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The Relations between Bullying Behaviour and Quality of Student Life among Secondary Students in a Northern Québec Community

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Abstract

The present study is an examination of the associations between bullying behaviour and the quality of student life (QOSL) in adolescents. Bullying behaviour (e.g., bullying perpetration and victimization) was assessed using the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (BVQ). Quality of student life was assessed using four sub-scales of the Quality of Student Life Questionnaire (QSL.Q) (i.e., satisfaction, well-being, social belonging & empowerment/control). Thirty-three students from a community in northern Québec participated in the study. Results indicated that students who reported being bullied also reported significantly lower satisfaction and social belonging. However, no differences were found in terms of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging and empowerment/control between students who bullied other students and those who did not. Further analyses revealed that students who reported more interventions by teachers during bulling episodes also reported higher levels of satisfaction with school and school-related activities. Similarly, students who perceived a good deal of peer involvement during instances of bullying reported higher levels of satisfaction and overall quality of student life than students who perceived little peer involvement. This study adds to the growing body of literature indicating that school interventions seeking to combat and/or prevent bullying should involve all members of the school community: students, teachers, staff, and parents.

Résumé

Cette étude porte sur l'étude du lien entre le *bullying* scolaire (intimidation scolaire) et la qualité de la vie étudiante chez les adolescents. Les comportements d'intimidation (par exemple, l'intimidation et la victimisation) ont été analysés en utilisant le Questionnaire Agresseur/Victime d'Olweus (AVO). La qualité de la vie étudiante (QDVE), a été mesurée par quatre sous-échelles du questionnaire QDVE (la satisfaction, le bien-être, l'appartenance sociale et l'auto-détermination/contrôle). Un groupe de 33 élèves provenant d'une école secondaire dans le nord du Québec a participé à l'étude. Les résultats ont indiqué que les étudiants qui ont déclaré avoir été victimes d'intimidation ont également signalé significativement moins de satisfaction et appartenance sociale. Toutefois, aucune différence n'a été observée en termes de satisfaction, bien-être, appartenance et auto-détermination/contrôle entre les étudiants qui ont intimidé d'autres élèves et ceux qui n'ont pas. Une analyse plus approfondie des résultats a également montré que les élèves qui ont déclaré plus d'interventions par les enseignants, pendant des épisodes d'intimidation, ont également rapporté des niveaux plus élevés de satisfaction avec l'école et les activités scolaires. Dans le même ordre d'idées, les étudiants qui ont indiqué plus d'interventions des pairs pendant des épisodes d'intimidation, ont également rapporté des niveaux plus élevés de satisfaction et de qualité globale de la vie étudiante que les étudiants qui ont perçu peu d'implication des pairs. Cette étude complémente la littérature croissante sur l'intimidation scolaire qui indique que les interventions scolaires visant à combattre l'intimidation doivent impliquer tous les membres de la communauté scolaire, y compris les étudiants, les enseignants, le personnel et les parents dans les efforts de prévention contre l'intimidation.

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Introduction

Bullying and peer victimization in school are serious problems that are a cause for concern for students, teachers, parents and school officials in around the world (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). Bullying refers to repeated aggressive behaviour that occurs over time in a relationship characterized by an imbalance of strength or power. On the other hand, peer victimization is the experience among children of being a target of the aggressive behaviour of other children; it includes being bullied and experiences of being the target of physical, social, emotional, or psychological violence from a peer (Oweus, 1994; Hawker & Boulton, 2000). Although there are a limited number of bullying statistics available to the public, bullying is a major concern in Canadian schools. A national study completed for the Public Health Agency of Canada surveyed 26,078 students aged 11 to 15 from 436 Canadian schools and found that 63 percent reported being victims of bullying, that 40 percent reported being bullies at some point in their school life, and that 88 percent believed that bullying was a major problem in their school (Statistics Canada, 2011). Moreover, a recent survey indicated that Québec has the highest rate of bullying in the country (Adamson, 2013). According to Statistics Canada (2011), 10 percent of all Québec students are victims of acts of bullying at least once a week, making the incidence of bullying in Québec higher than the national average of 8 percent. Aside from differences between provinces, differences in bullying behaviour also exist between rural and urban samples in Canada (Eisler & Schissel, 2004). Recent studies indicate that bullying behaviour is more prevalent in rural and remote communities in Canada when compared to urban centers (Leadbeater, Sukhawathanakul, Smith, Thompson, Gladstone, Sklar, 2013). For instance, Eisler and Schissel (2004) reported that there is greater concern among rural students with being a “victim of attack” in schools (40%), versus lower worries among urban students

(30%). Thus, bullying behaviour is serious social phenomenon that requires the attention and immediate action of parents, students, teachers, staff, and policy makers.

Increasing public awareness and concern have led provincial governments to introduce specific anti-bullying legislation. For example, in Québec, Bill 56 was introduced in 2012 to combat bullying, to better serve children, and to promote respect for all students. Specifically, Bill 56 seeks to introduce:

"Prevention measures to put an end to all forms of bullying and violence, in particular those motivated by racism or homophobia or targeting sexual orientation, sexual identity, a handicap or a physical characteristic" (National Assembly of Québec, 2012, 75.1, p.4).

Concerns over the rate of occurrence of bullying in schools have also led to an examination of the impact of bullying on students and the risk factors associated with it (Phillips, 2007; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005; Espelage & Horne, 2008; Garbarino & deLara, 2002; Limber, 2006). In the bullying literature, bullying had been associated with a number of negative outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and extreme social isolation (Juvonen, Graham & Shuster, 2003). For instance, Losel and Bender (2011) followed 637 participants from childhood to adolescence in order to assess the outcomes of bullying and victimization in schools. They found that bullying predicted later symptoms of anxiety, depression and social withdrawal among girls and later antisocial behaviour in boys.

Aside from investigating outcomes related to bullying, researchers have also looked at the risk factors associated with bullying. Typically, risk factors have been divided into individual and contextual (Espelage & Horne, 2008; Hong & Espelage, 2012). Individual factors include socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and race/ethnicity as well as sexual orientation, and health status (Espelage & Horne, 2008; Nansel et al., 2001; Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000; Hanish & Guerra, 2000). The contextual factors are generally considered to be the interactions between individuals or groups of individuals within immediate settings (e.g., home,

school) (Hong & Espelage, 2012). Contextual variables include peer relationships, teacher support, school connectedness, and the school climate (Espelage & Horne, 2008; Salmivalli, 2009; Brookmeyer, Fanti, & Henrich, 2006; Espelage & Swearer, 2003).

Another important factor within the bullying literature is how the interaction between individual factors and the social context influence engagement in bullying behaviour (Pryce & Frederickson, 2013). In order to examine this link, researchers have looked at student perceptions of their school climate. For instance, Doll, Song, and Siemers (2004) found that engaging students in decision making within the classroom (e.g., including student perspectives when creating classroom rules, activities, and choosing a reward/consequence system) was related to less peer aggression. Moreover, Bru, Stephens, and Torsheim (2002) found that students who saw themselves as being more involved in their classroom environment (e.g., increased student autonomy within the classroom) and who perceived more emotional support from teachers engaged in more positive classroom behaviours.

Another way to examine the interplay between individual variables and contextual factors as it relates to bullying behaviour is through the study of quality of student life (Flaspohler, Elfstrom, Vanderzee, Sink, & Birchmeier, 2009). The larger concept of quality of life (QOL) has been defined as the success, contentment, and happiness with one's experience in the different dimensions of life (e.g., social, emotional, physical, professional, financial) (Watson & Keith, 2002). Moreover, QOL is a measure of personal satisfaction with life experiences such as one's sense of belonging, feelings of competence, productivity, empowerment, and independence (Schalock, Keith & Hoffmann, 1989).

The notion of QOL was elaborated once it was situated within the school context by Keith and Shalock (1994) who developed a measure of quality of student life (QOSL) that comprised satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, and a sense of empowerment/control all in relation to one's school environment. Moreover, QOSL is a multidimensional concept that

includes both objective and subjective components. Thus, QOSL relates objective indicators such as health, social welfare, friendships, neighborhood, and family life with an individual's perceptions of QOL. As a result, examining the relationship between bullying and student quality of life provides the opportunity to identify and understand student's perspectives with regards to a number of aspects of their school context and address them in way that are in line with their specific needs.

Focus and Purpose of Research

The aim of this study is to investigate whether quality of student life is associated with bullying and victimization in a sample of secondary students in a remote community in Northern Québec. As such, this community displays many of the characteristics shared by rural and remote communities in the Canadian territory. In Canada, there is no official definition of what is considered a rural or remote community, and several alternative definitions are used by Statistics Canada for policy and analysis purposes (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2005). Because 'rural" or "remote" can be defined by geographical location, by community and cultural differences, or a way of life, the Canadian government allows communities associations to self-define as rural or remote when responding to national surveys (du Plessis, Beshiri & Bollman, 2002; Public Health Agency of Canada, 2005).

As mentioned above, rural and remote communities share a number of characteristics which include less noise, less traffic, and a closer bond to nature (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2005). Moreover, although common myths about rural and remote living include the notion of tight-knit groups and a strong sense of community, the reality is that many rural and remote communities are often more socially isolated due to their geographical location. Thus, community members often have to travel far distances to reach services, supplies, and work (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2005). Another aspect of rural or remote living that has been identified by members of small communities is a sense of security (du Plessis et al., 2002).

However, there seems to be a disconnect between feelings of security and the actual level of safety that exists in rural or remote communities. For instance, according to a 2005 report by Statistics Canada, a comparison between large urban, small urban and rural crime indicated that rural areas had the highest homicide rate (Francisco & Chénier, 2005). Moreover, a national survey examined the rates of domestic violence in rural and urban Canada between the years of 2006-2008; the researchers concluded that overall rates of domestic violence were significantly higher in rural areas than urban areas (Northcott, 2011).

Recently, researchers have also focused on violent behaviour in schools located in remote or rural areas (Leadbeater et al., 2013). Although, there is little research on this topic, evidence from cross-sectional studies indicates that peer victimization is more prevalent in rural Canadian samples (Leadbeater et al., 2013). For instance Eisler and Schissel (2004) conducted a study with a sample of 2,605 high school adolescents in Saskatchewan. They found that more students from rural areas (19 %) reported being afraid of getting hurt in school as compared to their urban peers (14%). Moreover, rural students (13%) also reported experiencing more physical victimization as compared to urban students (10%). Because little is known about this topic, it is important to investigate the prevalence and risk of bullying and victimization in rural and remote communities. Moreover, given difficulties related to access of services in these communities, it is equally important to investigate how bullying behaviour impacts students' lives. A good way of exploring this issue is by studying how bullying affects student's perceptions of their quality of life within the school context (Flaspohler et al., 2009).

