Bullying, Victimization, Associated Distress & Transition Among Intellectually Gifted Children

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Abstract

This cross-sectional study examined the prevalence of bullying and victimization among children identified as gifted who are in the last grade of elementary school (4th grade) and first two grades of middle school (5th and 6th grades). Additionally, I investigated if the children experienced distress associated with bullying and victimization and if the distress varied systematically across the three grades. The study took place at one elementary school and two middle schools located in Tennessee. There were a total of 35 participants [4th grade (n = 15), 5th grade (n = 13), and 6th grade (n =7)]. The results indicated that the 4th graders reported a significantly higher prevalence of bullying compared to the 5th graders. Furthermore there were significant, strong correlations between victimization and level of total distress; bullying and level of externalizing distress; and victimization and level of internalizing distress. The principal limitation of the study was the small sample size (N = 35). Additional studies investigating this topic should be conducted to help educators become more aware of the prevalence of bullying and victimization during the elementary-middle school transition period among children who are gifted. Such studies can also potentially shed light on the manner in which children who are gifted handle bullying and victimization.

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Chapter I Introduction

During the past three decades the amount of attention from educators focusing on bullying and victimization has increased (Aluede, Adeleke, Omoike, & Afen- Akpaida, 2008; Espelage & Swearer, 2003). In 1982 in Norway, three teenage boys committed suicide purportedly due to being severely bullied by classmates. In response to this tragedy the Norwegian government asked Dan Olweus, a researcher, to conduct a nationwide bullying study (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Olweus, 1993; Sveinsson & Morris, 2007). To carry out this study, Olweus developed a Bully/Victimization Questionnaire and administered it to approximately 150,000 Norwegian and Swedish students in grades 1 to 9. He found that approximately 9% of the students reported that they were victimized by others and 7% reported that they were engaging in bullying behavior (Olweus, 1995). This large-scale bullying study prompted an increase in bullying research in other countries, including the United States (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Olweus, 1995; Sveinsson & Morris, 2007). In the United States, concerns among educators regarding bullying behavior were further sparked after episodes of school violence, such as the Columbine tragedy, occurred (Parault, Davis, & Pellegrini, 2007).

Bullying in American schools is widespread and a cause for concern as both bullies and victims suffer a plethora of social, emotional, and/or physical problems (see Arseneault et al., 2006; Holt, Finkelhor, & Kantor, 2007; Houbre, Tarquino, & Thuillier, 2006; Scholte, Engels, Overbeek, de Kemp, & Haselager, 2007). Much of the research on bullying and victimization focuses on students in general education (see Haynie et al., 2001; Nansel et al., 2001). It is possible that unique sub-populations of children, such as those who are identified as intellectually gifted, might experience a different amount of victimization or may bully at different rates compared to their non-gifted same aged peers. However, few studies have

examined bullying and victimization among children who are identified as intellectually gifted. The results of one nationwide study that examined the rate of bullying and victimization among this unique subpopulation of students found that victimization peaks around sixth grade, which in most American school systems is the first year in middle school (Peterson & Ray, 2006b). The transition from elementary to middle school is a very difficult time period as students experience a discontinuous shift of routines, changes in social status, and developmental changes (Blyth, Simmons, & Carlton-Ford, 1983).

Research on the elementary to middle school transition, focusing on the general education population, has indicated that after transition, students' grades, achievement levels, perceptions of quality of school-life, and self-esteem decrease (see Mullins & Irvin, 2000). Students experience a disruption in social functioning as well (Blyth et al., 1983; Kingery & Erdley, 2007). Theoretically, this would lead one to expect that bullying and victimization would increase over this transition period. Indeed, the results of one longitudinal study that examined a group of general education students as they transitioned from elementary to middle school, indicated that although the rate of bullying increased over this time period, victimization decreased (Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000; Pellegrini & Long, 2002).

There is a dearth of literature focusing on the prevalence of bullying and/or victimization across the elementary to middle school transition among students who are intellectually gifted (heretofore referred to as "gifted"). The aim of my study is to determine if rates of bullying and victimization are different for children identified as gifted, enrolled in the last grade of elementary school than those enrolled in the first two grades of middle school. Furthermore, I will investigate whether children who are gifted experience significant levels of distress associated with bullying and victimization and if distress varies systematically across the elementary and middle school grades.

In the following sections I will review several topics as they relate both to the general education population and students who are gifted: bullying and victimization, distress associated with bullying and victimization, and distress associated with the elementary to middle school transition. This review of the literature will lead to an elaboration of my research questions.

Chapter II Review of Literature

Bullying and Victimization Among the General Education Population

There are many definitions of "bullying." In one prominent definition, Olweus (1995) believed that "a [person] is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons" (p. 197). A negative action refers to a behavior that a person deliberately engages in to injure or distress the targeted individual (Aluede et al., 2008). These negative actions can be verbal, such as threats, or non-verbal (physical), such as hitting (Aluede et al; Olweus, 1993, 1995). Typically there is a power-imbalance between the victim and bully (see Aluede et al., 2008; Ball et al., 2008; Olweus, 1995). The bully's power can derive from many sources such as strength, size, or social advantage (Craig & Pepler, 2007).

While certain characteristics must be present for a behavior to be considered bullying, researchers classify the types of bullying in different ways. For instance, Olweus (1993) believed that there are two forms of bullying: direct and indirect. Direct bullying occurs when the bully openly attacks the victim while indirect bullying is exemplified by exclusion and social isolation (Aluede et al., 2008). Other researchers categorize bullying into five broad categories: physical aggression (e.g., pushing), social alienation (e.g., rejection), verbal aggression (e.g., teasing), intimidation (e.g., threats), and relational bullying (e.g., gossiping) (Aluede et al.; Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager, & Short-Camilli, 2001; Rigby, 1995).

Due to the fact that researchers define the behavior of bullying differently, the exact prevalence rate of bullying is unknown (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). In 1982, the World Health Organization along with the Health Behaviour in School Aged Children research network launched an international study titled the *Health Behaviour in School Aged Children* (2010). Between the years 1983 and 2006, approximately 42 countries participated by administering

surveys which investigated health-related behaviors to adolescents. The resulting data indicated that the prevalence rate of bullying and victimization differs among countries. For instance, during the 1993/1994 administration of the survey, the percentage of students who reported that they participated in bullying at least one time during the present school term ranged from 13% of girls and 28% of boys in Wales to 67% of girls and 78% of boys in Greenland. The percentage of students who reported that they had been victimized ranged from 13% of girls and 15% of boys in Sweden to 72% of girls and 77% of boys in Greenland (King, Wold, Tudor-Smith, & Harel as cited in Haynie et al., 2001; Health Behavior in School Aged Children, 2010).

The United States participated in this international project in 1998 (King et al., as cited in Haynie et al., 2001; Health Behavior in School Aged Children, 2010.; Nansel et al., 2001). The United States sample consisted of 15,686 American students in grades 6 through 10. The sample, stratified based on several variables, was considered to be representative of American children. The participants were asked about their experiences with bullying and victimization during the present school term. Out of the total sample, 10.6% of the participants reported that they bullied others sometimes (moderate bullying) and 8.8% reported that they bullied others at least once a week (frequent bullying). Overall, 8.5% participants reported that they were victimized sometimes (moderate victimization) and 8.4% reported that they were victimized at least once a week (frequent victimization). Out of the total sample, 6.3% of the participants reported bullying others and being victimized at least sometimes during the current school term. The results of this large-scale study suggest that many U.S. students are involved in bullying as the perpetrator and/or victim.

Many studies investigating bullying have been conducted using smaller target populations such as individual school districts. For instance, Haynie et al. (2001) administered surveys to 4,263 middle-school students in a Maryland school district. The survey was designed

to assess many variables, including involvement in bullying and victimization during the last year. It is important to note that 63 participants did not report their experiences with bullying and 178 participants did not report their experiences with victimization. Thus, the researchers adjusted the sample size before they calculated their statistics. Overall, 16.7% of the participants reported that they bullied once or twice and 7.4% reported that they engaged in bullying behaviors three or more times during the past year. Also, 13.7% of participants reported that, during the last year, they were victimized one or two times and 30.9% reported that they were victimized 3 or more times. Additionally, 3.7% of the participants reported both engaging in bullying behaviors and being victimized at least 3 times over the past year.

In another study, Bradshaw, Saywer, and O'Brennan (2007) surveyed 15,185 students at elementary, middle, and high schools in one Maryland school district. The survey assessed the students' experiences of bullying, among other factors. Overall, 30.8% of the participants reported bullying others and 49% reported that they were victimized at least one time during the last month. Out of the total sample, 8% reported that they bullied, 23.2% reported that they were victimized, and 9.4% reported that they both bullied and were victimized at least two times during the last month.

Seals and Young (2007) examined the rate of bullying and victimization among 454 seventh and eighth grade students in schools located in the northern delta area of the United States. The researchers used the Peer Relations Questionnaire (Rigby & Slee, 1995) which assesses rates of bullying and victimization, among other variables. Seals and Young did not mention the time-frame over which the students were asked to reflect upon their bullying and/or victimization experiences. Ten percent of the students reported that they bullied others and 13% reported that they were victimized at least once a week. Furthermore 1% of the students reported that they both bullied and were victimized at least once a week.

As part of a study examining the relationship between bullying and risk behaviors, Berthold and Hoover (2000) examined the rates of bullying and victimization among 591 students in grades 4 through 6 in schools located in the Midwestern region of the United States. The participants were administered a survey developed by the researchers, which assessed the prevalence of bullying and victimization among other factors. Overall, 35.4% of the participants reported that they had been victimized and 19.8% reported that they had bullied other students during the current school year.

Lastly, Carlyle and Steinman (2007) examined the prevalence of bullying among 79,492 students, in grades 6 through 12, in 16 school districts located in the Columbus, Ohio metropolitan area. In addition to other instruments, the participants were administered 13 survey items that inquired about frequency of bullying and victimization. Overall, 20.1% of the participants reported that they had been victimized and 18.8% reported that they had bullied others during the past year. Also, 7.4% of the participants reported that, over the last year, they both bullied others and were victimized; consequently these students were classified as bully/victims.

Refer to Table1 on the following page for a summary of the findings reviewed above. It is important to note that the researchers used different definitions of bullying. In addition, the time-frame over which the researchers asked the students to recall bullying and victimization differed. Consequently, it would be misleading to provide a range of prevalence rates demonstrated across these studies. In summary, the results of these studies indicate that bullying and victimization are, indeed, prevalent in American schools.

Table 1.

Rates of Bullying and Victimization Among U.S. Studies

Authors	Year	Sample	Time Frame	Frequency	Grades/Ages	% Bullies	% Victims	% Bully-Victims
General Education								
Berthold & Hoover	2000	591	Current School Year	Unspecified	4th-6th	19.8	35.4	
Nansel et al.	2001	15,686	Current School Year	1/time/week	6th-10th	8.8	8.4	
Haynie et al.	2001	4.263	Past year	At least 3 times	6th-8th	7.4	30.9	3.7
Bradshaw et al.	2007	15,185	1 month	At least 2 times	4th-13th	8.0	23.2	9.4
Seals & Young	2007	454	Unspecified	At least 1time/week	7th-8th	10.0	13.0	1.0
Carlyle & Steinman	2007	79,492	1 year	Unspecified	6th-12th	18.8	20.1	7.4
Gifted Education								
Peterson & Ray	2006	432	9 years	Some time	8th	16	67	28
Parker & Bain	2009	90*	1 month	Moderately Severe Rate	14-18	4.3	12.8	6.4

Bullying and Victimization Among Students who are Gifted

Research has indicated that bullying and victimization is prevalent at varying percentages among the general education population. However, few studies have examined the rate of bullying and victimization among students who are gifted. According to the United States Government through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act students who are gifted

> *give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services and activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities* (National Association for Gifted Children, 2008, p. 1).

Students receive special education services for giftedness in seven states: Alabama, Florida, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Tennessee, and West Virginia (Education Commission of the States, 2004). The majority of the other states also provide programming for students who are gifted, but not under the auspices of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (Education Commission of the States; Shaunessy, 2003). The states of Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, and South Dakota do not identify students who are gifted whatsoever (Hoagies Gifted Education Page, 2009; Shaunessy, 2003). There are two perspectives that tend to dominate the popular and refereed literature regarding the prevalence of bullying and victimization among children who are gifted. According to one perspective, these children are more vulnerable to victimization than their non-gifted peers. The other perspective states that children who are gifted display at least the same amount of social competence as their non-gifted peers or possibly more. I will elaborate on the two viewpoints below.

Some gifted proponents cite anecdotal experience for support of the notion that children who are gifted are more vulnerable to bullying than their non-gifted peers. For instance, Cross (2001b) states that he has observed these children being bullied by parents, relatives, coaches,

teachers, administrators, librarians counselors, strangers, and other students who are gifted. Cross (2001a) also states that children, identified as gifted, might internalize other's perceptions, which could possibly lead to rage and subsequent bullying behavior. However, paradoxically, Cross (2001a) also states that students who are gifted are not likely to engage in violent behaviors.

Other gifted proponents (e.g. Boodman, 2006; McIntosh, 2006; Schular, 2002) believe that two studies conducted by Peterson and Ray (2006a; 2006b) provide evidence that students who are gifted are vulnerable to bullying compared to their non-gifted peers. In brief, Peterson and Ray (2006b) surveyed 432 gifted eighth graders about their experiences with bullying and or victimization during their entire school career. They found that 67% of the participants reported that they had experienced victimization at least one time. It is important to note that Peterson and Ray (2006b) did not use a comparison group of students who were non-gifted. The results of this study are discussed in more detail later in this section.

Additionally, in a qualitative study, Peterson and Ray (2006a) interviewed 57 students, designated as gifted, who had participated in their large-scale bullying/victimization study (2006b). They asked the participants 13 open-ended questions regarding their experiences with bullying and victimization. The researchers were not aware of the participants' bullying or victimization status prior to conducting the interview. They stated that one of the qualitative themes that arose from the interview responses was that participants associated giftedness with special vulnerability to bullying. However, the responses of the participants indicated that being bullied was also related to factors independent of giftedness. One such factor included simply not being known by classmates. Another factor was being different from the other children. Some participants reported that being smart led to being bullied. One participant believed that his non-gifted peers were jealous of his higher status in the classroom. As noted above, perceived differentness was not necessarily associated with being gifted.

The perspective that children who are gifted are vulnerable to bullying relates to Dabrowski's theoretical model of giftedness that proposes that individuals who are gifted display over-excitabilities, or intense reactions to certain stimuli. Dabrowksi believed that these over-excitabilities occur in the domains labeled psychomotor, sensual, imaginational, intellectual, and emotional (Mendaglio & Tillier, 2006). If a person displays intense emotions, he or she might be prone to victimization. Indeed, Schuler (2002) stated that several children and adolescents who are gifted experience bullying partly due to the fact that their reactions are intense. However, Schuler did not support her statement with either anecdotal or empirical evidence.

