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Exploring student victimisation and wellbeing in the UK higher education context

Emma Dawn Harrison

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Abstract

Research into student bullying in Higher Education (HE) has been limited and most is based on childhood bullying research. Bullying in HE could disrupt student mental health and wellbeing at university - a topic that has recently gained traction. Additionally, marginalised student groups may be more at risk (e.g. LGB+). Focus groups were used to explore students' conceptualisations of bullying and identify differences between childhood and emerging adulthood (EA) bullying behaviour. Themes identified were power imbalances; tactics of HE bullying; bullying for personal or social gain, and; justifications and minimisations for not intervening (bystander intervention). Examples of bullying behaviour from this first study supplemented the childhood and adult bullying literature to create a new HE bullying scale. The scale was tested on two samples to identify the factor structure ($N = 243$, $N = 304$). The third survey study ($N = 441$) adopted a correlational design using the developed scale alongside measures of wellbeing, childhood victimisation, and potential mediator variables, such as university belongingness, social connectedness, and Internal Working Models (IWMs). Group differences were found on victimisation, IWMs, social connectedness, and university belonging, especially for SES and sexual orientation, evidencing the disadvantages that minority groups may suffer within HE. Regression-based path-analyses found that IWMs, university bullying, social connectedness, and university belonging mediated the links between childhood victimisation and current wellbeing. Finally, UK university anti-bullying policies were examined. Policy length and quality varied between universities and a review of content is recommended based on the earlier study findings. This research has produced a new university bullying scale and has also explored mechanisms through which childhood victimisation may have negative effects on current HE student wellbeing. The importance of self- and other- beliefs as well as the social context (e.g. belonging) is stressed.

Dedication

For Carl Thornton (1987 – 2017)
For Rose Chambers (1999 – 2018)

"The unknown distance to the great beyond
Stares back at my grieving frame
To cast my shadow by the holy sun
My spirit moans with a sacred pain
And it's quiet now
The universe is standing still

There's nothing I can say
There's nothing we can do now

And all that stands between the soul's release
This temporary flesh and bone
We know that it's over now
I feel my faded mind begin to roam

Every time you fall
And every time you try
Every foolish dream
And every compromise
Every word you spoke
And everything you said
Everything you left me, rambles in my head

Up above the world so high

And everything you loved
And every time you try
Everybody's watching
Everybody cry
Stay, don't leave me
The stars can wait for your sign
Don't signal now

Goodnight, travel well."
(Flowers, Keuning, Stoermer, & Vanucci, 2008)

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List of Abbreviations

ACAS	Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AWA	Alliance of Women in Academia
BME	Black and Minority Ethnicity
BPN	Basic Psychological Needs satisfaction scale
BUQ	Bullying at University Questionnaire
CES-D8	Centre for Epidemiological Studies of Depression 8-item
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
DAIP	Domestic Abuse Intervention Programme
DBEIS	Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy
DDA	Descriptive Discriminant Analysis
DF	Discriminant Function
EA	Emerging Adult(hood)
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EU	European Union
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HRPs	Human Resources Practitioners
IRR	Interrater Reliability
IWM	Internal Working Model
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
LGB+	Lesbian Gay Bisexual and other sexual orientation
LOT-R	Life Orientation Test – Revised
MANOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Variance
ML	Maximum Likelihood
NFI	Normative Fit Index
NUS	National Union of Students
PAF	Principal Axis Factoring
PANAS-SF	Positive and Negative Affect Scale – Short Form
PSSM	Psychological Sense of School Membership scale

PWB	Psychological Wellbeing scale
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SES	Socioeconomic Status
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
UBQ	University Belongingness Questionnaire
UUK	Universities UK
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Bullying and Victimisation across the Lifespan: School, Home, and the Workplace

1.1. Research Overview

School bullying knowledge has advanced over the past four decades, and researchers now have a good understanding of the prevalence, impact of the problem, and causal influences of bullying. Individuals in the workplace have also been reporting more incidents of bullying and harassment, perhaps due to an increased awareness of negative behaviour and of workers' rights. Therefore, bullying is not only a childhood phenomenon. It is vital to understand the factors that are enabling aggressive behaviour to transpose to other contexts and life stages.

Much bullying research focuses on the individual, but Ringrose and Renold (2010) claimed that labelling individuals as the bully or victim reduces bullying to a personal issue; they assert that researchers fail to consider situational and sociological factors. For example, negative classrooms or workplaces may provide conditions that enable bullying to develop into vicious circles where certain individuals are targeted. A workplace entrenched in sexism, a classroom that segregates based on abilities or gender, or student norms at university, may provide the necessary contextual dynamics for bullying to take place.

Recent research shows that bullying does happen at universities, though student bullying research has grown only modestly over the past decade. However, there has been ongoing work surrounding illegal behaviours such as hate crime and sexual harassment (UUK, 2016). A student's characterological profile *and* the sociological conditions they experience (e.g. structural discrimination based on gender or race) may remain similar throughout their lives,

suggesting that being bullied in school may predispose one to being bullied at university, and then in the workplace. Consequently, it is necessary to develop the student bullying research whilst considering individual and sociological variables; this can be done by investigating the appearance of bullying in HE, prevalence rates, and how bullying impacts upon various aspects of the student experience. If the conditions and variables that associate most strongly with bullying and victimisation are isolated, preventative measures can be developed.

Accordingly, the purpose of this research is to build upon the limited student bullying literature in the UK, and address the research gap with a rigorous investigation into university students' involvement in bullying. It aims to increase awareness of the frequency and types of bullying occurring and to recognise students' understanding of bullying. The research will also establish any links between being a victim of bullying in HE and psychological outcomes (with a focus on functioning and feelings of wellbeing). Bullying is linked with negative outcomes at all stages of life, and so this level of education must not be overlooked. Students are not children, but Arnett (2015) reasoned that they are not quite adults either. At university, students learn to be critical, and they acquire in-depth knowledge of a specific subject area with the aim of obtaining good graduate jobs. Graduates are likely to be in higher-role jobs and might have more responsibility and power in the workplace. Hence, it would be beneficial for students to have positive university experiences, to ensure well-rounded development for entering the world of work. Negative experiences may impact individual feeling and functioning, which could lead to time off work due to ill-health. Those who are victimised at university may carry negative effects (e.g. academic, social, and/or emotional) into the next stage of their lives.

1.2. Chapter Overview

First, the prevalence, types, and effects of childhood bullying (school and sibling) will be described. It is well established that children bully at school; however, schools and universities are both educational institutions, hence similarities in bullying behaviour may be identified. Additionally, siblings often live together, sharing the characteristic of residency with HE students living in university-provided accommodation. It is important to first be aware of the childhood bullying literature to understand whether these shared contextual characteristics correlate with bullying. A brief overview of adult bullying in the workplace is then presented. A university is a business as well as a learning establishment; therefore, students may appraise university as a workplace and a learning environment. Consequently, the similarities and differences between adults in work establishments and students in HE institutions should also be explored. It is likely that some of these shared contextual features (indicated by a cross in Table 1.1) are associated with bullying. These related sets of literature from different contexts are relevant to HE bullying because they share certain characteristics.

Table 1.1

Shared characteristics of school, home, university, and the workplace that may provide the psychological potential for bullying

	Childhood		Adulthood	
	School	Home	University	Workplace
Accommodation		X	X	
Education	X	X	X	X
Business	X		X	X

1.3. Bullying and Victimisation in Childhood

1.3.1. Definitions of bullying. The most widely adopted definition of bullying is that it is a systematic abuse of power, where intentionally aggressive behaviour is directed at those who cannot defend themselves (Smith, 2004). Cyberbullying is typically defined in the same way but is instead performed through electronic media (Williams, Cheung, & Choi, 2000). A newer definition proposes that bullying is aggressive, *goal-directed* behaviour that harms others within a situation involving a *power imbalance* (Volk, Dane, & Marini, 2014). The latter definition removes “intent”, which can be difficult to ascertain from observations and self-report questionnaires. Volk et al. are proposing that bullying is a tool used not only for intentionally causing harm but also for achieving other aims. Bullying motivations are likely to be complex, but bullying often leads to the acquisition of something the perpetrator wants, whether that is completed homework or the approval of onlookers. This less sadistic view coincides with evolutionary theories that claim individuals bully for resources (Volk et al, 2014), rather than to enjoy others’ pain.

Defining bullying has been problematic, but the concept must first be operationalised so that findings can be compared and replicated. Some bullying studies ask for participants' perspectives, but for decades, most researchers introduce the above definitions at the start of questionnaires. Researchers who do not include definitions enable participants to consult their own frame of reference about whether bullying has occurred. It seems liberal to allow participants to confirm or deny the existence of bullying, but it is problematic; everyone has different levels of knowledge and influences informing their opinions. Furthermore, this method creates difficulties in comparing and replicating findings, as it is impossible to statistically compare individuals' social constructs.

In addition, there are issues with constructing a cyberbullying definition; *repetition* and a power imbalance are increasingly difficult to measure in cyberbullying. An attack need not happen multiple times online as a single retweet or share can induce a viral response from the online community. One mean comment can be viewed and shared by thousands, regardless of whether the perpetrator intended this; once a post is online it is at the whim of the internet (Langos, 2012). Perhaps it is the "potential" to be repeated that should be included in a cyberbullying definition, as most people are mindful that online posts are publicly accessible; even a private message can be shared through screenshots. Regarding the power imbalance component, everyone has the power to abuse online, and equally, they are powerless to receive abuse. Consequently, cyberbullying could be an easier method of abusing power, consciously or otherwise, especially considering *online disinhibition* (Suler, 2004), where one can disengage from negative posts due to being physically far away and/or anonymous.

Existing definitions are commonly used within bullying research, though some prefer the bottom-up approach of asking for participant opinions. It is problematic to apply a definition created in one context to another (e.g. online and HE), where it may not fit, but if no definition is provided, results between studies cannot be compared. It is, therefore, optimal to have a definition, but one which applies suitably to the context of study. Thus, it is first necessary to explore new contexts, which may uncover coinciding aspects or expose new features of bullying. This is one of the main aims of the qualitative study in Chapter 3.

1.3.2. Types of bullying. Bullying involves directly hurting others physically or emotionally through actions or words, or indirectly harming social relationships and manipulating peer interactions (Björkqvist, 1994; Olweus, 1993; Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009). As mentioned, bullying can also be perpetrated online through any electronic communication device (Watts, Wagner, Velasquez, & Behrens, 2017). Cyberbullying has been described as: "One of the negative by-products of the digital age" (Langos, 2012, p. 285), and there are numerous ways of bullying online: social media and smartphone apps (e.g. Facebook, Snapchat), direct email or text message, videos, and creating or contributing to offensive webpages (Kwan & Skoric, 2013; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007). Researchers are recently recognising a type of bullying against those with characteristic differences. Bias bullying is perpetration that directs the above methods at individuals based on group characteristics, such as race or disability (Smith, 2014).

1.3.2.1. Individual differences within types of bullying. In a review of bullying episodes in preschool children, girls engaged in indirect bullying more than boys (Vlachou, Andreou, Botsoglou, & Didaskalou, 2011), and earlier

evidence found boys engaged in more direct physical bullying (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992; Tapper & Boulton, 2004), though both genders perpetrated at similar rates. Vlachou et al. suggested, "gender-specific aggression trajectories may begin in early childhood, as young as 3 years of age" (p. 337).

Recent evidence contests this view, denying the existence of gender-typed aggressive behaviours. Juvonen, Wang, and Espinoza (2013) recruited 1,895 students from 11 schools in the US and followed them over three years. Peer nomination was used to assess social prominence, physical aggression, and rumour spreading. Peer nomination is a method that requires children's nominations of specific children in school or a class who possess certain characteristics or assume certain roles. They found that over three-time points, boys were perceived as more physically aggressive *and* as spreading more rumours; also, both types of bullying were linked to social prominence, suggesting both methods have the same goal. Consequently, relational aggression is not just a girls' tactic; boys' relational aggression may be hidden, or less likely to be labelled as bullying. Eriksen and Lyng (2018) conducted some ethnographic research by visiting schools in Norway every day for three weeks and interacting naturally with staff and pupils. On conducting group-and individual-interviews, they found that teachers believed in gender difference in bullying, regularly referring to "girl stuff" when talking about rumours and negative body language. However, when talking with the researchers, boys reported perpetrating and experiencing relational types of aggression as often as girls.

Gender role socialisation may explain some of the differences; in home and school contexts, parents and teachers may treat children differently depending on their biological sex (Oakley, 2016). For example, delinquent and aggressive

male children are seen to be punished physically by their parents, whilst non-aggressive children tend to be punished with the withdrawal of love (Oakley, 2016). It is apparent in society that males are (or are expected to be) more physically aggressive, which could ignite a cycle of using physical aggression, being punished physically by parents, and the subsequent conditioning to physically perpetrate at school. This may not only instil different reactions in boys and girls but also might reflect societal norms about male and female aggressive behaviour (see section 3.7.1. for discussion on structural inequality). Boys may appear to only use physical aggression, but they might just hide their relational aggression.

In summary, the originally labelled types of school and sibling bullying were those that could be seen or witnessed, such as physical and verbal bullying. Over the years, indirectly aggressive behaviour (such as damaging peer relationships) has also been classified as bullying, and with the invention of technology, cyberbullying has increased. Lastly, attention is being given to bias bullying. These types of bullying are well understood and usually form the basis of childhood bullying research. However, these methods of childhood bullying cannot be directly applied to the HE context without initial exploration and confirmation of their relevance. The qualitative study in Chapter 3 attempts to address this challenge by asking students what types of bullying happen at university.

1.3.3. Prevalence of bullying in the UK and other cultures. Prevalence rates vary depending on the research method used to gain the information. In a meta-analysis using 40 countries' data, Craig et al. (2009) found that 10% of the sample (21,100 students) reported perpetrating bullying in school, and 12%

(24,000 students) reported being bullied. A national report of child maltreatment by the NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children; Radford et al., 2011) found even higher rates. The NSPCC used interviews, which may have allowed for the detection of more nuanced forms of bullying and abuse. For peers, 22.2% (519) under 11s, and 35.3% (609) of 11 to 17-year olds had experienced victimisation within the past year.

Most children and young people are not involved in bullying; however, every child has the right not to be bullied. The bullying and victimisation rates in Craig et al.'s (2009) study were similar for males and females, and bullying tended to decline between the ages of 11 to 15 in all countries studied. The lowest prevalence rates of bullying were seen in Scandinavian countries, which could be related to their nationwide theoretically based anti-bullying programmes (Ttofi & Farrington, 2009). Conversely, peer victimisation rates increased above the age of 11 in the NSPCC study, indicating that bullying is still a widespread issue that is not being solved uniformly across countries.

Childhood cyberbullying rates are often lower than traditional bullying rates. In one short-term longitudinal study, 10 to 17-year-old Belgian school children were surveyed twice, six months apart. Out of the 2,128 students who completed both time points, 25% (532) of victims reported being traditionally bullied within the previous six months, whereas 10% (213) reported being cyberbullied (Pabian & Vandebosch, 2016). Those who completed only the first survey scored higher on cyber perpetration. Wolke, Lee, & Guy (2017) suggest that pure cyber victims are rare because those who traditionally bully proceed to cyberbully as well. They surveyed 2,754 adolescents aged 11-16 from UK schools about traditional and cyberbullying. Out of the complete victimisation data, 29%

(799) were victims of bullying; 73% (583 pupils) experienced traditional victimisation and only 4% (34 pupils) experienced pure cyber victimisation. Both occurred together 85% of the time. This emphasises that cyber victimisation is most likely a continuation of traditional victimisation.

Slonje and Smith (2008) surveyed 360 students (12-20 years old) from four schools and four sixth forms in Sweden on bullying experiences since the beginning of term; they found similar low cyber victimisation rates amongst sixth-formers, whilst in school (0%) and out of school (3.3%, 12 students). Although cyberbullying is less common than traditional bullying, there are many common methods of bullying electronically that can cause devastating consequences for the victim (Pieschl, Porsch, Kahl, & Klockenbusch, 2013).

It is also important to consider cultural differences within bullying research. The UK is home to over 450,000 international students (International student statistics: UK higher education, 2019) who choose to study at a UK HE institution. International students may interpret the terms bullying and victimisation differently, and so it is necessary to understand how bullying is construed, and to what extent it exists, globally.

Bullying research stemmed from Scandinavia in the late seventies and was originally known as *mobbning* (mobbing in English). One of the earliest books on bullying, “Bullying at School: What we know and what we can do” (Olweus, 1993) was originally published in Swedish and has since been translated into many languages. The term bullying was not commonly used before the 1970s, as bullying was regarded as normal school behaviour, though there is evidence of the word being mentioned as early as 1857 (Koo, 2007). It is now studied copiously around the world.

The problem of bullying remains today. Smith (2016, p. 7) stated that schools can no longer expect to say, "there is no bullying in this school," as it is a case of prevalence, not *if* it happens. The large 40-country cross-cultural study by Craig et al. (2009) found that many students had been victimised. Prevalence rates varied depending on the country; for example, only 8% (2,158) of Swedish boys reported bullying involvement, whereas 42% (2,792) of Lithuanian boys reported bullying involvement. The countries with the lowest rates were those that had national anti-bullying programmes in place, suggesting either the success of these programmes or a decrease in the social acceptability of bullying overall (which could be why more Swedish children took part in the survey). Craig and colleagues further emphasised that "bullying involvement transcends cultural and geographic boundaries" (Craig et al., 2009, p. 5), and proposed that youth who continue to be victimised at older ages are vulnerable to long-term problems. Bullying is still an issue in the UK and other cultures, and continues to be linked with enduring issues.

Cultural differences also extend to the language, terms used, and types of bullying. Different countries equate similar terms to this aggressive behaviour regardless of whether their language includes the actual word bullying. For example, in Japanese schools, the nearest word to bullying is *Ijime*, which is aggressive behaviour by a dominant person in a group, directed at someone in the same group (Morita, 1985). In one review, Hilton, Anngela-Cole, and Wakita (2010) stated that indirect bullying is more common than verbal bullying in Japan, and that rejection within the social group is considered as damaging as physical aggression.

Many studies report moderate childhood bullying prevalence rates, but bullying still needs tackling even when rates are low. Studies often research links between bullying and long-term issues, which emphasise the importance of investigating HE bullying. Issues arising from childhood bullying may affect the likelihood of being bullied at university, and current bullying may compound any longstanding issues. Chapter 5 and 6 discuss the results of a bullying scale taken by HE students in the UK. The levels of HE bullying can be identified from the data.

1.3.4. Bullying participant roles. Based on a comprehensive review, Salmivalli (2010) proposed that bullying is a group process involving various roles. She outlined six main roles that apply within school bullying: bully, victim, assistant of bully, reinforcer of bully, outsiders (uninvolved), and defenders of the victim. Assistants join in with the ringleader bully; reinforcers positively reinforce the bully through laughing or cheering; outsiders withdraw from involvement, and; defenders side with the victim. Defenders of victims play an important role as they can potentially moderate bullying and the negative effects through the comfort and support they offer the target (Sainio, Veenstra, Huitsing, & Salmivalli, 2011). Sainio et al. (2011) conducted a large-scale study in Finland with 7,481 children aged 10 to 12 years, from 356 classes. The children completed an online survey and those who identified as victims were asked to nominate peers who had defended them whilst they were bullied. The children were also asked to rate classmates they liked the most and least, and who they considered most popular. Results showed that 1,611 children (23% of the sample) reported being victimised, and three quarters of those had nominated defenders. Defending behaviour was frequently displayed by peers with the same gender to the victim,

and more girls defended than boys. Defended victims had higher levels of self-esteem and peer acceptance, whereas those with no defenders had the highest levels of victimisation and peer rejection. A quarter of the victimised sample were not helped by peers, and these were the most frequently bullied children. Defenders can have a positive impact, but studies find that defenders are fewer in number than the other roles (Salmivalli, Lappalainen, & Lagerspetz, 1998).

Bullying affects people in different ways; those in any role can feel discomfort and negative emotions. Adults and children disapprove of bullying, however, many still hold negative opinions of victims. Bystanders claim to support victims, though they often think victims are responsible for their plight and do not intervene (Randall, 1997). By standing by, “the reinforcement is the approval of an audience of onlookers, whose silent approbation is like thunderous applause” (Randall, 1997, p.15). Thus, it is important to investigate perspectives on bullying roles, as some people may have the power to prevent or stop the bullying,

Roles may transfer to other peer group contexts; young adults at university could be bully-assistants, outsiders, or defenders. Witnesses may find it difficult to defend if they are unaware of what constitutes as bullying; this relates to the need for exploring HE bullying definitions. Similarly, it would be difficult to reject an accepted group norm of teasing (i.e. becoming an assistant of a bully) if it is believed to be harmless fun. Subsequently, it is necessary to ask students questions that will reveal group norms and their understanding of bullying (see Chapter 3).

1.3.5. Sibling bullying. Peer bullying has amassed the most research, but sibling bullying should not be ignored. The NSPCC study mentioned (2011)

reported that for siblings, 23.7% (608) of under 11s, and 16% (275) of 11 to 17-year olds had experienced victimisation during the past year. Within the family context, the potential for harm is abundant; an abuser or aggressor has constant victim access and intimate knowledge of how to cause upset (Radford et al., 2011). Siblings share their free time at home, and sometimes this time is without adult supervision (Coyle, Demaray, Malecki, Tennant, & Klossing, 2017); consequently, sibling victimisation rates are as high as peer victimisation.

Hoetger, Hazen, and Brank (2015) surveyed 392 undergraduates with siblings from one large American university. They were asked about childhood bullying and victimisation experiences between peers and siblings. Four weeks later, they were asked for their perceptions on whether sibling violence should be classed as bullying. The respondents reported more sibling bullying and victimisation than peer bullying and victimisation, but only 40% (158) thought bullying was an acceptable term to describe sibling violence, with others normalising sibling fighting. The normalisation of sibling fighting and rivalry seems so common that society appears to be desensitised to the damaging consequences. Children may be unlikely to report sibling bullying because this kind of conflict is cast as harmless rivalry. Perhaps researchers have given less attention to sibling bullying because there have been few reports (or reports only to parents) from children at the time of the incidents (Hoetger et al., 2015; Tucker & Finkelhor, 2015).

Sibling bullying studies show an increased prevalence that warrants further investigation. In one large UK based survey study, Tippett and Wolke (2015) found that 46% (1,856) of 10 to 15-year olds had been victims of sibling aggression (defined as a composite of physical and verbal attacks, stealing, and

teasing). Similarly, Tucker, Finkelhor, Shattuck, and Turner (2013) found high victimisation rates using data from the National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence. They telephone-interviewed 1,705 children (or their parents) with siblings from the US and found that in the previous year, 37% (630) of children from two-parent families had experienced at least one incident of sibling victimisation. The most common types of victimisation were physical, property, and psychological victimisation. Experiences of physical injury also increased with age. This shows the urgency for further research on sibling bullying; children should not be exposed to physical violence in the home, from parents or siblings. Exposure to early violence not only involves personal harm, but it also may desensitise children so they continue to be involved in violent behaviour whilst growing up.

Using data from a UK community-based cohort (6,928 children), researchers found that siblings also experience name-calling and are made fun of (Bowes, Wolke, Joinson, Lereya, & Lewis, 2014). Children were sent postal surveys on sibling bullying at age 12 years; the data from these were compared with outcomes recorded by the young adults at age 18. Within this cohort, name-calling was experienced several times a week, with younger children and females more likely to be victims (Bowes et al., 2014; Tippett & Wolke, 2015). Other findings were that bullied siblings were more likely to have an older brother, be in families of lower social class and with higher levels of domestic violence and child maltreatment, and have mothers suffering from higher levels of maternal depression (Bowes et al., 2014). Tippet and Wolke (2015) further found that sibling victimisation was linked to harsh parenting, poorer family relationships, and families with three or more children. These studies demonstrate the ecological

nature of bullying, whereby context-specific factors may interact to produce negative responses.

Coyle et al. (2017) surveyed 372 students with siblings from two elementary schools in the US, finding that sibling bullying was associated with an increased risk of poorer outcomes than peer bullying. One outcome was a doubled risk of self-harm and depression at age 18 compared to non-bullied siblings, even when controlling for confounding factors (Bowes et al., 2014). If students experience bullying at school and home, they may be at greater risk of developing internalising problems than those victimised in one setting (i.e. confining feelings to the self, such as self-blaming and self-shaming, rather than projecting externally, such as attention problems and disruptive behaviour; Bowes et al., 2014). Girls bullied by siblings were especially at risk of depressive symptoms and emotional problems, however, social support buffered these associations (Coyle et al., 2017).

Children bullied by siblings also report higher rates of peer victimisation (Bowes et al., 2014); an increase of one standard deviation on the sibling victimisation scale increased the odds by 69% of school victimisation (Tippett & Wolke, 2015). Individuals who bully or are victimised can transpose these roles to other ages and contexts. Unlike school, however, sibling relationships are not self-selected, and victimised siblings cannot escape their home environment to avoid the bully (Bowes et al., 2014; Coyle et al., 2017). The sibling dyad can be uniquely compared with students living in halls of residence; they do not self-select their flatmates (at least not in first year), they are unsupervised most of the time (other than Resident Advisers who are fellow students), and cannot escape

their housemates easily (halls bullying is mentioned in Chapter 3, and sibling bullying is investigated further in Chapters 5 and 6).

1.3.6. Immediate consequences and coping with bullying. Bullying can have serious effects on the victim, regardless of relationship to the perpetrator and their perpetration method. Graham, Bellmore, and Mize (2006) used data from the first wave of a large longitudinal study on peer relationships. The sample consisted of 1,475 sixth graders (mean age 11.5) from 11 schools in the US. Using peer nominations and self-reports, victims and aggressors were identified, alongside psychological outcomes. Victims reported significantly more loneliness, social anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem than non-victims. Furthermore, victims were more likely to self-blame and feel unsafe in the school environment. The data were from only the first wave of the longitudinal study so did not establish true cause and effect, only associations.

Academic problems are also linked to bullying; Lopez and DuBois (2005) surveyed 508 children from one US middle school on peer victimisation and rejection and gathered data on grade point averages and absences from school. They found that peer victimisation and peer rejection independently contributed to emotional and academic adjustment problems. Using the data of 2,300 school children from 11 middle schools in the US, Juvonen, Wang, and Espinoza (2011) found that the more *bullied* students thought they were, the lower grades they obtained, and the less engaged they were rated by teachers across multiple time points.

Bullying in schools is also linked to poorer academic outcomes for other members of the school compared to schools with less bullying. With a large cross-sectional sample of over 7,000 Norwegian pupils, Strøm, Thoresen, Wentzel-

Larsen, and Dyb (2013) found that children who attend schools with higher bullying rates report lower grades than those attending schools with lower bullying rates. This coincides with Lacey and Cornell's (2013) research from 286 schools (7,304 students), where the prevalence rate of teasing and bullying negatively correlated with pass rates on standardised exams. In both cases, the effects of bullying extended beyond the individual and affected the school climate. The intrusion of bullying into the school environment can evoke an unhealthy climate that reduces student motivation and engagement. Alternatively, a school with widespread social problems and unhealthy climate may lead to bullying and poor achievement, representing a cyclical dynamic.

Research also shows that children who are bullied repeatedly and by different people or methods (referred to as a dose-response relationship), have the worst outcomes. For example, Zwierzynska, Wolke, and Lereya (2013) used data from parents and 3,692 children from the Avon Longitudinal study; children who self-reported stable bullying (i.e. at two time points in childhood) scored higher for depression than those reporting bullying at only one-time point. Similarly, children who reported being bullied directly *and* indirectly had higher depression scores than those bullied by one method. This study used a subsample from a large longitudinal research project and so was able to make justified cause-effect conclusions.

Children often adopt strategies to cope with the consequences of bullying. Coping strategies can be internalising, such as feeling upset, and pretending nothing happened, or externalising, such as fighting back (Smith, 2014). Age, gender, and social status may determine the chosen coping method and the degree of success. The recommended approach is to tell an adult, as stated in the UK's

first anti-bullying pack, “Don’t Suffer in Silence” (Department for Education, 1994). Children who are cyberbullied often opt to tell someone, but technological solutions like “blocking” or “unfriending” tend to be their first strategy (Perren et al., 2012). Internalising the effects of bullying is likely to be an ineffective method of coping and can lead to long term mental health issues (see 1.3.7.).

1.3.7. Long-term consequences of bullying. Often, the negative effects of bullying impact long-term psychological health with issues such as anxiety and depression (Ranta, Kaltiala-Heino, Pelkonen, & Marttunen, 2009; Roth, Coles, & Heimberg, 2002). In a longitudinal retrospective study with samples from three countries (totalling 884), teachers and university students were surveyed about their past victimisation (Schäfer et al., 2004); 28% (248) of respondents reported being victimised at school, with 8% (71) being victimised in primary and secondary school. Victimisation was also more common in the workplace for those who had been previously victimised. Being a victim in school may have negatively affected perceptions of the self and relating to others; these adults scored lower on self-esteem. Self-and-other perceptions are a central feature of this thesis, thus, associated studies will be discussed further in Chapters 2 and 6. The limitation of this study using retrospective data is that cause and effect cannot be established, though confirming associations provides a foundation for longitudinal research to build on.

Wolke, Copeland, Angold, and Costello (2013) support the existence of a dose-response relationship between bullying and negative outcomes. Using data from the Great Smoky Mountains longitudinal study in the US (1,420 children), they found consistent patterns of effects between being bullied, wealth, and social relationships. The children were surveyed annually from age 7 to 16, and four

times thereafter up to age 26; those who were classed as bullies, victims, or bully-victims, were all at risk of poverty in early adulthood and disrupted social relationships, even after controlling for confounds. Bully-victims and victims showed the poorest health outcomes. Additionally, Copeland et al. (2014) found evidence for links between childhood bullying and long-term physiological disruption. Being a victim in childhood predicted higher levels of C-reactive protein (CRP; a marker of inflammation that can lead to a range of physiological disorders) compared to those who were uninvolved. Perpetrators had no significant rises in CRP levels, supporting the theory that they gain from bullying.

Takizawa, Maughan, and Arsenault (2014) support Wolke et al.'s (2013) findings using a sample from The National Child Development Study, where British children were assessed incrementally from age 7 up to 50 years. Parents reported their children's bullying experiences at 7 and 11 years old, and data from 7,771 of these children was available when they were 23 and 50 years old. Being bullied in childhood was associated with higher levels of psychological distress at 23, and at age 50. Being frequently bullied was associated with increased depression, anxiety, and suicidality at age 45. For some, the consequences of bullying may be life-altering. School experiences can contribute to self-and other-impressions, which continue to have an impact over the lifespan.

Bullying can affect child development and impact experiences of school and social life. The effects may also predispose one to victimisation or lack of esteem and confidence later in life. This directly relates to my research, where childhood bullying experiences (i.e. in school and at home) were recorded, alongside current bullying experiences and wellbeing. Theorised long-term associations between past bullying and current wellbeing were observed, whilst

incorporating mediator variables, one being current bullying experiences (see Chapter 6).

1.3.8. Stability of bullying. If the negative effects of bullying can be demonstrated 40 years later, then all developmental levels should be included in bullying research. Those who continue being victimised as older children and EAs are likely to be vulnerable to longer-term problems (Craig et al., 2009). This is consistent with a dose-response relationship; each time bullying is experienced, the negative effects may add to, and compound, past bullying effects. Childhood bullying may not only be linked to poor psychological or physical health in early adulthood, but poor psychological health may also predispose one to victimisation. Therefore, students in HE who were bullied in childhood may suffer the after-effects during their time at university, which in turn may link to being targeted again.

Bully/victim roles may have some stability throughout life, and across time and contexts. Individual factors could be partially responsible for bullying involvement; however, new contexts may reflect the same type of environment that bullying happened previously. For example, students bullied in high school may associate academic environments with interpersonal maltreatment (Goodboy, Martin, & Goldman, 2016). This could trigger maladaptive behaviour in preparation for maltreatment at university; due to the shared features of school and university, the individual may expect an attack, and therefore prepare for one by isolating or internalising emotions. This will be covered further in Chapter 6. Furthermore, there may be structural similarities in past and current environments, for example, organisations entrenched in racism, which may predispose an individual to further attacks and reinforce their victim role.

1.3.9. Protective and risk factors for bullying and victimisation. Many factors could predispose a child to perpetrate or be victimised. Identifying these variables may aid the development of preventative methods or tools. However, investigations into individual factors have usually predominated, which could be interpreted as blaming individuals for their plight. Nevertheless, individual factors are important, it is likely that the social context interacts with individual factors to provide an atmosphere primed for bullying behaviour.

A meta-analysis by Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim, and Sadek (2010) explored the predictors of bullying and victimisation in childhood and adolescence. They studied eight individual and five contextual characteristics. Out of the 153 studies included in the analysis, the strongest individual predictor of perpetrating bullying was externalising behaviour, and the strongest predictor for being a victim was social incompetence. The strongest contextual predictors of being a bully were peer influences and community, and for being a victim were school climate and peer status (i.e. quality of peer relationships, popularity, likeability, rejection). The strength of the relationship between internalising behaviour and victimisation increased significantly in adolescence. Typical characteristics of those who bully were externalising behaviour, social competence, and negative attitudes and beliefs about others; they often came from a conflict-filled family environment with poor monitoring and were more likely to appraise the school community as negative. Those who were victimised typically had internalising symptoms, a lack of social skills, negative self-related cognitions, difficulty in solving problems, and they originated from a negative community, family, and school environment (where they were rejected by their peers).

Moderating effects were also found for age and peer status: a significant relationship between bullying and negative peer status was found during childhood, but not adolescence. Although those who bully are rejected and disliked by peers during childhood, they appear to be accepted and liked in adolescence. The variable of age changed the strength of the association between being a bully and popularity, so the older the individual who bullied, the more popular they became. This has implications for populations in other contexts and poses the question of whether age is a moderator of the association between peer status and victimisation in EA, full adulthood, and older adulthood.

A social variable that was found to increase vulnerability to bullying effects was a child's relationship with their teacher. Boulton et al. (2009) surveyed a sample of 363 children from seven primary schools in the UK using self-report and peer nominations. They were interested in levels of victimisation, perceived classroom safety, and relationships with teachers, and found that increased levels of bullying were associated with lower levels of perceived safety in the classroom and playground. A moderation effect was identified; those who were bullied often had lower perceived classroom safety due to poorer relationships with teachers. A poor relationship with a teacher moderated the strength of the association between being bullied and classroom safety. Consequently, it could be suggested that HE students' relationships with their instructors may impact their feelings of safety and belonging in the lecture theatre, or to the university.

Using data from the same study, Boulton et al. (2012) examined the links between being bullied and classroom concentration. They found that higher levels of peer bullying were linked to lower levels of classroom concentration. Feelings of safety in the classroom and playground were linked to increased classroom

concentration. Furthermore, the link between peer bullying and classroom concentration was mediated by feelings of safety and perceived relationships with teachers. Thus, the negative effects that bullying may have on classroom concentration, and therefore academic achievement, may act via the variable of feeling unsafe. The implication that a good relationship with a teacher can annul the effects of being bullied through feeling safe is important for promoting academic success at all educational levels.

Consequently, there are a variety of individual and contextual variables that may predispose or protect one from bullying and its effects. Cook et al. (2010) suggest that sophisticated research designs that consider the person and their environment provide a better understanding of the conditions in which bullying is likely to happen. This aligns with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, which advocates measuring as many variables as possible in research studies (from all levels of relationships and interactions). This is discussed further in Chapter 2. Individual characteristics *and* wider contextual variables can be associated with and responsible for issues; this is a view that minimises bias towards victim-blaming. Some variables investigated in schools can also be applied to the university context (e.g. social support and self-related cognitions). These are explored further in Chapter 6.

1.4. Bullying and Victimisation in the Workplace

As mentioned, those bullied in school or by siblings can also be bullied in adulthood, suggesting similarities between school, the home environment, and the workplace. Furthermore, there are similarities between the workplace and the HE environment. Universities and companies are businesses, and neither are compulsory like school. If you dislike your job, you can search for another, or

pursue further education. Likewise, if a student dislikes their university, they can transfer to another or seek a job. However, children can only change schools with their parents' cooperation. They cannot leave school, as it is a legal requirement for them to attend; parents can be prosecuted for not educating their child ("School attendance and absence", n.d.). Additionally, the workplace and university populace are adults, not children. There is crossover between contexts, suggesting that environmental variables and/or the retention of roles may be responsible for the similarities and differences in bullying behaviour.

1.4.1. Defining bullying in the workplace. Organisations have a stake in identifying staff bullying, but similar definitional struggles affect its recognition. Childhood bullying involves physical, verbal, social, and cyberbullying; however, Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (2003) suggest that workplace bullying is more psychological, for example, work interference, isolation, personal verbal attacks, and rumour spreading. Saunders, Huynh, and Goodman-Delahunty (2007) proposed five key features of workplace bullying: targets experience negative behaviour, the behaviour is persistent, targets experience harm, targets perceive they are less powerful, and targets label themselves as a victim.

By focusing on victim perceptions, Saunders et al.'s (2007) definition digresses from Randall's (1997) claim that the perpetrator always intends to cause harm or fear of harm. This updated definition is likely to benefit the workplace population; having to evidence intent to claim one is being bullied may favour a perpetrator who bullies indirectly. Alternatively, if a target is strong-willed and efficacious, they may be unaffected by a bully's attack, and so not report it; as a result, the perpetrator's behaviour would not be classed as bullying because it did not cause harm. If a similar attack was directed at the same individual again (i.e.

repeated), or at another unconfident or unassertive individual, the behaviour would be labelled bullying. Not labelling the first instance as bullying would allow the person to target another. Additionally, Saunders et al.'s component of the target experiences harm could be altered to reflect potential harm, or a behaviour which many would see as harmful, similar to the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, s 8(1) (b) whereby a "reasonable person" would view the behaviour as harassment. The victims' perceptions should always be considered.

ACAS (The Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service) use the terms bullying and harassment interchangeably but give brief separate definitions. They define bullying as, "Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient" (ACAS, 2014, p. 3). ACAS further state that whatever form the behaviour takes it is always unwanted by the target. Thus, even when unaffected by bullying, the experience is still unwanted. Although an unwanted action may be viewed as a joke or mean comment, these actions can still be reported as inappropriate behaviour.

Instead of repetition being a requirement for bullying, Randall's (1997) fear of harm may suffice. A one-off incident may induce fear of future victimisation; the same negative effects may be experienced as though the person *were* being bullied. The repetition challenge is analogous to cyberbullying (i.e. deciding whether one malicious incident is classed as bullying if it is shared millions of times); the effect on the target remains the same whether the perpetrator or the Twitter universe repeats it. Furthermore, victim-status often depends on when and how often the individual was bullied (i.e. how many times

per week in the past six months), but if a one-off incident induced fear of future victimisation, the frequency issue becomes controversial.

Incivility is often the label applied to bullying behaviour, as the term bullying can be seen as childish (Randall, 1997). More individuals would be classed as victims of bullying if their fear of harm was considered, but this is rarely accounted for so they do not label themselves as victims (Saunders et al., 2007). The workplace context should be explored in more depth to uncover coinciding aspects or expose new features of bullying. Definitions ought to be re-evaluated regularly to reflect the time and context.

1.4.2. Prevalence of bullying in the workplace. Workplace bullying prevalence rates are difficult to estimate due to the likelihood of under-reporting. A study by ACAS found that workers were too afraid to speak to their superiors about bullying, but 20,000 calls were made to ACAS during 2015 regarding bullying and harassment (ACAS, 2015). Evidence from workplace bullying research reflects the high number of calls to ACAS. Bairy et al. (2007) found that approximately half their sample (89) of junior doctors in India reported being bullied, with most of the reports made by doctors under 30. In this sample, only a small percentage of those who identified as being bullied reported this to a superior. Nurses also suffer abuse from their patients, colleagues, and families. A multi-region meta-analysis by Spector, Zhou, and Che (2014) found that 30% (45,404) of 151,347 nurses had been physically assaulted, 67% (101,402) reported non-physical assault, 37% (55,998) reported bullying, and 27% (40,863) reported sexual harassment. Europe had the lowest bullying incidence rates (perhaps due to the increased recognition) and the Middle East had the highest. Nurses in the Anglo-region countries (UK, USA, Canada, Australia) had the highest exposure

overall to negative behaviour, Asia had the least, and the Middle East had higher levels of non-physical violence and low levels of physical violence. Another multi-national meta-analysis of 86 workplace bullying samples found prevalence rates ranging from 11% to 18% when participants self-labelled as victims (Nielsen, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2010).

These studies provide examples to the extent of workplace bullying. It is of organisational interest to prioritise addressing bullying for economic success as well as individuals' health. Because the participants in these samples and the callers to ACAS are adults, it poses the question of whether students would also be reluctant to report bullying; this may depend on the individual and the context. They would first need to identify the behaviour as bullying, and then feel able to report it through the appropriate channels. Rates of student bullying can be seen in Chapter 5.

1.4.3. Consequences of bullying in the workplace. The consequences of workplace bullying are far-ranging. When a worker experiences harm from a co-worker or superior, they are likely to avoid work or take a leave of absence, costing the employer, who must accommodate for absences or poor work performance (Rigby, 2001). At the individual level, a meta-analysis of 63 workplace bullying studies from around the world found that workplace bullying is linked to, and predicts, depression, anxiety, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms (Verkuil, Atasayi, & Molendijk, 2015). Verkuil et al. (2015) investigated the cross-sectional and longitudinal associations, and further found support for a cyclical model showing that bullying can lead to psychological problems, and existing psychological problems can predispose to being bullied. A significant reversed relationship was found between baseline mental health

complaints and exposure to later workplace bullying, that is, mental health complaints predicted experiences of workplace bullying.

Consequences of workplace bullying can range from the individual to the organisation level (Saunders et al., 2007). Taking absenteeism, turnover, and productivity into account, the cost of bullying to organisations in the UK has been estimated at £13.75 billion (Giga, Hoel, & Lewis, 2008). Bullying may also engender a hostile climate, affecting all colleagues; it could even be embedded in organisational culture, surpassing one individual targeting another (Cowie, Naylor, Rivers, Smith, & Pereira, 2002). In a toxic work climate, individuals are unlikely to receive help, which could result in illness and stress, costing the individual and the organisation. Organisational climate is vital in influencing perceptions of unacceptable behaviour; for example, if sexual harassment is entrenched within a company, this leaves a hostile and unproductive atmosphere for any member of the harassed group (i.e. predominantly women).

Consequently, it is important that organisations work with employees to create a positive atmosphere where bullying and unacceptable behaviours are agreed between all staff. This could lead to an open and communicative workplace environment where problems are resolved when they arise. Similarly, the university climate could be either conducive to negative behaviour or open to tackling incidents appropriately if they happen. For example, at one UK university, there was recently a very poor response to a group of men joking and threatening sexual assault against their female peers via social media. The university handled the situation inappropriately, thus leading to a climate of mistrust and dissatisfaction from many students thereafter (Batty, 2019a).

1.4.4. Coping with bullying in the workplace. In the workplace, some individuals cope with bullying by implementing assertiveness skills (Randall, 1997) and some organisations offer assertiveness training. However, assertiveness training is often framed in a way that places responsibility on the victim for dealing with someone else's bad behaviour. For example, Buback (2004) outlines the development of a research module for nurses who work in perioperative settings - these were the target population because they often report verbal abuse from surgeons. The module educates individuals about types of situations that may have precipitated the abuse and gives assertiveness techniques. Arguably, it is the abusers' responsibility to recognise their own unacceptable behaviour, rather than the nurses' to be prophetic of when a surgeon may start abusing them. Training should be implemented for all individuals in an organisation.

Unassertive individuals may find it difficult to report bullying in the workplace; as mentioned, 20,000 calls about bullying and harassment to the ACAS helpline suggests that some who are targeted are unsure of coping strategies (ACAS, 2015). Organisational culture dictates acceptable behaviour. If bullying is minimised by the organisation or the superiors - or the bullying is perpetrated *by* the superior - individuals have few options. Hence, adequate preventative policy and practice should be in place, of which all employees are aware for all workplaces, schools, and universities.

1.5. Summary

This chapter has introduced the childhood and workplace bullying literature, outlined the problems with definitions and types of bullying, reported prevalence rates, coping strategies, bullying roles, short-and-long-term consequences, and risk and protective factors for bullying and victimisation. It has

profiled similarities and differences between the contexts of school, home, HE, and the workplace, which logically leads to an exploration of HE bullying research in Chapter 2. This is followed by a consideration of other relevant student variables in HE, such as mental health and wellbeing, and finishes with theoretical frameworks that are applied to the rest of the thesis.

2. Bullying and Victimisation across the Lifespan: Higher Education

2.1. Chapter Overview

This chapter begins by examining the HE bullying literature. Young adults are no longer children, but they may not be "fully adult" either (Arnett, 2015, p.21). Arnett suggests that young adults are EAs - a newly identified transition period of development between adolescence and adulthood. HE student bullying research thus far has tended to use the same measurement categories used in schools, even though the traditional student population are at a different developmental stage. Studies may be measuring behaviour that is not reflective of bullying amongst EA students. Therefore, using a similar structure to Chapter 1, HE-specific definitions and types of bullying will be explored, followed by prevalence, roles, consequences, coping, and stability of bullying in HE. The section will end with a comparison of understandings, methods, and prevalence of bullying between contexts.

This then leads into a section on wellbeing, which is the state of being well, rather than the presence or absence of mental illness or disorder (Huppert & So, 2013), as defined according to the medical model of psychological distress. One can experience various symptoms of mental ill-health but not pass diagnosable thresholds. Human experience is best assigned to a scale ranging from severely unwell or unhappy, to feeling in the best possible state of mind. Or, human experience could be appraised as having two continuums, with one measuring negative emotions and one measuring positive emotions (Houghton & Anderson, 2017; mentioned further in section 6.5). Measuring subjective wellbeing captures positive and/or negative feelings and functioning that pathological diagnostic tests would miss; the absence of mental health problems

does not automatically indicate a positive state of mind (Huppert & So, 2013; Huppert & Whittington, 2003).

The next section outlines student wellbeing and mental health issues, alongside other relevant issues in HE. This leads to a discussion of theories guiding the research. As well as examining different developmental levels, different ecological levels are considered (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Theories relating to these ecological levels and how they impact the bully-victim dyad will be explored. These include the individual level, groups and belongingness at the social level, and anti-bullying policies at the higher-order organisational level. Baumeister and Leary (1995) conceived the theory of belongingness, suggesting that humans have an innate drive to form close and lasting interpersonal relationships with at least a few others. This concept has been closely linked to wellbeing; those with lasting close interpersonal relationships often have higher levels of wellbeing and those who feel they belong often identify as happier. Subsequently, victimisation could affect wellbeing and belonging; targets may isolate themselves (i.e. not belonging) and feel anxious and unhappy (lowered wellbeing). These relationships will be discussed in Chapter 6.

2.2. Definitions of Bullying in HE

Young adults' views of bullying in HE are scarce, and the same definition that is used with school children is often applied to university contexts, regardless of fit. Young-Jones, Fursa, Byrket, and Sly (2015) suggested that students might have an overly harsh view of what bullying is. They questioned 130 US undergraduates about bullying; students did not consider it to be a problem at university, even though 49% (64) reported experiencing individual acts labelled as bullying by the researchers. For this study, an operationalised bullying definition

was not provided. Students may have been reluctant to class less serious behaviour as bullying, leading to underreporting. Young-Jones et al. found that four times as many students met the well-known definition of being bullied than the number of students who claimed to be a victim (64 students compared to 16). It remains unclear whether students were unaware of bullying criteria, or whether they were unaffected by the negative acts so did not believe they were victimised; perhaps more students would have identified as victims if the researchers provided a definition of bullying.

Further evidence by Crosslin and Golman (2014) supports the conflicting nature of the term cyberbullying. They asked 54 students in six focus groups for their opinions on cyberbullying. Some claimed the term was too childish and it did not happen at university; others disagreed, saying that cyberbullying happens but is ignored. Further still, some suggested that bullying is a rite of passage and people will bully regardless of the environment. Those who acknowledged university cyberbullying claimed the motivations were for retaliation, romantic disagreements, and the infliction of harm; but the authors did not identify themes of a power imbalance or repetition. The students' cyberbullying knowledge may be limited as they were not given a definition, but they had been exposed to technology all their lives, which qualified them to discuss it. The current generation of students are embedded in a different culture to the researchers who are studying them (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2010). Each generation develops in a unique *macrosystem* with differing influences, politics, and social norms (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; see 2.12.). The HE study samples were the first generation to have the internet and smartphones in their homes from birth, and so if researchers have a different worldview, it may cause a mismatch between

researcher interpretation and the researched population. As a student researcher, I have the advantage of identifying with students, as computer technology became commercially available whilst I was a child, which may provide additional insight.

Prensky (2001) coined the terms *digital native* and *digital immigrant* to describe the differences between those born into technology and those who have developed socially and morally in a pre-digital age. Although this sounds like an externally valid concept, it has been criticised for lacking evidence and theoretical underpinnings. Research suggests that the newest generation is not a homogenous group with the same internet usage and contributions, and the terms digital native and digital immigrant have been contested (Bennett, Maton, & Kervin, 2008; Jones, Ramanau, Cross, & Healing, 2010) Although technology usage may differ within the newest generation, they have still grown up in the same period. Social constructivists like Vygotsky (1962) would suggest that concept formation is a product of social and cultural growth; therefore, students could define behaviour based on their unique technological macrosystem. Hence, it is important to investigate young adults' perceptions of victimisation within a technological environment.

Byrne, Dooley, Fitzgerald and Dolphin (2016, p.6) used existing data from a large cross-sectional Irish study (6,085 participants) that asked students the question, "bullying can be described as…?" The younger participants (out of an age range of 15 to 19) described bullying using typologies, whereas the older participants showed more interest in victims' feelings. This suggests that as children grow into young adults, their evaluations of aggressive behaviour may change, and so may their definitions. None of the students mentioned repetition or

a power imbalance whilst describing bullying, even though these are two of the three main components of the common definition cited by Smith (2004), discussed in Chapter 1. Thus, each study must decide whether to measure only what falls within existing definitions, or whether participants' own meanings should be explored. Open-ended questions will obtain broader data, but this data may be difficult to compare with other studies and hinder the estimation of prevalence rates of bullying in HE (Byrne et al., 2016).

Using a pre-focus group questionnaire, Brewer, Cave, Massey, Vurdelja, and Freeman (2014) presented 18 female students from a western US university with ten cyberbullying scenarios; seven out of the ten scenarios met the legal definition in the USA for cyberbullying. Most students did not correctly identify the cyberbullying scenarios; even though they were familiar with the term, they were unclear what it encompassed. During the focus groups, some students recognised their role as a perpetrator or victim based on the definition given during the session. Cyberbullying behaviours were recorded in another study with 131 US undergraduates. Thirty per cent (39) of students said they had experienced undesirable communication but did not class it as bullying (Walker, Sockman, & Koehn, 2011). An operationalised definition *was* given at the beginning of this survey, but the esoteric definition used (from an article in a camping magazine) perhaps was not a valid representation of cyberbullying, and that was why students did not match their undesirable communication with the term. Alternatively, the students may have felt unhurt by the online communication and so did not class the negative electronic communications as cyberbullying.

Intentionality and harm were considered further in an American study with 54 undergraduate students (aged 18 to 27) in six focus groups. Some participants

said the sender must intend harm for it to be classed as cyberbullying, even though the intention is difficult to ascertain, and jokes can cause unintended harm (Crosslin & Golman, 2014). Another US study surveyed 196 university students asking them to describe what cyberbullying involves. There were mixed responses about the intentionality of the bullying. Students said cyberbullying was perpetrated to gain power or to feel part of a group; some mentioned that the victim provokes it. Others viewed internet aggression as meanness and not a display of power or dominance over another or within a group, as the common definition states. Myers and Cowie (2017) stated that student beliefs about bullying in HE (i.e. reasons for- and levels of- bullying) need exploring further because many are unaware of the seriousness of bullying.

From the available evidence, it seems that young adults do not have a collective definition and understanding of bullying within HE. In some of the studies, the students met the criteria for being bullied but would not report being bullied themselves. Either they were not affected by the behaviour, they did not have enough information about the term to categorise themselves as bullied, or they rejected the label. Many young people in the EA phase are still developing a coherent identity, and conflicting behaviour and feelings are likely to be present. Therefore, for the sake of replicability and clarity, an applicable definition should be presented to each population studied. It is important that understandings of students' bullying perceptions are furthered and a solid definition provided whilst conducting research. This will enable students to make a concrete decision about whether bullying has happened to them and may even serve to validate previously minimised or ignored experiences. With its qualitative component, the current research attempted to develop a deeper understanding of bullying in HE.

University students' conceptions of bullying were explored before administering a survey to measure occurrences (Chapter 3).

2.3. Types of Bullying in HE

As well as adopting school-derived bullying definitions for HE, most researchers also measure the same types, assuming bullying in both contexts is similar. School and HE contexts are educational establishments, but their populations are at different developmental stages. Information gathered thus far from HE students may reflect understandings based on their own school experiences, especially if the questions are phrased around physical, social, verbal, and cyberbullying. Students may answer with schoolyard-type bullying in mind and minimise or disregard other negative experiences at university. Chapell et al. (2006) surveyed 119 undergraduates at a US university about current and retrospective victimisation using the categories of verbal, physical, and social bullying. However, these categories may not represent the entire range of negative HE behaviour. Using an open-ended method (e.g. asking how you get bullied) like Sinkkonen, Puhakka, and Meriläinen (2014) and Byrne et al. (2016) may be the initial step needed to gain inclusive research data. From Sinkkonen et al.'s survey study of 2,732 students at one Finnish university, students responded to the open-ended question with discrimination, exclusion, pressurising, name-calling, and gossip. The researchers categorised these behaviours into Indirect Public, Direct Verbal, Indirect Individual, and Physical Harassment. These are new categories compared to school and could be developed with further studies.

Based on the existing literature, Doğruer and Yaratan (2014) developed a HE bullying scale using a sample of 211 students from one Turkish university. Their categories reflected school-based research: verbal, physical, emotional, and

cyber. Those classed as victims indicated experiencing emotional and verbal bullying more often than physical or cyberbullying. Chapter 3 details my attempt to first establish whether new categories were needed for the student population based on explorative focus groups with students. The data from the focus groups were then developed into categories forming a new scale.

The HE research does, however, show *some* similarities with childhood bullying categories. Brock, Oikonomidoy, Wulfing, Pennington, & Obenchain (2014) conducted interviews with six female members of an education course, and found that relational bullying was commonly reported, fitting into the category of social and/or psychological bullying. The behaviours comprised of snide comments, clique groups, and making fun of students and tutors; these have all be identified in school bullying research.

Lund (2017) supported the finding that relational and social bullying are common in HE. She surveyed 3,229 students from five Norwegian universities, supplementing the surveys with ten interviews and three focus groups. She was interested in discovering what types of bullying there were in HE and found social exclusion was common within the qualitative data. Students claimed that exclusion was perpetrated by the middle classes and that it usually happens to one person in the class who is socially weird (because nobody wants to associate with them). They further said that it can be difficult to socialise when most activities involve parties and alcohol and that they sometimes get left out of activities when arranged within earshot.

In addition to social exclusion, other types of bullying within HE have been identified. Akbulut and Eristi (2011) surveyed 254 students, finding the following cyberbullying behaviours: harassing or obscene emails, receiving

messages with religious or political content, gossipy and inappropriate chat, and confronting cursing whilst using instant messaging. HE bullying can have a direct verbal component (i.e. Sinkkonen et al., 2014), although some students believe verbal gossip is normal and harmless. Leenaars and Rinaldi (2010) conducted a mixed-methods study with a sample of 42 Canadian university students; they filled in questionnaires about indirect aggression and a subset (18 students) completed a journal, reflecting on their positive and negative daily interactions. Across all journals, gossiping was denoted as benign and an entertaining way to pass the time. There are clear discrepancies between what is deemed acceptable and what is bullying.

In response to an open-ended question in Byrne et al.'s (2016) study, 34% (370) students mentioned psychological bullying, 20% (218) mentioned verbal bullying, and 1% (11) mentioned cyberbullying. Nearly half of the sample aged 15-19 mentioned physical bullying. This study included university-aged students and younger adolescents, so the younger students were probably more familiar with physical bullying. EAs in Chapel et al.'s (2006) study indicated very little physical bullying. Also, only 1% of the sample mentioned cyberbullying, even with the widespread use of technology. This is not reflected in other research, where students report receiving nasty messages on Facebook (Kokkinos, Antoniadou, & Markos, 2014; Wolfer, 2014), rumour spreading, malicious texts (Kokkinos, Baltzidis, Xynogala, 2016), receiving demanding messages, or having people impersonating others (Walker et al., 2011).

A lesser-known concept related to bullying in UK HE is initiation rites, where newcomers are exposed to debasing or humiliating practices to become a fully-fledged member of a team or club. Da Silva, Farhangmehr, and Jalali (2018)

interviewed 12 past and current Portuguese university students on the topic of bullying and *praxe* (Portuguese term for initiation rite). They found that students were sometimes too afraid to enter university through fear of praxe. Students said that there was good praxe, but mostly, praxe was associated with the negative connotations of humiliation, social exclusion, threat of exclusion, psychological pressure, and belittlement.

These studies show conflicting findings on the types of bullying in HE. It is important to investigate young adults' categorisations of bullying and why some behaviour is deemed acceptable, even though it would not be perceived so by a researcher. For this reason, student focus groups were first used to examine whether the types of behaviour mentioned match onto the methods that children or adults implement. It is likely that variability is due to the EA developmental stage and the university context.

2.4. Prevalence of Bullying in UK HE and Other Cultures

Prevalence rates of bullying within HE vary from being rare, to up to 50% of a sample admitting to victimisation at least once (358 out of 666 students in Dilmaç's Turkish study, 2009) and perpetrating at least once (158 out of 297 students in Gibb & Devereux's American study, 2014). Studies tend to find that bullying decreases over time, for example, Chapell et al.'s (2006) American sample reported more bullying in elementary school than high school, and more in high school than in university; though any amount of bullying is still a problem. Sinkkonen et al. (2014) found bullying less prevalent in Finnish HE than other levels of education, with 5% (60 students) of their sample reporting bullying experiences. Young-Jones et al. (2015) found that a minority (16 students) of their American sample reported victimisation, but respondents thought that bullying

was not a problem at university. In Wensley and Campbell's (2012) study, 21% (109) of first-year undergraduates at an Australian university reported being traditionally victimised within the past 12 months, and 11% (61) reported cyber victimisation. Additionally, Walker et al. (2011) found that 11% (14 students) of their American sample had been cyberbullied. Approximately 5% (51) of 1,025 students from Chapell, Casey, De la Cruz, and Ferrell's (2004) American study had been bullied occasionally, with lower rates of frequent bullying. Lund's (2017) research found that 9% (291) of the 3,229 students from five Norwegian institutions reported being bullied. Finally, a recent review by Lund and Ross (2017) confirmed that bullying continues into university, with 20-25% of students reporting traditional-types and 10-15% cyber victimisation.

For cyber victimisation alone, rates range from 7-8% in Taiwan (100 students; Chen & Huang, 2015), to 10-15% in America and Greece (33 students, Finn, 2004; Kokkinos et al., 2014), to even higher in Turkey. Turan, Polat, Karapirli, Uysal, and Turan, (2011) surveyed students from three universities in Turkey and found that 59% (342 people) of their sample had been affected by electronic abuse; most perpetrators were unknown to the victim. Frequencies are likely to vary due to perceptual and methodological differences between studies. Over half of Walker et al.'s (2011) sample knew somebody that had experienced HE bullying, with 34% (342 students) having witnessed it. There are high numbers of witness reports even though victim reports are low, suggesting victimised students are not identifying as bullied, or are minimising the issue. It could also be because the same victims are repeatedly bullied in different contexts. However, in Chapell and colleagues' (2004) large scale survey, a high number of students (190) reported being bullied themselves. Prevalence rates vary

across countries from 5 to 50% but bullying occurs in all countries studied. Collectively, these findings indicate that there are still many students affected by different types of bullying in HE. However, the issue does not appear to be prioritised by universities, even though a considerable minority of students are seeing or experiencing bullying.

Types of bullying may vary by culture too. Dussich and Maekoya (2007) administered a questionnaire to a sample of 852 university students from Japan, South Africa, and America; 62% (528 students) reported bullying involvement (i.e. bully, victim, or bully-victim). Japanese students were more likely to experience each behaviour than the other cohorts, and males were more likely to be offenders. Slandering and shunning were the most commonly experienced behaviours in Japan, and name-calling and slandering in South Africa and the States. The researchers also recorded childhood physical harm in the same questionnaire, uncovering that within the country aggregate, most children who were physically harmed during childhood had a greater chance of becoming involved in bullying behaviour later. In one Spanish study (Sánchez et al., 2016), 543 students (mean age = 22) were surveyed about victimisation in the past 12 months; 52% (286 students) reported being cyberbullied, and 62% (337 students) reported traditional victimisation. Forty per cent of students (217) experienced both types; more females were cyberbullied and more males traditionally bullied. Additionally, traditional victimisation was twice as high for home (Spanish) students than international students. UK universities host many international students, so it is important to consider whether national origin and culture is a factor in bullying identification and perpetration. Bullying is a worldwide phenomenon. The current research focuses on UK university students, but

differences between Home and International students are explored in Chapter 5. Most HE bullying studies are from America, and UK studies are lacking; this research attempted to gain insights into prevalence estimates based on UK-wide student reports of victimisation (Chapter 5).

2.5. Bullying Participant Roles

Bullying roles at university are often unclear. After interviewing six female university students on an educational degree, Brock et al. (2014) found that those accused of being in an aggressive relational clique denied any wrongdoing. They could be unaware of their actions and may not perceive their behaviour as harmful, nonetheless, non-members of the clique group found their behaviour upsetting. Being unaware that one is perpetrating bullying demonstrates that perceptions of bullying vary between individuals. Awareness raising about the effects of offensive behaviour may help everyone. With increased awareness, perpetrators cannot deny wrongdoing in the future, and may even stop bullying. Alternatively, they may be subtly manipulating the situation to evade detection, as research suggests that those who bully may be higher on social intelligence - the ability to understand and interact with other people (Pabian & Vandebosch, 2016). A higher level of social intelligence could be a source of power over others (Pabian & Vandebosch, 2016).