Although few studies have investigated the relationship between bullying and quality of life (QOL), the research that has been done on this topic demonstrates a negative association between QOL and bullying/victimization (Flaspohler et al., 2009; Wilkins-Shurmer, O'Callaghan, Najman, Bor, Williams, & Anderson, 2003; Martin, Huebner, & Valois, 2008; Rigby, 2000). For instance, Wilkins-Shurmer and colleagues (2003) found that as the frequency

of victimization increased, student ratings of QOL decreased. Some researchers have also investigated the relationship between bullying and victimization and QOSL subscales (i.e., satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, and empowerment/control). Rigby (2000) found that a high frequency of bullying was associated with low levels of well-being. Thus, QOSL may be an important factor in determining the effect of bullying and victimization on the school trajectories of adolescents.

The present study seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on bullying and victimization in schools. One aim of this research is to examine the relationship between bullying and quality of student life within the context of rural or remote surroundings. Another aim of this study is to add to the limited research literature investigating bullying and peer victimization through student perspectives. The last goal of this study is to examine whether perceptions of peer teacher and interventions to stop bullying are associated with perceptions of SQOL.

Literature Review

The nature of Bullying

Bullying has been operationalized and conceptualized in many ways (Hong & Espelage, 2012). The World Health Organization (2002) categorized bullying behaviour as "the intentional use of physical and psychological force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation" (Hong & Espelage, 2012). Another more commonly used definition, and the one that will be used in this research, was advanced by Olweus (1994) who asserted that Bullying is a repeated behaviour that occurs over time in a relationship characterized by an imbalance of strength or power. Bullying can be either verbal or physical, can be perpetrated by more than one bully on more than one victim and can encompass a range of behaviours (e.g., physical aggression, gossiping,

exclusion, teasing, name calling) (Cunningham, 2007). The different roles that make up the bullying process, bullies, victims, and bully/victims, are characterized by distinct psychological and social profiles (Cunningham, 2007).

Bullies. Bullies may employ both proactive and reactive aggression (Juvonen, Graham & Shuster, 2003). Adolescent bullies tend to have high emotionality and low self-control, show little empathy, have low social anxiety, and are more likely to hold antisocial beliefs (Haynie, Nansel, Eitel, & Crump, 2001; Pellegrini, Bartini, & Brooks, 1999; Bernstein & Watson, 1997; Juvonen et al., 2003). Although bullies may enjoy a high social status among their peers, their friendships are primarily with other bullies (Juvonen et al., 2003). Moreover, they are also more inclined to be disengaged from school and to have low academic standing (Juvonen et al., 2003). However, overall, it seems that bullies tend to have higher self-esteem, to enjoy more popularity, and to have more friendships than victims, and bully/victims (Salmivalli, 1999). However, they may view themselves more negatively in academic, behavioural, emotional, and family-related domains (Salmivalli, 1999).

Victims. Adolescent victims of bullying tend to have a number of psychological and social difficulties such as poor self-esteem, high rates of depression or anxiety, and may feel more lonely and isolated than their peers (Haynie et al., 2001; Juvonen et al., 2003). They are also characterized by having few friends, few sources of social support, and a low social status among their peers (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Olweus, 1994). Moreover, victims tend to have negative attitudes toward bullying and do not endorse aggressive, coercive, or violent behaviour (Pellegrini et al., 1999).

Bully/victims. Bully/victims are relatively rare but are often more troubled than bullies or victims (Carney & Merrell, 2001). They display high emotionality and are more impulsive and anxious than the other groups (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Olweus, 2003). They exhibit poor social skills, fewer friendships, and less social support which all contribute to the high rate of

social and psychological difficulties (Griffin & Cross, 2004). Their bullying is often reactive in nature; they attack others who they perceive as weaker in response to being victimized by others who are more powerful than they are (Haynie et al., 2001). In addition to anxiety and depression, bully/victims often suffer from hyperactivity, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, and Conduct Disorder (Griffin & Cross, 2004; Greene, 2000).

Evidently, bullying is a complex phenomenon. Just as the profiles differ, so do the pathways toward bullying and risk factors associated with bullying behaviour. Typically, risk factors have divided into individual and contextual factors (Espelage & Horne, 2008).

Individual Factors Associated with Bullying and Peer Aggression

Given that risk factors associated with bullying and peer victimization vary according to personal characteristics, it is important to consider individual factors (e.g., age, gender, race, health status, sexual orientation) when studying bullying behaviour (Hong & Espelage, 2012).

Age. Findings on the association between bullying behaviour and age remain unclear. Smith, Madsen, and Moody (1999) hypothesized that bullying tends to gradually decline as children grow older because most children acquire better social skills with age. However, recent research comparing primary school and high school students suggests that the frequency of bullying increases during primary school and then decreases in high school (Espelage & Horne, 2008; Nansel et al., 2001; Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000). For instance, Pellerini and Long (2002) followed 154 students in the United States from the 5th grade to the 8th grade and found that bullying and aggression declined during secondary school. However, there was a peak in bullying behaviour during the transition from primary to secondary school (e.g., between the 6^{th} and 7^{th} grade). Similarly, a study conducted by Isernhagen and Harris (2004) comparing bullying behaviour in sample of 819 rural middle and high school students in the United states found that reported bullying rates were higher for middle school students (50%) than for of high school students (37%). Another study conducted by O'Connell, Pepler, and Craig (1999) investigated

bullying incidents on the school playground, they found that students in grades 4–6 were more likely to participate in bullying than were younger students in grades 1–3. Moreover, younger children and older girls were also more likely to intervene on behalf of bullying victims than were older boys. Although differences in findings exist when looking at bullying in different age groups, it seems that such differences can be at least partially explained by the peak in bullying behaviour that occurs during the transition from primary to secondary school (Isernhagen & Harris, 2004; Pellerini & Long, 2002). However, more research is still needed in order to establish a developmental framework to describe bullying and victimization experiences across age groups (Griffin & Cross, 2004).

Gender. Similarly, findings regarding gender and aggressive behaviour in schools are also inconclusive (Bernstein & Watson, 1997; Craig, 1998). Olweus (1994) reported that boys were more likely to be victims of direct bullying, whereas girls were more likely to be victims of indirect or relational bullying. Rivers and Smith (1994), on the other hand, reported that gender differences for direct and relational bullying decreased during the teenage years. Another study conducted in Finland with 200 adolescents indicated that bullying was more stable across time for boys than for girls. In this study, students were followed for 2 years from 6th grade to 8th grade; an examination of the results revealed that for boys, but not girls, the correlation between 6th and 8th grade bullying was strong and significant. Thus, there was a highly significant consistency in boy's bullying of others that was not present for girls (Salmivalli, Lappalainen, & Lagerspetz, 1998). In another study, Ma (2002) examined individual and school characteristics of victims and offenders of bullying in a sample of 6,883 students middle school from urban and rural areas in New Brunswick. They found that boys were far more likely than girls to be not only bullies but also victims. Some authors suggest that diverging findings may be an artifact of the vastly different operationalizations of bullying used by researchers (i.e., defining bullying as verbal aggression or physical aggression, or both)(Hong & Espelage, 2012; Griffin & Cross,

2004). As with age factors, more research is needed in order to identify how bullying behaviour develops and changes in accordance with age (Griffin & Cross, 2004).

Race and ethnicity. The association between race (e.g., a person's physical appearance, such as skin color, eye color, hair color, bone structure) and ethnicity (e.g., cultural factors such as nationality, culture, ancestry, language and beliefs) (Peguero, Popp, Latimore, & Shekarkhar, 2011) and bullying behaviour has also been difficult to establish (Spriggs, Iannotti, Nansel, & Haynie, 2007; Vervoort, Scholte, & Oberbeek, 2008). Research on this topic is further constrained by the fact that only a small number of studies have explored the role that race and ethnicity play in the occurrence of bullying (Vervoort, Scholte, & Oberbeek, 2008). Hanish and Guerra (2000) reported that Whites are significantly at higher risk of victimization than African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos. In another study, the authors found that Hispanic/Latino youth reported slightly higher involvement in bullying perpetration than Whites, while African Americans reported a higher level of peer victimization than youth of other races (Nansel et al., 2001). Other studies have found that race/ethnicity are not significant predictors of bullying and peer victimization (Seals & Young's, 2003). Moreover, it seems that the classroom context further convolutes the relationship between race and ethnicity and bullying behaviour. For instance, Vervoort and colleagues (2008) found that although racial/ethnic minority status was not a predictor of bullying, peer victimization was more prevalent in ethnically diverse classrooms. Thus, it may be that that the prevalence of bullying and peer victimization across race/ethnicity is less relevant than how racial/ethnic dynamics influence the type of bullying that is perpetrated (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Hong & Espelage, 2012).

Physical and mental health. Health status, especially obesity, seems to be strongly associated with risk for bullying and victimization. A study conducted in Canadian schools with a sample of 5749 students found that youth who were considered overweight or obese were more likely to engage in bullying than their peers with average weight (Janssen, Craig, Boyce, &

Pickett, 2004). Another study conducted in England found that obese boys were significantly more likely to be both victims and perpetrators of bullying, while obese girls were more often victims (Griffith, Wolke, Page, Horwood, & ALSPAC Study Team, 2005). Thus, it seems that obesity not only predicts bullying in youth, but it is also a significant predictor of victimization. Similarly, mental health has also been found to be strongly associated with bullying victimization (Fekkes, Pijpers, & Verloove-Vanhorick, 2005; Klomek, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld, Gould, 2007; Schwartz, McFadyen-Ketchum, Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1999). Fekkes et al., (2005) conducted a study with 1118 school-age children in the Netherlands looking at the relationship between health and bullying behaviour. They found that victimization among children with depressive symptoms was significantly higher than among children without such a history. The researchers theorized that depression and/or anxiety could make students easy targets as they may be viewed as vulnerable by bullies.

Sexual orientation. Unlike age, gender, and race, there is a consensus in the research literature concerning the association between sexual orientation and bullying behaviour. Bullying seems to occur more frequently among youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (and/or questioning) (LGBTQ) than in youth who identify as heterosexual (Hong & Espelage, 2012). A nationwide study conducted in the United Sates reported that nearly 40% of LGBTQ youth indicated experiencing physical harassment at least once because of their sexual orientation and 64% reported feeling unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation (Kosciw, 2004). According to a 2003 survey of Massachusetts high school students, individuals who identified as gay, lesbian, and bisexual were nearly five times more likely than students who identified as heterosexual to report not attending school because of feeling unsafe (Hanlon, 2004). Another study comparing sexual minority adolescents (e.g., adolescents who self-identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual) living in rural communities and urban areas in British Columbia found that rural sexual-minority adolescent boys were more

likely than were their urban peers to report dating violence and physical sexual harassment (Poon & Saewyc, 2009). Moreover, a relationship also exists between the broader social context and bullying behaviour related to sexual orientation. It seems that compared to homophobic environments, physically aggressive social climates are more conducive to bullying behaviour because of sexual orientation (Hong & Espelage, 2012). Poteat (2008) found that social climates where physical aggression was more prevalent were associated with increased use of homophobic teasing compared to homophobic climates. Thus, just like examining the social context of sexual orientation can provide insight into the interplay between individual and group-level factors, examining the social context of bullying behaviour may also provide insight into the relationship between individual and contextual factors associated with bullying.