In contrast to the vulnerability perspective, research has indicated that children who are gifted are not generally less socially-competent compared to their peers, suggesting that victimization rates may not be elevated and bullying rates may be less than that in the general education population. For instance, Garland & Ziegler (1999) investigated the relationship between exceptional giftedness and psychosocial adjustment. The participants were the parents of 191 young adolescents between the ages of 13 and 15 who attended a summer program (Talent Identification Program) specifically designed for those who are gifted. The parents were mailed the Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach, 1991), which assesses both internalizing (e.g. anxiety, depression) and externalizing (aggression, delinquency) problems. The results indicated that the children's scores were in the normal ranges. Additionally, the young adolescents who were highly gifted typically displayed fewer problems compared to the young adolescents who were moderately gifted. The researchers did not specify their operational definitions of "highly gifted" or "moderately gifted."

The results of another study (R. Cohen, Duncan, & S.L. Cohen, 1994) indicated that children who are gifted demonstrate higher levels of social competence compared to their peers. The participants were 4th to 6th grade students attending a university-affiliated school. Fifty-three

of the students were identified as intellectually gifted and participated in a pull-out program. The following types of data were collected: peer sociometric assessments, evaluations of special relationships, and perceptions of peer behavior. Compared to their non-gifted classmates, the overall sociometric ratings of the gifted group were higher. More specifically, they received higher ratings on the social preference scale and displayed fewer negative peer relation behaviors.

Similar to R. Cohen et al. (1994), Schneider, Clegg, Byrne, Ledingham, and Crombie (1989) investigated the social relations of 354 5th, 8th, and 10th grade students identified as gifted. One hundred and fifty children were placed in special self-contained classes and 104 were placed in general education classes. The researchers also selected non-gifted children to be in two control groups. One control group consisted of randomly-selected classmates of the children who were gifted and attending the general education classrooms. The other control group was a matched sample in that each student, who was gifted and attending general education classes, was matched to a non-gifted student in terms of sex, age, and number of years attending the school. There was not a control group for the children who were gifted and attending the self-contained classes. Among other measures, the participants completed the Revised Class Play (Masten, Morison, & Pellegrini, 1985), a peer-nomination instrument in which children nominate classmates to play positive and negative roles in a pretend class play. In grade 5, the children who were gifted and placed in the general education classroom were rated as having higher social competence compared to the children who were gifted and placed in the self-contained classroom and the two comparison groups of non-gifted children. There was not a significant difference in the social competence ratings between the four groups at the other grade levels.

In another study, Bain and Bell (2004) investigated peer relationships, social self-concept, and social attribution among 93 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. Twenty-six of the participants

were identified as gifted and sixty-seven were classified as high achievers, scoring at or above the 85th percentile on the state administered achievement test. The participants were administered the Self-Description Questionnaire-I (SDQ-I; Marsh, 1988), which measures components of self-concept experienced by preadolescents. The participants' teachers completed the Teacher's Social Rating (TSR) scale, in which they rated each child based on their peer relationships. The results indicated that on the SDQ-I, the students identified as gifted scored significantly higher on the subscales measuring self-concepts of physical ability, physical appearance, peer relations, and on the General Self Concept Scale. There was not a significant difference between the teachers' peer relationship ratings of children identified as gifted and the high-achieving children. These findings are consistent with the results of a similar study conducted on Canadian 8th and 9th graders (Pyryt & Mendaglio, 1994).

To date, Peterson and Ray (2006b) have conducted the only large-scale study that directly investigated the rates of bullying and victimization among children identified as gifted. The study was retrospective in nature. The researchers surveyed 432 gifted eighth graders in 16 school districts in 11 states. The participants were administered a survey, designed by the researchers, that asked both narrative and quantifiable information regarding bullying and victimization. Sixty-seven percent of the participants reported that they were victimized at some point during their nine years of schooling. Victimization was the least prevalent in kindergarten (27%) and the most prevalent during 6th grade (46%). Also, the participants reported that repeated victimization was most prevalent in 6th grade, with 11% reporting that they were victimized at least 10 times that school year. Twenty-eight percent of the participants reported that they bullied others at some point during their school career. Bullying behavior was the least prevalent in kindergarten (3%) and most prevalent in 8th grade (16%). In 8th grade, 16% of the students reported that they were victimized and 16% reported that they bullied others. Due to the

fact that the students were asked to recall their experiences with bullying and/or victimization over a nine-year period, their reports of when such incidents occurred might be inaccurate. However, the findings of this study indicate that some children who are gifted both bully others and suffer as victims.

In a study on a much smaller scale, Parker and Bain (in press) examined the prevalence of bullying among 47 gifted and 43 high achieving students aged 14 to 18 who attended high school in a suburban area. The students identified as gifted were receiving special education services and participating in a pull-out program. High achieving students were defined based on enrollment in advanced placement classes. The participants were administered the Reynolds Bully Victimization Scale for Schools (BVS; Reynolds, 2003) which is designed to measure bullying and/or victimization behavior among peers in or near school. The BVS consists of two scales, the Bullying Scale, which assesses the respondent's bullying behaviors and the Victimization Scale which assesses the respondent's experiences being victimized by peers during the past month. The researchers identified students as bullies or victims if their scores on the respective scales fell at or above the Moderately Severe Range. Overall, the results indicated that among the 47 participants, who were gifted, 4.3% were bullies, and 12.8% were victims. Additionally, Parker and Bain classified 6.4% of the participants who were gifted as bully-victims because their scores on both the Bullying and Victimization scales fell significantly above the Average Range. Similar to the findings of Peterson and Ray (2006b), the results of this study indicated that students who are gifted are involved in bullying both as perpetrators and victims. However, the results of Parker and Bain's study did not confirm a difference in bullying and victimization rates for students who are gifted compared to their high achieving peers.

The results of studies that have directly examined bullying and victimization among children who are gifted indicate that a small percentage of these children bully others, or are

victimized; some are both bullies and victims. Bullying and victimization are a cause of concern because of their connection with devastating consequences, discussed in the following section.

Effects of Bullying/Victimization Among the General Education Population

There is a vast amount of research that has focused on the distressing consequences of victimization and bullying. Such research has indicated that children involved in bullying, whether in the role of perpetrator or victim, typically experience distress. For instance, victims typically experience problems of the internalizing nature. The symptoms of internalizing problems are subjective and experienced internally (Reynolds, 2003). These types of problems and disorders include anxiety, depression, withdrawal, insecurity, and unhappiness (see Arsenault, 2006; Holt et al., 2007; Mishna, 2003; Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 1993; Pellegrini, 1998). Victims also experience feelings of loneliness and isolation as they typically lack friends (Aluede et al., 2008; Bosworth, Espelage, & Simon, 2001; Drake, Price, Telljohann, & Funk, 2003; Rubin as cited in Aluede et al., 2008). Such problems can persist well into adulthood (Ambert, 1994; Hugh-Jones & Smith, 1999; Olweus, 1993, 1995; Sweeting, Young, West, & Derr, 2006).

Although victims primarily experience internalizing problems, they might also display or be at risk for externalizing problems. Externalizing problems have overt behavioral symptoms (Reynolds, 2003). Examples of externalizing problems include impulsiveness, aggressiveness, and hyperactivity (see Aresenalut et al., 2006; Hanish & Guerra, 2002; Hodges & Perry, 1999; Holt et al., 2007; Mishna, 2003; Schwartz, McFadyen-Ketchum, Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1998; Schwartz, Gorman, Nakamoto, & Toblin 2005). Also, victims experience psychosomatic and/or physical problems such as cognitive difficulties, somatic pain, skin conditions, headaches, ulcers, sweating, shaking, trembling, palpitations, panic attacks, irritable bowel syndrome, sleep disorders, and frequent illness (Kumpulainen et al., 1998; Haynie et al., 2001; Houbre et al.,

2006; Williams, Chambers, Logan, & Robinson, 1996; Wolke, Woods, Bloomfield, & Karstadt 2001). If a child experiences chronic bullying, he or she might perceive his or her school environment as being a frightening place (Aluede et al., 2008). In fact in the 1990's, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) estimated that each day, approximately 160,000 children do not attend school due to fears of bullying (Centers for Disease Control, 2008; Pollack, 1998). Other research has indicated that rates of school absenteeism are high among students who are victimized (Kerikowlske as cited in Aluede et al., 2008; Peterson & Ray, 2006b; Rigby, 1995). Thus, it is not surprising that as a child is victimized, his or her level of academic performance usually decreases (Aluede et al., 2008; Ballard, Tucky, & Remley, 1999; Blyth et al., 1983; Clarke & Kiselica, 1997; Duncan, 1999; Mishna, 2003; Schwartz et al., 2005).

Research has indicated that children who bully also experience problems, primarily of an externalizing nature (Aluede et al., 2008; Haynie et al., 2001; Kumplanien, 1998). For instance, bullies tend to have conduct problems and engage in delinquent behavior (Arseneault et al., 2006; Holt et al., 2007; Centers for Disease Control, 2008; Nansel et al, 2001). Also, they are likely to commit crimes later in life (e.g. Arseneault et al.; Holt et al.; National Crime Prevention Council, 2009). In fact, the results of one study indicated that there is a 25% chance that bullies will develop a criminal record before they reach the age of 30 (Eron, Huesmann, Dubow, Romanoff, & Yarmel, 1987; Holt et al.). Children classified as bullies are likely to drink alcohol and smoke (Centers for Disease Control, 2008). Furthermore, bullies are more likely than victims to bring weapons to school and become injured (Kerlikowske as cited in Aluede et al., 2008). However, bullies also experience internalizing problems such as digestive disorders (Houbre et al., 2006).

Research has indicated that children who are both bullies and victims (bully-victims) also experience problems, perhaps more severe than children who are just bullies or just victims

(Arsenault et al.; 2006; Haynie et al., 2001; Kumpulainen et al., 1998). Bully-victims experience higher levels of anxiety and depression compared to other children (Arseneault et al., 2006; Ball et al., 2008). Furthermore, compared to children who are simply identified as bullies or victims, bully-victims are more likely to display externalizing behavior, to be referred for psychiatric care, and to refuse to go to school (Kumpulainen et al., 1998).

Children who are involved in bullying or victimization experience distress as evidenced by their reports of internalizing problems and/or displays of externalizing problems. Such distress can be detrimental and devastating to their well-being. For instance, research has indicated that both perpetrators and victims of bullying experience a loss of self-esteem (see Blyth et al., 1983; Nansel et al., 2001).

Effects of Bullying/Victimization Specifically Among Students who are Gifted

A vast amount of research has investigated the consequences of bullying and/or victimization among children in the general education population. However, research on this topic specifically focusing on children who are gifted is limited to the Peterson and Ray (2006a; 2006b) studies. Peterson and Ray (2006b), as part of their bullying and victimization study, asked the participants, who reported being victimized, to rate the emotional impact from victimization on a scale from *not at all* to *a lot.* They found that victimization had the most impact on the participants in the 5th grade, with 13% of the participants reporting being affected by victimization *a lot.* Victimization had the least impact on the participants in the 8th grade, with 16% of the participants reporting that they were *not at all* affected by victimization. Thus 84% of the participants reported being affected by victimization to some degree during their 8th grade year.

Additionally, as discussed previously, Peterson and Ray (2006a) interviewed 57 of their participants from their bullying and victimization study (2006b) about their experiences with

bullying and/or victimization. From these interviews, they found that children who are gifted can become highly distressed as a result of nonphysical types of bullying (e.g. name calling). For some students, only one incident of bullying led to distress. However, the researchers also found that their participants' coping strategies developed with age, and emotional mending took place over time.

Other studies have examined coping strategies among gifted children, but have not specifically focused on bullying. For instance, Tomchin and Callahan (1996) investigated the relationship between coping strategies and self concept among 457 children and adolescents, between the ages of 10 and 16, who had been identified as academically gifted. The participants were administered the Self-Description Questionnaire-II (Marsh, 1992) which measures adolescents' self-concept, and the Adolescent Coping Scale (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1990) which examines coping behaviors. The participants' scores on the Adolescent Coping Scale indicate that students who are gifted frequently use coping strategies such as working hard, achieving, and concentrating on solving problems. The use of such coping strategies indicates that students who are gifted assume that they are responsible for handling stressors. Indeed, Peterson and Ray (2006a) found that the students they interviewed assumed personal responsibility for handling bullying.

Sowa and McIntire (1994) examined the social and emotional adjustment of seven children identified as intellectually gifted in a qualitative study. From their interviews, the researchers found that the students coped with stressful situations by using cognitive appraisal strategies. These strategies involved both problem-focused coping, in which a person alters his or her behavior in an effort to influence the environment, and emotion-focused coping, in which a person alters his or her interpretation of the current environment (Lazarus, 1993; Sowa &

McIntire, 1994). The students also coped with stressful situations by withdrawing from the situation or initiating time-out for themselves.

In another study, Merrell, Gill, H. McFarland, and T. McFarland (1996) examined the internalizing symptoms of 130 elementary-aged children as part of the validation process for the Internalizing Symptoms Scale for Children (Merrell & Walters, 1996). Sixty-five of the children were gifted and matched to a comparison group of 65 non-gifted students. The results indicated that the students identified as gifted reported significantly lower amounts of internalizing symptoms compared to their non-gifted counterparts. This difference was the most pronounced on items that were associated with self-efficacy and perceived self-importance. The researchers believe that these types of self-perceptions possibly serve as a "buffering" factor, preventing insults from affecting the children's social-emotional functioning.

Although research discussed in the previous paragraphs has addressed coping skills among children who are intellectually gifted, very few studies have investigated the direct effects of bullying and victimization on distress, specifically among this unique population. The results of the Peterson and Ray (2006a) qualitative study indicate that children who are gifted experience distress due to nonphysical bullying such as name-calling. Other studies have found that children who are gifted often use strategies such as working hard, achieving, concentrating on solving problems, withdrawing from the situation, or initiating time-out for themselves to cope with being bullied (Sowa & McIntire, 1994; Tomchin & Callahan, 1996).

Elementary to Middle School Transition Among the General Education Population

It is reasonable to assume that most adults will recall having at least some difficulties handling their transition from elementary to middle school (also known as junior high school in past decades). Three theoretical perspectives attempt to explain why children experience disruption while transitioning from elementary to middle school. One perspective, stated by

Elder (1968), is that school transitions might be a sort of American rite of passage. Thus, a school transition is disruptive to children as it symbolizes an abrupt change from the routines and events that they have been used to (Blyth et al., 1983; Elder). A second theoretical perspective, known as the "top-dog" phenomenon, refers to the dramatic and possible disruptive effects of transitioning from the top position in elementary school to the bottom position in middle school (Blyth, et al.).

