skills who had high status among peers were not well liked. Rather, defenders with ToM skills who had high status among their peers were well liked (Caravita et al., 2010).

Bullies' behaviors are often repulsive, but their behaviors do not seem to lower their status among their peers. Cunningham (2007) asserted that aside from the fact that bullies use behaviors that are considered antisocial, they are often considered popular with their peers because of their propensity to challenge adult authority. Bullies gain more social status among each other the more they engage in bullying behaviors (Parault, Davis, & Pellegrini, 2007). Another characteristic of bullies is to disengage from school or demonstrate a lack of interest in school when they fail (Cunningham, 2007). Parault and Pellegrini (2007) asserted that bullies are the group of students that are more likely to engage in criminal activity, as they grow older.

The self-esteem of bullies is another factor that researchers have investigated. Bullies have the highest self-esteem for their roles (Dresler-Hawke and Whitehead, 2009). However, girls in this category gradually increase in self-esteem over time, whereas boys usually remain constant in their self-esteem (Dresler-Hawke & Whitehead, 2009). Pollastri, Cardemil, and O'Donnell (2010) noted that the sex of the child determines changes in self-esteem: boys remain the same, whereas girls increase in self-esteem. The disparity of the changes that take place between boys and girls may be that boys have a tendency to bully in overtly verbal and physical manners (direct bullying), whereas girls use (indirect bullying) psychological tactics (e.g., social isolation, vicious rumors; Carbone-Lopez, Esbensen, & Brick, 2010; Pollastri et al., 2010; Trach, Hymel, Waterhouse, & Neale, 2010). Teachers are more likely to identify and punish boys because their actions are obvious, whereas girls' actions are not easily identified as bullying (Carbone-Lopez et al., 2010; Pollastri et al., 2010 Pollastri's et al). study results indicated the nature of bully involvement, the gender, and the interfacing of these variables each played an important function in the self-worth of children in their study sample.

Another aspect of bullying is the relationships that influence bullying. Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita (2011) asserted that many of the distinctions found in bullies and victims are directly linked to their relationships with family and peers. The parents of bullies are usually unaffectionate and cold. In addition, the parents provide no discipline when their child exhibits aggressive behavior. The parents use aggressive tactics and physical punishment in raising their child. The marriage of the parents of bullies is usually riddled with conflict with a one sidedness of control (Hilton et al.,

2011). In this type of household, the boys usually become bullies and the girls are usually cautious and nervous. Finally, the parents provide very little supervision (Hilton et al., 2011).

Another relationship that rarely receives attention is the student–teacher relationship. The role of family influence on bullying has been the focus of most studies, with very little attention or investigation on the role of teachers in increasing or reducing the incidence of bullying and victimization (Murray-Harvey & Slee, 2010). The student-teacher relationship can either be problematic or supportive. The relationship may be problematic if the teacher is verbally abusive; but the relationship can be a buffer against the negative effects of bullying if the relationship is supportive (Murray-Harvey & Slee, 2010). Murray-Harvey and Slee (2010) asserted schools should teach students how to refrain from behaving aggressively. Their study results revealed supportive relationships reduced the levels of bullying (Murray-Harvey & Slee, 2010).

Victims. Victims are the students who are targeted by bullies because they seem weaker or different. Victims of bullying internalize their problems, which often leads to depression and anxiety (Georgiou & Stavrinides, 2008; Wienke Totura et al., 2009). Victims do not like bullying, but will often have friends who are bullies. In addition, victims sometimes have some physical attribute that makes them seem different from other students. These differences may be size, a disability, glasses, or race, and increased the risk of students being a victim of bullying (Georgiou & Stavrinides, 2008). Cunningham (2007) found that victims were socially isolated and were more comfortable in academic settings. Victims experience more loneliness and social anxiety than other categories associated with bullying (Cunningham, 2007). Chronic victimizations were

experienced more between the ages of 6 and 9 for boys and girls. In opposition to the stability rate of the role of bully, the stability rate for victims is low in primary school. In contrast, victims in secondary school often maintain their role as victims (Schafer et al., 2005). Schafer et al. (2005) asserted that students' role as victim in primary school was not an indication that they would retain the same role in secondary school.

Another item for consideration is the effect of social rejection on the stability of the role of victims. Schafer et al. (2005) asserted that a child who experiences social rejection in primary school is at risk of experiencing social rejection in secondary school. The stability of social rejection through primary and secondary school was a direct contradiction to the stability of the role of victim. The fact that the role of victim was not stable in primary school indicated that fewer students are targets of bullying in secondary school. However, Schafer et al. found that the stability of the role of victim was related to the stability of social rejection.

A 2007 study revealed that dialogue between victims of bullying and the school health nurse was beneficial (Borup & Holstein, 2007). The students would frequently discuss their problems with a school nurse. Less than half of the participants who self-reported as victims of bullying put the nurse's advice into action, whereas more than half of the students decided to solve their problems in their own way. More than half of the participants talked to their parents about their discussions with the school nurse. The study revealed that 8% of students were victimized on a weekly basis over eight weeks. The students who were victims of bullying were more likely to complain about their health issues. The overarching outcome of the study revealed that many of the victims,

who had dialogue with the school health nurse, felt that their discussions with the school nurse were beneficial (Borup & Holstein, 2007).

As with bullies, the self-esteem of students who experience victimization is another aspect that evokes investigation. Because of the emotional and physical attacks associated with victimization, most victims have low self-esteem (Pollastri et al., 2010; Ybrandt & Armelius, 2010). Although not as low as bully victim, victims struggle with their perception of themselves or their self-esteem as they internalize their problem. The internalization often leads to breaking rules and acting out in an effort to gain popularity, which eventually leads to aggressive behaviors and victims becoming bully victims (Ybrandt & Armelius, 2010). Murray-Harvey and Slee's (2010) study results indicated that students who are victimized are at risk of (a) threat to mental fitness; (b) facing surmounting bullying problems, and (c) becoming bullies themselves.

When examining the influences of victims, a few of the characteristics of the families resemble those of bullies with slight differences. Similar to families of bullies, an imbalance of power is evident between the mother and father. In addition, the victim's relationship with their siblings is usually uncertain. A study by Finkelhor, Ormrod, and Turner (2009) revealed victimization by siblings is highest between the ages of 6 and 9 and declines after 9 years of age. Peer assaults increased for boys after 9 years of age. The study revealed girls had no significant increase in peer assaults. Physical bullying reached its peak between ages of 6 and 9 (Finkelhor et al., 2009). Again mirroring those of the bully, the victim's parents use aggressive parenting strategies. However, some differences are evident in the parent–child relationship, according to the sex of the child. Girls in the victim category do not have good relationships with their

mothers. In contrast, boy victims have poor relationships with their fathers, especially if

the fathers are noncustodial (Hilton et al, 2011). Murray-Harvey and Slee (2010) found a

strong connection between being targeted for bullying and peer-relationship stress.

Supportive peer relationships correlated with fewer reports of victimization. The

strongest relationships for reducing reports of bullying were supportive relationships with

teachers (Murray-Harvey & Slee, 2010).

      The results of a pilot study evaluating the effectiveness of the Bullies to Buddies

(B2B) training program revealed the normal recommendation of responding to bullies by

telling them to stop, getting angry, telling an adult, or getting even with the bully is not an

effective coping strategy. In fact, the B2B program indicates that these reactions

intensify the bullying (Felix, 2010). The recommended response is to ignore the bullying

behavior and treat the bully in a friendly manner. The study results revealed students

trained in the B2B program experience a reduction in bullying behaviors being directed

towards them (Felix, 2010).

      Bully victims. Bully victims are those students who have experienced both ends

of the spectrum. Bully victims are those students who have been the target of bullying,

but who also bully others. Of the three categories, bullies, victims, and bully victims,

bully victims are the most troubled (Cunningham, 2007; Pollastri et al., 2010; Ybrandt &

Armelius, 2010). Bully victims are, very sensitive, rash, and fretful; and they have very

few social skills. Therefore, their behavior makes them ostracized by their peers. When

bullying victims are the targets of bullying, they retaliate by targeting others who they

consider weaker than themselves (Cunningham, 2007).

Examining the self-esteem of bully-victims provides some interesting insights. Bully victims have lower self-esteem when compared to the other roles of bulling, (Pollastri et al, 2010; Ybrandt & Armelius, 2010). Pollastri et al. (2010) found that only girl bully victims' self-esteem was lower than bullies' self-esteem. Looking a little closer at the self-esteem aspect of bullying, Pollastri et al. found that girl bully victims have lower self-esteem than boys who are bully victims. However, girl bullies' self-esteem increased over time (Pollastri et al., 2010). Pollastri et al. asserted that no matter the role, bully or bully victim, girls' self-esteem was lower. Likewise, no matter the role, bully, or bully victim, the boys had high self-esteem. A strong network of friends can counteract an unstable or negative home environment. Victims who have a supportive network of friends are seldom victims of bullying (Hilton et al., 2011).

A closer look at the families of bully victims also reveals very similar characteristics in the families of bullies. An imbalance of power is evident and family members are cold and not close to each other. In addition, the family does not model or have good problem-solving skills. The parents have a tendency to be overprotective and inconsistent in disciplining their children. Finally, the parents have poor monitoring skills (Hilton et al., 2011).

*Bystanders***.** Another group of students who have a role in bullying is bystanders. Bystanders may be categorized into four groups: those who help the bully, those encourage the bully's behavior, those who just watch, and those who defend the victim (Oh & Hazler, 2009). Oh and Hazler (2009) identified assistants as the students who participate in the act of bullying by capturing and or restraining the victim. The assistant is usually a fan of the bully and is a part of the bully's entourage (Trach et al., 2010). On

the other hand, Crapanzano, Frick, Childs, and Terranova (2011) posited, the assistant is the child who participates in the bullying by chasing and detaining the victim for the bully.

In contrast, reinforcers are bystanders who stand on the sidelines and encourage the aggressor to continue with aggressive behavior (Oh & Hazler, 2009; Trach et al., 2010). Outsiders are students who avoid the act of bullying and try to remain uninvolved with the act of bullying. Outsiders do not choose sides and maintain a neutral stance. Outsiders are the majority of students who are considered bystanders. The outsiders passively watch the bullying as it occurs, but do not engage for or against the actions. As children grow older, they are more often categorized as outsiders (Trach et al., 2010). The fact that outsiders watch the bullying is an unspoken message that they support the behavior entourage (Trach et al., 2010). The last classification of bystander is defenders. Defenders are those students who stand up for the victims and try to protect them from the aggressive behaviors of the bully (Oh & Hazler, 2009; Trach et al., 2010).

The role of bystander can provide solutions to the problem of bullying. Oh and Hazler (2009) asserted that bystanders have the potential to stop most of the bullying that takes place on school campuses, but most bystanders' behavior assist and encourage bullying rather than stop the behavior. Feinberg (2003), the assistant executive director of the National Association of School Psychologists, suggested making students responsible for their school community, by allowing them to help develop the rules and consequences. Feinberg further suggested giving students an opportunity to mediate and work on intervention teams. The reason for bystanders' reluctance to intervene in cases of bullying is that they fear retaliation by the bully. The results of the study conducted by

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Oh and Hazler indicated that female bystanders are more likely to intervene on behalf of the victim than male bystanders. Another important finding is bystanders who are bullies or bully victims encourage and support bullying behaviors. Bystanders may get involved with bullying, but they do not start it. Some watch, but do not join in. Others avoid the bulling or intervene. The self-esteem of the bystander is usually high. Bystanders seem to have higher self-esteem than all of the other categories associated with bullying (Pollastri et al., 2010).

Bystanders have several responses to witnessing bullying behaviors. The responses usually differ according to the sex of the bystander (Trach et al., 2010). Trach et al. (2010) found that boys would convince friends to get back at the bully. On the other hand, girl bystanders tried a number of options: ordered the bully to stop; communicated with the bully's friends; assisted the victim; collaborated with friends, or talked to another equal. Both girls and boys reported deserting the scene, refusing to notice the bully, staying away from the bully, or diverting the bully's attention. Older bystanders reported, deserting the scene, convincing others to even the score, or doing nothing (Trach et al., 2010).