Contextual Factors Associated with Bullying and Peer Aggression

The social context has consistently been identified as important to the explanation of individuals' behaviour (Vervoort et al., 2008; Poteat, 2008). Thus, an examination of contextual risk factors can illuminate some of the unique challenges and intricacies that exist in the research literature and thus lead to a better understand of bullying behaviour. Contextual risk factors include peer relations, teacher support, school connectedness, and school environment (Naylor & Cowie, 1999; Hong & Espelage, 2012).

Peer relations. Peers play an important role in the social development of children and adolescents (Cillessen & Bukowski, 2000; Ladd, Kochenderfer, & Coleman, 1997; Parker Low, Walker, & Gamm, 2005). Peer interactions are also important in determining the occurrence of bullying in adolescence (Hong & Espelage, 2012). Many studies have found that peers play a significant role in bullying victimization and perpetration (Hong & Espelage, 2012; Garandeau & Cillessen, 2006; Mouttapa et al., 2004; O'Connell et al., 1999; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003; Schmidt & Bagwell, 200). Specifically, researchers have found that negative peer relationships and lack of peer support are significant risk factors for bullying behaviour (Hong & Espelage,

2012). Demaray and Malecki (2003) found that youth with low levels of peer acceptance and social support were at increased risk of bullying victimization. However, good quality friendships served to protect students from bullying (Bollmer, Milich, Harris, & Maras, 2005; Bollmer, Milich, Harris, & Maras, 2005; Hugh-Jones & Smith, 1999). Moreover, it seems that youth's identification with the values and norms of their peer group can also exert an important influence during adolescence and can influence the occurrence of bullying behaviour (Espelage et al., 2000; Espelage, Holt, & Henkel, 2003). For instance, Espelage and Swearer (2003) found that adolescents whose peer group tolerates or promotes acts of bullying are more likely to engage in bullying behaviour. Thus, peer acceptance, friendships, affiliation, and social support may determine the likelihood to engage in bullying behaviour for adolescents.

Teacher support. Teachers are an important part of a child's social support network (Goldstein, Arnold, Rosenberg, Stowe, & Ortiz, 2001; Mishna, Scarcello, Pepler, & Wiener, 2005; Yoon, 2004); they can provide social support in multiple forms, including emotional, motivational, and informational support (Flaspohler et al., 2009). Teacher support has also been found to be a mitigating factor for bullying behaviour (Flaspohler et al., 2009). McNeely and Falci (2004) found that students who received more teacher support were less likely to engage in violent behaviour. Flaspohler, Elfstrom, Vanderzee, Sink, and Birchmeier (2009), found that students who perceived low levels of support by teachers and peers reported that they were more frequently the victims of bullies and that they were less satisfied with life in general. Moreover, Naylor and Cowie (1999) surveyed 2,313 respondents in the U.K to explore teachers' and students' experiences of peer support systems in response to bullying in schools. Students and teachers from 51 secondary schools and colleges participated in the study. The researchers found that, as attested by students, support systems were effective in reducing the negative effects of bullying for victims. Thus, receiving support from teachers may be an effective way to counteract bullying and to reduce the negative effects of bullying for those who are victimized.

School connectedness. School connectedness refers to the belief held by students that teachers, peers, and staff in the school care about their learning as well as social, emotional, and physical well-being (Hong & Espelage, 2012). The relationship between school connectedness (i.e., a sense of belonging in school) and bullying behaviour is also an important one (Glew, Fan, Katon & Rivara, 2005; You, Furlong, Felix, Sharkey, & Tanigawa, 2008). Studies have found that youths' sense of school connectedness can reduce the risk of peer aggression (Hong & Espelage, 2012; Brookmeyer, Fanti, & Henrich, 2006). For instance, Brookmeyer et al. (2006) conducted a longitudinal study of adolescent health with 6,397 students. They found that students who felt more connected to their schools demonstrated reductions in violent behaviour over time. Moreover, a number of studies have shown that students attending schools with lower levels of school connectedness are significantly more likely to be involved in bullying and peer victimization (Glew et al., 2005; Skues, Cunningham, & Pokharel, 2005; You et al., 2004; Young, 2004). Brookmeyer et al. (2006) argue that school-level changes can be brought about by promoting feelings of connectedness in schools. Such changes include empowering students and staff, increase school engagement, motivate students, and by creating open and caring relationships and fostering open communication in schools (Klem & Connell, 2004).

School environment. The school environment incorporates a range of components including the physical environment (e.g., school building and school ground) and the emotional well-being of students and staff (Hong & Espelage, 2012). The school environment is also an important factor to consider when studying the occurrence of bullying behaviour (Hong & Espelage, 2012; Espelage & Swearer, 2003). A number of studies have found that negative school environmental factors (e.g., lower levels of adult monitoring) can increase the frequency and likelihood of bullying and reduce the likelihood of students feeling safe in their school (Baker, 1998; Meyer-Adams & Conner, 2008; Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000; Wienke Totura et al., 2008). Moreover, according to Kupermine, Leadbeater, Emmons, and Blatt (1997), Youth with

positive perceptions of their school environment are less likely to display aggressive behaviours than youth with negative perceptions of their school environment.

Thus, it seems that the unique contribution as well as the interaction between individual factors and contextual factors makes the study of school-based bullying a complex phenomenon (Espelage & Horne, 2008).Thus it is important to examine the intricacies of bullying behaviour as well as the impact that it has on student's everyday lives. Moreover, as few studies have examined the concept of bullying in rural or remote settings it is important to examine the relationship between bullying and the specific challenges and outcomes that it leads to in students form such communities (Leadbeater et al., 2013). One way of exploring these issues is by examining how bullying affects student's views and appraisals of their social surroundings. Thus, factors such as satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, and empowerment/control, could help illuminate the consequences of bullying and expand on current knowledge regarding bullying, victimization, and their relationships to perceptions of school the school context.

Quality of Student Life and Bullying Behaviour

Quality of life (QOL) has been defined as the common human goal of success and satisfaction with one's experience (Watson & Keith, 2002). The term *quality of life* has also been used to describe happiness and contentment with different aspects of life (e.g., social, emotional, physical, professional) as perceived by different individuals (Stark & Goldsbury, 1990). According to Schalock, Keith, and Hoffman (1989) quality of life is a measure of satisfaction with one's overall life experiences, such as a sense of belonging to the community and feelings of competence, productivity, empowerment, and independence, all within a complex environment. In other words, QOL is a multidimensional and subjective phenomenon that is highly context-dependent (Cella, 1994; Felce & Perry, 1995; Watson & Keith, 2002).

Taking this into consideration, many measures of QOL for children and adolescents include aspects of family, home, friendship, and school (Keith & Shalock, 1994). Within the

school context, four fundamental elements have been found to provide a good basis for the measurement of quality of student life: general feelings of satisfaction, perception of well- being, social belonging, and control over one's life (Keith & Shalock, 1994). As such, Keith and Shalock (1994) defined the four components of QOSL as being: (a) satisfaction (personal opinions reflecting satisfaction with current circumstances, emphasizing school and school-related activities), (b) well-being (general view of the person's feelings regarding his/her life circumstances, including personal problems and some questions about family), (c) social belonging (participation in activities, social contacts, and relations), and (d) empowerment/ control (opportunity to exert control over one's life and to make choices).

Although there is little research looking at the relationship between bullying and QOSL, existing research suggests a strong link between these concepts (Rigby (2000). Specifically, students who are bullied tend to be less satisfied with their lives, and report lower levels of well-being, social belonging, and feelings of empowerment (Flaspohler, Elfstrom, Vanderzee, Sink, & Birchmeier, 2009). For instance, Rigby (2000) examined the link between bullying, social support, and well-being, and found that experiencing frequent instances of bullying and perceiving low levels of social support were independently related to low levels of subjective well-being. Moreover, You et al. (2008) investigated the sense school connectedness, sense of hope, and life satisfaction for bullied, and non-bullied students in grades 5 to 12. They found that bullied students reported significantly lower levels of school connectedness, less hope and less life satisfaction than non-victims. Thus, not only does bullying diminish peer connections which can be a source of resilience of bullied children, it can also have a devastating effect on youth's internal worlds. Consequently, it is important to investigate how bullying affects student's internal representations of their social world. Moreover, understanding how student's perceptions of the different aspects of their school context (e.g., satisfaction, well-being, social

belonging, and empowerment/control) are affected by bullying can be key in creating prevention programs that are tailored to and specifically address student's needs.

Satisfaction and bullying. Satisfaction has been defined by Huebner (2004) as an individual's positive cognitive appraisal of the entirety of that individual's life. It follows that school satisfaction refers to students' overall satisfaction with school experiences. School satisfaction is an important aspect of children's quality of life; therefore, it is important that children have positive appraisals of their educational institutions. Research on school satisfaction is relatively scarce and little is known about students' enjoyment and evaluation of school (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). However, the research that has been done on this topic focuses on a variety of outcome variables (e.g., mental health, physical health, risky behaviours) (Frisch, 2000). It has been shown that satisfaction is negatively related to depression, anxiety, and social stress (Gilman & Heubner, 2006) and to aggressive behaviours (Valois, Zullig, Drane, Huebner, 2001; Zullig, Valois, Huebner, Oeltmann, & Drane, 2001). Youth who report high levels of satisfaction also tend to report more positive school experiences, higher grade point averages (GPAs), better peer relationships, and lower levels of anxiety and depression when compared to those who report low levels of satisfaction (Gilman & Huebner, 2006). Verkuyten and Thijs (2002) examined school satisfaction among 1,090 Dutch and ethnic minority children between the ages of ten and twelve. The researchers focused on peer victimization and its relationship to global school satisfaction, and on children's perceptions of social acceptance or social self-esteem (e.g., how competent students felt in their social lives). It was found that peer victimization was negatively associated with global school satisfaction, while educational achievement was positively associated with school satisfaction. Moreover, the effects of peer victimization on school satisfaction were mediated by social self-esteem. In addition, the academic and social climate in the classroom had positive effects on the level of satisfaction with school. These findings demonstrate that student perceptions of school satisfaction rely on

the interplay between individual characteristics (e.g., mental and physical health, minority status) and contextual factors (e.g., perceptions of social acceptance, positive school climate) within schools. Furthermore, it seems that while peer victimization can negatively affect youth's enjoyment of school, classroom characteristics such as a positive climate, and teacher and peer support, can have a positive effect on students' school satisfaction. Consequently, altering some of the negative school characteristics may be key in increasing youth's satisfaction with school. Moreover, considering student's perspectives regarding school experiences provides insight into what their specific needs are and will help identify an create optimal learning environments for students.