Lastly, there is the developmental perspective. Most children transition to middle school when they are 12 years old, the approximate age, for many, of puberty, the beginning of adolescence, and, according to Erickson, the Identity and Repudiation vs. Identity Diffusion Stage (Erikson, 1950). Consequently, most children are facing the rapid physical and hormonal changes accompanied by puberty as they transition from elementary to middle school and begin to search for their identities (Kingery & Erdley, 2007). Thus, theoretically, when transitioning to middle school, children experience at least a short term disruption due to the experienced discontinuity, change in the social status, and developmental changes (Blyth et al., 1983; Kingery & Erdley). Considering all of the changes that students experience during the transition from elementary to middle school, it would not be surprising if they experience a heightened amount of anxiety (Galton & Morrison, 2000; Jindal-Snape & Miller, 2008). The anxiety actually starts prior to the transition to the new environment. For instance when asking elementary students in Georgia about their concerns in transitioning, Schumaker (1998) found that students were worried about punctuality, locating classes, and maintaining materials. Once the students actually enter middle-school, they face many different challenges such as changing classes and having different teachers as well as experiencing an absence of recess, and understanding new grading systems (Weldy as cited in Schumaker, 1998; Rosen, n.d.). Each of these concerns and challenges are aspects unique to transitions from lower to higher school

levels, thus supporting Blyth et al.'s perspective that students experience a great deal of discontinuity as they face different routines and schedules.

A few research studies have sought to investigate the impact of the elementary to middle school transition on students' well-being. The results of one longitudinal study that followed students as they made this transition indicated that neither puberty nor school transition significantly impacted psychological well-being (Seifert, & Schulz, 2007). However, in contrast, several studies have indicated that during the elementary to middle school transition, students experience several disruptions in functioning. For instance, students' grades and achievement levels decline, at least for a brief period of time (e.g. Aluede et al., 2008; Ballard et al., 1999; Blyth et al., 1983; Clarke & Kiselica, 1997; Duncan, 1999; Mishna, 2003; Schwartz et al., 2005; Petersen & Crockett, 1985). In addition, student's perceptions of the quality of school-life decrease (see Haladyna & Thomas, 1979; Hirsch & Rapkin, 1987). Lastly, students experience a decline in self-esteem and self-perceptions (see Blyth et al.; Simmons, F. Rosenberg, & M. Rosenberg, 1973).

Additionally, children might experience disruptions in social functioning. For instance, students experience severe changes in social status as they transition from top to bottom dog (Blyth et al., 1983). Indeed, the findings from one study conducted by Kingery and Erdley (2007) indicate that the level of disruption experienced because of transition might be related to the student's level of peer acceptance, number of friends, and friendship quality. The participants, 146 students, filled out peer-rating questionnaires, nominated students who were friends, and completed the Friendship Quality Questionnaire-Revised (Parker & Asher, 1993) in the Spring of their 5th grade year in elementary school and in the Fall of their 6th grade year in middle school. The results of a regression analysis indicated that peer acceptance was a predictor of loneliness and school involvement across the elementary to middle school transition. This

finding indicates that students who have low peer acceptance, few friends, and/or low quality friendships in the last grade of elementary school tend to have higher levels of loneliness and lower levels of school involvement after the transition. This, in turn, places them at a greater risk for experiencing difficulties in these areas after entering middle school.

As the results of the Kingery and Erdley (2007) study indicated, some students might be more prone than others to experience disruptions in their social lives during the elementary to middle school transition. However, the results of a longitudinal study, examining general education students as they transitioned from elementary to middle school, indicated that the rates of bullying and victimization do not increase over this time period. Pellegrini and Bartini (2000) studied bullying and victimization behaviors among 154 5th grade students as they transitioned from elementary to middle school. The children were first examined three times; in the Spring of their 5th grade year while in elementary school, and in the Fall and Spring of their 6th grade year while in middle school. By the end of 6th grade, 138 of the participants remained. During each data collection session, the students were administered the Olweus' Senior Bully Victim Questionnaire (Olweus, 1989), which assesses level of bullying and victimization. They also participated in a peer nomination procedure. Their teachers were instructed to complete the Teacher Check List (Dodge & Coie, 1987) in which they rated the students on their level of social competence. During the study, researchers directly observed the children at least one time a week during the entire school year. Bullying increased over the transition period or between the two first data collection periods. However, it is important to note that bullying decreased between the second and third data collection periods. The level of victimization decreased over the middle school transition period. However, it is interesting to note that the prevalence of students who both bullied and experienced victimization (bully-victims) remained fairly

consistent across transition. Additionally, following the transition, the students reported fewer close relationships and nominated more peers as being isolated.

In a second article, Pellegrini and Long (2002) reported the data from the same longitudinal study discussed above (Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000) but added data from students as they moved to 7th grade. By the end of 7th grade, 129 participants remained in the study. The participants' frequency of peer affiliations declined during the first year of transition (6th grade), but then increased to normal levels by the 7th grade.

Theoretically, students who are transitioning to middle school experience at least a short term disruption due to the experienced discontinuity, change in social status, and developmental changes. These theoretical viewpoints have been supported by empirical research conducted with students in general education settings, which has shown that after the transition to middle school, students' school grades, perceptions of quality of school life, number of friendships, and self-esteem decline (see Mullins & Irvin, 2000).

Elementary to Middle School Transition Among Students who are Intellectually Gifted

It is reasonable to assume that students who are gifted experience at least the same amount of disruption as their non-gifted peers when transitioning from elementary to middle school. Notably, one additional source of stress unique to students who are gifted is the fact that they might face a decrease in services in middle school (Duke University TIP Program, 2007). For instance, their new school might not offer pull-out enrichment activities (common among elementary schools), but instead may offer accelerated classes, a specialized study hall, or advanced academic classes integrated with other high-achieving students.

Very few studies have attempted to examine the stresses that students who are gifted may encounter as they transition from elementary to middle school. In one longitudinal study of students who are gifted, Peterson, Duncan, and Canaday (2009) examined students' experiences

with negative life events, stress, and general school experience. The study took place for 11 years and began with 121 students identified as intellectually gifted in grades 2 to 5. At the end of each school year, the parents of each student were asked to complete a Life Events Checklist, designed by the researchers, in which they marked events that their child had experienced during the past year. Sixty-three participants continued to participate in the study until their children graduated high school. When the students graduated from high school, they were sent an open-ended questionnaire to complete themselves. Additionally, the researchers obtained school information from 59 students after they graduated. The results indicated that a common theme among the students who are gifted was that school transitions, particularly elementary to middle school, were among the most challenging events experienced.

In another study, Pepperell and Rubel (2009) interviewed four young girls, three 5th graders and one 6th grader, about their experiences with transitioning from elementary to middle school. The researchers also interviewed three high school seniors about their recalled experiences of transitioning from elementary to middle school. During the interviews, all of the participants mentioned the changes (i.e. new school, new friends, and new experiences) that they experienced during this time period. Additionally, all of the participants mentioned that their strong identity helped ease their transition experience. The researchers reached the conclusion that the participants experienced social and academic success as well as personal growth while transitioning from elementary to middle school.

To date, no study has directly examined the effects of the elementary-to-middle school transition on bullying and victimization among students who are gifted. The Peterson and Ray (2006b) study was retrospective in nature. The qualitative study conducted by Pepperell and Rubel (2009) focused on girls' experiences with the elementary to middle school transition. Empirical research has indicated that some students who are gifted both bully and are bullied by

others, but not at definitively higher or lower rates than general education students. Few studies have focused specifically on the occurrence of bullying and victimization among students who are gifted and are transitioning from elementary to middle school. Studies by Pellegrini and Bartini, (2000) and Pellegrini and Long (2002) indicate that among the general education population bullying increases and victimization decreases over the elementary-middle school transition. A longitudinal study, following a group of students as they transition from elementary to middle school would be an ideal method of measuring changes in bullying and victimization over time. An alternative method, with inherent problems associated with measuring differences within individuals, is a cross-sectional design that examines students in elementary and middle school grades.

The Current Study: Statement of the Problem

Only a few studies have investigated the prevalence of bullying and victimization among students who are gifted (e.g. Peterson & Ray, 2006b; Parker & Bain, in press). The results of these studies indicate that students who are gifted are sometimes victimized, but may engage in bullying behaviors as well. Generally, research indicates that students' involvement in bullying and/or victimization can lead to distress as demonstrated by internalizing symptoms and displays of externalizing behaviors (see Aluede et al., 2008; Holt et al., 2007). One period of time that is typically already anxiety-provoking for preadolescents is the transition from elementary to middle school. During this period, students who are gifted might experience additional stressors such as a change in, or discontinuity of services. Theoretically, the disruptions that this transition has on students' social life might lead to increased bullying and/or victimization rates among children who are intellectually gifted. Peterson and Ray (2006b) found that their participants who were gifted retrospectively reported peaks in bullying and victimization in the 6th grade. Currently, no studies have directly investigated the

prevalence of bullying and/or victimization over the elementary to middle school transition among students who are gifted. To date, only one longitudinal study (Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000; Pellegrini & Long, 2002) has directly compared the amount of bullying and victimization that general education students display during late elementary school and early middle school. This study indicates that after the transition, bullying increases and victimization decreases.

No studies have apparently examined the rates of bullying and victimization and the experiences of distress associated with such situations among students who are gifted as they transition from elementary to middle school. Such a study can have important implications. For instance, if bullying and victimization is found to increase during this time period, and there is a strong association between anxiety and the rate of bullying and victimization, the middle school I am examining might consider implementing a bullying prevention program (e.g. Olweus Bullying Prevention Program; Olweus, 2004). However, if the rates of bullying and victimization do not increase during this time period, implementing a bullying prevention program for this unique population would be time-consuming and unnecessary. Rather, the middle school should expose the students to any intervention procedures that are in place for the general education students.

The purpose of my study is to carry out a cross-sectional examination of the prevalence of bullying and victimization among children who are intellectually gifted in the last grade of elementary school and in the first two grades of middle school. Also, I want to see if the students' experiences of distress are associated with bullying and victimization and if distress varies systematically across the elementary (4^{th} grade) and middle school grades (5^{th} & 6^{th} grades). Based on current research findings, I hypothesize that bullying and victimization will be the least prevalent among the 4^{th} grade sample. I also hypothesis that the 4^{th} graders will experience a lower level of overall distress compared to the other participants.

The following are my primary research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference in the BVS Bullying Scale *T*-Scores/BVS Victimization Scale *T*-Scores among children in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade levels who are gifted?
2. What is the frequency of participants, overall and within each grade, who scored in each of the descriptive categories (Normal, Clinically Significant, Moderately Severe, Severe) on the BVS and BVDS scales?
3. Is there a significant difference in the BVDS Total Distress Scale *T*-Scores among children in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade levels who are gifted?
4. Is there a significant difference in the BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale *T*-Scores/BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale *T*-Scores among the children in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade levels who are gifted?

   The following are my secondary research questions:

5. Is there a significant correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale *T*-Scores and BVDS Total Distress Scale *T*-Scores and between the BVS Victimization Scale *T*-Scores and BVDS Total Distress Scale *T*-Scores? If so, what are the strengths of these correlations?
6. Is there a significant correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale *T*-Scores and BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale *T*-Scores? If so, what is the strength of this correlation?
7. Is there a significant correlation between the BVS Victimization Scale *T*-Scores and BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale *T*-Scores? If so, what is the strength of this correlation?

Chapter II Methods

Participants

Participants were students in grades 4 to 6 identified as gifted and attending one of three schools in a school district in Tennessee. The 4th graders attended elementary school and the 5th and 6th graders attended one of two middle schools. Due to scheduling, the 6th graders at Middle School B were unable to participate. Overall, there were approximately 76 students identified as intellectually gifted in these grades at the three schools (*not including 6th grade at Middle School B). However, only 46% of these students (*n* = 35) [4th grade (*n* = 15), 5th grade (*n* = 13), and 6th grade (*n* =7)] returned signed parental consent forms as well as assent forms and completed the surveys. Overall, 43% (*n* = 15) of the participants attended the elementary school, 26% (*n* = 9) attended Middle School A, and 31% (*n* =11) attended Middle School B. Fifteen percent (*n* = 2) of the 5th graders and 100 % (*n* = 7) of the 6th graders attended Middle School A. Eighty-five percent (*n* = 11) of the 5th graders attended Middle School B. Overall, 57% percent (*n* = 20) were female and 43% (*n* = 15) were male. One participant (3 %) was African American, two were Asian/Pacific Islander (6%), thirty (86%) were White, and two (6%) were other. The ages of the participants ranged from 9 to 12 years; 31 % (*n* = 11) were 9, 43% (*n* = 15) were 10, 20% (*n* =7) were 11, and 6 % (*n* = 2) were 12. Refer to the Appendix A for demographic information of the sample

All of the students were identified as intellectually gifted and consequently received special education services. In the state of Tennessee, to qualify to receive such services, students must meet two conditions. First, they must meet several different criteria as outlined in a matrix titled TN K-12 Intellectually Gifted Assessment Scoring Grid (Appendix B). In brief, this matrix is divided into three main criterion areas: educational performance, creativity, and cognition. Each criterion area consists of three possible levels of certification with points designated to

determine eligibility. To qualify for gifted services, a student must obtain a minimum of 50 points. After being identified as intellectually gifted, the student must also demonstrate that a need exists to receive such services.

I decided to collect data on 6th graders for several reasons. First, 6th grade is the traditional transition point between elementary school and middle school. However, in the school district that I examined, students experience this transition during the 5th grade. Although the 5th graders are physically located in the same school as the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders, they are not 100% integrated into middle school life. The middle schools in my study generally house the grades in separate wings, and the 5th graders are not allowed to join all of the extracurricular activities available to the older students. Consequently, these students encounter another transition in 6th grade. Lastly, research has indicated that bullying and victimization among students who are gifted is the most prevalent during the 6th grade (Peterson & Ray, 200b).

Instruments

Reynolds Bully Victimization Scale

The Reynolds Bully Victimization Scale (BVS; Reynolds, 2003), designed to be used with children and adolescents aged 7 to 20, measures bullying and victimization behavior among peers in or near school. The BVS consists of 46 items, each of which has four response options, ranging from *Never* (0 points), *Once or Twice* (1 point), *Three or Four Times* (2 points), and *Five or More Times* (3 points). The BVS consists of two scales: the Bullying Scale, which measures bullying behaviors ranging from relational aggression and harassment to overt peer aggression, and the Victimization Scale which assesses the respondent's experiences of peer victimization such as being physically assaulted, forced to unwillingly engage in actions, being chased, spat on, threatened with harm, being teased, called names, and intimidated. Both scales

of the BVS assess the child's experiences that have occurred during the past month. The BVS can be group administered and generally takes children 5 to10 minutes to complete.

The raw scores on the BVS are converted to *T*-scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. On the Bullying Scale, *T*-scores below 58 fall in the Normal Range, scores from 58 to 65 fall in the Clinically Significant Range, scores from 66 to 74 fall in the Moderately Severe Range, and scores above 75 fall in the Severe Range. Children who score in or above the Moderately Severe Range on the questionnaire report that they bully others frequently.

On the Victimization Scale, *T*-scores below 56 are considered to be in the Normal Range, scores of 56 to 63 fall in the Clinically Significant Range, scores of 64 to 68 fall in the Moderately Severe Range, and scores above 69 fall in the Severe Range. Children who score in or above the Moderately Severe Range report that they are victimized frequently and may be at risk for developing social and/or emotional problems.

