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Elementary School Bullying: Moving toward an Intersectional Analysis

A Thesis Submitted in partial	satisfaction of the	requirements	for the degi	ree of
	Master of Arts			

in

Sociology

by

Amy Vasconcellos

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Laura Hamilton, Chair Kyle Dodson Irenee Beattie ©Amy L. Vasconcellos, 2019 All rights reserved

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Abstract

Children continue to suffer consequences of victimization from bullying in school despite prevention efforts by the U.S. educational system. Many bullying prevention programs do not account for sociological processes affecting the prevalence of bullying victimization, or examine specific forms of bullying independently. This paper uses intersectional theory and relies on nationally representative data of fourth grade students to inform my approach to the study of bullying. I find that different race and gender subgroups experience different forms of bullying. Simply controlling for gender and race does not account for the unique vulnerabilities of particular groups. I also show that certain school contexts put youth at greater risk of bullying. I conclude by suggesting that bullying programs should be developed with these insights in mind. I also suggest that future research should consider the intersection of race, class, and gender, and examine how particular types of students fare in particular types of school contexts.

Victims of school bullying experience strain on their sense of belonging and safety, lower academic performances, and sadness (Glew et al. 2005). They are at increased risk for depression, anxiety, and self-harm (Takizawa et al. 2014). Furthermore, experiences of bullying in childhood and adolescence have ripple effects across the life course. Adults who were bullied as children are at increased risk for poor social, health, and economic outcomes (Takizawa et al. 2014). Even with bullying intervention programs, such as those created and implemented by Dan Olweus (1994), 23 percent or more of school children in the United States continue to report being bullied (National Center for Education Statistics 2019)—a statistic that does not account for the many instances that remain unreported.

Olweus (1994) is one of the most well-established researchers in the field of school bullying and victimization. He determines that "a student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students" (pg. 1173). My research extends prior work by moving toward an intersectional approach that is not widely utilized in bullying research. Using the fourth grade wave of the ECLS:K 2011—a nationally representative data of elementary school students from the National Center for Educational Statistics—I focus on the experiences of being teased, lied about, excluded, and pushed. My paper addresses the following empirical questions: Are experiences of victimization from bullying raced, classed, and gendered? And, do intersections of gender and race affect the kinds of victimizations elementary children experience in the fourth grade?

Many frameworks for understanding bullying, including the Olweus (1994) prevention model, focus heavily on the individual bully and his or her aggressive behavior. Yet, a more sociological process highlights the importance of power structures that place individuals in more or less vulnerable positions (e.g., see Horton 2011). Often, these structures intersect in ways that may exacerbate experiences of bullying for multiply marginalized groups (Collins 1999). As educational theories suggest, power dynamics—often around race, class, and gender—are often built into schools' practices and policies (see Bourdieu 1987; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990; Zabrodska 2011). Without viewing bullying through an intersectional lens, our account of the victimization of youth is incomplete. For example, the experiences of girls and boys are not uniform within gender, and not all students from the same racial or ethnic group experience victimization in the same ways.

In 2011, the United States began to highlight the bullying problem within the nation's schools with the first-ever White House conference on bullying (Peguero 2012). As momentum builds in the U.S. educational system, prevention programs will benefit when accounting for the diverse U.S. population. Intersections provide a clearer understanding of the inequalities and power dynamics that underlie experiences of victimization and bullying (West and Fenstermaker 1995). An intersectional framework provides an applicable corrective to Olweus' (1994) bullying prevention program, which the United States needs in order to further reduce victimization from bullying in schools. This paper offers a useful step forward, particularly in understanding how the intersection of race and gender shape experiences with particular types of bullying.

Literature Review

It is important to understand identities and inequalities as part of the social process of bullying. Those who are privileged along multiple axes of advantage often set the standards for what is "normal" and acceptable in a particular context (Collins 1990). Victims of bullying are thus often from marginalized groups. When subject to the standards of dominant groups, they are often treated as different or inadequate in some way (Chakraborti and Garland 2012). Individuals in this position may experience fear, along with feelings of marginalization (Gernstenfeld 2018). Therefore, research should address the raced, classed, and gendered social locations of children, as they navigate bullying in school.

Race

Bullying research draws heavily on Olweus' (1994) work that began in Scandinavian countries. Scandinavian countries tend to be more racially and class homogenous, as compared to the United States' demographic composition. This led Olweus (1994) to overlook the importance of race in his model. Although the U.S. educational system also reports a majority white population, minority racial group populations are substantially increasing (National Center for Education Statistics 2019). Further, patterns of group segregation in the United States affects students from certain racial groups differently (Frankenberg 2013: Moody 2001). As Bauer et al. (2007) articulate, the Olweus (1994) bullying prevention program could be significantly improved by considering race, culture, and family dynamics.

Much of this scholarship on race and student experiences in school is focused on teachers' (especially white teachers') inequitable expectations for and treatment of students of color (Cherng 2017; Irizarry 2015). Racial discrimination continues to be an important issue because 84 percent of the teachers in the United States are white (Zumwalt and Craig 2005). Black students, in particular, become subject to punishment more often than white students (Nichols 2004; Ogbu 2003). Further, Black and Latino students receive suspensions and expulsions at greater numbers than white students for the same behavior (Allen 2010; Skiba et al. 2011).

Discrimination may impact how students of color trust and relate to their teachers and environment. As a result, they may feel less comfortable in reporting bullying victimization. Black students, in particular tend to under-report victimization from bullying because of cultural differences of what counts as bullying (Sawyer et al. 2008). Word choice, in particular, matters. For instance, a Black student who is asked if they have been bullied within the last week may answer no, but when asked if another student has recently tried to hurt them they may answer yes (Sawyer et al. 2008). The data used in this paper are thus reports of specific experiences with bullying (e.g. being teased)—not bullying more generally.