Well-Being and bullying. According to Diener (2000) subjective well-being refers to people's cognitive and affective evaluations of their lives. Specifically, subjective well-being refers to people's cognitions and affect (e.g., moods and emotions) that reflect reactions to and evaluations of events happening to them. Such reactions and evaluations may pertain to an individual's life as a whole, or to specific domains such as marriage and work (Park, 2004). The cognitive component relates to evaluative judgements of satisfaction with life and life domains. The affective aspect includes feelings such as happiness, sadness and anxiety (Park, 2004). Long, Huebner, Wedell, and Hills (2012) suggest that subjective well-being in schools incorporates 3 components: frequent positive emotions, infrequent negative emotions, and an overall positive evaluation of life circumstances. Consequently, within the school context subjective well-being is related to student's overall contentment with their life as well as student's appraisal of their abilities (Juvonen, Graham, & Schuster, 2003).

Juvonen, Graham, and Schuster (2003) examined how bullying and being bullied affects youth's subjective well-being and mental health. They analysed data from a from a community sample of 1985 mostly Latino and Black 6th graders from 11 schools in predominantly low socioeconomic status urban communities. Results indicated that compared to other students,

bullies, victims, and bully-victims displayed higher levels of loneliness and lower levels of self-confidence. In another study, Rigby (2000) examined the relationships between victimization in schools, perceived social support, and adolescent well-being in a sample of 845 students, aged 12 to 16 years, attending secondary schools in South Australia. Results showed that students who reported being bullied frequently not only had low social support but were also more likely to report low confidence in their ability to seek and receive social support. Thus, increases in bullying behaviour in school seem to have detrimental effects on the subjective well-being of students. Moreover, it is also plausible to assume that bullying behaviour is also associated to the social climate in schools.

Social belonging and bullying. Social belonging has been defined as the fundamental human need to have positive relationships with others (Walton & Cohen, 2011). Moreover, feeling connected to others and experiencing a sense belonging can have a positive impact on an individual's subjective well-being and can bring about feelings of happiness, success, and life satisfaction (Allen & Badcock, 2003). In contrast, social isolation, exclusion, loneliness, and a low social status can harm subjective well-being, intellectual achievement, and physical health (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade, 2005; Walton & Cohen, 2007; Cohen& Janicki-Deverts, 2009). Although the research literature examining the relationship between social belonging and bullying behaviour is scarce, there is research evidence suggesting that the social context (e.g., quality of social interactions, social belonging, and social support) is an important determinant of bulling in schools (Holt & Espelage, 2007). For instance, Espelage, Bosworth, and Simon (2000) indicated that time spent without adult supervision, negative peer influences, and neighborhood safety concerns were each positively associated with bullying behaviour. In contrast, positive adult role models were associated with less bullying behaviour. A study by Raskauskas, Gregory, Harvey, Rifshana, and Evans (2010) found that bullies and bully/victims

had the lowest connection to school (e.g., reported more negative relationships, fewer positive relationships, and less social support) and the poorest relationships with their teachers.

As mentioned before, social belonging refers to basic human need of social integration. As such, feeling accepted and supported by others in one's community is an important aspect of social belonging. Consequently, an examination of the construct of social support is also necessary when looking at the social context of bullying behaviour. Holt and Espelage (2007) examined perceived social support among a group of 784 ethnically diverse youth. Differences were assessed in perceived social support across bully/victim subtypes (e.g., bullies, victims, and bully-victims). Analyses revealed that bullies, victims, and bully-victims who reported moderate levels of peer social support also reported the lowest amounts of anxiety and/or depression. In a different study, Troop-Gordon and Quenette (2010) demonstrated that children's relational schemas can account for, and can moderate, the links between peer victimization and psychosocial difficulties. In this study, the authors examined whether children's mental representations of their teachers' responses to peer harassment moderated the associations between peer victimization, internalizing distress, and school avoidance. A group of 264 children in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades participated in the study. The results revealed that victimization was associated with greater internalizing distress only when they viewed their teacher as providing little social support (e.g., little teacher involvement during bullying episodes). However, there was little evidence that perceptions of teacher support moderated links between peer victimization and school well-being. Thus, components of the social context related to social bonding (e.g., adult supervision, peer influences, and social support) seem to have a close connection to bullying behaviour. Moreover, such components do not only influence the occurrence of bullying behaviour but they may also act as buffers to counteract the negative effects of bullying on student's subjective well-being.

Because bullying is clearly a social phenomenon which plays on the power differentials between individuals, it is also important to study whether bullying may affect student perceptions of interpersonal empowerment with members of their immediate social environment.

Empowerment/control and bullying. Empowerment has been defined as the personal control individuals can achieve over their learning processes and over life in general (Bergsman, 2004). This process involves critical reflection, and control over one's environment, life and resources (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Bullying is often defined in terms of a power differential between the victim and perpetrator (Olweus, 1993; Nation, Perkins, Vieno, & Santinello, 2008). To illustrate, Olweus (1993) indicates that an imbalance of power is a necessary component of bullying. Although power and control are central concepts in defining bullying, research delineating the nuances in the power dynamics of bullying is scarce. However, Nation and colleagues (2008) suggest that bullying behaviour can be better studied through the lens of empowerment (e.g., giving adolescents a voice) rather than through the lens of power relations and dominance.

In their study, Nation, Perkins, Vieno and Santinello (2008) examined the relationship between bullying in school and adolescents' sense of empowerment. Specifically, the authors studied the development of bullying and victimization in school by investigating 11, 13 and 15 year-old students' sense of interpersonal empowerment with parents, friends and teachers. A sample of 4386 male and female students from 243 middle and secondary schools in Italy participated in the study. The authors found that parents of 13 and 15 year-olds bully-victims were more likely to make decisions (e.g., decisions concerning youth's free time spent outside of school) for their children without consulting them. The authors theorized that, such actions made by parents modeled bullying behaviour which was then re-enacted by the youth. Another finding was that the sense of empowerment students experienced with their teachers decreased in the older cohorts. Moreover, disempowered relationships with teachers consistently predicted

bullying behaviour. The authors suggested that students who are disempowered by teachers may either compensate by oppressing (bullying) peers or generalize the power differential with peers (become a victim). Thus this article emphasizes the importance of teacher involvement in decreasing bullying behaviour as well as the importance of considering student's perspectives and views when examining bullying in schools. This article also highlights the fact that creating empowered classrooms where youth can freely express themselves and feel supported by teachers can lead to better school adjustment and lower levels of bullying behaviour.

Thus, bullying and victimization are intricate social phenomena that affect a large proportion of students in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2011). The study of these constructs is further complicated by the different pathways and risk factors associated with bullying behaviour (Espelage & Horne, 2008; Hong & Espelage, 2012). Thus, in order to effectively study the intricacies of bullying behaviour, an approach that allows for the study of different aspects of student's lives is necessary. The construct of SQOL offers this possibility as its multidimensionality allows an in depth exploration of the social, emotional, and physical dimensions of student's lives (Keith and Shalock, 1994). More important, studying the relationship between SQOL and bullying behaviour will illuminate how bullying affects student's perceptions and appraisals of their social surroundings. This study seeks to study this relationship in order to provide insight into the relationship between bullying and student's feelings of satisfaction, and their perception of well- being, social belonging, and control within the specific context of a small remote community. Findings from this research can inform policy and prevention efforts seeking to target specific components of the school context in order to meet student's needs.

The Present Study

The main goal of this study is to better understand how quality of student life (QOSL) is related to bullying and peer victimization in youth attending a high school in a Northern Québec

community. Moreover, this research seeks to understand how perceptions of teacher and student support affect student perceptions of their school environment (e.g., perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life.

Research questions

Are there significant differences between victims of bullying and students who did not report being bullied in terms of perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life? Based on previous research, it is speculated that students who reported being bullied will have significantly lower scores on all scales of the QOSL (Juvonen et al., 2003; Haynie, Nansel, Eitel, & Crump, 2001; Pellegrini, Bartini, & Brooks, 1999).

Are there significant differences between bullies and students who did bully others not in terms of perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life? Based on previous research, it is speculated that there will be no significant differences between students who reported bullying others and those who did not (Haynie et al., 2001; Juvonen et al., 2003; Carney & Merrell, 2001).

Are student's perceptions of teacher responsiveness to bullying associated with perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life? It is hypothesized that students who perceived more teacher involvement would also report higher levels of well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life (Walton & Cohen, 2007; Cohen& Janicki-Deverts, 2009).

Are student's perceptions of peer interventions to stop bullying associated with perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life? It is hypothesized that students who perceived more peer involvement would also report higher levels of well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life (Raskauskas, Gregory, Harvey, Rifshana, and Evans, 2010).

Method

Participants

This study is part of a larger project investigating predictors of academic success, social adaptation, and emotional well-being among First Nations adolescents. This research initiative was developed by the McGill Youth Study Team, a team of education researchers, in collaboration with a small community in northern Quebec. A total of 47 students were recruited from the only English-language school within the community. The group included students enrolled from secondary 1 to secondary 5. There were 14 students excluded from the study. Eleven students (5 male and 6 female) were excluded due to their absence during the data collection period and/or incomplete data. The remaining 3 students were excluded due to extreme victimization scores and were considered as outliers (this will be further discussed in the results and discussion sections). The final number of participants is 33 students (12 males and 21 females) who ranged in age from 12 to 18 (M = 14.25, SD = 1.84). Demographic information obtained indicated that Twenty-two participants self-identified as White, one participant self-identified as Italian and 10 participants self-identified as First-Nations. Frequencies Related to Age and Ethnicity are presented in Table 1

Table 1

Frequencies Related to Age and Ethnicity

		Number of Respondents	*Frequency (%)*
Age			
	12	3	9.09
	13	8	24.24
	14	4	12.12
	15	10	30.30
	16	3	9.09
	17	4	12.12
	18	1	3.03

(*table continues*)

Self-identified Ethnic Identity			
	White	22	66.67
	First Nations	10	30.30
	Italian	1	9.09

Measures

The assortment of questionnaires contained a demographic questionnaire that was developed by the McGill Youth Study Team for this project, a standardized measure of quality of student life, and a standardized, validated, multiple-choice questionnaire designed to measure a number of aspects of bullying problems in schools (e.g, prevalence of bullying, frequency of bullying, peer and teachers responses to bullying in schools).

Descriptives. The demographic questionnaire (see Appendix A) was developed by the McGill Youth Study Team. It contains 6 questions assessing family structure, and ethnic background. Moreover, school records were also used to obtain demographic information, including age, gender and ethnicity for every participant. Frequency analyses were performed in order to obtain general information on the percentage of respondents who endorsed certain statements.