Aggressive Victims Versus Pure Bullies

Aggressive victims are children who have been the victims of bullying, who then go out and demonstrate aggressive behaviors toward others. Pure bullies have never been the victim of bullying, but demonstrate aggressive behaviors toward those the bully believes are weaker. Unnever (2005) found minimal differences between aggressive victims and pure bullies. Unnever reported a significant difference in the kind of bullying employed by aggressive victims and pure bullies. Aggressive victims rarely

initiate bullying, whereas pure bullies most often initiated bullying behavior (Unnever, 2005).

Holt et al. (2007) found that students who were bullies, victims, or bully-victims (aggressive victims) were often victims of more serious forms of aggression such as regular crimes, child abuse, sexual abuse, and abuse from other students their age and siblings. Female students with learning disabilities and female students without learning disabilities had significantly different experiences in reference to bullying. Female students with learning disabilities experienced bullying, whereas female students without learning disabilities had fewer bullying experiences (Dev & Burdulis, 2008). The media has focused on some of the more extreme cases of bullying and the effect these cases have on schools in the United States. Some of the lesser forms of bullying or victimization may create a dangerous climate in schools because they are occurring more frequently (Carbone-Lopez et al, 2010). Carbone-Lopez et al. (2010) asserted that students experience indirect bullying, (e.g., teasing, vicious rumors, and social isolation twice as often as direct bullying by verbal or physical attacks).

Contributing Factors

Many factors contribute to children exhibiting bullying behaviors. The role of parents is an area of disagreement, with varying views on the role of the parent's affect on a child's propensity to bully. Veenstra et al. (2005) found that parents were not a significant factor in determining preadolescent students' predisposition for bullying. Socioeconomic status might be a determining factor in bullying behaviors (Veenstra et al., 2005). Study results by Thomas and Bierman (2006) indicated students from low socioeconomic neighborhoods more often experienced, engaged in, or witnesses of

bullying. Schools located in neighborhoods in a state of disrepair, rather than neighborhoods with a high rate of crime, were a stronger indicator of student aggression in schools (Limbos & Casteel, 2008). Aluede et al. (2008) asserted that bullies use bullying behaviors as a way to cope with a problem or situation at home. The literature on the factors contributing to bullying behaviors was varied (Aluede et al., 2008; Limbos & Casteel, 2008; Thomas & Bierman, 2006; Veenstra et al., 2005).

The sex of the child determines how bullying will manifest. Chapell et al (2006) noted a difference between boys and girls in type of bullying. Male bullies were prone to verbal and physical abuse (direct bullying). However, both male and female bullies used social bullying (indirect bullying). Aluede et al. (2008) found that victims suffered symptoms of depression more often from indirect bullying than victims who experienced direct bullying. Bullying is considered a mental health problem (Cunningham, 2007).

Another aspect of bullying is frequent occurrences of bullying on elementary school playgrounds. Physical and relational bullying occurs on the playground because of a lack of active adult supervision (Siemers, 2006). Siemers (2006) found that many victims of bullying worry about physical aggression on the playground, along with fear of the destruction of their social relationships.

Safe Schools

Schools are the main venue for peer-on-peer aggression (Saxman, 2005). In addition to schools being a place where peer-on-peer aggression thrives, much of students' perceptions of the school's safety rely on their perception of their teachers' awareness of and willingness to intervene when bullying occurs. Saxman (2005) found that teachers did not consider relational bullying as true bullying, and therefore were less

likely to intervene. However, teachers considered physical bullying as true bullying and felt they should intervene.

Morrison (2003) took a different approach to school safety by looking at the way educators handled discipline, aggressive behaviors, and bullying. Morrison discussed two approaches to discipline: punitive and permissive therapeutic. In punitive approaches, educators focus on the good of the community rather than the individual student. In the permissive therapeutic approach, educators focus on helping the individual student rather prioritizing the good of the community. The permissive therapeutic approach is a restorative approach to discipline (Morrison, 2003). Lindle (2008) posited that school safety begins with building social capital in neighborhoods and in students' surrounding sociological system, which helps decrease bullying behaviors.

Another method of determining the safety of a school involves looking at the crime rate and demographics of the surrounding communities. Students consider a school safe when the school has low incidences of bullying (Kartal & Bilgin, 2009). Astor, Benbenishty, and Nuñez (2009) believed student victimization or bullying mirrors the crime rate and demographics of the school's surrounding communities. Therefore, a neighborhood with a high crime rate was indicative that school violence would be high. Likewise, schools in neighborhoods with low crime rates and high socioeconomic status should have low rates of violence (Astor et al., 2009). However, Astor et al. found that some schools do not fit the predicted occurrences of school violence when exploring community crime or poverty rates. Astor et al. referred to these schools as theoretically atypical schools. Astor et al. identified two types of atypical schools: atypical low levels

of violence based on community crime and demographics, and atypically high levels of violence based on community crime rates and demographics.

The study results revealed theoretically atypical schools were common. Astor et al. (2009) found schools were unusually high or low in different categories of violence. In addition, some schools experienced a reduction in school violence. The reductions were significantly linked to changes in principals. The new principals' organizational changes were reflected in the school's rate of violence. Astor et al. asserted, the results of their qualitative study signified that the hypothetically unusually low violence schools have a amalgamation of structure and school atmosphere components that are executed by a leader with extraordinary foresight. Astor et al. found the most atypical low-violence schools did not use evidence-based programs, but created safe schools by building a community of teachers and students and building relationships.

A study of school safety and elementary students provided valuable information about the characteristics that made them feel unsafe in school. Jacobson, Riesch, Temkin, Kedrowski, and Kluba (2011) conducted a study that explored the conditions in the school's climate that made students feel unsafe. Of the 243 participants, 23.8% felt unsafe sometimes or all of the time. Feeling unsafe caused some students to stay home from school and activities. However, the majority of the participants chose to go to school and participate in activities in spite of their feelings. The Jacobson et al. (2011) study revealed six conditions that made the students feel unsafe: (a) tormenting, intimidating, and bullying; (b) watching others being victimized; (c) surroundings; (d) past experiences in earlier grades; (e) academic stressors; and (f) other. Ripski and Gregory (2009) asserted that when students feel safe at school, they are more engaged in

their education and are more likely to experience academic success (Booren, Handy, & Power, 2011). The majority of a child's day is spent in school. Therefore, schools should make sure students feel safe. Knowing the conditions that provoke unsafe feelings is one way schools can work toward ensuring students feel safe.

The National Association of School Psychologists created a compilation of studies offering guidelines for effective bullying prevention programs. Rossen and Cowan (2012) posited the use of bullying prevention programs with small groups does not produce the desired effect. Rather, the optimal bullying prevention program is one that encompasses an entire school and creates a culture where students and faculty feel they are safe and a part of the culture. Rossen and Cowan offer seven steps to developing an effective bullying prevention program. The seven steps are:

1) Evaluate the schools environment and surroundings,

2) Pinpoint the available resources at the school,

3) Create a team, consisting of representatives of all stakeholders, dedicated to facilitating school safety,

4) Immerse the school safety and bullying prevention plans into the district conduct policy,

5) Set positive disciplinary procedures,

6) Involve all stakeholders in the program by conveying the policies to them, and

7) Create a schedule for evaluating the climate of the school and the effectiveness of the of the program. The evaluation should also help identify areas that need more support.

Bernstein's Artful Learning™

The Bernstein Artful Learning™ model is a school reform model created in 1992 by developers at the Bernstein Center. The Artful Learning™ model was developed around Bernstein's belief children learn or gain knowledge of a concept best by learning the concept in the format of another subject (The Leonard Bernstein Office, 2005). The model evolved to its current state through 19 years of development, modification, implementation, and field research (The Leonard Bernstein Office, 2008–2009). The developers structured the model around learning units based on concepts demonstrated through masterworks. The masterwork may be a piece of art, music, dance, drama, architecture, scientific innovation, or literature (The Leonard Bernstein Office, 2008– 2009). The units carry students through four stages of development that are connected. During the first stage, the students are personally involved with the masterwork. In the second stage, the students explore and conduct an examination based on their experiences or involvement with the masterwork. In the third stage, students produce an original creation of their own that demonstrates their understanding of the concepts learned. In the final stage, students expand their understanding of the concept using different means (Griffin & Miyoshi, 2009). The four phases allow the students room to connect with the masterwork and build interest, facilitating the transfer of knowledge gained into their own creation, which demonstrates their understanding of the concept learned.

The Grammy Foundation sponsors the Artful Learning™ model and provides three levels of training and professional development (The Leonard Bernstein Office, 2008–2009). Upon initial implementation, the foundation provides 5 days of training, which is Level 1 training. Throughout the year, trainers visit the school to provide

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support for the design and development of the units. The foundation also offers training

for principals and an Artful Learning™ site-based facilitator (The Leonard Bernstein

Office, 2008–2009). The facilitator remains on site to assist in implementing and

maintaining the program. Schools continuing the program receive Level 2 and Level 3

training. The professional-development opportunities coupled with the student-centered

learning units provides a learning experience that is a comprehensive and well-rounded

learning experience for teachers as well as students (The Leonard Bernstein Office,

2008–2009).

Artful Learning™ has several components that differentiate the learning model

from other arts-integration programs. The model provides a platform that allows students

to access all other subject areas (The Leonard Bernstein Office, 2008–2009). Arts-based

strategies provide students with different ways to express the knowledge gained, help

students discover their personal learning strengths, and facilitate students' active

engagement and investment in their own learning. The professional development

provides teachers with the same learning experiences students' experience. The

Bernstein Office provides professional development for teachers and helps teachers

create their curriculum and units of study, creating an infrastructure that has sustainability

(The Leonard Bernstein Office, 2008–2009).

In the 2004/2009 reports, the UCLA National Center for Research Evaluation,

Standards and Student Testing (CRESST) found teachers believed the Artful Learning™

model help them become better teachers. In addition, the training was easily used in the

classroom and gendered more collaborative efforts between members of the staff. (The

Leonard Bernstein Office, 2008–2009). The Bernstein Office also provides support to

help the site-based Artful Learning™ leadership team members, who then provide support to increase the creativity of the school community and independence as the program grows. Finally, the program helps create a culture of life-long learning for everyone (The Leonard Bernstein Office, 2008–2009).

The Arts and Bullying

Using the arts as a vehicle to prevent bullying is a relatively new concept. However, Haner et al. (2010) believed arts-based curricula's distinctive power to change hearts and minds makes it an effective tool in bulling prevention. Haner et al. asserted that among the roles of bullying, individual students have different needs. The heterogeneity found in the bullying roles means no one method of building healthy relationships will work for all students (Bosacki, Marini & Dane, 2006). Haner et al. further posited that stories that depict simplistic outcomes or resolutions to the problem of bullying overplay the bully as a bad or evil person and the victim's ability to overcome obstacles and free themselves. These depictions are unrealistic, and though the stories inspire emotional connection for students, they do not provide students with real-life solutions to the problem (Haner et al., 2010).

The belief that the arts may have the potential to help prevent or lower the rate of bullying in schools is supported by Vygotsky's (1978) social-cultural theory. Haner et al. (2010) discussed two content areas that have the power to help prevent bullying: theater and music. Haner et al. held, the strength of performance lies in it ability to alter the way viewer feels and thinks. Cooper (2004) used Vygotsky's social-cultural theory when discussing the way theater creates preconditions of learning that help students interact with each other and the performers. Haner et al. asserted dramatic interventions were

successfully used to change other antisocial behaviors. When discussing the power of music, Haner et al. discussed the emotion evoked by music through the choice of key, rhythm, and harmony. Trainor (2008) proposed that music had the power to elicit emotions that transcend cultures around the world.

The results of the Haner et al. (2010) study yielded significant results that have implications for future studies. These researchers measured the ability of an arts-based curriculum to decrease bullying. Students watched an opera that had several brief scenes portraying possible situations that mimicked real life situations and negative results (Haner et al., 2010). The results revealed a decrease in bullying by boys, but an increase in bullying by girls. In addition, Haner et al. found a significant decrease in students reporting victimization. The increase in bullying by girls may have been the result of the girls being drawn to a popular female bully in the opera. No matter the cause, the results demonstrated that the arts-based program did affect the bullying that took place on the campuses (Haner et al., 2010).