Research also suggests that non-white students may experience racialized bullying by their peers. For example, girls of color are more likely to face sexualized teasing and name calling by white students, even if they are not sexually active (see Bettie 2003; Garcia 2012). Black and Latino boys often encounter assumptions of

their criminality from peers, teachers, and administrators (Lopez 2003; Rios 2011). There is often a lack of inclusivity for marginalized groups who do not adhere to stereotypes. Black males, for instance, have to resist invisibility among their Black and white peers when they do not fit Black male stereotypes (Wilkins 2014). Further, Asian and Black males who do outperform their minority group counterparts, those considered overachievers, are often subject to ridicule and are at an increased chance of being victims of bullying (Ispa-Landa 2013; Peguero and Williams 2011).

Racial experiences may be shaped by the composition of schools, and certain school contexts may also impact the experiences of students differently depending on the racial group they belong to. We can think of racial composition of schools, for instance, as an indicator of power arrangements (Van Dyke and Tester 2014). Students who attend schools largely composed of a race different from their own may experience greater instances of bullying victimization, as seen in an almost all white school with a handful of Black students (Ispa-Landa 2013). At the same time, a classroom or school equally composed of just two racial groups can create racial tensions (Moody 2001). The best situation may be a racially heterogeneous school, in which all groups have a critical mass, or a homogenous school in which there is no group of numerically-minoritized students (Bellmore et al. 2011). This is consistent with scholarship suggesting that victimization and vulnerabilities are reduced for marginalized students when the power dynamics of a classroom are in greater balance (Graham 2006). An even dispersion of power creates an environment resulting in lower levels of bullying victimization.

Class

Educational research uses socioeconomic status (or SES) as a measure of social class. This typically corresponds to the income, education, and occupation of students' parents. There is a long history of research on social class dynamics within schools (see Bourdieu 1974; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990; Zabrodska et al. 2011).

Schools and teachers often use standards consistent with higher social class norms and practices to evaluate students' knowledge, skill, and competence (Lareau and Weininger 2003; Lareau 2003). For example, Accelerated Reading (or AR) is a reading program used by schools to determine a students' reading level. AR reading levels and materials are based on white middle-class characters and cultures, creating an inherent reading disadvantage from the start for children who do not fall into this category (Brown et al. 2010). Parents from lower SES households are also often are unfamiliar with certain language used by teachers and may be unsure of how to meet teacher expectations for their children. They tend not to possess the resources, for example time and money, to implement expected educational support at home (Lareau 2003).

Victims of peer bullying are often at the bottom of social class hierarchies (Shafter et al 2005). Children may face teasing due to material items—their clothing, food, or possessions (Pugh 2009). For instance, in Pugh's (2009) research, one child overhears another child talking about taking after-school Chinese language classes in anticipation of a family trip to China. In the attempt to conceal any noticeable class

difference and possible class-based bullying, the less privileged child responds by expressing that get to go to McDonald's on Friday. Lower SES students often resort to this kind of response in an attempt to adopt the exclusionary social interaction style of higher class students. Coldness, alienation, and disregard are all examples of microaggressive practices (Solorzano 1998). Moreover, if a higher-class student attempts to befriend an excluded child, they are often met with ridicule (Evans and Eder 1993). Experiences of bullying, though, can also contribute to a greater likelihood of being a bully. The energy it takes to navigate a position of lower-class status can become expressed through bullying practices. Thus, as research concludes, whether a bully, a victim, or a bully-victim, students from lower SES backgrounds experience greater risk (Jansen et al. 2012).

Because income and wealth in the US are racialized (see Dettling et al. 2017), the study of class dynamics in the US is also a study of racialized dynamics. Racially marginalized students tend to come from lower SES households, and they are clustered in lower SES schools that have limited resources (Mcloyd 1998). Families and schools with limited resources are at a disadvantage. Poverty tends to increase levels of bullying and victimization (Stephenson and Smith 1993; Whitney and Smith 1993; Wolke et al. 2001).

Gender

Gender strongly shapes student experiences, even from the earliest years. Research on elementary schools, for example, demonstrates how gender norms are reproduced in peer dynamics that are reinforced by schools (Thorne 1993). Children and teachers partake in dichotomizing practices that support the separation of boys and girls as different, and distinct, groups. These practices also assume heteronormativity—privileging heterosexuality as normal and natural (Martin 2009). This leads to gendered expectations and interpretations of similar behavior, by both teachers and peers.

School fighting is one area in which gendered expectations and interpretations are at play. For instance, when boys fight, their fights are considered "real fights," and when girls engage in fighting, they are labeled as "cat fights" (Morris 2012). Insights into adolescent conversations also reveal the reproduction of gender. Boys are socialized to avoid becoming wimps as they control their emotions, meanwhile ignoring the emotions of girls. Girls then become caught-up in talk about appearance. Girls understand that they are to be just attractive enough, while not being too revealing—i.e. slutty (Eder et al. 1995). Extra-curricular school activities further gender reproduction. Males are to achieve and compete in sports, whereas girls partake in appearance management while supporting male sports through activities such as cheerleading (Eder and Parker 1987). Given the power dynamics at play, bullying research typically suggests that boys may bully girls, and girls may bully girls, but bullying against boys is typically executed by other boys (Olweus 1994).