Student quality of life. The Quality of Student Life Questionnaire (QSL.Q; Schalock & Keith, 1994) (see Appendix B) is a 40-item standardized rating scale designed to assess students' perceptions of life experiences. In addition to school-related issues, this instrument measures student's perceptions of aspects of home, family, friendships, and general satisfaction (Keith & Schalock, 1994). Participants were asked to rate, on a scale from 1 to 3, how well each question applied to him or her. The QSL.Q provides a total score and four subscales of 10 items each: (a) satisfaction (personal opinions reflecting satisfaction with current circumstances, emphasizing school and school-related activities), (b) well-being (general view of the person's feelings regarding his/her life circumstances, including personal problems and some questions about

family), (c) social belonging (participation in activities, social contacts, and relations), and (d) empowerment/control (opportunity to exert control over one's life and to make choices) (Keith & Schalock, 1994). The first of these subscales can be categorized as subjective in nature while the other three refer to more objective criteria (Keith & Schalock, 1994). Mean factor scores for high school mainstream education have been reported, respectively, as: satisfaction as 23.4; well-being as 23.9; social belonging as 25.2; and empowerment/control as 23.6 (Keith & Schalock, 1994). The QSL.Q is considered to be a reliable measure of student quality of life; reported alpha coefficients for the four scales were: 0.89 for satisfaction; 0.76 for well-being; 0.91 for social belonging; and 0.84 for empowerment/control (Keith & Schalock, 1994). Moreover, test-retest reliability coefficients (two-week intervals) ranged from .72 to .90 for a sample (N = 25) of high school-aged students (Keith & Schalock, 1995). This brief and relatively unobtrusive questionnaire aims to assess student's perceptions within their specific school culture and is therefore considered particularly useful for this study (Schalock & Keith, 1994).

Bullying behaviour. The Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (BVQ) (see Appendix C) is a standardized and validated, multiple-choice questionnaire designed to measure a number of aspects of bullying in schools (Olweus, 2007). The BVQ, consists of forty-two questions (several of which have sub-questions), and is typically used with students in grades 3 through 12. The response alternatives are arranged in scale of 1 to 5 or 1 to 4 and are made as specific as possible by using phrases such as "2 or 3 times a month" and "about once a week." Moreover, The BVQ contains several questions about the reactions of others to bullying, as perceived by those completing the questionnaire, such as the behaviour and attitudes of teachers, peers, and parents (Olweus, 2007). The BVQ has been used in a number of countries, including Canada and the United States, and with at least one million students (Olweus, 2007). Moreover, the questionnaire has also been designed to provide data that are relevant, reliable, and valid. With

individual participants as the unit of analysis in a sample of 2,219 Norwegian students from middle school/junior high, means of groups of questions about being bullied (Questions 5-13) or bullying other students (Questions 25-33), yielded internal consistency reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.80 or higher. Moreover, fairly strong associations between degree/frequency of being bullied as measured by the BVQ and variables such as depressive mood, poor self-esteem, and peer rejection have been found. Lastly, results indicate that there is a good deal of overlap between self-report estimates of bullying problems and estimates derived from independent peer ratings intended to measure the same or similar phenomena; thus, providing evidence for construct validity of the BVQ. This questionnaire has also been shown to have adequate concurrent validity with other instruments (between 0.40 and 0.60). The BVQ was developed to be user-friendly with questions that are as simple as possible for a wide range of students.

Procedure

A team of graduate students administered self-report questionnaires to the participants over a one-week period. Questionnaire packages were distributed to all students at the participating high school. Graduate students circulated within the classrooms in order to answer any questions or clarify instructions. The participants received small gifts at the end of the week for their participation.

Analyses presented in this research were conducted according to previous studies investigating bullying behaviour and QOSL (Cunningham, 2007; Holt & Espelage, 2007; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002; Rigby, 2000; Karatzias & Swanson, 2002). The raw data were entered into a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for further analyses. A cross-sectional design was used, with all participants being assessed at the same time point. T-tests and ANOVAs were conducted to explore the relations between the quality of students' lives and bullying.

Results

Descriptive of Sample

Descriptive statistics for all variables are presented in Table 2. In order to ensure integrity of the data and prior to conducting any analyses, all variables were examined for accuracy of data entry, distributional properties and assumptions of selected tests.

Table 2

Descriptives for all Dependent and Independent Variables (N = 33)

	Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*	*Skew*
Age	11.00	18.00	14.33	1.83	0.06
Satisfaction	18.00	28.00	23.97	3.19	-0.40
Well-Being	17.00	27.00	24.00	2.85	-0.94
Social-Belonging	19.00	30.00	24.52	3.21	-0.23
Empowerment-Control	18.00	29.00	24.27	3.32	-0.42
QSLQ Total Score	75.00	111.00	96.76	9.44	-0.74
Victimization	10.00	16.00	11.12	1.63	1.90
Bullying	10.00	14.00	10.52	1.09	2.48
Teacher Interventions	1.00	3.00	2.12	0.86	-0.24
Student involvement	1.00	3.00	1.76	0.75	0.44

Reported Prevalence, Type, and Duration of Bullying

Of the total sample of 33 respondents, 17 (10 girls and 7 boys; 51.5%) stated that they had been victimized by peers during the last 2 or 3 months, while 6 students (1 girl and 5 boys; 18.2%) stated that they had bullied another student in the past 2 or 3 months. Of those students who reported being bullied, 11 (64.7%) said they had been bullied once or twice, and 6 (35.3%) stated they had been bullied 2-3 times a month. No students stated that the bulling had occurred once a week or several times per week. Of the students who had been bullied, only 4 (23.5%) reported the incident to an adult. Of the 33 participants, 20 (60.6%) reported not being afraid of being bullied by other students in their school while 13 students (39.4%) reported being sometimes or often afraid of being bullied. Moreover, of the 17 students who reported being bullied, 5 (29.4%) reported being victims of physical aggression (e.g., hit, kicked, pushed), 8

(47.1%) reported being victims of relational aggression (e.g., spreading rumours, teased, being made fun of) and 4 (23.6%) reported being victims of both physical and verbal aggression. The prevalence, type, and duration of bullying is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Reported Prevalence, Type, and Duration of Bullying Behaviour

		Number of Respondents	*Frequency (%)*
Victimized		17	51.50
	Once or twice	11	64.70
	2-3 times a month	6	35.30
	Physical Aggression	5	29.40
	Relational Aggression	8	47.10
	Physical and Relational Aggression	4	23.60
Bullies		6	18.20
Not Afraid		20	60.60
Sometimes or Often Afraid		13	39.40

Are there Significant Differences between Victims of Bullying and Non-Victims in Terms of SQOL?

Paired-samples t-tests were used to determine whether there were statistically significant mean differences between students who reported being bullied (e.g., victims of bullying) (N = 17) and those who did not (N = 16) report being bullied in terms of perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life. Three outliers were detected that were more than 2 box-lengths from the edge of the box in a boxplot. Inspection of their values revealed them to be extreme and they were not kept in any of the analyses reported in this study. However, excluding these values from the analyses did not change any of the results reported in this paper. Assumptions of normality were not violated, as

assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's tests (p = .06, .06, .99, .33, .51, for satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life, respectively). Moreover, the results of the Levene's Test suggests that equal variances are assumed, $F(1,31) = 2.62$, p = .12, $F(1,31) = 2.71$, p = .11, $F(1,31) = 3.77$, p = .06, $F(1,31) = .12$, p = .73, $F(1,31) = .63$, p = .44, for satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life, respectively . The t-test revealed no significant differences between students who reported being bullied and not bullied students in terms of mean levels of well-being and empowerment/control $t(31) = -2.08$, p = .05, r = .35; $t(31) = -.48$, p = .63, r = .09, respectively. However, statistically significant differences were found between both groups in terms of satisfaction, social belonging, and overall student quality of life, $t(31) = -2.54$, p = .02, r = .37; $t(31) = -3.00$, p = .01, r = .47; $t(31) = -2.70$, p = .01, , r = .44, respectively. The examination of the descriptive statistics for differences between victimized and non-victimized students suggests that students who did not report being bullied had significantly higher scores on all scales except empowerment/control. On average, scores on satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, and overall student quality of life were -2.61, -1.94, -.56, and -8.11 higher for non-bullied group (M = 25.31, SD = 2.60; M = 25.00, SD = 2.00; M = 26.06, SD = 2.17;; M = 100.94, SD = 7.60, respectively) when compared to the bullied group (M = 22.71, SD = 3.24; M = 23.04, SD = 3.25; M = 23.06, SD = 3.40; M = 92.82, SD = 9.50, respectively). The results of the t-test comparing victims and non-victims are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Summary of t-test Analyses Comparing Victims and non- Victims on QOSL

Variable	*Df*	*t*	*p*
		Paired-Samples t-test	
Satisfaction	31	-2.54	0.02*
Well-Being	31	-2.05	0.05
Social Belonging	31	-3.00	0.02*
Empowerment/Control	31	-0.48	0.63

(*table continues*)

Quality of Student Life	31	-2.70	0.01*

* $p < .05$

Are there Significant Differences between Bullies and Non-Bullies in Terms of SQOL?

Paired-samples t-tests were also conducted to determine whether there were statistically significant mean differences between students who reported bulling other students ($N = 8$) and those who did not ($N = 25$) in terms of perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life. Assumptions of normality were not violated, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's tests ($p = .06, .18, .54, .65, .35$, for satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life, respectively). Moreover, the results of the Levene's Test suggest that equal variances are assumed, $F(1,31) = 2.28$, $p = .14$, $F(1,31) = .00$, $p = 1.00$, $F(1,31) = .11$, $p = .75$, $F(1,31) = .55$, $p = .46$, for satisfaction, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life, respectively. Equal variances are not assumed for well-being, $F(1,31) = 4.94$, $p = .03$. The t-test suggests no significant differences between students who bullied their peers and those who did not, in terms of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life, $t(31) = -.79$, $p = .43$, $r = .14$; $t(31) = -.31$, $p = .83$, $r = .06$; $t(31) = -1.00$, $p = .33$, $r = .18$; $t(31) = -1.93$, $p = .06$, $r = .33$; $t(31) = -1.30$, $p = .21$, $r = .23$, respectively. The results of the t-test comparing bullies and non-bullies are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Summary of t-test Analyses Comparing Bullies and non- Bullies on QOSL

Variable	*Df*	*T*	*p*
	Paired-Samples t-test		
Satisfaction	31	-0.79	0.43
Well-Being	31	-0.31	0.83
Social Belonging	31	-1.00	0.33
Empowerment/Control	31	-1.93	0.06
Quality of Student Life	31	-1.30	0.21

Are Student's Perceptions of Teacher Responsiveness to Bullying Associated with SQOL?

