
The Correlation Between Sexual Orientation And Bullying Among Adolescent Students

Bullying and sexual orientation are topics that have been broadcasted in homes of adolescents, in schools and as well as across the media. However, not much research has been broadcasted about the correlation between sexual orientation and bullying. Results from the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey show that, nationwide, more U.S. high school students who self-identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) report having been bullied on school property (33%) and cyber bullied (27.1%) in the past year, than their heterosexual peers (17.1% and 13.3%, respectively) (stopbullying.gov 2017).

Research has looked at the different types of sexual orientation, the different type of bullying as well as the extent of the bullying. This paper will examine the correlation between sexual orientation and bullying among adolescent students. This research will focus on the effect that bullying has on LGBTQ youth, the types of bullying that occur among students, and what students have to say about bullying. Although the literature cited in this paper covers a vast amount of ideology this paper will specifically focus in on the themes listed above.

The term LGBTQ stands for Lesbian, gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender and Queer individuals. Among many of the students in these studies were students who consider themselves apart of the LGBTQ community. Research conducted by (White et. Al 2018) explored the experience that LGBTQ youth had while participating in social and academic settings as well as the perceived experience that these adolescents had. In an academic setting many LGBTQ students experienced a higher amount of pressure and therefor were affected in school. "LGBTQ youth in the United States have lower academic achievement (Kosciw et al. 2012), higher truancy, and higher school drop-out rates (Aragon et al. 2014; Birkett et al.2014) (White et. Al 2018). This research along with research co White et. Al (2018) examined the positive and negative emotions that were experienced by LGBTQ youth. They examined the differences in emotions across gender identities, sexual identities and their intersections. They found that "LGBTQ adolescents reported significantly more frequent negative emotions and bullying, consistent with previous research. LGBTQ students also reported less frequent experiences of positive emotions at school and less frequent positive school experiences (i.e., positive peer and teacher relationships, subjective task value, and persistence support) (White et. Al 2018)".

Moreover, they found that among this group of students "Students who were both gender and sexual identity minority reported the most frequent negative and least frequent positive experiences at school, compared to students who were neither a gender nor sexual identity minority. (White et. Al 2018). To conduct this research, researchers used an online survey, participants were recruited from schools, youth serving organizations and social media outlets. Ducted by (McGuire et. Al 2010) included experiences that the adolescents had in high school. "Bullying is unwanted aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a rea or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has potential to be repeated, over time (stopbullying.gov 2018)."

As defined previously bullying is repeated aggressive behavior that involves an imbalance of power. However, the definition does not explain that there are different types of bullying,

bullying that is physical or verbal, but more so in the way of physical in person bullying or cyberbullying. Cyberbullying, although a type of bullying is its own separate entity. In a study completed by Paz Elipe et. Al Cyberbullying is a topic that was dissected, it is stated "Bullying and Cyberbullying have been studied exclusively. In lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning students, these phenomena seem to be overrepresented so that, although they share some common elements, homophobic bullying and cyberbullying could be considered as specific phenomena (Elipe et. Al 2018). The research conducted by these sociologists consisted of 533 participants that ranged from ages 12-20, and of these students results showed that : students who identified as non-heterosexual experienced a higher level of being targeted with bullying and cyberbullying, almost one half of them declaring that they had been victimized and more than 20% cybervictimized (Elipe et. Al 2018). A conclusion drawn by this study is that sexual orientation could be in fact a risk factor in suffering these aggressions. Moreover, a study conducted among college students looked at that risk in fact to determine if students who were of a different sexual orientation were in fact at risk to be a cyber-victim. This study conducted by Litwell et. Al found that of the 634 students across 25 different U.S states that those students who were of a different sexual orientation, specifically homosexual, there was a significant relation among that and cybervictimization. Many of the students who themselves, have experienced these acts of bullying have much to say about their sexuality, and the daily trials that they face when entering a school building or even walking onto a campus.

School safety is not only an issue that is looked at by the adults in schools and officials who must enforce policies to correct these issues, but it is something that students discuss. Specifically, in a study conducted by Atteberry et. Al school safety was the focus of the study. As discussed earlier in the paper findings identified that students who identified as a "LGBTQ" were more likely to skip school or be depressed due to bullying. This literature review identifies the escalating problems that schools administrators face as well as all students who endure bullying and mistreatment due to their sexual orientation. Further research that is being conducted identifies outliers, that could possibly affect the correlation between sexual orientation and bullying.