Evidence suggests that gender socialization leads to unique experiences of bullying. The most common forms of bullying experienced by girls are interpersonal

interactions that result in exclusion or emotional distress (Olweus 1994; Osler 2006). Girls engage in indirect and relational bullying behavior, such as telling untruths about or actively ignoring other girls (Underwood 2003). These types of victimization experiences are often overlooked. Most bullying attention in schools focuses on more overt forms of outward (physical) bullying; thus, girls are currently underrepresented in bullying prevention curriculum. Yet, exclusionary social practice can be just as detrimental (Underwood 2003).

Another form of gendered bullying surrounds the policing of what are considered appropriate gender behaviors for males. Victims of homophobic bullying are likely to be ridiculed for not being masculine enough. Even straight males are subject to homophobic bullying when they fail to live up to the unreachable masculine ideals society holds. As Pascoe's (2013) research indicates, boys use the epithet "fag" against each other to police the boundaries of gender. The consequences can be severe: victims of homophobic bullying face higher rates of suicide (Pascoe 2013).

Moreover, children experience shame when they have feelings, behaviors, and relationships that do not adhere to what schools normalize—heterosexuality (Martin 2009: Pearson, Muller & Wilkinson 2007). Children who do not adhere to what is "normal" experience lower academic performances, schools attachment issues, and overall social integration issues with their peers (Pearson, Muller & Wilkinson 2007). These shaming practices may contribute to bullying or be considered forms of bullying that schools often do not address.

Intersections

Previous (but not all) research on victimization tends to address race, class, or gender as separate and distinct categories (for exceptions see Morris 2012; Pascoe 2013). I argue that this is problematic. Power arrangements shape student and school dynamics that lead to vulnerabilities associated with bullying victimization. For example, race and gender power dimensions can stand alone in determining student vulnerability, but a more complete understanding is offered when two categories are bound together (Hamilton and Armstrong 2009), such as viewing race *and* gender as an intertwined.

My research uses race, class, and gender as important social categories for representing student experiences with bullying victimization. Combining the social categories and revealing their interdependence (Valdez 2016) exposes greater understandings of all groups experiencing victimization, especially those in highly vulnerable positions that tend to be unrepresented without category intersections (Crenshaw 1989). Race, class, and gender are systems of power that are deeply reliant on each other and produce unique experiences, depending on where one is located in these structures (Collins 1999).

To provide an illustration of the importance of attending to intersections in the study of bullying, we can turn to an empirical example from research on peer hierarchies among fourth-grade girls. Underwood (2003) describes Tasha and Sarah, two friends. Sarah is jealous of her friend Tasha spending time with the new girl in class. Sarah is upset and proceeds to act as though Tasha smells bad. Other girls begin to emulate Sarah's behavior. Tasha feels teased and left out. Tasha has experienced a form of bullying, and, if Sarah's behavior is repeated over time, Tasha will not feel safe in her school space. Furthermore, Tasha may not have the peer support or the ability to express her experience as a victim of bullying.

Underwood does not reveal Tasha's social location, with the exception of her gender. But there may be other factors at play here. How can Tasha's experience be more thoroughly understood if Tasha's race is known? What about her social class? Looking at Tasha's experience as gendered, raced, and classed will reveal information about Tasha's position of vulnerability that viewing race, gender, or class alone or separately will not uncover. For instance, if Tasha's racial category places her in a marginalized or minority group, her racial status, along with what it means to be a female, will create a kind of double jeopardy for Tasha. Thus, Tasha and Sarah's bullying/victimization scenario exemplifies how ongoing raced, classed, and gendered social processes (West and Fenstermaker 1995) may reveal inequalities that involve multiple, interactive oppressions (Crenshaw 1989; King 1988) when viewed as interdependent systems (Collins 1999; Valdez 2016).

Ideally, all research would account for each race, class, and gender, as well as other intersections (e.g., along the dimensions of sexuality, immigrant status, and citizenship status). This is, however, often difficult to manage within a single paper. My research takes a first step in this direction by considering the implications of race and gender on bullying. This study deepens the understanding of school bullying using an intersectional lens and supports the need of an intersectional framework to further reduce bullying in school.

Data and Methods

My analysis relies on data from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS-K: 2011), which fulfills a federal research mandate aimed at collecting and analyzing the condition of the United States' educational system. ECLS-K: 2011 followed the same children from kindergarten through the fifth grade, with purposeful intent to include children from diverse socioeconomic and racial/ethnic backgrounds. The voluntary surveys were given to children, as well as parents, teachers, and schools. Data began with an N of 18,174 and, after listwise deletion of missing at random responses and responses of not ascertained or not applicable, I am left with an N of 7,638. The current study uses fourth grade bullying victimization responses from the spring of 2015. This is the fourth-grade wave of the ECLS-K: 2011 and it comprehensively and thoroughly questions students about their experiences with bullying victimization.

Bullying Victimization

I measure experiences with bullying in several ways. First, I take a collective view of what it means to be a victim of bullying by combining four types of victimization: being teased, lied about, pushed, and excluded. Each victimization variable has a range of never, rarely, sometimes, often, and very often and was coded as 1-5, 5

being "very often." The resulting standardized scale has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.79. High values indicate greater levels of bullying.

I also examine each form of bullying victimization separately. Children were asked if they had been teased or called names, if others had told lies about them, if others had pushed or shoved them, and if others had excluded them. Notably, the ECLS-K: 2011 did not include any cyberbullying questions. Other research has shown that school children of this age experience much greater rates of physical, verbal, and social bullying in person, as compared to electronic bullying (Wang et al. 2009), in part because primary age children tend not to be given unrestricted access to the Internet.

Independent Variables

My analyses examine the relationship between characteristics of children, parents, and schools and bullying victimization. I ask which children, in which school contexts, are at the highest risk of experiencing bullying.