In a hypothetical role-play study with 60 university students aged 21-40 (Myers & Cowie, 2013), a bullying vignette was presented; a popular male student posted negative comments on social media about an intelligent, less popular, female member of the class because she refused to write his essay. Students were assigned the role of bully, victim, or bystander. The authors appraised that those assigned to the bully role felt “aggrieved” at being accused

and showed inflated self-worth (p. 260). The bystanders were reluctant to interfere in case the attacks were just an in-joke, or they believed that the victim and perpetrator should resolve the issue themselves. Participants claimed that the hypothetical scenario evoked unexpected emotions, but their real-life reactions cannot be known. The bystander reactions may be the most representative, as they were externally watching the dynamic unfold, and in reality, they would be an external witness. Their own security needs may have overridden the desire to help; unfortunately, the act of omission inadvertently lends support to the bully (bystander reactions are discussed further in Chapter 3). Evidence suggests that bullying often involves more than two people, implying that others may have a responsibility to be proactive in preventing or addressing harmful behaviour.

When students are aware of the roles they adopt, they have the power to make a change. For example, if a person unintentionally bullies, they might only realise they are causing harm when informed about the effects of their behaviour. And if a victim identifies their role in being bullied by a perpetrator, they may be less likely to self-blame. Alternatively, when a witness understands they are a bystander of bullying they can consider acting and changing the situation. Bystanders have a vital role in all social behaviour with the power to uphold or reject norms. The qualitative component of this research investigated how students viewed bullying roles; the results may inform the development of educational programs, bullying prevention, or interventions. If students are aware of the roles they are adopting by either bullying or standing by, it might lead to self-reflection and behaviour change. However, if students are bullying intentionally, they are unlikely to want to relinquish the perceived benefits they gain. The aim of this research was to discover HE-specific understandings of

bullying roles that could contribute to awareness-raising for the whole university community.

2.6. Consequences of Bullying

The emotional consequences of bullying in HE students were studied by Chen and Huang (2015). They found that students from a two-university Taiwanese sample of 1,439, who identified as verbal and relational victims of bullying before and during university, had significantly lower wellbeing scores than non-bullied students. In one web survey of 497 students who identified as LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, & Questioning/Queer), experiences of victimisation were statistically related to lower self-esteem and increased stress and anxiety (Seelman, Woodford, & Nicolazzo, 2017). Leenaars and Rinaldi (2010) supported this with their mixed-method study; 42 Canadian university students completed a questionnaire about indirect aggression and a subset (18 students) wrote a daily journal. Victims and aggressors showed signs of psychosocial maladjustment (e.g. hyperactivity, sensation seeking, and internalising problems), though victims reported problems in greater severity and number. The young adults claimed that the levels of indirect and direct aggression they subjectively experienced were comparable to what they had experienced in school. Similarly, another student sample compared their HE experiences with ostracism suffered in school (Brock et al., 2014).

In one Australian study, Davis, Campbell, and Whiteford (2018) looked at mental health outcomes of bullied students; 414 students completed the survey, of whom 30 identified as LGBT. Fifty-nine students indicated they had been victims within the past 12 months. Age and sexual orientation were significantly associated with being a victim, and LGBT students had significantly higher odds

of being bullied. However, all victims had high distress regardless of sexual orientation. Another interesting finding was that the 25-34 age group were more likely to be victimised.

Cyber victims also suffer from negative psychological outcomes. Three studies (West, 2015; Schenk & Fremouw, 2012; Walker et al, 2011) found common outcomes of feeling angry, hurt, sad, and depressed. Additional outcomes included embarrassment and anxiety (West) paranoia, and suicidal ideation/attempts (Schenk & Fremouw). In the focus group study by Brewer et al. (2014) that asked 18 female students from a US university to define cyberbullying, students also named consequences of cyberbullying after reflecting on their own experiences. They stated embarrassment, lack of confidence, anger, frustration, and lack of control as outcomes. Victims may feel negative adjustment effects in a myriad of ways (i.e. at a social, emotional, personal, and institutional attachment level; Goodboy et al, 2016). These effects are compounded if the victim feels isolated; they find it hard to make friends, they feel nobody will listen to them, and struggle to know how to react or fight back when people say hurtful things (Adams & Lawrence, 2011).

In addition to psychological consequences, HE bullying disrupts academic attainment, similar to school populations. West (2015) and Schenk and Fremouw (2012) found that young adult victims of cyberbullying had disrupted learning and attendance. Young-Jones et al. (2015) and Sinkkonen et al. (2014) also found that current victims had lower autonomy and competence, and lower academic motivation. This could lead to disengagement, poor performance, or drop out, which has been found amongst victims of sexual, verbal, and physical violence on campus (Mengo & Black, 2015).

Lastly, bullying is linked to university-wide consequences. Chapell et al's. (2004) survey study with 1,025 American university students found that a behavioural effect of student bullying was more bullying. Those who saw others bully at university may have assumed it was acceptable (or downplayed its importance) and perpetuated the aggression. Again, this was a cross-sectional study, and so those who already perpetrate bullying may be more attuned to the behaviour and witness more bullying by others. However, findings suggest worrying cultural norms within the university environment. Douglas, Douglas, McClelland, and Davies (2015) surveyed 350 students from two UK universities, asking what made a valuable or hindering university experience. Alongside staff, teaching, and money, one critical theme was fellow student behaviour. Bullying may influence the quality of the university climate, leading to, at the very least, student dissatisfaction. This would reflect negatively on the institution, indirectly displayed through surveys monitoring the student experience (e.g. The National Student Survey in the UK). Therefore, it is in the interest of the universities to tackle bullying to maintain their reputations. Bullying at any level can have overwhelmingly negative consequences, reaching beyond the individual victim through to the organisational level.

Except for research that identifies growth through adversity after bullying, most victims of bullying experience negative emotions and some may develop long-term mental health and behavioural issues. These associations are well established; however, most of the studies mentioned here are cross-sectional and cannot infer cause and effect. It is unknown whether the students were feeling negative emotions before the bullying, or whether their feelings beforehand predisposed them to the bullying. Furthermore, most studies only measure

negative outcomes, instead of considering other wellbeing aspects that might be affected (e.g. optimism, functioning, and autonomy). The current research used a variety of wellbeing measures alongside two measures of maladjustment to capture a range of experience (Chapters 5 and 6).

2.7. Coping with Bullying

Students gave mixed responses when asked about prevention and resolutions for bullying. Some said they did not report incidents (Finn, 2004; Leenaars & Rinaldi, 2010) because they did not know where to seek help (Meriläinen, Puhakka, & Sinkkonen, 2015), whereas others endorsed telling someone as healthy coping behaviour. Unhealthy strategies included getting revenge, drinking, and avoiding friends and peers (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012). Some students minimised the bullying or attempted to justify it (Leenaars & Rinaldi, 2010), and so few sought help; in Sinkkonen et al.'s study (2014), only one student approached a counsellor out of 147 students who reported victimisation. With internet bullying, more females were found to avoid the internet (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012), and students regularly unfriended people who posted inappropriately on Facebook (Wolfer, 2014). However, Meriläinen et al. (2015) found that 60% of 2,804 students were not able to suggest a solution for bullying when asked. Out of those who did, females tended to advocate more support for victims, and males recommended punishment for the aggressor. Bullied students were more likely to suggest interventions. Lastly, first-year students in one focus group study thought that disseminating cyberbullying information via campus services (i.e. counselling, student organisations, resident advisers) would raise awareness (Crosslin & Golman, 2014).

Coping with bullying or experiencing negative behaviour is intricately linked to psychological health and wellbeing. Unhealthy student coping behaviours such as isolating and avoiding friends means victims suffer twice; first they are enduring bullying, and second they are missing out on university life. Isolating oneself is linked to increased risk of mental health problems, which, in turn, links to impacted academic achievement and sense of belonging. Furthermore, negative coping strategies, such as smoking and drinking, can also affect physical health. As some students report not knowing what to do or where to go for help, this reinforces the need for available information and support. The qualitative component of this research (Chapter 3) sought to discover how students approach bullying incidents.

HE students also minimise bullying (Leenaars & Rinaldi, 2010); they attempt to deal with the effects of bullying via unhealthy mechanisms, for example, by drinking or avoiding friends (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012). Students who are cyberbullied may also use blocking functions on social media, though might feel reluctant to unfriend people or delete their social media page through fear of damaging their social reputation, and/or the fear of missing out (Alt, 2017). Lastly, the recommendation for children to tell someone about the bullying is not matched in HE; rather, policies strongly suggest that students confront the bully and tell them to stop (this is discussed further in Chapter 7).

2.8. Stability of Bullying.

Chapell et al. (2004, p.59) made the conclusive statement that bullying “graduates to college”. Alongside other researchers, they found positive correlations between being a bully in school and university, and between being a victim in school and university (Chapell et al., 2006; Adams & Laurence, 2011;

Leenaars & Rinaldi, 2010; Brock et al, 2014). Additionally, Lappalainen, Meriläinen, Puhakka, and Sinkkonen (2011, as cited in Cowie & Myers, 2016) found that half of the students currently bullied in HE had been bullied before leaving school, with most of these students being male. Out of Young-Jones et al.'s (2015) 130 students, 60 were past and current victims, only four were not. A minority of students from Bauman & Newman's (2013) study reported being a victim at primary school, high school, and university (3%; 18 students). Longitudinal evidence also supports this; Brendgen and Poulin (2018) found in their 10-year Canadian study, that higher levels of peer victimisation in school at age 13 to 17 were directly associated with victimisation in the workplace at age 22. Similar is found from the perpetrator perspective; Pörhölä (2011, as cited in Cowie & Myers, 2016) found that half of those who had peer bullied at HE level admitted to bullying their school peers. Past bullying and victimisation may be a risk for future bullying and victimisation. It is likely that traditional bullying follows through all levels of education, though it may be less prevalent within HE. This continuity could be due to individual or contextual factors. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the minority who experience bullying at multiple levels are at greatest risk of negative psychological outcomes because of a dose-response relationship.

Researchers have also found that cyber victimisation and bullying continues into university settings (Crosslin & Golman, 2014; Gibb & Devereux, 2014; Walker et al., 2011; Wensley & Campbell, 2012). Dilmaç (2009) found that previous engagement in cyberbullying increased the likelihood of future cyberbullying. There is evidence for continued bullying in HE, but prevalence rates thus far are incomparable to school bullying. Over half of Bauman and Newman's (2013) sample reported never being victimised, and Kokkinos et al.

(2014) found cyberbullying was rare. However, the lack of consistent empirical research could be the reason why bullying is rarely seen in HE (Coleyshaw, 2010). Following a suggestion by Sinkkonen et al. (2014), the current research recognised bullying as part of the life course of those studied, as the social and psychological traits of the victim and bully might increase the chances of the behaviour. Dilmaç (2009) exemplified the theory that different psychological profiles were evident for cyber bullies, cyber victims, cyber bully/victims, and those uninvolved. Cyber bully/victims were low on "intraception" (p.1313, attempting to understand self and others behaviour) and high on aggression, whereas pure victims scored higher on affiliation (seeking and maintaining positive friendships). These characteristics may represent roles of bully or victim, where certain traits could lead to being targeted, or doing the targeting.

The stability of roles is an important concept to consider, as it indicates that some individuals are more at risk. If bullying were purely context-dependent, there would not be evidence showing that the same people are bullied throughout their lives. It is likely that a mixture of personal predisposition and societal variables in an ecological model contribute to the problem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Chapters 5 and 6 explore multiple levels of variables within an ecological system and their relationship to past and current victimisation.

2.9. Context Comparison

Schools, HE, and the workplace have similarities and differences in their populations' understanding of bullying. Workplace bullying definitions are similar to those currently used in school research. They both include negative behaviour, which is persistent, and the target feels less powerful. However, the newly introduced component of goal-directed may benefit being applied to the

workplace, as bullying is often perpetrated for gain (i.e. to achieve promotion ahead of colleagues). Conversely, some feel the term bullying is too childish for the workplace, and instead use the term incivility. Though this may be an attempt to minimise bullying, for example, labelling a repetitive attack on a work colleague as incivility appears as though the perpetrator has just forgotten their manners. HE research shows that students are unsure of what constitutes bullying, omitting repetition and power imbalance from their constructions (Byrne et al, 2016). This may be due to a general lack of knowledge of the researcher-defined bullying definition, rather than disbelief of bullying being repetitive. If students are not given a definition at the beginning of a questionnaire, they tend to underreport experiences.

The most obvious discrepancy between childhood and adult bullying is the methods employed. Children frequently use physical aggression, whereas adults rarely resort to physical violence, perhaps because there are severe consequences; there seems to be a long-standing public acceptance of physical aggression against children (be that from adults hitting their children, or children hitting their siblings or peers). Alternatively, physical bullying may be an immature type of aggression. Methods may evolve over developmental stages. Thus far, HE research tends to use the same categories used with children. However, the predominant methods of bullying amongst students remain unstudied; it is likely there will be differences due to the EA developmental stage, as well as the context.

Prevalence rates of bullying are difficult to ascertain. In childhood and adulthood, victimisation rates range from 10% to 28% of the sample. Similarly, for HE students, rates range from 5% to 25%, but these samples are often obtained from one university and may only represent that geographic area or institutional

culture. Subsequently, the current research aimed to clarify understandings, prevalence, and methods of bullying within HE by using a nationally representative sample (see Chapter 5).

As with school bullying, there are a variety of variables that act as risk or protective factors, such as friendships, internal working models (IWMs), and relationship with the institution. To the best of my knowledge, few of the current HE bullying research studies have attempted to include and assess these variables. Victimisation may be used as a predictor variable, or it may be the outcome predicted from other variables. There are also variables that could have moderating and mediating effects between victimisation and outcomes. The next section will explore these other variables in greater depth.

2.10. Emerging Adulthood, Wellbeing, and Belonging in the Higher Education Context

This section focuses on the population and environment of interest, EAs in HE, and wellbeing, which is the state of being well, rather than purely the absence of mental illness or disorder (Huppert & So, 2013). The age group of interest, 18 to 25 year olds, predominantly compose the HE population. A dramatic increase in mental health issues and demands for university support services have been reported within this population (Brown, 2016). Therefore, it is important to understand what has influenced this sharp decrease in wellbeing and increase in psychological problems. Bullying is one factor that can affect wellbeing, sometimes enough to warrant psychological diagnoses. However, bullying can impact health and wellbeing in ways that do not correspond to mental health diagnoses. For example, bullying may affect confidence, self-esteem, optimism, and autonomy. The bullying literature focuses largely on pathology and mental

illness; the departure from this focus on negative pathology will lead to better insights into student functioning and feelings at university. This tactic aligns more with the HE literature, which strives to investigate and improve overall student wellbeing.

2.10.1. Emerging adulthood. EA, a new label given to those aged 18-25, is a developmental period before adulthood involving upheaval and circumstantial and biopsychosocial change. The EA period often extends the self-focus, identity exploration, and instability of adolescence (Arnett, 2015). Due to societal changes (i.e. people are marrying later and focusing on hedonistic pursuits and careers), EAs often feel in-between childhood and adulthood. Attachment bonds to parents have lessened as peers are now the most influential figures in adolescents' and EAs' lives. If a secure attachment is forged in childhood, adolescents are free to explore alone or with their peers in their twenties, without needing to be near their parents. The majority of students within HE are between the ages of 18 and 25, and are thus classed as EAs (there are a minority of mature students who choose to start education after the age of 21 and may be classed as fully adult).

2.10.2. Wellbeing. Wellbeing, or mental health, is not just the absence of negative symptoms, which is the normative focus for mental health research (Huppert & So, 2013). As early as 1948, The World Health Organisation (WHO) defined health as a state of physical, mental, and social wellbeing that is not merely the absence of disease. Furthermore, the state of being well is more complex than an objective assessment of a person's quality of life, which is what happens when professionals decide on treatment (Huppert & Whittington, 2003). Subjective measures of wellbeing are often excluded; however, both hedonic (feeling good) and eudaimonic (functioning well) components are important in

gathering insight into a person's level of wellbeing and mental health (Huppert & So, 2013; Huppert & Whittington, 2003). Individuals differ in their subjective responses to objective conditions (Huppert & Whittington, 2003). Huppert (2009) suggested that one must develop potential, have control over life, have a sense of purpose, and experience positive relationships for optimum psychological functioning. Furthermore, when measured validly, high levels of wellbeing benefit individuals *and* society (Huppert & So, 2013); an increase in wellbeing may reduce common mental ill-health problems (Huppert, 2009).

Student wellbeing is currently conspicuous in the media and on governmental agendas. Evidence shows that students are less happy and more anxious than non-students and other young people, with higher levels of mental health diagnoses and poorer wellbeing (Brown, 2016); one explanation is the increased participation in HE (UUK, 2018a). With around half of school leavers now attending university, students comprise a substantial proportion of the emerging/young adult population (UUK, 2018b). Earlier work by HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council England, now part of the Office for Students) found that demand for student support services increased by 150% between 2011 and 2015 (UUK, 2018a). However, clear and robust data on the prevalence of mental health issues is scarce in HE (Brown, 2016); the most reliable method thus far has been proxy measurements of demand for support services (UUK, 2018b). The increased reporting may not indicate increased mental health problems, but perhaps a greater student awareness of needing help.

Mental health problems can also lead to attrition, and universities with high attrition may alert prospective students that the university cannot cope with demands for mental health provision (O' Keeffe, 2013). The implications are

substantive; students dropping out of university without qualifications still acquire debt, thus increasing the likelihood of mental health problems developing, especially for minority groups such as Black and Minority Ethnicity (BME), low socioeconomic status (SES), and disabled students. Universities may struggle to reassign resources due to the overwhelming demand.

2.10.3. Belonging. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, belongingness is a theory that claims humans have an innate drive to form close and lasting interpersonal relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995); it is mentioned throughout the thesis and links closely to the HE student population. For example, one institutional self-monitoring indicator of progress is the proportion of students reporting a sense of belonging to the university community (Baik et al. 2017). Connectedness to university can be described as students' subjective sense of fit within a university and the perception of being personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others (which are human rights; Wilson & Gore, 2013). It can also be described as feeling acknowledged for personal capabilities, positive relations with staff and students, and feeling part of the wider university community (Pittman & Richmond, 2008). Belongingness is linked to mental health and wellbeing, and whether students feel they have social support, a friend, belong to a social group (Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994), identify with their university as a whole, and adjust during the first year (Pittman & Richmond, 2008).

Many HE belongingness studies use an adapted form of the Psychological Sense of School Membership (PSSM) scale by Goodenow (1993) to measure belongingness. Pittman and Richmond (2008) surveyed 79 American first-year students at two time points, asking after their belongingness, wellbeing, and

friendship quality. They found that this sample had higher rates of low self-competence and more problem behaviours than normative comparable populations. Over the course of the first university year, the students with positive changes in their sense of belonging also had increased scholastic competence and social acceptance. The changes in university belonging were linked to decreasing internalising, but not externalising, behaviour.

Similarly, in Malaysia, Awang, Kutty, and Ahmad (2014) conducted interviews with 16 first-year undergraduates to investigate which issues affect the student experience quality. They discovered that the experience was enhanced through greater participation and achievement, but interactions with others were important in those learning processes. The students suggested themes for optimum adjustment: supportive friendships, socio-educational support, and family support. Similarly, a sample of 1,845 students from six Canadian universities were surveyed on new friendship quality and adjustment (Buote et al., 2007). The quality (and quantity) of new friendships were significant positive predictors of overall university adjustment (including social, academic, personal-emotional, and institutional attachment). The quality of friendships formed in the first year was a significant predictor of adjustment, even when pre-university levels of adjustment were low (as measured by depression). Friendship quality was more strongly related to social adjustment, but also showed significant links to feelings of attachment to university and academic adjustment. Even one or two good friends served to enhance the strength of one's belongingness.

Relationships with instructors and other university staff can also have a major impact on levels of belongingness. Ploskonka and Servaty-Seib (2015) surveyed 249 undergraduates on belongingness; they found that family, peer, and

institutional belonging negatively related to suicidal ideation. However, only family belonging had a unique contribution to suicidal ideation. For those with substandard familial relationships, campus student services could provide opportunities where students can receive family-like practical and emotional support (e.g. older sibling alumni programmes or counselling). Belongingness has also been associated with adaptive motivational characteristics; it may be fostered in settings with effective instructors and respectful interactions between staff and students. Freeman, Anderman, and Jensen (2007) surveyed 288 students with the PSSM scale and found that school belonging was associated with academic staff motivation, students' efficacy in succeeding in class, and students' perception of the task value. Having an encouraging and warm instructor was highly associated with a sense of belongingness. Additionally, students who felt supported by various sources (i.e. peers and instructors) had even lower distress (Zumbrunn, McKim, Buhs, & Hawley, 2014).

Those who perceive support from various sources have higher levels of academic engagement (Zumbrunn et al, 2014), motivation, achievement, and wellbeing (Kennedy & Tuckman, 2013). Faculty-student relationships can be relevant to academic success and persistence of study. Zumbrunn et al. (2014) surveyed 212 undergraduates using the PSSM scale; persistent students reported more interactions with instructors and faculty, and they rated instructors higher for teaching and concern for student development. Students reporting supportive instructors also reported greater belonging, even though peers were named as the source of their belonging. The cross-sectional nature of the sample did not allow cause and effect conclusions, consequently, students who already felt a good sense of belonging may have encouraged a supportive attitude from instructors.

Additionally, Kennedy and Tuckman (2013) surveyed 2,044 first-year students, and 671 students completed surveys at two time points. They were administered the social exclusion concerns scale; academic values negatively related, and social exclusion concerns positively related, to procrastination. The study shows the deleterious influence of social exclusion on self-regulation. School belonging, self-efficacy, and perceived stress, all contributed to predicting grade outcome.

Further findings from Zumbrunn et al.'s (2014) study showed that students with low belonging reported "difference" and "disrespect" from unsupportive peers, suggesting that mistreatment from peers can alter belongingness feelings. Furthermore, instructor, academic, and social support also predicted belonging. Higher belonging students rated their instructors on several positive traits, for example, being prepared, enthusiastic, professional, respectful, passionate, and caring. Those who felt disrespected by classmates were uncomfortable in the classroom. Thus, instructors should actively promote respect in class. For example, ground rules should be set about respectful behaviour, as the importance of educational climate can have an impact on belongingness, self-efficacy, and peer relationships. Social acceptance by university personnel and peers is important for promoting high levels of connectedness within the institution.

Belongingness plays an immensely important role within the HE environment, for individual students and the organisation. If universities are perceived as welcoming, where non-traditional students can feel they belong, they may have fewer problems with negative behaviour, allowing for a more pleasant and encouraging climate. Many factors fit within the overarching theoretical framework of Bronfenbrenner (1979); this is discussed in section 2.12. The variables are situated within a logical space relevant to and interacting with, each

other. For example, one may be predisposed to react a certain way when conversing with others, but group membership often has the power to supersede usual interactional rules. Context may also affect behaviour, for example, a lecture, and a party in halls accommodation, are likely to evoke contrasting behaviour.

Student wellbeing is the outcome variable in the third survey study reported in Chapters 5 and 6. Consequently, the next section briefly considers student mental health and wellbeing and other variables that can impact it, which closely relate to belonging, and self and other perceptions.

2.11. Student Wellbeing and Mental Health

Graduates need to be intellectually, socially, and emotionally equipped to enter the workforce and contribute to society. There are significant differences between HE graduates and other members of society on a variety of issues, such as civic engagement, crime, health, and wellbeing; for example, those who are more educated tend to be more tolerant and trusting (Brennan, Durazzi, & Sene, 2013). Those with degrees are also more likely to cope better with distress, to get on with a wider range of people, and to have greater self-confidence (Brennan et al., 2013). Attending university influences moral and psychosocial characteristics as well as values, attitudes, and earnings (Brennan et al., 2013). Student mental health and wellbeing is thus a vital factor to study.

The initial transition to university may affect student wellbeing and mental health. Students may struggle to settle in and feel homesick, having left behind established routines and networks (Denovan & Macaskill, 2013). The transition from living at home to university is significant, particularly if there are cultural contrasts between contexts (Thurber & Walton, 2012). The boarding school

method of HE means that students often move away from support networks and into houses with people they have never met (Brown, 2016). Denovan and Macaskill presented undergraduates with a vignette: a friend was starting university in September, what advice/information would you give them? They clustered students' responses into the three themes of "change", "support networks", and "housemates". Change is inevitable when attending university for the first time, with new independent living and grieving for home and old relationships. Establishing good support networks early on was said to prevent loneliness and isolation; some of the interviewees had considered leaving university for these reasons. Consequently, students suggested employing three types of social support: university friends, university staff, and family. The third theme was difficulties with housemates; those who caused stress and unsettled feelings made the transition more challenging. The main message from the interviews was that support networks are crucial for adjustment and wellbeing when starting university. This is important for providing a sense of belonging and accommodating for the strong attachment-related emotions that may have been activated on moving away from family.

It is especially important that strong family relationships are subsidised and temporarily replaced with good-enough relationships with students and staff at university. University personnel motivation and their praise for student performance have been found to impact student wellbeing. Douglas et al. (2015) surveyed 350 students from two UK universities and found that university personnel and student behaviour (and whether the student felt socially included because of this), were critical factors contributing to a positive university experience. Therefore, staff behaviour can also contribute to how well students

settle in and feel a valued and belonging member of the university community, which in turn will impact wellbeing.

2.11.1. Mental health and wellbeing provision. Student mental health and wellbeing provision can be a deciding factor of which university to attend (Tobin, 2018). Universities can help the transition for prospective students by providing information on mental health and wellbeing support available. This could include positive student-led social enterprises, but also more specific information for those who are struggling, in a crisis, or need long-term support (Brown, 2016). Unfortunately, there is a widespread lack of funding for mental health support, and referrals from university counsellors are often refused because students do not meet certain criteria (Brown, 2016). A report from Student Minds revealed students' worries about mental health. They feared being judged, had difficulty finding the confidence to tell people about a mental health problem, and wanted to avoid being seen as weak (Student Minds, n.d.). Therefore, universities must adopt a whole university approach, which supports health, encourages positive wellbeing, and promotes understanding environments, as well as attending to mental health issues (as outlined in UUKs #StepChange strategy, n.d.).

HE is one of the only times that work, leisure, healthcare, and social support are provided in the same environment. This offers the perfect setting for universities to embed positive mental health and wellbeing, strengthen protective factors, reduce risk, and intervene early (UUK, 2018b). It has been suggested that teaching core modules in resilience, emotional wellbeing, mental health literacy, and implementing regular campaigns, would raise awareness and address stigma (Baik et al. 2017). Pool and Qualter (2012) conducted a study with undergraduates

at one UK university. The sample was divided into an intervention group (*N* = 66) who had chosen to complete a free-standing elective in emotional intelligence, and a control group (*N* = 68). Positive changes were seen across the intervention group on emotional intelligence; this has been found as one important predictor of health and wellbeing. Holistic initiatives aiming to improve wellbeing may also work to reduce mental health problems.

Personal Academic Tutors can also help by undertaking training in how to proactively approach their tutees work and wellbeing (Brown, 2016). This may involve incorporating curriculum and teaching practices that foster students' intrinsic interests. Curricula design and learning experiences can build students' self-efficacy, afford choice and flexibility, and create social connections amongst students and academics (Baik et al. 2017). Connectedness can be upheld if students have even one key relationship that allows them to feel cared for by the institution; for example, when instructors show character and caring, students are more likely to communicate with them (O'Keeffe, 2013). Another way to nurture connectedness and positive wellbeing is to have visible student liaisons for certain groups (Baik et al. 2017). This could include sabbatical officers from the Student Union, such as a BME individual as a BME officer (SUs have been found to have a positive impact; Brown, 2016), or other groups organised by the University Student Support Services.

The government has called for HE institutions to provide adequate support for staff and students with a range of mental health needs; they can participate more fully and successfully in HE if they feel supported (DBEIS, 2017). In a letter to HEFCE from the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, a section was dedicated to safeguarding students (2017 p.6). It called for all students

to be free from exposure to violence, sexual harassment, and hate, and to ensure that discrimination is a “thing of the past”. However, the recent government Green Paper is heavily concerned with school children and only dedicates 6% of the content to discussing the 16 to 25 age group (UUK, 2018a). UUK asks for a longer-term strategy lasting from birth up to age 25. Not only do students and staff suffer when institutions provide inadequate mental health care, but universities also disadvantage themselves during recruitment (O’Keeffe, 2013). However, Student Minds are currently undertaking UK university visits and administering surveys to students to develop a university mental health charter that will shape the future of university mental health.

Thus, student mental health and wellbeing are key concerns. The literature shows that problems with transition, social and staff support, and available provisions can impact mental health and wellbeing. Social and personal problems in relationships can also have a major impact on mental health, and bullying is one such factor. Furthermore, whether students feel that they belong to a group at any level of identification (e.g. personal characteristics, social identity, or affiliation with the university) could affect their wellbeing.

2.12. Theoretical Framework

As discussed, student wellbeing and belonging are affected by numerous factors, some are integral to the person, but others are contextual and social and beyond an individual’s control. This thesis, therefore, adopts a socio-ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; 1979) to investigate student bullying and wellbeing within HE. The ecology of human development is the study of the mutual relationships between individuals and their ever-changing environments. Bronfenbrenner conceived the ecological environment as sets of nested structures.

A *microsystem* is the relationship between a person and their immediate environment, and a *mesosystem* is a system of connecting microsystems. Bronfenbrenner claimed that human environments are too complex to be captured via methods that do not assess ecological structure and variation. In ecological research, the researcher attempts to include as many theoretically relevant ecological variables as possible; including two or more dimensions allows for the detection of organism-environment interactional patterns. Furthermore, in contrast to the typical unidirectional model of A = B, ecological research acknowledges and allows for bidirectional relationships, as reciprocal processes occur within and across settings. Bronfenbrenner (1977, p. 525) also stated that research must consider the physical environment that indirectly affects social processes; a past focus on the individual at the expense of the context has provided a "…broken trajectory of knowledge".

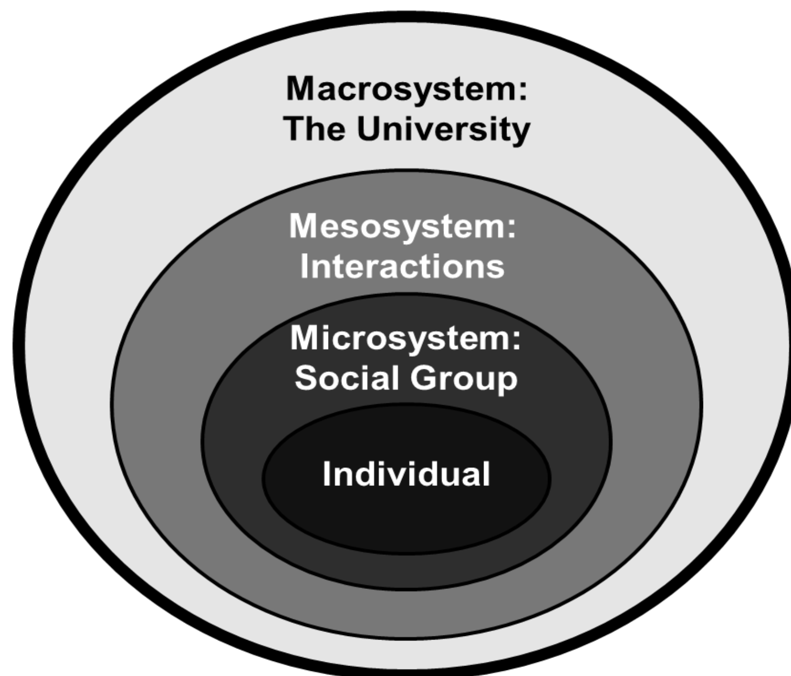

Figure 2.1. The university as a macrosystem and microsystems interacting within it.

To overcome this criticism, the individual and the university social context, which individuals are nested within, were explored. In Figure 2.1, the university is presented as a macrosystem with microsystems operating within; universities are unique in that they represent society on a smaller scale, with work, accommodation, healthcare, and social life contained within. From another perspective, Figure 2.2 shows the ecological framework arranged to display the peer group, family, and the university as microsystems interacting with the individual. The theory postulates that the culture of the overarching structure (i.e. university) can have a vast impact on the development of the systems nested within (i.e. individual). The levels of this framework will be explored in the following sections, and then applied to student bullying in HE.

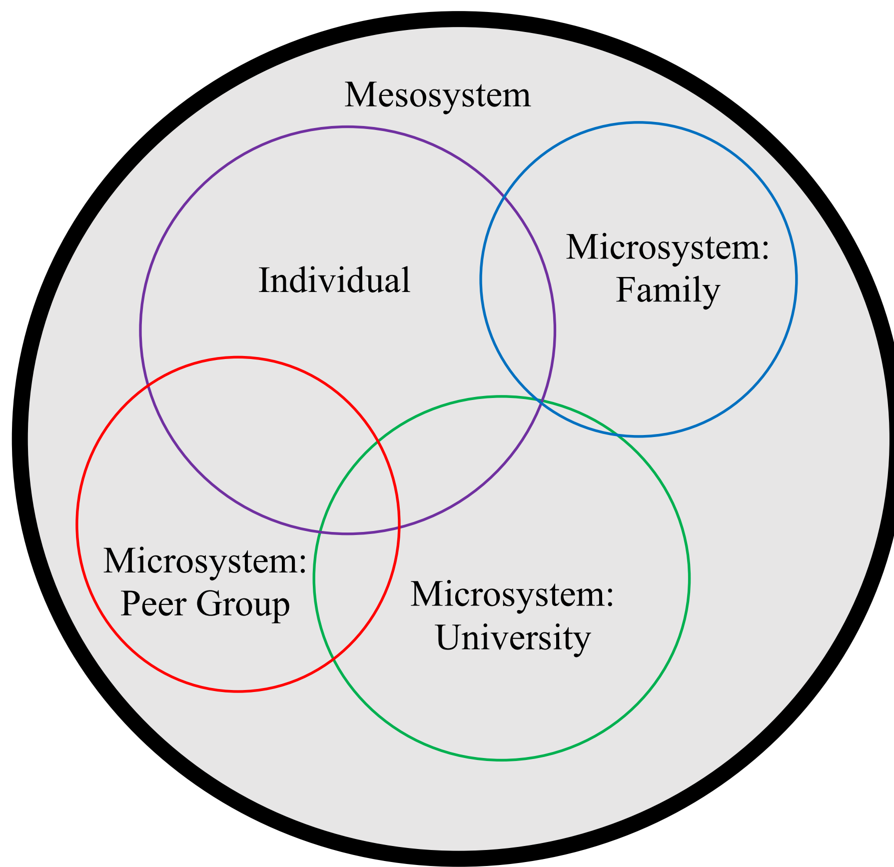

Figure 2.2. Ecological model showing multiple microsystems within a mesosystem, interacting with the individual.

2.12.1. Individual level.

2.12.1.1. Attachment and child development. At the heart of the ecological framework are well-respected theories of child development. From birth, our environments interact with our neurobiology and genes to create unique personalities and characteristics; some theories suggest commonalities between early experiences and subsequent development. Attachment Theory, proposed by John Bowlby and later expanded by Mary Ainsworth, is one credible theory of infant trajectories. Bowlby's (1969) Theory of Attachment proposed that children are born equipped with innate behavioural strategies to aid survival. When these

strategic systems are activated, infants interact with their primary caregiver and the environment, which promotes development. An infant's goal in life is survival, and safety ensures survival. Safety is normally provided by a primary caregiver, in which attachment behaviours (such as warm, loving interactions, and being in proximity when in danger; Sroufe & Waters, 1977) show the infant they are not only safe but also loved. The child can then use their secure attachment figure as a safe base to explore the environment, with the knowledge that their caregiver is available in the event of any danger (Bowlby, 1973).

The brain matures successfully if certain conditions are met, for example, if the child is in a nurturing environment (Malekpour, 2007) and feels unconditionally accepted by the primary caregiver (Rohner, Khaleque & Cournoyer, 2005). The attachment system is functional at birth and the child needs exposure to certain conditions (Spangler & Zimmermann, 1999), otherwise, they are biologically predisposed to respond in maladaptive ways (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002). Behaviour results from the interaction between biology and experience, modified by cognition (Rohner, 1986), and there are patterns between attachment styles and specific ways of thinking (Colonnesi et al., 2011), which Bowlby termed *Internal Working Models* (IWMs). IWMs are cognitive models that store and transmit information to make adaptive predictions on how set-goals can be achieved (Bowlby, 1969; Bretherton, 1990). These mental representations (Coleman, 2003; Rohner, 2004) process attachment relevant social information (Dykas & Cassidy, 2011), and are hypothesised to work automatically through learned patterns of perceptions, memories, knowledge, and feelings (Coleman, 2003; Zimmermann, 1999). Therefore, based on information from our past, these internal scripts guide our future pursuits, interactions, thoughts about the self, and

the meaning of others' intentions (Crittenden, 2006). The IWMs that have been theoretically set through childhood experiences can remain unchanged unless salient experiences encourage a change of view and models are disconfirmed.

Evidence shows that early self-and-other representations continue longitudinally. Insecure infants tested on the Strange Situation (an experiment where a parent leaves their infant alone in a room, returns, leaves the room again, and a stranger enters; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978) at 18 months were found to have poor adaption at age two (Matas, Arend, & Sroufe, 1978), with similar difficulties persisting into adolescence (Jacobsen & Hofmann, 1997). Conversely, well-adapted children continue to adapt well into adolescence; they may have transitioned from having a physical secure caregiver base to an emotional and cognitive sense of safety in adolescence (Allen & Hauser, 1996). Thus, through IWMs, individuals can carry early attachment experiences into future interactions and across contexts and people (Fivush, 2006).

Trans-situational links are evident in the literature. Parental relationship quality is found to be representative of attachment associations in adolescence (Hamilton, 2000); and children have been known to extend positive representations of caregivers to others in general (Cassidy, 2000). For example, children with high self-concepts (i.e. positive IWMs) and secure attachments to mothers, showed positive emotions with teachers (Colwell & Lindsey, 2003; Verschueren, Doumen, & Buyse, 2012). However, children with insecure relationships had fewer positive interactions with teachers, and this was especially true for shy children (Rydell, Bohlin, & Thorell, 2005). IWMs are related to social information processing in a variety of relationships (e.g. peers, partners, and strangers; Dykas & Cassidy, 2011); Sroufe (2005, p. 364) claimed that there is,

"no question that secure attachment is a critical platform for engaging in the world of peers". This has been supported by convergent family and peer ratings: a secure attachment with a primary caregiver is associative and predictive of social competence with peers (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Booth-LaForce et al., 2006; Coleman, 2003). Thus, attachment in early life may predict social relationships at university with peers and staff, and also influence belonging and wellbeing.

Developmental contexts have been found to affect social behaviour in later life. Children with high quality caregiver attachments are less likely to bully or be bullied, in school (Walden & Beran, 2010). Therefore, it is more likely that the insecurely attached, abused, neglected, and rejected children, are more at risk of school victimisation and are disadvantaged when trying to cope. Maltreated children may react aggressively or submissively, which puts them at risk of becoming a bully or victim (Shields & Cicchetti, 2001). Children with a history of repeated victimisation are likely to have dysregulated reactivity and experience emotional distress in conflicts (Rosen, Milich, & Harris, 2012). This may affect the ability to read social cues, speak up for oneself, and maintain social connections (Kendall-Tackett, 2002). It may also persist into EA, and is especially relevant to the university context, where developing and maintaining social connections is paramount.

Kendall-Tackett (2002) found that five types of negative childhood experience predicted victimisation in school: physical neglect, emotional withdrawal, failure of a caregiver to protect child, sexual abuse by the caregiver, and sexual abuse by a non-caretaker. The children might have developed a dangerous world view and fallen into a cycle of learned-helplessness, thus

viewing themselves deserving of abuse and unable to escape it (Nolen-Hoesksema, Girgus, & Seligman, 1986). IWMs may operate in a manner that guides behaviour to fulfil or confirm itself (Verschueren, Marcoen, & Schoefs, 1996). For example, due to negative IWMs, children may behave in ways that indirectly elicits negative behaviour from peers (Cassidy, 2000; Coplan, Findlay, & Nelson, 2004). Children who have experienced persistent abuse often exhibit traits that perpetrators seek; they are easily manipulated, easy to overpower, unlikely to resist or protest, are passively compliant, and self-blame for the victimisation (Gold, 2008). Childhood victims of bullying may continue to be victimised over time, which might be linked to their behavioural or emotional traits (Egan & Perry, 1998; Fox & Boulton, 2006; Hanish & Guerra, 2002; Hodges, Boivin, Vitaro, & Bukowski, 1999; Khatri, Kupersmidt, & Patterson, 2000; Raskauskas, 2010).

IWMs are found to not only affect children and adolescents' relationships but also adults'. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) proposed a four-dimensional model of adult attachment ("secure", "preoccupied", "fearful", and "dismissing") based on the childhood attachment types. Secure adults were found to be more coherent in interviews about relationships, had increased intimacy with friends, and had high warmth and romantic involvement (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). De Roos, Miedema, and Iedema (2001) also found that participants who were securely attached to their lovers, were more religiously committed and had a positive image of god - indicating positive internal representations of others.

However, all insecure types of attachment are problematic. Dismissing adults were found to be high on self-confidence, low on emotional expression, warmth, and closeness, and they downplayed the importance of others in

maintaining self-esteem (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Alternatively, preoccupied adults were high on self-disclosure and romantic involvement, and fearful adults were low on self-disclosure, intimacy, and self-confidence, and they rarely relied on others (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Biased childhood working models may be influencing the insecure adults' interactions. Representations of past experiences often correspond with current experience (Roisman, Madsen, Henninghausen, Sroufe & Collins, 2001); therefore, those rejected in childhood will expect rejection in most relationships (Downey & Feldman, 1996). Rejected individuals are more likely to be depressed in adulthood, be anxious, have low self-esteem, emotional instability, negative worldview, open or disguised hostility, and indifference (Rohner et al., 2005; Khaleque & Rohner, 2002; Rohner, 1976). Thus, these differences may impact upon behaviour and peer relationships at university. Self and other perceptions, and reactions based on these perceptions may elicit certain behaviour from others. For example, having negative models of the self and positive models of others could lead to self-blame instead of blaming the other (i.e. perpetrator). Further still, passive-aggressiveness from negative models of self and other could inadvertently precipitate an attack, as a perpetrator seeks these characteristics. Individuals who have had an advantageous head-start may be more able to deal with difficult situations, such as bullying.

Evidence shows links between infant attachment and school bullying (Walden & Beran, 2010), but the link between attachment IWMs and HE bullying is unclear. Parental attachment relationships and childhood IWMs may not be primary influencers in the new social world of university. One meta-analysis found that attachment to parents and subsequent working models only moderately

predicted adjustment at university; peer relationships had more valence (Mattanah, Lopez, & Govern, 2011). Consequently, interactions that happen within the new university social world may provide situations that confirm or disconfirm previous models (Bowlby, 1973). Furthermore, those who have not experienced an optimum upbringing are not condemned; although they may lack the foundation of confidence and assertiveness, they could have benefited from other social and environmental experiences that have challenged their negative worldviews, and vice versa for those with pre-existing positive worldviews. As mentioned in one study, some potentially disadvantaged students at university (non-traditional) showed a type of unobserved resilience that could not be explained by privilege (Feinstein & Vignoles, 2008). This emphasises the need to measure multiple variables that could explain levels of risk or protectiveness.

Whether human behaviour is driven by unconscious or set models of the world, self, and others, or whether it is altered by innate needs for growth, competence, and autonomy, our individual psyche shares some responsibility for how we react to others. The individual level and behavioural theories are therefore of significant interest to this research - how much responsibility do our IWMs have for our wellbeing after experiencing bullying, and how does victimisation affect our psychological wellbeing needs? Although psychological disposition is responsible for feeling and functioning, other levels within an ecological systems model (i.e. our groups) must be considered. Whatever the context, we bring ourselves, and we are situated in an environment, suggesting a self-environment interaction. Chapter 6 explores the role of victimisation on IWMs, belonging, bullying at university, and wellbeing, using an IWM scale from my previous research (Harrison, unpublished).

2.12.2. Interpersonal level.

2.12.2.1. Social identity. Personal experience is not the only thing that impacts development and identity. Individuals sit within groups, interact with others, and are affected by how others react to them (like the child-parent relationship). There are several theories of group cohesion and identity that show the advantage of being part of a group. Groups can also affect individual development. SDT suggests consulting immediate social contexts and developmental environments to identify which needs have been thwarted (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Even though individual factors are important to examine, we are inherently social beings and cannot exist in isolation. Interactions with others ensure the species' survival, and collective existence influences many decisions and motivations.

As well as individual identity, we also form a social identity with the groups around us. Social identity is a category of self and other that define individuals based on shared similarities with their group (Turner et al., 1994). Shared social identities are powerful and can sometimes supersede the effect of a personal self-perception. Intergroup interactions are characterised by people relating entirely as representatives of their group, which can change the way people see themselves and others (Hornsey, 2008). The social category which people are in can provide characteristics that assimilate into the self-concept (Hogg & Terry, 2012).

2.12.2.2. Self-categorisation. Once members of a group join to make a single entity, groups occupy different levels of the social hierarchy of status and power, and intergroup behaviour is motivated by the group's ability to challenge the status quo (Hornsey, 2008). Social identity differs from personal identity as it

has different levels of self-categorisation; self-categories are social definitions of the individual (Turner et al. 1994). Identity is said to exist on different levels of inclusiveness, ranging from the "superordinate", as a human being; the "intermediate", as a member of the social in-group defined against an out-group; and the "subordinate", based on personal interpersonal comparisons (Hornsey, 2008). It is thought that as one level becomes more salient, the others become less effective and powerful (Hornsey, 2008), much like Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Whilst at the group intermediate level, the norms of the in-group give us information on how to act, feel, and think, through the theorised method of depersonalisation (Hornsey, 2008). In a salient intergroup situation, individuals will not act based on their personal characteristics but as members of their in-group, standing in opposition or difference to members of other groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). However, individuals and groups can influence each other in a bidirectional relationship; individuals are shaped by group norms, but norms can be challenged and shaped by the individuals within (Hornsey, 2008).

Being part of a group is evolutionarily ideal because group resources (physical resources, and physical and psychological safety) increase chances of survival. Personal identity is not eradicated on becoming a member of groups, but the level of identification will depend on what one is needed to be at that moment. A decision may be needed based on personal identity, or if a choice based on intermediate identity is necessary, the group may make a decision collectively. The different levels exist simultaneously but are not active simultaneously. In times of personal identity crises, becoming a member, or accentuating membership, of a group with which you sit, may aid in switching the level of identity to increase social belongingness. Belongingness is a psychological theory

(mentioned earlier in the chapter); humans are a social species, and so want to fit in and belong somewhere.

2.12.3. Organisational level. Just as a person is situated within a group, a person and the group are also situated within an organisation. To some extent, personal characteristics can depend upon social arrangements that people are in (Maslow, 1971). Moreover, organisations can mirror other intergroup interactions. They are internally structured groups located in complex networks of intergroup relations characterised by power differentials (Hogg & Terry, 2012). Maslow (1971) stated the importance of maintaining awareness of the systemic fluctuations in which a single stimulus can change a whole biological organism, just as one person can change a whole organisation. This can have a knock-on effect by changing behaviour in all areas of life, or all behaviours in the social organisation. Individuals can change the way the organisation runs by questioning and challenging norms. Similarly, employees embody the prototypical positive or negative values of the organisation to influence power (Hornsey, 2008).

It is important to understand reasons for identifying with certain organisations, as strong identification leads to lower levels of employee turnover and burnout, and increased motivation, satisfaction, and compliance (Hogg & Terry, 2012). Alternatively, over-identification can lead to more intergroup conflict between or within organisations, because of antisocial, unethical, and immoral behaviour by leaders and followers, and the loss of an independent sense of self. Consequently, the higher-order organisational level in the ecological model must not be overlooked, and for that reason, university institutions were explored by identifying and analysing existing anti-bullying policies.

2.13. Rationale, Aims, and Research Questions

Most bullying research has been conducted with children in school and adults in the workplace. The university experience seems to have been largely overlooked. Although there are a growing number of researchers dedicating time and effort to exploring the topic now, most of these studies are in the US, and most have applied childhood questionnaires to the student population. Although these chapters have showed similarities between childhood and student bullying, the research lacks clarity as to how much they differ.

The research presented in the literature review chapters suggests that differences in bullying are not only contextual (university is a unique experience that encompasses work, leisure, and health), but are also individual, with the different developmental stages between children and EAs. The importance of considering the individual and their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours in the HE bullying context is paramount. How individuals think about themselves and others, situated within the university context, is likely to affect and be affected by a myriad of social factors. How people have interacted with their parents, siblings, and school peers, will have a bearing on how EAs relate socially at university. These differences must be explored in context, whilst considering a range of socioecological variables (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) that may affect bullying and reactions to it.

The individual is situated within several other systems in society. Social belonging and group categorisations must be considered, whether individuals feel like they belong to certain social groups, and whether that belongingness includes the higher university level. It is also important to examine whether other organisational factors, such as geographical area, population density, and

university-related outcomes such as TEF ratings and policy, are associated with behaviour. Subsequently, a range of personal demographic and university information were measured for the third survey study (Chapters 5 and 6) alongside individual and social level factors. The broader variable of anti-bullying policy was considered in Chapter 7. This represented an external organisation variable, but I was not able to compare the findings from the policy analyses to the prevalence of victimisation. Instead, the adequacy and content of policies was explored. Throughout this thesis, all levels of variables will be discussed in relation to their ecological location within the university environment.

It is well-known that bullying is associated with, predicts, and causes negative effects for individuals and broader social contexts. University bullying is likely to interfere with students' abilities to grow their knowledge, skills, and networks. Additionally, literature and media articles reveal that student mental health reports have increased exponentially over the past several years, with various factors thought to have contributed to this. One such factor may be fellow student behaviour. This research addresses the need to investigate the rising reports of student mental health and wellbeing problems whilst considering multiple variables.

The aim of this research was to investigate student bullying within a UK university environment. This included exploring the definition of bullying through qualitative methods and investigating the extent of bullying through a quantitative questionnaire. Four studies sought to further our understanding, with each addressing research questions that added to the small but increasing knowledge base surrounding the problem of student bullying (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

Research studies, questions, and aims

Study	Research questions	Aims
1. Student Perceptions of Bullying at University (Chapter 3)	How do students define bullying in HE? Where does bullying happen? How much of a problem is bullying in HE? Who do students think is involved in the bullying? What do students do when they see bullying? What do students think are the negative effects of bullying? For what reasons do students think bullying happens?	To explore students' perceptions of bullying behaviour at university
2. Two-Part Study Developing and Evaluating the Novel Bullying at University Questionnaire (BUQ) (Chapter 4)	Is there a clear factor structure in the new BUQ scale? Can this factor structure be verified with confirmatory factor analysis? Do the subscales have internal reliability?	To create and test a robust and valid psychological scale for measuring bullying at university

3. Student Victimisation and Wellbeing (Chapters 5 and 6)	What are the prevalence rates of student bullying in a national sample? What are the levels of wellbeing within the student sample? Are levels of victimisation associated with wellbeing? Do IWMs and belongingness mediate the links between victimisation and wellbeing? Does childhood victimisation predict current victimisation?	To investigate group differences and the associations between bullying and wellbeing in HE
4. Student Anti-Bullying and/or Harassment Policies at University (Chapter 7)	How many UK universities have an anti-bullying policy? How comprehensive are these policies for use in the HE context?	To investigate the existence and quality of university anti-bullying policies in the UK

2.14. Structure of Thesis

The thesis is divided into 8 chapters; Chapters 1 and 2 outlined the psychological research on bullying at various developmental levels, finishing with a focus on theoretical explanations for vulnerabilities to bullying involvement at different ecological levels. Student wellbeing and other HE sector concerns were also explored.

Chapter 3 is an exploratory focus group study that attempts to untangle definitional concerns of bullying within HE, drawing on students' own experiences and opinions. Data from the focus groups also contributed to a new scale to measure HE bullying. This study laid the foundations for the remainder of the thesis.

Chapter 4 outlines the creation of a novel scale to measure student bullying and victimisation within HE. Drawing on findings from the literature and the previous focus group study, items were created for a new scale, which were inspected by the research team, and tested and revised on two separate samples.

Chapter 5 introduces the third survey study investigating levels of student victimisation. It presents findings from analyses of group differences (e.g. gender, ethnicity, SES) on levels of victimisation and wellbeing, IWM, and belongingness. The chapter provides evidence for the socioecological model, which suggests that wider social contexts, such as social group membership, can impact victimisation levels.

Chapter 6 continues the third survey study, focusing on the associations between victimisation and wellbeing, and the mediating roles of IWMs, university victimisation, social connectedness, and university belonging. Multiple wellbeing scales were used as outcome variables to gain a broad idea of how students are managing psychologically at university, and whether this is linked to lower levels of bullying experienced in childhood and within HE.

Chapter 7 is a content analysis of university anti-bullying policies. The aim was to explore how many universities had a policy, investigate the quality and content of these policies, and analyse the differences between universities. The findings were interpreted as to how the content and quality translate into real-world practice.

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis with a discussion of the findings, linking the results to the previous literature, and providing implications for addressing bullying in the HE context, and in future research.

3. Student Perceptions of Bullying at University

This chapter moves on from discussing bullying in other contexts to focus on HE; it outlines the exploration of student attitudes regarding bullying in HE. It begins with a brief overview of relevant literature and then describes the study methodology and findings, which informed the subsequent two-part studies evaluating the scale introduced in Chapter 4. Results are then discussed.

As mentioned, research into school bullying is abundant, though research on bullying in HE has been scarce; as a result, there are no generally accepted methodologies for researching bullying in universities. Bullying has been defined as a systematic abuse of power, whereby intentionally aggressive behaviour is repeatedly targeted at victims who are unable to defend themselves (Smith, 2004). This definition has been adopted over the past 40 years by most bullying researchers working with school children. Yet the workplace definition listed by ACAS in their Bullying and Harassment at Work guide for employees states: "Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour; an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient" (ACAS, 2014, p.1). Another recent definition by Volk et al. (2014, p.328), suggests that bullying is "…aggressive, goal-directed behavior that harms another individual within the context of a power imbalance". Volk and colleagues' research is with adolescents, but they stipulate the definition could apply equally well to younger and older populations. They claim that the vital added component of goal-directed attends to rewards, which might drive the bullying behaviour, and possibly increase resistance to interventions.

Discrepancies are evident between these definitions: the need for the bullying to be repeated is omitted from the ACAS guide and the Volk et al. (2014) definition, and ACAS further omits that victims are unable to defend themselves. Children may be perceived as less able to defend themselves compared to adults, as their lives are primarily controlled and

governed by adults. However, some adults may also feel unable to defend themselves. There is evidence suggesting that those who are bullied in childhood may continue to be bullied as adults (Adams & Laurence, 2011; Brendgen & Poulin, 2018). In the attachment and abuse literature, supplemented with neuroscience evidence, patterns of thinking and behaving in childhood can continue into adulthood (Fivush, 2006). Thus, adults may feel unable to defend themselves at work even though there is nothing external preventing them from attempting to control the situation (e.g. by retaliating, avoiding, or informing their line manager). Hence, the alternate phrasing of perceived power imbalance may be beneficial, as power differences are not always obvious to outsiders. Power differentials may relate to structural hierarchies or personal and social constructs and perceptions (Prilleltensky, 2008).

It is unknown which definition should be applied to the period between childhood and adulthood. At university, most students are in late adolescence and EA; they possess characteristics of adolescents *and* adults and may be struggling with developing identity and navigating their social and emotional world. Alongside individual differences between children, EAs, and adults, there are institutional differences between university, school, and the workplace. Even though there may be pressures by parents to attend university, it is still non-compulsory. Students control their own lives and use their time however they wish (whether that is to attend lectures or parties). Students often receive finance and grants that are not dependent on punctuality, 100% attendance, or producing outstanding work. They also have more freedom of choice than children at school and adults in the workplace, and this freedom is available during a period of novelty seeking, social engagement, and creative exploration (Arnett, 2015). The individual and contextual differences between this population and others are likely to impact the way that students define, classify, and perpetrate bullying.

Discordance is likely between definitions from different generations (i.e. researcher and student), as Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems model theorises that unique

cultures develop within different generations. Students may be embedded in different cultures to those of the researchers studying them. It is recommended that researchers are mindful of the validity of definitions being used with their chosen sample population (Volk, Veenstra, & Espelage, 2017). Therefore, a more inductive research approach can explore student views on bullying, which will provide valid definitions for this sample. The few HE bullying studies conducted in the UK often include the definition applied to children's contexts or include no definition at all, and these mainly focus on cyberbullying.

Consequently, once an evidence-based conceptualisation is gained from students' perceptions and experiences, this can be developed into a scale to measure student bullying. Currently, school victimisation surveys are being used with HE students, which may lead to invalid results; if the questions are not relevant to student-related bullying, then this type of bullying will go unrecorded. Developing a student-specific bullying measure that validly represents university bullying will be useful for future researchers to adopt.

3.1. Aims

The current study, therefore, aims to build upon the literature by attempting to gather evidence of students' understanding of bullying at university.

1. To explore students' perceptions and experiences of the styles, frequencies, and intensity of HE bullying using focus groups.
2. To use the data to create a new psychological scale for measuring bullying at university in the UK (discussed in Chapter 4).

3.2. Methodology

3.2.1. Focus groups. Bullying research involving students often requires them to report their childhood bullying experiences (Espelage, Hong, & Mebane, 2016; Schäfer et al, 2004). Few studies have been interested in students' current experiences of bullying at university. Consequently, a qualitative investigation was warranted to explore student

experiences, attitudes, and opinions regarding bullying at HE level whilst studying at HE level.

The qualitative data were collected using focus groups; this method was chosen as focus groups can generate many ideas with a small number of groups (Morgan, 1997). Considering the time constraints with a doctoral project, this research format, compared to time-consuming interviews, was ideal. Focus groups are also effective for studying sensitive topics (Wong, 2008); an interview format may have prevented disclosure, especially if the participant had shameful feelings about experiences (e.g. if they had been targeted). Additionally, shared experiences or opinions in the group may encourage disclosure, as any one participant would not feel singled out. The responsibility to contribute is also diffused and individual pressure is absolved. Focus groups can also stimulate discussion between participants with little moderator involvement (Morgan, 1997). Participants can question others' statements or disagree, often referred to as piggybacking (Paxton-Buursma & Walker, 2008). This is useful for providing extra context and depth and allows the researcher to identify group-wide consensus or disagreement. Also, the everyday student subculture may be represented and reflected by the smaller scale group (Hyde, Howlett, Brady, & Drennan, 2005); the students' responses to each other, and to myself as moderator, could be reflective of how they interact with other students outside of the group (Krueger & Casey, 2009). Lastly, focus groups are recommended for conducting exploratory research and examining unknown social contexts, of which student bullying at university is one (Frey & Fontana, 1993). These data are also ideal to inform the development of a novel scale (Morgan, 1977) to measure the types and frequencies of student bullying within HE.

Several issues were considered before conducting the groups. In most research, a power imbalance exists between researcher and participant, with the researcher adopting an authoritative stance and possessing the power - it was important to attempt to overcome this,

as those who feel oppressed may struggle to give their opinions. In focus groups, the balance of power tends to shift, and participants have more control than the researcher (Wilkinson, 1988). Accordingly, only students were present moderating and note-taking in the focus group to facilitate active discussion (Morgan, 1998). The obvious power imbalance of having my supervisor present may have led to feelings of oppression. Consideration was equally given to dominant speakers who may stifle discussion. Space was provided for other group members to offer opinions by asking, "Does anyone else have something to add?" instead of moving onto the next question. I also diverted extreme digressions back to the topic.

Furthermore, there is contradictory literature on whether group participants should share certain characteristics (e.g. all one sex, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation). I decided on mixed groups, siding with Hollander (2004), who claimed heterogeneous groups can foster disagreement and encourage richer conversation. The shared characteristic of the participants (Hydén & Bülow, 2003) was their undergraduate student status, whereas their differences (e.g. gender, nationality, university) added to the complexity of the interactions, encouraging greater insights and unrestricted views. Undergraduates were selected because they were more likely to live in student housing; based on informal discussions with Student Services staff at Keele, a lot of negative behaviour happens within halls. The recommended number per group was six to ten participants (Lehoux, Poland, & Daudelin, 2006), and Morgan (1992) suggested four to six groups is typical.

Based on the discussion with the director of Student Services at Keele University, students were recruited from various universities in the UK. Student Services proposed the existence of a "bubble", whereby the community and subsequent activities, are self-contained on the campus. A bubble is plausible, being a campus-based university situated in a village. Subsequently, ethical approval was sought to conduct focus groups at other universities.

Due to a lack of volunteers, I changed approach and conducted online focus groups in addition to a physical one (see 3.4.). An asynchronous forum style format with static questions was chosen over a synchronous chat room where all participants are online at the same time. Participants had a chance to answer and discuss the topic in their own time whilst the group was open. A chat room may have been difficult to arrange and moderate. The eventual groups comprised students from various UK universities, recruited via social media. After a few months of unsuccessful recruitment, I offered a £5 Amazon e-voucher, and then after another few months increased this to a £10 Amazon e-voucher.

The physical focus group took a semi-structured format involving an inventory of questions (see Appendix A). Semi-structured formats allow for more flexibility, for example, the opportunity to change words and questions depending on the knowledge or vocabulary of the people present (Barriball & While, 1994). Barriball and While further suggest that the equivalence of meaning helps to standardise the semi-structured focus group format; if each person in each group understands the questions to mean the same, comparability can be achieved. For the online groups, the questions were static and unchanged.

