Resilience to Bullying Victimization: Moderating Role of Parents' Perceptions of School Climate
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Introduction
A burgeoning body of empirical studies has shown that bullying victimization is associated with a variety of psychosocial, behavioral and physical problems (Reijntjes et al., 2011). However, studies examining the linkage between bullying victimization and educational outcomes are inconclusive (Gardella, Fisher, & Tuerbe-Tolien, 2017).

As one of the most important educational outcomes, school engagement is a multi-dimensional construct that is malleable and responsive to both student and school conditions and the interactions between students and the school environment (Fredricks et al., 2004).

Previous study has conducted to understand the moderating role of school climate in the association between bullying victimization and student engagement based on students’ perspectives, but there is limited scientific understanding about parents’ perspectives on this topic (Yang et al., 2018).

To address this need, the current study aimed to examine:
- The association between parent perceived bullying victimization and student engagement among their children;
- Whether school climate and grade moderate the association between bullying victimization and student engagement based on parents’ perspectives.

Methods

Sample
14,970 parents from 114 public schools (71 elementary, 26 middle, and 11 high schools) in Delaware.

Key Measures: Delaware School Survey-Student (DSS-S-Boer et al., 2016)
- Delaware Bullying Victimization (BV) Scale – Parent: 6-point Likert Scale
- Behavioral Engagement: e.g., "My child gets along with other children.

Delaware Student Engagement Scale – Parent: 4-point Likert Scale
- Emotional Engagement: e.g., "My child feels happy in school.
- Cognitive Engagement: e.g., "My child does a good job communicating with others.

Delaware School Climate Scale – Parent: 4-point Likert Scale
- Teacher-Student Relations (5 items): e.g., "Students get along with each other.
- Fairness of School Rules (4 items): e.g., "Students know the rules are fair.

Results: Main Effects

Main Effects of Individual-level Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Emotional Engagement</th>
<th>Behavioral Engagement</th>
<th>Cognitive Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender: Male vs. Female</td>
<td>0.08 (0.07)**</td>
<td>0.14 (0.01)**</td>
<td>0.13 (0.01)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td>0.02 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian vs. African American</td>
<td>0.02 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic vs. African American</td>
<td>0.02 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian vs. African American</td>
<td>0.02 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.16 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.16 (0.02)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial vs. African American</td>
<td>0.02 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
<td>0.08 (0.02)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>-0.01 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.02 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.01 (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Bullying Victimization</td>
<td>-0.22 (0.02)***</td>
<td>-0.09 (0.02)***</td>
<td>0.00 (0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Climate</td>
<td>0.75 (0.01)**</td>
<td>0.48 (0.01)**</td>
<td>0.47 (0.02)**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results: Moderating Effects

Moderating Effects of School Climate in the Association between BV and Student Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Climate</th>
<th>Emotional Engagement</th>
<th>Behavioral Engagement</th>
<th>Cognitive Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BV vs. School Climate</td>
<td>0.29 (0.03)**</td>
<td>0.32 (0.05)**</td>
<td>0.30 (0.04)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BV vs. School Climate</td>
<td>0.49 (0.27)</td>
<td>0.18 (0.25)</td>
<td>0.31 (0.24)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion and Practical Implications

Conclusions:
- Bullying victimization at both parent and school levels had negative associations with emotional engagement; parent-level bullying victimization also had negative association with behavioral engagement;

- School climate at both parent and school levels had strong and positive association with all three types of student engagement;

- Parent-level school climate significantly moderated the association between parent-level bullying victimization and both behavioral and cognitive engagement; school-level school climate also significantly moderated the association between parent-level bullying victimization and behavioral engagement;

- Significant grade-level differences were found between elementary and middle schools for behavioral and emotional engagement and between middle and high schools for behavioral and cognitive engagement;

- No significant grade-level difference was found in the association between bullying victimization and student engagement across all grade levels.

Implications:
- School climate is critical to student learning and overall youth development.
- A multidimensional approach is needed in school-based problems targeting student engagement;

- School climate functions as different mediators in the association between bullying victimization and student engagement, depending on the student level and the level of bullying victimization.

- Thus, a multidimensional perspective is necessary in understanding bullying victimization and school climate and their influence on student educational outcomes.

Selected References