Arts Integration

School environment is an important factor in the social and mental development of students. Spratt, Shucksmith, Philip, and Watson (2006) asserted that school environment depends on the relationship between students and all staff members working at the school. Spratt et al. found that one of the most important factors in the students' perception of the school environment was their relationship with staff members outside of academic concerns. Case (2007) noted a gap in researchers' ability to demonstrate the relationship between school atmosphere and "students' interactions with others, how the student feels, what the student does, and the student's intellectual development.

Arts integration is a method of teaching and learning academic subjects through the vehicle of the arts. Students learn academics through units that are student centered and address multiple modalities of learning, such as visual, tactile, and auditory learners. The arts provide connections that facilitate a layering effect between subjects (LaJevic, 2009; Lynch, 2007). In addition, arts integration is complimentary to and supports classroom curriculum (Gullatt, 2008; LaJevic, 2009).

Teachers usually set up the unit and give students information about the unit and directions before students embark on an inquiry-based exploration of the unit. Students are free to visit, discuss, and share information as they accomplish the goals established by the teacher (Lynch, 2007). The teacher plays a minimal role during the students' inquiry of the unit. Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD theory supports the social nature of arts-integrated units. Vygotsky's developed sociocultural theory from ZPD theory, asserting that students develop cognitively when they interact with one another socially. As students work together collaboratively, they internalize the cognitive changes and learn the concepts (Kumar, 1996). On the other hand, Bandura's (1971) social learning theory might have been a more viable theoretical framework for this study. Bandura posited, new configurations of behavior can be developed through direct involvement or by watching others. The response to the behavior, reward or reprimand, determines whether the individual considers the behavior successful or a failure. The individual's judgment of the success of the behavior determines whether the individual retains or discards the behavior (Bandura).

Traditionally, classroom teachers use the arts as a topping or garnish to the academic curriculum. However, classroom teachers who use arts-integration strategies to

teach academic subjects use an instructional and learning method that helps students build their own understanding in a deeper and more meaningful way, as they attempt to understand the world around them (Lynch, 2007; Trent, 2009). Lynch (2007) asserted that through arts-integration lessons "meaning is created, represented, and interpreted through the use of different semiotic, or sign, systems, which learners naturally employ as they make sense of the world" (p. 34). Lynch noted three qualities that keep students involved in the artful-learning experience: (a) students get to use all of their personal attributes in significant ways, (b) students determine how they will work with the content, and (c) the learning experience was a social encounter. Gullatt (2008) and Lynch found that employing arts integration in the classroom developed a safe environment where students do not mind taking risks because they do not have to create a perfect work of art or product. The students' objective is to create a project that demonstrates their understanding of the targeted concepts. Likewise, Trent (2009) discussed several outcomes in a study of an arts-integration program in an urban elementary school:

1) The lessons reinforce student-learning according in of the chosen benchmarks.

2) Students found the experience pleasing and demonstrated a sense of effectiveness and value.

3) Students were able to transfer the learning,

4) Teachers had easy access to materials and were able to share lesson plans,

5) The program offers an organized of assessment of student understanding,

6) The approach is user friendly for teachers with limited arts backgrounds, and

7) Arts integration deals with standards and benchmarks from multiple subject matters.

Vygotsky's Social-Development Theory

Vygotsky was a Russian psychologist, whose "theory of social development is the foundation of constructivism" (Learning Theories Knowledgebase, 2011, para. 3). Vygotsky believed that cognitive development does not take place until a child socially interacts with others. Vygotsky posited, every process in a child's cultural development manifests on two occasion: first between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)" (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky believed children master concepts by their social contact with the concept. Children learn through social interaction with others who are more knowledgeable. These people help children build their knowledge of the concept: Vygotsky's ZPD. Vygotsky believed that children have their greatest learning opportunities while at play (Deborah & Bodrova, 2001). Vygotsky posited that learning facilitates development when the learning occurs in a child's ZPD (Leong & Bodrova, 2001). Vygotsky also found that adult–child dialogue is the focal point of cognitive development. Lantolf and Poehner (2011) asserted the ZPD is a good assessment tool, simultaneously facilitating development without concentrating on product, which is the conventional mode of assessment. Vygotsky believed the ZPD orients instruction and cognitive development as a continuous process (Lantolf & Poehner, 2011). Morrissey and Brown (2009) asserted, Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development is the variance between what a child has the ability to do without help and what a child can achieve with help from a adult or proficient peers, offers an avenue for exploring a child's process of change in the surround conditions of dyadic communication.

Summary

Bullying has been a problem for many years (Kim, 2004). However, Olweus was the first researcher to conduct a formal or systematic study of bullying in 1978 (Hazelden Foundation, 2011). Many researchers have endeavored to explore the phenomenon of bullying, examining bullying through different approaches to help leaders and educators understand the many facets of bullying. The literature review for the study included a brief description of some of the efforts employed to prevent bullying. The historical overview began with Olweus' pioneering research, which he began in Sweden and concluded with the implementation of Olweus' bully-prevention program in the United States (Aluede et al., 2008; Hazelden Foundation, 2011).

The overview included a review of the most recent research on bullying, covering the different characteristics of bullying and a systematic exploration of the roles involved in bullying. These roles included bullies, victims, bully victims, and bystanders. In addition, the overview includes a discussion of gangs, safe schools, Bernstein's Artful Learning™ school-reform model, a discussion of lived experiences, the arts and bullying, arts-integration programs, and Vygotsky's social-development theory.

Conclusion

Based on the review of current literature, bullying is a growing problem in American schools (Werle, 2006). The two categories of bullying are direct (physical and verbal) and indirect (relationship bullying) bullying. Various researchers (Limbos & Casteel, 2006; Thomas & Bierman, 2006; Veenstra et al., 2005) had opposing ideas of the types of neighborhoods or school locations that engender more bullying behaviors. However, Saxman (2005) agreed that schools are the most prevalent venue for bullying

behavior. Very little current research is available about the effects of arts-integration programs on bullying behaviors in schools.

Chapter 2 included a current and historical review of literature. After reviewing the literature, an apparent lack of research on the impact of arts integration on bullying behaviors was evident. Chapter 3 includes a review of the purpose statement and a description of the methodology of the research study, the survey instrument, and the statistical approach applied.

Chapter 3

Method

The purpose of the qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological research design was to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of a purposeful sample of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade elementary teachers concerning the possible effect of the Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model strategies on bullying behaviors of fourth- and fifth-grade students at an arts-magnate school in central Florida. Study participants included fourth- and fifth-grade teachers who taught at the targeted elementary school between 2007 and 2011. The years chosen provided the perspectives and lived experiences of teachers who taught 2010–2011 fourth- and fifth-grade students prior to the implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model. Chapter 3 includes a discussion of the research method and the appropriateness of the research design. Chapter 3 also includes a discussion of the populations, sampling, data-collection procedures, and rationale.

Appropriateness of the Research-Method Design

The use of a qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological method provided a means for the possible discovery of a program that creates a condition or an atmosphere conducive to deterring bullying. Phenomenological studies help researchers provide a description of the phenomenon in the context of how teachers experienced the phenomenon and the personal meaning teachers placed on those experiences (Finlay, 2009). Moustakas (1994) posited hermeneutical phenomenological designs allow researchers to explore the lived experiences of the participants. Bloor and Wood (2006) asserted, the phenomenological method aims to characterize, grasp the meaning of, and explain the meanings of what a human goes through in life. Husserl (1959–1938) was a

pioneer of phenomenology and made a significant contribution to the philosophy of phenomenology. Husserl introduced the concept of lifeworld, which is a person's routine experience throughout a day. Husserl believed phenomena only have relevance in the lifeworld (Bloor & Wood, 2006). A disadvantage of phenomenological methods is a weakness in generalizing to the population (Bloor & Wood, 2006).

An inherent component of a qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological study is gaining the lived experiences of the subject (Moustakas). The researcher gets an insider (Finlay, 2009) view of participants. Finlay (2009) further asserted that researchers obtain a subjective understanding of the phenomenon instead of the objectivity one might gain from a scientific study. The researcher gets a view of the lifeworld of the targeted population's lived experiences.

Qualitative research methods help researchers explore and understand the populations' perception and beliefs about a phenomenon. Qualitative research relies on obtaining rich textual data that reflect observations, perceptions, opinions, and beliefs of research participants (Creswell, 2005; Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). Therefore, qualitative methods are subjective in contrast to quantitative studies, which are objective.

The study provides educational leaders with information that may help build school community and create an atmosphere that promotes a safe environment by giving students consistent access and integration in the arts. In addition, the qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological design also helped describe the relationship between the school community and aggressive behavior among students, and identified measures for building school community.

Finally, the qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological design described the perceived effect of consistent access to and integration in the arts on bullying on school campuses. Finlay (2009) believed, phenomenology allows readers to see and understand the worlds of others vicariously, by providing a full and descriptive portrayal of the lives and experiences of others.

The design included an interview process using an interview guide with open-ended questions involving 15 elementary teachers. The interview questions were designed to answer the question: What are the perceptions of the faculty from a central Florida elementary school using an arts-integration strategy with regard to student aggression and bullying behaviors? Using previous knowledge of the arts integration program implemented at the research site and the culture of the targeted the population helped the formulated the questions used in the research guide. The study provides education administrators with information about the value of arts-integration programs in helping deter aggressive and bullying behaviors on school campuses.

The design of the study was nonexperimental and facilitated the exploration of the participants' lived experiences in the context of the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2005). An experimental research design employs the scientific method and requires the manipulation of variables to determine the effect of the variables on the outcome (Creswell, 2005). The experimental design would not be appropriate for this study. The qualitative approach was a more appropriate choice for the study because of the rich textual data that it provided. A quantitative approach would not provide data that recount the teachers' lived experiences or their perceptions of those experiences. Creswell (2005) posited qualitative research is best used when the variables are unidentified and the

researcher needs to explore. The research model was appropriate because a qualitative

study requires exploration and understanding (Creswell, 2005). For this study, a

qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological study was the more appropriate choice.

Exploring the lived experiences of fourth- and fifth-grade teachers provides insight into

the role of arts integration in promoting positive behavior. The research design was

appropriate for a qualitative study because of the possibility of discovering variables that

create a condition or an atmosphere conducive to deterring bullying and promoting

positive classroom behaviors. Educators' understanding of the role of the arts could

deepen and broaden the ranges of student experiences through the implementation of a

learning model that builds school community and gives students various learning

strategies and experiences that address all learning styles.

Population, Sampling, Data-Collection Procedures, and Rationale

      Population. In research, a group of people who embody the same characteristics

is the population. The researcher does not necessarily have access to the population

(Trochim, 2006). The targeted population was reduced from 20 to 15 because of

diminished accessibility to the targeted 20. The accessible population is the group of

people having the specified characteristics to which the researcher has access. From the

accessible population, the researcher identifies a group of people with specific

characteristics that are identified by the researcher. The group drawn from the accessible

population is the targeted population. The researcher pulls a sample group from the

targeted population (Creswell, 2005).

      The school that was selected for the study was chosen because of its location in a

low-socioeconomic neighborhood. Another factor that influenced school choice was the

gang activity in the neighborhood and the aggressive behaviors seen on the campus. The final factor influencing the school choice for the study was the implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ school-reform model. The sample was chosen from the targeted population in the selected school.

Sampling. The sample is the group of people chosen to participate in the study (Creswell, 2005; Trochim, 2006). A purposive sample of 15 educators in an elementary school of the arts was included in the study and was considered an excellent representation of the targeted population. Purposive sampling involves choosing participants for their ability to provide information that will help the researcher understand the phenomenon (Creswell, 2005). The sample was also chosen for their level of expertise as educators and their ability to observe the phenomenon between 2007 and 2011. The sample included teachers who were new to the study site in 2006 and teachers who were employed at the study site 5 or more years. The only challenge to securing participants was contacting teachers who had transferred to a different facility. The sample size was the total possible sample size available for the study. A small sample is an adequate sample size for a qualitative study (Bloor & Wood, 2006; Creswell, 2005). Large samples were not appropriate for a qualitative study because of the large amounts of textual data (Bloor & Wood, 2006; Creswell, 2005).