3.3. Method

3.3.1. Participants. Forty undergraduates from 17 UK HE institutions (16 publicly funded, one independent) participated in the groups. Thirty-four students comprised four online focus groups from universities across England and Scotland, and six students participated in a physical group at the campus-based pre-92 university. Participants were aged between 18 and 30 (M = 22, SD = 2.8), with 28 female, 10 male, and two undisclosed. Students ranged from first year to final year undergraduates, studied a wide range of disciplines, and reported varying demographic characteristics (see Table 3.1). All students were single, and all except one was full-time.

Table 3.1

Focus group demographics

Participant	Age	Sex	Sexual orientation	Ethnicity	Religion	University	Subject	Year
Online Focus Group 1								
1	19	F	Heterosexual	Indian	None	Queen Mary	Maths	1
2	21	F	Heterosexual	Polish	None	Aberdeen	Psychology	2
3	22	F	-	East Asian	None	Liverpool	Law	3
4	22	M	Gay/Lesbian	White British	Agnostic	Liverpool John Moores	English	2
5	19	F	Heterosexual	Asian	Christian	Coventry	Finance	1
6	23	F	Bisexual	Asian	Atheist	Nottingham	Psychology	1
7	-	F	Heterosexual	Chinese	Christian	Liverpool	Law	3
8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	18	F	Heterosexual	White British	None	Institute of Contemporary Music Performance	Song writing	1
Online Focus Group 2								
1	-	M	-	-	-	-	-	-

2	21	F	Heterosexual	African	-	Kings College London	Medicine	3
3	25	F	Heterosexual	African	Muslim	UCL	Biochemistry	3
4	22	F	Heterosexual	White British	Agnostic	Nottingham	Neuroscience	4
5	31	M	Heterosexual	Bangladeshi	None	Durham	Law	2
6	22	F	Bisexual	White	None	Huddersfield	Psychology	4
7	20	F	Bisexual	White	Atheist	Anglia Ruskin	Psychology	3
8	30	M	Heterosexual	-	-	-	-	-
9	-	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
Physical Focus Group								
1	20	M	Heterosexual	White British	Buddhist	Keele	Neuroscience and Psychology	2
2	20	F	Heterosexual	Caribbean	Christian	Keele	Human Resources Management and Sociology	1
3	19	F	Bisexual	White British	None	Keele	Psychology	1
4	20	F	Gay/Lesbian	White British	None	Keele	Psychology and Criminology	1
5	-	F	Heterosexual	White and Black Caribbean	None	Keele	Psychology and Neuroscience	1
6	23	F	Heterosexual	White British	None	Keele	Psychology	1
Online Focus Group 3								
1	21	F	Other	Croatian	None	Heriot-Watt	Pharmaceutical Chemistry	1
2	29	M	Gay/Lesbian	Scottish	Atheist	Heriot-Watt	Information Systems	1
3	20	F	Heterosexual	Indian	Hinduism	Heriot-Watt	Psychology	4

4	19	M	Heterosexual	Mixed	None	Sheffield Hallam	Biology	1
5	21	F	Heterosexual	British	Christian	Heriot-Watt	Language Interpretation and Translation	4
6	22	F	Heterosexual	Chinese	Buddhism	Heriot-Watt	Architectural Engineering	2
7	19	F	Heterosexual	Chinese	None	Heriot-Watt	Maths, Statistical, and Actuarial Science	2
8	19	F	Heterosexual	White	Christian	Heriot-Watt	International Business Management	4
9	-	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
Online Focus Group 4								
1	21	M	Heterosexual	Chinese	None	Heriot-Watt	Accountancy & Finance	4
2	19	F	Heterosexual	White British	None	Chester	Psychology	1
3	22	F	Heterosexual	White British	Atheist	Liverpool John Moores	Biomedical Science	3
4	20	M	Heterosexual	White Other	None	Heriot-Watt	Psychology with Management	2
5	22	F	Heterosexual	White British	Atheist	Leicester	Medicine	3
6	-	M	-	-	-	Heriot-Watt	-	-

Note. Not all participants disclosed demographic data. For reference later in the chapter, participants will be referred to by (a) their focus group number and (b) participant number. For example, OFG4.2 is online focus group 4, participant 2, and PFG.5 is physical focus group, participant 5.

3.3.2. Materials. The focus group schedule comprised an inventory of questions based on the aims of this research, for example, "how would you define bullying?". These questions resulted from a brain-storming session between myself and my lead supervisor. They were purposely broad, followed by some specific prompts, as we wanted to explore the what, how, why, and who, of bullying at university. The schedule was followed loosely in the physical focus group, and the discussion occasionally digressed. This was permitted, except on one occasion where a rising dispute was quelled, and the discussion was brought back to the topic. Members of the physical focus group completed a consent form and demographic questionnaire at the start. Similarly, online group members typed their initials for consent, and completed a demographic form on the web platform Qualtrics. The online groups proceeded to the chosen online focus group website (focusgroupit.com) where they signed up for a temporary account (using their name or a pseudonym) and answered the ten questions. The online members were able to respond to others' answers and return to the site later to contribute more. This site was chosen because a basic account was free, and it fulfilled the necessary requirements, such as the ability for participants to respond to others' answers, for me to interact with participants' answers, and to send group emails through the site.

3.4. Procedure

3.4.1. Physical focus groups. Ethical approval was granted to run focus groups with undergraduates at Keele and Staffordshire University campuses (see Appendix B). Posters were placed around the campus and posted on social media. Some slots were advertised on the psychology research participation scheme at Keele, but I recruited students from any taught discipline (see Table 3.1 for

student subjects). An email was also sent to a list of students who had signed up to an SU volunteering scheme.

Those who signed up were emailed the information sheet (see Appendix C) beforehand so they could make an informed decision about participating. The final group composition was three psychology students from the research participation scheme, and three from the SU volunteering scheme. A reminder was emailed to all participants on the morning of the focus group. The group convened in a booked library study room and a "do not disturb, focus group in progress" sign was attached to the door. Refreshments were available throughout the hour-long period. Participants read, signed, and completed consent and demographic forms. A Dictaphone was set up in the middle of the table to record the speech; the students were aware of this on signing up. Another PhD student was present to take notes for identifying the speakers. Once settled, I read an introduction, outlining ethical considerations, and then proceeded through the focus group schedule. Participants had the chance to ask questions or add final comments, and then they were verbally debriefed. As well as receiving RPT or SU credits, participants received a £5 Amazon e-voucher.

3.4.2. Online focus groups. An advertisement was posted on thestudentroom.ac.uk and university Facebook pages requesting for volunteers to email me. Additionally, callforparticipants.co.uk was used to recruit. This research-recruitment website advertises university research studies (with appropriate ethical approval) from around the UK. Once an email was received from a university account, an online-specific information sheet and consent form (see Appendix D) was sent. Potential participants typed their initials on the consent form and then emailed it back to me. They were then invited via a link,

which restricted the access to volunteers. They were taken to Qualtrics where they filled in a demographic form (see Appendix E) and then clicked a link that took them to the focus group site. Participants created an account (that could be deleted afterwards) and then answered the questions listed on the webpage. On the focus group website, ten participants could sign up to each group and one group was permitted to run at once. In some groups, participants signed up for an account but never answered the questions – taking up one of the ten available slots (this accounts for the second, third, and fourth online groups having less than 10 participants).

Participants answered the questions in detail and were able to respond to others' answers, generating written discussion, though online focus group two had little discussion. Once the slots in the first group were filled and the participants had answered the questions, they were sent a group email via focusgroupit.com saying that the group was closing in a few days, and if they had any more comments to add, could they please do so before this point. Once the group closed, another group email was sent to thank participants for completing, to offer a short debrief, and to request that they email me from a student email address to say they have completed the study. On receipt of this email, I sent an Amazon e-voucher as thanks for taking part. A student email address was requested to prove their student status with the aim of deterring non-students from participating just to get the incentive.

3.5. Analysis and Reflexivity

Thematic Analysis was chosen to analyse the focus group data. This flexible analysis is accessible, simple, and is not aligned to any one theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Based on the guidance from Braun and

Clarke (2006), the five groups of data were initially subject to a semantic data-derived inductive thematic analysis. The initial analysis was based on the content of the data, though it is acknowledged that we can never separate ourselves from our theoretical backgrounds; subsequently, there is likely to be some theoretical influence. I am sensitive to the key themes within bullying literature from schools, workplaces, and university research; however, I attempted to identify any inconsistencies between the theory and the participants' voice.

The initial data-driven coding was conducted to acquire knowledge about additional forms of bullying in HE that could be used in a new scale (see Chapter 3). With my existing knowledge of bullying, I was able to identify instances that were not normally seen in school bullying research. Having read through the data several times to familiarise myself, I read closely to identify "units of meaning" to which I allocated codes, for example, a student throwing away another person's food, "lad" behaviour, and students stopping others from using facilities (see Appendix F for a full page of coding). This run-through was necessary because the development and administration of the scale was running in parallel with the initial focus group data analysis, and so the items were needed to create the scale.

In addition to this initial extraction of semantic words, a secondary conceptual interpretation that applied knowledge of epistemological theories identified latent themes within the dataset. The main aim of this study was to explore how students conceptualise bullying. The term has adopted an inherently scientific, objective, and essentialist meaning, with several key facets (i.e. repetition, power imbalance, and intention to cause harm). Though everyone may have a general knowledge of or familiarity with the term bullying, some conceptualisations may not be related to the literature. I adopted a centre-ground

between essentialist theory and social constructivism for the secondary analysis. I was mindful of the scientific, objective, and widely agreed definition of bullying, but also attended to how the focus group members constructed bullying through their dialogue and written words. When interpreting the dataset, I maintained awareness of the students' existing knowledge frames (they may know certain legislation and definitions) when their verbalised/written thoughts were analysed for new constructions of bullying. I attempted to detect hidden meaning and interpret how the participants had constructed meanings by also applying my own awareness, experiences, and opinions on bullying. I also identified themes aligning with an essentialist definition of bullying.

From my own experiences of being an undergraduate, I have existing preconceptions of student dynamics in lectures and seminars; students often separated into cliques and were reluctant to acknowledge outsiders. I perceived much judgement about not being part of the stereotypical drinking culture; you were categorised as different. These observations, alongside personal experiences of bullying at school, home, with friends, and in the workplace, inevitably coloured my interpretation of the focus group data. Having always been in the victim role may have enabled me to empathise more with admissions of being bullied, rather than of perpetration. I could also understand how different behaviours could be perceived as bullying when perhaps they were not classic bullying behaviours listed from childhood literature. Having experienced a cumulative range of negative behaviours from other people over my lifetime, I can empathise deeply with others' pain and show compassion for their feelings and perceptions. What one person sees as bullying may be perceived as harmless to another; it was important to be mindful of how life events (and thus their

thought processes and mental models) can aid/hinder their interpretation of external events. I am very aware of this, having practiced reflection for many years. I recognised my own potential bias and was mindful of this whilst interpreting participants' views and experiences of bullying. My supervisory team also checked the credibility of my coding. They helped with the reliability and validity of the coding process by checking my understanding of the data, and redirecting and questioning at times where I had not explored in enough depth.

3.5.1. Thematic analysis

I familiarised myself with the physical focus group data by listening several times and then transcribing verbatim. The online groups were copy-and-pasted into separate Microsoft Word documents. Each transcript was read twice, and initial notes were made in the margins. Once familiar with the content, I highlighted important points, making more notes where necessary. Next, I surveyed the notes in the margins and wrote these as initial codes. When each focus group had several pages of initial codes, these were cut out and grouped together. Some codes fitted together, and were easy to group, for example, "there is no cyberbullying" and "cyberbullying does not happen here". Those that did not fit into any category were classed as "miscellaneous". Once the cut-out codes were arranged into similar groups, common groups were then merged. Mergers reduced the groups under umbrella themes. The umbrella themes labelled at this point were consulted to inform the novel bullying scale (see Chapter 4). This top-down approach was necessary then, as it was essential to gain this early knowledge of themes and specific bullying behaviours to continue with the sequential design of creating and testing a scale. The focus group data were left

for several months whilst the scale was created and administered to two samples for evaluation.

On returning to the focus group data, a more distanced approach was implemented based on further reading of the literature, survey results, and prior knowledge of the subject area. This allowed for a deeper exploration of the data and refining of the themes. Again, each transcript was printed off and separated. Then, I coded units of meaning from each line by attempting to interpret what the words represented. I was mindful of the existing knowledge and theory about bullying and related this to the data where applicable. I was especially cognisant of the widely used definition and the four common types of school bullying - physical, psychological, verbal, and cyber. Some of these themes were identified during the initial analysis, and the subsequent reading and analysis strengthened the case for including them within a theme.

In some cases, I identified unexpected themes of which I had little previous theoretical knowledge; for example, some types of bullying appeared to resemble the relationship abuse literature. My first supervisor (who is knowledgeable about relationship abuse literature) pointed out the link, which alerted me to consider this further. Alongside this, I applied some of my own thoughts and ideas to make sense of what was being said, based on personal knowledge and experiences with bullying and abuse. I also considered how the data could fit into the overall ecological systems framework of Bronfenbrenner.

3.6. Results

The main themes and subthemes can be seen in Table 3.2. One theme identified was that bullying involves a power imbalance between social groups, with the subtheme of social groups and/or individuals vying for status and

reputation in a social hierarchy. Next, I identified data suggesting that perpetrators bully for a reason, which I interpreted as an intentional act for social or personal gain. Third, common bullying tactics and methods used to perpetrate were identified by participants. Lastly, bullying is maintained and propagated by justifications and minimisations about people and bullying behaviour.

Table 3.2

Main themes and subthemes identified from the focus groups

Main theme	Subtheme
Power imbalance	Social groups
	Status and reputation in the social hierarchy
Objective of bullying	Intentional and goal-directed for social gain
	Intentional and goal-directed for personal gain
Methods of bullying and tactics used	Sexual harassment
	Active exclusion and isolating
	Online/cyber
	Controlling and mind games
	Verbal and jokes
Justification and minimisation for involvement in bullying	Bystander intervention

3.6.1. Power imbalance.

3.6.1.1. Social groups. Students frequently said that bullying happened between groups, where groups attacked other groups or individuals: "social groups will pick on an individual which [sic] they think is 'less intelligent' than the rest and make that person the butt of most of their jokes" (OFG3.4). Also, individuals within perpetrator groups may bully: "The perpetrator is typically in a group" (OFG4.5). Furthermore, attacks could be based upon group-level differences like race or social class, as commented by these students: "I think bullying comes mainly from majority groups towards minority groups in higher education. For example, from those from private education/more privileged backgrounds towards those from less well educated/less privileged backgrounds" (OFG1.9); and "Yeah, have seen students of different races in an argument in the library because of a derogatory term being used from one party to the other" (OFG1.7). It seems that those in a majority or privileged groups have existing power that those in disadvantaged or minority groups do not, even before any bullying. Being in a privileged group has many advantages, as one student said: "… and confident people tend to come from good socioeconomic backgrounds and have support" (OFG4.3).

Those with existing power may use this power to target minority groups who may have less existing power, perpetuating a cycle: "…but same goes with verbal one [sic], which can occur because of someone's ethnicity or race, even sexual orientation" (OFG3.6). One student mentioned that those who attack minority groups may not even realise they are bullying: "I would say verbal bullying is mainly included racism and discrimination in LGBT group. Sometimes people probably won't even notice what they did to others are actually bullying

[sic]" (OFG3.8). This quote suggests that group power is so ingrained that there is little awareness that they are perpetrating, and even less awareness of the effects of attacking those in other groups; the power is normalised, so they do not realise they are in a privileged position.

3.6.1.2. Status and reputation in the social hierarchy. The existing power of those in privileged groups could be in the form of a high social reputation and high position in the social hierarchy. Students agreed that teachers and lecturers may also bully students - because teachers and lecturers are already in a position of power by authority, they are advantaged and have a higher place than students in the classroom social hierarchy. One student said: "Teachers could also be included in the bullying, when they take part in humiliating a person or picking on them constantly in class or talking aloud when making comments about a student's work, conduct, activities or indeed appearance" (OFG3.3). This behaviour bolsters the teacher's existing power, and the target may feel their social power and position has been lowered. One student talked about supposed equality of status at university between students and staff; however, this is questioned:

> So I know a friend, so she feels like she's been bullied by a lecturer [moderator: ok], so I feel like that's different than at school when you wouldn't really consider it to be bullying by a teacher [moderator: no] cause you're kinda more equal here (PFG.5)

An authority figure and the person they have authority over will never have equal power. Perhaps there is increased expectations of respect and adult-like communication between students and lecturers at the university level, which gives the impression of equity because students are now EAs themselves, and not children.

As well as the personal characteristic of being a lecturer, other personal characteristics of the perpetrator were identified that presumed a higher level of power and position in a social hierarchy. For example, one student suggested attractiveness: “They are people who appear outwardly confident and they're usually stylish, attractive and have an entourage” (OFG1.4). Whereas others agree that confidence is a key perpetrator characteristic, especially if they have settled into university life: “Often more confident individuals are the perpetrators, especially if they have settled in quite quickly and easily” (OFG4.2). Sociability and popularity are also introduced as intertwined with confidence: “A person who is a social butterfly will have less chance of getting bullied because they appear more confident” (OFG2.3) and: “It’s always the one doing the bullying who is “popular” and they rally support from unconfident people who they allow into their group” (OFG1.4). Those with these characteristics seem to be perceived as having a higher status and it is these who are perceived to perpetrate.

Alternatively, those who have certain group characteristics may be categorised as perceived or actual targets of bullying, due to a group reputation gained through media or wider society: “…but perhaps those bullied are often minorities, or have been unfairly and inappropriately portrayed in a negative light from other sources” (OFG2.5). These group perceptions of lower social status may lead to an assignment of lower levels of power.

Social status and reputation are vital factors in bullying dynamics, as perpetrators can attempt to damage these: “The bully manipulates the victim’s social status by spreading rumors or ostracizing the victim from his or her peers” (OFG2.1). Lowering someone else’s status may be an attempt to increase their own, as one student says: “…they want to look the "big man" and show off”

(OFG3.3). Perpetrators want to have a higher status than their target through acquiring more power, which is also a motive for bullying: "When they have power over someone else it gives them a superficial sense of authority" (OFG1.4). One student shared that "Everyone has the right to enjoy student life and no one else has the power to destroy others life" (OFG3.8), which may indicate they believe that nobody should have the power to negatively impact others' lives.

3.6.2. Objective of bullying.

3.6.2.1. Intentional and goal-directed for social gain. Most students' comments represented the belief that bullying is intentional and goal-directed. There was some discussion about getting hurt unintentionally through ignorance, but this was not a widespread belief. Because most bullying is a social phenomenon, the goal that the perpetrator seeks is likely linked to other people, one student said: "People like the validation of others and joking around, teasing and singling somebody out is an easy way of bonding with others at the expense of the one they are making fun of" (OFG3.5). The interpreted goal here is linked to the earlier subtheme of increasing status, reputation, and gaining more power in the social hierarchy. Students join in with bullying as a way of bonding and fitting in or avoiding becoming a target themselves. One student said: "Wanting to fit in with other students - if the bully knows others feel the same way about the target, it may be a way to bond" (OFG4.2), and another mentioned a bandwagon effect: "Though if one person starts something, other people may join in" (OFG1.6).

3.6.2.2. Intentional and goal-directed for personal gain. If bullying has no social goal, it may be linked to a personal gain, especially in a one-to-one situation. As one student said: "It is a complex issue of which perpetrators bully people for their on [sic] gain for different reasons. It could be a number of things -

their own weaknesses, attention, jealousy, dislike to the victim" (OFG2.9). This quote suggests that the perpetrator may feel weak, and bullying may bolster their feelings of power and self-efficacy. Perpetrators may also want more agency, and have control over others: "Yes, once you respond it just fuels the bullies' desire to gain total control over you" (OFG1.7), and: "You have people who get a sense of power from limiting others from joining in" (OFG1.4). The personal goal is to have control and power over others, which might make themselves feel better. One student commented that it is natural to want to be better than others: "It's intrinsic for humans to want to be superior (especially those people who are actually secretly insecure inside)" (OFG1.7), suggesting that perpetrators assuage their insecurity by attempting to become superior.

3.6.3. Methods and tactics of bullying. The third theme can be labelled collectively as methods of bullying and tactics used. Most students had clear ideas about how bullying is perpetrated at university (even if they claimed not to have witnessed it), thus suggesting that students have a shared social representation of bullying based on their beliefs.

3.6.3.1. Sexual harassment. In three of the focus groups, several students said that sexual harassment was a problem, and many had experienced it themselves or knew others who had: "Aggression directed at female students / sexual harassment (i.e. groping, making unwanted sexual remarks)" (OFG1.3). One student said that it is harmful and can cause discomfort to women: "There is sexual harassment, which appears a lot more subtle from outside but I think if you're a young woman who gets that sort of overt interest it can be quite uncomfortable" (OFG1.4). There was a view that sexual harassment was mostly targeted at women, but one student noted it happens to men too:

> It does happen the other way round, but I feel that it isn't as prevalent. This isn't a reason to ignore it. I'd say 90% of my female friends have experience of men in clubs groping them, and maybe 40-50% of my male friends. When it gets more sinister like following you home, forcing themselves on you, or pulling your skirt up/top down, I find that men haven't had to deal with this, but a number of women have (OFG4.5).

This student suggested that most of their female friends had been sexually harassed, which indicates a widespread gendered issue. Sexual harassment may not normally be perceived as bullying; however, it is categorised as a type of bullying by the students: “Besides that, I believe that frequent catcalling, sexual abuse, it all counts as bullying” (OFG1.2).

3.6.3.2. Active exclusion and isolating. Groups actively excluding or isolating a person was a commonly discussed tactic used within universities. This might be in a group chat box online: “…so the group would make subtle remarks about them or talk about them in a group chat” (OFG3.1) or in person: “Active exclusion which takes a negative form. Often takes place in social groups - excluding one person who you live with from social events, one person in your lectures you actively move away from” (OFG4.2). This might be problematic if it starts to affect work: “Exclusion from group projects and ignoring peers and people in their groups, leading to unfair exclusion from university work which may lead to lowered grades” (OFG4.3).

There was also discussion of how conscious people were of excluding others, and whether an active decision to exclude was necessary for it to be classed as bullying. Another student said: “We don't have to be friends with or

include everyone" (OFG4.5), suggesting that excluding a stranger or unfamiliar person is not bullying. However, the excluded person will always be unfamiliar if they can never join in. Perhaps it is what follows an exclusion or whether the exclusion is encouraged socially, that classifies it as a method of bullying:

> Being excluded from groups and purposely ignored could also be thought of as bullying however it is a person's right not to want to speak to someone, but when you then turn others against a person with no due cause, this is bullying (OFG3.3).

This student suggested that not all exclusion is a form of bullying but said that if the perpetrator turned others against the excluded person, it is an act of bullying. Another student gave anecdotal evidence that supported the idea of targeted exclusion involving other mean behaviours: "Agreed, my flatmates in first year did this. Excluded a girl in our flat for no reason a long [sic] with being nasty and cruel, resulting in her being very upset" (OFG4.3).

However, one student claimed exclusion was not a problem because they had not witnessed it: "I believe that there might be more pressing matters than exclusion/bullying (since I haven't witnissed [sic] it yet)" (OFG4.4). And another suggested that exclusion is not bullying per se: "I think exclusion can happen as a result of bullying, I would not say exclusion is part of bullying" (PFG.1). Thus, the tactic of targeted exclusion may be a first step, or just one technique, within the overall method of isolating a person or turning others against them.

3.6.3.3. Online/Cyber. Cyberbullying was discussed from differing perspectives. The variability of opinion evidenced that it was a strong yet controversial theme. Students easily gave examples of online bullying: "…it can either be passed around the group chat for everybody to laugh at, posted publicly

on Facebook or even used as blackmail" (OFG3.4), suggesting it is a channel for various types of abuse. Students were aware of the ease of committing cyberbullying and compared the harm with traditional bullying: "cyberbullying can involve many different types of bullying such as sexual harassment, racism, sexism and homophobia. Saying something nasty, cruel or offensive online is no different than saying it in person in terms of the victims suffering" (OFG4.3). The nature of this method allows for easier perpetration, as hinted at by these students: "Everyone is connected online pretty much 24/7 these days so cyberbullying can take place anywhere" (OFG3.5), and is also easier to hide: "I believe that Cyber Bullying deserves special attention, since it is much easier to commit due to increased annomity [sic]" (OFG4.4). One student suggested that cyberbullying may be a supplementary way of bullying alongside physical perpetration: "For example, someone may be excluded from social events at their halls and yet may be involved in cyberbullying at the same time" (OFG4.6). Also, apps and social media are becoming more visual, allowing perpetrators to share personal images: "Online bullying through nasty messages and sharing of private information/photos would be a devastating method becoming more common through the rise of snapchat and other photo-centric social media apps" (OFG4.6).

Alternatively, some students reported not seeing any cyberbullying at university, or did not believe it happened: "I've not seen much cyber bullying in the university context (OFG4.5), and: "I have never experienced cyberbullying and have not heard of cases of cyberbullying in university within my group of friends and acquaintances. For the general majority of students, I think cyberbullying is not that big of an issue" (OFG3.5). In contrast, other students took a centre-ground approach and suggested that they have not witnessed

cyberbullying because it is rare or covert: "I don't think cyberbullying is a big problem at university. If it is, students are very secretive about it, and, in my opinion, it cannot be seen online, so it would have to occur through messages" (OFG1.2). Another student said:

> In higher education bullying can be more complex and is rather in the verbal or written form with cyber bullying being more prominent. Even though I'm saying that there are forms of bullying in higher education, I have rarely witnessed it at my university, but then again the whole point of cyber bullying is that it's silent and invisible (OFG3.4).

This method of bullying provides a channel through which other types of harassment occurred, for example, anonymous bullying, posting pictures and comments, group chat and personal messages.

3.6.3.4. Controlling and mind games. This tactic was an intentional attempt to control a person and/or environment or make a person feel a certain way. Control could be exercised through actions, as mentioned by this student: "It's usually verbal abuse, but also actions, such as listening to loud music on purpose when the bullied person has exam in the morning [sic] or throwing away their food" (OFG1.2). The perpetrator is controlling the level of noise because they know another student needs quiet, or they are stealing others' possessions. This tactic takes control away from the target, and one student labels it as playing mind games: "I think it is a psychological abuse in trying to play mind games with you [moderator: right] rather than getting on with what you're here to do" (PFG.1). Another student agreed and suggested that control could come in the form of pressurising: "I think bullying could be mentally manipulative, using

dominating nature to force someone to do something in their favour [sic]" (OFG3.7).

Having this sense of control was identified as a reason for bullying (see previous theme), as well as using control as a tactic of bullying: "…people just like to have power/control over others and do not care about others' feelings" (OFG2.7). One student in the physical group commented:

> A lot of people can lash out to others because they are in control of their own actions, they can control what they say to people and they can see what reaction they get from it, so, a lot of people will deliberately do things because they feel in control of it (PFG.6).

Participant 1 in the physical group agreed with the statement about needing to control the environment around them and suggested that having control may be preventing the eradication of bullying, as they are controlling others for a gain:

> …it's difficult to resolve, because there's things that people put across to try and counter bullying…the irony is, the people that are doing it are often deaf to seeing reason in that sense and seeing that they are causing harm [moderator: hm hm] especially if they mean it, because as we've mentioned before, it's a sign of control, of something they can do that empowers them (PFG.1).

Some students were clear that bullying was not only a means of gaining or maintaining control, as a noun (i.e. a state of being in control), but also that controlling (as a verb) a person or their environment was a method of bullying, indicating an entrenched association between control and bullying.

3.6.3.5. Verbal and jokes. There were examples of verbal bullying in the form of name-calling and telling jokes at the expense of others: "Some people try

to pass it off as a joke to feel clever" (OFG1.6). One student showed some confusion as to whether they were supposed to laugh along at jokes even though they found them harmful:

> Like a racist joke sometimes can be a type of bullying as I found it's not funny at all, but this actually happened a lot in conversations with "friends", you never know if they are actually being funny or they just using [sic] a funny way to hide their bullying. I personally have some experiences with these racist jokes, the boundary is very vague (OFG3.8).

The boundary between joking and bullying is not easily distinguishable, and some students thought that joking was not bullying, with the level of harm dependent on interpretation: "Most bullying I've seen if you can call it that has been light teasing and generally harmless but some individuals might find it more harmful than others" (OFG3.1). In group 4, there was disagreement about teasing, with one student saying: "I think it's harm depends on its severity [sic]. I would not call teasing bullying" (OFG4.3), whereas another suggested it depends on other factors: "Again, it depends on the context. Repeadidly [sic] teasing someone for e.g. their appearance can be devastating. A joke among friends is something entirely different" (OFG4.4). Another factor to consider in these verbal and teasing exchanges is who is doing the teasing: "This may be seen as light teasing but it does obviously have an effect on a person, especially if they thought it was their friend" (OFG3.4). Having a friend joking and teasing implies that boundaries between the friends are not clear: "It can happen within a group of friends when some people think they are just joking around but then one person feels ostracized all the time but does not really speak up" (OFG3.5). This may add to the

complexity of verbally teasing and joking; if the perpetrator is a stranger, it is easier to assume they are intentionally attempting to harm. However, there is the expectation of trust in friendship groups, which alludes to knowing what would be crossing the line. Similarly, a professor or lecturer making a joke at one student's expense may be seen as bullying if they are not being mindful of the student's personal boundaries: "Whoever is leading the taught session joining in with a joke being shared at the expense of another would be bullying as well" (OFG1.8).

3.6.4. Justification and minimisations for involvement in bullying. The final theme identified was justification and minimisations - students' beliefs and cognitions about what bullying is, identifying it when it happens, and not knowing whose responsibility it is to intervene, allows it to continue in this context. In general, their beliefs showed justifications for not helping, and minimisations about what could be classed as bullying. Some students said they would get involved, but the majority seemed to want to avoid it. Failure to intervene allows the behaviour to continue and shows implicit acceptance of it. Students had seen incidents or were aware through hearsay that bullying did happen; thus, in this circumstance, they could choose to act. They could help the target, or tell someone, or they could do nothing and ignore it. Some students mentioned a fear of getting involved: "I probably wouldn't interfere, especially if it's a heated argument. You'd never know if the parties could get violent. Don't want to get involved with that" (OFG1.7) therefore, using fear as a justification. Another student proposed that the fear may be dependent on the persons involved:

> If the person that was targeting somebody was a big bulky male that seemed to be very aggressive, most people would be deterred from intervening, whereas if it was, a, if it was a smaller female

> that's kind of bitching about something perhaps they'd be more
> likely to intervene (PFG.1).

Fear is perhaps an understandable justification for not getting involved; if the onlooker has low self-esteem or feels they cannot change the situation without becoming a target or exacerbating the situation, they are unlikely to step in. However, not all students felt they had to justify bystander behaviour; some commented that it was not up to them to get involved, but the responsibility of the involved parties: "The person being bullied should learn to stand up for themselves" (OGF1.7). One student had disassociated themselves from involvement by believing it is up to the target and so action from others is not required: "I don't think the issue needs intervention because most of the time the victim of bullying has the maturity to walk away, or confront the bully at this stage in life" (OFG3.4).

Additionally, students do not know if they are witnessing harmful bullying, especially when it is covert or ambiguous (e.g. in the form of jokes). When feeling uncertain, it is difficult for students to decide on the right course of action: "If I don't know someone or you just see people messaging each other about another person, I don't really know what I would do or how you should react" (OFG4.5). One student adds that there is a fine line between banter and bullying: "Sometimes you see things but I don't know if it's just classed as like banter between friends" (PFG.5). Students must have the confidence to first decide whether they believe a situation is bullying and not just harmless teasing; there needs to be available cognitive information about what to do; and there has to be sufficient feelings of power to change the situation or escape unscathed, before deciding whether to intervene. With this high cognitive effort, students

may feel it is easier to downgrade the seriousness of an incident, absolving them of responsibility once more: “Name calling definitely happens, but nothing major ever happens where someone can intervene” (OFG3.4). There seems to be an assumptive attitude about bullying, with one student claiming that: “Most people probably ignore it and assume that as adults everyone can handle their own problems” (OFG3.2), which shows a disinterest in other people’s problems that do not directly involve them.

3.6.4.1. Bystander intervention. The subtheme of bystander intervention is highly relevant considering that onlookers may have the power to intervene if they avoid minimising or justifying their reasons for not doing so. The bystanders need empowerment to stop standing-by and to act. Some students claimed they would help if they ever saw bullying because they feel they have the capacity to now: “Before I probably wouldn't get involved, but today I'm much more mature and confident in myself and would try to stop it” (OFG3.6). Another student said they would also help, as they do not care what people think of them, introducing a moral dimension into the decision to intervene: “It's dependent on how comfortable the person feels about their own role in the group before they intervene. I don't really care about that type of thing, so I tend to just act on what I think is right” (OFG1.4). This could be a socially desirable answer (i.e. this is the most desired response to present themselves in a positive light) or a genuine willingness to step in; it is unknown whether intentions would be exercised unless they were in that situation. However, one student claimed that they do proactively help by being inclusive**:** “I usually go and sit with the excluded person and my own friends join me” (OFG1.4). Another student wrote about witnessing and

speaking out against verbal attacks: “If I see people who I know being bullied verbally I typically say something” (OFG4.5).

The decision of whether to help involves many factors, and whether the student knows the perpetrator or victim may aid the decision to intervene, as one student said vehemently: “If the bully is someone I know, I would immediately intervene and make them stop” (OFG1.6).

3.7. Discussion

This qualitative study yielded some important themes surrounding students’ attitudes and opinions on bullying behaviour at university. First, there was a strong theme of power, which coincides with the bullying literature; this could be in the form of existing power through membership of a powerful social group, or power that was sought and gained through bullying. Having an increased sense of power was linked to a high-status reputation and being higher in the social hierarchy. This also supports the evolutionary theory suggesting that bullies can be intelligent, resourceful, and without emotional deficiencies; therefore, they bully to gain advantages or resources, which they are unlikely to relinquish by stopping the bullying (Volk, Camilleri, Dane, & Marini, 2012). The second theme identified is that people may bully others for a social or personal gain (which links with the advantages and resources just mentioned). This theme relates to the more recent definition that suggests bullying is goal-directed (Volk et al., 2014), and it links with the first theme of power. The perpetrator may have the goal of acquiring or maintaining power for themselves. Third, I identified tactics and methods used to bully; some mapped onto school-bullying types, but others were more complex and mature, linking to adult behaviour such as workplace bullying or abusive control in relationships. Lastly, students’ thoughts

and beliefs justified not intervening in bullying and minimised the seriousness of bullying. They indicated the occasions they might get involved (e.g. if they knew the person) or why getting involved was not an option, for example, students are mature adults and need to take care of their own problems. Figure 3.1 depicts these themes as a cyclical process model of bullying. Having existing power or achieving power grants an advantageous position to bully if there is an objective to do so; for example, if resources or social goals could be gained from bullying. Methods and tactics are then implemented to achieve these goals. Whilst the bullying is happening, those who witness it are faced with the decision of whether to intervene, often deciding not to, based on their own justification and minimisation of the witnessed behaviour. Whereas, some students said they would help or have done in the past, but these seemed to be a minority. For those who minimise their responsibility for involvement, or give any other justification for not getting involved, these beliefs can contribute to normalising bullying. Social norms may dictate that the victims do not need help, or ought to help themselves, which is likely to leave the bullying issue unaddressed and open to happening repeatedly.

3.7.1. Power. The concept of a power imbalance has long been included in definitions of bullying; the focus group findings show that a power imbalance is a goal-directed concept visible to students at the university level. Consequently, this research supported the definitions adopted by Smith (2004) that bullying is a systematic abuse of power, and by Volk et al. (2014) that bullying is aggressive goal-directed behaviour that harms others within a situation encompassing a power imbalance.

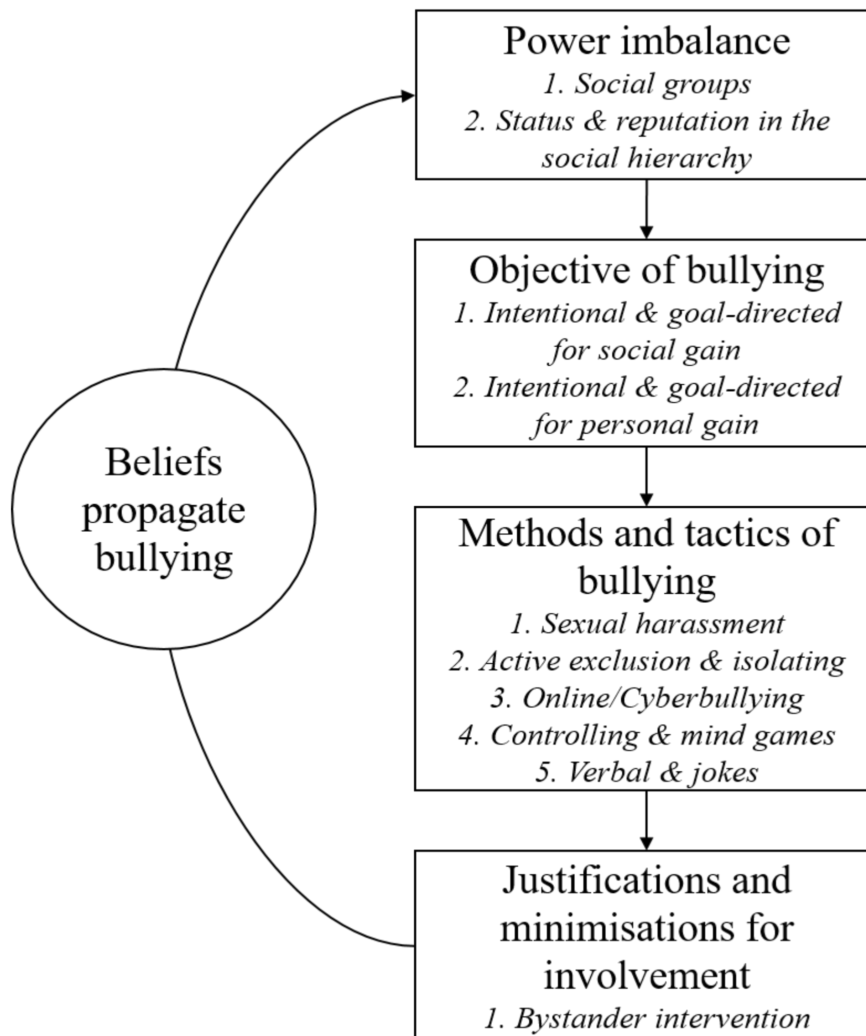

Figure 3.1. Themes and subthemes depicted as a process of bullying

Power is inherently unequal for different groups in societies; this aligns with social dominance theory (Pratto, Sidinius, & Levin, 2006). Each branch of social dominance theory can be related to the data from the focus groups: an age system, a gender system, and an arbitrary set system. In terms of age, adults have disproportionate power over children and lecturers have disproportionate power over students, but EAs are known to share more in common with adolescents than adults (Arnett, 2015). Students commented about being mature, so it seems they are more likely to view their peers as adults who can and ought to, look after

themselves, rather than compare them to adolescents. In a gender system, females are disproportionately affected by sexual harassment, which is rooted in a patriarchal society where males hold more power. An arbitrary set system can relate to anything from race to social class. Externally visible characteristics like race and gender can shape social hierarchies even when the characteristics have no bearing on a task (Link & Phelan, 2001). This indicates that power differentials exist regardless of setting, which allows for the structural discrimination that happens in school, the workplace, and at university (Prilleltensky, 2008). With structural discrimination in place, individual discrimination may be easier to perpetrate. In the focus groups, students said they had heard racist abuse in the library, had experienced racist jokes, and that females (mostly) had direct knowledge and experience of sexual harassment. These findings highlight that researchers need to be mindful of individual and group-based differences, and how these differences are targeted because of the entrenched power differences between societal groups. The HE bullying research does not tend to focus on majority-minority differences, even though school bullying research now evidences that minorities can be targeted.

Thornberg (2011) claimed that powerful groups label or define other groups or persons as deviant, which can lead to stigmatisation and a lower standing in the social hierarchy. A low-status reputation and place in the social hierarchy can increase the chances of being targeted because of being labelled as different. As a result of attempting to avoid the label, the prospective target can act in a way that may inadvertently confirm the label, as shown in school bullying research, whereby social anxiety predicts victimisation (Acquah, Topalli, Wilson, Junttila, & Niemi, 2016). This likely happens at university too; for example, a HE

student in Lund's (2017) study labelled a class member "weird" and said the group wanted nothing to do with him. This could reflect how the negative label led to exclusion from activities. Members of the powerful and dominant social groups enjoy positive social value (Pratto et al., 2006), that is, they may be awarded more social resources in the form of support and popularity. Individuals placed in subordinate groups are left with a disproportionate amount of negative social value. Thus, a group-based social hierarchy is produced by discrimination across multiple levels: institutions, individuals, and intergroup processes (Pratto et al., 2006).

Supporting Pratto et al's (2006) theory, students mostly said that social groups were involved in the bullying. Furthermore, they suggested that majority and privileged groups, in the form of higher SES, attractive, confident, popular, and white ethnicity groups, were the perpetrators. This aligns with the concept of having existing power before bullying, after which power dynamics are altered more in their favour. One student mentioned that the powerful groups may not realise they are bullying because they are so accustomed to their privilege. Even though inclusion is claimed to be a key university principle, it seems that power imbalances are present in all settings, HE included.

Sharing a social identity (Turner et al., 1994) with a minority group may be a disadvantage because of structural power differences; in the focus groups, students identified women, Asian, and LGBT individuals as vulnerable to attacks. Whereas, socially identifying with a privileged majority group may bolster individuals through the social group power, such as being white, male, and of a higher SES. When the powerful group bully those lower in the social hierarchy, they are maintaining the status quo and preserving statuses. The existing power is

maintained, and the target's perceived status may have been lowered by previous bullying and/or stigmatisation, as noted by Thornberg (2011).

Not all group members may be active perpetrators. Students said that bullies have an "entourage" and "supporters", and so once these peripheral members are assimilated into the group, they often adopt the norms and behaviours even if they contend with their own beliefs (as proposed by Srivastava, Guglielmo, & Beer, 2010). This suggests that they may perpetrate knowing it is wrong. These perpetrators could be socially identifying at an intermediate level, as a member of a social in-group defined against a different out-group (Hornsey, 2008). Thus, those in a powerful group have a group advantage of a good reputation and are unlikely to be targeted for bullying, whereas a low-powered group may not have a positive reputation and so are targeted.

Those in authority also have more power; students said that lecturers joined in or initiated bullying. It is well known that people in authoritative positions have been abusing power for centuries. Lecturers are in a position of responsibility at the top of the formal social hierarchy, with the lecturer role automatically assuming a sense of authority over those they are lecturing, regardless of individual characteristics. The lecturer has the power to give grades, they have knowledge and expertise, and the university grants them authority (Hulme & Winstone, 2017). One aim of attending university is to gain a successful degree, and so the lecturer has incredible power over the students in this regard. The students have the freedom to expend as much effort as they wish on their assignments, but the lecturer has the power vested in them by the university to allocate successful grades (Alsobaie, 2015). Alternatively, students may feel empowered because they are paying to attend university, and so could

complain about being unfairly treated by staff (Hulme & Winstone, 2017). It is curious that a lecturer would be comfortable making a joke at a student's expense when there is the potential to lose one's job and credibility arising from a complaint. Perhaps similar mechanisms are operative regarding a perpetrator targeting a victim who seems unlikely to defend themselves or report unfairness. Or perhaps when there is a noticeable age difference between student and lecturer, each has developed in different macrosystems with contrasting influences, politics, and social norms (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

One's position in the social hierarchy might also be based upon socially desirable external characteristics arising from global cognitive evaluations; students mentioned attractiveness, confidence, and being a "social butterfly" as advantageously powerful features. These characteristics were perceived as being linked with power, which may arise from a halo effect (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977) where a blanket positive evaluation is applied due to one or more appealing traits. This effect has been reported recently. Talamas, Mavor, and Perrett (2016) found that faces rated as more intelligent, as having better academic performance, and being more conscientious, were also rated as more attractive. Hence, external traits may represent biased perceptions of heightened levels of power. Some students claimed that perpetrators had these traits. Individuals with confidence, extroversion, and attractiveness may be aware of the power they hold (Prilleltensky, 2008), or are so comfortable in their privilege that they bully others unknowingly, or for a gain (e.g. maintained place in hierarchy). These superficial views may have been influenced by popular media through television shows that champion physical looks as being vital to the success of relationships.

The opposite effect could also be true: being female, Black, or low SES, may be a disadvantage in certain contexts because of global negative evaluations and a low status fuelled by stereotypes and stigmas from the powerful (Link & Phelan, 2001). The intersection of two or more discriminated identities may be even more disadvantageous (Crenshaw, 1991). Consequently, either having a role that assumes power (lecturer), having externally perceived power based on attractiveness, or being in a powerful group, are advantageous. To be at the top of a hierarchy conveys power, and having power represents control over situations. It is this power difference, an imbalance, between those at different places in the social hierarchy that could fuel the process of bullying.

3.7.2. Objective for bullying. Students said that perpetrators wanted to gain power, to look good, and make themselves feel better. The behaviour is goal-directed; its purpose is not just to provide the enjoyment of upsetting someone. This research supports the goal-directedness aspect of the definition by Volk et al. (2014). The goal could be separated into either a social or a personal goal, but they often overlap; the goal of maintaining their power or gaining it.

Social goals are likely to be the most common, for example, being a member of a popular and powerful exclusive team or club. These goals are either for the benefit of the group or the individual's social reputation. Students frequently mentioned perpetration was for the validation of the group, to bond with other perpetrators, and to fit in. It is possible that joining in and bonding with the perpetrator may also increase belongingness, especially for those who are unconfident and are trying to appease their personal insecurities. Salmivalli (2010) suggested that if bullying is driven by social goals, it should be apparent during times when peer status is important; the importance of social status was

mentioned in the focus groups. The university setting is clearly a context where peer status and reputation are vital factors in students' lives, and so students' social goals are directly observable by others. One student said that bullies manipulate victims' social status, and another mentioned that status is the basis for your academic and social life at university. Perpetrators may have existing power and attack a less powerful group or individual, to maintain their reputation for being "untouchable". Or, they may join in with others to claim a position at the top of the social hierarchy. Again, this could reflect their need for belongingness in whatever way possible, even if it means joining and identifying with a group who perpetrate.

If the bullying is from one individual to another, the goal may be personal, not group-level, as one student mentioned that mental manipulation can happen in couples and between "friends", but it could happen in any bullying encounter. Students claimed that bullying was a method of increasing one's own positive feelings. If a perpetrator is feeling low in confidence and esteem, they may try belittling someone else. One student said that derogating someone else lowers their self-worth and esteem; if the target has lower esteem than the perpetrator, it might increase the perpetrator's positive feelings. Bullying for the objective of gaining resources or advantages (Volk et al., 2012) could explain the comments in the focus groups about increasing one's own self-esteem. By belittling others, they are likely to feel better than the target, which is advantageous.

Furthermore, students claimed that bullying for personal gain was to control others and feel powerful, which is similar to abusive relationship dynamics. Basile, Espelage, Rivers, McMahon, and Simon (2009) reviewed the literature on child, adolescent, and young adult bullying behaviour, alongside

male sexual violence perpetration. They found substantial overlap between sexual harassment perpetration and bullying, suggesting that those who engage in one type of aggression are more likely to engage in the other. They depicted the overlaps graphically, based upon Bronfenbrenner's ecological model, as seen in Figure 3.2. It shows features of shared protective and risk factors for bullying and sexual violence perpetration, including low self-esteem, unhealthy parental attachment, social manipulation skills of a perpetrator, and school climate.

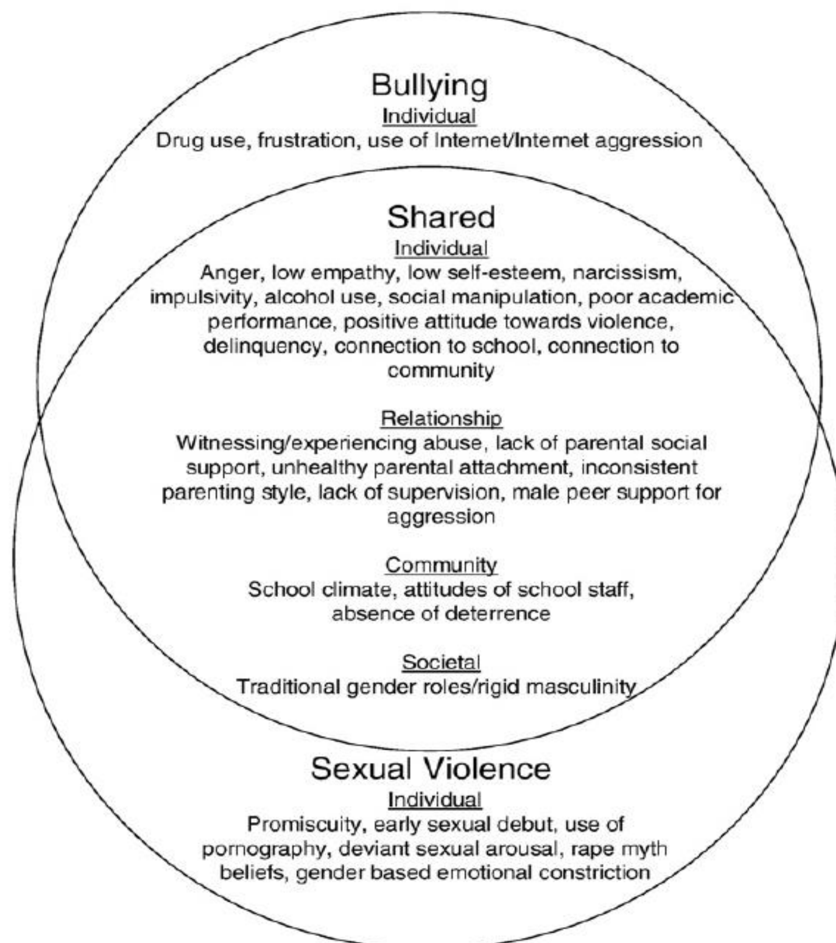

Figure 3.2. Diagram taken from Basile et al. (2009) showing shared and unique risk and protective factors for bullying and sexual violence perpetration.

3.7.3. Tactics and methods used to bully.

3.7.3.1. Sexual harassment. Students said that a common bullying tactic at university was sexual harassment, mainly, though not exclusively, perpetrated by males against females. Although most research in schools has focused on traditional-type bullying, there is emerging evidence showing that sexual harassment and bullying happen amongst children. For example, Gruber and Fineran (2016, p.114) claim that sexual harassment in schools has greater adverse effects than bullying, as it taps into the "structural and culturally sanctioned stereotypes and power relationships". Consequently, it is unsurprising that this behaviour is found at university. There has been media coverage and government plans for tackling sexual harassment at UK universities. A letter to HEFCE from the DBEIS (2017) called for all students to be free from exposure to violence, sexual harassment, and hate, and it said that discrimination should be obsolete. However, news outlets report that universities are doing little to address the complaints of sexual harassment and violence on UK campuses (Batty & Cherubini, 2018), with a recent article alleging that more than half of UK students are facing unwanted sexual behaviour (Batty, 2019b). The article quotes evidence from the sexual health and wellbeing charity, Brook (www.brook.org.uk), which cites figures as high as 49% for female students (1,826) and 3% (54) of male students experience wolf-whistling or inappropriate touching. The figures for rape were lower at 3% (111 women) and coercion into sexual acts was 4% (149 women), with 1% (18) of men reporting rape and sexual coercion, but less than a quarter of those who experienced the most serious attacks reported them. Hundreds of students admitted to being seriously sexually assaulted at university; this is clearly an urgent issue.

As mentioned, there are significant shared factors between bullying and sexual violence in and outside of relationships, which could indicate, “that neither form of peer violence is simply unilateral” (Hertzog, Harpel, & Rowley, p.22, 2015). Bullying behaviour starting in childhood may be a precursor to sexual violence or relationship abuse, a continuum of aggressive behaviour using power. Connolly, Pepler, Craig, and Taradsah (2000) surveyed 1,758 children aged 9-15 years from seven Canadian provinces and found that 196 of these could be classed as bullies. A series of scales were administered to the children to gather peer and dating relationship information. They found that the bully group were more likely to start dating earlier, they reported engaging in undesirable activities to retain their boyfriend or girlfriend, and they perceived the relationships unequal in terms of power (with power being in their favour). These results suggest that children who peer bully in school may be at risk of transferring physical and social aggression to romantic relationships (Monckton-Smith, 2019). This evidence also suggests that these individuals are on a trajectory of perpetrating using power; those who have bullied in school may be the same people who bully at university because they have successfully used power and control in the past.

Espelage, Basile, Leemis, Hipp, and Davis (2018) support these findings with a longitudinal study investigating the bullying-sexual violence pathways across early and late adolescence. They found that males or females who bullied and used homophobic verbal abuse in middle school had higher odds of perpetrating sexual violence in high school. The same has also been found at university; Felix et al. (2018) surveyed students on retrospective and current victimisation and sexual harassment at two points in the first university year. Students were grouped into classes of victimisation, and the high

victimisation/low aggression childhood class (those who experienced high victimisation and perpetrated low aggression in school) had the highest mean probability of sexual harassment victimisation at university. These studies suggest that those with power and those without may traverse their educational pathways whilst maintaining the same perpetrator or victim role.

3.7.3.2. Active exclusion and isolation. Active exclusion and isolating were other common tactics cited by students. This links with the theme of power within social groups and hierarchies, as excluding is normally perpetrated by a group against an individual. Excluding someone from activities or group work is likely to be the easiest method of causing upset as it is an act of negation, not doing something, as opposed to name-calling or groping. It is also unsurprising that indirect/relational bullying was frequently mentioned, as research shows that this type of bullying tends to increase with age. Archer and Coyne (2005) suggested that indirect/relational aggression is an alternate strategy to direct aggression, which is used when the costs of direct aggression are high and when the aim is to harm the social status of the victim. At university, physically attacking a fellow student is likely to have severe social and legal consequences, whereas one can indirectly bully for the desired effect and remain undetected.

Another notable issue identified in the data is whether exclusion must be purposeful for a bullying classification, or whether succeeding events are what is harmful (e.g. a member of the excluding group then turning others against the excluded individual). There was ambiguity amongst participants, with some saying they would actively go and sit with an excluded person, and others claiming you do not have to befriend everyone. Based on research with children, Killen and Rutland (2011) suggested that exclusion is not always seen as a moral

transgression, as social relationships are more complex. Perhaps those who are excluding based on justified reasons (e.g. someone not very sporty excluded from a sports team) do not intend to harm or be aggressive. Perhaps social exclusion is only bullying if it is goal-directed to harm. It was decided that only active exclusion, and not excluding for a valid reason, could be labelled as bullying.

Regardless of the reason for exclusion, the target usually experiences harm; it may be perceived as bullying by the victim when perpetrated unintentionally, alternatively, if the perpetrator did intend harm, the victim may perceive it as harmless. It is complex and depends on the individual and the context. However, there is also experimental research showing the negative impact that exclusion and ostracism have on fundamental belonging needs (Hartgerink, van Beest, Wicherts, & Williams, 2015). This was a meta-analysis of 120 experimental cyberball studies; cyberball is a ball tossing game where participants are excluded from the game by two computer players who they believe are actual people. The exclusion usually evokes feelings of social pain, and this paradigm is robust. This further exemplifies the importance of being included and belonging. Perhaps just having the offer of inclusion would stifle the social pain felt by being outright excluded. The findings support the literature; students suggested that exclusion can occur in a variety of university settings, such as in lectures/seminars where people could actively move away from a student, when participating in group work, and in group chats. The university environment may provide ample opportunity for this type of bullying because students spend a lot of time together (e.g. accommodation, group work).

The current literature on bullying in HE shows that students are aware of exclusion, for example, open-ended responses from one student bullying

questionnaire at Finnish universities named exclusion and discrimination (Sinkkonen et al., 2014). Clique group relational bullying has also been witnessed in class; some students even compared the ostracism felt at university to how they felt in school (Brock et al., 2014). Therefore, the focus group data builds on these findings, showing the importance of exclusion as a concept for all ages. Regardless of whether students classify social exclusion as bullying, it still has wide-ranging effects on the excluded individual; this has been found widely in the social psychology literature and likely originates from evolutionary survival. Being part of a group could aid survival because of increased personal safety and resources. It also links to structural discrimination, the exclusion could be based on in-group out-group characteristics, whether these are physical (e.g. skin colour) or personality-based (e.g. extrovert/introvert). Those with certain characteristics may share their social identity with this group, and thus exclude anyone who does not share the characteristics or internalise the group norms. These findings are important for the broader university context; if exclusion is negatively affecting students, there ought to be abundant information available on being inclusive and open, or visible campaigns about joining societies or clubs.

3.7.3.3. Cyber and online bullying. Although some students were divided on whether cyberbullying occurs at university, there was evidence to show that online negative behaviours were experienced and witnessed. With technology having such a large presence in our lives, there may be some cross-over between what is judged as normal online behaviour and what is bullying. For example, students may not always equate negative online behaviour with bullying; Walker et al. (2011) found that a third of their sample had experienced undesirable online behaviour but they did not class it as cyberbullying. Students said that cyber

perpetration was easy due to the opportunity for anonymity and the disassociated nature of perpetrating against somebody physically far away. There is still uncertainty amongst students as to whether these behaviours are bullying. This could be due to the ambiguity surrounding intent. In another study by Crosslin and Golman (2014), students claimed that the sender had to intend harm for the behaviour to be classed as cyberbullying, however, this is not easy to determine if the perpetrator is an anonymous stranger. Some suggested it was a major method of bullying amongst young adults that requires special attention because of the ever-increasing sophistication of technology (e.g. the development of photo-centric apps). However, cyberbullying in HE is already being given consideration (see Chapter 2, section 2.3).

Some students claimed that cyberbullying does not happen at university, as they had never seen it; they then backtracked and suggested this was because cyberbullying is invisible. This aligns with Crosslin and Golman's (2014) focus group study with 54 students who suggested that cyberbullying happens but is ignored because bullies will be aggressive regardless of the environment (i.e. physical versus online). Suffice it to say, the issue seems to be the classification of the behaviour, not whether it exists, as it is regularly witnessed on social media. The question is whether the behaviour is classed as a single mean comment or ill-perceived opinions.

Technological channels act as media through which other tactics and methods are perpetrated, such as racist abuse and harassment. Wolke et al. (2017) found in one childhood survey that 29% (796) of their sample were bullied, but only 1% (8) of the bullied pupils were pure cyber victims. They suggested that cyberbullying is a tool to harm existing traditionally bullied victims.

Consequently, one could theorise that it is only bullying if the negative online behaviour continues traditional bullying; an extension of retaining power over the individual. Continuing aggressing against an individual in their free time is an intrusion of personal space and retains power over a victim by attempting to control their feelings from afar. Of interest were the responses to the question about where bullying happens. Most participants stated a physical place, even though the previous question asked about cyberbullying. This could imply they had only face-to-face bullying in mind even when primed for cyberbullying, implying that traditional bullying is more common.

Different types of negative online behaviour may have different underlying motives, for example, trolling and flaming are implemented for the enjoyment of evoking a response (Golf-Papez & Veer, 2017). However, it could also be suggested that online, everyone has the power to be anonymous or abuse from afar, and equally they also are powerless to receive abuse from anyone. Consequently, cyberbullying is an easy method of abusing power if desired.

3.7.3.4. Controlling and playing mind games. Control was a recurring word within the data, and so was developed as a subtheme under tactics (i.e. a method with various tactics); it is also an objective of bullying, as mentioned earlier (i.e. to *have* control). Whereas control (noun) could have the objective of increasing feelings of self-esteem or agency, the tactic of using control (verb) attempts to command others' esteem or agency. Controlling a person or their environment using manipulation or pressure can also be linked to relationship abuse. The Duluth model of power and control (2011, Figure 3.3.) was created to educate about tactics used, predominantly by men, in abusive relationships. Beyond the rarer physically and sexually abusive attacks, the patterns of

behaviour included coercion, threats, intimidation/pressure, emotional and economic abuse, isolation, minimising, and denying (Domestic Abuse Intervention Project [DAIP], 2011). This has since been adapted several times, one notable adaptation is the workplace bullying power control wheel (see Figure 3.4.).

Figure 3.3. Duluth Model Power and Control Wheel

Scott (2018) compares the original power and control wheel with workplace bullying, showing how they are intricately related (Figure 3.4.). Each segment from the figure will be discussed in turn. The original power control wheel includes intimidation by making the partner afraid through looks, actions, gestures, and destroying property; these tactics are used in the workplace. “Cruel looks” and “throwing away others’ food” were mentioned in the current focus

groups, which can reflect intimidation and destroying others' property. Similarly, emotional abuse was exemplified in the focus group data through put-downs, name-calling, humiliating, and playing mind games. Isolation is linked with the previous tactic of exclusion, whereby excluding individuals leads to isolation; this has been evidenced in HE bullying studies and can be seen in the current data. For example, controlling who can join groups or social activities is exercising power over inclusion, and deciding who can use library computers is controlling resources and limiting a person's ability to use facilities in a public space.

The segment of minimising and denying from both figures shows a downplaying of abusive behaviour and failing to take concerns seriously. Perpetrators actively or passively blame the victim. Within the focus groups, students found ways to justify the bullying behaviour, but it is unknown whether they played any role in bullying or were uninvolved. They claimed that victims should have the "maturity" to walk away from the bullying situation or should confront the bully for a resolution, because of their perceived adult status. This shows a shift in responsibility for the negative behaviour from the perpetrator onto the victim. The effects of victim-blaming may have rippled out into the wider population where victims are seen to deserve abuse and bullying is minimised; the view is solidified that it is not "our" problem (minimisation will be expanded upon under the next theme heading). By collectively denying and minimising, this may have led to the normalisation of absolving oneself of responsibility for aiding a victim, and lessened everyone's perception of the seriousness of bullying.