Reynolds Bully-Victimization Distress Scale

The Reynolds Bully-Victimization Distress Scale (BVDS; Reynolds, 2003) is designed to evaluate students' psychological distress specifically related to victimization experienced during the past month. The BVDS consists of 35 items, each of which has four responses ranging from *Never or Almost Never* (0 points), *Sometimes* (1 point), *A lot of the time* (2 points), and *Almost all of the Time* (3 points). The BVDS consists of an Externalizing Distress Scale, which assesses externalizing problems (e.g. anger, physical violence, acting out, oppositional defiant disorder, and conduct disorder) and an Internalizing Distress Scale, which assesses internalizing problems (e.g. misery, loneliness, feelings of worthlessness, and hopelessness, depression, and anxiety). Like the BVS, the raw scores on the BVDS are converted to T-scores with a mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10. On the Externalizing Distress Scale, scores below 61 fall in the Normal Range, scores of 62 to 67 fall in the Clinically Significant Range, scores of 68 to75 fall in the

Moderately Severe Range, and scores above 76 fall in the Severe Range. Children who score in the Severe Range might express anger towards their peers who bully them and might participate in overt aggression. On the Internalizing Distress Scale, scores below 59 fall in the Normal Range, scores of 60 to 64 fall in the Clinically Significant Range, scores between 65 to 74 fall in the Moderately Severe Range, and scores above 75 fall in the Severe Range. Students who score at or above the Moderately Severe range experience high levels of distress on a regular basis. On the Total Distress Scale, scores below 56 fall in the Normal Range, scores of 57 to 63 fall in the Clinically Significant Range, scores between 64 to 70 fall in the Moderately Severe Range, and scores above 71 fall in the Severe Range. Similar to the BVS, the BVDS can be group administered and takes children approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

It is important to note that when Reynolds (2003) standardized the BVS and BVDS, he converted the raw scores to *T*-scores, which have a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. However, his descriptive classifications are not aligned with this type of distribution. For instance, the Clinical Severity Range, on each scale, starts between 56 and 62, which is not quite two standard deviations from the mean. Reynolds stated that he used several factors in determining the descriptive categories. For instance, he calculated an approximate range of bullying and victimization prevalence based on the percentages of bullies and victims reported in the literature. Then he examined breaks that occurred in the score distribution proportions. Reynolds describes his method in detail in the Reynolds Bully Victimization Scales for Schools Manual (Reynolds, 2003).

Standardization, reliability, and validity for the BVS and BVDS.

Both the BVS and BVDS are part of the *Reynolds Scales for Schools* (2003). The instruments were standardized using 2000 American students from 37 schools and 11 states. The sample was stratified by the variables of sex, age, grade, race/ethnicity, region, and parent

education level based on the 2000 U.S. census data. Refer to Appendix C for characteristics of the sample. The standardization data were collected between Spring and Fall of 2002.

Two forms of reliability, internal consistency and test-retest, were calculated for the BVS and BVDS (Reynolds, 2003). On the BVS, the internal consistency reliability coefficient was .93 for both the BVS Bullying Scale and Victimization Scale. The internal consistency reliability coefficients of the BVDS Internalizing Scale and BVDS Externalizing Scale were .95 and .92 respectively. The BVDS total score had a reliability coefficient of .96. The values of these coefficients demonstrate that the BVS and BVDS both yield excellent levels of reliability. Test-retest Reliability was also calculated using an additional sample of 207 students in grades 3 to 12. The test-retest reliability coefficients of the BVS Bullying Scale and BVS Victimization Scale were .81 and .80 respectively. The test-retest reliability coefficients of the BVDS Internalizing Scale, BVDS Externalizing Scale, and BVDS total Score were .85, .84, and .83, respectively. The test-retest reliability coefficients, calculated from the total sample for each scale, fall in the High Range. These reliability data indicate that both instruments have appropriate reliability.

Validity information was also obtained for the BVS and BVDS. Content validity, which determines if the scale's content adequately represents the domain it is supposed to measure, was calculated using item-with-total scale correlations from the standardization sample. I will interpret the correlation coefficients that I discuss in this paper using the guidelines suggested by Cohen (1988). The majority of these correlation coefficients were strong falling above .50 (Range = .44 -.77) which indicates that each of the items on the BVS and BVDS are significantly related to the total scale, providing evidence of item and content validity (Reynolds, 2003).

Criterion and construct validity were obtained by correlating the items of both the BVS and BVDS to measures such as the Beck Youth Inventories of Emotional & Social Impairment,

(BYI; Beck, J.S., Beck, A.T., & Jolly 2001), Reynolds Adolescent Adjustment Screening Inventory (RAASI; Reynolds, 2001), and Teacher Bully-Victimization Rating Scale (TBVRS; Reynolds, 2003). The correlations between the BVS Bullying Scale (Reynolds, 2003) and the TBVRS Bullying Scale (Reynolds, 2002) (r = .46) as well as the BVS Victimization Scale (Reynolds, 2003) and the TBVRS Victimization Scale (Reynolds, 2002) (r =.37) fell in the Moderate Range (Reynolds, 2003). The strength and direction of these correlations indicate that indeed the BVS (Reynolds, 2003) has adequate criterion-related validity. Correlations between the BVS Bullying Scale (Reynolds, 2003) and the following scales: BYI Disruptive Behavior Scale, (Beck et al.) BYI Anger Scale, (Beck et al.) BYI Disturbance Scale, (Beck et al.) RAASI Antisocial Subscale, (Reynolds, 2001) and the RAASI Anger Control Subscale, (Reynolds, 2001) ranged from moderate (r = .38) to strong (r = .60), (Reynolds) providing evidence of convergent validity. The BVS bullying scale also demonstrated discriminant validity as it was weakly correlated with the BYI scales of Anxiety (r = .11) and Depression (r = .12), and the RAASI Emotional Disturbance scale. (r = .08). The strong correlations between the BVS Victimization Scale and the BYI scales of Anxiety (r =.58) and Depression (r = 50) provide evidence of convergent validity. The BVS Victimization Scale was strongly correlated with the BYI Anxiety (r =.58) and BYI Depression Scale (r =.50) providing evidence of discriminant validity (Reynolds, 2003).

Correlations between the BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale and the following scales: BYI Anxiety Scale, BYI Anger Scale, BYI Depression Scale, RASSI Emotional Disturbance Scale, and RAASI Anger Control Scale ranged from moderate, (r = .35) to strong (r =.72) (Reynolds, 2003) indicating convergent validity. The correlation between the BVDS Internalizing Scale and the BYI Disruptive Behavior Scale (r = .24) fell in the weak range providing evidence of discriminant validity. Correlations between the BVDS Externalizing Scale

and scales of the BYI, including the Anger Scale (*r* = .66) and the Disruptive Behavior Sale (*r* = 55), fell in the Strong Range providing evidence of convergent validity. Because there was not a significant correlation between the BVDS Externalizing Scale and the RAASI Emotional Distress Scale, there is not sufficient evidence of discriminant validity (Reynolds).

Factor analysis, which examines the underlying factor structure of a measure, was conducted on both instruments. As expected on the BVS, two factors, bullying and victimization, were found. Twenty three items loaded onto each factor. The rotated item loadings on the Bullying Scale ranged from .52 to .70 and the rotated loadings on the Victimization Scale ranged from .41 to .71.

On the BVDS (Reynolds, 2003), two factors, Internalizing Distress and Externalizing Distress, were found as anticipated. Twenty one items loaded on the Internalizing Distress Scale and 14 items loaded on the Externalizing Distress Scale. The rotated item loadings on the Internalizing Distress Scale ranged from .50 to .77 and the rotated item loadings on the Externalizing Distress Scale ranged from .43 to .79. The BVS (Reynolds) and BVDS (Reynolds) have adequate factorial validity. To conclude, overall the BVS (Reynolds) and BVDS (Reynolds) have adequate validity.

Intercorrelations.

Intercorrelations among the Reynolds BVS and BVDS scales were calculated. The correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale and the BVDS Internalizing Scale (*r* = .17) was weak providing evidence of discriminant validity. The correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale and the BVDS Externalizing Scale (*r* = .48) was moderate. The BVS Bullying Scale and BVDS Total Distress Scale were moderately correlated (*r* = .34). The correlations between the BVS Victimization Scale and both the BVDS Internalizing Scale (*r* = .77) and BVDS Externalizing Scale (*r* = .65) were strong, providing evidence of convergent validity. Convergent

validity was also demonstrated by the strong correlation (r = .80) between the BVS Victimization Scale and the BVDS Total Distress Scale (Reynolds, 2003).

Procedure

Following approval from the university Institutional Review Board, the school district, and principals, I gave each gifted teacher in the respective target schools Parent Information Sheets (Appendix D), Parental Consent Forms (Appendix E) and Voluntary Assent Forms (Appendix F) to send home with their students who are gifted.

The students were asked to give the Parent Information Sheet and Parental Consent Form to their parents or guardians. Parents or guardians, if they provided consent, gave their children the Voluntary Assent Form and asked them to read and sign it they wished to participate. The students returned their consent and assent forms to their teacher, who transferred them to me during the selected day of data collection. All of the students had at least a one week period to turn in the forms to their teacher.

I collected data from students in four gifted education classes at one elementary school and two middle schools within the same school district. The elementary school had two classes due to the high number of students identified as academically gifted. Three of the data collection sessions took place during the scheduled gifted education class. One middle school teacher decided to have all of her participating students come to her room, at the very end of a class period, to complete the survey.

During each of the four data collection sessions, I followed the same general procedures. Each student in the classroom was given an envelope with enclosed materials. Students who obtained both parental consent and provided assent were allowed to participate in the study and received a packet containing the BVS and the BVDS. Based on requests by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), students who did not obtain parental permission and/or did not provide

assent, received a four-page packet of logic puzzles. Both packets had the Demographic Information Sheet (Appendix G) as a cover page. The demographic information sheets completed by students who were not participating in the study were discarded.

After I introduced myself, I distributed the envelopes to each student. Then, I gave brief instructions along the lines of: "Read the instructions on your packet and start working. Please keep your eyes on your own paper. If any of the questions you are asked make you feel uncomfortable, please tell me or your teacher. If you want to stop answering the questions, please tell me and I will collect your form and shred it." I collected and disposed of the empty envelopes to ensure anonymity of the students. Participants were given approximately 25 minutes to complete the packet. However, the 5th and 6th grade students took approximately 10 minutes to complete the packets. It took the 4th grade students about 15 minutes to complete the packets.

During the first day of data collection, due to the recommendation of the IRB, I wrote the participants' names on the envelopes. One of the participants, immediately after she turned in her questionnaire, asked me if her results were going to be shared with her parents. I assured this particular participant that her results would not be shared with anyone. Consequently, she asked for her questionnaire back. I returned it back to her. As one of the questionnaires had slashes over responses, I believe this particular participant changed her answers. Thus, I do not think that this procedure biased the participants' responses. However, I decided that listing the children's names on the envelopes might be causing anxiety. Consequently, during the next three data collection sessions, I did not write any names on the envelopes. I, with the help of the teacher, ensured that each student received the appropriate envelope.

Chapter III Results

Descriptive Statistics

I converted the participant's raw scores to normative scores, using the appropriate tables in the *Manual* (Reynolds, 2003*)*. Refer to Table 2 below for Descriptive Statistics (means and standard deviations) based on these data. Additionally, the Shapiro-Wilk statistic was calculated to test for normality. This statistic, for each of the scoring distributions, was significant at the .05 level, indicating that none of the score distributions are normal. Refer to Appendix H for the normality and skewness statistics. Although I will not discuss results of group comparisons based on the raw scores, I have included the descriptives (mean and standard deviations) and normality statistics of the raw scoring distributions in Appendices I and J.

Table 2.

Means and Standard Deviations for the Reynolds Bully Victimization Scale (BVS) and Reynolds Bully-Victimization Distress Scale (BVDS)

Scale	**Overall Sample**	***N***	**4th Grade Sample**	***n***	**5th Grade Sample**	***n***	**6th Grade Sample**	***n***
	M (SD)		M (SD)		M (SD)		M (SD)	
BVS Bullying	47.97 (9.66)	35	51.67 (12.38)	15	43.31 (.75)	13	48.71 (9.36)	7
BVS Victimization	47.86 (11.45)	35	52.20 (15.59)	15	44.46 (4.41)	13	44.86 (7.34)	7
BVDS Internalizing Distress	46.39 (6.21)	33	48.31 (8.91)	13	45.15 (3.87)	13	45.14 (1.95)	7
BVDS Externalizing Distress	47.36 (7.69)	33	50.62 (9.78)	13	46.00 (5.31)	13	43.86 (5.15)	7
BVDS Total Distress	46.39 (7.08)	33	49.00 (9.87)	13	45.08 (4.27)	13	44.00 (3.27)	7

Data Analysis

I have listed each research question before the corresponding analysis. To answer my primary research questions (1 through 4) I used univariate analyses and frequency counts. Due to the fact that several assumptions for One-Way Analysis of Variance ANOVA were violated (e.g normality & homogeneity of variance). I used the Kruskal Wallis Test, non-parametric equivalent for ANOVA to answer research questions 1, 3, and 4. Refer to Figures 1-20 in Appendix J for the scoring distributions. It is important to note that two participants did not complete their BVDS questionnaire. Following guidelines from Reynolds (2003) I invalidated these participants' scores on this measure, reducing the number of participants that completed the BVDS to 33.

1. *Is there a significant difference in the BVS Bullying Scale T-Scores/BVS Victimization Scale T-Scores among children in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade levels who are gifted?*

Using the Kruskal Wallis Test, a significant difference was found on the BVS Bullying Scale ($H(2) = 15.27$, $p < .001$). I conducted three separate Mann-Whitney U tests, non-parametric equivalent for the independent t-test, which use rank sums. Each Mann-Whitney U test compared the *T*-scores of two grades. The 4th graders' BVS Bullying *T*-Scores (mean rank = 20.07) were significantly higher than those of the 5th graders (mean rank = 8.08) ($U = 14.00$, $p < .001$). I did not find a significant difference between the 4th and 6th graders ($U = 38$, *ns*) or between the 5th and 6th graders ($U = 66.50$, *ns*). The 4th graders, 5th graders, and 6th graders did not score significantly different from each other on the BVS Victimization Scale ($H(2) = 2.11$, *ns*). Consequently, these results contradict my hypothesis that bullying and victimization are less prevalent in the 4th grade compared to the other two grades.

2. What is the frequency of participants who scored in each of the descriptive categories on the BVS and BVDS scales?

The majority of the participants scored in the Normal Range for each scale. Refer to Appendix L for tables of the frequency of participants in each descriptive category. According to the *Manual* (Reynolds, 2003) *T*-scores at or above 66 fall in the Moderately Severe Range. Three participants (8.6%) reported that they frequently bully others. Similarly, students whose scores on the BVS Victimization Scale fall at or above the Moderately Severe Range, at 64 or above, experience frequent victimization. Three participants (8.6%) reported that they are victimized on a frequent basis. It is important to note that one participant (2.9%) scored at or above the Moderately Severe Range on the Bullying and Victimization scales, indicating that this individual both frequently bullies and experiences victimization.