One-Way ANOVAs were performed to determine whether student's perceptions of teacher responsiveness to bullying were associated with perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life. Participants were classified into three groups for each scale of the SQOL: Little to counteract bullying (n = 10), somewhat to counteract bullying (n = 9), and a good deal to counteract bullying (n = 14). Data were normally distributed for each group, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk test ($p > .05$); and there was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test of homogeneity of variances (p = .61, .95, .54, .59, .79, for satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life, respectively). No significant differences were found between the three groups in terms of well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life, $F(2,30) = .31$, $p = .74$, $F(2,30) = .30$, $p = .82$, $F(2,30) = 1.54$, $p = .23$, $F(2,30) = 1.87$, $p = .17$. However, perceptions of satisfaction were different across the three groups, $F(2,30) = 4.868$, $p = .02$, $\omega^2 = .20$. A Tukey HSD post-hoc test revealed a significant difference in perceptions of satisfaction between students who perceived that teachers had done somewhat and a good deal to counteract bullying, $p = .02$. An analysis of the descriptive statistics suggests that students who perceived that teachers did a good deal to counteract bullying reported higher levels of satisfaction than students who perceived that teachers intervened somewhat (M = 25.71, SD = 2.73 and M =22.11, SD = 2.52, respectively). The results of the one-way ANOVAs comparing student's perceived teacher interventions and QOSL ratings are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Results of the one-way ANOVA conducted on Teacher Interventions and QOSL

(Table Continues)

Variable	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P*
		Satisfaction		
Group	2	39.81	4.87	0.02*
Error	30	8.18		
Total	32			
		Well-Being		
Treatment	2	2.59	0.30	0.74
Error	30	8.49		
Total	32			
		Social Belonging		
Treatment	2	2.21	0.20	0.82
Error	30	10.86		
Total	32			
		Empowerment/Control		
Treatment	2	16.40	5.42	0.23
Error	30	10.66		
Total	32			
		Quality of Student Life		
Treatment	2	157.64	1.87	0.17
Error	30	84.49		
Total	32			

* *P<0.05*

Are Student's Perceptions of Peer Interventions to Stop Bullying Associated with SQOL?

One-Way ANOVAs were also conducted to determine whether student's perceptions of peer interventions to stop bullying were associated with perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall quality of student life. Participants were classified into three groups for each scale of the QOSL: Little to counteract bullying (n = 13), somewhat to counteract bullying (n = 13), and a good deal to counteract bullying (n = 7). Data was normally distributed for each group, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk test ($p > .05$); and there was homogeneity of variances, as assessed by Levene's test of homogeneity of variances (p = .29, .32, .50, .90, .90) for satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall quality of student life, respectively). Similar to results for teacher interventions, no significant differences were found between the three groups in terms of well-being, social belonging, and empowerment/control, $F(2,30) = 1.65$, $p = .20$, $F(2,30) = 3.17$, $p = .06$, and $F(2,30) = 1.54$, $p = .34$, respectively. However, perceptions of satisfaction and overall quality of

student life were different across the three groups, $F(2,30) = 4.62$, $p = .02$, $\omega^2 = .20$ and $F(2,30) = 4.04$, $p = .03$, $\omega^2 = .21$, respectively. A Tukey HSD post-hoc test revealed a significant difference in perceptions of satisfaction between students who perceived little peer involvement and a good deal to counteract bullying, $p = .02$. Moreover, there were also significant differences in perceptions of overall quality of student life between students who perceived little peer involvement and those who perceived a good deal of involvement to counteract bullying, $p = .04$. An analysis of the descriptive statistics suggests that students who perceived that peers did a good deal to counteract bullying reported higher levels of satisfaction than students who perceived that other students intervened a little ($M = 26.14$, $SD = 2.12$ and $M = 22.23$, $SD = 2.89$, respectively). The same pattern emerged for overall quality of student life, students who perceived a good deal of peer involvement reported higher levels of satisfaction than students who perceived little peer involvement ($M = 102.28$, $SD = 9.10$ and $M = 96.85$, $SD = 9.44$, respectively). The results of the one-way ANOVAs comparing student's perceived peer interventions and QOSL ratings are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Results of the one-way ANOVA conducted on Student Interventions and QOSL

Variable	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*
		Satisfaction		
Group	2	45.09	4.62	0.02*
Error	30	7.91		
Total	32			
		Well-Being		
Treatment	2	24.26	1.65	0.20
Error	30	8.55		
Total	32			
		Social Belonging		
Treatment	2	37.22	3.17	0.05
Error	30	9.96		
Total	32			
		Empowerment/Control		
Treatment	2	12.72	1.54	0.34
Error	30	11.22		

(*table continues*)

Total	32			
		Quality of Student Life		
Treatment	2	404.58	4.04	0.03*
Error	30	84.237		
Total	32			

* *P<0.05*

Discussion

This study examined the association between bullying behaviour and student quality of life in 33 students from a high school located in northern Québec. The present study also examines the impact of student and teacher support on student perceptions of quality of life in schools. These findings add to the limited research available on quality of student life and school-related bullying. Moreover, this research gives insight into the social context of bullying behavior in remote communities. The findings outlined in this study can inform prevention strategies, programs, and policies seeking to decrease the likelihood and prevalence of bullying in schools.

Research shows that bullying perpetration and victimization are associated with several negative consequences including anxiety, depression, and social isolation (Phillips, 2007; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005; Espelage & Horne, 2008; Garbarino & deLara, 2002; Limber, 2006). Considering the high prevalence of school-related bullying in Québec and across the world, it is important to have a good understanding of bullying behaviour in order to take measures to prevent such behaviour (Adamson, 2013).

Given the negative consequences of bullying behaviour on students' physical and mental health, a number of researchers have looked into the individual (i.e., age, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and health status) and contextual factors (peer and teacher support, school connectedness, and the school environment) that may place students at risk for bullying perpetration and victimization (Espelage & Horne, 2008; Hong & Espelage, 2012). Although numerous articles have consistently indicated that the school environment is a powerful factor in

preventing aggressive behaviour in schools, few studies have investigated the relationship between bullying and student quality of life as perceived by students (Flaspohler, Elfstrom, Vanderzee, Sink, & Birchmeier, 2009). However, the research that has been done on this topic indicates that a negative association exists between perceived quality of life in schools and bullying behaviour (Wilkins-Shurmer et al., 2003; Martin, Huebner, & Valois, 2008; Rigby, 2000). Thus, examining the association between perceptions of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life is an important step towards understanding the link between the school climate and bullying behaviour. Specifically, this study will illuminate how the occurrence of bullying and victimization in a school in a remote community affects student perceptions of their quality of student life. In turn, this information will inform school-based prevention programs that involve all members of the school community, including teachers, staff, students, and parents.

Overview of Analyses and Overall Findings

Reported Prevalence, Type, and Duration of Bullying. As previously mentioned, the BVQ was normed in Norway with a sample of 2,219 students aged from 13-18 years old (Olweus, 2007). Of the 2,219 students surveyed, 24% of students reported being bullied while 19.3% of students reported bulling others. In the current study, results revealed that of the total sample of 33 respondents, 51.5% of students stated that they had been victimized by peers during the last 2 or 3 months, while 18.2% stated that they had bullied another student in the past 2 or 3 months. Compared to norms, results from the current study seems to follow established trends in the prevalence of reported bullying behavior. Mainly, that reports of being bullied tend to be higher than reports of engaging in bulling behavior. However, for this rural community the difference between reports of bulling and reports of being bullied was much higher when compared to norms. This finding may be consistent with previous studies indicating that peer victimization is more prevalent in rural samples (Leadbeater et al., 2013; Eisler & Schissel,

2004). However, given that information on the location of sampled school used in the norming procedures was not provided, the previous statement remains speculative.

T-tests were performed in order to determine how quality of student life may be associated to peer victimization and bullying perpetration.

Victimization and SQOL. The results from t-tests revealed significant differences between bullied and non-bullied students, and between students who bullied others and those who did not. Specifically, students who did not report being bullied had significantly higher scores on satisfaction, social belonging, and overall student quality of life than students who reported being bullied during the last 2 or 3 months. These results are consistent with previous research indicating that peer victimization was negatively associated with global school satisfaction, and higher levels of school connectedness (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002; Rigby, 2000; Hong & Espelage, 2012). Although no significant differences were found between bullied and not bullied students in terms of empowerment/control, and well-being an examination of the descriptive statistics revealed that the mean scores of students who did not report being bullied were higher, although not significantly, than the mean score of students who had been bullied.

Bullying and SQOL. Results from an independent t-test revealed no significant differences between students who bullied their peers and those who did not, in terms of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life. This is consistent with previous research literature indicating that that bullies tend to fair better than victims in the areas of self-esteem, popularity, and friendships, than victims or bully/victims (Salmivalli, 1999).

One-way ANOVAS were performed in order to examine the relationship between peer and teacher involvement and satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life.

Peer and teacher involvement and SQOL. Results revealed that students who perceived that teachers did a good deal to counteract bullying reported higher levels of satisfaction than students who perceived that teachers intervened somewhat. Similarly, students who perceived a good deal of peer involvement reported higher levels of satisfaction and overall quality of student life than students who perceived little peer involvement. Although not all scales were found to be associated with peer and teacher involvement during bullying episodes, these findings highlight the importance of including school-level factors in the study of bullying perpetration and victimization. Specifically, involving the school community in the development of prosocial beliefs, and fostering positive relationships. Sampson & Groves (1989) introduced the social disorganization theory, which emphasizes the potential influence of contextual and organizational factors on the risk for involvement in aggression. According to this theory, behaviour will be prosocial or antisocial depending on the predominant behaviours, norms, and values held by the people who are part of the environment that surrounds them (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2009; Plank, Bradshaw, & Young, 2009). Hence, it is important to involve students, teachers, and staff not only in combatting aggressive behaviour but also in creating environments where bullying is, under no circumstances, tolerated and where perpetrators are held accountable for their actions.

Outliers. Outliers are addressed in this section given the clinical importance of the discrepancies found. Three respondents reported extreme victimization scores (e.g., more than 2 box-lengths from the edge of the box in a boxplot, and in one case more than 3 box-lengths from the edge of the box). These students reported the lowest levels of satisfaction, well-being, social belonging, empowerment/control, and overall student quality of life. They also reported being often afraid of being bullied in school. These findings support the idea that higher rates of victimization lead to poorer outcomes for students who are the target of bullying in schools (Hoover, Oliver, & Hazler, 1992). Moreover, these findings raise important concerns especially

when placed in the context of a remote community. Because of lack of resources, difficulties related to transportation, and relative isolation, accessing services may prove much more difficult than in urban cities. Thus, emphasis should be placed on promoting positive interactions and limiting aggressive behaviour in schools. Specifically, school officials and policy makers should promote the creation of supportive social networks in schools in order to prevent and protect youth form the harmful consequences of school violence.

Limitations

Although this study highlights some important findings regarding bullying behaviour and student quality of life, its limitations should also be considered. First, a limitation of the study involved its reliance on adolescent self-report data. As with any self-report measure, there is the possibility of inaccurate responding or the desire of students to portray themselves in a more positive light. On a related note, the use of peer nomination methods could add to the validity of studies seeking to assess bullying behaviour in schools.

Second, data were collected from a small sample of students from a public Anglophone school in Northern Québec. Therefore because this community may vary with respect to cultural background, language, and geographic environment, results cannot be generalized to the larger population of high school students in Canada. A bigger sample size would definitely benefit future studies.