The next segment is using children; although it cannot be compared directly to university students, it is known that students use others for their gain. They mentioned several times that perpetrators attempt to gain followers or have

an entourage, which is also seen in the school bullying literature (Salmivalli, 2010). These followers may not have been perpetrators if they were not part of this group. Therefore, they could be being used by the powerful ringleader perpetrator. The original model also outlines male privilege, and Scott's (2018) refers to employer privilege; the focus group data show that both can be applied to HE bullying. Students believe that privilege exists as ethnicity, class, sex, or financial. Alongside the characteristics listed by the students, privilege could also exist as lecturer status at university. Lecturers set the tasks and assume a position of authority, automatically having power in the lecture theatre. It is therefore vital that lecturers do not misuse this privilege and power by mistreating their students or disrespecting their cognitive and social developmental level.

The segment of economic abuse can be indirectly linked to the data. For example, throwing away others' food and controlling who can use computers in the library amounts to throwing away their money and reducing their time to do assignments. Food and time are a currency of resources as a student: they must manage their money well and are encouraged to make food budgets. In between lectures and socialising, if the resources needed for assignments (that contribute to the degree outcome) are being controlled by someone else, it could be comparable to economic abuse; it is a subtle form of using control and power over someone. Whereas, using coercion and threats is a more direct method of control; students mentioned the pressure to conform or be excluded from social events.

The outer ring of the power and control wheels show physical and sexual abuse. These are directly relatable behaviours to serious incidents on campus, however, the students in the focus groups did not talk about these types of abusive behaviour, so they will not be discussed here.

Figure 3.4. Scott's (2018) Workplace Power and Control Wheel

3.7.3.5. Verbal and jokes. Name-calling and joking at another's expense was a common tactic, probably because they are obvious and easily observed. Jokes were not always welcome by the person who the joke was about, which increased the difficulty for onlookers and targets to define the boundary between banter and bullying, and whether harm is caused by either. It can be speculated that students claim they were only joking because of the directly observable nature of verbal harassment. Jokes are more socially acceptable than overt nastiness, and the perpetrator may want to maintain a positive reputation with students and staff. Some claimed that teasing is harmless, whereas others said that

repeatedly facing teasing and verbal attacks from friends could be devastating, especially if they struggle to find a way to communicate this to the joke-teller. This subtheme is unsurprising as verbal bullying is one of the four main types measured in childhood research (Björkqvist, 1994; Olweus, 1993; Wang et al., 2009), and there is also evidence from university studies. Doğruer and Yaratan (2014) found that their Turkish university sample reported experiencing more emotional and verbal than physical and cyber bullying, and Sinkkonen et al.'s (2014) sample included name-calling in their list of experienced negative behaviours.

Verbal bullying is also an easy method, but due to the overt and public nature of verbalising negative thoughts, perpetrators may need to disguise it as joking. To retain their high social status and avoid looking like a bully, perpetrators need their intentions to be unclear and confusing to targets and onlookers. Also, the pretext of a joke minimises the act, which could negate uncomfortable feelings the target may experience, and lead them to question their internal reactions. A target may experience sadness, but this might be overshadowed by confusion about what is acceptable and what is not. This links back to the contents of the emotional abuse segment of the power and control wheel: making the target feel like they are "crazy". By harassing someone in a verbally ambiguous manner, onlookers may be deceived into thinking the perpetrator means no harm. This allows a perpetrator to maintain the power and control over the situation and the victim, who may be uncertain of how to react to ambiguous joke-type harassment. Further still, if the victim verbalises their concerns or claims they were offended by the joke, they may be taunted further and labelled as overly sensitive, which is likely to lead to self-blame and shame.

3.7.4. Justification and minimisation of involvement in bullying. The mechanisms through which bullying can continue seem reliant on students' cognitive justifications and minimisations of bullying. Minimising allows bullying behaviour to be propagated and maintained without reprimand or consequence. Onlookers may believe that what they are witnessing is harmless, which maintains the bullying cycle. Perpetrator and onlooker beliefs work together against the target who has few avenues of escape and support. Even though some students were aware of bullying, they admitted to being reluctant to get involved because they were afraid of being attacked too, which is arguably a rational justification.

However, other students were adamant that bullying was not an issue, and that it was not their responsibility to get involved anyway. It seemed to either be a moral disengagement from the issue or a belief that as adults, students can tackle problems themselves. This silence indicates implicit approval of the bullying (Randall, 1997) as those who fail to act because they feel they should not have to, are part of the wider societal problem. Linking back to social groups, hierarchy, and structural discrimination, victims of bullying have been classed as other, and so are far removed from the students' consciousness. "They" are involved in bullying, so they ought to sort it out, not "us". There is little examination of what is morally right; separating classes of people eliminates any personal responsibility. Stigma theory (Goffman, 1963) suggests that on being labelled as different or deviant by the beholder (i.e. us and them, Hamarus & Kaikkonen, 2008), the stigmatised person or groups transcend the taken for granted norms. Using this theory, one can see that a bullied person or group may have become stigmatised, labelled as such through generations of students standing-by and reinforcing the norm that "it's only banter".

Alternatively, some students claimed they would want to help (part way to solving the structural issue) but that barriers prevent them from doing so. They are unsure that what they see is really bullying; if they step in and it was a genuine joke amongst friends, they may be mistreated for interfering. When witnessing a situation, they feel they have insufficient information to make a rational decision of whether to step in, whether it is safe to do so, and of what to do. This decision-making process maps onto the widely cited bystander model by Latané and Darley (1968). If a person is to intervene, they must notice the event, interpret it as an emergency, and finally decide that they have a personal responsibility to act (Latané & Darley, 1968). Therefore, students may believe that all students are adult and mature enough to deal with their own problems, and subsequently not get involved. However, most workplace and university anti-bullying policies encourage students to act on bullying they witness, whether that is by stepping in, telling someone, or by the broader responsibility of creating a positive and harassment-free work climate. This is a positive message to send; however, it is unhelpful whilst the barriers for intervening are left unexamined and misunderstood in this context. These barriers must be investigated and removed.

As well as having inadequate information to decide, there may also be insufficient time to weigh up the full costs and benefits of intervening. A study by Spadafora, Marini, and Volk (2018) looked at children's costs and benefits of deciding whether to intervene in bullying situations; they found that children were more aware of the costs and benefits than expected. Costs were identified from the least common to most: getting into trouble, loss of friends, loss of popularity, and becoming a target. Benefits were identified as gaining a friend through intervening, feeling good about oneself, helping someone in need, and increasing

one's likability. It can be theorised that the costs are similar for university students, as one student said that reputation is the basis for your life at university. An onlooker may perceive the perpetrator as powerful, or they may feel less powerful than them; the onlooker may notice the perpetrator is in a popular group and the victim is alone; the onlooker may also be unsure of whether the abuse was really bullying. Subsequently, intervening may require quick and correct decision making of which the onlooker is incapable of doing whilst being overloaded with these cognitions.

3.8. Summary

This research has contributed to the field of student bullying in HE by providing students' perceptions and experiences of the styles, frequencies, and intensity of HE bullying. The themes identified share similarities with other bullying literature, for example, the overarching theme of a power imbalance mirrors the school bullying literature, and to some extent, the workplace bullying research. Subtle differences were detected in how the power imbalance is perceived; in school this may be obvious, with popular, outgoing, or physically larger children maintaining the power. At university, the power differentials may ensue from structural power differences representing widespread societal issues, such as class inequalities and racism. Being in a powerfully privileged group enables them to take advantage and target other students in order to maintain this powerful position. The power afforded by society can manifest itself as confidence and sociability, which are also perpetrator characteristics identified by students. These individual characteristics have been seen in school bullying research; it is often the popular children who are identified as the pure bullies. Additionally, the workplace bullying literature identifies hierarchical bullying,

whereby those in a higher position in the company have more power and are open to abuse it. This type of hierarchical bullying from lecturers to students was reported in the focus groups.

Also, like school bullying research, this study suggests that bullying is goal-directed and for a gain. There was discussion about whether unintentionally harming was bullying, illuminating the process of identifying bullying behaviour. The consensus was that the bullying was usually intentional, and the perpetrator's goal was to become more popular, gain/maintain social hierarchical power, or to fit in. This reflects the process of bullying in childhood, where children bully for the goal of popularity and for having the highest social status with the most social power. However, in school, children are usually aware of who bullies and who is victimised in their classes, as evidenced by researchers who use peer report methods. This is an important way that school and HE bullying differs; in HE, the bullying is covert and often ambiguous to onlookers. Due to the age of EAs, it can be reasoned that bullying has adopted a more mature appearance in its implementation and execution. Instead of openly harassing and bullying, which can be seen in school bullying research, students tend to disguise their harassment with jokes or bully via covert communication channels. This makes it difficult to identify (for the victim and the onlookers), and therefore difficult for witnesses to decide whether to offer help. This feature of student bullying reflects workplace bullying and relationship abuse; the perpetrator does not take responsibility for the abuse, the blame is shifted onto the victim, and the victim is confused about what is happening. Consequently, not only does this covert nature personally benefit the perpetrator (e.g. having control over the victim), it is also a way to avoid

detection and sanctioning, which may result in a loss of any high status they have gained.

The perpetrator's need to avoid detection at university and in the workplace is more pertinent than in school because the consequences of being found out are more severe. Adults are susceptible to obeying the law. Linked to this, the literature suggests that the older the children, the more likely they are to defend victims. Consequently, adults may be more willing to defend at university and in the workplace; indeed, a minority of students in the focus groups said they would do what was morally right, and that they were not influenced by what other people thought of them. This increases the likelihood of perpetrating covertly; by bullying ambiguously, this reduces the possibility of an onlooker identifying bullying and intervening (i.e. getting caught).

The bullying methods used in HE reflect this desire to bully covertly. Sexual harassment, verbal bullying under the pretext of joking, active exclusion, online bullying, and controlling, are ways in which bullying can be perpetrated inconspicuously. There is evidence of these types of bullying in childhood, which reflects a certain maturity in the bully's thinking patterns, but most school bullying is detectable by others. The methods reported here are more reflective of workplace bullying and relationship abuse, where harm stems from the insidious and ambiguous nature of the bullying. If the victim cannot confidently identify they are being mistreated, onlookers or outsiders have little chance to do so. The perpetrator minimises the situation, lending support to onlookers who can now justify not getting involved.

This research has uncovered several unique findings relevant to the bullying field; the issue of lecturers bullying students, the types of methods and

tactics employed are more covert and ambiguous, and the power differences are more socially entrenched. Based upon the tactics found in the focus groups, a psychological scale was created to measure bullying at university across the UK; this will be discussed in the next chapter. The implications of these research findings are vast, not least for furthering our understanding of bullying in HE, but for attempting to tackle bullying and reduce the barriers to intervening; these will be explored in Chapter 8, the Discussion.

3.9. Strengths, Limitations, and Conclusions

On reflection, many participants (mostly those identifying as an ethnic minority) suggested that minority groups are more likely to be targets of bullying at university. By assuming that undergraduates had the self-confidence to voice competing opinions on this sensitive issue, I may have missed the opportunity to collect richer data. For example, in the physical group, once the white male student said that minority/racist bullying did not happen, the black female student said very little after this. Unfortunately, this was noticed only whilst listening back to the recording, perhaps revealing my own negative unconscious bias that the white male ought to be believed, or my lack of practice with conducting focus groups and resulting failure to manage the dynamics. I hope the online groups addressed the issue of low confidence and assertiveness; all participants were anonymous and had no information about each other except a name/pseudonym, so they likely felt comfortable saying whatever they wished (termed the online disinhibition effect; Suler, 2004).

Initially planned as physical focus groups, a lack of volunteers led to the need for online groups. The problems with recruiting for physical focus groups may have been avoided if an initial incentive was offered rather than incentivising

only once I was struggling to recruit. However, by this stage, most students had returned home for the summer break, and even though a high incentive was offered, I could still not enlist enough participants from the two universities to conduct another physical focus group.

Nevertheless, online groups were advantageous. Structural power differences (e.g. gender, race, social class) are unknown in anonymous online groups; it is less likely they would encroach upon responses. Furthermore, students suffering from social anxiety or other psychological issues, which may have prevented them from attending a group, would have been able to participate online. It is likely that the online groups allowed oppressed or minority voices to be heard who otherwise would not contribute because of the sensitive nature of the topic.

The sample represented a diverse group of students from various UK universities. Recruiting from different universities was more inclusive, revealing different university cultures, and expanding investigation outside of the Keele Bubble (as mentioned in section 3.2.1). However, there can be issues with self-selection biases; using volunteers may threaten external validity if the participants have similar characteristics (e.g. eagerness to please, desperation for monetary reward, not been involved in bullying). Having volunteers with no experience of bullying behaviour may have led to skewed views and an incomplete picture of bullying in HE. For example, the groups that said bullying was not an issue or it was not harmful may never have been involved. Without direct or indirect experience, the harm of bullying may not be apparent. Nevertheless, there was evidence that some students had witnessed and experienced bullying, thus

providing views from different perspectives, as is the aim with heterogeneous groups.

Physical focus groups are said to instil confidence in participants and allow the development of rapport and trust; online groups may have failed to do this. However, on this occasion, and due to the nature of the topic, online groups may have been the most appropriate option. Seymour (2001) stated that rituals of social interaction might underpin interview and focus group interactions, obscuring the focus of the group and lessening the likelihood of insightful revelations. Because students are very concerned with reputation, they may have regulated their words to avoid saying anything that could lessen the others' opinion of them. The online groups were anonymous, so power differentials were removed, and social reputations remained unchanged. However, students tended to perceive the groups as more of a forum rather than a chat, and once they had answered the questions, few students interacted with others' responses or my follow-up questions. A recommendation could be to try the alternative synchronous form of online focus groups for future research.

In conclusion, this study explored students' perceptions of bullying at the HE level. The data revealed similarities and differences between childhood bullying and student bullying at university, consequently furthering our knowledge of HE bullying. The additional methods identified as used by students were incorporated into the new scale to measure bullying on a wider scale; this will be described and discussed in the next chapter. The study demonstrated the importance of approaching this research using a more bottom-up approach; this has broadened our understanding of bullying amongst EAs in a university context.

4. Two-Part Study to Develop and Evaluate the Bullying at University Questionnaire (BUQ)

The research on bullying in HE has been lacking compared to that of school bullying. Most studies identified use adapted school bullying scales to measure HE bullying, and only a few studies have included attempts to create their own scale. As mentioned in Chapters 1 and 2, the school and university populations are at different developmental stages and are also situated in different contexts. The differences between the two groups may suggest that there are also differences in the reception and perpetration of abusive and aggressive behaviour, and what is perceived as bullying. Chapter 3 uncovered some of these differences. Subsequently, the current chapter attempted to isolate some of the differences and similarities between types of bullying at university, school, and the workplace. This was done by consulting existing school research, drawing on focus group data from the previous chapter, reading ACAS recommendations, and discussions within the supervisory team, to develop an initial pool of items suitable to construct a HE bullying scale. The scale was tested on two samples and altered accordingly based on factor loadings of items and strength of reliability statistics, using IBM SPSS Version 24. Several plausible scale models resulted from this iterative process, which were subsequently tested using the third survey study data (Chapter 5) with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in IBM AMOS Version 24.

The identified existing HE bullying scales were developed by Doğruer and Yaratan (2014) and Young-Jones et al. (2015). Doğruer and Yaratan (2014) explored existing bullying scales and created an item pool which they thought represented HE bullying behaviours; these were checked by four field experts and some items were deleted. The items retained represented the four categories of

verbal, emotional, physical, and cyber bullying, which are prevalent in school bullying. They also determined a definition of bullying from existing research (not specifying which studies) and included this at the beginning of the survey. Their participants were 211 students at one Turkish university; the majority were aged between 18 and 21, and most were from Turkey, with some from surrounding countries such as Jordan, Cyprus, Iraq, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan. The researchers conducted Principal Components Analysis on the results, extracting four factors that represent the four categories outlined above. Items were deleted that cross-loaded onto two or more factors and had weak factor loadings, resulting in a 22 item scale, with 9 items labelled as relational/emotional, 6 as verbal, 4 as cyber, and 3 as physical.

The use of exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to confirm a four-factor scale in Doğruer and Yaratan's (2014) study may have been a misuse of the factor analysis method. It may have been prudent to either explore all factor extractions to identify any other possible permutations of the scale (informed by the scree plot or number of eigenvalues greater than one), or to use a CFA method to confirm their proposed four factor scale based on theoretical research in comparison to other possible models. In new scale development, EFA is recommended (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006); CFA is used to test whether the data are consistent with a hypothesised factor structure (Tinsley & Tinsley, 1987). An initial exploration of the data may have found different results than what was tested based on a-priori reasoning. Furthermore, the scale was based on existing bullying scales, which must have been drawn from childhood bullying research; they did not specify this, but the lack of existing HE scales leads to this conclusion.

Young-Jones et al. (2015, p.190) created a perceptions of bullying scale "based on a review of similar studies" (these were not named) and administered it to a small sample of 130 undergraduate students from one American university. It contained one subsection measuring university climate, a second and third subsection were about current bullying experiences (verbal harassment, social exclusion, physical violence, cyberbullying), and the fourth and fifth sections were about past bullying experiences. The factorability of the scale and factor analysis results were not reported. The procedure section stated that question response anchors were 1 to 7 on a Likert-type scale; however, in the results section, the authors report the answers as "yes", suggesting that the questions actually had *yes* or *no* responses when asked if they had experienced or participated in a certain behaviour. The lack of details about this scale and its factor structure limits its usability.

Neither of the existing HE bullying scales were considered suitable for this research. Therefore, other avenues were explored to supplement knowledge of childhood bullying scales. The ACAS website was consulted - ACAS is a non-departmental public body of the government in the UK, aiming to improve organisation and workplace rights. There are various articles on bullying and harassment from the perspective of employees and employers, listing their definition of bullying, giving examples of bullying and harassment, and using fake scenarios to place the examples in context.

A good scale is reliable, valid, generalisable, and important (Field & Hole, 2003); therefore, a two-part study tested the new scale on two separate samples to evidence reliability of scores, rather than relying on a single sample collected at one time point. For this subject, a test-retest on the same sample was

deemed unnecessary and impractical due to bullying behaviour not being a stable trait; this could lead to differing results at both time points because of individual differences rather than survey error (Furr & Bacharach, 2008). The items and definition were supplemented by existing theoretical research like Doğruer and Yaratan (2014), but also empirical research from the preliminary focus group study (Chapter 3); it was hoped that this validly represented the concepts of HE bullying. Students were sampled from across the UK rather than just from one university, to enable generalisation. Young-Jones et al. (2015) found that students thought bullying was not a problem at their university, but 49% of their participants answered *yes* to at least one of the seven questions asking about current victimisation. This suggests that students are unsure of what constitutes as bullying, and so using the qualitative focus group findings helped untangle the complexities around perceptions of campus-wide behaviour and inform the scale construction.

This research is of great importance for academic impact - it is necessary to have a reliable and valid scale to measure bullying in this context. The research also has broader implications; as graduate students have lower unemployment, higher-paid jobs, and are more likely to be in positions of responsibility than those without a university degree, bullying may affect an individual's ability to deliver in a graduate employment context due to lowered wellbeing and psychological issues. It is vital that progress is made to investigate and address negative behaviour at university, by students against students, using a valid and reliable scale.

4.1. Survey Study One

4.1.1. Aim. The purpose of the study was to develop and test a scale with items reflecting student bullying that occurs at UK universities. On the recommendation of Worthington and Whittaker (2006), an examination of the initial factor structure and reliability using EFA could then lead to a test of competing models using CFA with the third survey study data.

4.1.2. Preliminary item construction. A novel bullying and victimisation scale was constructed asking how often certain bullying experiences happened at university within the past year. An item pool designed to tap the construct of student bullying was generated. The original item pool was derived from published research, relevant theory, and the results of the focus groups outlined in Chapter 3. The prominent types of bullying behaviour in HE were mostly unknown, therefore it was practical to include a variety of behavioural items that could be reduced later. The children's bullying literature widely uses the four categories of verbal, physical, indirect/social, and cyber, and so there were items representing all categories (see Appendix G for original item pool). Ideas were gained from existing children's scales in the following papers: Fox, Hunter, Jones (2015) and Fox and Farrow (2009). Several items were adopted from these papers concerning the above four categories (e.g. called names for verbal, spread gossip for social, been attacked for physical, and had nasty things said on Facebook for cyberbullying) but changed to suit the HE context.

Additional behaviours were identified from the focus groups that may have fitted into the existing four categories but expressed differently. Any relevant behaviour mentioned in the focus groups that did not already closely match an item was made into another item. For example, having food thrown away on

purpose is a physical act, but it would not fit into being physically attacked. These new items are likely specific to the chosen population because of the shared living conditions, but also because of the different culture of a university to a school or workplace. Another notable focus group finding was that sexual harassment was a big problem. The ACAS guidelines on harassment and bullying for employees also exemplify this serious behaviour. Students also proposed what did not count as bullying at university; for example, many believed that overt or direct bullying does not happen, suggesting it is more subtle, secretive, indirect, and invisible to the outside; items needed to reflect this. The ACAS bullying examples were similar to the focus group themes, with exclusion, verbal bullying, misuse of power, threats, undermining, and preventing work progression. The guidelines were examined for additional items that could be framed as relevant to the university context.

The initial 41-item pool was sent to my primary supervisor for a review. They were checked for face and content validity as well as readability and conciseness. My primary supervisor is considered an expert in the field of bullying, and so identified gaps in the item pool, suggested additional items, and indicated which items needed more information or specificity. Four items were replaced because they were too vague or verbose; (a) "experienced bitchiness from females" was changed to "experienced verbal malice or spitefulness"; (b) "experienced lad-behaviour" was replaced by "experienced inappropriate sexual advances"; (c) "been put down so the perpetrator appears popular and gets laughs from others" was replaced with "had your opinions belittled (e.g. in class)"; and (d) "passive-aggressiveness" was replaced with "have someone target abuse at you online, but not directly naming/tagging you in the post". Seven items were

added: “had possessions hidden”, “been insulted about your appearance”, “been shouted at”, “been physically attacked (e.g. pushed, tripped)”, “been verbally harassed by a group”, “been set up to fail”, and “been purposely blocked, unfriended, or deleted from groups or events online”. For the cyber-type items, my supervisor suggested including an action rather than a medium because media changes rapidly (e.g. unfriended or deleted from groups, instead of deleted from Facebook). The items were also duplicated and reframed slightly to create a bullying scale measuring perpetration of these behaviours. In total there were 48 items measuring victimisation and 48 measuring perpetration. To avoid missing important information, an open-ended question was included at the end of each section asking the participant to indicate if they were bullied for any apparent identity-related reason, as some school-bullying researchers attempt to measure whether intent is discriminatory (e.g. Hunter, Durkin, Heim, Howe & Bergin, 2010).

4.1.3. Participants and procedure. On 17th November 2017, ethical approval was granted for the first study; from 17th November to 20th January 2018, the questionnaire was live for data collection (see Appendix H for approval letter). The data were collected via an online questionnaire (Appendix I) on the host site Qualtrics. The questionnaire was advertised through social media, specifically, on a student recruitment page on The Student Room. The link to the questionnaire was Tweeted and shared on Twitter and Facebook by the research team to reach a wider range and number of potential participants. Reciprocal participation in other students’ studies was offered.

There were 329 responses to the survey; 243 remained after incomplete and excluded responses were deleted. The information sheet stated that if the

participant had retired from completing the questionnaire partway through (e.g. 25% completion), this data would not be used in analyses, thus the responses were only used if the participant had progressed to the end. Furthermore, surveys from respondents who reported studying outside of the UK were deleted.

Of the 243 responses, there was a variety of students from across the UK; 186 were female, 54 males, and 3 other (one demi-girl, one genderfluid, one non-binary). Ages ranged from 17 to 54 years (M = 24, SD = 6). Most indicated they were heterosexual (192), six were gay/lesbian, 30 bisexual, eight prefer not to say, and six other (one asexual, one queer, one questioning, and three pansexual). Whilst referring to the research studies I have conducted, non-heterosexual response categories were collapsed and labelled LGB+, to include other types of self-declared sexual orientations. Whilst referring to other research, I have used the term the authors have adopted (e.g. LGBT, LGBTQ). The sample consisted mostly of white students (193), with 14 Black/Black British, 19 Asian/Asian British, six Chinese, eight mixed ethnicities, two Latinx, and one white South African. Participant nationalities and origins varied (see Table 4.4 for full demographic details).

Once the students clicked on the Qualtrics link, the information sheet and consent questions were presented (see Appendix J). If they decided to take part, they checked the consent boxes and proceeded to the first questions. The opening questions consisted of demographic variables, such as age, gender, marital status, and ethnicity. Next, a definition of bullying was given because a precise objective definition is necessary for agreement between researchers and participants on what is being measured: Aggressive, goal-directed behaviour, that harms another

individual within the context of a power imbalance (not including within a romantic relationship), that may or may not be repetitive.

This definition was an amalgamation of existing bullying definitions. Olweus (1993) proposed that the term bullying should only be applied if there is an imbalance in strength. However, it is likely that the perceptions of the victim would decide on the existence of power imbalances. This is exemplified in the focus group data, where group status and reputation is seen as important, and a poor reputation may predispose one to become vulnerable to victimisation. From focus group data interpretations, it can be suggested that emerging adults do not employ entirely the same bullying methods as children; therefore, whether one person is physically stronger may have less of an impact than if one person perceived another to have more power in a formal or informal hierarchy (e.g. a line manager, mentor, or a popular peer in class). It is clear, however, that power differentials are an important facet of the definition which separates bullying from aggression (Volk et al., 2017). It is also included in the ACAS bullying and harassment at work guide for employees as an abuse or misuse of power.

Olweus (1993) also stressed that bullying must be carried out repeatedly and over time, but due to technological changes and revisiting research definitions after the focus groups, I indicated in the definition that the bullying “may or may not be repetitive”. For example, if someone were to post an aggressive comment online, there is the opportunity for this comment to be shared and/or retweeted by millions of others, without the explicit permission of the original commenter. If others were to share the original comment many times, this would resemble the experience of being attacked repeatedly (i.e. many notifications to the target from social media) even though the original aggressor commented a single time.

Furthermore, a single incident of bullying may also cause harm depending on the individual the aggression is directed at. Consequently, to exclude those instances whereby a person has been attacked only once may be invalidating for these results and also the person's experience. Volk et al. (2017) suggested that a victim's experience of harm is an interaction between the frequency and intensity of the negative behaviour, but is also dependent on individual resiliency and the contextual environment. Furthermore, not everyone in the focus groups agreed that bullying had to be repeated. Some commented that a one-off incident could be just as damaging. Taken together, this evidence led to the caveat of may or may not be repeated in the provided definition.

The concept of intentionality has been changed to goal-directed on the recommendation of Volk et al. (2017). This overrides the difficulties encountered when trying to rationalise whether someone else's behaviour is intentional. Goal-directed clearly implies that someone who wishes to bully another will behave strategically to achieve a certain goal, whether that is to gain a higher reputation, to have their work completed for them, or to inflict harm. The intention of an act cannot always be identified. One may know a person is bullying intentionally but not know why. In another case, one may know that someone wants to acquire something and acts purposely through an intentional act, alerting the victim to a possible motive.

There were 48 items about different types of victimisation, followed by 48 items about bullying perpetration with the same content as the victim questions (see Appendix I). The question asked: during the past academic year, how often did you experience/perpetrate the following from other students? (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.). The responses sat on a Likert-type

scale ranging from *never*, *rarely*, *occasionally*, *about once a week*, through to *multiple times a week*. At the end of each set of questions, one open-ended question asked if any of the previously experienced/participated in behaviours were due to perceived identity-related differences, (i.e. race, disability, or sexuality). There was also one final open-ended question asking if there were any bullying behaviours students are involved in that were missed from the questionnaire. At the end, they were presented with a debrief and then had to click the final arrow on Qualtrics to submit. Partial and complete responses were automatically saved on Qualtrics.

4.1.4. Results. Due to insufficient variance amongst perpetration scores, I concentrated on the 48 victimisation items only. The items were subjected to an EFA (Principal Axis Factoring, PAF) to test the underlying factor structure in the hope of representing the constructs. A factor is a construct operationally defined by its factor loadings (Kline, 1994). PAF was chosen over Principal Components Analysis (PCA) because it aims to understand latent factors that account for the shared variance amongst items, rather than reducing the item number to a few clusters (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). Worthington and Whittaker further suggest that initial validation of new instruments should involve empirically appraising the underlying factor structure, and this cannot be done using PCA.

Kline (1994) recommended gaining 200 responses for pilot work, though Field and Hole (2003) suggested 5-10 participants per variable. There were 48 victimisation items in total, therefore, 240 participants were the target. The number of questionnaires received was 329, though only 243 were usable. This still satisfied the minimum recommended number. Furthermore, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test for sampling adequacy was high at .93, deemed

“marvellous” by Kaiser (1974). Values closer to one indicated more distinct and reliable components (Field, 2009; Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was also significant, $p < .001$ (thus significantly different from zero; Field, 2009), indicating suitable factorability of the correlation matrix.

All 48 items were entered into the PAF analysis using SPSS version 24. Listwise deletion resulted in a reduction of the sample to below the minimum recommended number of 240, therefore, pairwise deletion was requested. As there was only a couple of item-level missing data for approximately 21 participants, pairwise deletions enabled the maximisation of the data. Parent (2012) has found that for so little missing data, any effects of pairwise deletions may be negligible, though this method is preferred over imputing mean scores, which can inflate correlations.

Initially, I requested extraction of all factors with eigenvalues (the amount of variance explained by a factor, Field, 2009) over one and a scree plot. Kaiser (1960) recommended retaining all factors with an eigenvalue over one, though this measure is sometimes too liberal, and a scree plot may show a more appropriate number of factors to retain (Cattell, 1966). The analysis extracted seven factors above one, which accounted for 67% of the variance; however, a scree plot showed that either a two-or a four-factor solution was appropriate. The factor matrix did not optimally show items loading onto two or four factors, indicating rotation was needed.

Rotation is a technique used to discriminate amongst variables, ensuring they load maximally onto one factor only (Field, 2009); this allows for easier interpretation. Oblique rotation (Direct Oblimin) was chosen because the victimisation factors were likely to correlate (Field, 2009; Kline, 1994). Based on

previous research, correlations have been identified between victimisation types (Boulton, 2012). The analysis was re-run with the imputation of the new instructions: rotation and four factors were requested. The results showed a more manageable and decipherable matrix of values.

When deciding on the number of factors to retain, researchers should be able to theoretically interpret factors in a meaningful way (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). When considering the pattern matrix of factors, there seemed to be a clear conceptual divide amongst the four factors. Most childhood bullying surveys ask questions in four subsections about the four types of bullying: verbal, emotional, physical, and cyber.

To make interpretation easier, the scale was refined and items with low loadings were removed. Based on Stevens' (2002) criteria, adequate factor loadings need to be at least .38 for a sample size of 200, and Worthington and Whittaker (2006) also suggested deleting items with factor loadings less than .32; four items were excluded. The cross-loading items were examined alongside the descriptive statistics for each item. Items that loaded too highly onto more than one factor were deleted unless there was a theoretically sound justification to include them in the final analysis. Two items that did not theoretically fit onto the factors they were in, were also removed, and one was removed after re-evaluating its clarity (i.e. verbal malice may be misunderstood, as malice is not a regularly used word). Items were examined further during a data session between myself and my lead supervisor, to arrive at a conceptually sound interpretation. The resulting four-factor model made theoretical sense, with 27 items accounting for 63% of the variance in scores from the rotated solution (seen in Table 4.1).

The first factor was named “Social”; it comprised of six items that measured types of bullying that are either perpetrated by a social group (e.g. excluded from group chat) or perpetrated with the intention of damaging a person’s social reputation, (e.g. opinions belittled in class). Higher scores indicated higher reports of social bullying. This factor accounted for 47.87% of the model variance. Social bullying is a highly relevant factor based on the adult and EA bullying literature, along with the focus group data. The composition of this theme suggests that social psychological theory can be applied to bullying interactions at UK universities; it is clear that group involvement or a group bearing witness to the bullying is important.

The second factor was labelled “Physical Act/Trace”. It comprised of seven items that measured the student population’s equivalent to physical-fight-type bullying in childhood. Higher scores indicated a higher incidence of being bullied via a method which left a physical trace. Of interest, this factor contained a mixture of online and offline items, thus supporting the suggestion that cyberbullying is not a separate factor, but a continuation of traditional bullying outside of traditional means (Wolke, Lereya, & Tippett, 2016). This factor accounted for 7.53% of the model variance. It included items such as “possessions sabotaged”, “physically attacked seriously”, and “nasty social media posts”. Each of these bullying items indicated that a physical effort was taken to perpetrate the behaviour, or a physical trace was left in its wake. This could be an elaboration of physical childhood bullying, sharing some similarities but with differences in physical contact.

The third factor was named “Psychological”, as this seemed to encapsulate the seven items. This factor included items that are not only seen in psychological

bullying literature but also the domestic abuse literature. “Food thrown away”, “bombardment of messages”, “inappropriate sexual advances”, and “coerced”, all indicate a more controlling method that aligns more with adult abuse than childhood bullying. A childhood psychological bullying item might be one child telling another what to do; these types of items have matured into a different form for EAs, yet still tap the psychological component of bullying. This crossover between bullying and abuse can be supported by Figure 3.2. of Chapter 3, which shows various shared individual and social characteristics and behaviours. This factor accounted for 4.31% of the model variance, and higher scores indicated more instances of psychological victimisation.

The fourth and final factor was named “Direct Verbal”, comprising seven items that measured types of bullying directed verbally at the target, with higher scores indicating higher reports of direct verbal abuse. These items were the most obvious to label and are commonplace in childhood and adult bullying literature. All items referred to an incidence of being spoken to or shouted at in a verbally derogatory way (e.g. “called names to face” or “been insulted about appearance”). This factor accounted for 2.80% of the model variance, and again, a higher score meant more experiences of verbal abuse.

The total 27-item victimisation section of the BUQ scale had an internal consistency of α = .96, with the four subscales having equally high estimates, as seen in Table 4.2. These results support the use of Oblique rotation, as all four factors correlated, see Table 4.3. Means, standard deviations, alphas, and factor loading range for each of the factors are reported in Table 4.2. Specific item loadings can be seen in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Factor Loadings for the BUQ: Survey Study 1

Factor name and item	Loadings			
	1	2	3	4
Factor 1: Social (6 items, α = .86)				
Purposely been ignored	.69			
Excluded from group chats or games online	.69			
Had others turn against you on the will of another student	.63			
Had your opinions belittled (e.g. in class)	.52			
Set up to fail	.51			
Experienced negative clique-group behaviour	.48			
Factor 2: Physical Act/Trace (7 items, α = .93)				
Had possessions sabotaged		-.87		
Had images of yourself shared or used for blackmail online		-.81		
Misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts		-.73		
Physically attacked seriously		-.67		
Physically attacked		-.68		
Prevented from using facilities		-.59		
Had nasty things said about you on social network posts or blogs		-.51		
Factor 3: Psychological (7 items, α = .90)				
Had your food thrown away or eaten on purpose			.72	
Experienced inappropriate sexual advances			.66	
Had possessions stolen			.63	
Stalked or followed on campus			.59	
Harassed online with a bombardment of messages			.51	
Coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to do			.50	
Felt manipulated or controlled by someone			.42	
Factor 4: Direct Verbal (7 items, α = .91)				
The target of unfriendly/nasty jokes				-.93
Called nasty names to your face				-.82
Insulted about your appearance				-.67
Mocked in public or private (not online)				-.64
Felt threatened or intimidated by someone (not online)				-.49
Shouted at				-.50
Made fun of in a nasty way				-.44

Note. N = 240 to 243. PAF with Oblique Direct Oblimin rotation. Participants responded using five options (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, e.g. a handful of occasions, 3 = Occasionally, e.g. two to three times a month, 4 = About once a week, 5 = Multiple times a week). The question was: During the last academic year, how often have you experienced the following (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) from other students…?

Table 4.2

Scale properties for Survey Study 1

Scale	Cronbach α	Loading range	Min-max score (possible)	Mean (SD)
Social (6 items)	.86	.56 - .81	6 – 28 (6 - 30)	9.18 (3.99)
Physical Act/Trace (7 items)	.93	.76 - .93	7 – 29 (7 - 35)	8.11 (3.29)
Psychological (7 items)	.90	.67 - .82	7 – 30 (7 - 35)	9.17 (3.84)
Direct Verbal (7 items)	.91	.61 - .86	7 – 32 (7 – 35)	10.07 (4.49)

Table 4.3

Correlations between scales Survey Study 1

	Social	Physical Act / Trace	Psychological	Direct Verbal
Social	-	.61**	.62**	.73**
Physical Act / Trace	-	-	.71**	.63**
Psychological	-	-	-	.66**
Direct Verbal	-	-	-	-

The findings from the first study show that bullying in HE has specific factors representing different types of perpetrating. Direct Verbal and Social map onto children's bullying types, but each factor contains insidious and mature items, which are reflected in the ACAS guidelines and the power and control wheel (Figure 3.3., Chapter 2; DAIP, 2011).

4.2. Survey Study Two

4.2.1. Aim. The aim of the second survey study was to test the retained items from the first survey study to explore whether a new sample would replicate the factor structure. This was done using the same method as survey study one.

4.2.2. Items. The items in Table 4.1 were used in the second survey. There were six Social items, seven Physical Act/Trace items, seven Psychological items, and seven Direct Verbal items. In the interest of having balanced subscales, a further social item was generated based on my primary supervisor's knowledge: "excluded from a social activity they wanted to be included in", resulting in four subscales with seven items.

4.2.3. Participants. There were 313 responses which were reduced to 304 once incomplete and excluded responses were deleted. Of the 304, there was a variety of students from across the UK. The sample was 186 female, 116 male, and 2 self-described as other. The mean age of participants was 25.23 years (SD 7.33). See Table 4.4 for full demographics. The participants from the second sample were recruited via the online recruitment organisation Prolific; the decision was made to pay participants through Prolific because the sample for the first survey was slow to accrue.

Table 4.4

Demographic details of participants from Survey Study 1 and 2

Variable		Survey One	Survey Two
Age			
	N	231	297
		23.92 (SD 6.36)	25.23 (SD 7.33)
Gender			
	N	243	304
	Male	54 (22.20%)	116 (38.20%)
	Female	186 (76.50%)	186 (61.20%)
	Other	3 (1.20%)	2 (.70%)
Sexual Orientation			
	N	242	303
	Heterosexual	192 (79.00%)	253 (83.2%)
	Gay/Lesbian	6 (2.50%)	14 (4.60%)

	Bisexual	30 (12.30%)	32 (10.50%)
	Other	6 (2.5%)	2 (.70%)
	Prefer not to say	8 (3.30%)	2 (.70%)
Ethnicity			
	N	243	304
	Asian/Asian British	19 (7.80%)	19 (6.30%)
	Black/Black British	14 (5.80%)	11 (3.60%)
	Chinese	6 (2.50%)	5 (1.60%)
	Mixed	8 (3.30%)	5 (1.60)
	White	193 (79.40%)	262 (86.20%)
	Other	3 (1.2%)	2 (.70%)
Religious beliefs			
	N	243	304
	No religion	142 (58.40%)	213 (70.10%)
	Christian	71 (29.20%)	70 (23.00%)
	Buddhist	6 (2.50%)	3 (1.00%)
	Hindu	3 (1.2%)	1 (.30%)
	Jewish	2 (.80%)	-
	Muslim	14 (5.80%)	10 (3.30%)
	Sikh	-	1 (.30%)
	Other	5 (2.10%)	6 (2.00%)
Degree type			
	N	243	301
	Undergraduate	173 (71.20%)	204 (67.80%)
	Masters	42 (17.30%)	47 (15.50%)
	PhD/Doctorate	24 (9.90%)	28 (9.20%)
	Other	4 (1.60%)	22 (7.20%)
Mode of study			
	N	242	304
	Full time	229 (94.20%)	224 (73.70%)
	Part time	13 (5.30%)	77 (25.30%)
	Other	-	3 (1.00%)
Student status			
	N	243	304
	Home	194 (79.80%)	281 (92.40%)
	Other EU	29 (11.90%)	10 (3.30%)
	International	20 (8.20%)	13 (4.30%)
University accommodation			
	N	241	304
	Yes	61 (25.10%)	68 (22.40%)
	No	180 (74.70%)	236 (77.60%)

Marital status			
	N	243	301
	Single	184 (75.70%)	131 (43.10%)
	Married/civil partnership	21 (8.60%)	47 (15.5%)
	Cohabiting	33 (13.60%)	22 (7.20%)
	Divorced	-	3 (1.00%)
	In a relationship	-	99 (32.6%)
	Other	5 (2.10%)	1 (.30%)
Standard of living			
	N	243	304
	Has more than enough money	35 (14.40%)	17 (5.60%)
	Is comfortable	127 (52.30%)	151 (49.70%)
	Has enough money for the basics	69 (28.40%)	104 (34.20%)
	Is living under meagre conditions	8 (3.30%)	28 (9.20%)
	Has extreme financial hardships	4 (1.60%)	4 (1.30%)

4.2.4. Procedure. Ethical approval was granted on the 2nd of February 2018 (see Appendix K). The study went online the same day and was open for only a week, as Prolific gathered the required number of volunteers within this time frame. Participants would see the study advertised through Prolific and had to meet the restrictions (i.e. currently lived in the UK and were a university student) to take the survey. After indicating suitability, they were taken through to Qualtrics and proceeded with the short survey. The second survey study again started with demographic questions and then moved on to bullying, presenting the same definition as in the first survey study. The time frame for reporting the bullying was changed to the past two months instead of the past academic year - it was believed that this would gain the most recent and pertinent bullying incidents. The question asked, “During the past two months, how often have you

experienced the following from other students? (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.).” The 28 victimisation items were presented, with response anchors ranging from *never*, *rarely (e.g. only a handful of times)*, *about half the time*, *most days of the week*, to *multiple times a day*. Next, the same items were inverted and asked the same question about perpetration. After these blocks of items, an open-ended question asked whether the bullying was due to any identity-related differences and for the student to say something about this if so.

To test for a variant of parallel-forms reliability, the existing HE bullying scale by Doğruer and Yaratan (2014) was included in this survey; they based their subscales on the childhood bullying types of physical, verbal, emotional, and cyber. The final scale had 100 items which were presented as a mixture of victimisation and perpetration items (only the 50 victimisation items were used here).

4.3. Results. The BUQ and Dogruer and Yaratan’s (2014) scale correlated highly (r =.80) indicating they were both measuring the same underlying construct. This provides convergent evidence for the reliability of the items in the BUQ (Furr & Bacharach, 2008).

Again, few people admitted to perpetrating, so only victimisation scores were analysed. The set of items were subjected to an EFA (PAF). The number of participants (304) for this survey study exceeded the recommended range by Kline (1994) and Field and Hole (2003) as there were now only 28 items on the victimisation scale. There were only 28 individual cases of missing data; thus, the means of the available cases were imputed and not expected to inflate correlations as the missing cells accounted for only .33% of the entire dataset. The KMO test for sampling adequacy was high at .94 (“marvellous” by Kaiser, 1974). Bartlett’s

Test of Sphericity was also significant $p < .001$ (thus significantly different from zero; Field, 2009), indicating suitable factorability of the correlation matrix.

An unrotated PAF analysis was first requested, asking for all those with Eigenvalues above one. This resulted in three factors being extracted, with factor one accounting for 51.30% of the variance, factor two accounting for 6.90% of the variance, and factor three 3.83% of the variance, resulting in 62.03% of the variance accounted for. A consultation of the scree plot showed ambiguity, and a two or three-factor extraction could be plausible. On looking at the unrotated factor matrix, most items fitted onto the first factor, and only a few sat on the other two factors; this suggested rotation was needed. Another analysis was conducted, requesting rotation using Oblique (Direct Oblimin) method, as the factors are known to correlate. I first requested three factors, based on the number of Eigenvalues over one, and then repeated the rotation but only requesting two factors. All factor loadings under .32 were suppressed in the matrix based on Worthington and Whittaker (2006).

The pattern matrix showed that all loadings were above .32, thus indicating suitability of all items for the scale. Twelve items loaded onto factor one alone, eight loaded onto factor two alone, two loaded onto factor three alone, and five items cross-loaded. The first factor seemed to contain most of the physical and psychological items, with possessions sabotaged cross-loading onto factor one and three. However, it made theoretical sense to remain with the other physical items, so this was placed with factor one. A second item also cross-loaded onto factor one and two: coerced or pressured. This may be because this item can be interpreted as psychological abuse, but it could also be construed as

being coerced in a social group, which was the second factor. It was decided to retain this item in the first factor with the rest of the psychological items.

The second factor contained most of the social items, with one psychological and one verbal item. One item (set up to fail) cross-loaded onto the first factor, but it was decided to cluster this with the social items. Being made fun of and being the target of nasty jokes, both loaded onto the second and the third factor, however, the third factor contained the other verbal items. They were therefore retained on the third factor for subsequent analyses. The only anomaly was that shouted at loaded only onto factor one and not onto the verbal items; this may be because the act of shouting was remembered more than the words spoken, and the act is quite physically aggressive. Felt threatened or intimidated also failed to load onto the verbal factor, again, this may have been interpreted as physical intimidation (e.g. with dirty looks or body language) rather than vocal intimidation. The resulting items that seemed to make theoretical sense in their current three-factor structure can be seen in Table 4.5. Other scale properties such as factor loadings can be seen in Table 4.6. Scale correlations are shown in Table 4.7. The correlation between scales for model two, Survey Study 2, was significant (.76, $p < .01$).

Table 4.5

Factor loadings extracting three factors for the BUQ: Survey Study 2

Factor name and items	Loadings		
	1	2	3
Factor 1: Physical/Psychological (14 items α = .94)			
Physically attacked seriously	.92		
Harassed online with a bombardment of messages	.79		
Physically attacked	.78		
Possessions stolen	.75		
Misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts	.75		
Images of yourself shared or used for blackmail online	.75		
Food thrown away or eaten on purpose	.74		
Stalked or followed on campus	.69		
Prevented from using facilities	.67		
Possessions sabotaged	.58		
Experienced inappropriate sexual advances	.56		
Shouted at	.43		
Nasty things said about you on social network posts or blogs	.37		
Coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to do	.43		
Factor 2: Social (9 items, α = .92)			
Purposely been ignored not online		.80	
Excluded from group chats or games online		.75	
Felt manipulated or controlled by someone		.71	
Experienced negative clique-group behaviour		.70	
Excluded from a social activity they wanted to be included in		.67	
Opinions belittled (e.g. in class)		.61	
Others turn against you on the will of another student		.57	
Felt threatened or intimidated by someone (not online)		.46	
Set up to fail		.42	
Factor 3: Verbal (5 items, α = .91)			
Called nasty names to your face			.63
Made fun of in a nasty way			.59
Insulted about your appearance			.55
The target of unfriendly/nasty jokes			.53
Mocked in public or private (not online)			.48

Note. N = 304. PAF with Oblique Direct Oblimin rotation. Internal reliability for the total scale was α = .96. Participants responded to the items using five options (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, e.g. a handful of occasions, 3 = Occasionally e.g. two to three times a month, 4 = About once a week, 5 = Multiple times a week). The question was: During the past two months, how often have you experienced the following (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) from other students…?

Table 4.6

Scale properties for model 1 Survey Study 2

Scale	Cronbach's α	Loading range	Min-max score (Possible)	Mean (SD)
Physical/Psychological (14 items)	.94	.59 - .83	14 – 53 (14 - 70)	16.37 (5.57)
Social (9 items)	.92	.71 - .80	9 – 44 (9 - 45)	12.18 (5.45)
Direct Verbal (5 items)	.91	.76 - .86	5 – 25 (5 - 25)	6.91 (3.09)

Table 4.7

Correlations between model 1 scales for Survey Study 2

	Physical/Psychological	Social	Direct Verbal
Physical/Psychological	-	.75**	.71**
Social	-	-	.79**
Direct Verbal	-	-	-

The items were then subjected to another factor analysis but only two factors were extracted, with Oblique rotation. A two-factor solution may be optimal due to the previous cross-loading items in the three-factor model. Thirteen items loaded uniquely onto factor one, and 11 loaded uniquely onto factor 2; there were 4 cross-loadings. From observing the pattern matrix, the items split into either Social/Direct Verbal or Physical Act/Psychological, with only a few not aligning with that pattern. The cross-loaded items were placed with the factor that made the most theoretical sense. See Table 4.8 for item loadings, Table 4.9 for scale characteristics, and Table 4.10 for correlations.

Table 4.8

Factor loadings extracting two factors for the BUQ: Survey Study 2

Factor Name and Items	Loadings	
	1	2
Factor 1: Social/Verbal (16 items, a = .95)		
Made fun of in a nasty way	.93	
Experienced negative clique-group behaviour	.81	
Purposely been ignored (e.g. everyone stops talking to you) not online	.80	
The target of unfriendly/nasty jokes	.77	
Excluded from group chats or games online	.76	
Opinions belittled (e.g. in class)	.76	
Called nasty names to your face	.67	
Excluded from a social activity they wanted to be included in	.64	
Threatened or intimidated by someone (not online)	.63	
Manipulated or controlled by someone	.63	
Mocked in public or private (not online)	.61	
Insulted about your appearance	.60	
Others turn against you on the will of another student	.59	
Set up to fail	.52	
Shouted at	.46	
Nasty things said about you on social network posts or blogs	.40	
Factor 2: Physical/Psychological (12 items, a = .93)		
Physically attacked seriously (e.g. kicked, hit, had something thrown at you)		-.96
Physically attacked (e.g. pushed, tripped)		-.80
Harassed online with a bombardment of messages		-.80
Possessions stolen		-.78
Misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts		-.77
Food thrown away or eaten on purpose		-.76
Images of yourself shared or used for blackmail online		-.75
Stalked or followed on campus		-.71
Prevented from using facilities		-.67
Experienced inappropriate sexual advances		-.57
Possessions sabotaged (e.g. books or essays torn up)		-.56
Coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to do		-.41

Table 4.9

Scale properties model 2 Survey Study 2

Scale	Cronbach's α	Loading range	Min-Max Score (Possible)	Mean (SD)
Social/Verbal (16 items)	.95	.65 - .83	16 – 73 (16 – 80)	21.72 (9.06)
Physical / Psychological (12 items)	.93	.59 - .84	12 – 46 (12 - 60)	13.74 (4.63)

4.4. Scale discussion. The first survey study showed a logical four-factor structure, labelled Social, Physical Act/Trace, Psychological, and Direct Verbal. These categories mapped onto the childhood bullying literature, with Physical Act/Trace replacing traditional physical bullying, Social and Psychological bullying were separate groups, and cyber-victimisation items fit into the existing categories rather than being a separate factor. The Physical Act/Trace category was intriguing because the items seemed to represent physical actions that might be seen within abusive romantic relationships (see the Duluth model Power and Control Wheel, 2011, Chapter 2). The outer ring of the wheel shows physical abuse and segments in the inner wheel represent emotional abuse, like intimidation, blackmail, and using economic abuse (in this case restricting access to communal facilities could be comparable). The social items all involved being attacked or humiliated in a social setting with witnesses. This category strongly relates to the power and social groups themes in Chapter 3, where bullying is used to increase social status and lower others' status in the social hierarchy. With others witnessing the bullying, the victim's reputation may be damaged, and they may lose their social status, resulting in exclusion from future activities due to their undesirable position in the hierarchy. The third category was titled

Psychological, and like the first category, the items mapped somewhat onto the power and control wheel. There was some crossover with the items on this factor and the first factor, as clearly some of these are physical acts; however, the overarching theme seemed to represent “mind games”, a comment that came from the physical focus group. The last factor was Direct Verbal, and these items represented direct derogatory comments at another, either alone or with witnesses. Doğruer and Yaratan (2014) found that verbal bullying, alongside emotional bullying, was the most common type in the HE context within Turkey.

For the first analysis of survey study 2, a three-factor model was proposed. Two factors matched the first survey study (Social and Direct Verbal); however, the Physical Act/Trace and Psychological items merged onto one factor. This is unsurprising, considering items in the psychological category could be categorised as being physical acts for a psychological gain. As mentioned, there may be crossover with these items, and survey study 2 represents this.

The second two-factor model created new categories by firstly merging Social and Direct Verbal items, and then merging the Psychological and Physical Act/Trace items. Theoretically, the categories transcended types or methods of bullying and separated into seriousness of behaviour concerning legislation, and perhaps maturity. All items on factor one were social and verbal items, which are subtle, insidious-type behaviours that could happen in a group; this behaviour could be mistaken for banter, or it could be easily denied and leave no trace evidence. These are also behaviours commonly seen in school bullying research. Whereas, the second factor items could all be prosecuted outside of the university context: actual bodily harm (physically attacked), harassment (inappropriate sexual advances, bombardment of messages, stalked or followed) theft

(possessions stolen), grooming (manipulated with fake accounts), criminal damage (possessions sabotaged, food thrown away), blackmail (images used for blackmail), anti-social behaviour (prevented from using facilities), and coercive control (coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to). These items represent behaviour that is less likely to be seen in school bullying research.

The three models were tested with CFA using the third survey study data and discussed in Chapter 5; overall scale discussion and implications are in Chapter 8.

4.5. Victimisation Scores

Based on the findings from Chapter 3, I explored group differences on the victimisation scale results. The overarching theme from the student focus groups was power amongst social groups. Students also proposed that those with the privilege and power of being in a desirable social group or category tended to be the perpetrators. Traits that could either classify you as powerful or disadvantaged at university were related to the demographic variables measured, for example, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, identifying with organised religion, student status, and SES. Therefore, these were explored with statistical techniques.

Other demographic variables were also analysed, such as whether students were living in university accommodation, and what their marital status, degree type, and mode of study was. Anecdotal evidence from campus university services suggested that students living in halls accommodation tended to have the most grievances, and students in the focus groups said bullying happens in halls accommodation. Marital status or relationship status can also be important to consider; those in relationships or married may have increased levels of social support and belonging, which may impact being victimised. Additionally, degree

type and mode of study could also be linked to victimisation. Younger students, predominantly undergraduates in the EA phase of development (which is said to share more with adolescence than adulthood) may be the most likely to be involved in bullying. However, bullying still happens in the workplace amongst adults; thus, it is not a behaviour that disappears with maturity. Furthermore, it would be expected that part-time students have less chance of being involved in bullying by not being available on campus as a target; nonetheless, their part-time status may risk them being excluded.

Based on the findings from existing studies exploring statistical group differences on victimisation (Sinkkonen et al., 2014; Davis et al., 2018), a sample of 82 to 150 participants was required to find a medium effect size of between .41 and .56. The survey studies had over 200 participants for each test, thus satisfying the minimum number required to detect a medium effect size. The test assumption of normality was not met; yet, parametric tests are powerful enough to perform well with non-normal distributions (Srivastava, 1958; Stonehouse & Forrester, 1998) if sample size guidelines are adhered to (each group should be greater than 20 for independent t-tests and greater than 15 for a one-way ANOVA; Minitab, 2019). For this reason, the categories that did not contain the required numbers were collapsed to satisfy this; for survey study 1, mode of study (i.e. part-or-full time) could not be compared as there were not 20 participants in each group, and the category of International students is one less than recommended. For the assumption of homogeneity of variance, if the Levene's test showed a violation, figures were read from the adjusted row where equal variances are not assumed. The assumption of independence and interval data usage were met. The data were

tested collectively with no assumed factor structure, this was due to the conflicting findings on factor structure from each survey study.

4.5.1. Survey Study 1. The victimisation scores from the first survey study could range from 48 (the lowest score possible and indicating *never* when asked about each victimisation item) to 240. The mean score was 64.01 (SD 24.19); 86% of the sample indicated at least *rarely* on at least one item. Tests were conducted on each demographic variable to explore differences in victimisation scores between groups. Based on the focus group data and answers from the open-ended question box asking about identity-related victimisation (see Chapter 5), it was thought that for each variable there would be significant differences between majority and minority groups in this setting.

Firstly, a Pearson's *r* correlation was computed to assess the relationship between age and victimisation scores; there was no correlation between the two variables (r = .03, n = 229, p = .661). Using independent t-tests and one-way ANOVAs, groups differences were calculated for each demographic variable, these can be seen in Table 4.10 and Table 4.11. Significant findings are asterisked. The categories that did not meet the minimum 15 to 20 case criteria were either merged or excluded from the test.

For the t-tests, Table 4.10 shows that there was a significant difference in victimisation scores between males and females, suggesting that males are victimised significantly more than females. There was also a significant difference between victimisation scores in the no religion group and the religious group, indicating that those identifying with a religion had significantly higher victimisation scores than those who indicated no religion. There was a significant difference in the scores for university accommodation and non-university

accommodation, representing that those in university accommodation had significantly higher scores than those in non-university accommodation.

For the ANOVAs, Table 4.11 shows that the only significant result was the student status variable; there was a significant effect of student status group on victimisation scores at the $p < .05$ level for the three conditions. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test found that the mean score for the EU students was significantly different than the UK students', CI [-25.03, -2.63], but the International students did not significantly differ from the other two groups. This suggests that the students from Europe had significantly higher victimisation scores than those from the UK or other international countries.

Table 4.10

Groups differences using t-tests for Survey Study 1

	M (SD)	M (SD)	*t*(df)	CI	Cohen's *d*
Gender*	Male (*n* = 53) 75.23 (36.43)	Female (*n* = 185) 60.84 (18.23)	2.78 (59.64)	7.17, 21.59	.50
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual (*n* = 190) 63.86 (23.48)	LGB+ (*n* = 42) 59.21 (14.00)	1.23 (230)	-2.78, 12.07	.24
Ethnicity	White (*n* = 191) 62.31 (20.32)	BME (*n* = 50) 70.88 (34.72)	1.67 (58.06)	-1.69, 18.83	.30
Religion*	None (*n* = 141) 60.72 (18.40)	Yes (*n* = 100) 68.85 (30.00)	-2.41 (151.22)	-14.81, -1.46	.33
Uni accommodation*	Yes (*n* = 59) 69.39 (26.00)	No (*n* = 180) 61.44 (21.73)	2.32 (237)	1.19, 14.70	.33

Note. LGB+ represents Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Other responses on the sexual orientation question collapsed into one category.

Table 4.11

Group differences using ANOVAs for Survey Study 1

	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	*F*(df)	η^2
Degree Type	Undergraduate (*n* = 174) 63.56 (23.26)	Masters (*n* = 43) 70.16 (30.85)	Doctorate (*n* = 24) 57.04 (13.15)	2.45(2,238)	.02
Student status	UK Home (*n* = 193) * 61.99 (21.77)	EU (*n* = 29) * 75.83 (34.29)	International (*n* = 19) 67.47 (25.16)	4.45(2,238)	.04
Marital status	Married/Civil Partnership (*n* = 21) 72.48 (32.89)	Single (*n* = 182) 63.95 (23.39)	Cohabiting (*n* = 33) 58.73 (22.23)	2.07(2,233)	.02
SES	More than enough money (*n* = 34) 67.97 (26.34)	Is comfortable (*n* = 126) 60.75 (19.82)	Financially insecure (*n* = 81) 67.65 (28.60)	2.55(2,238)	.02

4.5.2. Survey Study 2. The victimisation scores from the second survey study could range from 28 to 140, with 28 being the lowest score possible and indicating *never* when asked about each victimisation item. The mean score was 36.53 (SD 13.14). The lowest score was 29, indicating the possibility that every participant reported at least *rarely* on at least one item. Tests were conducted on each demographic variable to explore differences in victimisation scores between groups. It was again theorised that for each variable there would be significant differences between majority and minority groups.

A Pearson's r correlation was computed to assess the relationship between age and victimisation scores; there was no significant correlation between the two variables (r = -.11, n = 297, p = .052). There were no significant differences in any group variables from the second survey study data (see Table 4.12 for t-tests and Table 4.13 for ANOVAs).

Table 4.12

Group differences using t-tests for Survey Study 2.

	M (SD)	M (SD)	*t*(df)	CI	Cohen's *d*
Gender	Male (*n* = 116) 37.15 (13.08)	Female (*n* = 186) 36.06 (12.75)	.70(300)	-1.98, 4.15	.08
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual (*n* = 253) 36.08 (12.59)	LGB+ (*n* = 42) 39.28 (15.85)	-.154(299)	-7.28, .88	.22
Ethnicity	White (*n* = 262) 36.79 (13.68)	BME (*n* = 42) 34.94 (8.95)	-.85(302)	-6.15, 2.44	.16
Religion	None (*n* = 213) 36.18 (12.41)	Yes (*n* = 91) 37.35 (14.73)	.71(302)	-2.07, 4.41	.09
Uni Accommodation	Yes (*n* = 68) 38.61 (15.99)	No (*n* = 236) 35.93 (12.17)	1.49(302)	-.87, 6.23	.19
Mode of Study	Part time (*n* = 77) 36.01 (11.72)	Full time (*n* = 224) 36.79 (13.78)	.45(299)	-2.65, 4.21	.06
Student Status	UK Home (*n* =281) 36.42 (12.84)	Other country (*n* = 23) 37.88 (16.58)	-.51(302)	-7.07, 4.16	.10

Table 4.13

Group differences using ANOVAs for Survey Study 2.

	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	*F*(df)	η^2
Degree Type	Undergraduate	Masters	Doctorate	Other		
	(*n* = 204)	(*n* = 47)	(*n* = 28)	(*n* = 22)	1.05(3,297)	.01
	36.23 (12.51)	38.87 (14.74)	33.90 (10.00)	35.19 (10.97)		
Marital Status	Married/Civil Partnership	Single	In a relationship	Cohabiting		
	(*n* = 47)	(*n* = 131)	(*n* = 99)	(*n* = 22)	1.03(3,295)	.01
	33.83 (12.01)	37.75 (13.38)	36.50 (13.47)	35.98 (13.62)		
SES	Financially secure	Enough for basics	Financially insecure			
	(*n* = 168)	(*n* = 104)	(*n* = 32)		2.65(2,301)	.02
	34.98 (9.77)	38.45 (15.55)	38.45 (18.42)			

4.6. Discussion.

The statistically significant variables of interest from the first survey study were gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, student status, and accommodation. Cohen (1988) suggested for the *d* statistic, .20 is small, .50 is medium, and .80 is a large effect size. Males had significantly higher victimisation scores than females, with a medium effect size, supporting previous school bullying research (Nansel et al. 2001). One HE study found a similar effect size for this difference (Chapell et al. 2006). This may suggest that males are more involved in bullying and being victimised altogether, but because the perpetration reports were so minimal, an analysis could not be done on those scores to investigate this.