Child Characteristics

Because child's sex may impact the degree and nature of bullying they experience (Osler 2006; Pascoe 2013; Underwood 2003), I included a dichotomous measure of sex, with female=1. Children may also have different experiences with bullying based on age—especially if they are on the low or high end for their grade. The ages for children in this fourth grade study range from almost 8 ½ to about 12 years of age. Child's race is of central interest, given prior research on racialized experiences in schools (Peguero and Williams 2011; Sawyer et al. 2008). For the purposes of this study, child's race is coded as a series of dummy variables—Black, Hispanic, Asian, and other, with white as the reference.

Parental Characteristics

Parental education is included as a measure of child's class location. As previous research indicates, youth from low-income households may be at a greater risk for bullying (Jansen et al. 2012; Stephenson and Smith 1993; Whitney and Smith 1993; Wolke et al. 2001). I use parental education and income as indicators for social class. If at least one parent holds a college degree the value is 1. The parental income variable is recoded to the midpoints of annual income ranges, and run from \$2,500 to a top-code value of \$300,000.

School Characteristics

Given the centrality of race, and racial composition of the school, I included a measure of the percent of non-white students enrolled in school. The original data offer a range. I coded the values to the midpoint of the range for ease of analysis and data presentation. I do the same for the percent of children eligible for reduced or free lunch. The enrollment size of the school was also initially offered in a size range, and I use the midpoints of these ranges in my analyses. To address any potential urbanicity effects, I included the location of the school using a series of

dummy variables—suburban, rural, town, and city, using suburban as the reference. I also code the type of school—Catholic, public, and private/other religious (which includes private schools other than Catholic and is used as the reference).

Intersections

As articulated in this article's literature review, viewing experiences as internal to each social category of race, class, or gender does account for the entire picture of bullying victimization. A more holistic approach is necessary. In this paper, I focus on the intersection of race and gender, by using a series of interactions. This allows me to identify females of each race and males of each race, and to explore their unique experiences with victimization.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 gives the descriptive statistics for the variables used in this study. Children experience the most victimization from being teased, followed by being lied about, then pushed, and, finally, excluded. Responding students are split about evenly for gender—all students with an average age of 10 years old. Half of the students are white, a quarter are Hispanic, and Black, Asian, and other race comprise the rest about evenly. To help assess student SES, I look at parent income—the average being \$87,041, with less than half of students having at least one parent with a college degree. Schools distribute free or reduced lunches to almost half of their student populations, and enroll an average of 574 students. On average, schools report their populations to be less than half comprised of minority students. Public schools constituent the majority of schools within this study, with Catholic and schools that are private or religious (other than Catholic) just about evenly comprising the rest. At less than half, most of the survey data comes from students attending suburban schools, then city and rural schools, with towns comprising the least.

Analytical Plan

First, I run a series of regressions predicting students' overall experiences of bullying victimization, using the scale that I created. I do this to get a general sense of victimization occurring in fourth grade classrooms. I use three nested multivariate linear regression models to analyze coefficients. The first model explores the relationship between student characteristics and victimization. The second model adds the parental characteristics of students. Finally, the third model also includes the characteristics of schools in which children are embedded.

Next, I use ordinal logistic regression to examine predictors for the different *types* of bullying victims are experiencing. I examine being pushed, teased, lied about, and excluded separately, following a similar approach as in the previous set of analyses, yet including child characteristics, parent characteristics, and school characteristics simultaneously. The results of the four analyses are then compared.

Finally, I repeat the second set of analyses focused on specific types of bullying, but I also include intersections between student gender and race. I use the margins command in Stata to understand the gender and race intersection, while holding all other variables at their means, allowing for a more direct comparison across groups. I take this step to determine if intersectional analyses uncover hidden understandings of bullying victimization.

Results

Experiences of Bullying Victimization

I turn to my analyses to predictors for overall experiences with victimization, with the collective bullying scale as my outcome. In Model 1 of Table 2, I first examine individual student characteristics that the literature review suggests may have an influence on rates of bullying. Consistent with literature that looks at the gendered effects of bullying (Olweus 1994), I too find that girls have lower rates of bullying than boys (b=-.046, p<.01). Although, this gendered finding may be an artifact of lumping the different types of bullying together. When bullying is separated by type—being pushed, teased, lied about, and excluded—neither girls or boys are more likely to experience bullying (see below).

Next, Black students experience the most bullying (b=.231, p<.001), and Hispanic (b=.075, p<.001) and Asian (b=.110, p<.01) students experience the least, relative to white students. Although, not present in this model for Hispanic and Asian students, my finding regarding Black students is consistent with research that reveals racialization of schools within the United States and is consistent with reports of an anti-Black rhetoric in schools (Allen 2010; Skiba et al. 2011). Further, it is many times the case that if anti-bullying campaigns do exist they cater to the experiences of white students—the most popular anti-bullying campaign is premised with Scandinavian countries in mind and has little or no reference to race as a factor of bullying prevalence (Olweus 1994).

Further, I include characteristics of parents in Model 2 in order to better understand how SES influences bullying experiences. Income of parents and their level of schooling can be used as indicators of the socioeconomic backgrounds of students. As the yearly income increases for students' parents, there is a slight decrease in victimization (b=-.000, p<.001). If at least one parent holds a college degree, bullying prevalence decreases (b=-.150, p<.001). Like with race, I find that class associates with experiences students have in school. My findings are consistent with research that shows students in lower SES situations as experiencing more bullying (Jansen et al. 2012).