The nature of the study required the use of nonprobability sampling. Researchers using nonprobability sampling do not use random sampling to obtain their sample. Random samples are used in probability sampling (Bloor & Wood, 2006). The best sampling method for the study was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling involves selecting a sample for a specific purpose. Expert sampling was the appropriate purposive

sampling for the study because of the expertise needed to understand the phenomenon. Trochim (2006) expressed two reasons to use expert sampling: needing the perspectives of those who have a particular expertise or obtaining evidence for the validity of another sampling approach. Trochim further asserted that the use of expert sampling provides support for the research from experts, although experts can be wrong at times.

Purposive sampling was chosen to receive the optimum textual data appropriate for the study. Each member of the sample was a certified educator, licensed to teach in the state in which the district is located. The sample members had a variety of years of experience as educators, as well as experience in a school with the demographic structure of the school selected for this study. The use of educators with varied educational experiences provided a variety of perspectives for the study.

Sampling limitations. Several limitations were associated with the study. The sample members selected to participate in the study had an opportunity decline to participate in the study. After consenting to participate in the study, participants had the right to choose to withdraw from the study. Finally, some educators selected for the study no longer work at the selected school, which decreased accessibility. Bloor and Wood (2006) discussed two types of population access. In open access, the researcher has relatively easy access to the population. In contrast, closed access means the researcher has difficulty making contact with the group. The difficulty may lie in gaining access to those holding high-ranking positions or those in the baser elements, such as those involved in illegal or dangerous activity (Bloor & Wood, 2006). Gatekeepers control access to research participants. In the study, the gatekeepers included district-level officials and the site-based administrator. Bloor and Wood suggested the following

strategies for gaining access to participants through the gatekeeper: (a) approaching the

gatekeeper in a nonthreatening manner, (b) providing periodic reports, and (c) convincing

the gatekeeper of the social value of the research.

Informed consent. All participants received an informed-consent letter that

included an introduction to the researcher, and the purpose of the study (see Appendix

A). The document also included a notification of possible risks from participation in the

study. However, the letter included promises to conduct the study ethically, protecting

the confidentiality of the participants during the data-collection procedure and during

release of data results. The data-collection process involved the ethical and transparent

securing of all research data, while using discretion to protect the participants'

confidentiality.

Data-collection-procedures rationale. The data-collection process entailed

conducting face-to-face interviews using an interview guide that had open-ended

questions (see Appendix B). However, because some participants were not available for

the face-to-face interview, telephone interviews were the alternative interview method.

To assure the validity of interview questions, a small group of five, from which the

population was taken, participated in a pilot test. The small group answered and

evaluated the questions. The responses to the pilot test provided important feedback on

the sample population's ability to understand and answer the interview questions. All

pilot study participants understood all questions, so no adjustments were made to the

interview questions. The administration of the interviews took place over a 2-month

period. Permission to conduct the study included letters of collaboration (see Appendix

D) and informed consent to use the premises and recruit participants from district officials and the site administrator (see Appendix C).

Validity

Conducting a study ethically is vital to ensuring the validity of a study (Creswell, 2005). In research, the term validity encompasses two subtopics: internal and external validity. Internal validity is the most applicable form of validity in qualitative research (Wilson, 2007). The discussion of validity includes a brief discourse on external validity, with the main focus on internal validity.

Internal validity. The validity of a study is the determination of the accuracy of the study (Burton & Bartlett, 2009); in other words, whether the study accomplished what it was created to accomplish (Burton & Bartlett, 2009; Wilson, 2007). For the study, the information obtained from the interviews provided a rich pool of descriptive responses helped increase the validity of the study (Burton & Bartlett, 2009). The teachers employed 3 to 5 years provided more objectivity in their recount of their experiences. The teachers employed at the site for 5 or more years provided insight from a position of years of observation.

External validity. External validity is the ability of researchers to generalize the results or inferences derived from a study to the larger population from which the sample participants were drawn (Wilson, 2007). External validity is not usually appropriate for qualitative research. However, some researchers try to provide dense descriptions to address external validity (Wilson, 2007). Therefore, external validity was addressed by providing dense and rich descriptions of participants' perceptions and experiences.

Generalizability

The generalizability of a study refers to finding the study results are true for other populations under particular circumstances outside of the study (Gibbs, 2002). In a qualitative study, the transferability of the study is similar to generalizability. The rich and in-depth analysis of the participants' responses may help educational leaders determine the transferability of the study results to similar populations (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). In the study, generalizability or transferability was perceived as the ability to use the study results to provide valuable information to educational leaders that might provide a foundation for the future development and implementation of learning strategies that help build school community through the arts and in individual schools across the district, and that may deter the behaviors that erode school community. Therefore, the transferability of the study is finding the study results true for other populations with similar circumstances as the study site.

Data Analysis

In qualitative research, the data are most commonly recorded as text and are the perceptions, experiences, and feelings of the participants of the study (Drew, Hardman, & Hosp, 2008). After the collecting the data, interpretations and inferences were drawn from the data by finding common themes in the data (Creswell, 2005; Drew et al., 2008). Qualitative researchers use words to identify themes and trends, explain phenomenon, and compare concepts (Drew et al., 2008). When conducting qualitative analysis, researchers have two approaches: deductive and inductive. The deductive approach has preestablished themes and the themes determine the direction of the study. In contrast, researchers using the inductive approach enter the study with the expectation of exploring

the themes that naturally present themselves in the data (Wilson, 2007). The inductive

approach was selected for the study.

Coding. The step following the collection of raw data is coding. Coding is a

method of organizing and sorting data to help identify themes that emerge in the data and

is essential in organizing qualitative data. Richard and Morse (as cited in Saldaña, 2009)

posited, coding guides the researcher from the factual information the concept or mental

image and from the concept to other factual information relevant to the concept. Coding

is a three-stage process that includes open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

When coding passages, the objective is determining the underlying meaning of the

passages (Saldaña, 2009). Determining the underlying meaning of a particular passage

requires the deconstruction of the passage (Saldaña, 2009). After determining the

underlying meaning of a passage, the passage is given a code.

Open coding. In the first stage, open coding is the process of examining raw data

to identify passages that are relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Gibbs,

2002). Any passages that are not relevant to the phenomenon are removed from the

analysis process. After identifying the relevant passages, the next step involves linking

the passages to a node (Gibbs, 2002). In open coding, the objective is to use the passages

to create theoretical names for the nodes by identifying the most prominent or important

categories of information, which then become the nodes (Gibbs, 2002).

Axial coding. The second stage of the coding process is axial coding. Axial

coding involves linking the relevant passages to nodes developed during open coding.

Nodes help connect concepts and theories by linking two or more passages that have the

same or similar coding (Gibbs, 2002). Once the passages are attached to a node, similar

nodes were attached to a root note, creating a node tree (Gibbs, 2002).

Selective coding. The third stage of the coding process was selective coding. In

the selective-coding process, the researcher identifies the more prominent concepts or

phenomena that emerged during the axial-coding stage to develop the story that linked

the different elements of the phenomenon under investigation (Gibbs, 2002). The process

then involved connecting the selected phenomenon to the other nodes. Gibbs (2002)

posited, at this stage, the researcher's work entails sorting, moving, dividing, and creating

new nodes.

Data-analysis software. The study included the use of the qualitative data-

analysis software, HyperResearch™. HyperResearch™ is a qualitative research software

program, developed by Research Ware, which assists the researcher with coding various

sources of media. The HyperResearch™ software program operates on dual platforms:

Windows and Macintosh. The software helps researchers sort and organize data from

audio, video, images, and textual data (Kung, 2007). The software helps "cipher and

recover, develop concepts, and conduct an evaluation of the data" (ResearchWare™,

1997–2010). Phrases or relevant words used commonly among 50% of the study

participants or more were identified as emerging themes. These themes helped determine

the possibility of using arts-integration programs as a possible method of creating an

atmosphere conducive to the reduction of bullying behaviors in similarly populated

schools and providing educational leaders with an additional tool to deter bullying

behaviors in their institutions.

Results Format

The final phase of the data-analysis process is reporting the findings. The format for presenting the findings of the study is a narrative to embrace or portray the rich text provided through the responses through the questionnaire. The narrative also includes diagrams, graphs, and tables to provide visual support of the findings.

Data Storage

An essential element in collecting the data is the secure storage of the data. To protect the confidentiality of participants and the content of their responses, the data were stored on an external hard drive. Access to the hard drive was password protected and secured in a locked file cabinet. The secured cabinet also contains the original raw data collected from the questionnaire. The hard copies will be shredded and the data erased after 3 years. Should any participants have decided to withdraw from the study; the participant's data would have been shredded immediately.

Summary

The use of a qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological method provided a means of discovering a type of program that may help create a school environment that deters bullying. The use of qualitative research helped bring an understanding of participants' perceptions of the phenomenon under investigation (Finlay, 2009). The population was a group of people who have the same characteristics identifiable by the research (Trochim, 2006).

When conducting a study, the researcher takes the sample group from the targeted population (Creswell, 2005). The sample chosen for this study was a purposive sampling of teachers new to the study site in 2007 and teachers who were employed at the site 5

years or more prior to implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model. The

purposive sample provided the optimum textual data necessary for the study. Each

participant received a consent form to conduct the study ethically and with transparency.

The data-collection process included the use of a researcher-generated interview-

question guide using open-ended questions to encourage participants to provide rich and

descriptive details about their perceptions of the phenomenon under exploration. After

the collection of all data, data analysis included the use of the HyperResearch™

qualitative-research-analysis software. The software helped extract themes and theories

that emerged from the data.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis

The qualitative phenomenological research design explored the perceptions and lived experiences of a purposeful sample of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade elementary teachers concerning the possible effects of the Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model strategies on bullying behaviors of fourth- and fifth-grade students at an arts magnate school in central Florida. Study participants included fourth- and fifth-grade teachers who taught at the targeted elementary school between 2007 and 2011. Interviews were conducted engaging the participants in discussions exploring their perceptions of their students' behaviors and interactions relating to bullying the years prior to, during, and following the 2008 implementation of the Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model strategies.

Chapter 4 contains a thorough analysis of the interviews. Also, included in Chapter 4 is a discussion of the process and procedures used in securing the sample for the study, limitations associated with conducting the interviews, data-analysis procedures, emergent themes, and results of the analysis. The discussion of the themes contains excerpts from the interview transcripts.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted with five nonparticipants from the population from which the sample was drawn to determine the participants' ability to comprehend and respond to the interview questions. Each pilot-study participant was asked to answer the interview questions on the interview guide sheet and note any questions needing

clarification. None of the pilot-study participants noted any problems in comprehending or answering the questions.

Data Collection

Interviews. The use of interviews as the mode for collecting data provided descriptive and detailed information about the teachers' perceptions. However, conducting interviews also had disadvantages. Creswell (2005) found interviews allow researchers an opportunity to control the information they receive through questioning. In contrast, participants have the ability to give answers they would like the researcher to hear. Before recruiting participants for the study, permission was received from the district level gatekeeper, as well as the site-based gatekeeper by obtaining a Permission to use Premises (see Appendix C) and a Letter of Collaboration (see Appendix D). Before conducting the interviews, a Confidentiality Statement (see Appendix E) was signed and notarized, agreeing to conduct the study ethically and to protect the confidentiality of participants and any identifying data. Interviews were conducted over a 2-month period. Each participant received an informed-consent letter (see Appendix A) prior to participating in the study.