Students who scored at or above the Moderately Severe Range on the BVDS scales (at least 65 on the Internalizing Distress Scale, at least 68 on the Externalizing Distress Scale, and at least 64 on the Total Distress Scale) experience a significant level of distress related to their victimization experiences according to Reynolds (2003). One participant (3.0%, $N = 33$) reported experiencing a significant level of internalizing distress, externalizing distress, and overall distress.

Within the 4th grade sample, two participants (16.6%, $N = 15$) reported frequent bullying, three participants (25%, $N =15$) reported frequent victimization, and one participant (8.3%, $N=13$) reported experiencing a significant level of internalizing distress, externalizing distress, and overall distress. One participant was classified as a bully-victim (8.3%). None of the 5th grade participants scored at or above the Moderately Severe Range on any of the scales. Within the 6th grade sample, one participant (14.3%, $N = 35$) reported frequent bullying. However, none of the 6th grade participants reported frequent victimization, experiencing a significant level of

internalizing or externalizing distress, or experiencing a significant level of overall distress. (For tables 5 through 8 refer to Appendix K).

3. *Is there a significant difference in the BVDS Total Distress Scale T-Scores among children in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade levels who are gifted?*

Using the Kruskal Wallis Test, a significant difference was not found on the BVDS Total Distress Scale ($H(2) = 1.45$, *ns*), indicating that the BVDS Total Distress Scale *T*-score of the 4th graders was not significantly lower than the mean *T*-scores of the 5thgraders and 6th graders.

4. *Is there a significant difference in the BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale T-Scores/BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale T-Scores among the children in the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade levels who are gifted?*

Using the Kruskal Wallis Test, a significant difference was not found on the BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale ($H(2) = 1.34$, *ns***)**. Similarly, there was not a significant difference on the BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale ($H(2) = 2.47$, *ns*). The 4th graders *T*-Scores on both the BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale and BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale were not significantly lower than the mean scores of the 5th and 6th graders. School grade did not appear to influence the scores of either the BVDS Internalizing Scale or BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale. To answer my secondary research questions (Questions 5 to 7) I used the Pearson-product moment correlation. Refer to table 3 on the following page for a matrix of correlations between the Reynolds BVS and BVDS scales.

5. *Is there a significant correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale T-Scores and BVDS Total Distress Scale T-Scores and between the BVS Victimization Scale T-Scores and BVDS Total Distress Scale T-Scores? If so, what are the strengths of these correlations?*

There was not a significant correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale T-Scores and the BVDS Total Distress Scale T-Scores ($r = .33$, ns). It is interesting to note that Reynolds found a

Table 3

Matrix of Correlations Between Reynolds Bully Victimization Scales (BVS) and Reynolds Bully-Victimization Distress Scales (BVDS)

Scale	BVDS Internalizing Distress	BVDS Externalizing Distress	BVDS Total Distress
BVS Bullying	.19 *ns*	.54 *	.33 *ns*
BVS Victimization	.63**	.69**	.70**

ns- not significant

*- significant at .01 level

**-significant at .001 level

significant correlation of nearly the same magnitude (r = .34, p <.001) between these scales, based on his standardization sample. One possible reason that my correlation was not significant might be due to the small sample size and a restriction of range in my results, particularly with the 5th grade sample, which had a range of 2. The range of the entire distribution is 38.

There was a significant strong positive correlation between the BVS Victimization Scale *T*-Scores and the BVDS Total Distress Scale *T*-Scores (r = .70, p < .001). This indicates that as frequency of experienced victimization increased, level of overall distress, which includes expressions of both internalizing and externalizing distress, also increased. Similarly, Reynolds (2003) found a strong, significant correlation (r = .80, p <.001) between BVS Victimization Scale and BVDS Total Distress Scale.

6. Is there a significant correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale T-Scores and BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale T-Scores? If so, what is the strength of this correlation?

There was a significant strong positive correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale *T*-Scores and the BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale *T*-Scores (r = .54 , p < .01).This indicates that as level of bullying increases, level of externalizing distress also increases.

7. *Is there a significant correlation between the BVS Victimization Scale T-Scores and BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale T-Scores? If so, what is the strength of this correlation?*

There was also a significant strong positive correlation between the BVS Victimization Scale *T*-Scores and BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale *T*-Scores ($r = .63$, $p < .001$). This indicates that as frequency of experienced victimization increases, level of internalizing distress also increases. Reynolds (2003) also found a significant positive correlation between these scales ($r = .77$, $p < .001$).

Additional Analyses

In addition to my research questions, I was also interested in investigating whether there was a significant difference between the male and female *T*-Scores on each of the scales (BVS Bullying, BVS Victimization, BVDS Internalizing Distress, BVDS Externalizing Distress, and BVDS Total Distress). Consequently, I used the Mann-Whitney U test to compare the *T*-Scores of the male and female students. There was not a significant difference between the male and female *T*-scores on any of the scales. Refer to Appendix M for the results of the Mann-Whitney U tests comparing the scores between these two groups.

Furthermore, I was interested in investigating whether significant differences existed between the *T*-Scores on each scale obtained by the participants at each school. Using the Kruskal Wallis Test, a significant difference was found on the BVS Bullying Scale ($H(2) = 19.39$, $p < .001$). I conducted three separate Mann-Whitney U tests, each of which compared the scores of the participants at two schools. The students at the elementary school scored significantly higher on the BVS Bullying Scale (mean rank = 19.00) than the students at Middle School B (mean rank = 6.00) ($U = 165$, $p < .001$). A significant difference also existed between the two middle schools ($U = 16.50$, $p < .01$), with the students at Middle School A (mean rank =

14.17) scoring higher than the students at Middle School B (mean rank = 7.50). There was not a difference in the BVS Bullying Scale *T*-scores between the elementary school and Middle School A ($U = 83$ *ns*).

Using the Kruskal Wallis Test, a significant difference was not found between the participants at the different schools for the BVS Victimization Scale ($H(2) = 2.02$, *ns*), BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale ($H(2) = 1.00$, *ns*) BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale, ($H(2) = 1.93$, *ns*) and BVDS Total Distress Scale ($H(2) = 1.39$, *ns*).

Chapter IV Conclusions

Discussion

In this cross-sectional study, I examined the prevalence of bullying and victimization among children who were gifted and enrolled in the last grade of elementary school (4th grade) and in the first two grades of middle school (5th and 6th grade). Disconfirming my hypothesis, the 4th graders actually reported a higher prevalence of bullying compared to the 5th grade students. This finding, that bullying was more prevalent at the elementary school level was disconfirmed by the results of a longitudinal study examining general education students (Pellegrini and Bartini, 2000). Whereas I found that the prevalence of victimization was not significantly different between the 4th, 5th, or 6th graders, Pellegrini and Bartini (2000) found that victimization decreased over the elementary-middle school transition period. Contradicting the findings of the current study, Peterson and Ray (2006b), in their retrospective study, found that students reported experiencing the most victimization in 6th grade.

I found that 8.6% (n = 3) of my participants qualified as bullies based on scores in the Moderately Severe range on BVS scores; 8.6% (n = 3) were victims; and 3% (n = 1) were bully-victims. Similar to the Parker and Bain (in press) study which focused on high school-aged students, these rates indicate that some children who are intellectually gifted are perpetrators of bullying, others are victims of bullying, and a few are bully-victims. Parker and Bain found that within their sample of 47 high school students who were identified as intellectually gifted, 4.3% were bullies, 12.8% were victims, and 6.4% were bully-victims. However, it is interesting to note that whereas my study found an equal percentage of bullies and victims, Parker and Bain found a larger percentage of victims. Furthermore, Parker and Bain found a larger percentage of bully-victims.

In addition to studying bullying and victimization, I also examined the participants' level of distress, specifically related to victimization. One participant (3.0% of $N = 33$) reported experiencing a significant level of internalizing distress, externalizing distress, and overall distress. These results indicate that overall the participants did not experience a heightened degree of suffering from distress related to victimization. These findings were dissimilar to those obtained by Peterson and Ray (2006b), who found that that victimization had the most impact on the participants in the 5th grade, with 13% of the participants reporting being extremely affected by victimization.

Also, I investigated whether the participants' experiences of distress varied systematically across the three grades, I hypothesized that the 4th graders would experience a lower mean level of distress compared to the participants in the other grades. However, grade-level did not seem to influence levels of overall internalizing or externalizing distress related to victimization, indicating that my sample, consisting of students identified as gifted, did not experience as much social-life disruption over the elementary to middle school transition as some advocates of children who are gifted have feared (e.g. Boodman, 2006; Cross, 2001; McIntosh, 2006; Schular, 2002). Indeed, one of the themes that arose when Pepperell and Rubel (2009) interviewed several gifted children and adolescents about their experiences with the elementary-middle school transition was that the participants experience social success, academic success, and personal growth during this time period. However, Peterson, et al. (2009) indicated that the students they interviewed, who were recent high school graduates, reported that transitions were among the most challenging events they encountered. My specific results tend to support the findings by Pepperell and Rubel, suggesting that children who are gifted generally have resilient qualities that help them survive transitions.

Research on the general education population has indicated that students experience difficulty with transition from elementary to middle school due to the fact that they experience a discontinuous shift of routines, changes in social status, and developmental changes (Blyth, et al., 1983). In the U.S. traditionally schools transition students to middle school between 5th and 6th grade. The approximate age for the onset of puberty is 12 years of age. Hence, in the traditional transition arrangement, students have to deal with issues related to puberty and rapid developmental changes along with the stressful middle school transition. However, the middle schools I examined transition students from elementary to middle school a year earlier, between 4th and 5th grade. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that a much smaller percentage of students simultaneously experience puberty and transition. Also, it is important to note that the middle schools I examined keep the 5th graders separate from the older children, slowly incorporating them into middle school life. Thus, these students encounter a lessened degree of change in routines and social status. In summary, in addition to resilience, this unique transitioning arrangement might have contributed to the fact that grade level did not influence the participants' levels of overall internalizing or externalizing distress related to victimization.

Additionally, I investigated whether the participants' experiences of distress, as they reported on the BVDS, were associated with bullying and victimization, as reported on the BVS. I hypothesized that there would be a significant positive correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale *T*-Scores and BVDS Total Distress Scale *T*-Scores as well as a significant correlation between the BVS Victimization scale *T*-Scores and BVDS Total Distress Scale *T*-Scores. I did not obtain a significant correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale T-Scores and the BVDS Total Distress Scale T-Scores ($r = .33$, *ns*). This insignificant correlation contradicts previous findings by Reynolds (2003). However, as I mentioned earlier, the small sample and the

restriction of range of scores on the BVS Total Distress Scale likely influenced the level of the correlation I achieved.

Partially confirming my hypothesis, a significant strong positive correlation was found between the BVS Victimization Scale T-Scores and the BVDS Total Distress Scale T-Scores (r = .70, p<.001), reflecting findings in similar research. For instance, Reynolds (2003) found a strong significant correlation of .80 ($p < .001$) between the two variables.

My hypothesis that there would be a significant positive correlation between BVS Victimization Scale *T*-Score and BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale *T*-Score was also confirmed (r = .63, p <.001). This finding is similar to other research which has indicated that victims of bullying experience internalizing problems such as anxiety, depression, withdrawal, insecurity, and unhappiness (Arsenault, 2006; Holt et al., 2007; Mishna, 2003; Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 1993; Pellegrini, 1998).

Lastly, I hypothesized that there would be a significant positive correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale T-Scores and the BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale-T-Scores. Indeed, there was a strong positive correlation between the BVS Bullying Scale T-Scores and BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale T-Scores (r = .54, p <.01). This finding is supported by research, focusing on the general education population that has indicated that children who bully also experience externalizing problems such as conduct problems (Aluede et al., 2008; Arseneault et al., 2006; Haynie et al., 2001; Holt et al., 2007; Kumplanien, 1998).

In the current study, I found that the bullying and victimization rates among a sample of children who are gifted were quite low. In addition, the percentage of students who experienced a significant level of distress was very low. Implications from these results are that students who are gifted have a high level of social competence, disconfirming Holingworth's viewpoint that highly intelligent children are likely to have emotional and social adjustment problems

(Grossberg & Cornell, 1988). Hollingworth found that children who are gifted with IQ levels between 125-155 display the best level of social adjustment, while those with higher IQ levels tend to have more difficulty with social interactions (Hollingworth as cited in Gallaher, 1958). Other researchers have replicated such findings (see Austin & Draper; Janos & Robinson as cited in Grossberg & Cornell; Gross, 2006). My study supports Terman's belief (Terman as cited in Grossberg & Cornell, 1988) that children with very high IQ levels (greater than 140 on the Stanford Binet) tend to be better adjusted socially compared to the nongifted population (Gallagher, 1958; Grossberg & Cornell; Terman as cited in Grossberg & Cornell). This viewpoint has been supported by several other researchers (see Grossberg & Cornell, Kelly & Colangelo, 1984; Kitano, 1990; Lehman & Erdwins, 1981; Reynolds & Bradley, 1983; Terman as cited in Grossberg & Cornell). This study provided evidence that children who are gifted might not display social incompetence.

Social competence is a very important aspect of work life, as positive interactions with others is generally necessary for job success. However, research has indicated that one of the most important predictors of success in work is IQ level. For instance, Hunter and Hunter (1984) performed a meta-analysis of research on different types of predictors of job performance and found that general mental ability had the highest validity for predicting success in an entry-level position. Also, Schmidt & Hunter (1998), in a meta-analysis of validity of various types of predictors of job performance found that the three combinations with the best validity were: general mental ability and a work samples test, general mental ability and an integrity test, and general mental ability and a structured interview.

Considering the information from these two meta-analyses, results from the present study suggest that the sample of children who were gifted have positive social interactions with their peers and may expect high levels of vocational success in the future. According to Munson and

Rubenstein (1992) school can be structured to resemble the working world For instance, early in their school years children can learn how to work collaboratively with others and carry this knowledge through life. Hence, if children who are gifted have a high level of social competence in school, they will likely have positive social relations during their work years. By definition, children who are gifted have high IQ levels. Consequently, children who are gifted, with a high level of social competence and high general mental ability, will likely experience success in their careers.

Limitations

There were several limitations to the current study. First, because the sample was so small ($N = 35$), the degree to which the results are generalizable to students at other schools within the same district or region is questionable. Generalizability was also compromised due to the fact that the ethnic composition of the sample was not an accurate reflection of the ethnic distribution within the southeastern region or across the country. Additionally, there was a fairly equal number of 4th and 5th grade participants; however, there was a much smaller number of 6th grade participants. Consequently, the results I obtained for the 6th grade sample should be interpreted with caution. A stratified random sample across grade levels would be ideal, eliminating the issue of unequal representation. However, as the population of students who were gifted is already quite small and not all parents allow their children to participate, the task of having a stratified random sample would be difficult.