Moreover, research cannot adequately address bullying without accounting for school characteristics. In Model 3, students in schools with higher percentages of free and reduced lunches—an indicator of school poverty—report more victimization (b=.003, p<.001). More impoverished schools have societal conditions that may lead

to higher rates of bullying victimizations for students who attend them, and, after considering the above relationship of race and bullying prevalence, it is notable that many of the students attending these impoverished schools are Black.

In contrast, students in schools with lower enrollments report slightly more victimization (b=-.000, p<.05). It may not be possible to gain anonymity in smaller schools and the most bullied students may become constant targets. Larger schools may have environments where students can more easily escape interactions with bullies.

Next, I find that there is no relationship between minority student population and rates of victimization in Model 3. Further, the race effect for Black students is no longer present. These findings may be because of the high levels of correlation that exist between school poverty, individual student race, and school racial composition—given the segregation of Black students in low-income, largely Black schools—making it difficult to see racial effects (Mcloyd 1998).

I also find that Catholic and public schools experience less bullying than private/other religious schools (b=-.189, p<.001; b=-.205, p<.001). Private/other religious schools tend to be smaller and students may experience more over-all bullying. Even if Catholic schools are smaller in size, the similarity in societal beliefs that exists among the student body creates a more homogeneous environment that lessens the prevalence of bullying. Conversely, public schools are often heterogeneous—an environment of even race and/or class dispersion—that lessens the chance of bullying as well (Moody 2001). Finally, as compared to suburban schools, rural schools experience more bullying (b=.069, p<.01). Rural schools tend to be smaller too, and research supports the notion that people who live in rural areas tend to believe in a common ideology that discounts the negative consequences of physicality (Oliver et al. 1994; Stockdale et al. 2002).

Prevalence by Type of Bullying

In addition, I look at the rates of victimization for specific types of bullying—being pushed, teased, lied about, and pushed. In Table 3, I simultaneously account for student, parent, and school characteristics. I only discuss significant results and I convert odds ratios to percentages for ease of interpretation.

Without a noticeably large probability, age only affects children who are being excluded. Students at the older end of the fourth grade age spectrum are 1.2% less likely to experience exclusion. Next, I find that boys are not necessarily bullied more than girls, after-all. Looking across all types of bullying, girls actually experience more bullying than boys in the form of exclusion. Boys are 15.7% less likely to be excluded than girls. Although, girls are 37.7% less likely to be pushed than boys. Here, physical bullying continues to be less likely for girls—a possible result of girls actually experiencing less physical bullying or an artifact of over-

looking experiences that particular sub-sets of girls have with different types of bullying.

My findings show that race matters when considering different types of bullying. Black student are 37.3% more likely to be lied about than white students. Black students are many times blamed for things because of anti-Black racism that exists in schools (Allen 2010; Skiba et al. 2011). Although, Black students are 22.1% less likely to experience exclusion (in comparison to white students). Black students, especially Black males, often experience greater inclusion when filling the stereotypical Black athlete role (Wilkins 2014) and when posing no academic threat to students who are in the dominate power positon—usually held by white students (Ispa-Landa 2013).

Interestingly, Hispanic students are less likely than white students to experience victimization from all forms of bullying—being pushed (36.3% less), teased (39.1% less), lied about (36.8% less), and excluded (37.8% less). More research is needed to understand the results for Hispanic students. One possible explanation may be that Hispanic students often attend homogeneous schools that lessens the possibility of experiencing discrimination (Bellmore et al. 2011), and quite possibly reduces experiences with bullying as well. Hispanic students may also hold different interpretations of what it means to be pushed, teased, lied about, and excluded. Also, relative to white students, Asian students report a 32.2% less likely chance of being lied about and a 21.3% less likely chance of being excluded, whereas students who are ascribed to the category of other race are not largely affected by bullying victimizations.

Students whose parents have higher incomes are less likely to be pushed, teased, and excluded than students whose parents are in lower income brackets, although this probability is almost negligible and could be an artifact of how I measured income. Here, a sizeable difference may occur in bullying prevalence with a different breakdown of income, such as an income variable that represents parents who fall in high and low brackets. Next, when analyzing the effect of parent education, the effects of lower SES (class) status is revealed, as prior research suggests (Jansen et al. 2012)—positioning them as more likely to be victims of all forms of bullying. Students whose parents hold a college degree are less likely to be pushed (12.5% less), teased (13.9% less), lied about less (21.5%), and excluded (15.0% less) than students who have parents without a college degree.

Schools with more free and reduced lunch students have the highest rates of bullying across all forms. Although, the greater likelihood of being bullied is small for students who are being pushed (.40% more), teased (.50% more), lied about (.50% more), and excluded (.40% more). Nevertheless, free and reduced lunch distribution is an indicator that lower SES schools experience greater likelihoods of bullying.

Even though previous results from Table 2 find students experiencing more bullying in small schools, when I break bullying down by type, I now find that students who attend larger schools are at an almost negligible more likely chance of being pushed. These results suggest that breaking bullying down by type does not always make it easier to predict if more of less bullying will occur in certain school contexts. Yet, a possible explanation that pushing may be slightly more common in larger schools is that less visibility allows pushing to occur when more students are present. Next, with no relationship of over-all bullying and minority population percentage in Table 2, I now find that when broken down by type pf bullying (Table 3), schools with larger minority populations experience more teasing. Although very small, schools more populated by minority students have a .30% chance that students will experience greater amounts of teasing than those in less minority populated schools.