Students from EU countries had significantly higher victimisation scores than UK or other international students. Cohen (1988) said that η^2 effect sizes of .01 are small, .06 are medium, and .14 are large, so this finding had a small to medium effect size at .04. This may be representative of the increase in country-wide hate-crime reports at the same time this survey was conducted. Stop Hate UK, a national charity fighting hate crime, have reported that in the period immediately after the EU referendum in the UK, there was a 150% increase in reports of race-related incidents compared with the same period before the vote (Stop Hate UK, 2016-2017). It may be the case that this was linked to more attacks against EU students.

Lastly, students living in university-provided accommodation had significantly higher victimisation scores than those not living in university accommodation; and those identifying with a religion had higher scores than those not. These two findings showed a small to medium effect (d = .33). From the focus group feedback and discussions with Student Services, halls

accommodation was where many disagreements and problems occurred, and so this was expected. Again, like the discrimination based on nationality and ethnicity, religion is often a feature that is targeted for hate crime and abuse, so this finding was also expected.

From the second survey study, there were no significant differences between groups. There may have been issues with the sample, as these were paid participants controlled by the survey site Prolific. When setting up an account with Prolific, the initial sample pool was several hundred thousand; however, after inputting the limiters that participants needed to be a student currently living in the UK, the available number of participants reduced significantly to a couple of hundred. Furthermore, the types of students who participate in paid survey sites like Prolific may share similar characteristics, for example, they may have more spare time and try to fill it with online activities, or they may be especially driven to earn more money whilst studying. They may also be likely to spend more time alone; most of both samples did not live in university accommodation, suggesting they lived alone or with family. These students may be less likely to encounter bullying due to their accommodation choices. Lastly, these students were only asked about bullying within the past two months as opposed to the past year like the first survey study sample. The first study may have been more likely to detect less frequent bullying behaviours and be more sensitive to different types than the second survey study. In future, a comparable timeframe should be referred to within multiple survey studies.

There may have also been differences between the first sample and the generic population of students; for example, volunteers may be more intelligent, have a higher socioeconomic status, and have more intrinsic motivation to help

(Field & Hole, 2003). These samples may not have been a representative mix of students from around the UK, and samples that do not represent the population of interest can affect the factor structure of scales and generalisability (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006).

An overall criticism of online research is the high rate of attrition and partial completions. With the first survey study, only 73.86% of the responses were usable, and the 26.14% of responses that were excluded may have contained important information. The second survey study had a higher rate of usable surveys at 97.12%, this was probably because Prolific acted as a mediator between client and participant, ensuring only those who signed up and reached the very end got paid.

There were noticeable differences in demographic characteristics between the first and second survey study (e.g. a lower percentage of males in the first survey study, a lower percentage of single students in the second survey study, and a higher percentage of non-religious, part-time, and UK home students in the second survey study) that could explain the varying results. Consequently, the two samples were not equal and the differences in demographics may have affected the differences in outcomes. A solution that may alleviate this in future research could be to collect a larger sample over a slightly longer period, and then implement split-sampling so two samples are produced and tested as two survey studies (DeVellis, 2016). This may be more representative, but it would cause other issues regarding scale composition; items would not be altered and improved ready to administer to a second sample as the whole sample would be responding to the initial item pool.

Another possible issue with the data may stem from the constraint that in the first survey study sample first years were excluded due to the timings. The first survey study opened in November; therefore, first-year students would not have been able to answer the questions about bullying within the past year, only answering about the past two months. This may have meant that a lot of the halls accommodation incidents were missed, and based on focus group data, this is an important context to capture. However, this criticism may have been overcome if second years took part and were asked about the past year, as they would have had their first year in mind. Unfortunately, information on year of study was not recorded.

4.7. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to develop a new scale to measure bullying in HE based on theoretical and practical knowledge. The findings show similarities and differences between HE and school bullying types, indicating the importance of exploring this. HE bullying research should not purposely imitate bullying research methods from other contexts (i.e. childhood and the workplace). From the initial item pool, through the iterative piloting, altering, and retesting process, a selection of items were deemed representative of the behaviours that happen within UK universities (final scale can be found in Appendix L). It was thought that if the items yielded solid psychometric properties with the third survey study sample (Chapter 5), they could be recommended for other researchers to include in their investigations into bullying within the UK HE context. Developing a new scale is complex, and scales often require several rounds of testing before being considered as reliable and valid; these findings show some progress towards a new HE student bullying scale.

Although the results of these survey studies indicate low levels of bullying in UK HE, a majority of students indicated that they had experience of at least one item on a least one occasion. This may not be considered bullying by those with few reports, but it does show that the behaviours represented by the survey items are happening at university. With a larger opportunity sample acquired from unpaid volunteers, a more representative prevalence rate may indicate the importance of each survey item. Findings from the third survey study will be reported in the next chapter. Negative student behaviour should not be ignored in the current climate of increasing reports of mental ill-health, lowered wellbeing, harassment, and abuse on campus. If one contributing factor can be isolated, then this shows progress at attempting to address the root cause of students' mental health issues at university.

5. Student Victimisation and Wellbeing: Group Differences

The first half of this chapter extends the work on the new scale development for measuring student victimisation within HE. The second purpose of this chapter is to present exploratory results from the BUQ, alongside other measured variables, which highlight group differences across a range of demographic characteristics.

5.1. Background

As mentioned in Chapters 1 and 2, research shows that bullying can happen at all stages of life, including university, and can negatively impact individuals and society. This chapter will extend the earlier literature and draw on the focus group data showing that certain groups of individuals may be targeted more than others. For example, students suggested homophobic and racist bullying happens at university, therefore, people who identify with and self-categorise into these groups may experience more victimisation. At the intermediate level of inclusiveness (Chapter 2, section 2.12.2.2), those from non-traditional student backgrounds or in a minority, may be classed as a social out-group and have less power in the social hierarchy. As mentioned in Chapter 1, just as differences such as age and gender may relate to certain subtypes of victimisation experienced (i.e. boys more physical, girls more relational), demographic characteristics may also link to the amount of victimisation. Studies show that group demographic characteristics such as being in a minority or non-traditional group are associated with lower levels of belongingness; feeling less belonging may also be associated with higher levels of victimisation (expanded upon in Chapter 6). A brief overview of relevant group differences regarding

wellbeing (i.e. functioning and feeling) and belonging will now be outlined, followed by literature on group differences and victimisation.

5.1.1. Group differences on wellbeing and belonging

HE is disproportionately pursued by those from higher SESs (Feinstein & Vignoles, 2008). Using data from a longitudinal British cohort study starting in the 1970s, Feinstein and Vignoles found that for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, graduating was linked to economic disadvantage in adulthood and increased risk of mental health problems. Features of the developing child, home, and school environments, all potentially impact educational pathways. Those from BME families tend to have lower SES, they are less likely to access HE, and to remain there if they do. The most recent accessible non-continuation rates for 2015-2016, full-time, first-degree, UK domiciled students show that black, mixed-race, and Asian students are the most likely to drop-out (11%, 9%, 8% respectively). Black students and LGBTQ are also more likely to report mental health issues whilst at university (Brown, 2016).

Non-continuation rates also show that those with non-traditional qualifications, such as BTECS or other level three qualifications, made up 12-14% of those who dropped out; those with three A-Levels or an International Baccalaureate had the lowest dropout rate at 4%. In addition, 11% of those who did not continue were mature students, whereas only 6% were younger (under 21). The dropout for those with a declared disability who were not in receipt of Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) was at 10%, but this reduced to 7% for those who *were* claiming DSA. Financial aid may ease the burden of the disability at university (HEFCE, 2015a).

O'Keeffe (2013) found that student concerns about revealing their mental illness may have a negative impact on education. Part-time, first-year, and first-generation students, and those with mental health problems, disabilities, and minority groups, were at risk of non-completion, which is reflected in the non-continuation rates reported by HEFCE (2015b). O'Keeffe (2013) suggested that feeling rejected and not developing a sense of belonging within HE is a key cause of attrition. Alongside mental health problems, being a non-traditional student in other regards also affects university belongingness. Read, Archer, and Leathwood (2003) claimed that academic culture is not uniformly accessed or experienced, and is reflected by the dominant discourse of the student as white, middle class, and male. Non-traditional students are disadvantaged by an institutional culture that places them as "other". They do not passively receive the discourses, but actively engage with and challenge them. Discourse presents the middle-class student as the norm, thus, students from these backgrounds find no need to question their belonging, or have any awareness that not-belonging could be an issue. Those who deviate from the norm are aware of their differences. BME students are often aware of the role of ethnicity in the construction of belongingness and otherness at university, and that otherness does not recede on entering HE.

Additionally, Read et al. (2003) found that working-class academics can feel different, inauthentic, and fear being found out, though they have a desire to retain some or all of their working-class identity. "Distance" was also a consequence of the difference in status and knowledge between student and lecturer; students may feel they are learning their place as subordinates in hierarchical academic culture. Students coming from backgrounds with little

participation in HE can find the culture bewildering and lack the support from family and friends who have been through university. For example, Spiegler and Bednarek (2013) found that the students who were the first in their immediate family to attend HE had difficulty fitting in and mastering the university role, and had a lower sense of belonging. Lastly, Read et al found that masculine academic culture can alienate women. Students should feel they belong in any HE institution, but the authors conclude that this will not happen whilst universities remain traditional, and government-funding remains geared towards these universities.

Ethnic identity is important to consider regarding belonging, as one's ethnic identity gives access to that social group (see section 2.12.2.1. on social identity). Gummadam, Pittman, and Ioffe (2016) found that school belonging (i.e. broader feeling of being connected to a school community) may predict psychological adjustment amongst ethnic minority groups. They used the adapted PSSM scale to survey 322 US university students and discovered that school belonging was negatively related to depressive symptoms, and positively related to self-worth, competence, and social acceptance, whilst ethnic identity was only associated with self-worth. Those with no sense of school belonging nor a strong ethnic identity had the lowest levels of self-worth. The interaction between ethnic identity and school belonging was significantly linked with self-worth, suggesting that in the absence of school belonging, ethnic identity became more important. A strong identification with one's ethnic group may sustain those in the minority who feel disconnected from university.

Minority groups joining university can have concerns about race, ethnic identity, and belonging. Their social identities make them vulnerable to the social

identity threat of their group being devalued. In a three-part study surveying high school students and undergraduates about expected and experienced belongingness, Murphy and Zirkel (2015) found that school students who felt their race was represented in a university major, anticipated a greater sense of belonging, and were more likely to consider attending that university (the effect was larger for BME students). Additionally, the undergraduates said experiences of belonging very early on at university were related to their academic performance over the year. Independent evidence also shows that a sense of belonging is linked to success at university and retention (Thomas, 2012). Developing a sense of belonging can be crucial to student success, especially for those at risk already (O'Keeffe, 2013).

Friendships can aid feelings of belongingness, which is vital for students to feel settled, especially international students. Hendrickson, Rosen, and Aune (2011) found that the main component of 84 international students' homesickness was longing for their familiar environment and culture. International students from the University of Hawaii were surveyed on friendship and social connectedness; it was found that participants had a higher ratio of host-national than co-national friendships (international students at the university with the same nationality). Those with more host-national friendships reported significantly higher satisfaction, contentment, and lower levels of homesickness. They were also significantly more socially connected. Therefore, it seems that encouraging integration with host country students and making host country friends helps international students feel less isolated. This could increase their belongingness in a foreign country, enabling them to feel settled and concentrate on academic endeavours.

Yorke (2016) created and tested a belongingness scale (which included academic engagement and self-confidence) at 13 UK institutions, obtaining 2,841 student responses. He found, overall, students were quite high on belongingness, and those with significantly lower adverse circumstances and white British students had a stronger sense of belongingness. However, those coming from outside the UK to study were significantly more self-confident. Yorke explained this by suggesting that those wishing to study abroad may have existing high confidence levels, which would be necessary to move to a different culture and country to study. Confidence and engagement may both be tied to whether one feels they belong, for example, being high on confidence may help the international students socialise and may lead to increased feelings of belonging.

Students from any non-traditional background (i.e. ethnic minority group, mental/physical health problem or disability, LGBTQ, first-generation students, low SES), are potentially disadvantaged and at risk of not belonging (O'Keeffe, 2013). Feinstein and Vignoles (2008) suggest that those from unsupportive contexts who still attend university have a type of "unobserved resilience". The authors defined resilience as an individual's capacity to overcome adversities and adapt to their environment. Pidgeon, Rowe, Stapleton, Magyar, and Lo (2014) studied 214 students from the US, Australia, and Hong Kong, and found that those categorised as having high resilience reported significantly higher social support and campus connectedness compared to those with lower resilience. The high resilience group also reported significantly lower levels of psychological distress. Therefore, the unobserved resilience may be linked to a variety of social factors and belonging, rather than being due to an individual feature that only some people possess (i.e. not a deficit of character). For example, the broader

social factor of financial worry may reduce resilience; social, environmental, and personal factors likely interact to dictate how well a person can cope in any situation. The non-traditional students with unobserved resilience may have especially determined and persistent characters, or strong peer support networks, even if they do come from low SES backgrounds.

5.1.2. Group differences on victimisation

Lund and Ross (2017) investigated the frequency and prevalence of victimisation amongst university students. After reviewing 13 datasets, mostly from the US, they suggested that victimisation may continue to be a problem in university for vulnerable minority groups. Sexuality has been given some attention within HE literature. Myers and Cowie (2017) suggested that relationships and sexual orientation could be major factors in bullying amongst university students, due to traditional student age and being away from home for the first time. Indeed, just as homophobic bullying and harassment is found in schools (Rivers, 2004; Elipe, de la Oliva Muñoz, Del Rey, 2018) and workplaces (Hoel, Lewis, & Einarsdottir, 2014), Lund and Ross found data indicating that sexual minority university students may be at greater risk compared to heterosexual peers. Most of the studies they reviewed had samples from single universities in the US, and so Lund and Ross called for researchers to use cross-national samples to better capture the prevalence and to measure all forms of bullying. They further called for researchers to examine the relationship between school victimisation and university involvement to investigate the degree to which one could predict the other.

Davis et al. (2018) also investigated the prevalence and impact of bullying on mental health in non-heterosexual students at university compared to

heterosexual students. Students from Australian universities (30 identified as LGBT and 367 identified as heterosexual) were questioned on whether they had experienced bullying within the past 12 months. On answering yes, students moved onto questions about the form of victimisation (physical, verbal, socio-emotional, cyber) and the overall impact. They found that 59 students reported being victimised and that those in the non-heterosexual category were more likely to be bullied than the heterosexual group. Those who were in the victimised group also reported higher depression scores.

Further evidence that sexual minorities experience higher levels of bullying in HE comes from Wensley and Campbell (2012). They surveyed 528 first-year undergraduates from an Australian university (mean age = 19.52) on traditional and cyber victimisation. They found that 20.80% (110) reported being traditionally victimised, with a chi-square test showing that victimisation was not independent of sexuality; a significantly higher number of non-heterosexual individuals had been victimised. Whereas there was no significant association between sexuality and cyber victimisation overall, a gender-specific finding showed non-heterosexual men experienced more cyber victimisation. It appears that those identifying as a sexual minority are at greater risk of victimisation. Likewise, another web-based survey showed the negative effects of sexuality targeted victimisation; Seelman et al. (2017) recruited 497 self-identified LGBTQ participants and asked them about victimisation and microaggression experiences. Significant moderate correlations were found between victimisation and microaggressions, and self-esteem, stress, and anxiety.

West's (2015) slightly younger (ages 16-17) further education students indicated that after physical appearance, reasons for being targeted for

cyberbullying ranged from intelligence, family, sexual orientation, gender, religion, and ethnicity. Gender is often recorded in surveys, including those on victimisation. However, there are inconsistent findings between gender and victimisation, as shown in Chapter 1. Studies do suggest more boys are involved (or report involvement) in bullying than girls (Craig et al., 2009; Tippett, Wolke, & Platt, 2013), and similar for university students (Chapell et al., 2006; Dilmaç, 2009; Akbulut & Eristi, 2011; Kokkinos et al., 2014). The differences between types of bullying and gender in HE have not been examined to a great extent. Brock et al. (2014) showed that females relationally bully, and females are known to endure higher rates of on-campus stalking (McNamara & Marsil, 2012); much research has investigated gendered sexual aggression and violence in HE, which tends to represent the population incidences.

As well as sexual minorities and gender, a certain ethnicity may also increase vulnerability to bullying, as suggested by the focus group participants and seen in school research. Those in BME groups have been targeted for bullying amongst school populations. Durkin et al. (2012) surveyed 925 children from primary schools in Scotland and England about victimisation and minority or majority group status (the question asked to indicate their three most important group memberships e.g. Muslim, Christian, Indian, Scottish). Whilst similar levels of bullying were experienced by minority and majority groups, minority status was associated with reporting their victimisation as discriminatory; they were also twice as likely to report being unsure of whether they were bullied because of their minority status. Statistical analyses showed that minority children were over twice as likely to experience discriminatory peer aggression than majority children; however, it was suggested that school ratio of minority and majority

children was a better predictor of discriminatory aggression than individual ethnicity. When the minority is very small, these differences are accentuated and discrimination is more likely, whereas when the minority effectively disappears, so may the discrimination; that is, if there are equal number within different groups, the in-group out-group effect mentioned in Chapter 2 may diminish (Vitoroulis, Brittain, & Vaillancourt, 2016).

Alternatively, other studies have not supported these findings and instead suggest there are no differences between victimisation rates of different ethnic groups. Tippett et al. (2013) used data from the first wave of a longitudinal household study in the UK (N = 4,668, mean age = 12.51) measuring ethnicity and school bullying involvement. Although associations were found between ethnicity and victim status for African youths, these associations were not shared by other minority ethnic groups, who appeared to have less chance of victimisation than their majority counterparts once confounding variables were accounted for. Overall, there were few differences in victimisation status across ethnic groups. Where ethnic differences have been found, the researchers suggest that other social variables such as SES, home environments, and parenting style may be responsible. It is therefore unclear as to whether there will be group differences in victimisation levels between minority and majority ethnic groups at UK universities, but students within the focus groups thought there were.

SES has also been investigated regarding victimisation amongst children. Due et al. (2009) conducted a large-scale cross-national study into socioeconomic inequality and exposure to bullying. Data were used from the health behaviour in school-aged children World Health Organisation collaborative survey, with students aged 11, 13, and 15 years old; the final sample was 142,911 children.

Bullying was recorded, SES was measured at an individual level using the family affluence scale (FAS), and SES was measured at school and country level. Analyses showed that for every 1-point reduction in the FAS, the odds of being victimised increased by 14%. SES level, school and countrywide, also had an impact on bullying, indicating that the schools and countries with the greatest disparity in income were associated with increased odds of being bullied. The results overall suggested that adolescents at an SES disadvantage had a higher risk of being bullied; also, those who attend schools or live in countries with larger economic equalities are at an elevated risk of victimisation.

Tippett and Wolke (2014) supported these findings with a meta-analysis; the association between victimisation and SES was systematically investigated with 28 studies. Overall, results showed that victimisation was positively associated with low SES and negatively associated with high SES, but the associations were weak. Coming from a lower SES background may have singled students out for victimisation, whereas a high SES background may allow students greater access to resources, specific knowledge of norms, and problem-solving skills that may reduce their likelihood of experiencing problematic peer relationships. Literature on SES-related differences in HE bullying could not be found, except for students in Lund's (2017) study mentioning that middle classes perpetrate. Similar to ethnicity, there is literature on demographic group disadvantages at university (section 5.1.1.), such as access to HE, dropping out, increased need for mental health provision, and not belonging. Students identified the importance of power and social group status regarding victimisation in HE (Chapter 3), with some suggesting that those from higher SES target those from lower SES. Those with higher SES were thought generally to have more

confidence, being members of a desirable high status and powerful group, and having come from supportive backgrounds.

This evidence supports the rationale for investigating group differences across a range of demographic variables concerning victimisation at HE level. Being a member of a minority group or coming from a non-traditional background may have an impact on victimisation compared to those from majority and traditional backgrounds, which can also be related to other personal and contextual HE factors.

5.1.3. The current study. Based on recommendations by Myers and Cowie (2016), this study aimed to provide accurate knowledge on the extent and nature of bullying at university in the UK. Bullying research in school contexts emphasises individual factors whereas workplace bullying emphasises organisational factors; a combination of these approaches has been recommended to provide richer explanations of bullying behaviour (Campbell, 2016). This study included a correlational analysis to investigate links between childhood victimisation, HE victimisation, IWMs, university belongingness, social connectedness, and wellbeing (all outlined in Chapter 2). Chapter 3 explored students' understanding of bullying types and existing definitions in the literature, which informed the scale. Because the theory suggests that children maintain certain bullying roles throughout their lives, it can be posited that those who were bullied in school may also be bullied in HE, and possibly even in the workplace after that. It is of vital importance to explore this topic as victimisation can negatively affect wellbeing in many ways, alongside precipitating behavioural measures, such as leaving university and reduced attainment on exams and tests (Mengo & Black, 2015).

It is further hypothesised that childhood victimisation will lead to negative adjustment in terms of wellbeing, through the underlying mechanisms of IWMs, university victimisation, and belongingness (Chapter 6). This study, therefore, recorded school, sibling, and HE bullying experiences. Alongside these, an array of wellbeing measures are included that represent the eudaimonic and hedonic wellbeing factors used extensively in the European social survey. Studies measuring bullying at HE tend only to measure psychopathology as an outcome and have not looked at various aspects of being well. Including wellbeing measures as opposed to just disorder measures ensures a spectrum of experience can be recorded. The concept of belongingness was measured with two scales to represent a feeling of belongingness with one's institution and a more general social connectedness. Lastly, perceptions of self and others were recorded using an IWM scale; everything we witness and experience is viewed through our lens, hence, indicating the importance of discovering how we perceive ourselves and others, as this is likely to affect how experiences are processed. These associations will be explored further in Chapter 6.

The first major aim of this chapter is to report on the progress of the newly developed HE bullying at university questionnaire (BUQ); results can be found in section 5.3.4.2. Secondly, the focus group data and wider literature lead to the hypothesis that:

1. Those in minority groups and from non-traditional backgrounds will report significantly higher levels of victimisation, lower levels of wellbeing, belongingness, and social connectedness, and more negative IWMs than those in majority groups.

5.2. Method

5.2.1. Participants and procedure. Any student studying at a UK university was eligible for participation. There were 616 responses to the online questionnaire; 86 from the School of Psychology Research Participation Scheme, which is open to first- and second-year undergraduates at Keele, and 530 were students recruited through the internet. A total of 441 responses were useable once incomplete responses were excluded; ethical approval was granted under the pretext that only complete surveys would be used in the analysis. Of the 441 students, 353 (80%) identified as female, 81 (18.4%) male, 5 indicated other genders, which were pooled into an “other” (1.1%) category, and 2 (.5%) preferred not to say. The mean age of the sample was 23.4 years (SD = 6.0) with a range of 18-59 years. The majority of the sample, 344, identified as heterosexual (78%), whereas 63 (14.3%) identified as bisexual, 16 (3.6%) as gay, 6 (1.4%) preferred not to say, 5 (1.1%) as pansexual, 2 (.5%) queer, 2 (.5%) greysexual, 1 (.2%) asexual, 1 (.2%) bi-curious, and 1 (.2%) don’t know. These smaller values were pooled to make an LGB+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, other) category for analyses, which totalled 90 students (20.4%). Students’ ethnicities were reported as 342 (77.7%) White, 52 (11.8%) Asian/Asian British, 13 (3%) Black/Black British, 11 (2.5%) Chinese, 7 (2%) White and Asian, 6 (1.4%) Arab, 6 (1.4%) Latin American, 1 (.2%) other European, 1 (.2%) White and Black Caribbean, and 1 (.2%) White and Black African. Just over half of the sample had no religion, 265 (60.1%), with 116 (26.3%) identifying as Christian, 26 (5.9%) Muslim, 9 (2%) Other, 8 (1.8%) Buddhist, 6 (1.4%) Hindu, 3 (.7%) Sikh, and 2 (.5%) Jewish. The minority groups were pooled to make a religious affiliation category totalling 173 (39.2%).

Students were from 91 UK universities, with 153 students (34.7%) from Keele University, and 288 students (65.3%) from other universities; 293 (66.4%) students were studying at undergraduate level, 86 (19.5%) Masters, 56 (12.7%) PhD/Doctorate, and 6 (1.8%) on a postgraduate diploma or certificate. Most students were studying full time, 411 (93.2%), and 28 (6.3%) were part-time; 172 (39%) students lived in university accommodation (either off or on-campus), and 269 (61%) did not.

Twenty-seven students (6.1%) were married or in a civil partnership, 223 (50.6%) were single, 152 (34.5%) were in a relationship, 3 (.7%) were divorced, and 35 (7.9%) were cohabiting. Lastly, regarding family's perceived standard of living (referred to as SES), 39 (8.9%) students said they had more than enough money, 243 (55.1%) said they were comfortable, 141 (31.7%) said they had enough money for the basics, 10 (2.3%) said they were living under meagre conditions, and 7 (1.6%) said they were suffering extreme financial hardships. The five SES categories were parcelled into three for all analyses (the categories of more than enough money and comfortable remained the same; those with enough for the basics, living under meagre conditions, and suffering extreme hardships, were categorised together as "financially insecure").

After obtaining university ethical approval (Appendix M), participants were recruited online; data were collected from the host site Qualtrics. The questionnaire was advertised through social media, The Student Room (a page especially for student recruitment), and Call For Participants. The link to the questionnaire was tweeted and shared on Twitter and Facebook by the research team to reach a wider range and number of potential participants. Reciprocal participation in other studies was offered.

Once students clicked the Qualtrics link, they read the information sheet then checked the consent questions (see Appendix N) and clicked Next, proceeding to the demographic questions. Following were two blocks of questions concerning wellbeing, after which, university belonging and social connectedness were measured. Next was a section on IWMs, then retrospective and current victimisation. Last, were a few questions on university bullying policies, asking if students were aware of their university policy, if they had read it, and also how easy it would be for them to confront the person who was bullying them (as is suggested by anti-bullying policies, see Chapter 7). Once complete, they were presented with a debrief page, and if they wished, the students could click to an external page and leave their email address to be entered into a prize draw. Their responses were saved on Qualtrics and their email addresses were separated from their survey responses and saved in my password-protected Google Drive (see Appendix O for full questionnaire).

5.3. Measures and Scale Properties

5.3.1. Wellbeing. The questionnaire comprised several existing and new scales. The wellbeing measures were obtained from round three of the European Social Survey (but most were used in their original form), which includes previously tested and established scales on various aspects of independent wellbeing types. It includes scales that measure items on eudaimonic (feeling) and hedonic (functioning) wellbeing. Wellbeing scale information can be seen in Table 5.1.

5.3.1.1. Optimism. Optimism was measured by the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) developed by Scheier, Carver, and Bridges (1994). This has ten items - three reverse scored and four fillers. Five response anchors range from *I*

agree a lot to *I disagree a lot*. Scoring is summed and kept continuous. LOT scores have been shown to overlap with other constructs such as self-esteem and self-mastery, however, the association remains once third variables are partialed out, indicating unique variance for optimism (Scheier et al., 1994).

5.3.1.2. Self-esteem. Self-esteem was measured by the widely used 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965), which has a four-point response scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. It is a unidimensional scale, with five items reverse scored. Responses are summed and kept continuous. A study with a large diverse sample of 28 countries found the scale to be psychometrically sound (Schmitt & Allik, 2005). It was also found to be positively correlated with positive models of self (as measured by the relationship questionnaire; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

5.3.1.3. Depression. The World Health Organisation cites depression as the most common mental health issue (2017); therefore, it was included as a measure alongside more positive scales for balance and comparison. The original Centre for Epidemiologic Studies Depression scale (CES-D, Radloff, 1977) is a 20-item measure designed to identify those at risk of depression; a shortened version with 8 items used in the European Social Survey (CES-D 8, Jowell et al., 2007) was implemented to minimise the questionnaire completion time. Items are on a four-point scale ranging from *none or almost none of the time* to *all or almost all of the time*, and responses are summed. Bracke, Levecque, and Van de Velde (2008) found the 8-item scale to be of a univariate factor structure, and have high validity and reliability across 25 countries using data from the European Social Survey.

5.3.1.4. Psychological wellbeing. The Ryff Psychological Wellbeing scale (PWB, Ryff et al., 2007) is a 42-item scale that measures six aspects of wellbeing and happiness: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Six response anchors range from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Twenty items are reverse scored, and items are summed on each subscale to provide subscale scores. Subscale scores can also be summed to create an overall score. The scale is constantly being updated by the ongoing project and has been found as psychometrically sound to use with adults (though participants have mostly been American samples).

5.3.1.5. Needs satisfaction. A self-determination (SDT) theory of human behaviour claims that humans evolved inner resources for personality development and behavioural self-regulation. SDT includes three basic needs: “competence”, “relatedness”, and “autonomy”, which are said to be essential for facilitating growth and optimal functioning and wellbeing (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction scale (BPN) was developed central to self-determination theory. It has 21 items, 9 reverse scored, and forms three subscales based on innate and universal needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gagné, 2003). Response anchors range from one to seven, from *not at all true* to *very true*; subscale scores are averaged. The scale has widespread evidence for its robustness and has been extensively researched (see the Center for Self-Determination Theory website).

5.3.1.6. Positive and negative affect. The PANAS (Positive and Negative Affect Scale) short form (PANAS-SF) is a 20-item two-dimensional shortened version of the original scale. It measures the independent constructs of positive

and negative emotion with ten items on each. The question asks to what extent the participant feels this way in this moment or within the last week; responses are on a five-point scale ranging from *very slightly or not at all* to *extremely*, and scores on each scale are summed. The authors claim the scale is a reliable and valid measure for recording these important dimensions of mood (Watson, Clark, Tellegen, 1988).

Table 5.1

Cronbach's alpha, scores, and means of wellbeing scales and subscales

Scales and Subscales	A	Min-Max (Possible)	Mean (SD)
Life Orientation Test (6 items)	.86	6-30 (6-30)	17.96 (5.37)
Rosenberg Self-Esteem (10 items)	.91	10-40 (10-40)	26.57 (6.15)
Depression (8 items)	.54	11-32 (8-32)	17.85 (3.41)
PWB (42 items)			
Autonomy (7 items)	.77	12-49 (7-49)	30.85 (7.10)
Environmental Mastery (7 items)	.84	7-49 (7-49)	28.62 (7.90)
Personal Growth (7 items)	.77	14-49 (7-49)	35.71 (6.69)
Positive Relations (7 items)	.77	11-49 (7-49)	34.01 (7.14)
Purpose in life (7 items)	.80	12-49 (7-49)	33.62 (7.60)
Self-Acceptance (7 items)	.89	7-49 (7-49)	28.97 (9.21)
Total	.88	104-287 (42-294)	191.78 (36.25)
Basic Psychological Needs (21 items)[a]			
Autonomy (7 items)	.77	1.43-7 (1-7)	4.55 (.99)
Relatedness (8 items)	.85	1-7 (1-7)	5 (1.05)
Competence (6 items)	.80	1-7 (1-7)	4.45 (1.16)
Total	.82	1.45-6.86 (1-7)	4.67 (.92)
PANAS-20			
Positive Affect	.91	10-50 (10-50)	29.23 (9.05)
Negative Affect	.90	10-49 (10-50)	23.77 (9.11)

[a]*Means and SDs of BPN scale are averages of scores, all others are summed*

5.3.2. Belongingness.

5.3.2.1. University belonging. The University Belonging Questionnaire (UBQ) by Slaten, Elison, Deemer, Hughes, and Shemwell (2018) was developed to specifically measure feelings of belonging to a university institution. They drew on theory by Maslow and Baumeister and Leary for their conception of

belongingness and applied this to the university context. Slaten et al. (2018) adopted the same method that was used for creating the BUQ scale, first using qualitative interviewing of students' university belongingness experiences to underpin and inform items for the scale. It contains 24 items with subscales of university affiliation (12), university support and acceptance (8), and faculty and staff relations (4), which had high internal consistency. Items are rated on a four-point scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* and scores are summed.

5.3.2.2. Social Connectedness. The Social Connectedness scale is one half of a scale developed by Lee and Robbins (1995) to measure the unique concept of belongingness. This is an 8-item 6-point scale with response anchors ranging from *agree* to *disagree*; items are summed for an overall score. It was initially tested on several student samples to explore the emotional distance felt between the self and others, even friends. All samples provided evidence of a valid and reliable measure that can be transposed to the population of interest in this study. Belongingness scale information can be seen in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

Cronbach's alpha, scores, and means of belongingness scales and subscales

Scales and Subscales	A	Min-Max (Possible)	Mean (SD)
University Belongingness Questionnaire (24 items)			
UBQ Affiliation (12 items)	.88	12-48 (12-48)	31.86 (6.97)
UBQ Support and Acceptance (8 items)	.89	9-32 (8-32)	24.80 (4.24)
UBQ Faculty and Staff Relations (4 items)	.92	4-16 (4-16)	11.23 (3.23)
Total	.70	32-96 (24-96)	67.91 (12.02)
Social Connectedness (8 items)	.95	8-48 (8-48)	32.07 (10.37)

5.3.3. Thoughts about self and others.

5.3.3.1. IWM. The IWM scale is an improved version of a scale I developed and used in previous research (*N* = 211, *M* age = 24, *SD* = 8.92; Harrison, unpublished). The scale was created after extensive reading of the IWM literature; definitions were identified from different branches of psychology and assimilated to produce statements believed to represent the concept of an internal working model. IWM Other subscale (α = .76) was defined as how trustworthy, sensitive, competent, predictable and overall worthy others are judged. The IWM Self subscale (α = .90) was defined by the concepts of self-worth, self-esteem, blameworthiness, competence, and acceptance. The original scale had an 'IWM Interaction' subscale but that was modified and removed for this study based on the previous results; instead, there was an IWM scale for familiar others and strangers.

The scale showed strong alpha reliability and factorial validity using Principal Components Analysis. The final scale comprised 35 items and had three subscales of IWM Self (10), IWM Other Familiar (14), and IWM Other Stranger (11), which were tested again using exploratory factor analysis, being only the second sample to have completed it (see Table 5.4 for properties). Five response anchors ranged from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*, 20 items were reversed, and items for each subscale were summed.

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted for this study instead of a CFA because this was only the second sample it had been administered to. The items were subjected to PAF because it aims to understand latent factors that account for the shared variance amongst items, rather than reducing the item number to a few clusters (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). There were originally

43 items with three subscales. The KMO test indicated suitable factorability of the correlation matrix at .92, with Bartlett's Test of Sphericity also significant, $p < .001$. All items were entered into the analysis using SPSS version 24. There were no missing values in the dataset as these had previously been imputed using the multiple imputation method (see section 5.3.4.2.). I first requested all factors with eigenvalues over one, however, this resulted in nine factors extracted that had few and poor loadings on each. A scree plot was no clearer in displaying a suitable number of factors, as it seemed to show five. Rotation (Direct Oblimin) was requested because the variables were expected to correlate (and had previously) and the analysis was run again. From consulting the pattern matrix, the high loadings all grouped onto the first three factors with one high loading on the fourth factor. The analysis was run again but only requesting three factors. Once this was done, five item scores were repressed as they were lower than the recommended cut-off of .32 (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006); these items were deleted from the scale. Two items loaded poorly onto the factor they did not theoretically fit into, so were also deleted, and one item had matched loadings on two factors, so was also deleted. The analysis was run a final time with the remaining 35 items, resulting in all items loading onto the three factors sufficiently, and the model explaining 42.77% of the variance in the scores (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3

Factor loadings for the three subscales of IWM

	Loadings		
Factor name and items	1	2	3
Factor 1: IWM Self			
I generally have a favourable impression of myself	.81		
I have successfully accepted myself for who I am	.80		
I feel I am a person of worth	.78		
I have very little self-respect	.74		
I don't think I am important	.74		
I feel that I am an incompetent person	.73		
I am not satisfied with the person I am	.70		
I see myself as adequate	.57		
I am usually to blame for bad things that happen	.55		
I should not be blamed for everything	.41		
Factor 2: IWM Other Familiar			
My loved ones are very important		.76	
It is easy to trust my loved ones		.71	
My family and friends are adequate in relating to people		.69	
The people closest to me are unreliable		.60	
I enjoy socialising with family and friends		.59	
I know how my loved ones will react when I need them		.58	
My friends and family are not available when I require them		.56	
I think my loved ones are socially incompetent		.55	
I can freely talk with loved ones about anything		.54	
My loved ones are perceptive of my needs		.54	
I am indifferent towards loved ones		.52	
I never know what to expect from my family and friends		.50	
The people closest to me are unworthy of my love		.50	
I am incapable of communicating with loved ones		.41	
Factor 3: IWM Other Stranger			
I am highly defensive around strangers			.72
I do not want to socialise with people I don't know			.59
Most people I don't know seem insensitive			.55
Strangers usually lack the ability to relate			.54
Talking to people I don't know is very difficult			.53
I have low expectations of people I don't know			.52
I am always uncertain of how strangers will react			.51
I connect easily with strangers			.44
I assign very little worth to people I do not know			.42
It is easy to be friendly towards strangers			.37
I tend to see strangers in a favourable light			.34

Table 5.4

Cronbach's alpha, variance, loading range, and means of IWM subscales

Scales and subscales	α	Variance	Loading range	Min-max (possible)	Mean (SD)
Internal Working Model (43 items)					
IWM Self (10 items)	.92	27.81%	.41-.81	10-50 (10-50)	34.15 (9.34)
IWM Other Familiar (14 items)	.90	8.64%	.41-.76	19-70 (14-70)	54.91 (9.62)
IWM Other Stranger (11 items)	.82	6.32%	.34-.72	11-55 (11-55)	34.49 (7.09)
Total	.92	42.77%	.34-.81	62-174 (35-175)	123.56 (20.59)

5.3.4. Victimisation.

5.3.4.1. School and sibling bullying. The retrospective bullying scale used by Boulton (2012) has three items about verbal victimisation, physical victimisation, and social exclusion. Three items have been added to include retrospective cyber victimisation, after consulting Palladino, Nocentini, and Menesini (2015; how often did other children send you nasty texts/emails or posted nasty things on social network sites; share photos or information online without your consent; exclude from online group chat or games). These questions were asked about school and sibling victimisation. Scale properties are seen in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5

Cronbach's alpha, score, and means of all childhood victimisation subscales

Scales and Subscales	α	Min-Max (Possible)	Mean (SD)
School Victimisation (15 items, *N* = 441)			
Physical (3 items)	.90	3-15 (3-15)	4.69 (2.34)
Verbal (3 items)	.95	3-15 (3-15)	7.64 (3.61)
Social Exclusion (3 items)	.95	3-15 (3-15)	7.56 (3.68)
Relational (3 items)	.93	3-15 (3-15)	6.55 (3.33)
Cyber (3 items)	.83	3-15 (3-15)	4.93 (2.74)
Total	.89	15-75 (15-75)	31.37 (13.25)
Sibling Victimisation (15 items, *N* = 358)			
Physical (3 items, *N* = 365)	.94	3-15 (3-15)	5.54 (2.69)
Verbal (3 items, *N* = 364)	.95	3-15 (3-15)	5.93 (2.97)
Social Exclusion (3 items, *N* = 364)	.92	3-15 (3-15)	5.13 (2.76)
Relational (3 items, *N* = 365)	.94	3-15 (3-15)	3.87 (2.28)
Cyber (3 items, *N* = 363)	.85	3-15 (3-15)	3.40 (1.50)
Total	.86	15-75 (15-75)	23.63 (9.92)
Total Childhood Victimisation	.88	30-150 (30-150)	54.92 (19.47)

5.3.4.2. Bullying at University. The Bullying at University Questionnaire (BUQ) was adapted after the first survey study and then administered to a second sample. The adapted scale remained unchanged from the second survey study to be used in the current study. The psychometric properties of the scale were explored further on the new, larger, and more representative sample.

Based on the EFA with the first survey study samples, a CFA was performed on the third survey study sample data by specifying three plausible models. It was believed that there was sufficient theoretical justification to use the CFA technique, as the items seemed to cluster within groups that are evident in childhood bullying literature; for example, in the first model, verbal, physical, social, and psychological items all separated into distinguished groups. The labels are comparable to those used in much bullying research, but the items reflected slightly different methods of implementing the bullying. However, the second

survey sample did not reproduce this, instead producing two other plausible models. It was accepted that the Physical Act/Trace and Psychological items had some crossover, and could theoretically fit together in the second model. Similarly for the third model, it was plausible that Social and Direct Verbal items could cluster based on the understanding that direct verbal abuse is often perpetrated in a social setting, thus allowing for further crossover of items. Based on the similarities between the first model and the bullying literature, and the superiority of the first sample compared to the second sample (using a paid survey site was problematic, see section 4.7) it was hypothesised that the first model would obtain adequate model fit. All three were tested using SPSS AMOS version 24, based on the recommendation by Worthington and Whittaker (2006) to test competing models using CFA after examination of the initial factor structure. Testing multiple models is recommended so modifying models is not needed for acceptable fit (Jackson, Gillaspy, Purc-Stephenson, 2009).

Before the models were run in AMOS, a few issues were addressed. Missing data values were fulfilled for the entire dataset with multiple imputation. This was deemed the most suitable method as only .15% of the entire dataset was missing, and these were labelled as missing at random. Eekhout et al. (2014) explored the different methods of addressing missing data using simulation studies; it was found that mean imputation caused biased estimates and multiple imputation showed smaller biases when applied to individual items; thus, they suggested that multiple imputation should be applied in cases of missing data regardless of how many scores are missing.

The BUQ scale items were not univariate normal and Log10 transformation did not alleviate skew and kurtosis. Response categories were

parcelled from five into three in an attempt to reduce the non-normality. Having five categories to measure the frequency of bullying in HE turned out to be superfluous. As with much psychological research, a normal distribution would be difficult to ascertain (O'Boyle & Aguinis, 2012). Subsequently, the variables were recoded: *never* retained the code of group one, *rarely, a handful of occasions* and *occasionally, two to three times a month* were parcelled into group two, and *about once a week* and *multiple times a week* were parcelled into group three. This resulted in three categories: *never* remained the same, but the second category was now named *less than once a week,* and the third category was named *once a week or more often*. The skew and kurtosis remained, and any further method of addressing this (e.g. deleting outliers) would result in a misrepresentation of the collected data scores. Maximum likelihood (ML) estimation was implemented for each of the models, and it was kept in mind that this procedure can be detrimental to tests with kurtosis using structural modelling.

5.3.4.2.1. Model One. Based on Byrne (2016), the CFA model of the victimisation scale structure hypothesises a priori that (a) responses to the victimisation scale can be explained by four factors: Social, Physical Act/Trace, Psychological, and Direct Verbal; (b) each item has a non-zero loading on the victimisation factor it was designed to measure, and zero loading on all other factors; (c) the four factors are correlated; and (d) the error/uniqueness terms associated with the item measurements are uncorrelated. See Figure 5.1. for the proposed four-factor model, showing the latent factors in ellipses, and the observed variables (items on scale) in rectangles; Table 5.6 shows the factor loadings.

The sample data did not adequately fit the hypothesised model based on recommended incremental and residual fit indices; the ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom should be less than 3 (Kline, 1998), values of Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and the Normed Fit Index (NFI) should be greater than .90, and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) .08 or lower (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). Indices of fit were: χ^2 (344, *N* = 441) = 1268.11, NFI = .85, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .08; χ^2/df ratio = 3.69. All items loaded reasonably well onto the factors though, so no items were deleted. It was concluded that the hypothesised model one was of mediocre fit, and this may have been due to the non-normal attributions of the sample. The kurtosis scores for 11 out of the 28 items were greater than 7, which showed positive kurtosis (West et al., 1995) and they indicated heavily that the means and standard deviation of bullying scores leaned towards the *never* response anchor. It is also recognised that ML estimation has the assumption of multivariate normality (Jackson et al., 2009), which was violated for this test. Failure to meet the assumption of multivariate normality can lead to an inflated Type 1 error, where significant results are found when the sample does not adequately fit the model, as shown in simulation studies (Curran, West, & Finch, 1996). Based on the non-normal data, Bollen and Stine (1992) non-parametric bootstrapping was conducted with normal ML. This procedure simulates a requested number of samples (in this case 2000) and investigates how well the hypothesised model would fit these samples. The bootstrapping results showed that the null hypothesis was significant, $p < .001$, indicating that the model fit the sample better in all 2000 of the simulated samples compared to the real sample. This gives further evidence for the poor model fit in the real sample.

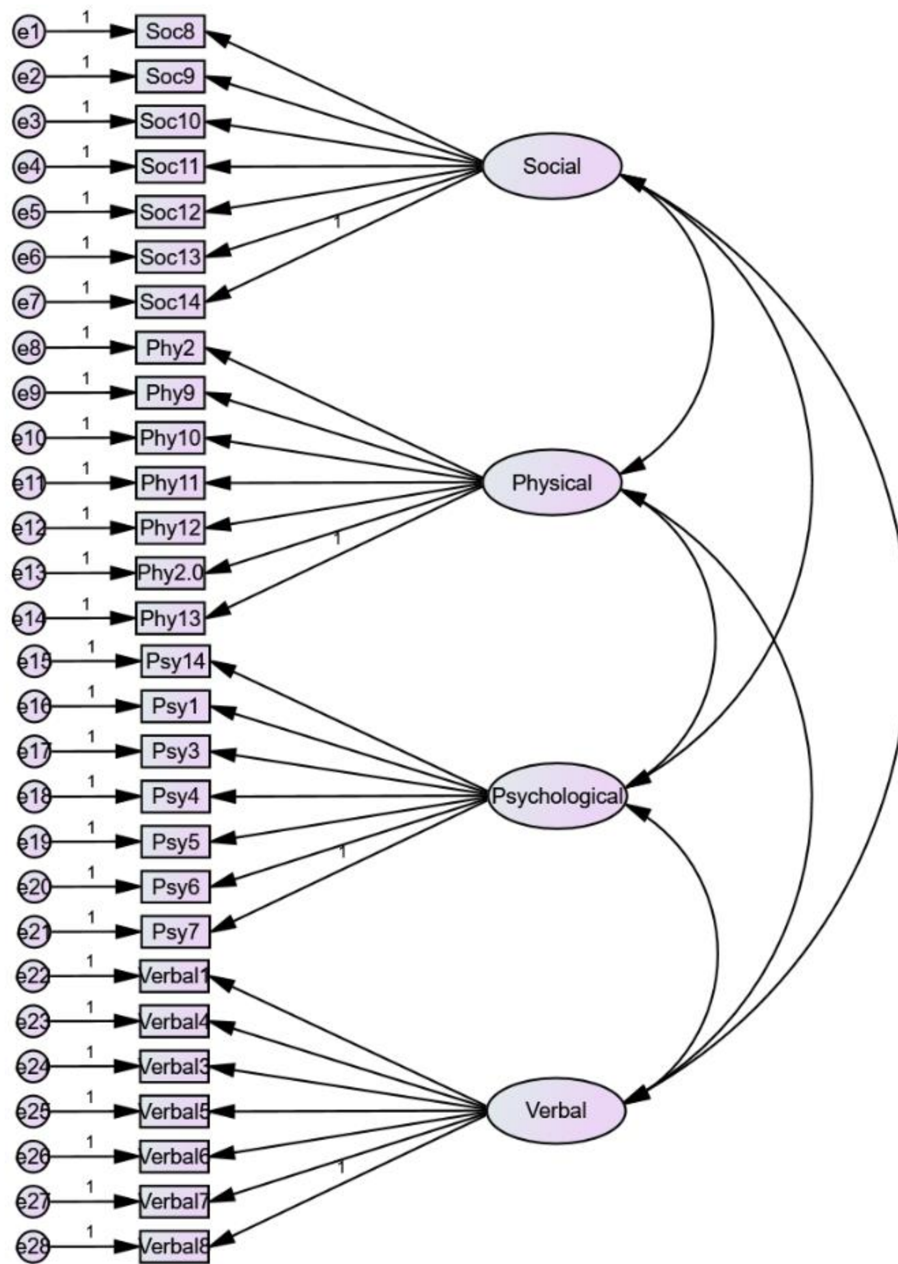

Figure 5.1 Hypothesised model one with four factors

Table 5.6

Hypothesised model one with factor loadings

Factor Name and Items	Loadings			
	1	2	3	4
Factor 1: Social				
Purposely been ignored	.74			
Excluded from group chats or games online	.80			
Others turn against you on the will of another student	.81			
Opinions belittled (e.g. in class)	.70			
Set up to fail	.67			
Experienced negative clique-group behaviour	.71			
Excluded from a social activity you wanted to be included in	.79			
Factor 2: Physical Act/Trace				
Possessions sabotaged e.g. books or essays torn up		.78		
Images of yourself shared or used for blackmail online		.74		
Misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts		.81		
Physically attacked seriously		.76		
Physically attacked e.g. pushed, tripped		.82		
Prevented from using facilities		.74		
Nasty things said about you on social network posts or blogs		.72		
Factor 3: Psychological				
Food thrown away or eaten on purpose			.65	
Experienced inappropriate sexual advances			.54	
Possessions stolen			.63	
Stalked or followed on campus			.71	
Harassed online with a bombardment of messages			.73	
Coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to do			.64	
Manipulated or controlled by someone			.67	
Factor 4: Direct Verbal				
The target of unfriendly/nasty jokes				.79
Called nasty names to your face				.78
Insulted about your appearance				.81
Mocked in public or private (not online)				.82
Felt threatened or intimidated by someone (not online)				.73
Shouted at				.71
Made fun of in a nasty way				.86

Alternatives to normal ML are available (Santorra & Bentler, 1994), such as the asymptotically distribution-free estimation method, though this requires over a thousand participants (Byrne, 2016); or the robust maximum likelihood estimation, which cannot be done using AMOS software. As the model fit was substandard, it can be assumed that had the results not been inflated by using ML, the model fit would be poorer, subsequently, it seemed ineffectual to investigate further. If there was adequate fit, then robust maximum likelihood tests would have attempted to explore further; as it stands, poor fit is poor fit regardless of inflation.

5.3.4.2.2. Model two. The second competing model hypothesised a priori that (a) responses to the victimisation scale can be explained by three factors: Physical Act/Psychological, Social, and Direct Verbal; (b) each item has a non-zero loading on the victimisation factor it was designed to measure, and zero loading on all other factors; (c) the three factors are correlated; and (d) the error/uniqueness terms associated with the item measurements are uncorrelated. See Figure 5.2. for the proposed model. Again, the model was an inadequate fit for the sample. Indices of fit were: χ^2 (347, N = 441) = 2074.24, NFI = .81, CFI = .83, RMSEA = .11; χ^2/df ratio = 5.98. Factor loadings can be seen in Table 5.7. Bollen-Stine bootstrapping with 2000 samples was conducted; the null hypothesis was significant, $p <.001$, indicating that the model fit the sample better in all 2000 of the simulated samples compared to the real sample, emphasising the poor fit. The kurtosis scores for 18 out of the 28 items were greater than 7.

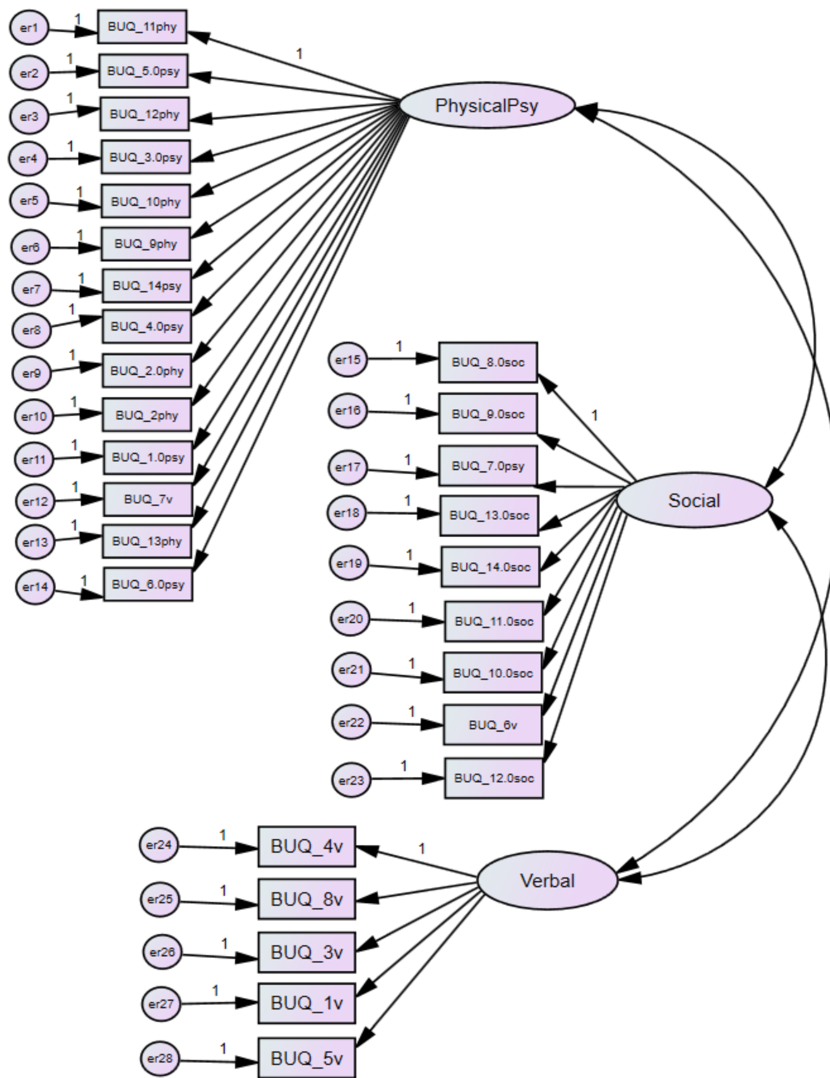

Figure 5.2. Hypothesised model two with three factors

Table 5.7

Hypothesised model two with factor loadings

Factor name and items	Loadings 1	2	3
Factor 1: Physical Act/Psychological			
Physically attacked seriously	.80		
Harassed online with a bombardment of messages	.76		
Physically attacked	.85		
Possessions stolen	.75		
Misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts	.79		
Images of yourself shared or used for blackmail online	.75		
Food thrown away or eaten on purpose	.71		
Stalked or followed on campus	.77		
Prevented from using facilities	.84		
Possessions sabotaged	.79		
Experienced inappropriate sexual advances	.48		
Shouted at	.65		
Nasty things said about you on social network posts or blogs	.75		
Been coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to do	.57		
Factor 2: Social			
Purposely been ignored (e.g. everyone stops talking to you) not online		.79	
Excluded from group chats or games online		.83	
Felt manipulated or controlled by someone		.72	
Experienced negative clique-group behaviour		.74	
Excluded from a social activity they wanted to be included in		.84	
Opinions belittled (e.g. in class)		.74	
Others turn against you on the will of another student		.86	
Felt threatened or intimidated by someone (not online)		.77	
Set up to fail		.67	
Factor 3: Direct Verbal			
Called nasty names to your face			.79
Made fun of in a nasty way			.88
Insulted about your appearance			.81
The target of unfriendly/nasty jokes			.86
Mocked in public or private (not online)			.88

5.3.4.2.3. Model three. The third competing model hypothesised a priori that (a) responses to the victimisation scale can be explained by two factors: Social/Direct Verbal, and Physical Act/Psychological; (b) each item has a non-zero loading on the victimisation factor it was designed to measure, and zero

loading on the other factor; (c) the two factors are correlated; and (d) the error/uniqueness terms associated with the item measurements are uncorrelated. See Figure 5.3. for the proposed model. Again, the model was an inadequate fit for the sample. Indexes of fit were: χ^2 (349, N = 441) = 2418.81, NFI = .77, CFI = .80, RMSEA = .12; χ^2/df ratio = 6.93. Factor loadings can be seen in Table 5.8. Bollen-Stine bootstrapping with 2000 samples was conducted; the null hypothesis was significant, p <.001, indicating that the model fit the sample better in all 2000 of the simulated samples compared to the real sample, emphasising the poor fit. The kurtosis scores for 15 out of the 28 items were greater than 7.

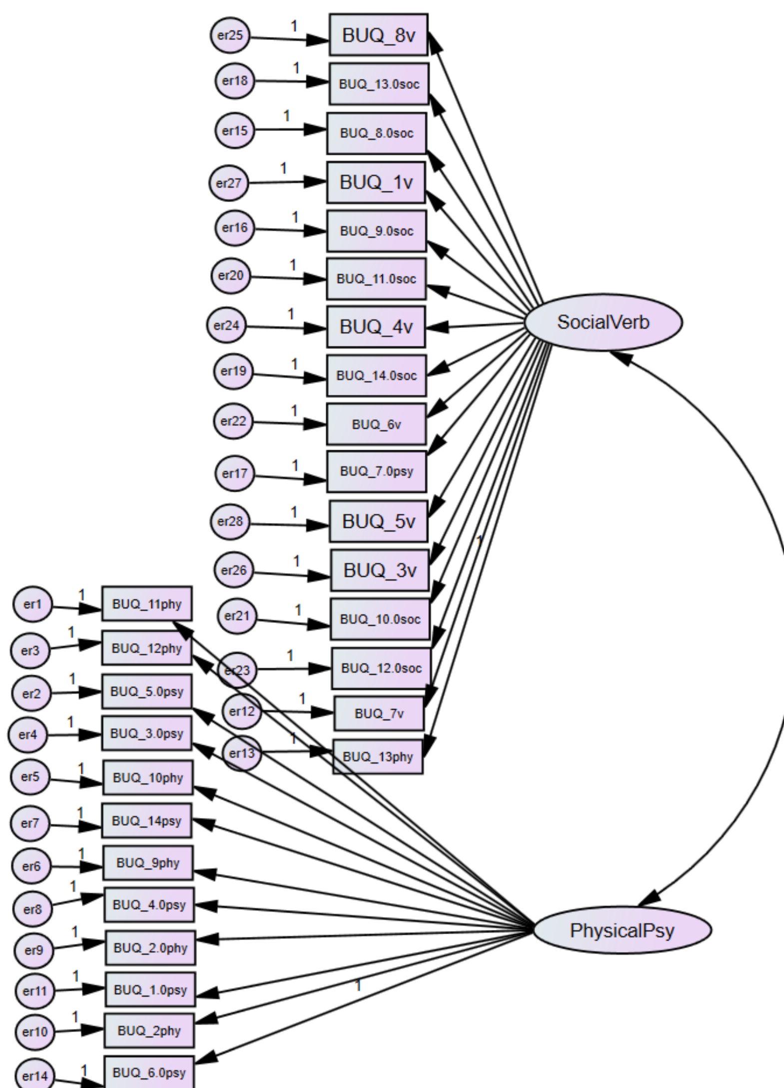

Figure 5.3. Hypothesised model three with two factors

Table 5.8

Hypothesised model three with factor loadings

Factor name and items	Loadings 1	Loadings 2
Factor 1: Social/Direct Verbal		
Made fun of in a nasty way	.84	
Experienced negative clique-group behaviour	.70	
Purposely been ignored (e.g. everyone stops talking to you) not online	.73	
The target of unfriendly/nasty jokes	.81	
Excluded from group chats or games online	.77	
Opinions belittled (e.g. in class)	.72	
Called nasty names to your face	.74	
Excluded from a social activity they wanted to be included in	.77	
Felt threatened or intimidated by someone (not online)	.78	
Felt manipulated or controlled by someone	.70	
Mocked in public or private (not online)	.85	
Insulted about your appearance	.78	
Others turn against you on the will of another student	.84	
Set up to fail	.65	
Shouted at	.70	
Nasty things said about you on social network posts or blogs	.70	
Factor 2: Physical Act/Psychological		
Physically attacked seriously		.81
Physically attacked		.84
Harassed online with a bombardment of messages		.75
Possessions stolen		.76
Misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts		.77
Food thrown away or eaten on purpose		.71
Images of yourself shared or used for blackmail online		.75
Stalked or followed on campus		.78
Prevented from using facilities		.86
Experienced inappropriate sexual advances		.48
Possessions sabotaged (e.g. books or essays torn up)		.80
Coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to do		.57

5.3.4.3. Factor analysis summary. None of the three models successfully gained adequate fit with a CFA; the models need investigating further and to be re-specified. It can be noted that model one with four-factors was superior with fit indexes near the recommended figures, which suggests that this model is more adequate in representing the variables being measured. Once a CFA is rejected, it

can be modified post-hoc and tested further using EFA. Exploring further using a simple PAF in SPSS, I requested a four-factor extraction with a rotated factor solution; the results showed that all of the Social items clustered as one factor and all of the Direct Verbal items clustered as one factor, but the Psychological and Physical Act/Trace items mixed. This informal exploration provides evidence for the proposition that the two categories of Social and Direct Verbal are robust categories of bullying behaviour happening in HE, as these have replicated. The Psychological and Physical Act/Trace items, however, have consistently crossed over, and therefore need investigating further. It must be noted however that these items all had sufficiently high loadings, so may still represent bullying behaviour happening in HE, but their suited location in a subscale remains unknown. As the scale was developed for this PhD, it was expected that the results would be unclear and need further investigation and replication using a more representative sample. Perhaps using a non-probability sample failed to represent the student population and led to the skew and kurtosis (Furr & Bacharach, 2008), as perhaps those who had only rarely been affected by bullying decided to take part (based on the low scores of victimisation reported). The convenience sampling method may have effectively excluded those who were unlikely to engage with the subject due to personal experience; thus, more suitable methods for recruiting a range of participants are needed in the future.