Third, as mentioned before, data in this study consisted solely of reports of high school students. However, taking into account the perspective of different raters through the use multi-informant data (e.g., data coming from different sources such as teachers, staff, and parents) is a good way to add to the methodological soundness of a study.

Conclusions and Future Directions

Although parents, teachers, students and school officials have mobilized to put a stop bullying behaviour, bullying remains a serious problem that affects students across the world

(Adamson, 2013). The findings from this study support previous research on bullying and student well-being indicating that bullying has severe consequences on the development and adjustment of children and adolescents (Nabuzoka, Ronning, & Handegard, 2009; Nansel et al., 2001). Additionally, the present study provides insight into the relationship between student perceptions of their school environment, such as quality of student life, and bullying behaviour. This research has implications for academic interventions that go beyond targeting individual bullying perpetrators and victims. Instead, interventions seeking to prevent and stop bullying behaviour should involve all members of the school community, including students, teachers, staff, and parents (Waasdorp, O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2011; Jimerson & Furlong, 2006).

Because intervention research on bullying prevention indicates that prevention programs have, thus far, have had a limited impact on reducing bullying in schools (Hong & Espelage, 2012; Smith et al., 2004; Merrell et al., 2008). Richard, Schneider and Mallet (2012) suggest that bullying prevention can only be effective if a whole-school approach is adopted. Such approach is based on the assumption that bullying is a systemic problem, and that consequently, bullying interventions should be directed at the entire school rather than just at individual bullies and victims. More important, the authors state that clearly identifying the precise aspects of school climate that are linked specifically to the problem of bullying will allow for the development of effective interventions. In their study which included 18,222 adolescent students from across France, they found that students in schools with more positive social climates, including stronger student teacher relationships, better sense of school bonding, and greater staff collaboration, reported fewer bullying episodes. Thus, consistent with new emerging research on bullying prevention, bullying in schools should be viewed as a problem in which many actors, including adults and students , play a part (Craig, Pepler, & Blais, 2007; Pepler, Craig, Jiang, & Connolly, 2008; Pepler, Jiang, Craig, & Connolly, 2008). From that perspective, schools with positive climates that promote prosocial behaviours and school belongingness, that encourage the

formation of supportive relationships within the school community, and provide academic, emotional, and social support should be at lower risk for the occurrence of bullying behaviour.

Although there was a large incidence of reported bulling instances in this sample, it is important to emphasize that results from the current study underlie the fact that changing simple aspects of the school environment, such as encouraging student and teacher interventions during bullying episodes, can have a positive effect on student's level of satisfaction and overall quality of student life. Thus, interventions from students, teachers, school psychologists, and other staff are instrumental in fostering a positive school climate. As school professionals, we have the duty to improve students' quality of life and promote equality and communication in order to ensure that students are developing in positive and safe environments. This is particularly important when addressing rural and remote communities where social isolation and difficulties in accessing services may be more prevalent.

The present study also contributes to the growing body of knowledge on bullying and victimization in schools. Specifically, this research adds to the small body of research investigating the relationship between school bullying and student quality of life in remote settings. Examining these relationships may prove helpful in providing a better understanding of how bullying behavior affects student's perceptions of their social surroundings. Findings from this research offer information that may help schools, students, parents, and policy makers foster more supportive school communities by engaging all members of the school community in school initiatives is in order protect against, prevent and stop bullying in schools. However, additional researcher is still needed in order to fully comprehend bullying as a social phenomenon.

Presently, more research is needed in order to determine the exact pathways through which individual risk factors relate to bullying behaviour. Future research should also focus on the specific factors of the social context that may prevent students from engaging in bullying

behaviour. Lastly, future studies should investigate strategies to mobilize students and school personnel in preventing and intervening during occurrences of bullying.

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Appendix A

Demographics Questionnaire (DEMO)

Instructions

Items

People who live in your house:

1. How many older brothers do you have?

2. How many older sisters do you have?

3. How many younger brothers do you have?

4. How many younger sisters do you have?

5. Which adults live in your house? (check all that apply)

Mother (a) _____ Father (f) _____
Grandmother (b) _____ Grandfather (g) _____
Aunt (c) _____ Uncle (h) _____
Step-mother (d) _____ Step-father (i) _____
Foster-mother (e) _____ Foster-father (j) _____
Other (k) _____

Foster parent (j) _____ Other (k) _____

6a. Your father is
Cree _____
White _____
Other First Nations _____
Other _____

6b. Your mother is
Cree _____
White _____
Other First Nations _____
Other _____

Appendix B

Quality of Student Life Questionnaire

Instructions

Please think about where you live, study, and have fun, and the family, friends, and teachers whom you know. The following questions ask how you feel about these things. Check the choices given for each item. Circle the answer that best describes how you honestly feel. Please try to answer each of the items, and take as much time as you need. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want to know how you feel about where you live, go to school, and have fun, and the family, friends, and teachers whom you know. Do you have any questions?

Items

Satisfaction

1. How satisfied are you with your current school?
2. How well is your educational program preparing you for what you want to do?
3. Do you feel your school work is worthwhile and relevant?
4. How satisfied are you with the skills and experience you have gained or are gaining from your education?
5. Are you learning skills that will help you get a good job?
6. Do you feel you receive fair grades for your effort?
7. How satisfied are you with the education that you are receiving?
8. How closely supervised are you in the classroom?
9. How did you decide on the classes you are now taking?
10. How satisfied are you with the clubs or organizations to which you belong?

Well Being

11. Overall would you say that life:
12. Compared to others, are you better off, about the same, or less well off?
13. Are most of the things that happen to you:
14. Do you have more or fewer problems than other people?
15. How successful do you think you are compared to others?
16. How well do you feel you do in school?
17. Does your job or allowance provide you with enough money to buy things you want?
18. Are there people living with you who sometimes hurt you, pester you, scare you, or make you angry?
19. What about your family members? Do they make you feel:
20. Overall, would you say your life is:

Social Belonging

21. How much fun and enjoyment do you get out of life?
22. How do your fellow students treat you?
23. How many times per month do you feel lonely?

24. Do you ever feel out of place in social situations?
25. How do people treat you at school?
26. How many school clubs or organizations do you belong to?
27. Do you worry about what people expect of you?
28. How many times per day do you talk to (associate with) your classmates?
29. How often do you attend recreational activities (homes, parties, dances, concerts, or plays)?
30. Do you actively participate in those recreational activities?

Appendix C

Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (BVQ)

Instructions

You will find questions in this booklet about your life in school. There are several answers next to each question. Answer the question by marking an X in the box next to the answer that best describes how you feel about school. If you really dislike school, mark an X in the box nest to "I dislike school very much". If you really like school, put an X in the box next to "I like school very much", and so on. Only mark one of the boxes. Try to keep the mark inside the box

Now put an X in the box next to the answer that best described how you feel about school.

Items

1.How do you like school?

- ☐ I dislike school very much
- ☐ I dislike school
- ☐ I neither like nor dislike school
- ☐ I like school
- ☐ I like school very much

If you mark the wrong box, you can change your answer like this: Make the wrong box completely black: ■

Then put an X in the box where you want your answer to be ☒

Don't put your name on this booklet. No one will know how you have answered these questions. But it is important that you answer carefully and how you really feel. Sometimes it is hard to decide what to answer. Then just answer how you think it is. If you have questions raise your hand.

Most of the questions are about your like in school in the past couple of months, that is, the period from start of school after summer/winter holiday vacation until now. So when you answer you should think of how it has been during the past 2 or 3 months and not only how it is just now.

2. Are you a boy or girl?

- ☐ Girl
- ☐ _

3. How many good friends do you have in your class(es)

- ☐ none
- ☐ I have 1 good friend in my class(es)
- ☐ I have 2 or 3 good friends
- ☐ I have 4 or 5 good friends
- ☐ I have 6 or more good friends in my class(es)

About being bullied by other students

Here are some questions about being bullied by other students. First we define or explain the word bullying. We say a student is being bullied when abother student or several students

- Say mean and hurtful things or make fun of him or her or call him or her mean and hurtful names
- Completely ignore or exclude him or her from their group of friends or leave him or her out of things on purpose
- Hit, kick, push, shove around, or lock him or her inside a room
- Tell lies or spread false rumors about him or her or send mean notes and try to make other students dislike him or her
- And other hurtful things like that

When we talk about bullying, these things happen repeatedly, and it is difficult for the student being bullied to defend himself or herself. We also call it bullying, when a student is teased repeatedly in a mean and hurtful way.

But we don't call it bullying when the teasing is done in a friendly and playful way. Also it is not bullying when two students of about equal strength or power argue or fight.

4. How often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months?

- ☐ I haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months
- ☐
- ☐ It has only happened once or twice
- ☐
- ☐ 2 or 3 times a month

Have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months in one or more of the following ways? Please answer all questions.

5. I was called mean names, Was made fun of, or teased In a hurtful way

- ☐ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ☐
- ☐ Only one or twice
- ☐

6. Other students left me out of Things on purpose, excluded me from their group of friends, or completely ignored me

- ☐ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ☐
- ☐ Only one or twice
- ☐

7. I was hit, kicked, pushed, Shoved around, or locked Indoors	☐	It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
	☐	
	☐	Only one or twice
	☐	

8. Other students told lies or Spread false rumors about me And tried to make other dislike me	☐	It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
	☐	
	☐	Only one or twice
	☐	

9. I had money or other things taken away from me or damaged	☐	It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
	☐	
	☐	Only one or twice
	☐	

10. I was threatened or forced to do Things I didn't want to do	☐	It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
	☐	
	☐	Only one or twice
	☐	

11. I was bullied with mean names Or comments about my race or color	☐	It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
	☐	
	☐	Only one or twice
	☐	

12. I was bullied with mean names, Comments or gestures with a Sexual meaning

- ☐ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ☐ Only one or twice
- ☐ 2 or 3 times a month
- ☐ About several times a week

12a. I was bullied with or hurtful Meassages, calls or pictures, or in Other ways on my mobile phone Or over the internet (computer). (Please remember that it is not Bullying when it is done is a Friendly and playful way.)

- ☐ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ☐ Only one or twice
- ☐ 2 or 3 times a month
- ☐ About several times a week

12b. In case you were bullied on your Mobile phone or over the internet, How was it done?

12c. Please describe in what way

_____

_____

_____

13. I was bullied in another way

- ☐ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ☐ Only one or twice
- ☐ 2 or 3 times a month
- ☐ About several times a week

13a. Please describe in what wa

14. In which class(es) is the student Or students who bully you?

- ☐ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ☐
- ☐ In my class
- ☐
- ☐ In a different class but same grade (year)

15. Have you been bullied by Boys or girls?

- ☐ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ☐
- ☐ Mainly by 1 girl
- ☐
- ☐ By several girls
- ☐

16. By how many students have you usually been bullied?

- ☐ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ☐
- ☐ Mainly by 1 student
- ☐
- ☐ By a group of 2-3 students
- ☐

17. How long has the Bullying lasted?

- ☐ It hasn't happened to me in the past couple of months
- ☐
- ☐ It lasted one or two weeks
- ☐
- ☐ It lasted about a month
- ☐

18. Where have you been bullied?

☐ I haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months

☐ I have been bullied in one or More of the following places in the past couple of months (continue below)

18a. On the playground/athletic field (during recess or break times) ☐

18b. in the hallways/stairwells ☐

18c. in class (when the teacher was in the room) ☐

18d. in class (when the teacher was Not in the room) ☐

18e. in the bathroom ☐

18f. in gym class or the gym locker Room/shower ☐

18g. in the lunch room ☐

18h. on the way to and from school ☐

18i. at the school bus stop ☐

18j. on the school bus ☐

18k. somewhere else in school ☐

18l.