Students who attend Catholic schools are less likely to be pushed, lied about, and excluded (37.9% less, 26.3% less, and 37.1% less) than those attending private/other religious schools. Catholic schools may adhere to similar ideological practices, creating homogamy among students, and making them less likely to have students experiencing most forms of bullying. Further, students who attend public schools are less likely to experience all forms of bullying than students who attend private/other religious schools. Public school students are 38.6% less likely to be pushed, 28.8% less like to be teased, 27.5% less likely to be lied about, and 34.8% less likely to be excluded. It seems bullying occurs most in less homogenous and less heterogeneous schools—supported by research that finds public schools to be more evenly heterogeneous and less likely to have instances of bullying (Moody 2001). With this, there is a need for more research to understand why a greater likelihood of bullying exists for children attending private/other religious schools.

Finally, when looking at where a school is located—city, town, and rural, in comparison to children attending suburban schools, I find that students who attend rural schools are 18.2% more likely to be pushed and 19.4% more likely to be lied about. The pushing students are experiencing in rural schools is supported by prior research that suggests rural schools may have higher rates of bullying, especially in the form of pushing, due to dismissive attitudes about physicality (Oliver et al. 1994; Stockdale et al. 2002). Physical interactions between students may be seen as normal and a rite of passage. For the current study, urbanicity (attending schools in cities or towns) has no significance across all types of bullying, as compared to students attending suburban schools—a contradiction of some prior research (Ispa-Landa 2013; Lopez 2002), but not all (for an exception see Posey-Maddox 2014).

Race and Gender Interactions

In Figures 1-4, I focus on the interactions between student race and gender for the different types of bullying. My choice to do this is grounded in intersectional theory that supports the notion that race and gender are interactive. As in my prior analyses, I also account for student, parent and school characteristics. For this section, I focus

my findings on areas where large gaps present themselves or when something arises that is theoretically important.

Here, I make the distinction between students who experience any level of bullying verses those who report never experiencing that type of bullying, that is I compare those who experience "some" bullying—rarely, sometimes, often, and very often—to students who have no experiences with victimization. I then report results as percentages for ease of interpretation for the predicted probabilities of being pushed, teased, lied about, and pushed.

I report student raced and gendered experiences with pushing in Figure 1. I find that Black girls have around a 50% chance of being pushed. This result is important because Black girls are usually put in the same experience category as white girls. Here, Black girls experience a 5% greater chance of being pushed—a reasonably large difference—as compared to white girls who experience a 45% chance of being pushed, demonstrating that experiences of bullying do not always adhere to those of the dominate group. Also, notable, Figure 1 shows that Black girls are subject more often to a physical form of victimization, where prior research places girls as a homogenous group, regardless of race, experiencing less physical forms of bullying (Olweus 1994; Underwood 2003). Moreover, Figure 1 shows that Black boys are a little over 50% likely to experience being pushed—a likelihood almost the same as Black girls. This finding debunks the generalized idea that boys are bullied more than girls and demonstrates how important it is to understand experiences from a perspective that considers race and gender. Another interesting finding is the high rate in which boys who identify as white, Asian, or other racial category—all over 60%—experience pushing. Also, boys and girls who are Hispanic remain less likely to experience this type of bullying, however there is still a gender difference in the way we might expect—the probability of boys being pushed is at around 45% and girls are close to 35%.

Student experiences with being teased are presented in Figure 2. In comparison to all types of victimizations, being teased is the most uniform and the most common form of bullying across all race and gender combinations. Yet, Black girls are most likely to experience being teased at a likelihood of over 70%. This finding substantiates the need to further research bullying experiences based on student race and gender—especially experiences of Black girls. Further, Hispanic boys and Hispanic girls continue to report less of a chance of being bullied, including being teased, both at about a 56% chance. Whether girls or boys, Hispanic student experiences with being teased continue along a trend of being the least bullied racial group relative to white, Black, Asian, and Other Race—raising the question as to why.

In Figure 3, I report raced and gendered results for being lied about. Again, Black girls, along with Black boys, are the most likely to be lied about than any other group, each at close to a 70% probability. The high probability of Black boys and Black girls being lied about is, again, a possible result of anti-Black racism that

exists within U.S. schools (Allen 2010; Skiba et al. 2011). Further, without interactions of race and gender the high prevalence of Black girls being lied about would be over-looked, substantiating the need for bullying research to be grounded in intersectional theory (Collins 2009). Moreover, Black boys are more probable to experience being lied about (and teased at 70%—see Figure 2) than being pushed—suggesting that bullying experiences for all boys are not generalizable as being more physical.

Finally, Figure 4 represents experiences of students being excluded using interactions of race and gender. Exclusion is the least probable form of bullying across all student race and gender interactions—although, white females are the most probable to experience exclusion at just over a 50% likelihood. This result is perhaps a reflection of the mean girl phenomenon portrayed in pop culture. The mean girl phenomenon occurs when a group of affluent white girls exclude and cut out other less affluent girls (Ringrose 2006)—a situation that white girls may be emulating in the fourth grade. Also, expectations of those in more dominate positions—in this case, white girls—may also help explain the higher likelihood of exclusionary experiences.

Again, I find Hispanic boys and Hispanic girls as being the least likely to be excluded, both at about 35% (Figure 4). Results for Hispanic girls and boys need further analysis—experiencing the least amount of victimization across all groups and types of bullying, but research does show that school and classroom compositions are important in understanding power dynamics for various groups (Van Dyke and Tester 2014). Research also shows that Hispanic students are highly segregated by race in schools (Frankenberg 2013). This may help suggest why there is a low likelihood that Hispanic students will experience all bullying victimizations—being pushed, teased, lied about, and excluded. Moreover, schools that are more homogenous—comprised of one race—exude minimal tensions that can possibly result in lower rates of all types of bullying for Hispanic boys and Hispanic girls (Bellmore et al. 2011).