Additionally, the scale may not have represented the full spectrum of university bullying behaviours. In Table 5.9, a wide variety of issues are mentioned in response to the open-ended question box about additional bullying methods. Some of these were represented by the items in the current scale, however, some points were not. Because the first batch of comments were

collected after the administration of the first survey study, it would be difficult to add more items to the second survey study. That would mean the second sample would be checking the reliability of some items but would be the first to see other items, thus requiring another sample to check the reliability of the new items. Time constraints did not permit this; therefore, it can be recommended that future HE bullying research can consult the existing scale and the comments in Table 5.9 to build upon the current scale.

Table 5.9

Open-ended question responses about additional methods of bullying

Other methods of bullying
Cliques/exclusion/peer pressure in sports clubs
Cliques in societies
Cliques in accommodation, banging on doors, shouting
Bitchy girls
Lecturer bullying: not told about opportunities that other students get, excluded from department events, purposely lowering grades, blackmailing
Boys club cliques
Pressure and exclusion for not drinking
Purposely disturbed throughout the night, banging on doors, shouting into your room, leaving mess outside your door
Negative sarcastic comments
Gossiping and cold shouldering
Forced to go out clubbing
Bullying within the faculty amongst professors
Deliberately leaving people out of conversations and social events
Ignoring someone
Taking advantage of someone’s kind and quiet nature
Using people’s possessions without permission
Banter on gaming platforms
Passive aggressive actions in accommodation: dumping someone’s dishes in the sink, heavy circling of your part of the cleaning rota
Deliberately withholding information from other students in their group
Glaring unnecessarily
Talking about people behind their back to a larger group and influencing their opinions about the person
Using other people’s things or eating their food without permission in accommodation
Giggling and pointing
Making people feel uncomfortable and unwanted when put together in group projects

Not respecting other's choices, what time they get up, when they cook, how clean they keep their possessions
Instagram mocking
Neglected boundaries
Being made to feel stupid by members of lab group for not wanting to spend free time doing work
Close friend turned on them then tried to turn the whole year against them
Students and staff talking about others in a negative way

Note. Question asked, "Are there any other methods of university bullying that have not been mentioned in this survey?"

The scale was still used in statistical analyses with other variables from the survey even though the factor structure was unclear. In statistical tests that required the BUQ items to be categorised into subscales, the superior model one was used; Cronbach's alpha for internal reliability demonstrated that each item was consistently associated with the same concept (see Table 5.10 for alphas, means, standard deviations, and scores).

Table 5.10

Scale properties for four-factor model one

Scales and subscales	α	Min-max (possible)	Mean (SD)
BUQ scale (28 items)			
Social (7 items)	.89	7-21 (7-21)	8.94 (3.01)
Physical Act/Trace (7 items)	.90	7-21 (7-21)	7.53 (1.71)
Psychological (7 items)	.83	7-21 (7-21)	8.25 (2.18)
Direct Verbal (7 items)	.92	7-21 (7-21)	8.84 (2.98)
Total	.95	28-84 (28-84)	33.56 (8.63)

5.4. Group Differences on Scale Scores

Within this sample, 67.80% (299 students) indicated they had experienced one victimisation item at least once; 11.30% (50 students) scored over one standard deviation above the mean, indicating that this minority may be the persistent victims of HE bullying.

Multivariate analyses of variance tests (MANOVAs) were conducted to explore group differences on all scales. The assumptions of independence and interval measurement were met, but multivariate normality and homogeneity of covariance matrices were violated. Research has found that MANOVA is a robust statistical procedure; when compared with non-parametric tests, the power of both tests has been found to increase with an increase in sample size (Finch, 2005). Finch conducted simulation studies and found that as the size of the smaller groups increased, Type 1 error on the parametric tests decrease, whereas it increased for non-parametric tests. The ratio of sample sizes was important in determining Type 1 error (i.e. non-parametric outperformed parametric with larger discrepancies in group sizes). In cases where homogeneity was violated, it was found that non-parametric tests had slightly increased power, whereas if normality was violated, parametric statistics had higher power. These findings were considered alongside Yatim and Ismail's (2014) simulation studies, where they claimed that MANOVA outperformed alternative approaches, except where variables were highly correlated, in which case permutational MANOVA performed better. They concluded that with violations of assumptions, MANOVA is satisfactory with large sample sizes. Having identified that the majority of correlations in the dependent variable matrices were low to moderate, and that Type 1 error would be increased by conducting multiple ANOVAs anyway, I decided to continue with MANOVAs, being mindful that the test results with very unequal groups may be inflated (all group sizes are displayed in the tables). However, Warne (2014) said that Pillai's trace statistic is highly robust to many violations of the assumptions of MANOVA. Taking into consideration the family of tests, six MANOVAs were run (victimisation including sibling data,

victimisation excluding sibling data, positive wellbeing, negative wellbeing, IWMs, belongingness), and a Bonferroni correction of .05/6 = .008 was applied. A conservative *p*-value of .008 was adopted for statistical significance.

To detect which groups differed, post hoc tests were necessary; Borgen and Seling (1978) recommended that descriptive discriminant analysis (DDA) is more suitable than univariate ANOVAs. DDAs were conducted for each of the significant MANOVAs. DDAs are suitable for naturally occurring groups (i.e. gender) and preferred over univariate post hoc tests, which fail to consider covariances and increases Type 1 error (Warne, 2014). Canonical correlations above .32 are worthy of mention, similar to factor loadings in factor analysis (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). Significant results are presented here, and non-significant tables can be found in Appendix P.

5.4.1. Victimisation. The victimisation data were separated so that one set of analyses looked at participants' scores on school and current bullying, and the second set only included participants with siblings, and looked at school, sibling, and current bullying together (considering the covariances). Significant group differences were found with gender and SES on victimisation scales, see Table 5.11 to 5.13 for means and standard deviations, multivariate statistics in the form of Pillai's trace (V), and strength of the effect provided by partial eta squared (η^2). Cohen (1988) suggested that for partial eta squared, .02 is small, .13 medium, and .26 is a large effect size. Post hoc DDAs report specific differences, and centroid tables were consulted to decipher which direction variables loaded onto which function.

Descriptive statistics for gender and victimisation (including siblings) can be seen in Table 5.11**.** The DDA found a canonical R^2 = .11. The discriminant

function (DF) significantly differentiated gender groups, $\Lambda = .89$, χ^2 (14) = 41.96, $p < .001$. The correlations between outcomes and discriminant function revealed that only School Physical loaded onto the function ($r = .58$), suggesting this variable differed between groups; males experienced significantly more physical bullying in school.

The results for gender and victimisation excluding sibling data are in Table 5.12. The DDA found a canonical $R^2 = .07$. The DF significantly differentiated gender groups, $\Lambda = .93$, χ^2 (9) = 31.34, $p < .001$. Correlations between outcomes and DF revealed that only School Physical loaded highly onto the function ($r = .66$), suggesting this variable differed between groups; males experienced more physical bullying in school.

Table 5.13 presents descriptive statistics of SES and victimisation excluding sibling data. Two DFs explained the variance; the first 82.20%, canonical $R^2 = .08$, the second 17.80%, canonical $R^2 = .01$. In combination, the DFs significantly differentiated the SES groups, $\Lambda = .90$, χ^2 (18) = 45.43, $p < .001$, but after removing the first function, the second function did not significantly differentiate the groups, $\Lambda = .98$, χ^2 (8) = 8.33, $p = .402$. The correlations between outcomes and DFs revealed that School Physical ($r = .85$), School Verbal ($r =$ .71), School Social Exclusion ($r = .59$), School Relational (r = .57), and School Cyber ($r = .41$) loaded onto the first function positively; this was interpreted as those more financially insecure scoring higher on the school bullying types.

Table 5.11

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of gender and victimisation of those with siblings

	Male (*n* = 64)	Female (*n* =274)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	*F*(df)	*p*	Partial η²
Sibling			.12	3.02(14, 308)	<.001	.12
Physical (3-15)	5.16 (2.41)	5.48 (2.71)				
Verbal (3-15)	7.70 (3.18)	5.93 (2.91)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	5.28 (3.10)	5.02 (2.63)				
Relational (3-15)	4.30 (2.88)	3.72 (2.05)				
Cyber (3-15)	3.48 (1.58)	3.34 (1.32)				
School						
Physical (3-15)	5.55 (2.05)	4.36 (2.05)				
Verbal (3-15)	7.98 (3.26)	7.39 (3.46)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	7.34 (3.47)	7.49 (3.58)				
Relational (3-15)	6.06 (2.91)	6.61 (3.28)				
Cyber (3-15)	4.86 (2.49)	4.92 (2.72)				
HE						
Social (7-35)	8.55 (2.76)	8.84 (2.82)				
Physical (7-35)	7.59 (1.73)	7.33 (1.14)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.03 (2.08)	8.18 (1.91)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.91 (2.97)	8.72 (2.96)				

Table 5.12

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on gender and school and HE victimisation

	Male (n = 78)	Female (n = 338)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	V	F(df)	p	Partial η^2
			.08	3.76 (9,392)	<.001	.079
School						
Physical (3-15)	5.53 (2.38)	4.41 (2.16)				
Verbal (3-15)	8.05 (3.49)	7.40 (3.58)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	7.53 (3.71)	7.45 (3.68)				
Relational (3-15)	6.12 (3.17)	6.58 (3.34)				
Cyber (3-15)	4.88 (2.58)	4.19 (2.77)				
HE						
Social (7-35)	8.73 (3.05)	8.83 (2.80)				
Physical (7-35)	7.68 (1.75)	7.46 (1.58)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.08 (2.06)	8.22 (2.11)				
Verbal (7-35)	9.10 (2.96)	8.70 (2.92)				

Table 5.13

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on SES and school and HE victimisation

	More than enough (n = 38)	Comfortable (n = 232)	Financially insecure (n = 146)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	V	F(df)	p	Partial η^2
				.09	2.13 (18, 786)	.004	.05
School							
Physical (3-15)	4.13 (1.93)	4.24 (1.75)	5.35 (2.77)				
Verbal (3-15)	6.13 (2.72)	7.16 (3.40)	8.47 (3.80)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	6.61 (3.11)	7.05 (3.44)	8.35 (4.02)				
Relational (3-15)	5.74 (3.07)	6.15 (3.13)	7.23 (3.54)				
Cyber (3-15)	4.61 (2.11)	4.67 (2.56)	5.37 (3.07)				
HE							
Social (7-35)	8.74 (2.63)	8.40 (2.44)	9.47 (3.36)				
Physical (7-35)	7.63 (2.06)	7.39 (1.41)	7.64 (1.77)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.61 (2.69)	8.01 (1.85)	8.00 (2.28)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.66 (3.01)	8.42 (2.48)	9.37 (3.44)				

5.4.2. Positive wellbeing scales. Significant group differences were found with gender, sexual orientation, and student status on positive wellbeing scales. See Table 5.14, for descriptive and multivariate statistics of gender on positive wellbeing. Significant differences were found. The DDA found a canonical R^2 = .13. The DF significantly differentiated gender groups, $\Lambda = .87$, χ^2 (12) = 58.51, $p < .001$. The correlations between outcomes and DFs revealed that Positive Affect ($r = .48$) and Self-Esteem ($r = .33$) loaded onto the function, suggesting this variable differed between groups; males experienced significantly more positive affect and higher self-esteem than females.

Descriptive statistics for sexual orientation and positive wellbeing scales are in Table 5.15. The DDA found a canonical $R^2 = .12$. The DF significantly differentiated sexual orientation, $\Lambda = .88$, χ^2 (12) = 54.42, $p < .001$. The correlations between outcomes and DFs revealed that Self-Esteem ($r = .79$), PWB Environmental Mastery ($r = .73$), PWB Self-Acceptance ($r = .66$), Positive Affect ($r = .63$), PWB Purpose in Life ($r = .56$), BPN Competence ($r = .54$), Optimism ($r = .51$), BPN Autonomy ($r = .41$), BPN Relatedness ($r = .39$), and PWB Positive Relations ($r = .34$) loaded onto the function, suggesting these variables differed between groups. The Heterosexual group experienced significantly higher scores on these scales than members of the LGB+ group.

Descriptive statistics of student status and positive wellbeing are in Table 5.16. Two DFs explained the variance; the first 84.50%, canonical $R^2 = .12$, the second 15.50%, canonical $R^2 = .02$. In combination, the DFs significantly differentiated student status groups, $\Lambda = .86$, χ^2 (24) = 67.40, $p < .001$, but after removing the first function, the second function did not significantly differentiate groups, $\Lambda = .98$, χ^2 (11) = 10.90, $p = .452$. The correlations between outcomes and

DFs showed that Optimism (r = .48), Self-Esteem (r = .46), and PWB Self-Acceptance (r = .40) loaded onto the first function. This was interpreted as the international students scored significantly higher on these measures than Home students.

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Table 5.14

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of gender on positive wellbeing

	Male (*n* = 78)	Female (*n* = 338)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	*F*(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.13	4.66(12, 389)	<.001	.13
Optimism (6-30)	18.62 (5.71)	17.91 (5.33)				
Self-Esteem (10-40)	28.42 (6.30)	26.24 (6.02)				
PWB Autonomy (7-49)	32.26 (7.08)	30.48 (7.07)				
PWB Environmental Mastery (7-49)	29.85 (8.77)	28.55 (7.58)				
PWB Personal Growth (7-49)	35.17 (7.97)	35.88 (6.35)				
PWB Positive Relations (7-49)	33.22 (7.70)	34.60 (7.02)				
PWB Purpose In Life (7-49)	33.86 (8.45)	33.70 (7.39)				
PWB Acceptance (7-49)	30.71 (9.50)	28.80 (9.03)				
BPN Autonomy (1-7)	4.44 (1.07)	4.60 (.96)				
BPN Relatedness (1-7)	4.87 (.98)	5.06 (1.07)				
BPN Competence (1-7)	4.61 (1.17)	4.43 (1.16)				
Positive Affect (10-50)	32.90 (9.98)	28.64 (8.82)				

Table 5.15

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of sexual orientation on positive wellbeing

	Heterosexual (*n* = 334)	LGB+ (*n* = 82)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	*F*(df)	*p*	Partial η²
			.09	3.34(12, 389)	<.001	.09
Optimism (6-30)	18.52 (5.29)	16.11 (5.47)				
Self-Esteem (10-40)	27.46 (5.92)	23.34 (5.83)				
PWB Autonomy (7-49)	31.16 (6.99)	29.40 (7.40)				
PWB Environmental Mastery (7-49)	29.78 (7.54)	24.80 (7.73)				
PWB Personal Growth (7-49)	36.02 (6.73)	34.63 (6.40)				
PWB Positive Relations (7-49)	34.57 (7.10)	32.38 (7.15)				
PWB Purpose In Life (7-49)	34.46 (7.34)	30.78 (7.92)				
PWB Acceptance (7-49)	30.16 (8.91)	25.11 (8.99)				
BPN Autonomy (1-7)	4.64 (.96)	4.30 (1.06)				
BPN Relatedness (1-7)	5.09 (1.06)	4.75 (.99)				
BPN Competence (1-7)	4.57 (1.16)	4.05 (1.10)				
Positive Affect (10-50)	30.28 (8.86)	26.04 (8.79)				

Table 5.16

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of student status on positive wellbeing

	Home (n = 333)	EU (n = 45)	International (n = 38)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	V	F(df)	p	Partial η^2
				.13	2.17(24, 780)	.001	.06
Optimism (6-30)	17.57 (5.37)	19.78 (5.09)	20.18 (5.23)				
Self-Esteem (10-40)	26.10 (6.22)	28.89 (5.13)	28.82 (5.36)				
PWB Autonomy (7-49)	30.51 (7.12)	32.49 (6.58)	31.53 (7.32)				
PWB Environmental Mastery (7-49)	28.41 (7.84)	31.20 (7.07)	29.29 (8.23)				
PWB Personal Growth (7-49)	35.32 (6.62)	37.87 (7.05)	36.97 (6.24)				
PWB Positive Relations (7-49)	33.96 (7.27)	34.80 (6.87)	34.92 (6.53)				
PWB Purpose In Life (7-49)	33.54 (7.89)	35.49 (6.44)	33.34 (5.82)				
PWB Acceptance (7-49)	28.44 (9.35)	32.22 (7.57)	31.87 (7.76)				
BPN Autonomy (1-7)	4.58 (.97)	4.64 (1.02)	4.38 (1.03)				
BPN Relatedness (1-7)	5.07 (1.07)	4.92 (.95)	4.72 (.98)				
BPN Competence (1-7)	4.42 (1.21)	4.59 (.95)	4.68 (.95)				
Positive Affect (10-50)	28.89 (9.17)	32.18 (7.89)	30.97 (8.11)				

5.4.3. Negative wellbeing scales. Significant group differences were found with sexual orientation, student status, and SES on negative wellbeing scales. See Table 5.17 for descriptive statistics for sexual orientation and negative wellbeing. The DDA found a canonical $R^2 = .05$. The DF significantly differentiated sexual orientation groups, $\Lambda = .95$, χ^2 (2) = 23.62, $p < .001$. The correlations between outcomes and DF showed that Depression scores ($r = .99$) and Negative Affect ($r = .57$) loaded onto the function, suggesting they were significantly higher in the LGB+ group than the heterosexual group.

Descriptive statistics for student status and negative wellbeing are seen in Table 5.18. Two DFs explained the variance; the first 98.80%, canonical $R^2 = .04$, the second 1.20%, canonical $R^2 <.00$. In combination, the DFs significantly differentiated student status groups, $\Lambda = .96$, χ^2 (4) = 17.59, $p = .001$, and after removing the first function, the second function was not able to significantly differentiate groups, $\Lambda = 1.00$, χ^2 (1) = .21, $p = .645$. The correlations between outcomes and DFs showed that Depression scores ($r = .74$) were significantly lower for EU students.

Descriptive statistics for SES and negative wellbeing are shown in Table 5.19. Two DFs explained the variance; the first 86.90%, canonical $R^2 = .03$, the second 13.10%, canonical $R^2 <.00$. In combination, the DFs significantly differentiated SES groups, $\Lambda = .97$, χ^2 (4) = 15.48, $p = .004$, and after removing the first function, the second function was not able to significantly differentiate groups, $\Lambda = 1.00$, χ^2 (1) = 2.05, $p = .152$. The correlations between outcomes and DFs showed that Depression scores ($r = .98$) and Negative Affect ($r = .74$) were significantly higher for the financially insecure students.

Table 5.17

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of sexual orientation on negative wellbeing

	Heterosexual (*n* = 334)	LGB+ (*n* = 82)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	*F*(df)	*p*	Partial η²
			.03	6.77(2, 399)	.001	.03
Depression (8-32)	17.47 (3.25)	19.38 (3.56)				
Negative Affect (10-50)	23.07 (8.85)	26.37 (9.50)				

Table 5.18

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of student status on negative wellbeing

	Home (*n* = 333)	EU (*n* = 45)	International (*n* = 38)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	*V*	*F*(df)	*p*	Partial η²
				.04	3.93(4, 800)	.004	.02
Depression (8-32)	18.06 (3.53)	16.40 (2.37)	17.68 (2.90)				
Negative Affect (10-50)	23.75 (9.29)	24.09 (8.54)	22.97 (7.75)				

Table 5.19

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of SES on negative wellbeing

	More than enough (*n* = 38)	Comfortable (*n* = 232)	Financially insecure (*n* = 146)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	*V*	*F*(df)	*p*	Partial ŋ²
				.05	5.06(4, 800)	<.001	.03
Depression (8-32)	16.92 (2.72)	17.46 (3.30)	18.71 (3.56)				
Negative Affect (10-50)	20.63 (8.19)	23.37 (8.72)	25.07 (9.61)				

5.4.4. IWM. Significant group differences were found with gender, sexual orientation, and SES on IWM scales, see Table 5.20 for descriptive statistics on gender and SES. The DDA found a canonical $R^2 = .04$. The DF significantly differentiated gender groups, $\Lambda = .96$, χ^2 (3) = 19.44, $p < .001$. The correlations between outcomes and DF revealed that IWM Other Familiar ($r = .58$) and IWM Other Stranger ($r = .42$) loaded onto the function and were interpreted that females had significantly higher scores (implying more positive IWMs) on these variables than males.

Descriptive statistics for sexual orientation and IWM are seen in Table 5.21. The DDA found a canonical $R^2 = .07$. The DF significantly differentiated sexual orientation groups, $\Lambda = .93$, χ^2 (3) = 32.65, $p < .001$. The correlations between outcomes and DF revealed that IWM Other Familiar ($r = .47$), IWM Other Stranger ($r = .56$), and IWM Self ($r = .98$) loaded onto the function and were interpreted as showing that the LGB+ group had significantly lower scores (less positive IWMs) on these variables than the heterosexual group.

SES and IWM descriptive statistics are in Table 5.22. Two DFs explained the variance; the first 82.80%, canonical $R^2 = .05$, the second 17.20%, canonical $R^2 = .01$. In combination, the DFs significantly differentiated SES groups, $\Lambda = .94$, χ^2 (6) = 26.82, $p < .001$, but after removing the first function, the second function did not significantly differentiate groups, $\Lambda = .99$, χ^2 (2) = 4.69, $p = .096$. The correlations between outcomes and DFs showed that IWM Other Stranger ($r = .60$), IWM Other Familiar ($r = .96$), and IWM Self ($r = .45$) loaded onto the first function; the data suggested that those with more than enough money and were comfortable had significantly higher scores than those financially insecure.

Table 5.20

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of gender on IWM

	Male (*n* = 78)	Female (*n* = 338)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	*F*(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.04	4.98(3, 398)	.002	.04
IWM Other Stranger (11-55)	33.31 (7.01)	34.78 (7.03)				
IWM Other Familiar (14-70)	52.64 (11.46)	55.55 (9.00)				
IWM Self (10-50)	35.81 (8.91)	34.00 (9.34)				

Table 5.21

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of sexual orientation on IWM

	Heterosexual (*n* = 334)	LGB+ (*n* = 82)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	*F*(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.05	6.97(3, 398)	<.001	.05
IWM Other Stranger (11-55)	35.00 (6.81)	32.48 (7.62)				
IWM Other Familiar (14-70)	55.60 (9.35)	52.55 (10.07)				
IWM Self (10-50)	35.55 (8.81)	29.40 (9.54)				

Table 5.22

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of SES on IWM

	More Than Enough (n = 38)	Comfortable (n = 232)	Financially Insecure (n = 146)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	V	F(df)	p	Partial η^2
				.06	3.77(6, 798)	.001	.03
IWM Other Stranger (11-55)	34.08 (7.97)	35.44 (6.76)	33.14 (7.04)				
IWM Other Familiar (14-70)	57.42 (9.34)	56.42 (8.96)	52.12 (9.91)				
IWM Self (10-50)	36.92 (9.01)	34.81 (9.11)	32.92 (9.45)				

5.4.5. Belongingness. Significant group differences were found with sexual orientation, university accommodation, and degree type on belongingness scales; see Table 5.23 for sexual orientation and belonging descriptive statistics. The DDA found a canonical $R^2 = .07$. The DF significantly differentiated sexual orientation, $\Lambda = .93$, χ^2 (4) = 31.42, $p < .001$. The correlations between outcomes and DF showed Social Connectedness ($r = .93$) loaded highly onto the function, suggesting that the LGB+ group scored lower on this variable than the heterosexual group.

Accommodation and belongingness descriptive statistics are seen in Table 5.24. The DDA found a canonical $R^2 = .05$. The DF significantly differentiated accommodation, $\Lambda = .95$, χ^2 (4) = 24.25, $p < .001$. The correlations between outcomes and DF revealed that UBQ Affiliation ($r = .76$) loaded onto the function, suggesting that those in university accommodation scored significantly higher on this variable than those not in university accommodation.

Descriptive statistics for degree type and belonging are in Table 5.25. Two DFs explained the variance; the first 90.00%, canonical $R^2 = .08$, the second 10.00%, canonical $R^2 = .01$. In combination, the DFs significantly differentiated degree type groups, $\Lambda = .91$, χ^2 (8) = 40.94, $p < .001$, and after removing the first function, the second function was not able to significantly differentiate groups, $\Lambda = .99$, χ^2 (3) = 4.22, $p = .238$. The correlations between outcomes and DFs showed that UBQ Faculty and Staff Relations ($r = .76$) and Social Connectedness ($r = .35$) loaded onto the first function, suggesting that these variables were significantly higher in doctorate students than other degree types.

Table 5.23

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of sexual orientation on belongingness

	Heterosexual (n = 334)	LGB+ (n = 82)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	V	F(df)	p	Partial η^2
			.04	4.51(4, 397)	.001	.04
UBQ Affiliation (12-48)	32.22 (6.96)	30.99 (6.84)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance (8-32)	24.93 (4.10)	24.71 (4.68)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations (4-16)	11.42 (3.06)	10.70 (3.83)				
Social Connectedness (8-48)	33.35 (9.97)	27.33 (10.39)				

Table 5.24

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of accommodation on belongingness

	Uni accommodation (n = 162)	Non-uni accommodation (n = 254)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	V	F(df)	p	Partial η^2
			.04	3.98(4, 397)	.004	.04
UBQ Affiliation (12-48)	33.46 (6.60)	31.03 (7.01)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance (8-32)	25.04 (3.84)	24.80 (4.45)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations (4-16)	11.01 (3.09)	11.45 (3.32)				
Social Connectedness (8-48)	31.65 (9.94)	32.49 (10.57)				

Table 5.25

Descriptive and multivariate statistics of degree type on belongingness

	Undergraduate (n = 277)	Masters (n = 85)	Doctorate (n = 54)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	V	F(df)	p	Partial η^2
				.06	3.00(8, 796)	.003	.03
UBQ Affiliation (12-48)	32.05 (6.67)	31.61 (7.61)	32.17 (7.32)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance (8-32)	24.86 (4.03)	25.32 (4.90)	24.35 (4.03)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations (4-16)	10.80 (3.19)	11.86 (3.28)	12.81 (2.81)				
Social Connectedness (8-48)	31.43 (10.27)	33.22 (10.55)	34.26 (10.00)				

5.5. Group differences discussion. It was hypothesised that there would be group differences on all dependent variables between majority and traditional student groups and minority and non-traditional student groups. The data were inputted into MANOVAs to test the variables together, accounting for latent variance, and all significant results led to post hoc DDAs to identify specific differences. The results showed some group-level differences on all dependent variables; these will be discussed briefly.

5.5.1. Victimisation. Whilst testing victimisation with only the participants with siblings, it was found that males experienced more School Physical victimisation. More significant effects were found when testing each participant excluding the sibling data. Males experienced more School Physical victimisation. The financially insecure group experienced more School Physical, Verbal, Social Exclusion, Relational, and Cyber victimisation.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, early evidence suggested that boys engage in more physical bullying than girls (Björkqvist et al., 1992; Tapper & Boulton, 2004); this research shows that boys experienced more physical school bullying. No other gender differences were found. The financially insecure group experienced greater school victimisation than those better off. It may be the case that growing up in poverty leads to evident external differences (e.g. having free school meals, non-branded uniforms), which may be used as reasons for targeting. The focus group students suggested those from lower SES were targeted at university; however, students may be more able to conceal this difference at university, as most students are claiming student finance and bursaries, and so are in similar positions regardless of their family status back home.

No other group differences on victimisation were found, which may indicate that victimisation is not only based on group differences at school, home, or university. On consulting the second open-ended question box with responses about being targeted for identity-related differences, more identity-related reasons were given than were represented in the scale items (Table 5.26). As mentioned earlier, more items could not be added due to time constraints, but Table 5.26 shows that students do perceive that these differences may lead to increased victimisation.

Table 5.26

Open-ended responses of identity-related reasons for being targeted

	Identity-related reasons for being bullied
Intelligence	Above average
	Making out someone is thick
	Being used for their intelligence to ask questions and help with work
	Verbally harassed for wanting to study
Gender	Culture of lads trying to turn lesbians straight
	Refused sexual advances lead to further bullying
	Men leering, making lewd comments, and groping
	Sexual assault
	Sexual harassment in clubs
	Set up to fail and belittled by men
	Men in "packs" trying to intimidate and grabbing breasts
	Jokes
	Mis-gendered loudly, i.e. being called a girl when a trans man with a beard
	Sexist comments because of the degree subject
	Being called a lesbian because they never had a boyfriend
	Sexual harassment in pubs and lectures, and threats from male students
	Men acting in controlling ways towards females
Race/ethnicity	Belittled for being Greek when the country was in financial turmoil
	Questioning religious beliefs in public professional settings
	Denied leave for religious festivals
	Feeling unwanted because of different ethnicity
	Tutor makes fun of accent in class, so the class laugh along
	Mocked because of parentage
	Belittled for English skills

	Collective racial abuse in the class, people getting up to leave when they were there, being the only black person Native English people feel superior to foreigners
Health issues	Mental health (name-calling, e.g. crazy, psycho) Disabilities Dyslexia ADHD Questioning the validity of health problems Autism Diagnosed conditions used as jokes Horrible comments because of absence from campus (mental and physical health issues) Lecturers outing their mental health issue to class and comparing them with others in the class Disability – extensions on work, which peers think an unfair advantage. Say their good grades are because of this "perk" Mental health difficulties led to exclusion from social events, a nomination for "most likely to end up on Jeremy Kyle" at a ball - they avoid the event so they would not get this award Wheelchair user
Sexuality	Homophobic comments Played off as banter/jokes Negative reception to being bisexual Testing someone's sexuality with inappropriate advances
Age	Isolated mature students
Political affiliation	Being Conservative
Socioeconomic status/hometown	Intellect questioned Dialect made fun of Opinions belittled Upper white middle-class questioning competency of other ethnicities Working-class background leads to an assumption of unintelligence Exclusion from social events Regional differences north/south divide - people down south think northerners are thick
Appearance	What clothes they are wearing Socially awkward Brands Makeup Dressing more traditionally like a different gender Body size and height Hair colour Tan Wearing glasses

Note. *Question asked 'If you were bullied for any apparent identity-related differences, can you say a bit about this?'*

5.5.2. Positive wellbeing. Significant effects were found on the positive wellbeing scales. Males scored higher on Self-Esteem and Positive Affect. Heterosexual groups scored higher on Self-Esteem, PWB Environmental Mastery, PWB Self-Acceptance, Positive Affect, PWB Purpose in Life, Optimism, BPN Competence, BPN Autonomy, BPN Relatedness, and PWB Positive Relations. International students scored higher on Optimism, Self-Esteem, and PWB Self-Acceptance than Home students.

Worldwide, men are seen to have higher self-esteem than women (Bleidorn et al., 2016); this may be attributed to power and social status. Most westernised countries have typically evolved from patriarchal societies, and equality is something that is constantly being strived for. It is therefore unsurprising that males feel better about themselves and experience more positive emotions because men tend to have more social power. Furthermore, the heterosexual group scored higher than the LGB+ group on almost every positive wellbeing measure. Although the LGB+ group did not report significantly more victimisation, they are still scoring lower on positive wellbeing measures. This could be linked again to social power – LGB+ groups are often marginalised in society and are only just gaining equal status for certain things (e.g. marriage). This lack of societal power may be a powerfully cognisant factor in the lives of LGB+ groups, leading to lower positive wellbeing experiences like optimism, relatedness, autonomy, competence, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. International students scored higher on Self-Esteem, PWB Self-Acceptance, and Optimism than Home students, which suggests they may be happier with themselves overall and have a robust sense of optimism about their future of study

in the UK. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Yorke (2016) found international students significantly more confident than Home students.

5.5.3. Negative wellbeing. For the negative wellbeing scales, the LGB+ group scored higher on Depression and Negative Affect, EU students scored lower on Depression, and the financially insecure group scored higher on Depression and Negative Affect. These findings echo the positive wellbeing scales. It seems that those who identify as LGB+ not only have lower positive wellbeing, but they also have higher depression and experience more negative emotions, which identifies them as an especially vulnerable group within HE. The reason that EU students scored lower on depression could again be related to them experiencing a certain level of positive wellbeing to consider studying abroad; perhaps this protects them from depression whilst they are in the UK. Lastly, those in lower SES groups are known to face many disadvantages, some of which are outlined in Chapter 2 and 6 (e.g. mental health issues, access to HE, not belonging). Not only are they disadvantaged structurally by a lack of economic power, but they also may be vulnerable to increased depression and negative emotions, which likely stem from a lack of social power as well as individual differences. Of note was that the Cronbach's alpha score for the shortened depression scale was low, indicating that the items may not all be measuring the same concept of depression. This must be considered whilst interpreting depression results; perhaps it would have been preferable to include the original length scale in the questionnaire.

5.5.4. IWM. For the IWM scales, females scored higher on IWM Other Familiar and IWM Other Stranger; LGB+ scored lower on IWM Self, IWM Other Familiar, and IWM Other Stranger; those with more than enough money scored

higher on IWM Self, IWM Other Familiar, and IWM Other Stranger. The findings suggest that females have greater trust in- and dependency on- strangers and familiar people than males. Heterosexuals and those with more than enough money had greater trust in others, but also the belief that they were worthy, more so than LGB+ and those financially insecure. Those with significantly more positive IWMs of Other signify that positive early relationships may have been experienced, where caregivers met early security needs (Coleman, 2003). Whereas, those with more positive IWMs of Self suggest that the individuals believed in their caregivers' love early on (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) leading to feelings of self-worth (Graham & Juvonen, 1998).

5.5.5. Belongingness. For the belongingness variables, LGB+ scored lower on Social Connectedness. Those in university accommodation scored higher on UBQ Affiliation. Doctoral students scored higher on UBQ Faculty and Staff Relations, and Social Connectedness.

It is unsurprising that the LGB+ group scored lower on a measure of belongingness, as noted, they seem to be at a disadvantage by experiencing more negative emotions and scoring lower on positive wellbeing measures; those who feel they belong are often happier. It also makes sense that those staying in university accommodation feel more affiliated with their university. They spend most of their time on campus, are probably more likely to participate in on-campus activities, and have dedicated to moving to their university of choice. However, this does seem to be at a cost; those living in university accommodation had higher HE victimisation scores than those living elsewhere. Additionally, doctoral students scored higher on UBQ Faculty and Staff Relations, which again is not unexpected, considering their unique position within faculty being a student

but having access to staff facilities and groups. Doctoral students' higher scores on Social Connectedness, however, were an artefact of age; the older one is, the higher the Social Connectedness regardless of degree level.

5.6. Conclusion

This chapter first sought to test a new BUQ scale on the third survey study sample using CFA to identify a suitable factor structure. The first model with the four-factor structure was adopted as the most superior out of the three models, even though no model met recommended fit indices. It was concluded that contributions were made to the development of a new scale to measure HE bullying, but the scale still needs further work; the two categories that replicated were Social and Direct Verbal, suggesting that these factors are representative of HE bullying in the UK. The other categories of Physical Act/Trace and Psychological had crossover and need investigating further; however, all items in the final scale loaded sufficiently highly onto a factor, suggesting their appropriateness for inclusion in the scale overall.

The second part of this chapter sought to investigate group differences in victimisation and other measured variables. It was hypothesised that those in minority groups and non-traditional students would fare worse on all measures; this was partially supported by the results on some measures. It was concluded that although individuals in certain disadvantaged groups may be more at risk than those in privileged groups, it is not a given that they will succumb to increased victimisation, negative emotion, or lower positive wellbeing. Certain factors may serve to protect vulnerable individuals, which allows them to appear to have unobserved resilience (Feinstein & Vignoles, 2008). Some of the mechanisms through which victimisation can lead to lowered positive wellbeing and increased

negative emotions are investigated in the next chapter, and further discussion of these results can be seen in Chapter 8.

6. Student Victimisation and Wellbeing: Associations and Mediating Variables

This chapter further explores the data from the questionnaire-based study in Chapter 5; it looks at associations between variables and considers the role of key variables as mediators of these relationships. A brief literature review will recap the knowledge on associations between being a victim in childhood and adulthood, between victimisation and psychological adjustment, and variables that relate to IWMs and belongingness, which are the potential mediators being tested in this study.

6.1. Background

As outlined in section 2.8, it is known that those who are bullied in school are at a greater risk of being bullied later in life. Chapel et al. (2006) provided evidence that bullying and victimisation behaviour can continue through the life course. They investigated the continuity of bullying from elementary school, through high school, and into university. This study recruited 119 undergraduates from a large US university; it was found that there was a greater frequency of bullying at elementary school than high school, and more at high school than university. In addition, there was a positive correlation between being a bully in childhood and adulthood, and between having been bullied in childhood and adulthood, providing evidence of continuity of victim/bully status. Adams and Laurence's (2011) study supported this claim; 269 students from a small US university were asked about bullying and adjustment. The questions in the survey were developed from the literature and informal discussions with people who had been bullied, though these discussions were not reported. The data suggested that students who were bullied in school can continue to be victimised and suffer the

negative effects at university. Victims reported feeling isolated, found it hard to make friends, and did not know how to fight back when individuals said hurtful things to them.

Chen and Huang (2015) suggested that childhood victimisation could act as a predisposing factor for future bullying. They used retrospective and current victimisation reports from 1,452 university students in Taiwan to investigate whether victimisation affected health-related quality of life. They found that verbal bullying was the most prevalent, and cyberbullying the least so, but those with verbal and relational victimisation at both time points had significantly lower health-related quality of life scores. The study proposed that previous exposure to bullying may have latent effects that could be triggered by future bullying; this provides more evidence for negative cumulative effects on the victims but also suggests an increased likelihood of being bullied if you have been bullied in the past.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, childhood victimisation leads to- and is associated with- various other negative effects, such as depression, anxiety, loneliness (Graham et al., 2006), emotional maladjustment (Lopez & DuBois, 2005), and academic disengagement (Juvonen et al., 2011) to name a few. Longitudinal studies also show that the effects of childhood victimisation can be long term (Adams & Laurence, 2011), for example, psychological distress (Wolke et al., 2013) and lack of motivation to study (Goodboy et al., 2016). Similarly, the literature on HE victimisation finds associations between victimisation and maladjustment at this level. Experiences of victimisation at university have been linked to increased stress and anxiety (Seelman et al., 2017), psychosocial

maladjustment in the form of internalising issues (Leenaars & Rinaldi, 2010), and even suicidal ideation and attempts (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012).

It is well established that being victimised early on may not only lead to victimisation in the future but also negatively impact psychological health. For some, there may be a pathway from childhood victimisation to maladjustment through adult victimisation. Some researchers have attempted to investigate intermediate factors between these experiences and outcomes, which are variables that are responsible for the effects of victimisation on adjustment (i.e. mediators of the two variables). Monks et al. (2009) suggested that promising approaches ought to be multi-dimensional by looking at various levels of individual and situational factors. This viewpoint is supported by Felix et al. (2018), who adopted a socioecological framework (discussed in Chapter 2). This stresses that victimisation that occurs within peer, family, and school contexts can promote or diminish future involvement. For this reason, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory was used and subsequently an attempt was made to investigate variables at the individual, social, and organisational levels, by testing some of these variables as mediators.

6.1.1. Individual level

Some individual-level variables previously tested as mediators are internally salient constructs, like perceptions of the self and others, cognitive representations, and schemas. Different schools of psychology contribute to the theory of IWMs but use differing terminology (Cassidy, 2000). Booth La-Force et al. (2006) investigated the link between attachment security and social competence through self-worth, which is a perception of self. Using self, peer, and parent reports of attachment security and self-perceptions ratings of 73 children

(mean age 10.19 years), they found significant indirect effects of the mediation model. Self-worth mediated the association between attachment security and social competence. Holistic IWMs, which include the self-perception of worth, are proposed to work similarly by accounting for how victimisation can impact aspects of psychological wellbeing (one wellbeing subscale measure in the current study is social competence).

Grills and Ollendick (2002) found evidence for the mediating role of individual cognitive perceptions of the self. They surveyed 279 middle school children in the US about self-perceptions, peer victimisation, and anxiety, and found that self-perceptions of worth mediated and moderated the peer victimisation and anxiety relationship, particularly for girls. Similarly, Calvete (2014) investigated whether early emotional abuse from parents or peers contributed to the symptoms of depression and social anxiety in adolescence through the mechanism of maladaptive schemas (i.e. IWMs). It has been theorised that schemas are not fully developed until adolescence, and subsequently, experiences of victimisation by peers can contribute to the development of dysfunctional cognitions and schemas. For example, early attachment relationships may set a trajectory of development, but in adolescence, this trajectory may be altered or compounded depending on experiences. Calvete tested 1,052 adolescents (mean age 13.61) from Spanish schools at three time points, six months apart. Measures included the Young Schema Questionnaire, which recorded thoughts about the self and other; parental psychological abuse and peer relations were also recorded, alongside depressive and social anxiety symptoms. It was found that emotional abuse by peers predicted increased depressive symptoms via schemas of disconnection and rejection, and increased

social anxiety via schemas of subjugation to gain acceptance. The results showed that victimisation by peers was an independent predictor of schema change; emotional abuse by peers predicted a worsening of schemas, suggesting that peer victimisation in adolescence is crucial to the development of maladaptive schemas. This supports earlier work by Sroufe (2005), who suggested schema or model change can occur at any point in life, but change becomes more difficult the longer a pathway has been followed.

Schemas may also be mediating mechanisms between early maltreatment and later re-victimisation. Calvete, Gámez-Guadix, Fernández-Gonzalez, Orue, and Borrajo (2018) explored whether experiencing or witnessing family violence predicted experiences of dating violence in adolescence, through maladaptive schemas. Spanish adolescents (933) aged between 13 and 18 (mean = 15.10) completed surveys on exposure to family violence, dating violence, and disconnection and rejection schemas, at three separate time points. Schemas mediated between witnessing or experiencing family violence and experiencing dating violence victimisation. This suggests that our cognitions and how we think about ourselves and others may increase our vulnerability to future victimisation having been victimised in the past. Although cognitions, schemas, and IWMs may uphold victim roles, the authors acknowledged that we must not ignore the wider social context in which patriarchal beliefs about control and entitlement allows for abuse against women.

Longitudinal studies like those by Calvete and colleagues (2014; 2018) are best placed to test mediational links, but these are time-consuming, costly, and often difficult to execute. As such, many studies use retrospective reports to gather past experiences for the temporal mediation chain; a study by Wright,

Crawford, and Del Castillo (2009) looked at the link between childhood maltreatment and later psychological distress through the effects of cognitive schemas. They surveyed 301 undergraduate students in the US (mean age 23.70) about negative childhood experiences (e.g. neglect and abuse), trauma symptoms, and cognitive schemas. Schemas of self-sacrifice and shame mediated the relationship between childhood abuse and neglect, and adult trauma symptoms of anxiety, depression, and dissociation. The results provided evidence for the links between childhood emotional maltreatment and harmful effects as EAs at university. Childhood experiences such as disapproval, contempt, rejection, and being ignored were hypothesised to exert their negative influences longitudinally if they were internalised as beliefs about the self. These experiences could either support existing self-beliefs dependent on attachment style, or could challenge existing beliefs, leading to either confirming, disconfirming, and shaping of IWMs.

Similarly, Pontzer (2010) talks of the individual risk factors that increase vulnerability to victimisation when parents do not teach their children conflict resolution skills. Pontzer adopted the theory of shame displacement, hypothesising that those who are targeted have poor self-image because they tend to internalise shame and blame, which are both ways of thinking about the self. He conducted a study with 527 US university students using a senior version of the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire; 23.7% of the sample were victimised by at least one form of bullying in the past couple of months, and 56.4% reported being a victim during childhood. Students who were most likely to be victims had the characteristics of internalising shame and were victims during childhood. The study supported the assertion that parents who interact with their children in a

suboptimal way may socialise them to behave in certain ways with other children. It suggested that young adult victims harboured certain traits stemming from childhood, which increased their vulnerability to current bullying. Although the variables were not directly tested as mediators, the evidence from this study shows the importance of feelings and thoughts about ourselves when considering social interactions with others at university.

6.1.2. Social level

Although there is evidence for the mediating role of individual cognitions between victimisation and negative symptoms, other aspects of the socio-ecological model must be considered. Whilst personal IWMs may make one vulnerable to victimisation, victimisation only happens if the vulnerable individual is situated in a place where an attacker is available to take advantage of them (i.e. combined individual and situational factors impact events). Subsequently, social context, in-group out-group dynamics, and hierarchical structures provide conditions for bullying.

With the HE context and the EA period, much attention has been given to the social variables of friendship and belonging (as described in sections 2.10.3 and 5.1.1). Those at risk of not belonging tend to fare worse on a variety of measures, such as mental ill-health and suicidal ideation (Ploskonka & Servaty-Seib, 2015), motivation (Sinkkonen et al., 2014), and academic engagement (Mengo & Black, 2015); belongingness is said to be critical to the success of students (O'Keeffe, 2013). Subsequently, belongingness may be another mechanism through which early victimisation can impact later victimisation and negative effects.

Brendgen and Poulin (2018) looked at continued victimisation from childhood to young adulthood, alongside mediating and moderating variables in a population of EAs who were currently in paid work. Their participants were 303 youths who completed the questionnaires at each time point, from age 11 up to age 22; the questionnaires measured victimisation, demographics, and potential mediating and moderating variables between childhood and adult victimisation at work, one of these being friendship support. Higher levels of peer victimisation in school at ages 13-17 were associated with higher levels of peer victimisation in the workplace at age 22, which was also associated with lower levels of friendship support between the ages of 16-19. Anxious and withdrawn children seemed to be at risk of becoming a target later. The sample were not university students, but the research provides longitudinal evidence of a victim/bully continuity. It also suggests that how we feel about ourselves and others (i.e. being anxious and withdrawn) and the friendships we have (i.e. whether we feel belonging) can affect the trajectory of harassment over the life course. Friendship was tested as a moderator in this study. Friendship may represent one part of belongingness, with belonging being the mechanism through which negative experiences can lead to negative effects, but one can still have friends and feel like you do not belong to a certain group.

Thus, friendship and belonging link past and current victimisation. There is also evidence that belonging can mediate between past victimisation and current maladjustment. Corrales et al. (2016) aimed to test whether a sense of belongingness mediated the relationship between childhood adversity and current psychological distress and educational engagement. Young people who were engaged in community-based services in Australia (N = 275; mean age 18.89)

were surveyed on belonging, psychological distress, and childhood adversity (physical/sexual abuse, neglect, social disadvantage, and various other factors that likely contributed to disrupted attachment and trauma). Simple mediation models were tested and found significant; the impact of childhood adversity on psychological distress and educational engagement was in part explained by a low sense of belonging. Results suggested that childhood adversity is associated with a decreased sense of belonging, which in turn is associated with increased psychosocial distress.

The evidence suggests that individual and social level factors can mediate the relationships between early victimisation in various forms, current victimisation, and negative outcomes. However, considering existing HE research, much attention is given to wellbeing, not only negative outcomes such as mental ill-health. Though it is important to examine levels of distress and mental ill-health, it should not be the only focus of research. If mental ill-health and wellbeing are on separate continuums of adjustment, both ought to be considered. Measures of wellbeing include positively worded items that record feelings and functioning, that is, the presence of optimal features of experience, rather than just the presence or absence of negative symptoms. One Australian project (Baik et al., 2017) created to assist educators, offers a wealth of information about enhancing student wellbeing. The project identified that student wellbeing and academic achievement can be strengthened by learning environments that foster autonomy, belonging, and competence, showing a focus on positive functioning rather than problematic symptoms. Within much of the literature outlined in this chapter, the focus is predominantly on negative outcomes; this mirrors bullying and victimisation research but is at odds with HE research. Subsequently, this

study attempts to address the mismatch by exploring mediators between childhood victimisation and current wellbeing on predominantly positively salient measures, with UK university students.

Consequently, in the current study, associations were first established between predictor, mediator, and outcome variables, and then IWMs were tested as individual factors and social connectedness and university belongingness as situational factors. Social connectedness and institutional identification may be perceived as a combination of individual and social level variables. Belonging is judged through one's perceptions; however, the interaction between perceptions and behaviour can take belonging to a social dynamics level, that is, internal processes may interact with contextual factors to lead to certain outcomes. The organisational factor external to the individual or social group, university anti-bullying policies, is considered in Chapter 7. The following hypotheses were proposed based on the previous literature and theory.

6.2. Hypotheses

1. Victimisation types will be positively correlated.
2. Childhood Victimisation will be positively correlated with BUQ scores (HE victimisation).
3. All Victimisation types will be negatively correlated with Optimism, Self-Esteem, PWB (psychological wellbeing), BPN (needs satisfaction), and Positive Affect.
4. All Victimisation types will be positively correlated with Depression and Negative Affect.
5. All Victimisation types will be negatively correlated with IWMs, UBQ Belongingness (university belonging), and Social Connectedness.

6. The relationship between Childhood Victimisation and current wellbeing will be mediated by IWMs, BUQ (HE victimisation), Social Connectedness, and UBQ Belongingness (university belonging).

6.3. Method

For participants, procedures, and scale information see Chapter 5. The data from the study in Chapter 5 is used to test these hypotheses.

6.4. Results

6.4.1. Correlations. Pearson correlations were used to test hypotheses 1-5.

6.4.1.1 Hypotheses 1 and 2.

1. Victimisation types will be positively correlated.
2. Childhood Victimisation will be positively correlated with BUQ scores (HE victimisation).

The data showed that all victimisation subscales correlated with each other at the $p < .01$ level (Table 6.1), supporting the suggestion that those whose are bullied in one manner are more vulnerable to be bullied in another. Total School Victimisation was also positively related to a total BUQ score ($r = .50$, $N = 441$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .25$) and for those with siblings, a total Childhood Victimisation score (i.e. sibling and school) was positively related to total BUQ score ($r = .55$, $N = 366$, $p = <.001$, $r^2 = .30$), suggesting that a victim role may be operative.

Table 6.1

Correlations between school, sibling, and HE victimisation types

	BUQ (HE victimisation)				School victimisation					Sibling victimisation				
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.
BUQ (HE victimisation)														
1. Social	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Physical Act/Trace	.57**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Psychological	.67**	.76**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Direct Verbal	.77**	.63**	.66**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
School victimisation														
5. Physical	.38**	.43**	.40**	.41**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. Verbal	.40**	.19**	.27**	.36**	.62**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. Social Exclusion	.41**	.20**	.29**	.36**	.52**	.78**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8. Relational	.42**	.23**	.35**	.39**	.54**	.67**	.74**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9. Cyber	.48**	.36**	.47**	.45**	.51**	.56**	.57**	.68**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sibling victimisation														
10. Physical	.32**	.24**	.24**	.28**	.39**	.29**	.28**	.34**	.36**	-	-	-	-	-
11. Verbal	.34**	.24**	.20**	.31**	.34**	.33**	.32**	.39**	.38**	.71**	-	-	-	-
12. Social Exclusion	.32**	.27**	.26**	.28**	.42**	.34**	.37**	.39**	.30**	.58**	.67**	-	-	-
13. Relation	.48**	.40**	.33**	.41**	.44*	.30**	.32**	.42**	.33**	.50**	.59**	.66**	-	-
14. Cyber	.40**	.57**	.49**	.35**	.38**	.14**	.19**	.30**	.44**	.46**	.51**	.51**	.59**	-

6.4.1.2. Hypothesis 3.

3. All Victimisation types will be negatively correlated with Optimism, Self-Esteem, PWB (psychological wellbeing), BPN (needs satisfaction), and Positive Affect.

The data can be seen in Table 6.2; most correlations supported the hypothesis. A minority of correlations were not significant, which are highlighted in bold. Of note, most childhood victimisation types were not associated with PWB Autonomy. Sibling Relational and Cyber victimisation were not related to PWB Self-Acceptance, and Sibling Physical and Verbal victimisation were not related to BPN Relatedness. Lastly, all types except HE Physical victimisation were not significantly associated with Positive Affect. Effect sizes ranged from small (r^2 = .01) to large (r^2 = .26), accounting for 1% to 26% of variance shared.

6.4.1.3. Hypothesis 4.

4. All Victimisation types will be positively correlated with Depression and Negative Affect.

Table 6.3 shows the correlations between victimisation types, Depression, and Negative Affect. Bolded numbers represent non-significant correlations. The hypothesis was again mostly supported as all but two correlations were statistically significant at $p < .001$. There was no significant correlation between Sibling Relational and Sibling Cyber victimisation and Depression. Effect sizes ranged from small (r^2 = .02) to medium (r^2 = .13), with 2% to 13% of variance shared between variables.

Table 6.2

Correlations between victimisation types, Optimism, Self-Esteem, PWB, BPN, and Positive Affect

	Optimism	Self-Esteem	PWB Autonomy	PWB E Mastery[a]	PWB Personal Growth	PWB Positive Relations	PWB Purpose In Life	PWB Acceptance	BPN Autonomy	BPN Relatedness	BPN Competence	Positive Affect
School victimisation												
Physical	-.51**	-.15**	**-.04**	-.17**	-.12*	-.24**	-.15**	-.13**	-.20**	-.22**	-.12*	**.04**
Verbal	-.28**	-.27**	**-.03**	-.29**	-.12**	-.31**	-.15**	-.28**	-.27**	-.27**	-.18**	**-.08**
Social Exclusion	-.29**	-.31**	-.11*	-.33**	-.17**	-.33**	-.19**	-.32**	-.27**	-.28**	-.21**	**-.09**
Relational	-.27**	-.25**	**-.05**	-.29**	-.13**	-.27**	-.18**	-.23**	-.25**	-.18**	-15**	**-.04**
Cyber	-.27**	-.26**	-.10*	-.29**	-.23**	-.25**	-.22**	-.23**	-.27**	-.22**	-.20**	**-.05**
Sibling victimisation												
Physical	-.12*	-.13*	**-.07**	-.16**	-.15**	-.12*	-.15**	-.14**	-.17**	**-.08**	-.12*	**.02**
Verbal	-.16**	-.13*	**-.06**	-.20**	-.12*	-.11*	-.14**	-.14**	-.15**	**-.06**	-.13*	**-.03**
Social Exclusion	-.17**	-.19**	**-.05**	-.25**	-.18**	-.17**	-.19**	-.22**	-.23**	-.12*	-.17**	**-.07**
Relational	-.16**	**-.06**	**<.00**	-.16**	-.12*	-.14**	**-.10**	**-.07**	-.18**	-.13*	**-.05**	**.04**
Cyber	**-.10**	-.12*	-.11*	-.12*	-.22**	-.16**	-.17**	**-.08**	-.16**	-.14**	-.12*	**-.01**
BUQ (HE victimisation)												
Social	-.27**	-.23**	-.13**	-.30**	-.23**	-.30**	-.23**	-.25**	-.31**	-.29**	-.20**	**-.04**
Physical Act/Trace	**-.05**	**-.07**	**-.07**	**-.08**	-.19**	-.12*	-.13**	**-.04**	-.14**	-.13**	**-.06**	.09*
Psychological	-.14**	-.18**	-.10*	-.19**	-.20**	-.16**	-.22**	-.14**	-.24**	-.14**	-.15**	**.02**
Direct Verbal	-.22**	-.21**	-.12*	-.27**	-.23**	-.30**	-.22**	-.19**	-.29**	-.28**	-.17**	**-.01**

[a] Environmental Mastery

Table 6.3

Correlations between victimisation types, Depression, and Negative Affect

	Depression	Negative Affect
School victimisation		
Physical	.27**	.27**
Verbal	.29**	.30**
Social Exclusion	.32**	.31**
Relational	.32**	.33**
Cyber	.36**	.34**
Sibling victimisation		
Physical	.16**	.18**
Verbal	.16**	.17**
Social Exclusion	.16**	.23**
Relational	**.09**	.16**
Cyber	**.08**	.19**
BUQ (HE victimisation)		
Social	.26**	.32**
Physical Act/Trace	.13**	.22**
Psychological	.23**	.29**
Direct Verbal	.28**	.31**

6.4.1.4. Hypothesis 5.

5. All Victimisation types will be negatively correlated with IWMs, UBQ Belongingness (university belonging), and Social Connectedness.

Results can be seen in Table 6.4. Again, the numbers in bold represent non-significant correlations. First, most victimisation types correlated with IWM Self and IWM Other Familiar, but only School and BUQ (HE victimisation) correlated with IWM Other Stranger. For the UBQ scale (university belonging), no type of victimisation correlated with UBQ Affiliation, about half of all victimisation types correlated with UBQ Support and Acceptance, and only a few types of victimisation correlated with UBQ Faculty and Staff relations. However, for general belongingness, the Social Connectedness scale showed a majority of statistically significant correlations, especially with School victimisation. Effect sizes ranged from small (r^2 = .01) to medium (r^2 = .11), with shared variances between 1% and 11%.

Table 6.4

Correlations between victimisation types, IWM, UBQ, and Social Connectedness

	IWM Self	IWM Other Familiar	IWM Other Stranger	UBQ Affiliation	UBQ Support and Acceptance	UBQ Faculty and Staff Relations	Social Connectedness
School victimisation							
Physical	-.16**	-.25**	-.10*	**.04**	**-.06**	**-.01**	-.19**
Verbal	-.29**	-.24**	-.24**	**<-.00**	-.05	**-.03**	-.33**
Social Exclusion	-.33**	-.26**	-.26**	**<.00**	-.10*	**-.05**	-.33**
Relational	-.24**	-.28**	-.22**	**.05**	**-.07**	**-.09**	-.26**
Cyber	-.30**	-.26**	-.22**	**-.03**	**-.08**	-.13**	-.26**
Sibling victimisation							
Physical	-.15**	-.21**	**-.10**	**-.04**	**-.07**	**-.07**	-.12*
Verbal	-.15**	-.16**	**-.06**	**-.05**	-.13*	-.15**	**-.09**
Social Exclusion	-.18**	-.24**	**-.09**	**-.04**	**-.10**	**-.04**	-.13*
Relational	**-.03**	-.30**	**-.03**	**-.03**	-.17**	**-.08**	**-.10**
Cyber	-11*	-.25**	**-.02**	**-.03**	-.14**	**-.08**	**-.06**
BUQ (HE victimisation)							
Social	-.24**	-.32**	-.20**	**-.07**	-.16**	**-.08**	-.20**
Physical Act/Trace	**-.07**	-.23**	**-.02**	**.03**	-.15**	**-.06**	**-.01**
Psychological	-.17**	-.25**	-.10*	**.07**	**-.08**	**-.07**	**-.07**
Direct Verbal	-.19**	-.31**	-.18**	**-.06**	-.18**	-.11*	-.20**

6.4.2. Mediation Analyses. For the mediation analyses, Hayes' PROCESS custom dialogue box version 3.3 was downloaded and installed for SPSS. This technique tests whether variation in a predictor variable affects variation in one or more mediator variables, which in turn affects variation in the outcome variable. It is a process of modelling that tests hypotheses about the pathways through which the predictor variable carries its effects on the outcome variable. Though the normative view is that longitudinal data is necessary for establishing causal relationships, it is believed that inferences made about the cause are not drawn from the mathematical modelling process, but from our interpretations (Hayes, 2018). Consequently, if our inferences consider the limitations within the research, one can proceed with mediation analysis if there is a foundation of theoretical reasoning for doing so (Hayes, 2018). The data met the necessary assumptions of regression except for normality on the victimisation scales; however, Hayes (2018) claimed this is of little importance for regression. All pathways were tested using serial mediation and bootstrapping with 5000 resamples, which does not make assumptions about population distribution (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). A 99% bias-corrected confidence interval was obtained; this conservative significance level was adopted to account for the multiple tests. For all tests, school victimisation $N = 441$, and sibling victimisation $N = 358$. Although one study in the literature review tested self-perceptions as a moderator *and* mediator, I agree with Hayes (2018) who states that just because this is mathematically possible, it does not mean it makes theoretical sense to propose that the same variable acts as both. In light of the evidence that suggests IWMs can be altered by childhood experiences, self and other perceptions (IWMs) will only be tested as mediators in the current research.

6.4.2.1. Hypothesis 6.

6. The relationship between childhood victimisation and current wellbeing will be mediated by IWMs, BUQ (HE victimisation), Social Connectedness, and UBQ Belongingness (university belonging) in the following pathways:

a. School Victimisation and Optimism
b. School Victimisation and Self-Esteem
c. School Victimisation and Depression
d. School Victimisation and PWB (psychological wellbeing)
e. School Victimisation and BPN (needs satisfaction)
f. School Victimisation and Positive Affect
g. School Victimisation and Negative Affect
h. Sibling Victimisation and Optimism
i. Sibling Victimisation and Self-Esteem
j. Sibling Victimisation and Depression
k. Sibling Victimisation and PWB (psychological wellbeing)
l. Sibling Victimisation and BPN (needs satisfaction)
m. Sibling Victimisation and Positive Affect
n. Sibling Victimisation and Negative Affect

IWMs, BUQ, UBQ Belongingness, and Social Connectedness were hypothesised to mediate the relationship between childhood victimisation and wellbeing. Because the types of bullying highly correlated with each other, these were used in the analyses as merged groups of total school, total sibling, and total BUQ scores. Sroufe (2005) found that IWM of Other and Self are complimentary, so these were also merged to form an IWM total category for mediation analyses. Similarly, the UBQ Belonging subscales were highly correlated, so a total was

used for this also. Using total scores of subscales reduced the number of tests and the likelihood of a Type 1 error. It was decided to enter IWMs, BUQ, UBQ Belongingness, and Social Connectedness as serial mediators into the model:

> The goal when an investigator estimates a serial multiple mediator model is to investigate the direct and indirect effects of X on Y while modelling a process in which X causes M1, which in turn causes M2, and so forth, concluding with Y as the final consequent (Hayes, 2018, p. 167).