Another limitation is that the school district where the data were collected includes 5th grade in middle school, which is relatively uncommon as most American school districts transition students in 6th grade. Additionally, it is important to note that the 5th grade students are not completely incorporated into middle school life. For instance, each grade level eats lunch at a different time period and generally is housed in a different area of the building. The 5th graders

are not allowed to join most extracurricular activities that include the upper grade levels. Therefore, it is difficult to determine which factor, school-level, or transition, was most influential.

An additional limitation is that the Reynolds BVS and BVDS might have been too narrow in their constructs. For instance, the BVS did not assess cyber-bullying. It is possible that some of the children in the study did bully others or experience victimization from others through cyberbullying but did not report it because they were not directly asked. Hence, the bullying and/or victimization prevalence rates I obtained might have been underestimates. Additionally, the questions on the BVDS specifically ask about distress associated with victimization, not bullying. Consequently, the participants who were self-reported bullies may have experienced more distress than they indicated on the BVDS.

A further limitation is related to the fact that the IQ levels of the children in the sample are unknown. As I mentioned earlier, to qualify for gifted services in the state of Tennessee, a child must meet two conditions. First, they must obtain a minimum of 50 points on the K-12 Intellectually Gifted Assessment Scoring Grid, which is divided into three main criterion areas: educational performance, creativity, and cognition. On the cognition criterion area, the minimum IQ level a child could obtain to be considered intellectually gifted is 118. After being identified as intellectually gifted, the student must also demonstrate the need to receive the extra services. Hence I know that all of the children in the sample have met these two main conditions. However, I do not know the participants' IQ scores, level of educational performance, or level of creativity. It is likely that the participants represented various levels of giftedness. Some research indicates that IQ is related to level of social adjustment (Gallaher, 1958; Grossberg & Cornell, 1988).

Implications

Due to the problems associated with bullying and victimization, prevention and intervention are extremely important. It would be of value for elementary schools to screen all students to estimate prevalence rates of bullying and victimization. If bullying and or victimization are heightened overall then the school personnel should consider implementing a school-wide bullying prevention program such as the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* (OBPP; 2003). Within the United States, in 1999, this program was designated as a "model program" to be used as part of a violence prevention initiative supported by the Department of Justice (Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, 2003). Other anti-bullying programs include the San-Francisco based non-profit program, *No Bully* (2009) or Izzy Kalman's *Bullies to Buddies* (2010). For a meta-analytic review of the literature on bullying prevention programs consult Ferguson et al. (2007) or Merrell, Gueldner, Ross, and Isava (2008).

If the results of the school screening indicate that rates of bullying and victimization are relatively low, establishing a large-scale bullying program might not be necessary. However, research, including my current study, indicates there is a strong association between internalizing distress and victimization as well as externalizing distress and bullying (see Arsenault, 2006; Centers for Disease Control, 2008; Holt et al., 2007; Mishna, 2003; Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 1993; Pellegrini, 1998). Thus it is important that even if a few students are suspected of being bullies and/or victims, administrators and educators should take action. Such students should receive individual counseling. Another option might be to provide these students with group guidance counseling or social skills training that focuses on avoiding bullying situations and coping with the aftermath of bullying when it occurs. Possibly, the professional school counselor should talk to all of the students about the effects of bullying and victimization in age-

appropriate language. This can be accomplished via a school assembly or by talks to individual classrooms.

Additionally, there are some websites that explain bullying/victimization in children-friendly terms (see *PACER Center's Kids Against Bullying*; *McGruff.org's Milstein Child Safety Center*; Stop *Bullying Now).* As these websites provide interactive games, it might be beneficial for the teacher to allow their students time to explore these websites during free-time soon after the professional school counselor presents the topic.

The results of the current study do not offer support for the specific middle schools under study to implement bullying prevention program and/or peer facilitators, specifically for children who are gifted. In fact, as the 4th graders reported the highest prevalence of bullying (16.6%) and victimization (25%) perhaps the elementary school would benefit by implementing a program to address bullying for its gifted population, and probably across the entire student population. The elementary school administrators should consider screening all students in the school to check the overall prevalence level. I strongly suggest that, at least, the professional school counselor talks to the students in large or small groups about bullying and victimization. Furthermore, the counselor could place a box and slips of paper in the main office and inform the students to write their name on a slip of paper and place it in the box if they wish to see him or her to talk about their concerns regarding bullying and victimization.

Recommendations and Further Research

I believe that researchers should carry out studies of this nature due to the benefits of such research. For instance, it can help educators to become more aware of the implications and prevalence of bullying and/or victimization among children who are gifted during the elementary-middle school transition period. However, I recommend that researchers make slight modifications to the procedure of the current study. First, they should consider conducting

similar studies at school-districts that assume the typical arrangement in U.S. schools transition students to middle school after their 5th grade year. Researchers should consider adding a comparison group of non-gifted students as this would allow for direct comparison within the same population.

Additionally, researchers who examine students who are gifted should make an effort to obtain the IQ scores of their participants. Although a student must meet specific guidelines of cognitive functioning to be considered gifted, there is a continuum of giftedness. It would be interesting to correlate the participants' IQ scores with their *T*-scores on the BVS and BVDS to further investigate the association between intelligence and social competence.

Future research should also address cyber-bullying (see Campbell, 2005; Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho et al., 2008). In this technological age, it appears as though this type of bullying is becoming more prevalent as more children have access to both the internet and cell phones. The instrument used in my study, BVS, did not assess cyber-bullying. It is possible that some of the children in the study did bully or victimize others in this method. Thus, if this study were to be replicated, I would recommend adding items that assess for cyber-methods of bullying along with the traditional methods. It appears as though a large-scale measure of cyber-bullying has not been published. However, several researchers have designed surveys for their studies to investigate cyber bullying (see Dempsey, Sulkowski, Nichols, & Storch, 2009; Griezel, Craven, Yeung, & Finger, 2008; Kowalski, & Limber, 2007; McQuade & Sampat, 2008; Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009).

Additionally, I encourage researchers who are planning on implementing similar studies to assess for distress associated with both bullying and victimization. It appears as though a large-scale instrument measuring distress associated with bullying and victimization has not yet

been published. Therefore, I recommend researchers to use the BVDS and a supplemental questionnaire asking questions specifically related to distress associated with bullying.

In conclusion, I believe that researchers should conduct similar studies with students identified as gifted, as such studies might yield important findings that will inform educators of the status and needs of children and adolescents who are gifted regarding bullying and victimization, particularly during school transitions.

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Appendices

Appendix A Participants' Demographic Information

Gender	**Male**	***n***	**Female**	***n***		***n***		***n***	***N***
Percentages	43	15	57	20					35
Grade	**4**		**5**		**6**				
Percentage	43	15	37	13	20	7			35
School	**Elementary School**		**Middle School A**		**Middle School B**				
Percentage	43	15	26	9	31	11			35
Race/Ethnicity	**African American**		**Asian**		**Caucasian**		**Other**		
Percentage	3	1	6	2	86	30	6	2	35

Appendix B TN K-12 Intellectually Gifted Assessment Scoring Grid

ED5387 -10/07 Department of Education

TN K-12 Intellectually Gifted Assessment Scoring Grid

Student Name_____ DOB____/____/_____ School System_____ School_____ Grade____ Date____/____/_____

The Comprehensive Evaluation must include assessments in each of the three Assessment Categories. Record the highest score obtained in each Assessment Category. Record the single highest score for each Assessment Category in Category Points and calculate a Total Score. The assessment criteria for Intellectually Gifted are met if the student has an overall Total Score of 50 or more points which must include: a) Scoring in the Second or Third Range on at least one Target Instrument from any Assessment Category, and b) Scoring in at least the First Range on a Target Instrument in both Educational Performance (Assessment Option 1, 2 or 3) and Cognition (Assessment Option 14) Categories.

Assessment Category	Assessment Option	Scoring	First Range 10 Points	Second Range 20 Points	Third Range 30 Points	Target Instrument	Category Points
Educational Performance	1) Standardized Group Criterion-Referenced (e.g., TCAP) and/or Norm-Referenced Group or Individual Achievement Test (e.g., Stanford-9, ITBS, PLAN, Explore, PSAT, WIAT-II, WJIII)	Area or Cluster Scores	❑ 1 Area ≥95%ile or ≥90%ile 2 Areas	❑ 2 Areas ≥95%ile or ≥90%ile 3 Areas	❑ 3 Areas ≥95%ile or ≥90%ile 4 Areas	❑ 2nd/3rd Range	_____ POINTS Educational Performance
	2) College Entrance Exams (e.g., ACT, SAT)	Area Scores or Full Scale or Total Battery	❑ ≥90%ile – ≤93%ile	❑ ≥94%ile – ≤97%ile	❑ ≥98%ile		
	3) TN Supplementary Gifted Performance Checklist (TnSup) {Do not use TnSup if TnTOC or TnTOC+ used in Creativity/Characteristics of Gifted Category}	Total Score Supplementary Performance Checklist	❑ 7/12	❑ 8/12	❑ 9/12		
	4) Grade Point Average (GPA) Middle School and High School	Current GPA	❑ ≥top 6%	❑ ≥top 4%	❑ ≥top 2%		
	5) Academic Awards: K—12	Awards won in last three years	❑ 1 school district	❑ 2 school district or 1 in-state regional	❑ 3 school district or 2 in-state regional or 1 national/ multi-state/ or statewide		
	6) TN Academic Product or Portfolio	Evaluation score	❑ Score total ≥27	❑ Score total ≥30	❑ Score total ≥33		
Creativity/ Characteristics of Gifted	7) Nationally Normed Standardized Test of Creativity (Torrance Test of Creative Thinking-TTCT – Figural or Verbal, Creative Assessment Packet by Frank Williams – Williams CAP, Profile of Creative Abilities – PCA)	Total: TTCT-Figural/Verbal	❑ ≥84%ile – ≤89%ile	❑ ≥90%ile – ≤93%ile	❑ ≥94%ile	❑ 2nd/3rd Range	_____ POINTS Creativity/ Characteristics of Gifted
		Total: Williams CAP	❑ 1 SD = 60	❑ 1 ½ SD = 70	❑ 2 SDs = 80		
		Total: PCA	❑ CI ≥115–≤122 and HRS or SRS ≥115–≤122	❑ CI ≥123–≤129 and HRS or SRS ≥123–≤129	❑ CI ≥130 and HRS or SRS ≥130		
	8) TN Creative Product or Portfolio	Evaluation score	❑ Score total ≥27	❑ Score total ≥30	❑ Score total ≥33		
	9) TN Creative Thinking Rating Scale (TnCreat)	Evaluation score	❑ 40	❑ 45	❑ 50		
	10) Nationally Normed Gifted Characteristics Checklist (GES-2, GRS)	Refer to instrument manual for scoring	❑ GES-2 Quotient: 115-122 ❑ GRS – 3 T-Scores ≥60 (2 from IA, AA, or C)	❑ GES-2 Quotient: 123-129 ❑ GRS – 3 T-Scores ≥65 (2 from IA, AA, or C)	❑ GES-2 Quotient: ≥130 ❑ GRS – 3 T-Scores ≥70 (2 from IA, AA, or C)		
	11) TN Teacher Observation Checklist (TnTOC)	Evaluation score	❑ 16 (TnTOC)	❑ 19 (TnTOC)	❑ 22 (TnTOC)		
	12) TN Teacher Observation Checklist Plus (TnTOC + TnPIF = TnTOC+)	Evaluation score	❑ 21 (TnTOC+)	❑ 25 (TnTOC+)	❑ 29 (TnTOC+)		
	13) Local Norms from Nationally Normed Characteristics Checklist	Based on local norms approved by SDE	❑ Score ≥ +1 SD	❑ Score ≥ +1.5 SD	❑ Score ≥ +2 SD		
Cognition	14) Individually Administered Test of Intelligence or Cognition	Full Scale Refer to Manual for acceptable global or composite scores	❑ ≥118 – ≤122 Refer to Manual for use of SEM in Range 1	❑ ≥123 – ≤129	❑ ≥130	❑ 2nd/3rd Range	_____ POINTS Cognition
		Split Score	N/A	N/A	❑ Primary Cluster Score ≥130 with 1.5 SD Discrepancy		
► The student scored in at least the First Range on a Target Instrument in both Educational Performance (Assessment Option 1, 2, or 3) and Cognition (Assessment Option 14) Categories: ❑ Yes ❑ No			► Check the box which indicates the Target Instrument Assessment Category. ❑ Educational Performance ❑ 2nd Range ❑ 3rd Range ❑ Creativity/Characteristics of Gifted ❑ 2nd Range ❑ 3rd Range ❑ Cognition ❑ 2nd Range ❑ 3rd Range				_____ TOTAL SCORE

Appendix C Characteristics of Standardization Sample for BVS and BVDS

Gender	**Male**	**Female**			
Percentages	50	50			
Grade	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Percentage	10	10	10	10	10.2
Grade	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**
Percentage	10.8	9.4	10.3	9.4	10.1
Race/Ethnicity	**White**	**African American**	**Hispanic**	**Asian**	**Native American/Other**
Percentage	63.5	15.6	14.7	3.9	2.4
Region	**West**	**Northeast**	**North Central**	**South**	
Percentage	23.6	18.3	23.6	34.5	
Parent Ed. Level	**0-8**	**9-11**	**12**	**13-15**	**16**
Percentage	3.8	8.3	29.8	35.9	24.4

Appendix D Parent Information Sheet

Parent Information Sheet

Bullying, Victimization, and Associated Distress During School Transition among Gifted Children

Bullying in American schools is widespread and a cause for concern as both bullies and victims suffer a plethora of social, emotional, and/or physical problems Most of the research on bullying and victimization focuses on students in general education settings. It is possible that other sub-populations of children, such as gifted children, might experience a different amount of victimization compared to their peers. Only a few studies have examined bullying and victimization among gifted children. In one such study, gifted 8th graders were asked about their experiences with bullying and/or victimization. The researchers did not specifically investigate the relationship between school transition and bullying, but they found that victimization peaked in 6th grade, which in most American school districts is the first year of middle school.

The transition from elementary to middle school is a very difficult time period as students experience a discontinuous shift of routines, changes in social status, and developmental changes. Research on bullying and victimization specifically focusing on the transition from elementary to middle school previously included only the general education population (Pellgrini & Bartini, 2000; Pellgrini & Long, 2002 ; Scholte et al., 2007). Similar research focusing on students who are gifted is lacking. The purpose of my study is to determine if rates of bullying and victimization are different for gifted children who are in 4th grade (elementary school) than for those in the first two grades of middle school (5th and 6th grades). I am also interested in related levels of distress associated with victimization for these students. I wish to study a cross-section of students at each of the three grades and compare the students across grade levels. I am asking that you consider allowing your child to participate in my study. Please read the attached consent form which provides more information about the study.

Appendix E Parental Consent Form

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Bullying, Victimization, and Associated Distress During School Transition among Gifted Children

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

I am a fourth year doctoral student in the School Psychology program at the University of Tennessee. I am asking your permission for your child to participate in a study that investigates whether the rates of bullying and victimization differ for students who are gifted in the last year of elementary school (4th grade) from those of 5th and 6th grade students who are gifted who have transitioned to middle school. Additionally, this study will examine whether their experiences of distress are associated with bullying and victimization. Rather than following one cohort of students through the 4th through 6th grades, I wish to study a cross-section of students at each of the three grades and compare the students across grade levels.