Discussion/Conclusion

The effects of school bullying and victimization can last a lifetime, leaving negative impacts on health and social outcomes (Glew et al. 2005; Takizawa et al. 2014). Interventions, such as the one created by Dan Olweus (1994), have sought for almost 50 years to improve the safety of our schools through bullying prevention programs—programs that have the potential to positively impact the entire lifecourse of school children. Yet, I find that bullying continues to occur, suggesting that intervention efforts may be overlooking some of our nation's most vulnerable children. A reexamination of programs like the Olweus middle-school focused bullying prevention program has implications toward further reducing school bullying and victimization within the United States' educational system.

My findings suggest that children as early as the fourth grade experience bullying—substantiating the need for prevention programs in elementary schools.

My findings also build on theory that associates bullying victimization with raced, classed, and gendered characteristics of school children. I further find evidence that the prevalence of bullying victimization is influenced by the school contexts in which it occurs.

Overall, Black children experience the most victimization as compared to white children. Therefore, it is important to view the bullying that is occurring in U.S. schools as racialized. Why are Black students experiencing more bullying victimizations? We need a more complete understanding of the possible anti-Black racism that affects victims of bullying within our nation's schools and how bullying prevention programs can help address and reduce such occurrences. Moreover, addressing how children from different racial groups fair in certain school contexts may help researchers further understand bullying experiences of Black students.

Also, analysis of gender characteristics shows that as homogenous groups, girls and boys have different experiences with types of victimizations that occur. Girls experience more relational bullying (exclusion), and boys experience more physical forms of bullying (being pushed). Yet, when I further ground bullying research in intersectional approaches, I find very different results. I show that when student race and gender intersect, not all girls and boys experience bullying victimization similarly. For example, Black girls experience higher rates than previously expected for all types of bullying that would not be accounted for without the intersection of race and gender. Bullying prevention programs need to address the experiences of vulnerable and overlooked children.

I strongly suspect that the intersection of race, gender, and class will reveal additional overlooked aspects of bullying. My research does not analyze student class as a further interaction of race and gender, due to the complexity and scope of this project, although my findings of bullying victimizations based on class alone suggest the importance of a fully intersectional model. I find that students whose parents have less educated parents and are from lower income families experience more victimization. It may be, for instance, that a "mean girl" phenomenon is at play, in which affluent white girls victimize those from less affluent backgrounds.

With this, it is important to take intersectional theory into consideration when understanding bullying victimization that occurs within U.S. schools. Intersectional theory goes beyond the findings of prior research regarding various aspects of bullying victimization and provides a deeper understanding of victims from bullying who may be experiencing multiple, interlocked forms of oppression (Collins 1999). Established bullying prevention programs need to address children who are being overlooked, often marginalized, in understanding that race, class, and gender intersect in ways that create unique experiences of victimization—potentially revealing the children most at risk. These intersectional findings have implications for improving bullying prevention programs.

My research also suggests that school characteristics matter. Students experience more bullying in schools that serve lower-income students and are thus likely to be lowered resourced. Bullying is also more prevalent in rural schools and in private/other religious schools. It stands to reason that particular contexts may be particularly problematic for certain students, a possibility I did not explore in this

paper. For instance, it may be that children coming from already multiply oppressed backgrounds—a Black girl coming from a low SES family, for instance—may experience even further oppression attending a school comprised of poor students that is less resourced. Future research should consider the ways in which context intersects with student characteristics.

Intersecting student race, gender, and class with various characteristics of schools may also help answer perplexing questions that have come from my study. Interacting student race, gender, and class, together, with school type may help explain the discrepancy in school size and bullying prevalence, along the low reports of bullying from Hispanic students. Further research in this regard may also provide explanations as to why my study found no relationship of bullying victimization with urbanicity as well.

In sum, programs like the Olweus bullying prevention model and others will benefit from incorporating an intersectional framework. Current programs that are functioning within the U.S. can also be improved upon by not only accounting for intersections of individual student characteristics—race, gender, class, sexuality, disability, etc., but by focusing on what happens when these further intersect with school contexts. It is important that we implement improved bullying prevention programs at every school—preferably put in place earlier than the fourth grade—and think carefully about the forms and levels of bullying that particular types of students are likely to experience. Our nation can do more to account for all children in all circumstances and prevent students from suffering the detrimental consequences of bullying victimization.

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Table 1: ECLSK2011 Means and Standard Deviations—Select Fourth Grade Variables

	Mean	SD
Child Excluded	1.765645	-
Child Teased	2.245352	-
Child Lied About	2.224404	-
Child Pushed	1.877062	-
Bullied – All Forms	0235872	.77019
Student Sex (Female)	.4931919	-
Student Age (Months)	121.0789	4.441276
White	.5417649	-
Black	.0809112	-
Hispanic	.245614	-
Asian	.0748887	-
Other	.0568212	-
Parent Income (Yearly)	87041.76	77703.62
Parent Education (College Degree)	.4460592	-
% Free Lunches	48.05532	29.12573
School Enrollment	574.0407	296.309
% Nonwhite Students	42.9962	30.17935
Catholic	.0551191	-
Public	.8985336	-
Private/Other Religious	.0463472	-
City	.2903902	-
Town	.0748887	-
Rural	.2039801	-
Suburban	.430741	-
Observations	763	8

Table 2. Linear Regression Coefficients Predicting Victimization from Bullying using a Nested Model with Student, Parent, and School Characteristics