Limitations. The targeted sample size for the study was 20. However, changes in administration led to many human-resource changes at the study site as well as some changes in location because of family situations. Some of the targeted participants no longer worked at the research site, which made contacting the potential participant quite difficult, and in some instances impossible. Therefore, the sample size was smaller than initially planned. Instead of the projected 20-sample size, the sample size was reduced to 15 (see Table 1). In addition to a reduction in the sample size, another limitation in the

study was the difficulty of some participants experienced when trying to recall their lived experiences. The passage of time was a limiting factor in receiving detailed recounts of lived experience, for some participants.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant Number	Gender	Years in Education	Years at the Research Site	Years at the Research Site Prior to Model Implementation
1016	Male	6	6	1
1017	Male	47	5	1
1018	Female	17	16	13
1019	Female	12	6	8
1020	Female	27	15	10
1021	Male	31	13	9
1022	Female	25	7	2
1023	Male	25	20	11
1024	Female	20	8	3
1025	Female	18	5	1
1026	Male	13	13	9
1027	Female	10	9	6
1028	Female	7	5	1
1029	Female	9	5	1
1046	Male	9	7	4

Note. n = 15

Data Analysis

Procedure. After collecting the raw data, the data were sent to a professional transcriptionist. Before receiving the data, the transcriptionist signed a nondisclosure

agreement (see Appendix F). 155 pages of transcripts were delivered in hard copy and digital formats. Another strategy for increasing the validity of a study is member checking (Cho & Allen, 2006). The transcripts were given back to the participants to make sure the transcripts were accurate and their responses matched their perceptions. Participants were encouraged to write in corrections, if necessary.

Open coding was the first step in identifying emerging ideas in the data. The data were then entered into HyperResearch™, a qualitative-research software program that assists with coding and organizing data. Each interview transcript was entered into the software program and coded, as different themes emerged while reviewing the transcripts. After coding the first transcript and creating a codebook, additional codes were added, as new ideas emerged from the remaining transcripts. The next step involved axial coding or connecting the concepts that had similar codes and placing them in a node. Finally, selective coding was used to organize similar nodes into themes. The next step involved organizing the codes according to the frequency of their appearance in the transcripts. Codes that did not show a significant frequency of 50% references or more were removed.
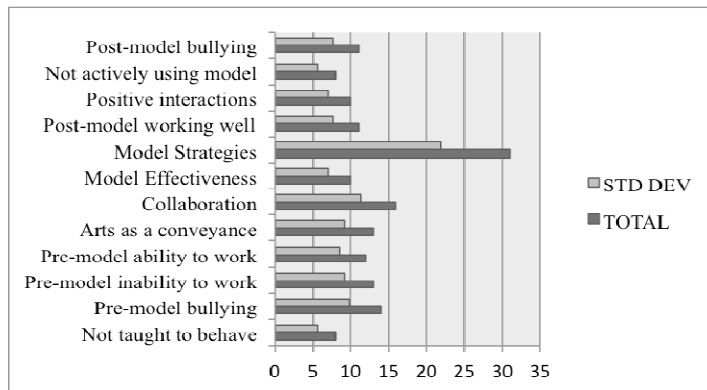
Figure 1. Code reference frequency chart: Standard deviation and totals of references to the codes.

The data were grouped into nodes used to identify major themes emerging from the data. In addition, the data were organized to determine whether the participant was referencing their perceptions that occurred prior to the 2008 implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model, after 3 years of implementation, or was a current observation.

Themes. Themes are the ideas that result when similar codes are put together to form one idea (Creswell, 2005). Care was taken to make sure the codes were identified as occurring during the correct time: prior to the implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model, during the 3rd year of implementation (2010–2011 school year), or at the present time. In this study, five themes emerged from the codes that had a significant number of references:

Theme 1: Bullying and aggressive behaviors were prevalent in the years prior to the implementation of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model.

Theme 2: Students worked well in small groups prior to the 2008 model implementation.

Theme 3: The model strategies helped students work well together and interact positively.

Theme 4: After 3 years of implementation, bullying and aggressive behaviors decreased.

Theme 5: Failure to continue the model has caused a rise in bullying and aggressive behaviors.

Theme 1. Bullying and aggressive behaviors was prevalent in the years prior to the implementation of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model. The data revealed Theme 1 was

a significantly referenced code. The general perception was bullying was a problem on

campus. The participants' perceptions revealed that students did not have the strategies or

skills to know how to interact with each other. Some teachers' observations are shown in

Table 2.

Table 2

Theme 1: Bullying and aggressive behaviors were prevalent in the years prior to the

implementation of Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model Interview Responses

Participant	Response
1016	But there was, I could say, a lot more students, you know, really taking their aggression out on other kids physically, verbally, in writing.
1017	When they believe that an adult is not closely monitoring them, that they will try things that they ordinarily wouldn't do if they knew the adult was immediately present. And even though we do have people on duty in those situations, we—the adults in charge usually are given overwhelming numbers of people that they have to monitor. And so the kids get the feeling that as soon as Group A distracts the monitor, then they take me off their radar and so I can do the pushing, the shoving, the tripping, the taunting that I—I might choose to do.
1020	I didn't witness it and it was occurring on the bus. It was with that young Hispanic kid (student's name), I think was his name. He was—there were a group of kids who rode the bus with him and they would try to trick him into—because he didn't know the English apparently—into saying things and doing things on the bus.
1025	They were targeting students who were involved, yes. They were targeting the kids that were very artistic. They were targeting kids that were—were enjoying—the arts.
1018	You would say they beat the hell out of each other. Now, you can't. Roughly aggressive, unforgiving and self-centered; I guess that's a—yeah, that's about the good way to describe it.
1026	Every year I have at least one child that could be called a bully... the bully is classically, in general, speaking in general terms, they're usually an insecure person that wants it to be all about them. And so I have noticed in groups where I do—you know, I always try to not put the bullies together—I try to space them out if I do have more than one. And a lot of times they still continue their bullying whether I am supervising or not, they tend to try to dominate the children in their group.
1027	Yeah, a lot of name-calling, a lot of fistfights—I mean, I was shocked at even girls fighting and—and seeing—even the younger kids fighting and bullying each other, calling names, racial slurs, even among the black people, black students themselves—fighting about who's light or who's dark I mean—yeah, there was a lot of bullying going on. I was surprised about that, too.
1028	It was a lot of manliness, kids making fun of each other; kids, you know, picking on each other in reference to how they looked, things like that.
1029	Prior to the implementation, I would say that bullying was happening. There was definitely some kids who were bullying more than others and who definitely did not feel like—they were not included as much, so you could tell that they didn't get along. And I remember one student in particular that was just—had a really rough time in my class—because of the fact that he wasn't accepted and the other kids just kind of turned him into an outcast.
1046	You know, I wouldn't say there was excessive bullying, given the students that I taught in particular in the higher grade levels, third, fourth and fifth, because they were a mixture of kids. The chemistry was definitely different than having just a—one class from one teacher. I wouldn't say it was an everyday occurrence over and over again as defined by bullying, but there was a lot of, you know, just teasing and joking around and, you know, sometimes students don't realize when to stop—or they, you know, they'll tease with their friends and then tease with someone that's not quite a friend—and hurt their feelings. And to define that as bullying is kind of tough unless it happens.

Note. Table 1 includes the participants' responses to questions 4, 5, 8, and 9 of the interview guide (See Appendix B). These questions explored teachers' observations of aggressive and bullying behaviors and their perceptions of the reasons for those behaviors. These questions targeted observations prior to the Artful Learning™ model implementation.

Theme 2. Students were able to work together in small groups prior to the 2008 model implementation. Theme 2 indicates that even though teachers observed bullying in their classroom, they found that when working in small groups, students were able to work well with each other. These teachers' perceptions were that small groups were a little less threatening, and students who would normally engage in bullying worked well in the team setting (see Table 3).

Table 3

Theme 2 Pre-model Student Ability to Work in Small Groups Interview Responses

Participant	Response
1017	Well, I've found that working in small groups has been a very positive type of environment to work in. I feel that it's much easier to connect with the students because I can give each one of them a lot more opportunities to respond to any kind of questioning or to make comments and that I can give them immediate feedback. And I don't have to feel like I have to move on to the next person.
1018	Well, obviously, the behavior's better in a small group. However, it's still self-centered, all about them don't care who they hurt.
1019	Small groups are much better because they're smaller groups and I can, I guess, direct their attention more. They're more focused on me instead of on each other. So in small groups, it's like they're different children than they are in the larger groups or whole classes. Q: So you don't see as much of the aggressive behaviors or not with small groups, no.
1018	You would say they beat the hell out of each other. Now, you can't. Roughly aggressive, unforgiving and self-centered; I guess that's a—yeah, that's about the good way to describe it.
1024	So the group worked fine together as long as I had the ones that were more needy than the others. I mean it worked out well for me.

Note. Table 3 includes participants' responses to their observations of students' interactions during small group activities prior to the Artful Learning™ model implementation and their perceptions of the reasons for those behaviors.

Although teachers believed students work well in small groups, some contributing factors seem to be the teachers' ability to separate opposing personalities and stand in closer proximity to the students. Teachers used close proximity to help deter bullying behaviors and choose the groups that a particular student joins.

Theme 3. The model strategies helped students work well together and interact

positively. Theme 3 was the most frequently referenced theme. The teachers believed

the strategies helped students develop the ability to positively interact with each other.

Students were able to work together toward a common goal and take ownership of their

learning. The teachers believed the Artful Learning™ model strategies accommodated

all learning modalities, giving all students an opportunity to contribute to class

explorations and projects (see Table 4).

Table 4

Theme 3 Model Strategies Interview Responses

Participant	Response
1017	I think when we bring up the Artful Learning topics, the different concepts that the children start thinking very differently. When I worked with a fourth grade group assisting a teacher with their Artful Learning unit, it was interesting; one of the children who had done a lot of verbal bullying, when we got to talking about grandparents and their importance to the family unit, he child almost went to tears talking about his grandpa and how much Grandpa meant to him and how they go fishing on the weekends. And Grandpa will help him with any of his homework that he's struggling with. And so I think when we talk about community relationships and, you know, what we do to calm ourselves down, what we do to regroup our thoughts that, you know, the Artful Learning has been very good at helping us do that. And with some of the neat classroom activities that we've learned, the kids get physically actively engaged, like with the Zip Zap Zoom and we've given them a prescribed manner in which to be physically active as opposed to them choosing hitting, slapping, kicking, punching as how they're going to be—physically active. 'Cause some of them; they've just got to move. And so I think that the—the Bernstein Artful Learning Model has done a lot to temper the intensity of some of the bullying that—that we've experienced. I wish I could say that it has totally eradicated it, but that would not be honest. But I think that it has tempered it to the point where we are able to identify those students who are engaging in bullying and have some impact with them.
1019	… And they were able to not only implement what they had learned, but just from class to class, kids knew that the teachers knew and the kids were able to use some of those arts-based skills and strategies—and I guess the kids didn't have enough time to think about their mischievous behaviors.
1021	Well, I believe from the Artful Learning experiences that I had in trainings and stuff in the inquiry centers where they work in groups — Uh-huh and they are given a task and they have to cooperate with each other in the classroom when they're doing these activities. Just the fact that they're getting an experience everywhere in the school of working cooperatively in smaller groups. So when they come to me and we go outside to a sectional, we're doing exactly the same thing. We're working in smaller groups. And so, I'm just assuming that its kind of being reinforced everywhere that cooperation helps you. Well, I think, as I've stated previously, the cooperative aspect of it. That if they're doing that school line, they're working in inquiring center—inquiry centers where the teacher is—is, for much of it, is out of

Participant	Response
	it and the students are running it. And the students have to learn it's their—creating their own little community; how to get a task done. If they're bickering and bullying or whatever the thing might be, it's keeping them from getting the task done. They're mutually exclusive. If you have that behavior, you can't be getting the task done. So if you're a snare drummer that can play that part, you want everybody else to play that part. You don't want to keep them from playing it because it makes you look better.
1022	Some, but I feel that since we've been using it that they have more tools and strategies to go to. They have more—more things in their—in their kit.
1023	I think teamwork was a lot better after Bernstein was implemented, um, you know I had, uh done this project with 4th and 5th grade, and um, what they were doing is they had, um, basically, they're doing an art history lesson, but they didn't know it. Um, they teamed up in groups of three … and there was some hesitation among some groups against particular individuals, um, where they didn't want to work with them and stuff like that. But um, what happened was when they were in groups of three, they were doing um, like a little documentary film. And um, you had one person who was going to be artist or the expert on the artist. Um, originally, they supposed to be the artist, but we had, um, a group of boys that was going to do a woman artist, and a group of girls that was gonna do a guy artist. So, um, and they really wanted to do these. And I said, "Well you can be the world's best expert on that artist." So, they could either be the artist or the world's best expert on that artist. One was going to be the interviewer, and then one was gonna be the cameraperson.
1024	I believe that the Leonard Bernstein Model is a model that does—it increases the student's ability to be more, I guess to interact more with each other, to be more—it's a nonthreatening environment. Every—the ability levels are different. It encourages the student to interact. Everyone participates from high, medium, low. And it gives the students a sense of ownership. They're in charge of their group. They have their activities to do. You have a range of students that are—they contribute. They contrib—each student has to contribute to the thing, so I think it helps the students to be more understanding of each other—and nonjudgmental is a good term for that. Let everyone participate.
1025	Hmm, in my class. More creative because the had some new knowledge and new understanding of how to use their bodies and their voices and their attitude had changed towards one another because somebody who might have been a great reader couldn't do something artistic—whether it be dance or sing or like tableau. That's a thing that my kids love to do. They—I saw less of the hands on. I saw more engagement, most importantly. That was the first thing 'cause the opportunities to move were there, the opportunities to explore a different way—to show understanding were there.

