NEW DIRECTIONS IN RESEARCH ON WELL-BEING: PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESS IN EVERYDAY CONTEXTS

DEVELOPMENT, DIVERSITY AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS AT SCHOOL

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Attachment perspective to explain human development

Socialization theory: primary relationship with peers

Hedegaard’s (2009) theory of development conceptualised as the child’s participation within and across several institutions at the same time, it has been possible to examine how school practices influence home practice and the child’s social situation of development.
ATTACHMENT PERSPECTIVE

According to Bowlby (1982), the attachment behavior is a forthright continuance of attachment behavior in childhood, disclosed by the circumstances that lead an adult’s attachment conduct to become more readily stimulated. In cases of danger and high risk, young adults and adults often become exacting of others. Indeed, in conditions of sudden danger, an individual will almost certainly seek proximity to another known and trusted person. In these cases, an increase of attachment behavior is recognized by all as natural. In other words, the attachment style can influence future relationships with others, for example, with peers during adolescence.
In his time, Vygotsky (1998) argued for a different perspective of child development. He put forward a dialectical process “in which a transition from one stage to another is accomplished not as an evolving process but as a revolutionary process (p. 193).”

A conception of development as a revolutionary transition provides an alternative conceptual framework (Kravtsova, 2006), and helps teachers move beyond the present developmental conceptual framework, as it foregrounds the cultural institutional context and the specific child’s lived experience.
FOCUS IN OUR STUDIES

• Role of family (Olson’s Model and Operation working model came from with primary relationship)

• Role of peer relationships

• Role of teachers in the school contexts (Institutional learning and context become important elements of a child’s social situation. The social situation of a child is dependent on the society and cultural context in which the child is embedded. Different cultural contexts foreground particular social situations, which in turn position children to actively engage and take up particular participation structures).

• Role of society (e.g., cultural beliefs).
Culture

School (values, etc.)

Work

Extended Family

Peer relationship
Culture of group

Family

Father (s)

Mother (s)

Children

Religion
PARENTAL SOCIALIZATION

• Parents as *direct instructors*
  • Parents may directly teach their children skills, rules, and strategies and explicitly inform or advise them on various issues

• Parents as *indirect socializers*
  • Parents provide indirect socialization in the course of their day-to-day interactions with their children

• Parents as *providers and controllers of opportunities*
  • Parents manage children’s experiences and social lives, including their exposure to positive or negative experiences, their opportunities to play with certain toys and children, and their exposure to various kinds of information.

• *Psychological Parental control*: may have negative effect to child.
About 75% of preschool children are involved in reciprocal friendships with their peers, which rises to 80-90% in teenage years when adolescents enter larger peer ecologies during the transition to middle school (Hinde et al., 2000).

Peer relationships are also relevant in the context of other characteristic life experiences in young adulthood and can even mediate their effects on personality development.

Group socialization theory (Harris, 1995) is one of the few approaches that explicitly consider the role of peers in personality development.

Good relationships with peers: protective factor during life span.
Knowledge and understanding of school success and failure and of ability and disability need to be considered as cultural constructions (Carrier, 1990) that are reflected not only in the beliefs and attitudes of people, but also in the behaviour of individuals in organizations.

In the school context, the components of educational platforms may not be well known and discussed. That is, teachers tend to be unaware of their assumptions, theories or educational beliefs and the implications of these for behaviour and practice (Carrington, 2000).

School as learning community:

Active role of students and teachers in learning.
CRITICAL ISSUES:

Valuing relationships with parents and the broader community is also important. This means respect for the full range of contributions made by these groups, rather than the traditional notions of parent help or community sponsorship. Schools frequently refer to parents as partners in the educative process but the nature of the involvement of families is, in many schools, superficial. Indeed while it is generally accepted that parents play a vital role in children’s education, in some schools, parents are seen to be more part of the problem than the solution (Fullan, 2000).

It is necessary supporting and monitoring the critical intellectual roles of teachers (Smyth, 2000).
DIVERSITY IN CLASSROOM AND IN THE SOCIETY

Teachers understand student diversity and know how to plan and teach learning experiences and design assessments that are responsive to differences among students that promote all students’ learning.

Appreciate the uniqueness of each person and mutual respect for all.
HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING AT SCHOOL

In today’s social fabric, aggressive acts against sexual minorities are increasing, especially among adolescents (Espelage et al. 2018a, b)

Extensive studies have suggested that not having a good friendship network based on trust can be a risk factor in the genesis of aggressive, antisocial and delinquent behaviors, especially in adolescence, which is the structuring and definition phase of self and self-esteem (Pace et al. 2018; Waller et al. 2017; Zappulla et al. 2014).
DEFINITION:

Homophobic bullying is a set of deliberate actions aimed at denigrating one or more people belonging to a sexual minority or attacking sexual identity, gender, body, behaviors and desires, with verbal (including spreading rumors that someone is gay or lesbian), physical violence/abuse and cyberbullying (e.g., using social media to spread rumors). In other words, bullying is a form of dehumanization that serves to attach importance to the bully at the expense of others (Rivers, 2011).
The Interplay Between Trust Among Peers and Interpersonal Characteristics in Homophobic Bullying Among Italian Adolescents

Giulio D’Urso · Irene Petruccelli · Ugo Pace

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PROCEDURE

Participants in this study were 334 adolescents, (141 boys—42.1%— and 193 girls—57.6%) aged from 15 to 20 years (M=16.50; SD=.87), attending the third and fourth classes of some public high schools situated in Italian cities.

Participants completed the homophobic bullying scale, to investigate bullying actions towards sexual minorities, the personal attributes questionnaire, for personal characteristics, and the inventory of parent and peer attachment, to the trust between peers.
## GENDER DIFFERENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>$F(1,333)$</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$M$ (SD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homophobic bullying</td>
<td>1.20 (.20)</td>
<td>1.24 (0.23)</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assertive or Instrumental</td>
<td>2.18 (0.50)</td>
<td>2.09 (0.47)</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal traits or Expressivity</td>
<td>2.30 (.62)</td>
<td>2.52 (.62)</td>
<td>11.0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust among Peers</td>
<td>4.04 (.69)</td>
<td>4.22 (.74)</td>
<td>4.72**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .001$  ** $p < .05$
**RESULTS 2/3**

*Interpersonal traits or expressivity mediating the association between Trust among peers and Homophobic Bullying*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>F(1,331)</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Trust among Peers → Homophobic Bullying (path c)</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
<td>4.4*</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Trust among Peers → Interpersonal Traits (path a)</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>14.8**</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Interpersonal Traits → Homophobic Bullying (path b)</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
<td>8.9*</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Trust among Peers → Homophobic Bullying (path c')</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p < .05 ** p < .001
RESULTS 3/3

Bootstrapping analyses indicated that Lack of trust among peers has exerted an indirect effect on homophobic bullying through the intervention lack of interpersonal traits.

Note: *p < .05  ** p < .001
DISCUSSIONS

According to literature (Thornberg & Jungert, 2017; Zych, Ttofi, & Farrington, 2016; Mitsopoulou & Giovazolias, 2015), among adolescents, personal characteristics should not be neglected; they also play a key role in explaining homophobic bullying behavior. Bullies, although they are not very capable or willing to establish relationships of trust with peers, are more prone to perceive themselves as not very warm or empathic. That’s why this cognitive distortion impacts their disposition to undertake homophobic bullying. In line with the triadic reciprocal determinism model (Bandura, 1986), it can be deduced how the adolescent’s characteristics, linked to emotionality and expressiveness, play an active role in the inclination to perform acts of bullying. In this sense, a low level of trust in peers may directly influence homophobic bullying.