I would like to ask your child to fill out two questionnaires, one will measure bullying/victimization behavior among peers, and the other one will evaluate students' psychological distress specifically related to bullying. In addition, I will ask your child to complete a short demographics page asking for your child's grade in school, race, gender, and age in years.

If you agree to allow your child to participate in this study, please allow your child the opportunity to assent of decline to participate. I have included two copies of the Voluntary Assent Form with this packet. Please ask your child to read the consent form and to sign it if he or she wants to volunteer to participate.

If you and your child agree that he/she will participate, he or she will spend approximately 25 minutes filling out two brief questionnaires during his or her regular meeting with other students who are gifted. This activity will take place at a time when your child's teacher feels will not interfere with your child's academic coursework. During the chosen time of data collection, one or two graduate students will distribute this envelope to your child.

Initial that you have read this page: _____

If your child is participating in this study, the envelope will contain the packet including the questionnaires and demographics form. If he or she is not participating, the envelope will contain a packet of logic puzzles.

The questionnaires contain no identification information for your child or for others. There are not questions that call for the naming of individual children who are bullies of victims. Participation is confidential. Neither the researchers nor the research assistants will use your child's name or any other identifying information in oral or written reports.

In addition, your child will be instructed not to write his or her name anywhere on the demographic information sheet or the questionnaires the packet. If he or she inadvertently does so, I will immediately black it out. I will assign code numbers to the students' packets for the sole purpose of data analysis. The code numbers will not be linked to the students' identities.

Your child may withdraw from this study at any time during the questionnaire session by simply telling the researchers, or his or her teacher. If your child withdraws during this period, I will destroy the partially completed forms, via a paper shredder, and not include them in my study. You may also withdraw permission for your child's participation at any time before the questionnaires are filled out by contacting one of the researchers through the phone number or e-mail address below. After I collect the questionnaires, there will be no way for me to link the student's identity directly to the questionnaire so I can not destroy the data.

There are no direct benefits for participation. However, the results of this project will contribute to the knowledge base regarding bullying, victimization, and associated distress during the elementary-middle school transition among gifted children. Declining or not deciding to allow your child to participate will in no way affect your relationship with your child's teacher or school administrators, nor will it affect your child's grades or affect your child's standing in school in any way.

Risks for participation are minimal. I do not foresee any harm in participation; however, if your child appears uncomfortable while completing the questionnaire, I will encourage him or her to withdraw from the study and immediately inform his or her teacher of the situation. The school counselors will be informed of the study and will be available for students to talk to, that day or on subsequent days if needed. If you have questions at any time about this study or the procedures, please contact me, Taylor Pelchar, at (phone 865-806-7553 email tpelchar@utk.edu)

or my faculty advisor, Sherry Bain, at (phone: 865-974-2410 e-mail: sbain2@utk.edu). If you have questions about your child's rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer (University of Tennessee) at (865) 974-3466.

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Please sign below and return this form to your child's school if you understand the conditions of this study and agree to allow your child to participate if he/she wishes. You may keep the extra copy of this form for your records.

Name of student _____.

Parent's signature _____ **Date**

Appendix F Voluntary Assent Form for Students

VOLUNTARY ASSENT FORM FOR STUDENTS

Bullying, Victimization, and Associated Distress During School Transition among Gifted Children

In this research project I will answer written questions about bullying, victimization, and anxiety. If I choose to be in this project, I understand that the following things will take place:

I will spend approximately about 25 minutes in a classroom with other students who may or may not choose to take part in the project. Those of us who choose to take part will fill out two questionnaires. One will be about my experiences with being a victim of bullying or about teasing or taunting others. The other questionnaire will be about any worries that each of us has related to being bullied or teasing and taunting others. I am not expected to name anyone else who has been a bully or a victim. I will be asked for my grade in school (e.g. 4th, 5th, 6th), race, my gender, and my date of birth. My name will not be included on any survey or form.

The information I give about me will not be shared with anyone in my class or with my teachers, parents, or guardian. The information I give will not be linked to my name.
I understand that if I choose to participate, I will not be graded for anything that I do in this research project. If I choose to not participate, my grades or activities in school will not be affected.

Contacts: I understand that I may ask questions of the researchers before I decide to participate. I also understand that if I have questions about the research at a later time, I may contact Taylor Pelchar at tpelchar@utk.edu or her faculty advisor, Dr. Bain at sbain2@utk.edu. Or, I can ask my teacher or parents to help me get in touch with Taylor Pelchar or Dr. Bain. Initial that you have read this page:_____

If I have questions about your rights as a participant, I can contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer (University of Tennessee) at (865) 974-3466.

If I feel that filling out the questionnaires for this project has made me feel uneasy, I will be able to tell one of the researchers or my teacher, and can see the school counselor if I wish.

Participation: I understand that I do not have to participate in this project if I do not want to. I can take a break during the questionnaire session if I need to. If I choose to stop during the time I am filling out the questionnaire, I will tell my teacher or one of the researchers and my incomplete questionnaires will be destroyed. If I do withdraw from the project, no bad things will happen to me.

I will sign my name below if I agree to be in the project and if I understand all the things listed on this page. I will keep the second copy of this Student Assent Form for my own information.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix G Demographic Cover Page

Demographic Cover Page

Please DO NOT write your name.

Circle how old you are:

8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Circle your gender

Boy

Girl

Circle your grade-level

4th

5th

6th

Circle your Race:

African American

Asian

Caucasian/White

Hispanic

Native American

Pacific Islander

Other

Appendix H Normality and Skewness Statistics of Scoring Distributions

Scale	Normality Statistic	Skewness Statistic
BVS Bullying Scale	.59*	2.50
BVS Victimization Scale	.69*	2.99
BVDS Internalizing Distress	.64*	3.11
BVDS Externalizing Distress	.85*	1.26
BVDS Total Distress	.74*	2.60

*-significant at .001 level

Appendix I Mean and Standard Deviations of Reynolds Bully Victimization Scale and Reynolds Bully-Victimization Distress Scale (Raw Scores)

Scale	**Overall Sample**	**4th Grade Sample**	**5th Grade Sample**	**6th Grade Sample**
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)
BVS Bullying	3.5(7.3)	5.6 (91)	.15(.38)	5.0(8.7)
BVS Victimization	10.1(12.0)	.16 (15.3)	6.3(5.3)	4.6(8.4)
BVDS Internalizing Distress	4.9 (8.5)	7.7(12.0)	3.3 (4.2)	2.1 (2.0)
BVDS Externalizing Distress	5.3(6.3)	7.6 (7.6)	4.5(4.7)	2.1(4.1)
BVDS Total Distress	10.3(13.6)	15.3(18.2)	7.8 (8.0)	4.3(6.0)

Appendix J Normality and Skewness Statistics of Scoring Distributions (Raw Scores)

Scale	Normality Statistic	Skewness Statistic
BVS Bullying Scale	.55**	2.43
BVS Victimization Scale	.80*	1.76
BVDS Internalizing Distress	.59**	3.50
BVDS Externalizing Distress	.84*	1.30
BVDS Total Distress	.73**	2.61