Note. Table 4 includes participants' responses to questions about their observations of aggressive and bullying behaviors after three years of the Artful Learning™, their perceptions of the reasons for the observed behaviors, and their belief or unbelief of a relationship between model implementation and bullying and aggressive behaviors.

Theme 4. During the 3rd year of implementation, teachers believed bullying and aggressive behaviors decreased. Teachers found the strategies employed through the Artful Learning™ enabled students to work together toward a common goal. These strategies transferred to their behaviors outside of the classroom as well (see Table 5).

Table 5

Theme 4: Third Year Decrease in Bullying and Aggressive Behaviors Interview

Responses

Participant	Response
1016	It's all working together to come to a consensus on the topic of, you know, how does this—how does this piece of artwork or this piece of music or this sculpture relate to whatever the concept is. They may be able to articulate that in ways that somebody else could make sense out of. So it's all about working together which helps them works through whatever negative feelings they have about somebody—and they do it through the art … third year it got better. And you could track it—the previous administrator would talk about how the number of referrals kept going down—for this, that or the other thing. So there's data that—that you could see the curve go down? And then—well, then last year, and this year, it spiked back up. Q: And do you think the spike is probably—or in your opinion, do you think that the fact that he Bernstein model is not being implemented as much. Do you think that has—There's too many mitigating factors really to just put it all on that. I'm certain that it has something to do with it. But the—what to do—there's a new principal, there's a new assistant principal, there's a new behavior specialist, there's teachers that haven't been trained in the model or bought into it in any way, shape or form probably. There's—I mean, there's so many things that add up to the school in flux—that it's hard to pin it down to one specific indicator. But I would say it probably has something to do with it.
1020	When we approached anything, whether it was through Artful Learning, community building, community building through SFA, I feel what we did with the Randy Sprick and the Behavior Academy, when we were all on the same page—I think we had a reduction of instances and kids knew what was expected of them.
1021	Well, I think, as I've stated previously, the cooperative aspect of it. That if they're doing that school line they're working in inquiring center—inquiry center where the teacher is—is, for much of it, is out of it and the students are running it. And the students have to learn it's their—creating their own little community; how to get a task done. If they're bickering and bullying or whatever the thing might be, it's keeping them from getting the task done. They're mutually exclusive. If you have that behavior, you can't be getting the task done. And I'm just thinking behavior modification, right? They do it over—they do it enough times, it becomes their behavior that becomes that way. So that they just accept that that's—now, when they come to me—after they've been in the inquiry centers they come to me and they're in their sectionals, I could say, it's like your inquiry centers, guys. You're working together to make the group, the whole group gets it. … It's mutually exclusive, I believe. If they're—I think, if they're cooperating—if you're cooperating, you're not bullying. If you're bullying, you're not cooperating. To me, that's—to get them to cooperate eliminate the bullying. And if one of the aspects of Artful Learning is that they're working in these inquiring—inquiry centers, hopefully you're—you're getting them—keeping them from bullying because they're working towards a common—goal.
1022	Again, I just think, because it goes back to my philosophy that all students have an arts-learning connector and I think that once that's understood through—they found—that philosophy found a home in the arts-based skills and strategies from Leonard Bernstein. So once the students are equipped with an understanding of oh, look at how I can learn, you know, through—through my arts, through my art talent, whatever it is—they see more success. And so they're happier, so they get along better.

table continues

Participant	Response
1023	I would say, yes, because like I said, they started working more in groups and going more towards collaborative learning with the Leonard Bernstein Model in a way that they learned how to interact with each other. And they learned more about each other. And when they learned more about each other, they realized that—it seemed like they realized they're more alike than they thought.
1027	I noticed that when we started the Bernstein thing—because they had to work so closely with each other—that they were learning to start cooperating with each other. And I think the three years—looking students that I've seen through the three years—I could say that they learned better to get along with each other. And I think it had a lot to do with the art coming into the school. It was something they enjoyed. It was something you could pull away from them, so it was something that you can use as a learning tool for them. So I saw a lot more cooperation among the students. I mean, there was still some bullying. You're going to have that no matter what, but I saw it—it was a lot better than when I first came to the school.
1028	I think so, again, because it allows, as I said prior, it allows the kid to relate to something we're doing even if they don't know about the artist or even if they don't know about the person that, you know, drew the painting or made the music or created the dance. It allowed the children who enjoyed that specific activity to enhance their learning. It got other kids to see what other artistic abilities there were. I think it's a great thing to have and again, you have to set your groups up correctly. But it was an outlet the kids had that was positive. They were able to—it wasn't just, let's sit down and do this bookwork—which the kids get bored with. They were able to get up. They had to move around. They had to create something to bring out their talent, which was amazing.
1029	I would say that after the Leonard Bernstein was introduced and everything and the school really went on that positive path that it really did turn—well, it did actually seem less. I mean, thinking back about it, I never gave it much thought. But now that I'm thinking back, it seemed like with the Artful Learning and the working in groups but it wasn't just like, yes, that they were working in groups. It turned into more of a positive experience working in groups—you know, that sounds terrible. But it really gave them a chance to learn to interact and then also because around that same time, we went more to the uniforms. And like I said before, a lot of the bullying came from the clothes. So—and that's also when we started getting more people from outside of just the (City's Name) area, coming to the school, which I think made a big difference.
1046	I think that any time you can get students to interact with each other of different backgrounds, different skill levels, if it's done correctly, it can be a very positive experience.

Note. Table 5 includes participants' responses to their observations of bullying and aggressive behaviors during the 2010-2011 school year.

Theme 5. Failure to continue the model caused a rise in bullying and aggressive behaviors. The designs of qualitative studies often lend themselves to new ideas, not initially the targeted information. However, the new ideas often add strength to the phenomenon under exploration. These ideas emerged as participants elaborated about their experiences and perceptions of the phenomenon. Theme 5 strengthened the teachers' perception of the final interview questions. The final questions follow:

12. Do you believe there is a relationship between the implementation of

Bernstein's Artful learning™ model and bullying behaviors? What is the reason

for your belief?

Theme 5 revealed that many teachers believe the learning model helped deter

bullying behaviors. This phenomenon was further illuminated when participants began

recounting how use of the Artful Learning™ model was dissipating and not practiced as

robustly as in the past (see Table 6). In addition, the influx of new teachers and students,

who are untrained on how to use the model, left only a small group of teachers who have

received full training. Several teachers have noticed an increase in bullying and

aggressive behaviors during the last year.

Table 5

Theme 5: Dissipating Model Use Interview Responses

Participant	Response
1016	The third year it got better. And you could track it—the previous administrator would talk about how the number of referrals kept going down—for this, that or the other thing. So there's data that—that you could see the curve go down? And then—well, then last year, and this year, it spiked back up. Q: And do you think the spike is probably—or in your opinion, do you think that the fact that the Bernstein model is not being implemented as much? There's too many mitigating factors really to just put it all on that. I'm certain that it has something to do with it. But the—what to do—there's a new principal, there's a new assistant principal, there's a new behavior specialist, there's new teachers that haven't been trained in the model or bought into it in any way, shape or form probably. There's—I mean, there's so many things that add up to the school influx—that it's hard to pin it down to one specific indicator. But I would say it probably has something to do with it.

table continues

Participant	Response
1018	As opposed to now, not so many children remember some of those arts-based skills and strategies and the teachers—we have a lot of different teachers. So they haven't had the intensive training that I've had. So, the connection would be basically we believed in it when it was here—and now that it's not as focused on, not as many professional developments—it's here, but it's not really here. It's like in the background of our mind. Q: So are you saying then when we were in full implementation, you saw a change?
	I did see more community and not as much bullying because they seemed to care for one another. Now it's I'm angry at everybody and everything and everything that you do at this point in the game. Well, of course, there's been a decrease based on this, because the strategies that the teachers use in the classroom allow the child to do more than just sit there. It gives them another way to express what they know in a positive way, and any time you make a child feel positive, any negative behaviors decrease. The problem with it is, does the teacher buy into the Bernstein approach. If they buy into it, you can walk into a classroom and tell which teacher has bought into the program and uses it correctly and watch the children's behavior. You can walk into a classroom that does not it, or they pretend they're doing it, or go through the motions, and there's an obvious behavior difference. So based on that and what I've seen in the classrooms I visited that I would say, yes, if it's done correctly, then, yes, there's a positive relationship. I've gone through so many rooms this year and I can walk into (Teacher's Name) room and know she's doing it and watch her kids. And then I can walk to—well, let us remain nameless on that name—who doesn't know what Artful Learning is nor does he care to know what it is. He hasn't even asked—you know, if—we've all been new somewhere, you have to take some responsibility yourself and ask. Look, I want to try this. I heard it's great. What can I do? You can't always try and cram it down their throats. They have to want—they were hired under the assumption that we had Bernstein here. And they all did the uh-huh head bob to get the job. Yet I see now, three months into the year, they've had some training and then enough to know a couple of strategies, even if it's something as simple as (indiscernible) art for your main idea. That's not even being done in some of these rooms. And you can tell by the behaviors.
1028	And now, when there's no implementation of this, I think the behaviors go down because of that. Q: So do you think the Artful Learning Model created more community-like behaviors among students because of the structure of it? Oh, definitely, definitely. Oh, definitely. Yeah. I mean, it's a great program. It's—as long as it's implemented right, it would work perfect and I think the behaviors in reference to a school would—the negative behaviors would decrease and you would see more positive behaviors and more kids learning how to get along with each other and be more accepting of each other because of how the program works.

Note. These comments were in response to Question 12: Do you believe there is a relationship between the implementation of Bernstein's Artful Learning ™ model and bullying behaviors? What is the reason for your beliefs?

The general perception was that because not all teachers actively practice the model, the students no longer have the strategies and skills to work well together. The participants spoke of seeing more bullying behaviors and an increase in negative interactions. In addition, the predominantly new staff has not received intense training on the Artful Learning™ model.

Results

  The exploration of the perceptions of teachers, who taught fourth and fifth grade in a Title I school in a school district located in central Florida provided some interesting findings. First, most participants believed aggressive behavior and bullying were problems at the study site prior to the 2008 implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model. Many believed some of the reasons for this was that no one taught students to behave differently, and students did not have the necessary strategies to work well together and have positive interactions with each other. Not all students realized they had anything to contribute to projects and discussion.

  The study also revealed the positive effect of the Artful Learning™ model on the students' ability to interact with each other, to collaborate, and have a common goal they all worked to achieve. Students were self-motivated to use those same strategies in class, but also during times when the students were relaxing, in holding areas, and at recess. The sense of community was stronger.

  The participants also noted that over the last year, the model was not practiced as robustly, leaving a group of teachers and students who have not been trained or lacked understanding of the benefits associated with using the model. The participants spoke of an increase in bullying behaviors as the use of the model decreased. However, one participant felt that other factors might have influenced the changes (see Table 6, Participant 1016).