Variable (Reference)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Female	-0.046**	-0.047**	-0.046**
Tomato	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.017)
Age	-0.001	-0.001	-0.002
1190	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Race (White)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Black	0.231***	0.126***	0.055
Bluck	(0.033)	(0.034)	(0.036)
Hispanic	-0.075***	-0.184***	-0.239***
pw	(0.021)	(0.023)	(0.027)
Asian	-0.110**	-0.090**	-0.107**
Tistuii	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.037)
Other	0.056	0.026	0.004
o inci	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.039)
Parent Income	(0.037)	-0.000***	-0.000***
Turent meome		(0.000)	(0.000)
Parent Education		-0.150***	-0.109***
Turent Education		(0.021)	(0.022)
% Free/Reduced Lunch		(0.021)	0.003***
,0 1100,1000000			(0.000)
Enrollment			-0.000*
			(0.000)
% Minority Students			0.001
, c			(0.000)
School Type (Private)			(0.000)
Catholic			-0.189***
2 11122 222			(0.054)
Public			-0.205***
			(0.043)
School Location (Suburban)			
City			0.016
,			(0.022)
Town			0.049
			(0.036)
Rural			0.069**
			(0.026)
Constant	0.118	0.367	0.445
	(0.244)	(0.241)	(0.246)
Observations	7638	7638	7638
R^2	0.012	0.035	0.047
BIC	1.8e + 04	1.7e + 04	1.7e + 04

^{*}Significant at p<.05 level
**Significant at p<.01 level
***Significant at p<.001 level

Table 3. Odds Ratios from Ordered Logistic Regression Predicting Victimization by

Type of Bullying using Student, Parent and School Characteristics

Variable (Reference)	Pushed	Teased	Lied About	Excluded
Female	0.623***	0.977	1.005	1.157***
	(0.027)	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.051)
Child's Age	0.996	0.995	0.999	0.988^{*}
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Race (White)				
Black	0.947	1.170	1.373***	0.779^{**}
	(0.088)	(0.104)	(0.122)	(0.074)
Hispanic	0.637***	0.609***	0.632***	0.622***
	(0.044)	(0.040)	(0.042)	(0.044)
Asian	1.055	0.910	0.678***	0.787^{*}
	(0.096)	(0.079)	(0.061)	(0.075)
Other	1.147	1.011	0.967	0.913
	(0.109)	(0.093)	(0.091)	(0.090)
Parent Income	1.000***	1.000**	1.000	1.000***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Parent Education	0.875^{*}	0.861**	0.785***	0.850^{**}
	(0.047)	(0.044)	(0.041)	(0.046)
% Free/Reduced Lunch	1.004**	1.005***	1.005***	1.004***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Enrollment Size	1.000^{*}	1.000	1.000	1.000
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
% Minority Students	1.002	1.003^{*}	1.002	0.999
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
School Type (Private)				
Catholic	0.621***	0.822	0.737^{*}	0.629^{***}
	(0.083)	(0.105)	(0.094)	(0.086)
Public	0.614***	0.712***	0.725**	0.652***
	(0.064)	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.070)
Location (Suburban)				
City	1.095	1.061	1.002	1.059
	(0.060)	(0.055)	(0.053)	(0.059)
Town	1.168	1.129	1.081	1.061
	(0.105)	(0.096)	(0.093)	(0.096)
Rural	1.182**	1.101	1.194**	1.105
	(0.076)	(0.068)	(0.074)	(0.072)
Observations	7638	7638	7638	7638
Bic	1.9e + 04	2.2e+04	2.2e+04	1.8e + 04

^{*}Significant at p<.05 level

^{**}Significant at p<.01 level

^{***}Significant at p<.001 level

Figure 1. Ordered logit regression predicted probabilities of victimization from being pushed using student race and gender interactions.

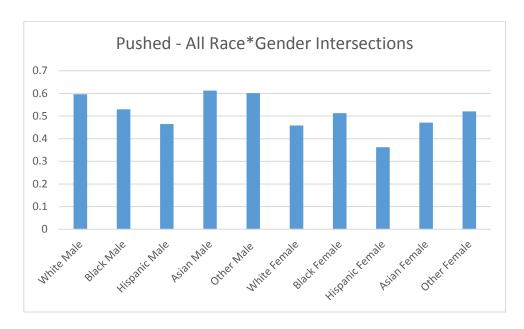


Figure 2. Ordered logit regression predicted probabilities of victimization from being teased using student race and gender interactions.

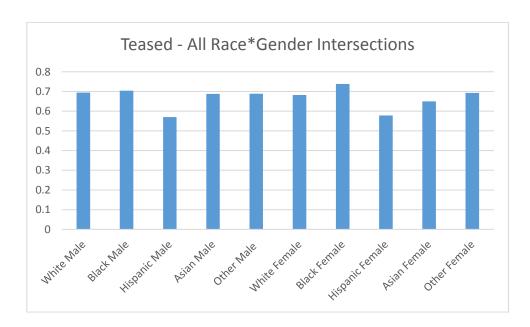


Figure 3. Ordered logit regression predicted probabilities of victimization from being lied about using student race and gender interactions.

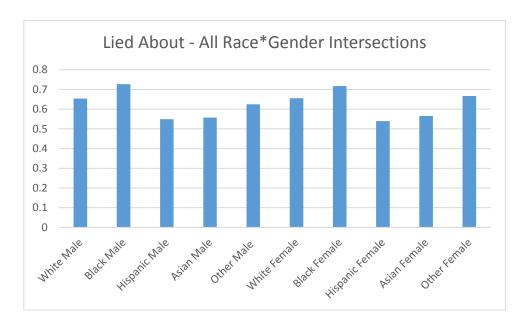


Figure 4. Ordered logit regression predicted probabilities of victimization from being excluded using student race and gender interactions.