The decision to enter the mediators in series was based on the view that two separate models were plausible, though these models could theoretically be merged; when merged, the logical progression of the variables was in series. It is possible that separately (Figures 6.1. and 6.2.), childhood victimisation and wellbeing is mediated by IWM, and current victimisation and wellbeing is mediated by belongingness; however, testing these variables together in one model (Figure 6.3.) limits the number of tests, again reducing Type 1 error. Subsequently, all models were based on the hypothetical model in Figure 6.3., with either Sibling or School victimisation as the predictor (X), IWM as mediator one (M1), BUQ as mediator two (M2), Social Connectedness as mediator three (M3), UBQ Belongingness as mediator four (M4), and each wellbeing scale in turn as the dependent variable (Y), resulting in 14 models. The preceding correlational analyses not only showed that childhood victimisation is linked to wellbeing, but there were also significant correlations between predictor, mediator, and outcome variables. Because this research was not longitudinal, the study does not claim to be a causal model; however, the

timeframe of measured variables allows the logical inference of proposed events. School and sibling victimisation are retrospective measures, and so recalled events precede the other measures. IWMs are formed predominantly in childhood, which also precedes the other measures. IWMs likely affect our behaviour, which may lead to a continuation of a victim role and experiencing more bullying at university. Being bullied at university could impact the ability to socialise and feel belonging and general feelings of connectedness, which may, in turn, affect our connection to our institution. All factors are then likely to influence our wellbeing.

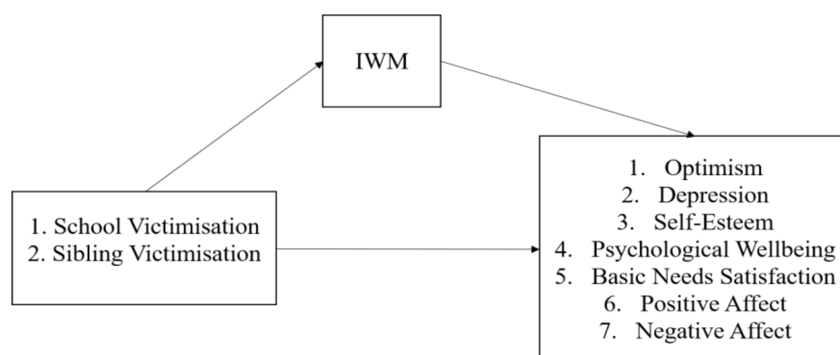

Figure 6.1. Mediation model with IWM as a single mediator between childhood victimisation and wellbeing

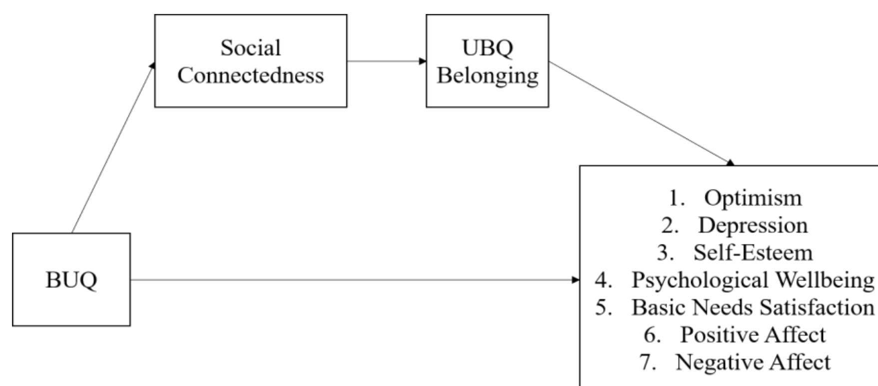

Figure 6.2. Mediation model with Social Connectedness and UBQ Belonging mediating between BUQ and wellbeing

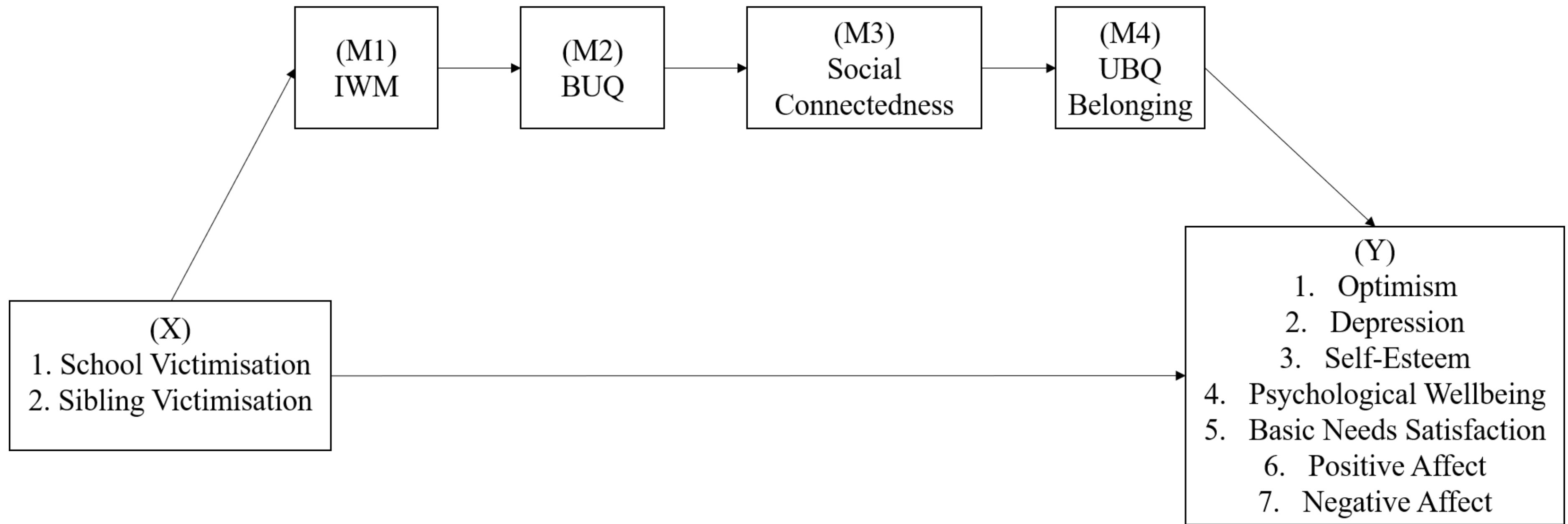

Figure 6.3. Chosen mediation model with serial mediators

6.4.2.1.1. Optimism. School victimisation indirectly influenced optimism through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging**.** Whilst holding all mediators constant, the direct effect of school victimisation on optimism was not significant (Table 6.5; bolded numbers in all tables show the direct effect without mediators, R^2 amount of variance, and confidence intervals). All predictors accounted for 38% of the variance in optimism scores. Sibling victimisation also indirectly influenced optimism through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging. Whilst holding all mediators constant, the direct effect of sibling victimisation on optimism was not significant. All predictors accounted for 40% of the variance in optimism scores.

6.4.2.1.2. Self-Esteem. School victimisation indirectly influenced self-esteem through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging**.** Whilst holding all mediators constant, the direct effect of school victimisation on self-esteem was not significant (Table 6.6). All predictors accounted for 55% of the variance in self-esteem scores. Sibling victimisation also indirectly influenced self-esteem through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging. Whilst holding the mediators constant, the direct effect of sibling victimisation on self-esteem was not significant. All predictors accounted for 57% of the variance in self-esteem scores.

6.4.2.1.3. Depression. School victimisation indirectly influenced depression through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging**.** However**,** whilst holding all mediators constant, the direct effect of school victimisation on depression remained

significant (Table 6.7), suggesting that other variables not included in the model also contribute significantly to depression. All predictors accounted for 38% of the variance in depression scores. Sibling victimisation also indirectly influenced depression through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging. Whilst holding the mediators constant, the direct effect of sibling victimisation on depression was not significant. All predictors accounted for 29% of the variance in depression scores.

6.4.2.1.4. Psychological wellbeing. School victimisation indirectly influenced psychological wellbeing through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging**.** Whilst holding all mediators constant, the direct effect of school victimisation on psychological wellbeing was not significant (Table 6.8). All predictors accounted for 72% of the variance in psychological wellbeing scores. Sibling victimisation also indirectly influenced psychological wellbeing through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging. Whilst holding the mediators constant, the direct effect of sibling victimisation on psychological wellbeing was not significant. All predictors accounted for 73% of the variance in psychological wellbeing scores.

6.4.2.1.5. Needs satisfaction. School victimisation indirectly influenced needs satisfaction through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging**.** Whilst holding all mediators constant, the direct effect of school victimisation on needs satisfaction was not significant (Table 6.9). All predictors accounted for 71% of the variance in needs satisfaction scores. Sibling victimisation also indirectly influenced needs satisfaction through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university

belonging. Whilst holding the mediators constant, the direct effect of sibling victimisation on needs satisfaction was not significant. All predictors accounted for 72% of the variance in needs satisfaction scores.

6.4.2.1.6. Positive affect. School victimisation indirectly influenced positive affect through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging. Whilst holding all mediators constant, the direct effect of school victimisation on positive affect was not significant (Table 6.10). The total effect was also not significant. All predictors accounted for 38% of the variance in positive affect scores. Sibling victimisation did not indirectly influence positive affect.

6.4.2.1.7. Negative affect. School victimisation indirectly influenced negative affect through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging. Whilst holding all mediators constant, the direct effect of school victimisation on negative affect was not significant (Table 6.11). All predictors accounted for 38% of the variance in negative affect scores. Sibling victimisation also indirectly influenced negative affect through its effects on IWM, bullying at university, social connectedness, and university belonging. Whilst holding the mediators constant, the direct effect of sibling victimisation on negative affect was not significant. All predictors accounted for 40% of the variance in negative affect scores.

Table 6.5

Mediation results for childhood victimisation and optimism

	Effect	SE	t	*P*	R²	CI	
						Lower	Upper
School victimisation							
Total	-.13	.02	-6.79	<.001	**.38**	-.17	-.08
Direct	-.04	.02	-2.20	**.029**		-.09	.01
Indirect	-.08	.02				**-.13**	**-.05**
Sibling victimisation							
Total	-.10	.03	-3.35	<.001	**.40**	-.02	-.17
Direct	<.01	.03	-.07	**.940**		-.07	.06
Indirect	-.09	.03				**-.16**	**-.03**

Note. School victimisation N = 441, Sibling victimisation N = 358.

Table 6.6

Mediation results for childhood victimisation and self-esteem

	Effect	SE	t	*P*	R²	CI	
						Lower	Upper
School victimisation							
Total	-.14	.02	-6.71	<.001	**.55**	-.20	-.09
Direct	-.02	.02	-1.15	**.251**		-.07	.03
Indirect	-.12	.02				**-.17**	**-.07**
Sibling victimisation							
Total	-.11	.03	-3.24	.001	**.57**	-.19	-.02
Direct	.01	.03	.22	**.823**		-.06	.07
Indirect	-.11	.03				**-.20**	**-.04**

Note. School victimisation N = 441, Sibling victimisation N = 358.

Table 6.7

Mediation results for childhood victimisation and depression

	Effect	SE	t	*P*	R²	CI	
						Lower	Upper
School victimisation							
Total	.10	.01	8.32	<.001	**.30**	.07	.12
Direct	.04	.01	3.35	**.001**		.01	.08
Indirect	.05	.01				**.03**	**.08**
Sibling victimisation							
Total	.05	.02	2.30	.003	**.29**	.01	.10
Direct	.01	.02	.48	**.629**		-.04	.05
Indirect	.05	.01				**.01**	**.08**

Table 6.8

Mediation results for childhood victimisation and psychological wellbeing

	Effect	SE	t	*P*	R²	CI	
						Lower	Upper
School victimisation							
Total	-.82	.12	-6.62	<.001	**.72**	-1.15	-.05
Direct	.11	.08	1.32	**.187**		-.11	.33
Indirect	-.94	.12				**-1.26**	**-.63**
Sibling victimisation							
Total	-.79	.19	-.4.13	<.001	**.73**	-1.28	-.29
Direct	-.02	.12	-.16	**.876**		-.32	.28
Indirect	-.77	.18				**-1.25**	**-.33**

Table 6.9

Mediation results for childhood victimisation and needs satisfaction

	Effect	SE	t	*P*	R^2	CI	
						Lower	Upper
School victimisation							
Total	-.02	<.01	-6.69	<.001	**.71**	-.03	-.01
Direct	<.01	<.01	1.41	**.158**		<-.01	.01
Indirect	-.02	<.01				**-.03**	**-.02**
Sibling victimisation							
Total	-.02	<.01	-3.58	<.001	**.72**	-.03	<-.01
Direct	<.01	<.01	.26	**.796**		-.01	.01
Indirect	-.02	.01				**-.03**	**-.01**

Table 6.10

Mediation results for childhood victimisation and positive affect

	Effect	SE	t	*P*	R^2	CI	
						Lower	Upper
School victimisation							
Total	-.04	.03	-1.25	.213	**.38**	-.12	.04
Direct	.06	.03	1.90	**.058**		-.02	.14
Indirect	-.11	.03				**-.18**	**-.03**
Sibling victimisation							
Total	-.03	.05	-.59	.555	**.41**	-.16	.10
Direct	.04	.04	.98	**.330**		-.07	.15
Indirect	-.07	.04				-.18	.03

Table 6.11

Mediation results for childhood victimisation and negative affect

	Effect	SE	t	*P*	R²	CI	
						Lower	Upper
School victimisation							
Total	.25	.03	8.32	<.001	**.38**	.17	.33
Direct	.07	.03	2.20	**.028**		-.01	.15
Indirect	.18	.02				**.13**	**.25**
Sibling victimisation							
Total	.20	.05	4.09	<.001	**.40**	.07	.32
Direct	.02	.04	.42	**.673**		-.09	.13
Indirect	.18	.04				**.08**	**.28**

6.5. Discussion

This study first investigated the hypothesis of whether victimisation types positively correlated; this was supported, as it was found that victimisation types all positively correlated at the 99% confidence level.

Childhood victimisation was hypothesised to be positively correlated with BUQ scores (HE victimisation); this was strongly supported. For School Victimisation (every participant) the effect size was large ($r^2 = .25$) which equated to School Victimisation sharing 25% of the variance with BUQ scores. For Sibling and School Victimisation together (only those with siblings) the effect size was large ($r^2 = .30$) equating to childhood victimisation scores sharing 30% of the variance with current victimisation scores.

Next, it was hypothesised that victimisation types would be negatively correlated with the positively salient wellbeing scales; most correlations supported this at the 99% confidence level. However, there was no association between one measure of autonomy and childhood victimisation. Also, physical bullying at university was not associated with Optimism, Self-Esteem, PWB Autonomy, and PWB Environmental Mastery. Last, Positive Affect was not associated with victimisation.

Victimisation was hypothesised to be positively correlated with negatively salient wellbeing scales; again, this was supported by significant correlations at the 99% confidence level. However, Sibling Relational and Sibling Cyber victimisation did not significantly associate with Depression scores.

Victimisation was also hypothesised to be negatively correlated with IWMs, UBQ Belongingness, and Social Connectedness; this was partially supported. School and BUQ negatively correlated with IWM subscales, but

Sibling Victimisation did not correlate with IWM of Other Stranger. No victimisation type correlated with UBQ Affiliation; only School Social Exclusion, Sibling Verbal, Sibling Relational, and Sibling Cyber victimisation correlated with UBQ Support and Acceptance; only School Cyber, Sibling Verbal, and BUQ Verbal victimisation correlated with UBQ Staff and Faculty Relations.

The last hypothesis was that there would be a relationship between childhood victimisation and current wellbeing, mediated by IWMs, BUQ, Social Connectedness, and UBQ belongingness. All pathways except Sibling Victimisation and Positive Affect showed evidence for mediation with 99% confidence. When holding the effects of the mediators constant, all direct effects except between School Victimisation and Depression were rendered not significant. This suggests that all the variables included in the model were important in accounting for the outcomes, however, School Victimisation had an unmeasured variable which significantly accounted for its effects on Depression. Effects given in the table are unstandardized in their original metric, as such, the indirect pathways can be directly interpreted (Preacher & Kelley, 2011). The results for Optimism show that for every one-point increase in School Victimisation, Optimism decreased by .08, and for Sibling Victimisation, by .09 (on a five-point scale). For every one-point increase in School Victimisation, Self-Esteem decreased by .12, and for Sibling Victimisation, by .11 (four-point scale). For every one-point increase in School Victimisation, Depression increased by .05, and for Sibling Victimisation, by .05 (four-point scale). For every one-point increase in School Victimisation, PWB decreased by .94, and for Sibling Victimisation, by .77 (six-point scale). For every one-point increase in School Victimisation, BPN scores decreased by .02, and for Sibling Victimisation, by .02

(seven-point scale). For every one-point increase in School Victimisation, Positive Affect decreased by .11 (five-point scale). For every one-point increase in School Victimisation, Negative Affect increased by .18, and for Sibling Victimisation, by .18 (five-point scale).

The associated amount that the predictor has on the outcome may appear small, but these values must be considered in relation to the total effect. For example, the indirect effect of School Victimisation on Negative Affect is .18, and the total effect is .25, which indicates that the indirect pathway (i.e. the mediators) was responsible for 72% of the association between the predictor and outcome.

Higher levels of victimisation were found to be associated with lower levels of positive wellbeing and higher scores on negative wellbeing scales. This supports the literature that shows victimisation is a negative experience and can have negative outcomes. In childhood, victimisation is known to be associated with short and long term loneliness, anxiety, low self-esteem (Graham et al., 2006) and depression (Ranta et al., 2009; Zwierzynska et al., 2013). Although no studies were found that looked at the association between victimisation and positive measures of wellbeing in childhood, there has been research identifying the negative effects of victimisation on classroom concentration (Boulton et al., 2012) and academic achievement (Juvonen et al., 2011). These variables could be categorised as the functioning aspect of wellbeing, indicating that victimisation can impact positive wellbeing functioning, as well as being associated with mental health problems. Similar is found in EA and adulthood, where victimisation is not only linked with increased mental health problems (Seelman et al., 2017) but also with increased leave of absences or poor work performance, that is, work functioning (Verkuil et al., 2015).

One notable finding was that victimisation was not associated with positive affect. This provides evidence for the suggestion that positive and negative experiences and feelings are on separate subscales, rather than a single continuum. If victimisation is significantly correlated with negative affect but not positive affect, it suggests that one can still feel positive emotions even when being victimised. If something is causing unhappiness in life, it does not mean that no positive emotions will be felt. This supports the two continua model of mental health and wellbeing, which proposes the possibility that a student diagnosed with a mental health problem may subjectively experience higher levels of mental wellbeing than a person who has never been diagnosed with a mental health problem (Houghton & Anderson, 2017).

One exception was that Sibling Relational and Cyber Victimisation were not significantly associated with depression. A possible reason for this could be that sibling bullying is so normalised that children may perceive attacks as standard sibling rivalry, and therefore do not internalise feelings or blame themselves for the attack; self-blame and shame are often linked with depression. However, childhood studies have established links between sibling victimisation and depression (Coyle et al., 2017; Bowes et al., 2014). Perhaps the retrospective nature of the current research made it difficult for EAs to remember sibling bullying incidences and so they may have underreported them.

School victimisation and BUQ negatively correlated with IWM, meaning that those with higher victimisation scores had lower IWM scores and more negative IWMs. This supports the literature that suggests victimisation is often linked with more negative perceptions of self and other (Grills & Ollendick, 2002; Troop-Gordon & Ladd, 2005). Experiences of school victimisation may affect

self-perceptions so much so that if attachment relationships were substandard, early IWMs are solidified as negative, or if early attachments relationships were good enough, IWMs are challenged and negatively changed. Sibling victimisation, however, did not correlate with IWM of Other Stranger; this could simply be explained by the fact that siblings are not strangers, and are well known, therefore negative experiences with siblings may not transfer to- or link with- thoughts about strangers. They are more likely to affect thoughts about familiar others.

No victimisation type correlated with UBQ Affiliation, suggesting that being victimised does not affect your ability to feel affiliated with your university. This may be because the university as an institution is not a person, and so is not responsible for bullying. Students may separate their feelings about people and about their sense of belonging to their institution, and view the latter as unrelated to whether they were victimised in school or at university. Even though the university is one microsystem (Chapter 2, Figure 2.1), or one macrosystem with interactions and microsystems within (Chapter 2, Figure 2.2), it could be suggested that students do not blame the social institution for being bullied. The university, therefore, does have some responsibility for the interactions happening within, but students may not see it this way.

Only School Social Exclusion, Sibling Verbal, Sibling Relational, and Sibling Cyber victimisation correlated with UBQ Support and Acceptance; and only School Cyber, Sibling Verbal, and BUQ Verbal victimisation correlated with UBQ Staff and Faculty Relations. The relational and verbal types of bullying link with how much students feel they can seek support from staff and feel accepted, and also how well they get on with staff and members of faculty. This is logical,

as any negative interpersonal event can impact how one feels about interacting with others, especially those who are above them in the formal social hierarchy (i.e. staff), and how well one fits and feels belonging within that situation.

Childhood victimisation correlated strongly with Social Connectedness, and Social and Direct Verbal HE victimisation correlated with Social Connectedness. This evidence shows that being victimised in childhood can disrupt a sense of connection to other people, which is an important human experience. It appears that current social and verbal victimisation, interpersonal aggression, can also impact how socially connected one feels to others in daily life. It is likely that being victimised relationally could disrupt one's sense of connection to other people. This supports Calvete's (2014) finding that emotional abuse by parents and peers increased depressive symptoms via the schema of disconnection and rejection, that is, emotional abuse led to the schema of disconnection. Being victimised emotionally or relationally may decrease the likelihood of wanting to connect to the world, or may increase feelings of avoidance through defensive independence, or fear of being rejected (Rohner et al., 2005).

There was evidence for mediation with all proposed pathways, showing strong support for the hypothesis that how we think about ourselves and others is linked with positive and negative wellbeing (Troop-Gordon & Ladd, 2005). Taking a systemic lifespan approach, this evidence shows that there may be complex pathways involving multiple level mediators through which people could get caught in vicious circles of victimisation (Vartia-Väänänen, 2003). Although the measured variables in this study were retrospective and cross-sectional, the childhood victimisation must have happened before the current victimisation, and

IWMs are also theorised to solidify in childhood, becoming more difficult to change as an adult. Further discussion of this study can be found in Chapter 8.

6.6. Conclusion

This study provides evidence that individual factors are not fully responsible for being victimised; social factors can also have an impact. How we perceive ourselves and others is likely to have a large impact on everything we do, as we see the world through our own experiences and apply our perceptions to situations and interactions. However, personal characteristics that can make us members of groups, such as BME ethnicity or low SES, can also impact on relational dynamics and in-group out-group behaviour and may increase the likelihood of being targeted. Further still, whether we connect socially to others or our institution and feel belonging, may affect the likelihood of being targeted, or impact how well one can cope with perceived bullying. The interactions between time and different levels of variables are likely to be complex; it is recommended that a long-term study, such as that by Wolke et al. (2013) who used data from a large longitudinal survey, be undertaken to investigate this further.

The next chapter examines a broader feature of the university macrosystem, attempting to investigate policy and procedure adopted by the university in cases of bullying. Looking at anti-bullying policies may help to build a bigger picture of the attention and seriousness HE institutions give to bullying and harassment.

7. Student Anti-Bullying and/or Harassment Policies at University

7.1. School Context

By law in the UK, all state schools must have a behaviour policy in place, which includes a section on the prevention of bullying ("Bullying at school", 2015). A policy is mandatory in an attempt to eliminate bullying, the individual negative effects of being bullied, and the effects on the school environment. The first UK Government anti-bullying pack for schools suggested that "Challenging bullying effectively will improve the safety and happiness of pupils, show that the school cares, and make clear to bullies that the behaviour is unacceptable" (DfE, 1994, p.4). It is the school's responsibility to compose a user-friendly policy for the whole school community to understand, including parents, pupils, and staff (Purdy & Smith, 2016). However, an early synthesis found that whole-school anti-bullying approaches that included an anti-bullying policy showed few significant reductions in self-reported victimisation (Smith, Schneider, Smith, & Ananiadou, 2004). Smith et al. (2004) noted that amongst the 14 studies included in the analysis, implementation of the whole school approach varied so much so that a tenable comparison concerning effectiveness could not be confidently made. As such, the small number of significant reductions in bullying may have been due to methodological differences, such as whether the participants were randomly assigned to groups or not, the ages of participants, and the number of months to post-test follow-up. In contrast, a more recent synthesis by Rigby and Smith (2011) showed that self-reported peer victimisation has declined slightly from 1990-2009, noting the findings run parallel to implementations of anti-bullying programmes with policies. The mixed evidence for the effectiveness of anti-bullying policies in schools suggests limited importance of the presence of anti-

bullying policies alone; perhaps more school-wide interventions alongside policies are needed to address a negative school culture.

In the US, there have been mixed findings. Hall (2017) conducted a systematic review of 21 studies on school anti-bullying policies. He wanted to investigate the effectiveness of school policies in reducing bullying by systematically reviewing the characteristics of studies researching anti-bullying policies and bullying. The perceptions of policy effectiveness varied greatly, ranging from 5% to 88% of students, teachers, and other school professionals thinking policies are effective to some degree, whilst 4% to 79% perceived policies to be ineffective. These percentages give no clear indication of the effectiveness of policies due to the large overlap between the percentages of those thinking policies were in/effective, and because of the different perspectives from different groups. Three studies found a significant association and eight studies found no significant associations between the presence of a policy and lower general bullying rates. Hall concluded that the presence of a policy is necessary but not sufficient: policy must be implemented as intended after it is adopted, which was not the case in any of the school's in the study. He mentioned that analysing policy content instead of the presence or absence of a policy is needed in future for a better understanding of its effectiveness. For example, a policy may be present, but it might not be evidence-based. There is also variation between content; general components are often included, such as outlining consequences of being found bullying, but other important information (such as signposts for mental health support) is omitted. Lastly, policies may be incomprehensible and full of jargon, whereas ideally, educators need to understand all concepts to increase the likelihood of implementation.

This recommendation of analysing anti-bullying policy content supports Hatzenbuehler, Schwab-Reese, Ranapurwala, Hertz, and Ramirez's (2015) findings on youth in 25 US states. Hatzenbuehler et al. took data from the national youth risk behaviour surveillance survey (YRBSS), resulting in a sample of 61,691 youths. There were two questions on this relating to bullying: during the past 12 months have you ever been bullied on school property, and have you ever been electronically bullied? There was some variation of bullying rates across states, ranging from 14% in Alabama to 27% in South Dakota. The Department of Education had statutory laws governing bullying which recommended 16 items to include in school-level policy - states were assigned compliance scores depending on how many items were included. Across legislative components, increased compliance with recommendations was associated with lower rates of bullying and cyberbullying. Three components were associated with these decreased odds of bullying: a statement of scope, a description of prohibited behaviours, and requirements for districts to implement local policies. A policy that clearly defined prohibited behaviours was associated with reduced risk of bullying, but the results did not establish which behaviours were responsible for the association. There was a link between the policy content and lower rates of bullying; however, this study did not record which particular bullying behaviours were associated with the reduced rates of bullying, and was limited with only *yes* or *no* responses on the bullying scale. Subsequently, this paper suggests that the more comprehensive policies are those which include all four subtypes of prohibited school bullying behaviours (i.e. verbal, psychological or relational, physical, and cyber). Lastly, because the findings only showed an association, there may have been other variables that led to the reduced rates of bullying, rather than the

policies, or the policies alone; an interaction between presence of policy, policy content, and whole school climate may be responsible.

There have been positive findings, however, associated with the implementation of inclusive anti-bullying policies regarding Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual youth (LGB). Hatzenbuehler and Keyes (2013) used data from an annual Oregon Healthy Teens survey which included 34 counties in Oregon. They pooled data from 2006-2008, which resulted in a sample of 31,892 youths. They wanted to investigate a broader social contextual influence on a vulnerable student group's development of mental health issues; to do this they coded anti-bullying policies from the schools within the sample. Policies were coded for whether they included LGB students as a protected group; some school policies did not include this, whereas some schools had no policy at all. They investigated the hypothesis of whether LGB students in counties with more school districts with inclusive (i.e. including LGB as a protected group) anti-bullying policies had lower risk for suicide attempts. The researchers found that LGB respondents were significantly more likely to have attempted suicide in the past 12 months than students identifying as heterosexual; LGB youths were twice as likely as heterosexual youths to report peer victimisation in the past 30 days; and lesbian and gay youths (but not bisexual) in the least-inclusive policy counties were over twice as likely to have attempted suicide compared to those in inclusive counties, within the past year. Peer victimisation was more likely to occur in the counties with least inclusive policies, but when controlling for peer victimisation, a higher proportion of districts with inclusive anti-bullying policies was associated with reduced risks of suicide attempts by lesbian and gay youth. This indicates that as well as reduced peer victimisation being associated with the presence of inclusive

policies, fewer suicide attempts were also made where there was an inclusive policy - the inclusive policy seemed to have an additional positive effect on the youths above that of reduced victimisation. An anti-bullying policy that omitted LGB youth as a protected group was not associated with reduced risk of suicide attempts. These findings suggest that it is not just peer victimisation that is linked to the increased suicide attempts by the LGB youth. The inclusive anti-bullying policy was a protective factor in LGB mental health problems; LGB youth may feel they have a safety net in the inclusive policy if they are bullied, or the presence of an inclusive policy could indicate that the whole school is inclusive in other ways. This exemplifies, within an ecological framework, how broader organisational level factors can potentially impact upon individual experience. The study was cross-sectional so cannot claim cause and effect between the existence and/or quality of policy and lower rates of bullying and mental health problems, but the sample was accrued from several years' worth of students. By having a diverse cross-section, variations between age groups may have been identified.

Similar mixed findings can be seen from the content of policies in Canada. Roberge (2011) obtained school board policies from two provinces in Canada (56 from Ontario, eight from Saskatchewan), and analysed them based on the framework from Smith, Smith, Osborn, and Samara (2008) whilst also including recommendations from local government strategies of each province. Roberge looked at the number of schools that incorporated the framework criteria, rather than individual school scores; the criterion was considered moderately satisfied if the content was found in 50%-94% of policies, and marginally satisfied if found in less than 49% of schools. Almost all categories had moderate satisfaction in

both provinces, however, mention of bullying due to sexual orientation, gender, special needs, or religious belief, and presenting a positive school climate, were low in the Saskatchewan province. There was a considerably smaller sample from Saskatchewan than from Ontario; it is possible that a greater sample would have raised the average of schools satisfying the criteria moderately. Both regions scored low in mentioning sensitivity to diversity and reporting and responding to bullying. These findings suggest that improvements should be made to policies so that all school boards incorporate vital criteria, such as characteristics that would be protected by law in the UK under the Protection from Harassment Act (1997). This is especially important in light of the findings from Hatzenbuehler and Keyes (2013) who showed that LGB youth had reduced suicide attempts if they were at a school with an inclusive policy.

7.2. University Context

From an extensive search, no academic research evaluating anti-bullying policies in the UK university context was found. One Canadian study by Cismaru and Cismaru (2018) was identified that looked at Canadian university harassment and bullying policies. They conducted an online search over three years (2014-2017) for universities in Canada with over 5,000 students and then searched on the university websites for the policies. Their final sample included 39 institutions. The researchers found that the information in the policies differed greatly between universities, though sexual harassment, the effects of bullying, and the importance of a respectful environment, were commonly addressed. Some policies used the terms bullying and harassment interchangeably, and some gave separate definitions.

The researchers found that most policies offered advice and help available to students in various forms, such as counselling, and the availability of peer or harassment advisers. The policies often advised students not to ignore bullying, to tell the harasser to stop, and avoid being alone with the harasser. The latter points may contradict each other as it is difficult to tell the harasser to stop the behaviour if the target cannot be alone with them - the target may have nobody to accompany them. Alongside advice for targets, the policies also stated that everyone can take action against bullying and object to it if witnessed.

A systematic evaluation of the policies was not reported, and so their content could not be compared for quality of information. The authors reported observations only; they did not provide a collation of information about which policy included what, and which policies were likely to be the most successful in preventing or informing students about bullying and harassment. Cismaru and Cismaru (2018) noted that there was little consistency of campaigns, initiatives, and programmes between universities, instead, there was an array of involvement from different societies, clubs, and sports teams on campus and country-wide. The authors recommended having consistent, easy-to-access policies, and information and adequate investigations and response times to ensure a respectful campus.

One blog post was identified that reviewed university policies for reported bullying and sexual harassment, identified strengths and weaknesses, and made recommendations from their findings (Alliance of Women in Academia [AWA], 2018). Six policies were examined (four universities in London, one in Manchester and one in Oxford). Based on the professional and personal experiences of the AWA members, and a Lad Culture audit report (NUS, 2015), they proposed three main criteria that ought to be considered for a policy to be

efficacious: existence and quality of policy, reporting channels, and the effectiveness of policy and consequences. They found that each institution provided definitions, the policies were publicly available, and they mentioned reporting mechanisms. However, reporting channels were of unequal quality and often referred to other policies; one policy was clear in the reporting process, whilst the others were poor at outlining procedures. All six universities suggested informal resolution of bullying and sexual harassment, but none mentioned a specific person that dealt with bullying reports; one even suggested unqualified student reps could be a source of support for tackling sexual harassment. The AWA (2018) stated:

> The lack of adequate procedure and reporting mechanisms puts all the risk and cost of reporting onto the victims, further exposing them to retaliations in cases where the perpetrator is a member of staff or a colleague in a higher hierarchical position. Given the power relations at stake in academia, and the dependence of students and young scholars on their more established colleagues to succeed professionally, it is imperative that an external actor be in charge of listening to and supporting victims.

Lastly, the consequences of bullying were unclear in all six policies, with no established scales of punishment and little protection provided for the victim. Consequently, the Alliance recommended the following steps for institutions to take: have a dedicated webpage for bullying information, establish clear reporting procedures with trained non-academic staff, ensure the reporting system is confidential, automatically investigate when a report is made, keep a record of

allegations, and introduce continuous mandatory training for all members of staff and students.

No further research was found regarding anti-bullying policies within universities; therefore, no conclusions can be made about levels of bullying being linked to the existence or quality of policies in UK universities. Little research has been done on the frequency of bullying at UK universities, hence, the importance of a good policy in relation to this is also unknown. My research attempts to address both points; students from various UK universities were asked about their bullying experiences within the last year (Chapter 5), and a content analysis was conducted on as many university anti-bullying policies that were obtainable.

Within policies, there is likely to be a crossover between the labels of bullying and harassment in adulthood (including university) because there is no law that universities should have an anti-bullying policy; however, there is harassment law that institutions must abide by. Institutions have a Public Sector Equality Duty and a duty of care to their students and staff, and the Protection from Harassment Act (1997) outlaws bullying and harassment relating to protected characteristics. This is similar to the duties of workplaces, however, the student and workplace populations are different. Most students can be classed as EAs and are still learning and maturing and may not have the confidence to address bullying or harassment themselves via informal means (which workplace policies often stipulate as a first step). However, as over 18s, they are responsible for themselves by law, and lecturers are not in the same position as teachers, so they cannot adopt a protector role as they do with children at school. The onus of responsibility is squarely on the student, which minimises the responsibility of the whole university context and the community within. It would be prudent for this

community to be collectively responsible for their behaviour, for challenging bad behaviour, and for being active bystanders, with all students and staff encouraging respectful behaviour. University is more of a learning environment than a workplace for students, and so policies may be best designed with this in mind, rather than being modelled on workplace policy. As with school anti-bullying policies, a whole-university approach is desired, where a collectively positive university climate should be encouraged, rather than placing responsibility on the individual for avoiding victimisation and then addressing it.

7.3. Workplace Context

It is interesting to note that the content of student anti-bullying policies at university outlined by the AWA (2018) is similar to those of workplace bullying policies (Salin, 2008). Further, some universities have the same policy for students and staff, classing employees and students as one single population, when there are clear differences between them and how they might experience bullying. As well as there being a possible age difference between most students and established staff, staff at university are normally within one of many formal hierarchical structures. If they are at the top of a structure in a managerial or professorial role, they are assigned a certain level of power (as mentioned in Chapter 3). Bullying and harassment might need to be addressed in a way allowing for considerations of possible abuse of this more formal power. With students, there are rarely any formal hierarchies, but as seen in Chapter 3, informal hierarchies are often created. The difference between the staff and students being that those informal student hierarchies are not always visible to outsiders (i.e. staff); subsequently, university anti-bullying policies may need to

include more nuanced points to cover the informal power differences that exist or have been created by students who bully other students.

Exploring the content of workplace policies in greater detail, Salin (2008) looked at organisational anti-bullying policies in Finnish municipalities. She sent surveys to each municipality in Finland and received 205 responses from Human Resources (HR) managers at various organisations. The survey asked about the existence of written anti-bullying policies, whether information or training had been provided, and whether surveys had been conducted and statistics recorded at the organisation.

Salin (2008) also requested that organisations send her a copy of their anti-bullying policies; 27 were obtained and analysed. Overall, only 55% of organisations had an anti-bullying policy and only 25% of them recorded bullying and kept statistics on incidences. Regarding the policy content, emphasis was given to defining bullying, giving recommendations to victims, perpetrators, and managers, and clarifying what did not constitute workplace bullying. Half of the policies mentioned potential disciplinary actions, and all documents instructed the victim to confront the harasser and make it clear their behaviour was offensive. Managers were supposed to hear all parties and gather evidence, but it was not clear how to do this; policies mentioned people who could be approached, but did not specify names or roles. Also of note was that many documents used the same sentences and words, suggesting copy and pasting, rather than content-driven by consultation with employees and managers within the organisations. For example, in other areas, such as community mental health, the process of policy-making with meaningful stakeholder participation is important for empowerment and the mental health of the people who will use the policies (Nelson, Lord, & Ochocka,

2001). Subsequently, policies need to include all vital information whilst maintaining organisation-specificity by relating to the problems that each organisation may suffer (e.g. one may have issues with sexual harassment, another with poor management style resulting in bullying).

The Finnish system seems to be more progressive than evidence from the US system - this is unsurprising considering bullying research originated from Scandinavia (e.g. Dan Olweus). Cowan (2011) gained a sample from a large HR management association company in one US state, which resulted in 36 interviewees. Cowan wanted to find out whether companies used anti-bullying policies, what gets communicated to workers about bullying, and how HR team members interpreted policies. After analysing the data using grounded theory, she found that only one out of 36 people thought their organisation had a policy that used the word bullying. Sixteen people said they did have an anti-bullying policy but it was not labelled as anti-bullying, rather, a mixture of other policies (e.g. respect and working together); some HR members thought these were sufficient. Additionally, 14 interviewees thought their organisation did not have a policy to cover bullying; further still, they believed that bullying could not be covered under the harassment policies. Cowan concluded that the lack of a definition or naming bullying in a policy could lead to the perception that the organisation does not prioritise the prevention of workplace bullying. The absence of policies could send negative signs to current and potential employees. The general policies did not include steps the victim could take, repercussions, or how to address violations. In an organisation which has a bullying culture, general policies would be unhelpful, whereas actual bullying policies with clear routes to follow, may give individuals more power to deal with the situation.

It is problematic that the implementation of bullying policies in the workplace does not seem to be resulting in a decrease in bullying incidents, for example, 20,000 calls were made to ACAS during 2015 regarding bullying and harassment (ACAS, 2015). This suggests that there may be barriers between being bullied in the workplace and the success of anti-bullying policies. One possible factor could be trust between targets of bullying and the HR staff to whom the targets reported incidents. Harrington, Rayner, and Warren (2012) used data from 17 interviews that were taken from a larger study with Human Resources Practitioners (HRPs) in the UK; all 17 members were responsible for dealing with bullying reports, and seven had titles relating to anti-bullying, such as bullying and harassment officer. All organisations in which the 17 HRPs worked had anti-bullying policies. Interviewees were asked for their opinions on what they considered bullying to be, on handling cases of reported bullying, and to describe challenging cases. HRPs said that dealing with bullying reports was one of the most challenging tasks of their job role due to having to balance the needs of various stakeholders (i.e. the employee, accused employer, and upper management). Whichever side the HRP sympathises with, there will be consequences; for example, if the HRP concludes a manager is bullying an employee, this has serious implications for the individual but also indicates that the company allowed this person to become a powerful leader of the organisation. The HRPs particularly voiced their reluctance to raise bullying allegations with their managers (whom some of the allegations were about), and to validate the subjective experience of the person who was bullied by labelling the behaviour as bullying. HRPs admitted to “repackaging” bullying claims and reporting them in a way that suggested the behaviour was just managerial style. This is problematic; if

the HRP (who is responsible for implementing the anti-bullying policy) does not trust the words of the claimant, the report of bullying is denied, and the bullying will not be resolved, likely leaving the employee feeling disenfranchised and disbelieved.

The effects of a bullying report not being believed or resolved can reach beyond the individual. In reference to research mentioned earlier in Chapter 1 on school climate, bullying at any establishment can have a knock-on effect. If an individual knows nothing will be done to tackle bullying, this information is likely to spread throughout the workforce generating a toxic atmosphere built on mistrust. Other victimised people may avoid reporting incidents as they believe that nothing will be done. This inadvertently lends support to the person perpetrating bullying, who can see that their negative actions have few or no consequences. The resulting atmosphere may impact the mental health of staff and also work efficiency due to poor motivation and engagement, similar to how a school with a climate of bullying has been known to impact upon whole school grades (Lacey & Cornell, 2013; Strøm et al., 2013).

Another study by Woodrow and Guest (2014) found similar reluctance by management staff to implement bullying policies. They did case study research at one London hospital, drawing sources of data from multiple channels. They explored what policies and practices were in place; conducted 12 interviews (with nurses, administrative staff, one consultant, and one manager who had been involved in bullying cases); looked at best practice policies suggested by the literature; grievance files of bullying reports; and data on the levels of bullying from the annual national NHS (National Health Service) survey from 2008 and 2009 (N = 895). Woodrow and Guest hypothesised that better policy

implementation would be associated with better employee outcomes; they found that the organisation's policy and guidelines were in line with recommended practice; however, bullying instances had risen from 2005-2008, and levels of bullying at this hospital had been constantly above average. Even though the hospital had the best guidance policies in place, bullying was still happening. In some cases, managers implemented the policy with the best interests of the employee in mind, but more often, managers failed to get involved with resolving the conflict and did not implement the policy. Managers were found to lack the confidence to implement the policy, they had little motivation to do so, or the manager and the accused were friends outside of work so were in a biased position against the complainant.

Consequently, the ideal of having the recommended policy in place is seriously undermined without proper implementation. This places responsibility on the management to have had the necessary training to be confident to implement policy procedure. The consequences of bullying in this hospital also had negative indirect effects on the quality of patient care; thus, it is vital for the health of the individual and the organisation that the barriers to implementing anti-bullying policies are eradicated. The authors suggested that awareness campaigns may have increased the incidences of bullying reports due to improved identification; however, they suspected that rising figures were due to poor implementation of policies.

It is apparent that even if an organisation has an excellent quality anti-bullying policy, this does not deter bullying alone. An ACAS report from 2015 supported the notion that policies are not working on their own (ACAS, 2015); it found that policies and skilled managers are essential for addressing bullying in

the workplace, however, policies often rely on the targets to resolve the situation themselves. Some individuals are not able to do this due to barriers created to protect themselves from the very behaviour which they are expected to resolve (e.g. they may have low self-esteem, little confidence, and no assertiveness skills). Thus, a quality anti-bullying policy, alongside the promotion of a positive workplace culture, may work better in deterring bullying and incivility (ACAS, 2015).

The current study aimed to investigate the existence and quality of anti-bullying policies at UK universities. There is no published research exploring anti-bullying policies at universities in the UK, as a result, this study hopes to fill the gap in the literature. Policy is important in this context as there is often ambiguity by students about what behaviour is classed as bullying, what to do when witnessing it, and where to seek help when experiencing it. Furthermore, as Hall (2017) mentioned, analysing the content of policies is needed for a better understanding of their effectiveness, rather than just noting the absence or presence of a policy. This study measures policy content using a codebook devised from school, workplace, and a small sample of university policies.

7.4. Aims

1. To obtain and analyse as many UK university bullying and/or harassment policies as possible.
2. To identify what they include, how instructive and informative they are, and how various sections are prioritised.
3. To compare policies' content.

7.5. Method.

7.5.1. Participants. Bullying and/or harassment policies were obtained from 62 UK universities and coded. The Good University Guide listed 131 universities on the website, with an additional 13 for Music Dance and Drama, and so from a total of 144 UK universities, 62 policies were analysed (43%). For the year 2016 to 2017, each university's website was searched for the specified policy; the policy was downloaded if located or requested from the university via a Freedom of Information (FOI) Act request if one was not found. Fifty-three policies were publicly available and downloaded from the internet. For the remaining universities, an FOI request was sent to the university when an email address could be found. I received 21 responses to this request: most respondents either said they did not have a specific bullying policy or directed me to subsections of other policies. Six universities replied with the bullying and harassment policy attached; this gave a total of 59. In 2019, a further search was undertaken to re-check the universities where a policy had not been obtained - this resulted in an additional three policies which had been created in the intervening year, totalling 62. On a read-through of three dignity and respect/dignity at work policies, the content looked similar to bullying and harassment policies, but it was decided to only include those that were titled bullying and/or harassment. This was to ensure comparisons were being made like-for-like, for example, some dignity and respect policies may have different information to what is expected in a bullying and harassment policy.

7.5.2. Materials/procedure.

7.5.2.1. Coding framework and guidelines development. A draft codebook and guidelines were compiled using information from three outlets.

First, I looked at Smith and colleagues' (2008) code framework for school policies and used this as a starting point for a university codebook. Most items were identified as suitable for a university policy. Wording was altered slightly to apply to the university context (e.g. student and lecturer replaced pupil and teacher). Twenty-six items were used as a starting point (Appendix Q). Five items were excluded: (a) definition of bullying, (b) discuss advice for parents about bullying, (c) discuss if/when/how parents will be informed, (d) mention the responsibilities of parents if they know of bullying, (e) mention follow up to see whether sanctions were effective. A bullying definition of some form was deemed to be an obvious inclusion, and so would be superfluous to include when looking for differences between policies. Due to students being over 18 at university, the Data Protection Act 2018 applies, and so the university cannot disclose anything to a parent without their child's permission; thus, items with parental involvement cannot apply. Lastly, a follow up was thought too difficult to implement at university; for example, if a student was sanctioned for verbally bullying another, it would be impossible to check that they had ceased the verbal abuse. Whereas, in a school setting, children's days are more structured and observable. The items were divided into subsections based on Smith et al (2008), see Table 7.7.

To investigate what additional information there may be in university bullying and harassment policies, I consulted a list of UK universities and downloaded the first six policies I could find from university websites, in alphabetical order (Abertay, Aston, Bolton, Buckinghamshire New, Chichester, Edge Hill). It was expected that these policies would not be similar based on arbitrary alphabetical categorisation. I conducted a mini content analysis on these six policies, familiarising with the text after several read-throughs, and then

making simple notes in the margins. These notes were written up separately for each of the six policies and then compared. At this early stage, there were some significant similarities and differences between policy content. I also consulted the ACAS web pages for information about workplace bullying and harassment to check for additional information that may have been missed from looking at university policies alone (ACAS, 2014). Based on these additional sources, 49 (Appendix R) items were added to the original 26, resulting in a 75-item codebook. The draft codebook and guidelines were discussed in a meeting with all three coders resulting in the removal of three items (a) mention it is relevant to students; (b) mention it is relevant to staff, and; (c) mention relevance to university workers. These items were removed because there was already an all-encompassing item "mention who the policy applies to"; this left 72 items. Other items were also reworded. We decided to independently code a policy using this initial codebook and reconvene on completion.

7.5.3. Interrater reliability for codebook draft 1. Percentage agreements were not used to check Interrater reliability (IRR) as they do not correct for chance-agreement and therefore overestimate the level of agreement (Hallgren, 2012). Instead, the Fleiss Kappa (Fleiss, 1971) extension bundle for SPSS was downloaded, which is suitable for more than two coders and studies where any number of coders are sampled from a larger population of coders. The coding framework was intended to be user-friendly so anyone with the codebook and guidelines could code a university bullying policy. One random policy was initially coded by all three coders using the first draft of the code framework. The Fleiss Kappa statistic was .51; Landis and Koch (1977) proposed guidelines suggesting this figure represents only moderate agreement. To probe further,

ordinary Cohen's Kappa was calculated to identify the two-way agreement between the three coders. The results are shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1

Cohen's Kappa scores between the three coders

	Coder 2	Coder 3
Coder 1	.62	.43
Coder 2	-	.51

There were some differences between the coders' scores; two out of the three coders had more subject-specific knowledge. Taking both Fleiss and Kappa scores into consideration, more training for the coders and honing of items was necessary to improve the framework. The three coders met to discuss how our interpretations differed, the challenges and changes needing to be made, and the time taken to code. I took far longer to code (than was probably necessary) and this may have led to more inferences on my part, rather than taking the text at face value. The other coders also each had a different way of coding based on their existing knowledge frameworks of bullying. Email correspondence between the three coders led to more changes and versions of the draft codebook. Similar items were deleted, some were rephrased, and some needed additional information. Further training was undertaken to discuss the codebook and the interpretation of items. The changes were made, and a new version of the code framework was created with 67 items (see Appendix S). Deleted items from the first version are seen in Table 7.2., and added items can be seen in Table 7.3. With the newest form of the codebook, the coders coded a new policy independently and reconvened on completion.

Table 7.2

Deleted items from the first version of the coding framework

Deleted item	Reason for deletion
Mention “acceptable/unacceptable behaviour”?	Too similar to other items
Mention hate crime?	Too similar to items referring to bullying and harassment due to protected characteristics
Mention the responsibilities of other university staff if they know of bullying?	Too vague - there was already an item asking how employees could respond to a report
Discuss what actions will be taken if the bullying persists?	Too vague - other items included what students should do if they are aware of bullying, and what sanctions there are
Mention university responsibility for eliminating all forms of unfairness/discrimination?	Too vague - other items mentioned that students and staff have a responsibility to each other, and the university is bound by legal responsibilities
Mention responsibility of student to read the policy?	Irrelevant - the student would have to be reading the policy already to know that they were responsible for reading the policy
Mention manager’s responsibilities for treating their staff acceptably/with respect?	Irrelevant - the focus was students’ wellbeing and mention of staff was unlikely to be in policies only for students
Mention advice and guidance on the procedures?	Too vague - other items specify procedures of reporting
Mention encouraging cooperative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, improving university climate, or creating a safe environment?	Too much information in one item - an item was retained about feeling safe and belonging
Mention the preventative role of activities (societies?) and supervisors (bullying ambassadors?)?	Too broad - an item was retained about preventative roles of campaigns and training about bullying

Table 7.3

Added items to the first version of the coding framework

Added item	Reason for addition
Mention the preventative role of campaigns?	Some universities have national campaigns and offer regular training on bullying and harassment
Mention that students should record evidence, where practical, of bullying/harassment incidents?	This coincides with recording evidence for reporting a crime to the police; evidence would help the student build a case if they decided to formally complain
Mention what sanctions there are for bullying behaviour?	The presence of sanctions indicates the university are taking the issue seriously and that perpetration will have consequences
Mentions disablist bullying?	Disability is included in the protected characteristics and there is research on disablist bullying amongst school children
Does the definition of bullying mention repetition or potential to be repeated?	Repetition is a key component of the well-known definition of bullying

7.5.4. Interrater reliability for codebook draft 2. Following the same method as the first policy, Fleiss Kappa agreement between the three coders was calculated as .38, which was fair (Landis & Koch, 1977). To identify discrepancies between the three coders, Cohen's Kappa statistic was also computed.

Table 7.4

Cohen's Kappa scores for draft two of the codebook between the three coders

	Coder 2	Coder 3
Coder 1	.30	.66
Coder 2	-	.28

Table 7.4 clearly shows that coder one and three had the best agreement rating, being the only improved rating from the first coding process. The reduced agreement between the three coders was concerning, and so we met and discussed

where there was disagreement for variables. Some items had just been missed, whereas others were viewed more manifestly when they may have required latent interpretation. Coder two mentioned she had changed her method of rating the second time to looking more manifestly for exact wording, whereas the other two coders had background knowledge in the subject and could have interpreted items if they were not explicitly mentioned. It was thereafter agreed that items and the descriptions in the guidelines should be made more explicit (see Appendix T for final guidelines). The mild debate that arose based on the alternate interpretations of guidelines and items showcased the ease of misinterpreting what should be simple statements that are created for students' understanding. The team decided to base their coding on sentences that could potentially fit the item and guidelines because there are many different terms used around negative behaviour. To require a certain word to be present would result in missing and therefore incorrectly coding items in policies. Based on this discussion, three more items were dropped, seen in Table 7.5. It was decided that for the final coding, the subsample for the reliability check should be conducted by coder three due to the increased reliability agreement between three and one; therefore, it is acknowledged that some knowledge of bullying may be required to use the code framework for analysing policies in future. A final version of the codebook was developed with 64 items divided into four sections, see Table 7.7. Coder one coded all 62 policies using this codebook, with coder 3 coding 25% (16) of these for reliability (based on Wimmer & Dominick's recommendation, 2013, p.175).

Table 7.5

Additional deleted items

Deleted item	Reason for deletion
Mention where you can get support from?	Too similar to other items about support mechanisms
Mention who is responsible for recording them?	Irrelevant - it is only important to know bullying incidents are recorded
Mention that behaviour not coinciding with values is unacceptable/will not be tolerated?	Too vague - behaviour that is not tolerated is specifically listed, i.e. behaviour classed as bullying and harassment

7.5.5. Interrater reliability for final codebook draft 3. There were now only two coders, so Cohen's Kappa was calculated for the two coders with the 16-policy subsample. See Table 7.6 for scores. Based on McHugh's (2012) interpretation of Kappa value level of agreement, the one score between .21-.39 indicates minimal agreement; the four scores between .40-.59 suggest weak agreement; the nine scores between .60-.79 show moderate agreement; and the final two scores between .80-.90 show strong agreements. When averaged, a moderate agreement of .63 results. Confidence intervals are not presented; the subsample is less than 30, and so the confidence intervals are wide, resulting in the unlikelihood of agreement being within the intervals (McHugh, 2012). The results from the final interrater reliability statistics suggest that the coding framework could be refined and improved for future use.

Table 7.6

Levels of agreement between two coders for subsample of polices

University policy	Cohen's Kappa score between coders
1	.37
2	.44
3	.47
4	.48
5	.53

6	.60
7	.61
8	.67
9	.68
10	.68
11	.69
12	.69
13	.76
14	.78
15	.82
16	.84

7.6. Results

Sixty-two policies were obtained from a possible 144 universities in the UK listed on The Good University Guide website. An initial investigation was conducted into whether there were substantial differences between the universities that did and did not have anti-bullying policies. This was done using three clusters created by categorising universities based on publicly available characteristics, such as research activity, teaching quality, economic resources, academic selectivity, and socioeconomic student mix (Boliver, 2015). A chi-square test of independence was performed to examine the relationship between university clusters and the existence of a policy, where group (a) was research-intensive universities; (b) research and teaching, and (c) teaching-intensive universities. The relationship between cluster and policy existence was non-significant, χ^2 (2, N = 122) = 1.10, p = .58, indicating that having an anti-bullying policy was independent of which research cluster the university was in.

7.6.1. Overall policy and subsection scores. Table 7.7 presents the overall scores for the 62 universities. There was no unanimous inclusion of any item, and universities varied on what was included in their policy. Overall, universities did not include 33.72% of items in the codebook and did include

66.28% of items. This indicates that generally, a large portion of the items are appearing in anti-bullying policies.

The first subsection (A) dedicated to the nature and definitions of bullying and harassment had the highest percentage, showing that universities included 73.75% of items in subsection one. Following this, universities included 67.70% of items in subsection (C) regarding recording bullying and evaluating and policy/procedure to follow. The next highest percentage was subsection (D) aims, values, and strategies for preventing bullying at 57.45% inclusion, shortly followed by subsection (B) initial reporting and responding to bullying, with 57.30% inclusion.

Looking at individual items in Table 7.7, those that were present in most of the policies included a reference to power and the methods of bullying most commonly seen in school (e.g. physical, verbal, relational, and cyber). A power imbalance is included in most definitions of bullying and is also evident as the main theme from the focus groups reported in Chapter 3. This indicates the importance of including it in anti-bullying policies, as it is a clear component of bullying in childhood and HE. Similarly, by including traditional methods of bullying, it indicates to students what unacceptable behaviour is; however, as seen in Chapter 3, more focus ought to be dedicated to HE specific behaviour. Behaviours such as controlling and using mind games, for example, listening to music loudly knowing a housemate has an exam in the morning, cliques in societies/group work/sports clubs, being excluded or dismissed, and not respecting others' possessions (in accommodation) are just some examples of what ought to be included in a HE-specific anti-bullying policy.

The university policies also did well at including protected characteristics such as homophobic, racial, disablist, and sexual harassment regarding the protection from harassment act, as well as a definition of harassment. This is to be expected as most anti-bullying policies were named anti-bullying and harassment policies, encompassing unlawful behaviour alongside bullying.

The majority of policies also provided information about what a student should do if they felt they were being bullied; this included support mechanisms, such as counselling services, and links to other policies and procedures, like an IT policy for cyberbullying, or an equality and diversity policy for a case of racial or sexual harassment. Additionally, most policies mentioned that in the first instance, an informal resolution should be sought between the aggrieved and the accused before issuing a formal complaint. This informal resolution directed the victimised party to address the perpetrator and make them aware that any offensive behaviour towards them is unacceptable.

Other items that scored highly were how the policy is put into practice and who the policy applies to. It is useful for the policy to include whose responsibility it is to do what, as this gives a clear indication of job role expectations if they are ever needed to carry out tasks. It also provides enough information for anyone reading the policy to know who to contact if the necessary is not being done. Indicating who the policy is for is also important information, for example, a student who might have found a staff anti-bullying policy can recognise that they are not the intended audience.

In general, the policies scored poorly on some items, such as whether there was any mention of material bullying, like damaging property. As seen in Chapter 3, this method of bullying has been found in HE; for example, students

commented on how others have eaten or thrown away their food on purpose. If this method is employed in HE as well as schools, it should not be omitted from anti-bullying policies for EAs at university.

A second item that scored poorly was whether policies mentioned that being under the influence of alcohol or drugs did not excuse inappropriate behaviour. Considering the social norms of university students, this is an important item. It has implications on whether perpetrators try to claim they did not know what they were doing and use drunkenness as an excuse to disassociate themselves from a negative act. It may leave a victim even more confused about the behaviour than if the perpetrator was sober, as a victim may be unsure of whether being drunk excuses the behaviour in this context. Of course, nothing does excuse bullying and harassment.

Lastly, only a small number of policies included a clear flow chart of what to do in a bullying situation. Although this may not seem necessary, flow charts are often used to aid understanding of processes. If a student is experiencing bullying and harassment, they may be emotionally upset and not have the cognitive capacity to read through twenty pages of a policy to find out what to do; a flow chart is quick, simple, and enables important information to be acquired with minimal effort.