*- significant at .01 level

**-significant at .001 level

Appendix K Figures of Score Distributions

Figure 1. BVS Bullying Scale T-Score Distribution-Overall Sample

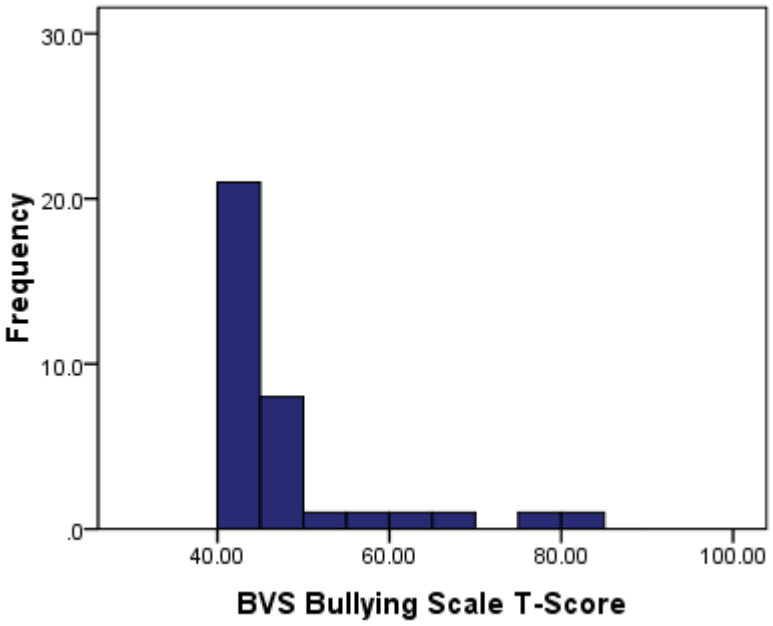


Figure 2. BVS Victimization Scale T-Score Distribution-Overall Sample

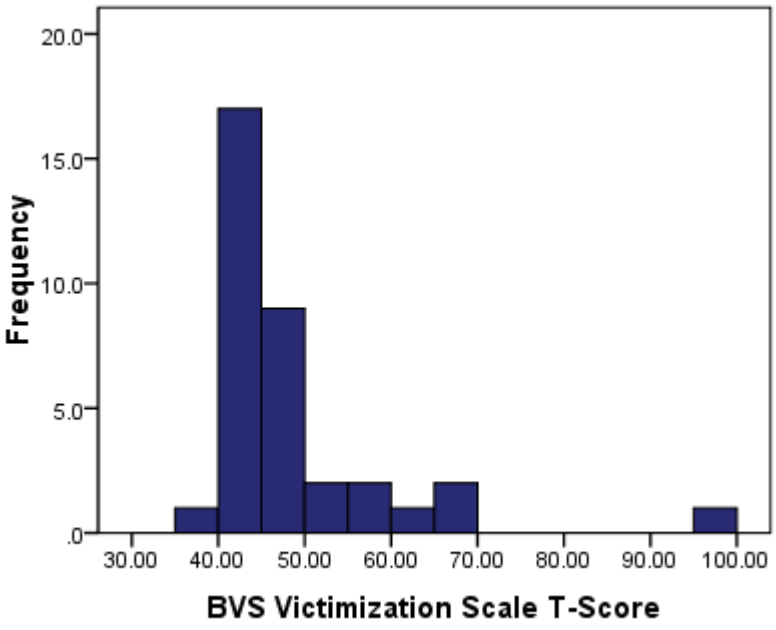


Figure 3. BVDS Internalizing Scale T-Score Distribution-Overall Sample

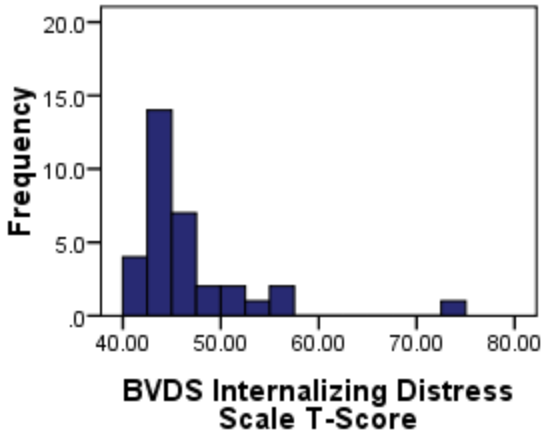


Figure 4. BVDS Externalizing Scale T-Score Distribution-Overall Sample

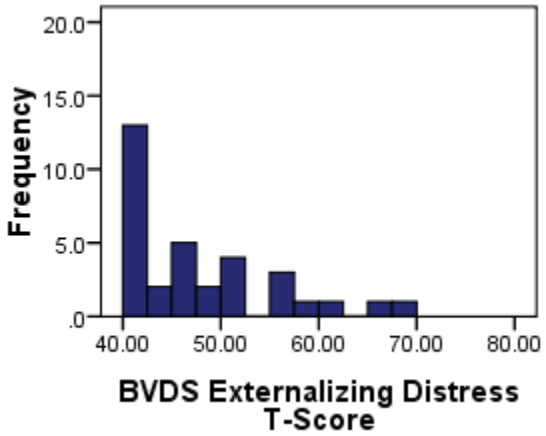


Figure 5. BVDS Total Distress T-Score Distribution-Overall Sample

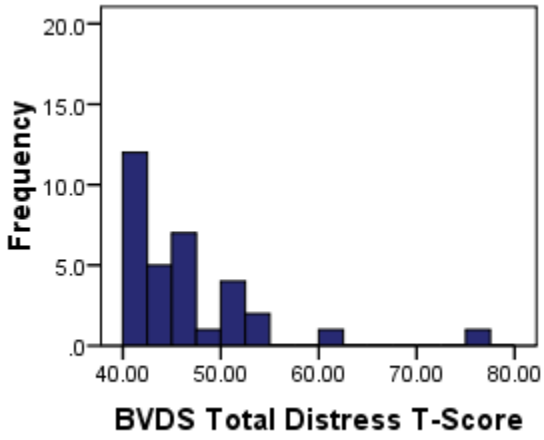


Figure 6. BVS Bullying Scale Distribution-4th Grade Sample

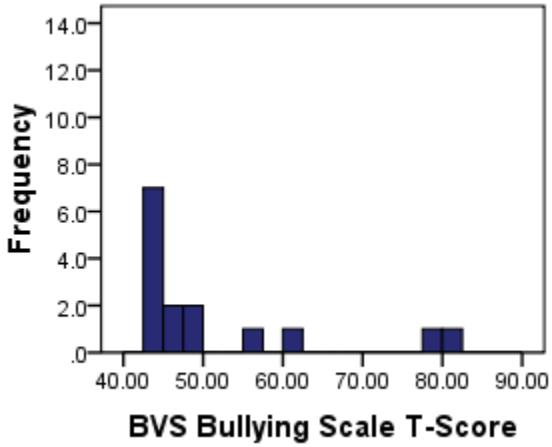


Figure 7. BVS Bullying Scale Distribution-5th Grade Sample

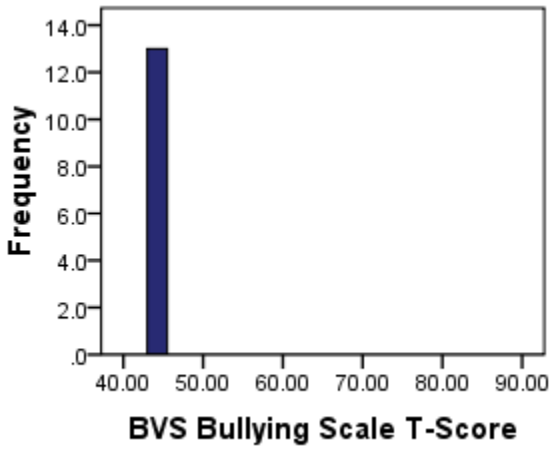


Figure 8. BVS Bullying Scale Distribution-6th Grade Sample

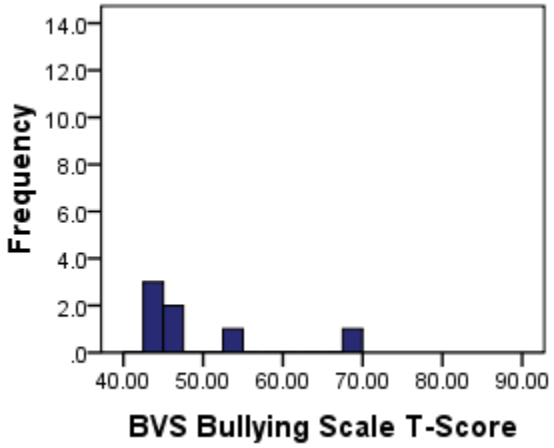


Figure 9. BVS Victimization Scale Distribution-4th Grade Sample

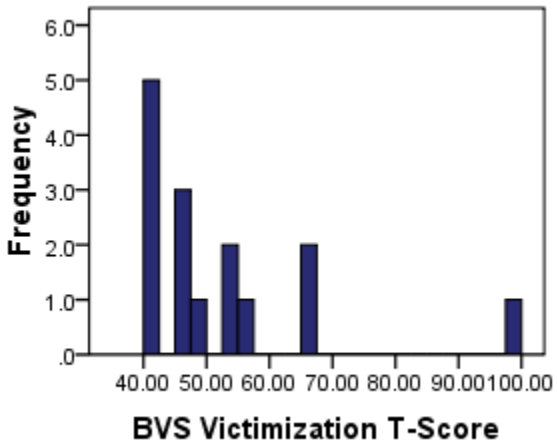


Figure 10. BVS Victimization Scale Distribution-5th Grade Sample

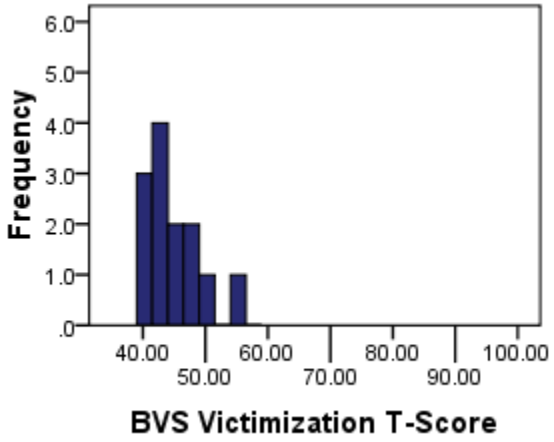


Figure 11. BVS Victimization Scale Distribution-6th Grade Sample

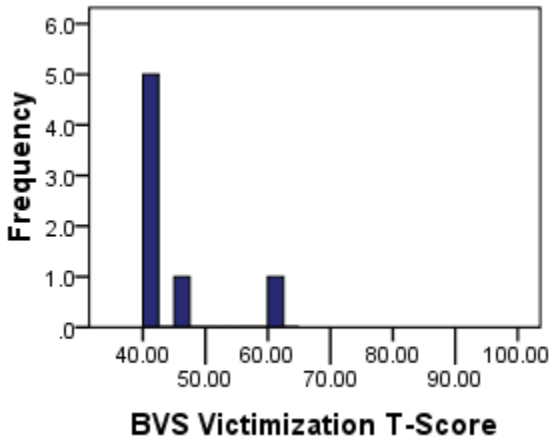


Figure 12. BVDS Internalizing Scale Distribution-4th Grade Sample

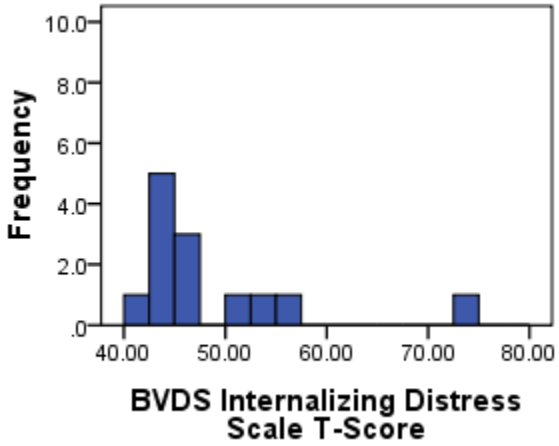


Figure 13. BVDS Internalizing Scale Distribution-5th Grade Sample

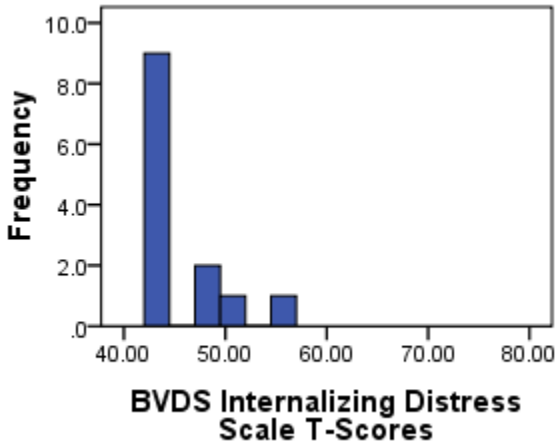


Figure 14. BVDS Internalizing Scale Distribution-6th Grade Sample

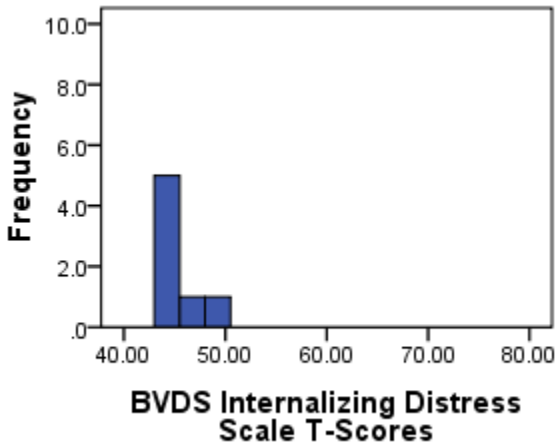


Figure 15. BVDS Externalizing Scale Distribution-4th Grade Sample

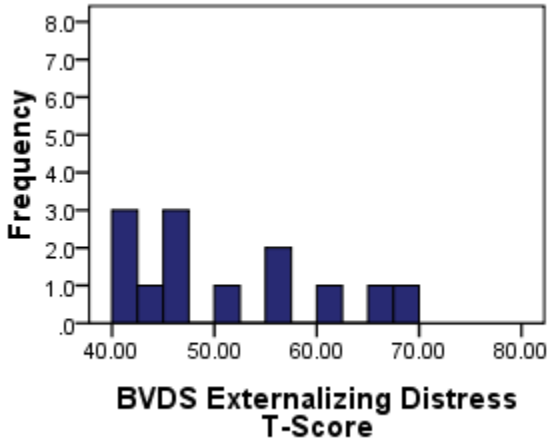


Figure 16. BVDS Externalizing Scale Distribution-5th Grade Sample

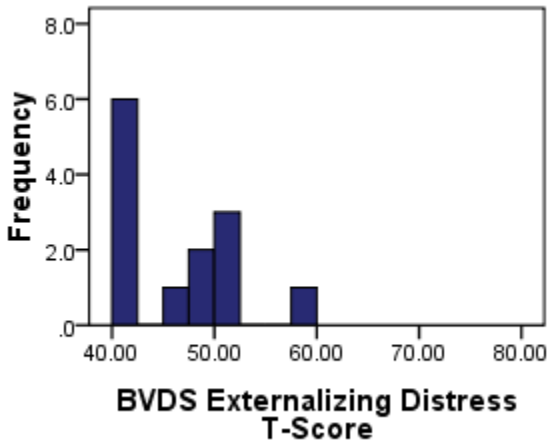


Figure 17. BVDS Externalizing Scale Distribution-6th Grade Sample

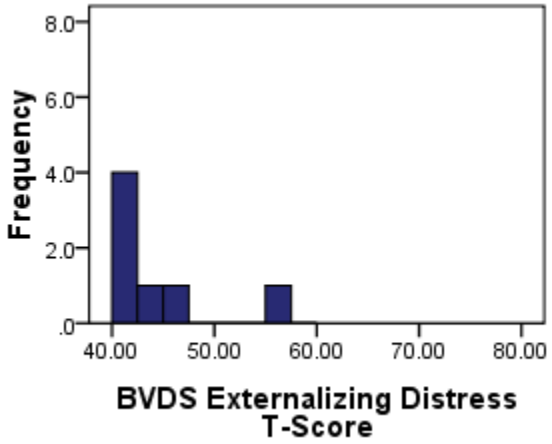


Figure 18. BVDS Total Distress Scale Distribution-4th Grade Sample

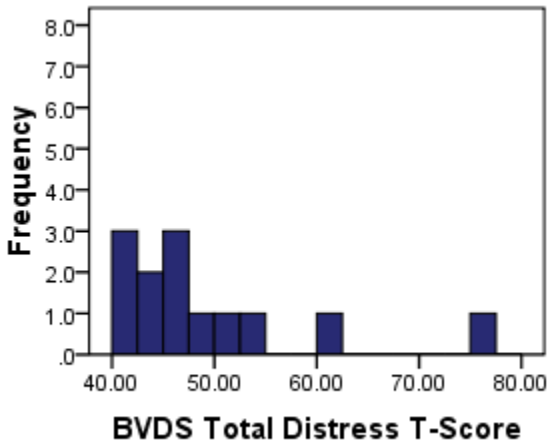


Figure 19. BVDS Total Distress Scale Distribution-5th Grade Sample

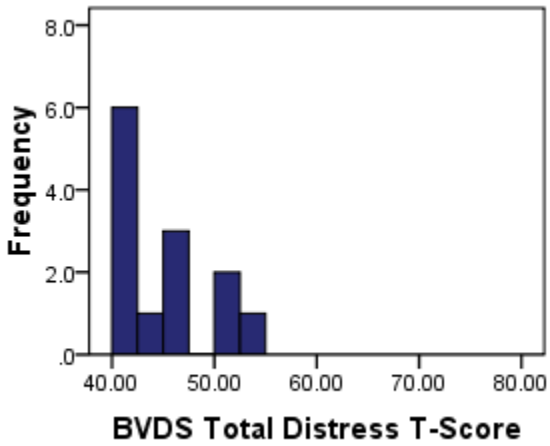
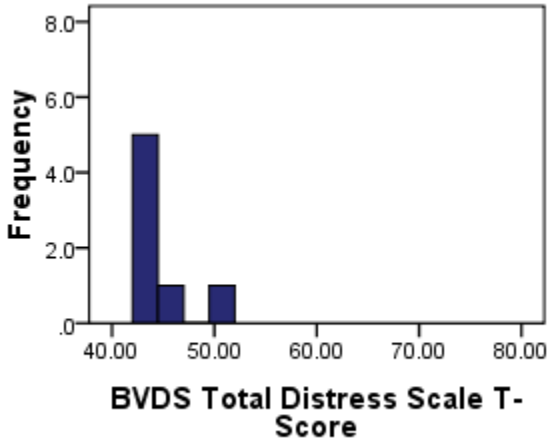


Figure 20. BVDS Total Distress Scale Distribution-6th Grade Sample



Appendix L Participant Scores by Descriptive Categories

Table 4

Participant Scores by Descriptive Categories-Overall Sample

	Sample	Normal	Clinically Significant	Moderately Severe	Severe
BVS Bullying	Males	13	1	0	1
	Females	18	0	1	1
	Overall	31	1	1	2
BVS Victimization	Males	13	0	1	1
	Females	18	1	1	0
	Overall	31	1	2	1
BVDS Internalizing Distress	Males	13	0	0	0
	Females	19	0	1	0
	Overall	34	0	1	0
BVDS Externalizing Distress	Males	12	1	0	0
	Females	19	0	1	0
	Overall	31	1	1	0
BVDS Total Distress	Males	12	1	0	0
	Females	19	0	0	1
	Overall	31	1	0	1

Table 5

Participant Scores by Descriptive Categories-4th Grade Sample

Scale	Sample	Normal	Clinically Significant	Moderately Severe	Severe
BVS Bullying	Males	6	1	0	1
	Females	6	0	0	1
	Overall	12	1	0	2
BVS Victimization	Males	6	0	1	1
	Females	6	0	1	0
	Overall	12	0	2	1
BVDS Internalizing Distress	Males	6	0	0	0
	Females	6	0	1	0
	Overall	12	0	1	0
BVDS Externalizing Distress	Males	5	1	0	0
	Females	6	0	1	0
	Overall	11	1	1	0
BVDS Total Distress	Males	5	1	0	0
	Females	6	0	0	1
	Overall	11	1	0	1

Table 6

Participant Scores by Descriptive Categories-5th Grade Sample

Scale	Sample	Normal	Clinically Significant	Moderately Severe	Severe
BVS Bullying	Males	5	0	0	0
	Females	8	0	0	0
	Overall	13	0	0	0
BVS Victimization	Males	5	0	0	0
	Females	8	0	0	0
	Overall	13	0	0	0
BVDS Internalizing Distress	Males	5	0	0	0
	Females	8	0	0	0
	Overall	13	0	0	0
BVDS Externalizing Distress	Males	5	0	0	0
	Females	8	0	0	0
	Overall	13	0	0	0
BVDS Total Distress	Males	5	0	0	0
	Females	8	0	0	0
	Overall	13	0	0	0

Table 7

Participant Scores by Descriptive Categories-6th Grade Sample

Scale	Sample	Normal	Clinically Significant	Moderately Severe	Severe
BVS Bullying	Males	2	0	0	0
	Females	4	0	1	0
	Overall	6	0	1	0
BVS Victimization	Males	2	0	0	0
	Females	4	1	0	0
	Overall	6	1	0	0
BVDS Internalizing Distress	Males	2	0	0	0
	Females	5	0	0	0
	Overall	7	0	0	0
BVDS Externalizing Distress	Males	2	0	0	0
	Females	5	0	0	0
	Overall	7	0	0	0
BVDS Total Distress	Males	2	0	0	0
	Females	5	0	0	0
	Overall	7	0	0	0

Appendix M Results of Mann Whitney U tests comparing male and female T-scores on Reynolds Bully Victimization Scale (BVS) and Reynolds Bully-Victimization Distress Scale

Scale	*U*
BVS Bullying Scale	125.50 *ns*
BVS Victimization Scale	129.50 *ns*
BVDS Internalizing Distress Scale	125.00 *ns*
BVDS Externalizing Distress Scale	120.50 *ns*
BVDS Total Distress Scale	125.00 *ns*

ns- not significant

Vita

Taylor K. Pelchar was born in May, 1984 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. When she was a young child, her family relocated to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. In 2006, Taylor graduate Cum Laude from Appalachian State University with a B.S. in Psychology and Statistics Minor. She earned a M.S. in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville in 2009. In her spare time Taylor enjoys conducting research, reading, snow skiing, and riding roller coasters.