_____

_____

_____

19. Have you told anyone that you have been bullied in the past couple of months?

- ☐ I haven't been bullied at school in the past couple of months
- ☐ I have been bullied, but I have not told anyone
- ☐ I have been bullied and I have told somebody about it

Please put an X if you have told:

19a. your class (home room teacher) ☐

19b. another adult at school (a Different teacher, the principal/ headmaster, the school nurse, the custodian/ school caretaker, the school psychologist/ mental health professional etc) ☐

19c. your parent(s)/ guardian(s) ☐

19d. your bother(s) or sister(s) ☐

19e. your friend(s) ☐

19f. somebody else ☐

19g. _____

_____

_____

20. How often do the teachers or Other adults at school try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at school?

- ☐ Almost never
- ☐
- ☐ Once in a while
- ☐
- ☐ Sometimes

21. How often do other students try to put a stop to it when a student is being bullied at school?	☐ Almost never ☐ ☐ Once in a while ☐ ☐ Sometimes

22. Has any adult at home contacted the school to try to stop your being bullied at school in the past couple of months	☐ Almost never ☐ ☐ Once in a while ☐ ☐ Sometimes

23. When you see a student your age being bullied at school, what do you feel or think?	☐ That is probably what he or she deserves ☐ ☐ I don't feel much ☐

About bullying other students

24. How often have you taken part in bullying another student(s) at school in the past couple of months	☐ I haven't bullied another student(s) ☐ at school in the past couple of months ☐ ☐ It has only happened once or twice ☐

Have you bullied another student(s) at school in the past couple of months I one or more of the following ways? Please answer all questions.

25. I called another student(s) mean names, made fun of or teased him or her in a hurtful way

- ☐ I haven't bullied another student(s) at school in the past couple of months
- ☐ It has only happened once or twice
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

26. I kept him or her out of things on purpose, excluded him or her from my group of friends or completely ignored him or her

- ☐ I haven't bullied another student(s) at school in the past couple of months
- ☐ It has only happened once or twice
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

27. I hit, kicked, pushed and shoved him or her around or locked him or her indoors

- ☐ I haven't bullied another student(s) at school in the past couple of months
- ☐ It has only happened once or twice
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

28. I spread false rumors about him or her and tried to make others dislike him or her

- ☐ I haven't bullied another student(s) at school in the past couple of months
- ☐ It has only happened once or twice
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐ 2 or 3 times a month

29. I took money or other things from him or her or damaged his or her belongings	☐ It hasn't happened in the past couple of months ☐ ☐ It has only happened once or twice ☐ ☐ 2 or 3 times a month
30. I threatened or forced him or her to do things he or she didn't want to do	☐ It hasn't happened in the past couple of months ☐ ☐ It has only happened once or twice ☐ ☐ 2 or 3 times a month
31. I bullied him or her with mean names, or comments, about his or her race or color	☐ It hasn't happened in the past couple of months ☐ ☐ It has only happened once or twice ☐ ☐ 2 or 3 times a month
32. I bullied him or her with mean names, comments, or gestures with a sexual meaning	☐ It hasn't happened in the past couple of months ☐ ☐ It has only happened once or twice ☐ ☐ 2 or 3 times a month

32a. I bullied him or her with mean or hurtful messages, calls or pictures, or in other ways on my mobile phone or over the internet (computer)

- ☐ It hasn't happened in the past couple of months
- ☐ It has only happened once or twice
- ☐ 2 or 3 times a month
- ☐ About once a week
- ☐ Several times a week

32b. In case you bullied another student(s) on your mobile phone or over the internet (computer), how was it done?

32c. Please describe in what way

_____

_____

_____

_____

33. I bullied him or her in another way

- ☐ It hasn't happened in the past couple of months
- ☐ It has only happened once or twice
- ☐ 2 or 3 times a month
- ☐ About once a week

33a. Please describe in what way

_____

_____

_____

_____

34. Has your class (home room) teacher or any other teacher talked with you about your bullying other students at school in the past couple of months.

- ☐ I haven't bullied another student(s)
- ☐ at school in the past couple of months
- ☐ no, they haven't talked with me about it

35. Has any adults at home talked with you about your bullying other students at school in the past couple of months

- ☐ I haven't bullied another student(s)
- ☐ at school in the past couple of months
- ☐ no, they haven't talked with me about it

36. Do you think you could join in bullying a student whom you didn't like?

- ☐ yes
- ☐ yes, maybe
- ☐ I don't know

37. How do you usually react if you see or understand that a student your age is being bullied by

- ☐ I have never noticed that students my age have been bullied
- ☐ I take part in the bullying
- ☐ I don't do anything, but I think the bullying is O

38. How often are you afraid of Being bullied by other students in your school?

- ☐ never
- ☐
- ☐ seldom
- ☐
- ☐ sometimes

39. Overall, how much do you think your class (home room) teacher has done to counteract bullying in the past couple of months?

- ☐
- ☐ Little or nothing
- ☐
- ☐ Fairly little
- ☐
- ☐ somewhat

Thank you!

Appendix D

Faculty of Education
McGill University
3700 McTavish Street
Montreal, PQ, Canada H3A1Y2

Faculte des sciences de l'education
Universite McGill
3700, rue McTavish
Montreal, PQ, Canada H3A 1Y2

Facsimile/Telecopier
(514) 398- 6968

Dear Parents:

As part of the McGill Youth Study Team's continued research collaboration with [insert school name], we will continue to conduct our project in identifying the factors that predict school and personal success among the high school students. In order to help us better understand the factors that lead to success in school and social relationships, the students from secondary 1 through secondary 5 will be asked to complete a series of questionnaires. These questionnaires cover a range of areas including problem-solving abilities, behaviour, relationships with friends and family members, emotions, and identity with their local culture. In addition, we will ask for records of school grades from the entire school year. The students will fill out these questionnaires during 2-3 class sessions when we visit the school during the week of [insert dates].

Please be advised that the data in this study will be used only for research purposes and will be held in the strictest confidence. Your son's/daughter's results will not affect their status at [insert school name] in any way. When the results will be published it will be as group averages and no personal information will be used in the publication of findings.

We would greatly appreciate your child's participation. If you are willing to allow your son or daughter to participate in this study, please sign the attached consent form. Your child will be asked if they wish to participate and will be told that they can stop at anytime. Your child will receive a small present, regardless of whether s/he completes the questionnaires.

If you have any questions, please contact Jake Burack at 514-398-3433.

Sincerely,

Jake Burack, Ph.D.
Professor and Director
McGill Youth Study Team

Appendix E

Faculty of Education
McGill University
3700 McTavish Street
Montreal, PQ, Canada H3A1Y2

Faculte des sciences de l'education
Universite McGill
3700, rue McTavish
Montreal, PQ, Canada H3A 1Y2

Facsimile/Telecopier
(514) 398- 6968

This consent form specifies the purpose, procedures and conditions required for your child's participation in the study that is being conducted by the McGill Youth Study Team from McGill University.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this research is to study the academic and emotional functioning of school aged children in your community. The data gathered may provide answers to important questions about child development in this community.

2. Procedures

Your child will be asked to complete paper and pencil questionnaires. These questionnaires present no known risks and have been used before with persons of the same age as your child. Everything your child is asked to do will be explained to him/her beforehand and he/she will be asked for verbal assent to participate. If your child wishes to stop or not complete the questionnaires, he or she may do so at any point. Your child's answers to these questions will not affect his or her status, in school or otherwise, in any way. The researchers will have access to your child's report cards in order to record grades and will ask your child's teacher to provide some information. Your child will be told that this is the case before participating in the study.

3. Conditions of Participation

The tasks will be presented as questionnaires in a group setting and your child will receive a small gift regardless of completion of the questionnaires. Your child's name will not be used in reports but his or her identity will be known to the researchers. All data will be stored in a locked cabinet. The researchers will disclose information only if compelled by law in the event that your child reveals information that indicates they may cause harm to themselves or others or if there is a suspicion of child abuse. The data will be used for research purposes only. In the published reporting of this study, the results will be reported as group averages and your child's name or any other personal information will never used in these reports. The researchers involved will be available to answer any questions regarding the procedures of this study.

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If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a volunteer in this project you may contact the McGill Research Ethics Officer at 514-398-6831

I HAVE BEEN GIVEN INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY IN THE PARENT LETTER AND HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS AGREEMENT. I VOLUNTARILY AGREE AND FREELY CONSENT FOR MY CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

_____ _____
Child's Name Child's date of birth

_____ _____
Date Signature of Parent or Legal Tutor

Jake Burack, Ph.D., Professor and Director, McGill Youth Study Team, (514) 398-3433

Appendix F

Faculty of Education
McGill University
3724 McTavish, room 100 Montreal, PQ,
Canada H3A 1Y2

YOUTH ASSENT FORM

Why are we doing this study?

The goal of our study is to learn more about children and adolescents your age and what things help you do well in school. We will be asking you about your thoughts on many different things in your lives as school, your culture, your parents and your peers as well as your emotions and behaviours.

What will happen during this study?

You will be asked to fill out some questionnaires in your classroom. A researcher will read out every question and give you time to answer it individually. It will take approximately 34 sessions of about 1 hr each to complete all the questionnaires over the course of one week. Your teacher will be asked to provide some information about you and the researchers will also have access to your report cards in order to record your grades.

You can ask questions at any time and you can stop doing the study at any time if you want for any reason.

Are there good things and bad things about this study?

You might find helping out in this study fun. You will also get to learn more about research. You will have to miss some of your classroom activities in order to fill out the questionnaires.

Can I decide if I want to do these activities?

Your parents have given permission for you to participate in this testing. You do not have to participate in this process if you don't want to. Nobody will be angry or upset if you do not want to be in the study. If you do want to participate you can decide not to answer any questions that you don't want to. You can stop participating at any time.

Who will know what I did in this study?

The answers you provide on the questionnaires will only be seen by members of our research team. Your name will never appear on any of the questionnaires you give us and you will be given a code to use instead. The only time we will ever ask you about your answers on the questionnaires, is if you write that you might seriously cause harm to yourself or others. When we present what we find from this study in papers and presentations all of the information will be shown as group averages so that no one will ever be singled out.

Do you have any questions? Would you like to participate?

Assent

I read this form to _____ and acknowledge that he/she gave verbal assent to participate.

Signature _____ Date _____