Summary

  Chapter 4 included a discussion of the Pilot Study and the data-collection process. Included in the data-collection discussion were details on steps taken to ensure the

process and interviews were conducted ethically, taking every precaution to protect

participants' confidentiality. In addition, the chapter included a discussion of the

limitations encountered when recruiting participants for the study, and the measures taken

to overcome those limitations, which was not always possible.

Also, included in Chapter 4 was a detailed report of the data-analysis procedures,

along with a detailed discussion of the themes that emerged from the data. Sample data,

taken from the transcripts, were used to demonstrate the themes identified in the study.

Finally, a discussion of the results from the findings of the study provided a synopsis of

participants' perceptions as they relate to the relationship between bullying behaviors and

Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This study revealed the perceptions of a sample of 15 fourth- and fifth-grade teachers concerning the relationship between the implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model and bullying behaviors in an elementary school located in central Florida. Initially, the projected sample size was 20 fourth- and fifth-grade teachers. However, access to the purposeful sample was limited to 15 because of increased teacher turnover. Creswell (2005) found a small sample size is a common characteristic of qualitative studies.

Research Question

The overarching question of this study was, what are the perceptions of the faculty from a central Florida elementary school using an arts-integration strategy with regard to student aggression and bullying behaviors? Review of the data revealed the perception that the learning model and the strategies employed upon full implementation of the model helped deter bullying behaviors. The participants believed the various model strategies addressed all learning modalities and provided successful learning experiences for all students. The use of the model strategies also created a sense of community that helped students redirect their focus from their differences to working collaboratively to achieve a common goal. The model fostered the contribution of all students to the community of learning by drawing focus to the strengths of the members. The teachers saw these strategies being used by their students outside of the classroom and in other school-related activities. Adding to the strength of their perceptions was the

revelation that the instances of bullying increased with the decrease in the use of the model strategies.

The secondary research question was, how have the instances of aggression or bullying changed since the implementation of the arts-integration strategies? According to the data collected, teachers did notice a decrease in bullying and aggressive behaviors after 3 years of actively using Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model. Teachers received 3 years of intensive model training, which allowed them to help their students take ownership in their learning process. The model strategies also provided students with the tools needed to positively interact with each other, consequently lowering aggressive and bullying behaviors. In line with Vygotsky's theory of Zone of Proximal Distance, the students learned to work cooperatively in small groups in their inquiry centers. The Artful Learning™ strategies equipped the students with the skills necessary to work with and learn from each other in a positive manner through social contact.

The decrease in bullying and aggressive behaviors became more evident after the dissipation of the active use of the learning model. The influx of new teachers and students, who were not trained in the use of the model strategies, led to a decrease in teacher interest and use of the model. The changes led to the increase of students unequipped to positively interact with each other and a reversion to those negative interactions and practices observed prior to the implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model.

Each theme was referenced to the information found in the literature review. The findings of this study were supported by the theories and findings reported in earlier

studies on related topics. Some topics supported multiple themes that emerged from this study.

Theme 1

Participants' responses concerning their observations of bullying prior to the 2008 implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model was that they did witness bullying and aggressive behaviors in their classes. Along with their observations, some participants believed that the students, who exhibited bullying or aggressive behaviors, did so because of insecurities. Participants' responses supported Georgiou and Stavrinides (2008) and Wienke Totura et al. (2009) who asserted bullies externalize their problems and are often vulnerable and unsure of their abilities. The bullies offset these insecurities by creating a façade of being dominant over others. Similarly, Participant 1026 asserted, "The bully is classically, in general, speaking in general terms, they're usually an insecure person that wants it to be all about them." However, Jacobson's (2001) study revealed students felt unsafe when they were teased, threatened, and bullied. In addition, the students felt unsafe if they observed aggressive behaviors or threats to others. Jacobson also found these antisocial behaviors often occurred when no adults were around. Likewise, participants found students who engaged in bullying and aggressive behaviors often did so when they felt they were not monitored. Participant 1017 stated,

> And so the kids get the feeling that as soon as Group A distracts the monitor, then
> they take me off their radar and so I can do the pushing, the shoving, the tripping,
> the taunting that I—I might choose to do.

Therefore, participants' perceptions of the bullying and aggressive behaviors and their causes before the implementation of the model, provided support for the findings of previous studies.

Theme 2

Vygotsky's (1978) social-cultural theory supported the concept that students were able to work in small groups prior to the implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model. In agreement with Vygotsky's theory, Kumar (1996) posited, when students work together collaboratively, they internalize the cognitive changes and learn the concepts. Kumar used Vygotsky's social-cultural theory as a basis for students working collaboratively on a single project, using networked computers. However, some students were able to work well in small group before the model implementation. The catalyst of the students' ability to work well was the teachers' selection of group members, the close proximity of the teacher, and teacher-directed instruction. An example was Participant 1019's response: "I can, I guess, direct their attention more. They're more focused on me instead of on each other." So, instead of the small groups being child centered, the groups were still teacher centered, with the teacher determining the structure of each group. So Vygotsky's social-cultural theory was not allowed to operate in the small group setting.

Theme 3

Participants believed the Artful Learning™ model strategies helped students work well together and interact positively with each other. According to Pepler and Craig (2008), bullying is a distorted view of the relationship process. To rectify this distortion,

students need help in increasing their ability to interact and build long-lasting

relationships with their peers. Participant 1024 posited,

> It encourages the student to interact. Everyone participates from high, medium,
>
> low. And it gives the students a sense of ownership. ... They contrib—each
>
> student has to contribute to the thing, so I think it helps the students to be more
>
> understanding of each other—and nonjudgmental is a good term for that. Let
>
> everyone participate.

The participants believed that the model equipped the students to do work collaboratively

with each other and take responsibility for their own learning processes. This

phenomenon supports Vygotsky's (1978) social-cultural theory. The Bernstein Office,

Inc. (2008–2009) posited that arts-based strategies provide students with different ways

to express their knowledge gained by helping students discover their personal learning

strengths, and facilitating students' active engagement and investment in their own

learning.

Theme 4

Participants' responses indicated the model was effective in decreasing aggressive

and bullying behaviors. This belief supports Lindle's (2008) assertion concerning school

safety. Lindle believed school safety begins with building social capital in the

neighborhood, and in the students' surrounding sociological system, which helps

decrease bullying behaviors. In contrast, Haner et al. (2010) found arts-based curricula

were effective in preventing bullying and aggressive behavior because of the power of

the arts to change hearts and minds. However, the Haner et al. study was not conclusive

because the researchers failed to include a comparison group or conduct a test prior to the

students' exposure to the arts-based curriculum. This theme also supports the study conducted by Lynch (2007), who found employing arts-integration curricula in the classroom helped create a safe environment where students are willing to take risks because they do not have to create a perfect work of art or product. Participant 1021 stated,

> And if one of the aspects of Artful Learning is that they're working in these inquiring—inquiry centers, hopefully you're—you're getting them—keeping them from bullying because they're working towards a common goal. And so as far as the other aspects of Artful Learning and how it supports their growth, we all love that they're studying master works and they're exposing them to—to works of art because they're raising their whole child; it's not just the academics, but they're also seeing the connections.

Lynch's study also indicated students who struggle with academics experience success in an arts-integrated curriculum because the curriculum addresses multiple learning styles and multiple methods of demonstrating learning. Participant 1022 asserted,

> So once the students are equipped with an understanding of oh, look at how I can learn, you know, through—through my arts, through my art talent, whatever it is—they see more success. And so they're happier, so they get along better.

Therefore, participants' perception that the bullying behaviors decreased after 3 years of implementation demonstrated the assertions made concerning the power of arts-integration programs in decreasing instances of bullying in a school setting.

Theme 5

Astor et al. (2009), found schools with low instances of violence had a visionary principal who changed the "organizational and social climate" of the school. Participants noted an increase in bullying behaviors, which they believed was a result of the learning model not being actively used. Participant 1016 surmised,

> And you could track it—the previous administrator would talk about how the number of referrals kept going down—for this, that or the other thing. So there's data that—that you could see the curve go down? And then—well, then last year, and this year, it spiked back up.

The principal who implemented the model transferred to a different school site. The change in administrative leadership along with new teachers and students, who were not trained in using the arts-based strategies, led to a decrease in the use of the Artful Learning™ strategies and an increase in bullying and aggressive behaviors. These changes led to students who were not equipped with the tools and strategies necessary to help them interact and collaborate with each other in a positive manner. This theme demonstrates the power of an art-based curriculum to help build community and decrease bullying and aggressive behaviors, in the reverse.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical framework chosen for this study was Vygotsky's theory of social development and Zone of Proximal Distance, which relies on the students' interactions with each other as the foundation for learning. In the study, the students' interactions with each other in their learning groups were indicative of Vygotsky's theory. The students learned with and from each other in the learning groups. However, among the

skills developed in the learning group was the ability to work positively with each other, while in the group. The students were not able to demonstrate their learning without working cooperatively with each other.

Reflecting on this study and the findings, a different theoretical framework may have been more appropriate for this study. Albert Bandura's (1973) social learning theory may have provided a stronger foundation on which to base this study. Bandura (1973) posited environmental factors strongly contribute to aggressive behavior. According to Bandura, children learn these behaviors from those, whom they consider as role models. Bandura (1971) posited, new configurations of what a student does can be attained by direct involvement or by watching others. The response to the behavior, either direct or indirect, determines whether the behavior is retained or discarded. Using Bandura's theory, the implementation of the Artful Learning™ could be a method of changing that environment and providing role models or pattern of behaviors and conditions that inhibit or deter bullying behaviors.

Implications for Educational Leaders

This study provides a place for educational leaders to start when looking for a program that will help create a sense of community on their campuses. Educational leaders may find the use of an arts-integration program a strong tool to decrease aggressive and bullying behaviors by providing students with the skills necessary to take the focus off their differences and on to what they can contribute to their learning community. Although the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model is not the only arts-integration program on the market, the data show the strength of this particular model.

An important component of the success of the model is a commitment to the model. This commitment must come from every stakeholder involved.

Study Limitations

Reflecting on this study and its results revealed some limitations that were not anticipated at the start of the study and outside of the researcher's control. One of the limitations is the significant passage of time between the participants' lived experiences and their participation in the study. The assumption is the participants' responses were open and honest. However, participants were asked to remember experiences that happened between two and seven years prior to participating in the study. Some participants had a difficult time remembering, while others had no problems. The passage of time might have hindered some participants' ability to accurately respond to the interview questions.

Another element, not considered was the possibility that the study results may have been affected by other initiatives implemented prior to the implementation of the Artful Learning™ model. The use of the Success for All reading program also had team building elements, which might have contributed to the decrease in bullying behaviors. Success for All was used prior to the implementation of the Artful Learning™ model.

This study only explored the perceptions of the participants. Therefore, the study lacked data demonstrating observed behaviors. In addition, a couple of participants suggested that even though bullying behavior decreased, they were not willing to attribute all of those changes to the implementation of the Artful Learning™ model.

Recommendation for Research

This study provided a foundation for future research that will explore the ramifications of a well-developed arts-integration program as a tool or method to help improve school community and deter bullying and aggressive behaviors. The study provided valuable information for educational leaders, but also created room for future research by exploring a phenomenon that has not received much attention. However, after completing the study, using referral data might have provided more insight into the effectiveness of the Artful Learning™ model in helping deter bullying and aggressive behaviors. Another important change would be to conduct interviews with more stakeholders, which would provide a broader spectrum of experiences and perceptions.

Recommendations for future research consist of conducting a different type of qualitative study. Researchers might conduct a collective case study by studying several schools that have implemented the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model, who have similar demographics and a history of bullying and aggressive behaviors among their students in the past. This strategy might provide more validity to the study if the results are replicated at multiple research sites. Duplication of this study at multiple research sites would help substantiate the findings that arts-integrations programs are a viable instrument to help deter bullying and aggressive behaviors.

