

DEVELOPMENT OF RESILIENCE AGAINST BULLYING: SCAFFOLDING THE POSITIVE SELF-ESTEEM OF TEENAGERS

Nijole Ciuciulkiene¹

1 Vytautas Magnus University

Vytaute Rukiene²

2 Kolping University of Applied Science



Name: N. Čiučiulkiene
Webpage: www. vdu.lt
E-mail: nijole.ciuciulkiene@vdu.lt
Institution: Vytautas Magnus University
Address: K. Donelaicio str. 52
Phone.: +370 65027273
Research field: S007



Name: V. Rūkiene
Webpage: www.kolpingokolegija.lt
E-mail: rukienevytaute@gmail.com
Institution: Kolping University of Applied Science
Address: Raguvos str. 7
Phone.: +370 60056866
Research field: S005

Research purpose (topic, problem, aim). Bullying is regarded as a form of aggressive behavior that is repeated over time against a person who feels powerless to defend himself or herself. In the context of bullying prevention research, a lot of attention is devoted to the analysis of numerous problems of bullying victimization behavior. Still little research attention has been paid to bullied students who are able to resist bullying and are therefore defined as “resilient” instead of feeling oneself as a “victim” (Rothson, Head, Klineberg, & Stansfeld, 2011). Resilient individuals might be regarded those who manifest positive outcomes over time despite facing significant adversities. Many researchers argue that resilience is not a personality trait, but rather an ability or even competence that develops over time in the context of positive relationships with family members and peers. The essence of resilience towards bullying may be centered on knowing how to calm down and concentrate, demonstrate good regulation of emotions, knowing how to stimulate positive emotions and realistic optimism. Three main sources of emotional resilience development can be distinguished: individual characteristics (including high self-esteem, self-worth and autonomy), family environment (defined as positive relationships with parents characterized by warmth, harmony and absence of neglect and conflicts) and communality (including positive relationships), peer interactions characterized by trust, support and non-conflict, quality neighborhoods and schools). In this context, personal self-esteem is regarded as one of the major bricks while building “the wall of resilience” towards bullying. The aim of the research is to reveal possible individual self-esteem elements that weaken the feeling as a victim and enable the bullying resilience competence demonstrating the ability to diagnose the positive aspects of one's personality, to cultivate them.

Keywords: bullying, victimization, resilience towards bullying, bullying resilience competence.

Research Methodology. The research was performed in a qualitative research paradigm. The sample of the research is 18 teenagers from 6 Kaunas schools who were characterized by social pedagogues as being resilient towards bullying. The data were collected while conducting the in-depth interviews (up till 2 hours with the breaks). The data were analyzed with the help of inductive qualitative content analysis.

Results / Findings. After conducting the inductive qualitative analysis there were revealed the following themes: having self-acceptance; being able to think positively; easy socialization; being tough; teaching resilience. The analysis of the thematic content provides the information about the factors that scaffold the bullying resilience and suggest some ideas how to develop resilience towards bullying.

Originality / Practical implications. The presented research may be regarded as the idea for the anti-bullying interventions which may not only prevent bullying but also reduce the effects of bullying by educating young people about resilience against bullying. The findings of the research may serve as a basis for creation of practical resilience development programs that could be included into anti-bullying interventions.