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**An Attributional Analysis of Peer Victimisation and  
Bullying Behaviour in School Children: A Replication  
and Extension**

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## Abstract

Bullying and victimisation of children by their peers' is a perennial problem. Previous studies have shown that both the bully and the victimised child are at risk of psychological problems at the time and in later life.

In this study the relationship between characterological versus behavioural self-blaming attributions for victimisation and maladjustment, and peer reactions (rejection/acceptance) was examined in a replication of a study by Graham and Juvonen (1998a). Graham and Juvonen's (1998a) study was also extended here by looking at an extended age range, teachers' views and issues related to bullying.

One hundred and sixty-one participants (51 males, 110 females) ranging in age from 10 to 17 years old completed questionnaires that assessed self-perceptions of bullying behaviour and victim status, attributions for hypothetical victimisation situations, and feelings of loneliness, social anxiety, and self-worth. Participants also completed peer-rating measures looking at perceptions of others' bullying behaviour and victim status, and their acceptance and rejection of others in their class. Classroom teachers' completed a measure rating participants in their class on bullying behaviour and victim status.

In terms of victimisation, results suggest that as in Graham and Juvonen (1998a) characterological self-blame (CSB) partially mediated the relationship between self-perceived victimisation and adjustment problems. Also consistent with the findings of Graham and Juvonen (1998a), self views of victim status were more predictive of intrapersonal factors (loneliness, social anxiety, and self-worth) and others' (peers' and teachers') views were more predictive of interpersonal factors (peer acceptance/rejection).

In terms of bullying behaviour, participants' who reported high levels of self-perceived bullying behaviour also reported lower levels of self-worth. This relationship was moderated by peer perceptions of bullying. Additionally, peers' perceptions of bullying behaviour were related to higher levels of rejection by peers. Further, this rejection was more pronounced when teachers viewed the children as bullies. Further, some supplementary results are discussed, and limitations and suggestions for further research are proposed.

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## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	x
Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION.....	<b>1</b>
Chapter 2. BULLYING AND PEER AGGRESSION IN CHILDREN.....	<b>4</b>
2.1 Definition and Prevalence.....	4
2.1.1 Subtypes of Aggression.....	5
2.1.2 Prevalence.....	7
2.2 Consequences of Peer Aggression.....	8
2.2.1 Peer Rejection/Acceptance.....	8
2.2.2 Self-perceptions.....	10
2.3 Attribution Theory.....	12
2.3.1 Functions of Causal Attributions.....	15
2.3.2 Social Cognitive Model of Aggression.....	17
Chapter 3. PEER VICTIMISATION IN CHILDREN.....	<b>20</b>
3.1 Definition and Prevalence.....	20
3.2 Consequences of Victimization.....	23
3.2.1 Peer Rejection/Acceptance.....	23
3.2.2 Self-perceptions.....	25
3.3 Self-Blame.....	27
Chapter 4. THE PRESENT STUDY.....	<b>32</b>
4.1 Overview.....	32
4.2 The Hypotheses.....	33

Chapter 5.	METHOD.....	<b>35</b>
5.1	Participants.....	35
5.2	Measures.....	36
5.2.1	Peer Nomination.....	36
5.2.2	Self Nomination.....	37
5.2.3	Attributional Questionnaire.....	38
5.2.4	Adjustment Indexes.....	40
5.2.5	Teacher Rating of Bullying Behaviour/Victimisation.....	41
5.3	Procedure.....	42
5.4	Overview of Data Analysis.....	43
Chapter 6	RESULTS .....	<b>46</b>
6.1	Demographic Analysis and Assessment of Order Effects.....	46
6.2	Factor Analysis of Attribution Scenarios.....	46
6.3	Relationships among the Variables.....	49
6.3.1	Simple Pearsons Correlations.....	49
6.3.2	Testing Moderation.....	52
6.3.3	Testing Mediation.....	71
6.2	Analysis by Victim and Bully Status.....	73
Chapter 7	DISCUSSION.....	<b>80</b>
7.1	Summery of Major Findings.....	80
7.2	Specific Findings.....	85
7.2.1	Hypothesis One.....	85
7.2.2	Hypothesis Two.....	86
7.2.3	Hypothesis Three.....	87
7.2.4	Research Question One.....	89
7.2.5	Research Question Two.....	91
7.3	Limitation and Suggestions for Further Research .....	92
	REFERENCES.....	<b>94</b>

## APPENDICIES

Appendix A: Participant Questionnaire.....	109
Appendix B: Teacher Questionnaire.....	118
Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form.....	122
Appendix D: Parent Information Sheet and Consent Form.....	124
Appendix E: Teacher Information Sheet.....	126



## List of Tables

Table 1.	Factor Loadings of the Item Ratings for the Reaction to the Attribution Scenarios.....	47
Table 2.	Correlations between Variables.....	50
Table 3.	Victimisation Hierarchical Regression predicting Loneliness.....	54
Table 4.	Victimisation Hierarchical Regression predicting Anxiety.....	56
Table 5.	Victimisation Hierarchical Regression predicting Self-worth.....	57
Table 6.	Victimisation Hierarchical Regression predicting Peer Rejection.....	59
Table 7.	Victimisation Hierarchical Regression predicting Peer Acceptance.....	61
Table 8.	Bullying Behaviour Hierarchical Regression predicting Loneliness.....	63
Table 9.	Bullying Behaviour Hierarchical Regression predicting Anxiety.....	64
Table 10.	Bullying Behaviour Hierarchical Regression predicting Self-worth.....	66

Table 11.	Bullying Behaviour Hierarchical Regression predicting Peer Rejection.....	69
Table 12.	Bullying Behaviour Hierarchical Regression predicting Peer Acceptance.....	71
Table 13.	Mean Differences on the Dependent Variables as a Function of Victim Status Group 1.....	75
Table 14.	Mean Differences on the Dependent Variables as a Function of Bullying Status Group 1.....	76
Table 15.	Mean Differences on the Dependent Variables as a Function of Victim Status Group 2.....	77
Table 16.	Mean Differences on the Dependent Variables as a Function of Bullying Status Group 2.....	79

## List of Figures

Figure 1.	Structure of Causal Perception.....	14
Figure 2.	Peer Status Groups.....	25
Figure 3.	Schematic Representation of the Self-Perceived Bullying x Peer-Perceived Bullying Interaction in the Prediction of Anxiety.....	65
Figure 4.	Schematic Representation of the Self-Perceived Bullying x Peer-Perceived Bullying Interaction in the Prediction of Self-worth.....	67
Figure 5.	Schematic Representation of the Peer-Perceived Bullying x Teacher-Perceived Bullying Interaction in the Prediction of Peer Rejection.....	70