Researchers might also identify other arts-integration programs that have community building as a core component for integrating the arts, and conduct a study of schools that have implemented those programs. In this community, students work collaboratively towards a common goal, with everyone student in a group having a voice and contributing to accomplish that goal. Another consideration might be to conduct a

mixed method study that could be qualitative and quantitative. The study could include collecting school referral records that involve bullying or aggressive behaviors in addition to interviews. The data collected might encompass the time prior to the implementation, and again after full implementation.

An additional recommendation for future research could be expanding the scope of the study by including all grade levels and any employee involved in servicing those students (e.g. para-professionals, school nurse, etc.). Another option for expanding the scope of the study would be to include more stakeholders. The additional stakeholders might include, parents, PTA members, volunteers, and community members. All of these recommendations would provide a larger sample size and a more complete picture or the phenomenon.

Summary and Conclusions

Based on the data gathered from the participants, teachers believed the implementation of the Bernstein Artful Learning™ model equipped students with learning strategies that increased their ability to work well with each other, while collaborating to reach a common goal. Teachers began observing positive interactions between students outside of the classroom setting. A majority of participants believed bullying and aggressive behaviors decreased during the 3rd year of implementation. However, following Year 3, model use started to decline; many of the teachers who received intensive model training transferred to another school; new students transferred to the research site; and a new administrative team moved in. The changes led to a school with only a few of the original stakeholders to continue using the model.

Participants discussed these changes and noticed an increase in bullying and aggressive behaviors during the last school year (2011–2012).

Chapter 5 included a discussion of the research question, implications for educational leaders, and recommendations for research. The data collected indicated that the participants believed Bernstein Artful Learning™ model was related to the decrease in bullying behaviors at the research site. The participants' perceptions were reinforced by the rise in bullying and aggressive behaviors that appeared with the dissipation of active use of the model. This study provided a basis for future exploration on the effects of an arts-integration program on bullying behaviors. This study also provided a foundation for educational leaders considering the possibility of using an arts-integration program, specifically Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model to help build school community and deter bullying behaviors. Although the information gained is helpful, more research is needed.

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UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX

Informed Consent

Dear   Participant,

My name is Ivy Maxwell and I am a student at the University of Phoenix working on a doctorate's degree. I am conducting a research study entitled "Teacher lived experiences: Effects of arts integration on deterring bullying in fourth and fifth graders." The purpose of the research study is to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of fourth and fifth grade elementary teachers concerning the possible effect of the Leonard Bernstein's Artful Learning™ model strategies on bullying behaviors of fourth and fifth grade students.

Your participation will involve participating in a personal interview to describe your experiences and opinions about the Artful Learning model and bullying on your present and past student. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. The results of the research study may be published but your identity will remain confidential and your name will not be disclosed to any outside party.

In this research, there are no foreseeable risks to you except none. Although there may be no direct benefit to you, a possible benefit of your participation is providing valuable information that educational leaders may use in making decisions concerning the curtailing of bullying behaviors in their school.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me at ███████████ or email me at ███████████████.

As a participant in this study, you should understand the following:

1. You may decline to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without consequences or penalty. Your data will be destroyed upon notification, using the above telephone number or email address.

2. The data collection process will involve the ethical and transparent securing of all research data, while using discretion to protect your confidentiality. Your identity will be kept confidential.

3. Ivy Maxwell, the researcher, has thoroughly explained the parameters of the research study and all of your questions and concerns have been addressed.

4. You understand that the researcher will structure a coding process to assure that anonymity of your name is protected. Your interview will be recorded using you code instead of you name.

5. Data will be stored in a secure and locked area. The researcher will have the only access to the data. The data will be held for a period of three years, and then destroyed.

6. The research results will be used for publication.

"By signing this form you acknowledge that you understand the nature of the study, the potential risks to you as a participant, and the means by which your identity will be kept confidential. Your signature on this form also indicates that you are 18 years old or older and that you give your permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in the study described."

Signature of the participant _____ Date _____

Signature of the researcher _____ Date _____

Appendix B: Teacher Perspectives of Bullying Interview Guide

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research project. You will be asked several

questions about bullying behaviors and the arts integration program implement at the

research site in 2008. Please express your experiences and perceptions as completely as

possible. For the purpose of this study, bullying is defined as the repetitive aggressive

physical or verbal behaviors, as well as, threats of behavior towards others who the

aggressor considers physically or emotionally weaker (Aluede et al., 2008).

1. How many years have you been a teacher? _____

2. How many years have you taught at your present institution (research site)?

    _____

3. How many years have you taught at the research site prior to the 2008

    implementation of the Leonard Bernstein Artful Learning™ model?

    _____

4. Please describe some of your experiences with your students and bullying

    prior to the implementation of the Leonard Bernstein Artful Learning™

    model?

5. What do you believe is the reason for the observed positive or negative

    behaviors?

6. Please describe some of your experiences with students working in small

    groups?

7. What do you believe was the reason for the students' ability or inability to

    work in small groups?

8. What were some of your observations of your students' interactions with each other during recess, lunch, before school, and after school as they relate to bullying and getting along with each?

9. What is your perception of the reasons for the observed positive or negative behaviors?

10. Describe some of your experiences with your students and bullying during the 2010–2011 school year.

11. What are some of your observations of your students' interaction with each other during lunch, recess, before school, and after school in regards to bullying behaviors?

12. Do you believe there is a relationship between the implementation of Leonard Bernstein's Artful Learning ™ model and bullying behaviors? What is the reason for your beliefs?

Appendix C: Permission to Use the Premises

UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX

PERMISSION TO USE PREMISES, NAME, AND/OR SUBJECTS

████████████████████████████████

Check any that apply:

☑   I hereby authorize <u>Ivy Maxwell,</u> student of University of Phoenix, to use the premises (facility identified below) to conduct a study entitled Teacher Lived Experiences: Effects of Arts Integration on Deterring Bullying in Fourth and Fifth Graders.

☑   I hereby authorize <u>Ivy Maxwell,</u> student of University of Phoenix, to recruit subjects (teachers) for participation in a study of Teacher Lived Experiences: Effects of Arts Integration on Deterring Bullying in Fourth and Fifth Graders.

☑   I hereby authorize <u>Ivy Maxwell,</u> student of University of Phoenix, to use the name of the facility, organization, university, institution, or association identified above when publishing results from the study entitled of Teacher lived Experiences: Effects of Arts Integration on Deterring Bullying in Fourth and Fifth Graders.

████████████████████   11/6/11

Signature   Date

████████████████

Name

Principal

Title,

████████████

████████████

Appendix D: Letter of Collaboration

UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX

LETTER OF COLLABORATION AMONG INSTITUTIONS

Date: ▓▓▓▓▓

To: Office of the Provost/Institutional Review Board

University of Phoenix

    This letter acknowledges that   is collaborating with Ms. Ivy S. Maxwell enrolled in the Educational Leadership program at the University of Phoenix in conducting the proposed research. We understand the purpose of this research is to explore the perceptions and lived experiences of a purposeful sample of 16 fourth and fifth grade elementary teachers concerning the possible effect of the Leonard Bernstein's Artful Learning Model strategies on bullying behaviors of fourth and fifth grade students at an arts magnate school in Central Florida and will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Michael Marrapodi.

    This project will be an integral part of our institution/agency and will be conducted as a collaborative effort and will be part of our curriculum/research/data/service delivery model.

Sincerely,

_____

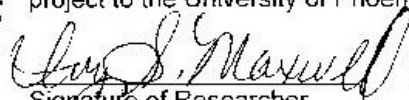Print

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Appendix E: Confidentiality Statement

Teacher Lived Experiences: Effects of Arts Integration on Deterring
Bullying In Fourth and Fifth Graders

Ivy S. Maxwell

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

As a researcher working on the above research study at the University of Phoenix, I understand that I must maintain the confidentiality of all information concerning all research participants as required by law. Only the University of Phoenix Institutional Review Board may have access to this information. "Confidential Information" of participants includes but is not limited to: names, characteristics, or other identifying information, questionnaire scores, ratings, incidental comments, other information accrued either directly or indirectly through contact with any participant, and/or any other information that by its nature would be considered confidential. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the information, I hereby agree to refrain from discussing or disclosing any Confidential Information regarding research participants, to any individual who is not part of the above research study or in need of the information for the expressed purposes on the research program. This includes having a conversation regarding the research project or its participants in a place where such a discussion might be overheard; or discussing any Confidential Information in a way that would allow an unauthorized person to associate (either correctly or incorrectly) an identity with such information. I further agree to store research records whether paper, electronic or otherwise in a secure locked location under my direct control or with appropriate safe guards. I hereby further agree that if I have to use the services of a third party to assist in the research study, who will potentially have access to any Confidential Information of participants, that I will enter into an agreement with said third party prior to using any of the services, which shall provide at a minimum the confidential obligations set forth herein. I agree that I will immediately report any known or suspected breach of this confidentiality statement regarding the above research project to the University of Phoenix, Institutional Review Board.

Signature of Researcher   Ivy S. Maxwell   2/2/2012
                            Printed Name   Date

Signature of Witness   Sheryl Hardy   2/2/12
                          Printed Name   Date

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Appendix F: Nondisclosure Agreement

Non-Disclosure Agreement

_____ acknowledges that in order to provide the services to Ivy Maxwell (hereinafter "Researcher") who is a researcher in a confidential study with the University of Phoenix, Inc., _____ must agree to keep the information obtained as part of its services (as more fully described below) confidential. Therefore the parties agree as follows:

1. The information to be disclosed under this Non-disclosure Agreement ("Agreement") is described as follows and shall be considered "Confidential Information": all original recordings and transcriptions of interviews for the proposed study. All information shall remain the property of Researcher.

2. _____ agrees to keep in confidence and to use the Confidential Information for transcription only and for no other purposes.

3. _____ further agrees to keep in confidence and not disclose any Confidential Information to a third party or parties for a period of five (5) years from the date of such disclosure. All oral disclosures of Confidential Information as well as written disclosures of the Confidential Information are covered by this Agreement.

4. _____ shall upon Researcher's request either destroy or return the Confidential Information upon termination of this Agreement.

5. Any obligation of _____ under this Agreement shall not apply to Confidential Information that:

    a) Is or becomes a part of the public knowledge through no fault of _____;

    b) _____ can demonstrate was rightfully in its possession before Researcher/ research subjects; or

    c) _____ can demonstrate was rightfully received from a third party who was not Researcher/research subjects and was not under confidentiality restriction on disclosure and without breach of any nondisclosure obligation.

6. _____ agrees to obligate its employees or agents, if any, who have access to any portion of Confidential Information to protect the confidential nature of the Confidential Information as set forth herein.

7. _____ shall defend, indemnify and hold the Researcher and the University of Phoenix harmless against any third party claims of damage or injury of any kind resulting from Margaret Bales use of the Confidential Information, or any violation of by Margaret Bales of the terms of this Agreement.

8. In the event _____ receives a subpoena and believes it has a legal obligation to disclose Confidential Information, then _____ will notify Researcher as soon as possible, and in any event at least five (5) business days prior to the proposed release. If Researcher objects to the release of such Confidential Information, _____ will

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allow Researcher to exercise any legal rights or remedies regarding the release and protection of the Confidential Information.

9. Margaret Bales expressly acknowledges and agrees that the breach, or threatened breach, by it through a disclosure of Confidential Information may cause irreparable harm and that Researcher may not have an adequate remedy at law. Therefore, Margaret Bales agrees that upon such breach, or threatened breach, Researcher will be entitled to seek injunctive relief to prevent Margaret Bales from commencing or continuing any action constituting such breach without showing or providing evidence of actual damage.

10. The interpretation and validity of this Agreement and the rights of the parties shall be governed by the laws of the State of Florida.

11. The parties to this Agreement agree that a copy of the original signature (including an electronic copy) may be used for any and all purposes for which the original signature may have been used. The parties further waive any right to challenge the admissibility or authenticity of this document in a court of law based solely on the absence of an original signature.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each of the undersigned has caused this Agreement to be duly executed in its name and on its behalf:

Printed Name of Third Party: Margaret Bales
Signature:
Address:
Date: 2-2-2012

Printed Name of Researcher: Ivy Maxwell
Signature:
Address:
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