Table 7.7

Number and percentage of policies that have included items from the codebook

Item (A) Definitions/Nature	No	Yes
1. Does the policy include reference to "misuse/abuse of power"?	8 (12.9%)	54 (87.1%)
2. Does the policy include reference to bullying involving repetition or potential to be repeated?	19 (30.6%)	43 (69.4%)

3.	Does the policy make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour?	31 (50%)	31 (50%)
4.	Is it clear that academic debate/feedback is not bullying?	34 (54.8%)	28 (45.2%)
5.	Mention physical/actions or threats of physical acts?	3 (4.8%)	59 (95.2%)
6.	Mentions verbal?	3 (4.8%)	59 (95.2%)
7.	Mentions relational/social/indirect?	4 (6.5%)	58 (93.5%)
8.	Mentions cyber?	1 (1.6%)	61 (98.1%)
9.	Mentions material (e.g. damaging property)?	55 (88.7%)	7 (11.3%)
10.	Mentions homophobic?	1 (1.6%)	61 (98.4%)
11.	Mentions racial bullying?	2 (3.2%)	60 (96.8%)
12.	Mentions sexual bullying?	3 (4.8%)	59 (95.2%)
13.	Mentions disablist bullying?	3 (4.8%)	59 (95.2%)
14.	Mention the issue of student-lecturer and/or lecturer-student bullying?	21 (33.9%)	41 (66.1%)
15.	Give specific/detailed examples of bullying?	8 (12.9%)	54 (87.1%)
16.	Mention definition of harassment?	1 (1.6%)	61 (98.4%)
17.	Give examples of harassment?	5 (8.1%)	57 (91.9%)
18.	Mention harassment is/may be against the law?	10 (16.1%)	52 (83.9%)
19.	Mention the protected characteristics (all or some)?	2 (3.2%)	60 (96.8%)
20.	Mention a definition of discrimination and/or include the different types?	35 (56.5%)	27 (43.5%)
21.	Mention the Equality Act (2010)?	23 (37.1%)	39 (62.9%)
22.	Mention a definition of victimisation (regarding a complainant who has reported someone for abuse based on protected characteristics)?	18 (29%)	44 (71%)
23.	Mention individual differences, or being mindful and respecting perceptions/cultures?	28 (45.2%)	34 (54.8%)
24.	Mention how being bullied can make you feel?	16 (25.8%)	46 (74.2%)
25.	Mention how bullying can affect academic work and learning?	21 (33.9%)	41 (66.1%)
26.	Mention the legal concept of reasonableness?	21 (33.9%)	41 (66.1%)
27.	Mention that the policy applies even if the behaviour was not intended to hurt?	18 (29%)	44 (71%)
28.	Mention that "being under the influence" does not excuse inappropriate behaviour?	51 (82.3%)	11 (17.7%)
	Total subsection scores	445 (26.25%)	1250 (73.75%)
	(B) Initial Reporting and responding to bullying incidents/responsibilities		
29.	Provide information for what the victim could do?	3 (4.8%)	59 (95.2%)
30.	Provide information about how employees could respond to a report of bullying?	24 (38.7%)	38 (61.3%)

31. Provide information on actions that other students could take if they know of bullying?	36 (58.1%)	26 (41.9%)
32. State what sanctions there are for bullying behaviour (e.g. if it's a criminal act, may be prosecuted)?	20 (32.3%)	42 (67.7%)
33. State whether sanctions applied for bullying will depend on the type or severity of the incident?	31 (50%)	31 (50%)
34. Mention support mechanisms for the victim?	6 (9.7%)	56 (90.3%)
35. Mention resolution mechanisms for either complainant and/or accused (e.g. mediation and/or counselling)?	25 (40.3%)	37 (59.7%)
36. Suggest how to help the student doing the bullying to change their behaviour?	47 (75.8%)	15 (24.2%)
37. Mention the opportunity to appeal if unsatisfied with formal outcome/review?	44 (66.1%)	15 (24.2%)
38. Include a clear flow chart of what to do in a bullying situation?	50 (80.6%)	12 (19.4%)
39. Link/signpost to other related documents, policies, and procedures (e.g. regulations, code of conduct)?	4 (6.5%)	58 (93.5%)
Total subsection scores	290 (42.70%)	389 (57.30%)
(C) Recording bullying, communicating, and evaluating policy/procedure to follow		
40. Mention that student/staff should record evidence, where practical, of bullying/harassment incidences?	27 (43.5)	35 (56.5%)
41. Mention that the report of bullying will be recorded?	21 (33.9%)	44 (66.1%)
42. Mention explicitly and transparently how this information will be used?	25 (40.3%)	37 (59.7%)
43. Mention periodic review and updating policy?	30 (48.4%)	32 (51.6%)
44. Mention all reports of bullying will be taken seriously?	18 (29%)	44 (71%)
45. Mention fake complaints/reports could lead to disciplinary action?	17 (27.4%)	45 (72.6%)
46. Mention that informal resolution should come first?	8 (12.9%)	54 (87.1%)
47. Mention formal resolution second?	9 (14.5%)	53 (85.5%)
48. Mention how a formal complainant will be supported?	34 (54.8%)	28 (45.2%)
49. Mention what happens if a complaint is made against you?	45 (72.6%)	17 (27.4%)
50. Mention how the policy is put into practice (i.e. whose responsibility it is to do what)?	5 (8.1%)	57 (91.9%)
51. Mention confidentiality will be maintained where possible?	7 (11.3%)	55 (88.7%)

Total subsection scores	246 (32.93%)	501 (67.07%)
(D) Aims and Values/Strategies for preventing bullying		
52. Mention general issues of peer support?	36 (58.1%)	26 (41.9%)
53. Mention the preventative role of campaigns/training?	44 (71%)	18 (29%)
54. Mention issues of inclusiveness?	45 (72.6%)	17 (27.4%)
55. Mention the existence of a dignity advisor/bullying ambassador or equivalent	36 (58.1%)	26 (41.9%)
56. Mention staff and/or student's responsibility for treating people acceptably/with respect (e.g. good behaviour, creating a safe environment)?	16 (25.8%)	46 (74.2%)
57. Mention the aim or purpose of the policy?	15 (24.2%)	47 (75.8%)
58. Mention who the policy applies to?	3 (4.8%)	59 (95.2%)
59. Mention the importance of dignity &/or respect?	6 (9.7%)	56(90.3%)
60. Mention equality and/or diversity?	19 (30.6%)	43 (69.4%)
61. Mention feeling safe/supported/belonging?	41 (66.1%)	21 (33.9%)
62. Mention it is staff and/or student's responsibility to address unacceptable behaviour?	24 (28.7%)	38 (61.3%)
63. Mention the phrase "duty of care" and/or other legal responsibilities of university?	28 (45.2%)	34 (54.8%)
64. Mention where the policy applies (e.g. just on campus, or field trips)?	30 (48.4%)	32 (51.6%)
Total subsection scores	343 (42.55%)	463 (57.45%)
Total scores overall	1324 (33.72%)	2603 (66.28%)

7.7. Discussion

This study builds upon the informal work conducted by the AWA (2018) and is the first study to explore the presence and content of anti-bullying policies at UK universities, as recommended by Hall (2017). It was important to investigate this in-depth, especially considering some findings of the associations found between reduced bullying and reduced suicide attempts amongst LBG youths and existence of an inclusive policy (Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2013). It investigated how many UK universities had an anti-bullying policy available from their institution's webpages or accessible another way. It further explored the policies that were collected using a new coding framework created for this

research, based on school policies, a subsample of HE policies, and guidelines from ACAS. Using a codebook, the content of policies was recorded using the yes/no presence or absence of items, which resulted in a score. The policies were then compared for content and scores, and recommendations for future policies are given below.

Firstly, there was no difference between university clusters based on whether they were research-intensive, research and teaching, or teaching-intensive, on whether they had a policy or not. This suggests that the existence of an anti-bullying policy is independent of what type of university it has been clustered into and dependent on the individual university. It is unsurprising that an anti-bullying policy could not be obtained for 68 universities, as it is not mandatory by law, unlike within the school context; however, universities are still bound by a duty of care and required to uphold the Protection from Harassment Act (1997). It is surprising that the universities have either decided not to have a policy, or are slow in delivering a planned policy, considering how pertinent the issue of bullying and harassment in academia is in the current media (Batty, 2019b; Batty, Weale & Bannock, 2017), especially staff-to-staff and staff-to-student harassment and bullying (Devlin & Marsh, 2018). Student wellbeing is also notoriously publicised for being at an all-time low with high mental health diagnoses (Brown, 2016); unchecked bullying and harassment can have devastating effects on wellbeing. A climate of bullying and harassment, especially one where universities seek to hide incidents by paying staff to conceal the extent of harassment and bullying (Batty, 2019c), could negatively affect the student population. The negative effects on whole school climate are evidenced in school bullying research, where exam scores and engagement are lower for schools with

more incidences of bullying (Lacey & Cornell, 2013; Strøm et al., 2013; Juvonen et al., 2011), and in the workplace, where experiences of being bullied can impact upon the quality of care delivered to patients (Woodrow & Guest, 2014). Consequently, it is highly recommended that all universities have a current and up-to-date anti-bullying policy available to all students. The existence of a policy implies an openness surrounding bullying and harassment, encouraging students and staff to talk about these issues and to seek help when affected by them. An existing policy may be a preventative measure deterring perpetration because the consequences are evident.

For the universities with policies, the findings are mostly positive, with universities on average including 66.28% of items in the code framework. Section A (the definitions and nature of bullying) had the highest percentage of items included followed by section C (recording bullying, and communicating and evaluating policy/procedure). This is expected; some personal characteristics are protected by law so these would need to be included, but other types of information not covered under the law are easily available from the school and workplace bullying literature. There should be little difficulty in gathering information on what to include. Even without government guidelines of what should be covered in a policy, defining the key methods should be included in any type of policy. This helps in an organisational manner, for example, the person responsible for deciding whether bullying has occurred can check against the criteria of behaviours. Additionally, the inclusion of key concepts and methods relevant to this context can help a potential victim classify their feelings in response to certain behaviours. If a policy indicates social exclusion as a method and then gives a specific example (e.g. you are placed in a predetermined group

for a group project, but everyone is ignoring you), a person may find it easier to match the behaviour to their experience of exclusion and feelings of powerlessness. As well as indicating to the victim that they have grounds to make a complaint, having written evidence to label their situation may also help them to regulate negative affect caused by bullying; mindfulness and neuroscience evidence supports the theory that naming emotions and feelings attenuates affective responses (Creswell, Way, Eisenberger, & Lieberman, 2007; Lieberman, Inagaki, Tabibnia, & Crockett, 2011).

The policies' reference to a power imbalance or abuse/misuse of power is particularly important, based upon the bullying literature (Smith, 2004; Volk et al., 2014) and the results from Chapter 3. However, due to the complex nature of power imbalances, it might be difficult to detect that you are disadvantaged regarding power as a university student, compared to being in a formal hierarchy where a supervisor is bullying a colleague lower down in an organisational structure. Students may be unfamiliar with university bullying and so have stereotypical bullying in mind when considering power imbalances, for example, a smaller person against a bigger and physically stronger person. Subsequently, it is recommended that the reference to power in policies should be accompanied with explicit examples of what this can look like in practice; a few policies did this by giving contextual examples, thus making a relational power imbalance more recognisable.

The policies included only just over half of the items in sections B (initial reporting and responding to incidents) and D (aims and values/strategies for preventing bullying). There is little research on bullying within HE, and even less on bullying policy; therefore, there may not be readily available guidelines based

on research on how to respond to reports of bullying. Most policies did not instruct employees or other students as to what they could do if they knew of bullying; most also did not include sanctions for the perpetrator, nor help for the perpetrator to change. There was little inclusion of the opportunity to appeal in the event of an unsatisfied outcome from a formal complaint, and there were very few suggestions for resolutions between aggrieved parties. These omissions may reflect inexperience with dealing with and responding to reports of bullying in a meaningful and practical way. Because there is little research into these mechanisms in HE, there is no indication about the preferred way to approach responding.

Furthermore, evidence from Chapter 3 suggests that onlookers are plagued by ambivalence and ambiguity around bullying. Some commented that they were too afraid to intervene or help in any way in case the perpetrator turned their attack towards them. This can be linked to workplace findings from the interviews with HR managers (Harrington, et al., 2012); instead of being afraid of the consequences of opening a case of bullying between employer and employee, they were conscious of balancing stakeholder needs (i.e. a bullying complaint against a manager may have serious implications for the rest of the company). Harrington et al. found that HR managers sometimes repackaged bullying claims as managerial style to avoid having to deal with the consequences of a bullying investigation (this could be framed as wanting to avoid trouble, and perhaps fear is involved). It links with the importance of having a clear set of guidelines about what would happen if bullying was reported, from the reporting phase through to resolution and/or sanctions. If there were clear guidelines, the responsible people could be held accountable if they were not handling the case as they were

instructed to. It may be prudent to mention in the policy itself that bias towards a certain party must be avoided and that the correct procedures must be followed. Alongside this, the policy could outline that it is likely to be difficult and may evoke uneasy feelings to proceed with formal complaints and investigations, but the institution should do everything in its power to take bullying seriously. Currently, it has been suggested that universities appraise bullying as a prank that is not taken seriously (Myers & Cowie, 2016).

Similarly, with section D, research on HE bullying is in its infancy so strategies for preventions are also underdeveloped. Without knowing the underlying relational mechanisms of student bullying, any conceived preventative strategies are not based on research and so may not elicit change. Students should be involved in any planned intervention design, and research findings should inform the foundations of such a workshop or working group. It may be helpful to check out the meaningfulness of anti-bullying policies and students' understandings of each section. Bradbury-Jones (2017) used the analogy of a radiographer pointing out a fracture to a patient: if you do not know how to interpret an X-ray, you cannot locate a fracture. Likewise, if you are not aware of what bullying behaviour is, you are unlikely to recognise it, seek help for it, or make a complaint. Hence, it may be helpful to show students concepts and research findings during intervention design; this would raise awareness, leading to recognition, and hopefully empowerment. An evidenced-based theoretically informed intervention could be developed, which would aim to tackle bullying at before it reached the stage where students needed to use the policy.

Most of the policies included an item on what the victim could do, and also support mechanisms (e.g. counselling, student services). This is positive

because it gives the student a means to help themselves and contact a relevant party to try to resolve the situation; however, the rest of section B (reporting and responding to bullying) was not as positive. The policies only included just over half of the other items. This section scored poorly for providing information on how employees and other students can respond to bullying; providing resolution for both complainant and accused; giving suggestions on how the accused can change their behaviour, and; allowing the opportunity for the complainant to appeal if unsatisfied with the outcome of their complaint.

Roberge (2011) reported similar findings when investigating school policies in two Canadian regions; she found that both regions scored low in mentioning reporting and responding to bullying. These points in the policy have not been given enough consideration, or they have rarely been needed (e.g. serious formal complaints are few and far between so what happens once a student has complained is new territory). This may not instil confidence in students who approach staff regarding bullying. It seems positive that there are places they can go to complain or seek help, but if the process after the initial step is inadequately defined or explained, this is likely to lead to dissatisfied students. If one student utilises the anti-bullying policy but does not feel supported by the university after the initial steps, this feeling could escalate and have a negative impact on the university climate. Similar to the HR research that showed some HR managers repackage bullying claims as managerial style - they are not adequately responding to the bullying either. If it is common knowledge that bullying and harassment do not get resolved at your university, this may negatively affect the confidence and esteem of the victim, impact the levels of trust between students and staff, and inadvertently support the bully’s actions by

failing to reprimand the bullying behaviour. Accordingly, it is recommended that there is sufficient information in the policies to help staff and students know exactly what the process will look like when raising a complaint. Furthermore, designated staff members should have sufficient training on bullying and harassment so they can acknowledge the victim's perspectives and feelings, and are confident they know how to respond and are able to, in response to a report.

Most policies included the item about students attempting to resolve the bullying informally first, and moving onto formal means if the informal method failed (unless the bullying was sufficiently serious to warrant an immediate formal complaint, though it is unknown who is the judge of severity). This is usually in the form of the victim addressing the perpetrator directly and making it clear that their behaviour is offensive and must stop. At a surface level, this item may seem obvious or empowering; however, asking a perpetrator directly to stop bullying is placing the target in a relational dynamic fraught with a power imbalance. At the end of the third survey study (Chapters 5 and 6), students were informed that most anti-bullying policies suggest addressing perpetrators directly and asking them to stop. They were then asked how easy they would find this to do, giving a score on a scale of 0-10, where 0 was *very easy* and 10 *not at all easy*; the mean score was 5.94 (SD = 2.96, N = 437), with 60% (297) of students giving a score of 5 or above. This shows that on average, students would not find it easy to confront a perpetrator, with a minority of students scoring nearer to 10 indicating they would find it *not at all easy* to do so. All things being equal, it is likely that anyone would be able to confidently tell someone to stop harassing them; however, the very act of bullying and harassment removes power from the victim (see Chapter 3) leaving an unequal balance and relationship. It would depend on the

individual's life experiences and assertiveness, but also the context and location of the bullying, and who witnessed it. Informally asking the perpetrator to stop is also a component of workplace bullying policies, but its effectiveness in this arena may also be limited, based on the workplace bullying figures. Subsequently, this method of addressing bullying is inadequate, as lots depends on unconsidered factor where every situation is different. There needs to be greater consideration when creating policies in the future. Perhaps the policy should state that addressing a perpetrator can be difficult to do, and suggest ways to make it easier (e.g. take a friend with them). Further still, it needs to be considered that some people will not want- or be able- to do this at all. They should be able to complain formally without having gone through an initial step and without the severity of the incident judged by someone else.

The last item that was included in most policies was how the policy is put into practice (i.e. whose responsibility it is to do what). As mentioned, it is positive that there are clear guidelines on who to approach in certain circumstances; however, this item conflicts with the general findings of low inclusivity of section B items on reporting and responding to bullying. It is useful knowing who to approach in the first instance, and knowing they are responsible for a certain role, but if the response is lacking on approach, this negates the usefulness of listing the person in the first place. This reiterates the need for comprehensive practical procedures and adequate training for all staff who may be involved in the resolution of bullying cases.

One item that was missing from most university policies was any mention of material bullying. This is included in school bullying policies, and the results from material-related bullying items in the survey (Chapter 4) showed that this

type of bullying does happen at university. On the item asking students if they had ever had their food thrown away or eaten on purpose, 9.10% (40 students) of the sample indicated this had happened from *rarely* to *multiple times a week*. When asked about sabotaged possessions, 5.90% (26 students) indicated this had happened to them, with scores ranging from *rarely* to *once a week*. Finally, when asked about stolen possessions, (12.5%) 55 students indicated this had happened to them, with scores ranging from *rarely* to *once a week*. The issue of material bullying is one that does not disappear after school, and so it is recommended that this item is retained in anti-bullying policies aimed at students. This seems like an important component, considering that theft of food or possessions outside of the university environment could be classed as a crime and penalised by indictment and imprisonment.

Another item that was omitted from most policies was that being under the influence of alcohol or drugs did not excuse unacceptable behaviour. Student culture often involves binge drinking, which is subsequently associated with careless behaviour such as arguing with friends, getting into fights, and damaging property (Vik, Carello, Tate, & Field, 2000); it has also been linked to increased risk of sexually aggressive behaviour (Norona, Borsari, Oesterle, & Orchowski, 2018), and verbal aggression (Carlson, Johnson, & Jacobs, 2010). As there is increased risk of bullying and harassment occurring when students are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, it is recommended that it be made clear that regardless of “being under the influence”, individuals are still responsible for their actions.

A final item that scored poorly, because it was not present in the majority of policies, was the existence of a clear flow chart that shows what to do in a

bullying situation. This component is not related to content per se, but rather the presentation of information. A flow chart may be easier to understand by enabling the reader to find the required information fast. As mentioned, if a student is being bullied, they are unlikely to want to read through the whole policy to find what to do; on average, policies had 9.40 pages (with a range of 2-26, SD = 5.66). In addition to this, most traditional students are between 18 and 25 years old; these students have grown up with social media, which breaks down information into considerably smaller chunks to be consumed fast. Consequently, it can be surmised that students prefer information that is easily available and can be accessed fast; a flow chart does just this. Policy documents can be dry and lengthy and may deter students from reading them even when they need information. Out of the 221 students from the third survey study (Chapters 5 and 6) who were aware of their university's anti-bullying policy, only 16.10% (71 students) reported reading it. It can be recommended that visual ways of presenting the policy information be sought, or a simplifying of the written information in. For example, in one study where first-year students were given crosswords and card games to learn and revise, it was found that the majority claimed these methods helped them to sort out ideas and information. A small percentage of the student sample was not keen to engage in the visual activities (Franklin, Peat, & Lewis, 2003). Having a selection of ways to access the policy material may encourage more students to want to read and/or view it. Of course, the policy must first be publicised in some way (e.g. via inductions or training) so that the students know it exists, as only 50.10% (221 students) of the survey sample were aware of their university anti-bullying policies.

Accordingly, it is recommended that universities incorporate anti-bullying policies, or the information from them, into a more visible and communicative platform. For example, policy content could be made into a video, which could be available on the intranet all year round, or possibly represented graphically and added to mandatory online induction modules that have to be completed by the end of the year. Social media campaigns could be implemented and training offered annually with each new intake of students, though they are sometimes of limited success (personal correspondence with Student Services welfare officer). Student focus groups may be a suitable way of exploring what should be included in policies so they will want to be read and how to raise awareness of policies. Including stakeholders in decision-making processes may increase motivation if students perceive they have power, and they have actual ownership of power (Nelson et al., 2001) through contributing to policy documents. Additionally, students could help with the co-creation of the policy document via workgroups; with the recent inception of the term "students as partners" and the same-named journal, the aim is to work alongside students in a way that rejects traditional hierarchies (Cook-Sather, Matthews, Ntem, & Leathwick, 2018). The term questions the roles of students as compliant consumers and offers a way of visualising the agency students can have when permitted. Therefore, allowing students to offer their expertise in developing a policy for students may increase their feelings of power and enable them to stress the importance of being kind and respectful to their student-peers and staff.

7.8. Limitations

Some limitations of this study include the reliability of the coding framework and the types of policies chosen to code. Firstly, although the coding

framework had several drafts and was discussed at length within the research team, some of the reliability scores between the first and third coder were below the desired cut-off for adequate reliability. This indicates that either the framework needs more work, the guidelines for the framework need to be more explicit to enable easier interpretation, or the coders needed further training on how to follow the guidelines and code items. It is likely that with adjustments of all three, the reliability scores between coders would increase, indicating a more reliable measure that could be used by anyone to score policies. As it currently stands, it was advantageous that the two members of the supervisory team had existing bullying and harassment knowledge to code the policies. Someone with specialist knowledge may be best placed to review policies in future as they may be sensitive to pertinent issues that might be missed by someone unfamiliar with bullying.

Secondly, because only policies with the title "bullying and/or harassment" were included, universities with alternately named policies containing similar content were not represented in this work. Whilst searching for policies using the key terms "bullying" and "harassment", there were other types of policies that resulted from the search. These were named: dignity and respect, code of practice/conduct, dignity at work and study, dealing with unacceptable behaviour, regulations governing student discipline, respect at university, student conduct, dignity and inclusion, grievance procedure, behaviour and fitness to study, student complaints, personal dignity, and student misconduct procedure. The dignity and respect policies seemed to contain very similar content to anti-bullying policies, therefore, could have been analysed for content in the same way. However, I decided to only include certain policies, due to time constraints,

and because including every type of policy may have caused additional problems. This enabled like-for-like comparisons of policies, as those with the same title, had similar aims and content. In consideration of this, it could be suggested that if a university has a dignity and respect policy (or any other name), which is used synonymously for bullying and harassment, that they change the title to reflect the contents. As well as making it easier to compare policies, it may also be easier for students to find information on bullying and harassment if they are searching for it online. Whilst policies are being developed, the dignity and harassment policies could be hyperlinked under the heading of bullying and harassment, this would enable students to find some information.

Despite the limitations, a new and comprehensive coding framework was produced for coding university anti-bullying policies. This will be a useful tool for future researchers to explore the role of policies as a higher-level organisational factor that may impact bullying, and responses to bullying, in this context.

7.9. Conclusion

This chapter has provided the first analysis of all available UK university anti-bullying policies and provided recommendations that match those outlined by an online harassment UUK report published during the writing of this thesis (UUK, 2019). It has covered what they include, how instructive and informative they are, and how certain criteria are prioritised. Through the development of a coding framework and guidelines, the policy content was compared and universities were given a score, displaying the differences between universities. There is great variation between policies, which suggests that students at some universities may be left without adequate support when seeking information regarding bullying and harassment. Alongside the discrepancies between policies,

the preferred method of informally addressing a perpetrator and asking them to stop their behaviour, seems problematic. As suggested, future research ought to seek out plausible methods for students to address bullying, one example could be anonymous reporting. However, it is recommended that students are involved in the development of any intervention; if it is co-created it may be more likely to have influence. The universities that either did not have an anti-bullying policy or did not make them publicly available, may be failing students who require assistance. If workplaces and schools have policies, universities (which are educational institutions *and* workplaces) should have policies to protect the very population they serve. This should be covered under their public sector duty of care. If universities do have a policy, this ought to be up to date (i.e. updated regularly), inclusive, comprehensive yet concise, and it must be publicised so students are aware it exists.

However, the existence of a policy is not enough. As Salin's (2008) research suggests, organisations can either allow or disallow bullying; proper implementation is necessary and the existence of a policy is not sufficient alone. If the policy is not being followed, there is little point in having one. Students may see that it is not being implemented and be reluctant to report abuse in the future. It should be a deterrent, as well as giving guidelines for acceptable behaviour. The low scores on section B (reporting and responding) indicate that practical improvements ought to be produced and outlined so that those responsible know how to respond. If actions are seen to be taken based on a bullying report, this might encourage others to report abuse, or may even deter those perpetrating.

Due to the small sample of students who had read their policy, and the small number of respondents from each university, no statistical association could

be established between victimisation scores on the third survey study and whether their university had a policy. Thus, the links between the two are currently unknown. Much like school research, where there are mixed findings on whether the existence of policy leads to less school-wide bullying, this research cannot elucidate whether the same applies to universities. A much larger scale study can use this research as a foundation to investigate further; this would ideally be an analysis of policies from each university in the UK. Once all universities have policies in place, a large-scale study could investigate the associations between policies and bullying rates at the universities. This would require an analysis of each policy, and data on bullying and victimisation from a large sample of students from each university.

8. Discussion

This thesis sought to investigate bullying and victimisation in the HE context; it aimed to further our understanding of the prevalence and types of student bullying. The multiple methods used throughout the thesis each contributed vital information whilst together weaving a holistic picture of the state of bullying in HE and associated variables. The qualitative study provided the student voice perspective, which supplemented the researcher and university definitions of bullying. Types of bullying cited by students enhanced childhood bullying items that were then developed into a novel scale administered to three samples. The policy analysis gave insight into the broader organisational perspective of how universities are currently attempting to prevent or address bullying by way of a policy; however, the dry and formal language used by the university organisation within policies may have been inappropriate for students to fully understand, thus showing the discrepancies between the unit with power (i.e. university) and the population they are required to protect (i.e. students).

The results add to the small but growing literature that explores aggressive behaviour at this higher level of education in the UK. The research also considered the individual factor of IWMs, the social factor of belonging to a group and/or university, and an organisational factor of current policy and practice concerning student bullying. Key findings are found in Table 8.1. This chapter will first outline and discuss the studies' findings; implications for research, practice, and limitations will then be given.

Table 8.1

Overview of thesis study findings

Study	Findings
Chapter 3: Student Perceptions of Bullying at University Aim: To explore students' perceptions of bullying behaviour at university	Data were analysed thematically and four themes were identified: (a) power imbalance between individuals and/or social group; (b) objective for bullying is intentional for personal or social gain; (c) tactics of bullying include sexual harassment, active exclusion, controlling and mind games, cyber, verbal, and; (d) minimisation and justification for not getting involved in bullying.
Chapter 4: Two-Part Survey Study Developing and Evaluating a Novel Bullying at University Questionnaire (BUQ) Aim: To create and test a robust and valid psychological scale for measuring bullying at university	Bullying methods mentioned in the focus groups supplemented childhood and adult bullying literature in the creation of items for a new scale. The scale was administered to two separate samples and psychometric properties were tested using PAF and Cronbach's α. A four factor structure was found from the first sample data (a) Social (b) Physical Act/Trace (c) Direct Verbal (d) Psychological. A three (a) Physical/Psychological (b) Social (c) Direct Verbal; and a two (a) Physical/Psychological (b) Social/Verbal, factor structure were identified in the second sample's data.
Chapter 5 and 6: Student Victimisation and Wellbeing Aim: To further test the scale properties using CFA.	The three statistical models from Chapter 4 were tested using CFA in AMOS. The four factor model was superior as the fit indices were the closest to the recommended figures.

To investigate group differences and the associations between bullying and wellbeing in HE	Using MANOVA tests, group differences were found for gender and SES on victimisation; for gender, sexual orientation, and student status on positive wellbeing; for sexual orientation, student status, and SES on negative wellbeing; for gender, sexual orientation, and SES on IWMs; for sexual orientation and university accommodation on belongingness. The data were tested using Hayes' macro PROCESS; evidence showed that IWMs, BUQ (university victimisation), social connectedness, and UBQ (university belonging) mediated the links between victimisation and wellbeing outcomes.
Chapter 7: Student Anti-Bullying and/or Harassment Policies at University Aim: To investigate the existence and quality of university anti-bullying policies in the UK	A coding framework was created to analyse university anti-bullying policies. Not all universities had an anti-bullying policy, and there was great variation between policy content. Universities, on average, included 66.28% of items in the coding framework. Most policies included information about the definition and nature of bullying and harassment, but some were lacking information on reporting and responding to incidents, and on preventative strategies.

8.1. Qualitative focus group study

The first study aimed to qualitatively explore the types, frequencies, and intensity of HE bullying using focus groups. The data gained from the groups were used to supplement existing knowledge from the literature to create a new psychological scale to measure bullying at university within the UK. I did this by recruiting participants for physical focus groups, but due to a lack of volunteers, further groups were later conducted online.

Focus groups were the chosen method as the topic initially needed exploring qualitatively. Qualitative methods are claimed to be valuable for obtaining detailed contextualised information, which is ideal for unexplored topics (Creswell, Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). Groups were more suitable than interviews as they can generate ideas between participants. Due to the sensitive topic, a group also allows for dilution of responsibility and does not pressurise individuals to speak. Focus groups are also used to aid survey development (Morgan, 1997), which was an additional aim of this study. All groups used the same questions about university bullying and a range of responses were recorded, transcribed, and analysed thematically.

Considering the sensitive nature of bullying and victimisation, students may have been reluctant to take part in the research - especially joining a focus group. This could explain why it was a struggle to recruit participants, and why the focus groups were eventually conducted online. Although the online groups were more successful, they might have only appealed to certain students, which could have led to an incomplete picture of HE bullying. Though the data allowed insights into bystander behaviour from those non-involved students, future research may wish to request participants who have direct experience of bullying

at university (that has happened in the past, but is not happening now, to avoid upsetting participants).

After analysing the data thematically and refining the themes several times, the following were identified: power imbalance, with the subthemes of social groups and status and reputation within a social hierarchy; objective of bullying, with the subthemes of intentional and goal-directed for social gain or personal gain; methods of bullying, with subthemes of sexual harassment, active exclusion and isolating, online/cyber, controlling and mind games, verbal and jokes; finally, there was an apparent justification and minimisation for involvement in bullying, with a subtheme of bystander intervention.

Perceived power imbalances were evident within HE amongst students, which is highly consistent with bullying and victimisation research in schools and workplaces. Participants in this study suggested that students bully because they are interested in maintaining or gaining power for themselves, or a social group, to improve their status and reputation. Smith's (2004) claim that bullying involves a systematic abuse of power, and Volk et al's. (2014) suggestion that bullying is goal-directed, are supported by this research. By showing that power differentials are reflected in HE as well as school and the workplace, the research suggests that social groups represent broader power imbalances within society, supporting social dominance theory (Pratto et al., 2006). Being an authority figure is another factor that can affect one's position in a social hierarchy; it is well known that people in authoritative positions have been abusing power for centuries. In this environment, lecturers have authority that is granted to them by their university. They also have knowledge, expertise, and the power to give grades. Alternatively,

personality-based socially desirable characteristics might decide one's place in the social hierarchy; these might arise from global cognitive evaluations.

The second theme of intentionality links closely with the theme of power. Most often, the objective of bullying is the goal-directed intention to gain power, individually, or for the group. Students suggested that perpetration could be for gaining approval from other members of the group, or to bond with other perpetrators over a shared target. Salmivalli (2010) suggested that if bullying were driven by social goals, it would happen in contexts where peer status was important. The university setting is clearly a context where peer status and reputation are vital factors in students' lives, and so the social goals of students become directly observable by others. Personal goals were also mentioned in the focus groups, such as for increasing positive feelings about the self. These goals can also be linked to evolutionary theory; the social gain could be in the form of resources or physical and psychological safety (Volk et al. 2014). If perpetrators bully for this reason, it has implications for addressing the bullying behaviour. The perpetrators may be unlikely to want to relinquish the social and personal benefits they gain from bullying (Volk et al. 2012). In which case, interventions must conceive of alternative ways to attend to their needs, and so suppress the appeal of bullying.

Methods and tactics was the third theme found within the focus group data, with each tactic becoming a subtheme. Sexual harassment was cited as a common tactic used by (mostly) males against females. This not only provides further evidence for the structural power imbalances on university campuses but also supports the widespread news reports on sexual harassment at university, by staff and students. Universities may reflect the structural power differences in

society, in this case, where men have greater power than women. There is unequal power between groups in the gender system of social dominance theory (Pratto et al., 2006), where the more powerful group has control and a sense of entitlement.

Another method involved actively excluding and isolating others. This links in again with the first theme of power and social hierarchy, as those in an established group are more likely to undertake the excluding. Students suggested that exclusion can occur in a variety of university settings, such as in lectures/seminars where people actively move away, when participating in group work, and in group chats. Being excluded often results in isolation and loneliness; one person alone lacks power, and they are likely to struggle for resources and to maintain safety against the excluding group.

Another notable method was online/cyberbullying. This subtheme was divisive as some students said it happened a lot, whereas others claimed that it happened infrequently. With technology having such a large presence in our lives, there may be some cross-over between what is judged as normal online behaviour and what is bullying. The implications of this are discussed below.

The fourth tactic subtheme was using control, which is closely linked to the sexual harassment subtheme, and to power - a common thread throughout the data. Controlling others and using mind games was mentioned several times by students. This appears to be a mature method of bullying and is associated closely with behaviour seen in abusive relationships. This might be an EA and adult-specific type of bullying, as it is seen less in school children. Methods and tactics of bullying may mature as the individual matures. In childhood, bullying is more overt and physical, whereas in adulthood the consequences of hurting others physically are more severe. Nonetheless, the importance of non-physically

harmful behaviour is becoming apparent, with the recent inception of legislation against coercive control.

The final methods subtheme of verbal harassment and joking was commonly represented by data examples and is shown in much of the HE bullying literature. This could be the most common tactic used by students in HE, or it may just be the most detectable. Unlike controlling others, verbal harassment is seen amongst children, through EA, and with adults in the workplace. Name-calling and harassing others verbally has long been perceived as a lesser form of bullying, with the adage of “sticks and stones will break my bones but words will never hurt me”. However, it is perhaps this perception that continues to allow verbal harassment to pass unchecked. Passing off nasty comments as jokes is also another way of minimising the harassment; the victim and onlookers may be unsure of how to react, and this could contribute to the perpetuation of bullying behaviour.

The final theme concerns bystanders. Students were interpreted as cognitively justifying and minimising university bullying. Onlookers may believe that what they are witnessing is harmless, which maintains the cycle of bullying. Conversely, there were students who claimed to want to help, but certain barriers were stopping them. For example, they claimed to have insufficient information to make the decision of whether to help. There is much to be researched based on this theme; researchers must investigate further the students who say they would like to help and intervene. These students may be able to act as social referents, altering the current norms of bullying as banter and jokes, and spreading the message to individuals and groups that bullying is unacceptable. Those who feel they have the individual power to step in, and especially if they also have social

power (i.e. they are captain of a team or a popular RA), have the capacity to change the balance of power within the student population. Equalising power could potentially quell bullying behaviour.

The findings from this chapter display a variety of student understandings of what bullying looks like within HE. Through focus groups, their shared understandings were heard, acknowledged, and analysed. The data lend further support to the inclusion of the concept of a power imbalance in a definition of bullying, even at the EA stage of life. There was less focus on the repeated nature of the bullying, suggesting that this is not an important concept when measuring bullying amongst students. The study can uniquely contribute support for the retention of including power imbalance in all definitions of bullying. This will allow easier statistical comparison between future studies when recording student bullying. It further shows that students are embedded in informal structures at university, guided by in-group out-group behaviour, with reputation and image important indicators of success. These qualities are so important that they may guide certain roles students adopt when witnessing bullying, for example, joining in, ignoring it, or intervening. The decisions to collude with the perpetrators, or reinforce their behaviour by inaction, may underlie the sustained cyclical process of bullying in HE, as shown in Figure 3.1.

The study confirms that students do have different constructions of bullying or of perceiving negative behaviour and these student perceptions must be taken into account by researchers conducting HE bullying research. Also, when universities are creating policies and government agencies and charities are formulating recommendations for universities, student viewpoints must be

included. This will enable students to correctly interpret policy documents, which were even interpreted differently between myself and my supervisors.

8.2. Survey studies

The purpose of the first two survey studies was to develop and test a new scale that contained items reflecting student bullying at UK universities. The initial factor structure was examined using exploratory factor analysis for the first and second survey studies, which led to a confirmatory test of competing models with the third survey study data.

An initial item pool was created based on research and the focus group findings; these were checked by my supervisor who is an expert in the field of bullying research. She identified possible gaps in the item pool and suggested additional items. The items were revised several times until there were 48 items measuring victimisation and 48 measuring bullying. These were administered as a short questionnaire, alongside a definition of bullying, to volunteers around the UK. The question asked: during the past academic year, how often did you experience/perpetrate the following from other students? There was little variance amongst the perpetration scores, and so it was decided to focus only on the victimisation scores. A principal axis factoring analysis was used to test the underlying factor structure, and after deleting low-loading items, four factors were identified. These were named: Social, Physical Act/Trace, Psychological, and Direct Verbal.

Scores from the first survey study suggested little victimisation within this sample; however, over three quarters indicated *rarely* on at least one item. Males were found to have significantly higher victimisation scores than females, religious students had higher victimisation than non-religious students, EU

students had higher scores than UK students, and those living in university accommodation had higher scores than those not living in university accommodation. These results partially supported the expected direction of scores for minority groups (Durkin et al, 2012), with groups such as BME, religious, and EU students reporting more victimisation than the majority groups. Males scoring higher than females has been found in the childhood bullying literature (Nansel et al. 2001), with males more likely to be the bully and the victim. It was also expected that those living in university accommodation would be more open to abuse due to the proximity of other students, allowing more opportunity for disagreements and arguments.

The second survey study aimed to test the retained items from the first survey study to explore whether a similar factor structure could be found with a new sample. There were 28 victimisation items and 28 perpetration items, alongside an existing measure of HE bullying (Doğruer & Yaratan, 2014). Again, there was a lack of variation in the perpetration scores, and so only victimisation scores were analysed. Another PFA was conducted on the second sample data, and after several iterations, a three-factor structure was identified (Physical/Psychological, Social, Direct Verbal) alongside a two-factor structure (Social/Verbal, Physical/Psychological).

The first survey study showed a logical four-factor solution, which shared similarities with the widely used categories applied to childhood bullying research (e.g. social/psychological, verbal, physical, and cyber). The categories of Social and Psychological appeared to be separate factors in HE, and Physical had matured into a category where the acts left a physical trace or were physical acts that involved no direct contact with the individual. This factor also showed

similarities to actions seen within abusive romantic relationships. The Social category involved being attacked in social settings with witnesses, showing similarities with the power and control themes from the focus groups, where bullying is used to increase social status and reputation. The Psychological factor also had items that mapped onto the power and control wheel. The Direct Verbal category represented derogatory comments said to another. There was also no evidence for a separate category containing only the cyber items. Compared to the scale by Doğruer and Yaratan (2014) who included the categories of verbal, emotional, physical, and cyber, the current scale confirmed that there is verbal and physical-type bullying at university. However, cyber victimisation was not a single factor, which links with the low reports of cyberbullying in Doğruer and Yaratan's study; emotional (which was interpreted as indirect) was also not a single factor. The second survey study findings matched the first survey study on two factors (Social and Direct Verbal) but the other two categories merged together. Items in the Psychological category could theoretically be categorised as a physical act perpetrated for psychological gain, and so there was a valid explanation for the two factors merging. For the two-factor model, the Social and Direct Verbal categories merged, and the Physical Act/Trace and Psychological categories merged. Theoretically, these could both be plausible factors; instead of showing types of bullying, they seemed to have separated into seriousness of acts regarding legislation. Items on the first factor are insidious behaviours that could be interpreted ambiguously or could be hidden, whereas the items on the second factor could be prosecutable offences outside of the university context. The second-factor items may be less common in school bullying research (e.g. sexual advances, controlling facilities, stalking).

It is of note that both survey studies produced different factor structures for each sample. This may have been a product of the varying samples, or there may have been an issue with the scale, though all three models were theoretically plausible. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the second sample was acquired through an online recruitment agency called Prolific, which vastly reduced the number of possible participants. Instead of advertising the study to as many UK university students as possible through social media and websites, Prolific can only advertise to their signed-up sample of survey-takers. Once the account was set up and limiters put in place, the potential sample was approximately 200-300 people. These students may have had common traits amongst members of a paid survey site, and therefore may not have been a good representation of the general student population. This recruitment issue, alongside the slow acquisition of participants for the qualitative focus group study and the other survey studies indicated that this was a topic that students did not want to engage with. This may have been because it was too sensitive, and they did not wish to be involved in focus groups that could potentially discuss uncomfortable or distressing content. Alternatively, some students may be the ones gaining from bad behaviour or maintaining the norms of minimising and justifying not involving themselves in bullying instances, and so would not want to be involved with psychological research studies that wish to explore this and develop recommendations for positive interventions.

The mean victimisation scores on the second survey study were quite low, suggesting that victimisation was not a major problem in this sample either. However, the differences in the time period of reporting bullying, but also issues with the second sample, may account for the low rates recorded. The only

significant difference between groups in this sample was that those who perceived themselves as financially insecure had higher victimisation scores. This is supportive of what students mentioned in the focus groups: that those who are wealthier are less likely to be bullied and may be the ones who are bullying others.

This chapter uniquely contributes a new scale to measure bullying amongst students at university. Although there are existing scales to do this, they have either been adapted from childhood bullying scales or based on childhood bullying literature. This scale contains items that were generated by bottom-up qualitative inquiry and supplemented with items used in childhood and adult bullying questionnaires. The scale can be used in future student bullying research, perhaps with some additional items mentioned in Table 5.9, which may improve the clarity of its factor structure.

8.3. Third survey study

The third survey study (Chapters 5 and 6) had three aims: to test the three models of the BUQ scale (HE victimisation) using CFA, to investigate group differences on victimisation, wellbeing, IWM, and belongingness measures, and to explore whether IWM, Social Connectedness, UBQ (university belonging), and BUQ (HE bullying) mediated the link between childhood bullying and current wellbeing. It was hypothesised that the four-factor scale would be superior to the others, as this model more closely matched existing research. It was also theorised that those in minority groups or were non-traditional students would have significantly higher scores on negative wellbeing measures, lower scores on positive wellbeing measures, lower IWMs, and less belonging than majority group and traditional students.

To test these hypotheses, an online questionnaire was administered to student volunteers around the UK. A limitation is that all individual and social level variables were self-report, answered by the same people, thus, opening the data up to shared-method variance. This may create artificial variance on all scales as the same individuals would be applying the same beliefs to each scale. Often, however, significant results are present when shared-method variance is controlled for (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). Furthermore, when conducting post hoc tests to control for the shared-method variance, only slight improvements are made over conducting no correction at all (Richardson, Simmering, & Sturman, 2009). The only viable method of collecting data within the time constraints of this research was a cross-sectional study using self-report; therefore, the reader can be mindful of possible result inflation due to shared-method variance, but it was unavoidable at this time. Larger scale studies may wish to seek alternative ways of gathering the desired information; however, it would be difficult to use peer reports at university. There are hundreds of students in some lectures and they may not see the same people throughout the week. It would be advantageous to access victimisation rates recorded by universities to compare with student reports of bullying; this would illuminate any differences between self-reported experiences and number of reports to the university. However, not all universities record this information, and those that do, may be unwilling to share the information through fear of damaging their reputation.

Once data collection was complete, the data were subject to a Confirmatory Factor Analysis in AMOS, and afterwards, a factor structure was chosen to use for all other statistical tests. The four-factor scale matched the recommended fit indices the closest out of the three models, and so this model

was adopted in tests using subscales. Scores on the fit indices for the four-factor scale structure approached the recommended values but fell slightly short. However, the other two models resulted in significantly worse fit indices. None of the models fit the data as expected, probably due to the severe kurtosis in the sample scores; most students did not experience victimisation at university. To test the scale structure further, a sample who have experienced victimisation at university may need to be gathered, though requesting only students who have been bullied could be ethically questionable. The scale needs further work to ensure inclusion of all bullying types in HE; in Chapter 5, Tables 5.9 and 5.26, the open-ended question responses from the two survey studies and the third survey showed behaviours (and identity-related reasons) that were not represented by the items in the scale. In future studies, these comments could be considered, and additional items added to the scale for testing. This will ensure that a broader range of behaviours that encapsulate university bullying are recorded.

The data were next tested using MANOVAs to investigate differences between groups. After that, the data were tested using correlations and mediation models. On conducting the MANOVA tests, it was found that males had experienced significantly more School Physical victimisation than females, and those who were financially insecure had significantly higher scores on all types of school victimisation than those who were financially secure. Males also experienced significantly higher Self-Esteem and Positive Affect than females. Those identifying as heterosexual experienced significantly higher scores on Optimism, most of the PWB subscales (psychological wellbeing), and all the BPN scales (needs satisfaction) than those identifying as LGB+, whereas LGB+ scored significantly higher on Depression and Negative Affect. International students

scored significantly higher on Optimism, Self-Esteem, and PWB Self-Acceptance than Home students and Depression scores were significantly lower for EU students. Financially insecure students also had significantly higher scores on Depression and Negative Affect than those financially secure. Females had significantly higher scores on IWM Other Familiar and Other Stranger than males, LGB+ had significantly lower scores on all IWM scales, and those financially secure had significantly higher scores on all IWM scales than those financially insecure. LGB+ individuals scored significantly lower on Social Connectedness than heterosexuals and those in university accommodation scored significantly higher on UBQ Affiliation than those not in university accommodation.

The hypothesis that minority group and non-traditional students would score poorly on all measures was not fully supported. The characteristics that did show significantly poorer scores were based on lower SES status or being a member of the LGB+ group, suggesting that these two groups are especially vulnerable to victimisation, poorer wellbeing, and poorer belonging in HE. Though not a minority characteristic, females may also be vulnerable to lower self-esteem and positive emotions. These findings align with the literature and support the notion that children who bully in schools may target those from a lower SES, which may be because those children are noticeably different in some way. These children may be stigmatised and labelled as less powerful and lower in the structural school hierarchy (Prilleltensky, 2008). Other children may not identify with them and cast them as an unattractive out-group member (Turner et al., 1994). If these school members are commonly known to belong to an out-group, they may be excluded, avoided, and targeted for abuse. It was also found that those more financially insecure had higher scores on the negative wellbeing

scales; this suggests that they may be more likely to be victimised in school, which may lead to higher depression and negative emotions experienced at university. The mediation results supported that more victimisation at school linked with increased depression and negative affect at university. Consequently, not only are lower SES individuals more likely to be bullied at school, they are also more likely to develop mental health problems later, which may in part be due to the victimisation and their economic lack of power. It was surprising that no other characteristic was linked to increased victimisation in school, home, or at university, as students from the focus groups suggested that certain groups are targeted. Further research is needed that could support or refute these findings using a larger more representative sample. Other variables could also be accounted for that were not included in this research. For example, the transition to being a first-year undergraduate may have impacted wellbeing; year of study was not recorded for this study, so its effects on wellbeing are unknown.

Those who indicated they were heterosexual scored significantly higher on almost all wellbeing scales than those who indicated they were LGB+, who scored higher on depression and negative emotions. It can be stressed that an inclusive anti-bullying policy is important for the LGB+ group, as these results explicate they are a vulnerable group who may benefit psychologically from an anti-bullying policy that protects their rights (Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2013; Chapter 7). However, the LGB+ group did not report experiencing more victimisation. Other studies have found higher rates of victimisation within LGB samples, and associations between victimisation, depression (Davis et al, 2018), and stress and anxiety (Seelman et al, 2017). These are both Australian studies, and all Australian states decriminalised same-sex intimate relationships between men 30

years later than the UK (Davidson, 2015). This may be linked to the findings of the studies showing that LGB individuals are more victimised; this was not found in the UK-based university sample. Furthermore, the measurement scales were different from the current study - in Seelman and colleagues' study, the focus was given to microaggressions rather than overt bullying types that were represented by some of my scale items. Perhaps if more items on passive aggressiveness were included, an increase of victimisation amongst LGB+ individuals would be found. These findings did, however, support earlier research showing that LGB+ individuals experience more mental health issues at university (Davis et al, 2018; Brown, 2016), as they scored higher on depression and negative affect. They also scored lower on feeling socially connected at university, supporting O'Keeffe (2013), who suggested that they may be disadvantaged and at risk of not belonging. Of further note, the LGB+ and lower SES groups had lower IWM scores on all subscales, indicating that they were more likely to see themselves and others in a more negative way.

Most of the hypothesised correlations between variables were evidenced, which supported the justification for mediation analyses; evidence for indirect effects were found. Direct effects were rendered non-significant for all pathways whilst holding mediators constant, except between school victimisation and depression. This suggests that school victimisation is still linked to depression even after holding the mediators constant, indicating that other unmeasured variables were more responsible for this link. The links between school/sibling victimisation and Optimism, Depression, Self-Esteem, PWB scores, Basic Needs scores, Positive Affect, and Negative Affect were mediated by IWM, BUQ scores,

Social Connectedness, and UBQ Belonging as serial mediators (except for sibling victimisation and Positive Affect).

The evidence that suggests past victimisation can lead to future victimisation (Lund & Ross, 2017; Crosslin & Golman, 2014; Gibb & Devereux, 2014; Walker et al., 2011; Wensley & Campbell, 2012; Chapell et al, 2006) was supported with the correlation and mediation analyses. Not only did childhood victimisation link to wellbeing, it did so via the pathway of IWMs, BUQ (HE victimisation), Social connectedness, and UBQ (university belonging). The tested pathway proposed that childhood victimisation can alter or cement IWMs in childhood, which can then put the individual at greater risk of victimisation in HE. This model was supported. This provides further support for a victim role theory whereby individual psychological characteristics (i.e. IWMs) may increase vulnerability to victimisation at any stage of life, but individual characteristics were also joined by the social group and belongingness factors.

The main limitation of this study is its cross-sectional nature. Ideally, the mediation model would be tested on longitudinal data to provide stronger evidence that could claim causality. Although the mediation model in this study theorised causation pathways, it is based on the logical inference that childhood victimisation and IWMs precede the other variables, but these variables were not measured at differing time points.

The research supports previous literature that has found self and other perceptions to mediate between victimisation and outcomes (Grills & Ollendick, 2002; Calvete, 2014; Calvete et al, 2018; Wright et al, 2009), and that being a school victim negatively affects adults' self-and other- perceptions (Schäfer et al., 2004). The research also suggests that individual factors combined with social

factors may provide the mechanisms through which wellbeing is affected. This supports the literature that has looked at friendship and belongingness (Brendgen & Poulin, 2018; Corrales et al, 2016) as mediators between victimisation/abuse and outcomes. Consequently, whether one was victimised as a child may solidify or change early IWMs, which can link to being victimised at university. This could in turn impact how socially connected you feel, and how close to your institution you are, which finally could impact upon a variety of wellbeing indicators.

The findings from this chapter contribute greatly not only to our understanding of bullying amongst students at university but also to the ecological system in which this takes place. Using student data from many UK universities, the topic was approached broadly whilst adopting Bronfenbrenner's advice of including as many variables as possible. Individual-level and social level variables within the university environment were recorded, and this allowed group differences to be identified on victimisation, belongingness, IWMs, and wellbeing. Due to the similarities between siblings and students who live in halls accommodation, consideration was also given victimisation to recording these victimisation outcomes. The results supported the previous thread of structural inequality, where certain groups may be disadvantaged by having less societal power; in this case, LGB+ and lower SES groups may be suffering the effects of marginalisation and having less power than other groups. The study further exemplified that context-specific factors may interact with individual factors to produce negative responses. As mentioned, in every situation we bring our own psyches, which are situated within our group categorisations, and in turn, individuals and groups are situated in a wider context, with variables often outside

of our personal control. Lastly, this was the first study to investigate not only negative outcomes but also positive wellbeing in the form of functioning and feeling. Mental health issues do not occur in isolation; individuals interact with the world around them, and being diagnosed with depression or anxiety, for example, does not always negate the ability to function. One can still feel positive emotions, still be autonomous, have friendships, and be competent.

8.4. Anti-bullying and harassment policies

For the policy chapter, I aimed to obtain and analyse as many UK university bullying and/or harassment policies as possible. I wanted to identify what they included, how instructive and informative they were, how various sections were prioritised, and compare policies' content between universities. This led to recommendations for future policies. This was done by first searching for and finding anti-bullying policies on university websites and emailing the university to obtain their policy if I could not locate it. Whilst these were being collected, I devised a coding framework and guidelines in which to code the policies. This was based upon Smith's (2008) code framework for use with school policies, a small selection of university policies, and information from the ACAS website on workplace bullying. A framework was generated and after several iterations and meetings with the supervisory team, all policies were coded by myself, and a subset for a reliability check were coded by my primary supervisor. The coding framework did not achieve perfect interrater agreement, indicating that problems remain. The best agreement scores were between myself and my supervisor who has extensive bullying knowledge, suggesting that familiarity with the topic is advantageous for using the framework. The items with the most disagreement need to be examined further as to how they have been interpreted

differently by different people, and efforts can be made to simplify and frame them as more identifiable.

Sixty-two policies were analysed and no differences were found between university type (research-intensive, research and teaching, teaching-intensive) and the existence of a policy. Overall, universities included two-thirds of items in the codebook; the most included items were from the section on defining bullying and naming methods, whereas the reporting and responding section had the lowest inclusion of items. Some of the key items that were included were the existence of a power imbalance and types of bullying, though the types mainly referred to those seen in school bullying research. Additionally, policies normally included protected characteristics, probably because harassment against any these characteristics is unlawful. Information was given about what students could do, usually in the form of signposting to departments or certain people who could help. Another common theme within the policies was that in the first instance, students were directed to confront their perpetrator and ask them to stop bullying. Because most policies featured this, it seems to be a widely-accepted method of initially addressing bullying; however, this is problematic, as when asked the question of how comfortable they would be in doing this, most students indicated they would not find it easy at all (reported in Chapter 7).

Items that were rarely included were material bullying and the perpetrator being under the influence of alcohol. Material bullying in the form of throwing away food or sabotaging possessions, and drinking and being under the influence, are both behaviours seen in university students; it would be wise to include them in anti-bullying policies. Considering the entrenched culture of drinking and

socialising, this is an especially important item to include so a perpetrator cannot avoid culpability by blaming their behaviour on a product of drunkenness.

It was surprising to find that half of all universities had no anti-bullying policy; this may be because it is not currently mandatory. However, of those that did have a policy, most included a sentence on power imbalance or abuse/misuse of power, which is important in reference to the bullying definition (Smith, 2004). The information on reporting and responding to bullying was somewhat lacking, which links to workplace bullying research showing that managers are afraid of the consequences of opening up a case of bullying (Harrington et al., 2012). If instructions are not clear, explicit, and reassuring, students may be deterred from reporting at all, like the managers in Harrington's study; they were unsure of the consequences so were afraid to carry out the proper procedures. Similarly, Roberge (2011) found that two schools in Canada scored low on mentioning reporting and responding to bullying. It seems that this section is not adequately detailed even though it is important reassurance for a person seeking help from a policy. Additionally, an unsupported student who has reported bullying may share their negative experience with others, which could negatively impact the university climate.

The main limitation of this study was that the results of the policy analysis could not be compared to victimisation outcomes. There were insufficient universities with enough participants to include in an analysis investigating whether universities with better policies had less bullying. Therefore, even though the policies have been given a rating as to their perceived quality, it is unknown how effective they are in practice. A policy that scored highly may just be for show, for example, and in practice is not followed or implemented by staff.

Implementation information was not recorded, so it remains unknown as to how effective the policies are, and how helpful students find them. Many students were unaware of their university's policy, and of those who indicated awareness, only a minority had read it. Consequently, there is still a lot that is unknown about the overall usefulness of anti-bullying policies. Even if bullying does not affect a wide range of students, it is still important to address; a single student should not be subjected to any type of abusive behaviour on campus. Therefore, it is important that institutions have adequate anti-bullying policies in place as a deterrent and to provide information about what will happen to those who choose to bully others. This should include a clear course of action that the university will take.

This study contributes to the limited field of anti-bullying policy analysis. One blog by the AWA (2018) outlined a small-scale analysis of a handful of policies; however, no other UK university policy analyses were identified, and those conducted abroad, with school policies, and with workplace policies were not of this depth and scale. The findings help to illuminate the unexplored area of student anti-bullying policies. The existence and quality of university anti-bullying policies can be considered alongside other university-wide factors, such as student support provision and university climate, to form an impression of how seriously the university is likely to treat bullying issues.

8.5. Implications for research

First, more work is needed on the development of a measure for bullying in HE, as EFAs of the BUQ produced three different factor structures on the first survey study samples, and all three failed to adequately fit the recommended indices when tested using CFA. Although Social and Direct Verbal categories of

victimisation replicated, the Psychological and Physical Act/Trace categories did not. However, it is known that coercive behaviour exists in HE, which cannot be classed as social or verbal bullying. Future research needs to include a wide range of items in questionnaires on HE bullying that do not just map onto school bullying behaviour. With a larger, more representative sample and a wide range of included behaviours, optimal scale factor structures may be identified. Future pilot studies building on this scale work may wish to use either a random sampling method or recruit different universities to distribute to more students. My attempts at recruiting universities were largely unsuccessful, and if this is to be done in future it may be useful to recruit student organisations, such as NUS, from the outset, as time constraints allow little leeway in devising alternative recruitment tactics.

Future HE bullying researchers should also ensure that they use a bullying definition that includes reference to a power imbalance and goal-directedness. This research bolsters the validity of the definition not only in the school context but also lends support to the application of the definitions to the university environment and victimisation amongst EAs. This study fills the research gap and provides strong support for the presence of a power imbalance with university bullying, similar to school and workplace bullying; it is recommended that future research studies continue to use this criterion. It must be considered that in all contexts, the power imbalance can be at an individual level, group level, or broader structural level. There needs to be a shared understanding across contexts and developmental ages that existing power imbalances, or created power imbalances, leave ample opportunity for bullying; if this is considered, incidents that may appear harmless or ambiguous may be recognised as bullying. Future HE

researchers may wish to include power imbalance and goal-directed in a definition provided to students at the beginning of questionnaires, qualitative groups, or interviews. Also, universities should ensure these points are included in anti-bullying policies. This would be an evidence-based method of communicating to students what bullying involves within HE and will, therefore, indicate what types of encountered situations can be classed as bullying. This could lead to more accurate reporting and recording of incidences, and evidence-based preventative measures. To measure HE victimisation accurately, students ought to be aware of what it could involve, and that means referencing a perceived power imbalance, that the behaviour is goal-directed for gain, and are given examples of types of HE victimisation.

Additionally, this research contributes to the debate as to whether cyberbullying is a separate concept and problem, or whether cyberbullying and traditional bullying are linked. Cyberbullying was identified as a type of victimisation under the theme of tactics and methods used in HE. Although it was a divisive theme, there were clear examples of cyberbullying in the focus group data, and so cyber-type items should be included in future questionnaires. However, there was no evidence for cyber victimisation being an isolated factor, which suggests it may just be another type of bullying that continues traditional bullying. It is recommended that further in-depth research explores negative online behaviour due to the findings of cyberbullying's ambiguous nature. Even though there are currently many studies on cyberbullying with children and EAs at university, it may be restrictive to observe these behaviours as bullying and trying to fit them into bullying categories. It may be more useful to start generally, perhaps with a qualitative study, to fully investigate online communication and

social media by adopting an evolutionary perspective. The behaviour that arises online via multiple channels is a natural product of the evolution of technology, so this perspective ought to be considered when studying online behaviour. For example, technology has its own language, new creative methods of communicating and rapidly evolving subcultures (e.g. memes). In-group out-group behaviour may exist virtually, based on knowledge of these subcultures or latest viral fads; those who are not up to date with them may become targets. Furthermore, what is accepted in the online community may be different to what is accepted in reality; it is known that due to online disinhibition (Suler, 2004), online comments are said that would never be verbalised. However, this does not make cyberbullying identification easier, as the anonymous and physically disconnected nature of online communication allows one to just delete and block a nasty message and sender. Perhaps having the tools to immediately shut down an online abusive person alleviates the necessity of labelling the person a bully. They may just label them a troll (Hardaker, 2010), someone who is purposely inflammatory, and remain unaffected by the impersonal insults.

One of the motivations found for bullying in HE was associated with having control over another. These results were somewhat surprising, as they align with key features of abusive romantic relationships, thus suggesting that the reason for bullying and the reason for perpetrating abuse against a romantic partner could be similar. Studies have investigated the cross-over between these types of aggressive behaviour and found that many characteristics are shared. Basile et al. (2009) reproduced these shared characteristics in diagrammatic form (see Figure 3.2.), showing a substantial overlap. They suggested that because of this overlap, there was the possibility that those who perpetrated one type of

behaviour could go on to perpetrate the other - in a progressive fashion, (i.e. those who bullied in school may abuse their partner as an adult). Because HE is between childhood and adulthood, with most of the student population being EAs and living in halls accommodation (similar to partners who live together), it is logical to suggest that both bullying and abusive controlling behaviour may be present at university. This novel finding supports the theorised links between those who bully in school and those who are aggressive in adult romantic relationships, suggesting they have a similar personal gain of wanting control. Sexual bullying has mostly been neglected in the bullying literature, but sexual harassment and bullying does happen in school (Schnoll, Connolly, Josephson, Pepler, & Simkins-Strong, 2015). None of the identified existing HE bullying scales included items asking about sexual bullying or harassment, so, it is recommended that this, alongside other control-type items, are included in future research so all types of bullying are recorded.

It is well known that victimisation can lead to negative psychological effects. This study supports that, but also provides a unique contribution of evidence for the theoretical model that childhood victimisation can lead to altered wellbeing (i.e. feeling and functioning) through the mechanisms of mediator variables. However, the model is causal, and data were not longitudinal, thus the model needs to be tested with longitudinal data. Although the data were retrospective and cross-sectional, there is value in first establishing the theorised links before embarking on costly longitudinal projects. There is strong evidence that the hypothetical model is supported, and so future researchers can attempt to collect data from longitudinal surveys to validate the hypothesised model. If

similar results are not found and the model is refuted, it may need to be re-specified.

It was also shown that certain minority groups within HE may be more at risk, not only for victimisation but also poorer wellbeing. In this research, those identifying as LGB+, and those classed as coming from low SES families, seemed to score significantly worse on the measures. The stricter criterion for acceptance of statistical significance may have meant that other group differences were not detected in the sample; however, the nature of testing for significant p values requires researchers to set logical limits, otherwise, data will continually be processed until the desired results are gained. Consequently, the adopted significance level was suitable for this research. A larger sample that is representative of more UK universities is necessary to support the group-difference findings and give more credence to the theory that minority groups have issues with belongingness, victimisation, and wellbeing at university.

In terms of policy work, future researchers may wish to follow up this policy study by looking into statistics and incidences of bullying to compare with policies; however, not all universities record reports, and they may also be unwilling to share negative findings that could reflect badly upon the institution. A study with a large sample of students from a variety of institutions would enable more sophisticated statistical techniques, like multilevel modelling; this would be ideal for seeking explanations for differences between institutions. Rates of bullying may differ between universities; a larger study allowing data to be captured across multiple institutions could help to identify whether higher-level factors can explain these differences (e.g. policy, university climate, majority-minority group ratios). Alternately, the coding process could be undertaken

periodically and compared to this study to see whether more universities have developed policies over this time and to see whether quality has improved.

8.6. Implications for society

The findings show that bullying in HE has some similarities with school-type bullying, but also that more mature forms encompassing a spectrum of aggressive behaviours bridge the gap between childhood and adulthood. For example, name-calling still happens at university, and it might be obvious and witnessed, or it might happen amongst friends and passed off as a joke. Whereas controlling whether someone can use computers in communal areas or throwing away their food seem more advanced and manipulative, like in abusive romantic relationships. This cannot be passed off as banter or jokes as easily because students know the value of budgeting for food and the need to use facilities to complete assignments. Onlookers also may be less likely to sympathise with the perpetrator. Furthermore, with recent legislation deeming controlling behaviour illegal, questions arise as to whether the university ought to refer some types of behaviour to the police. Under the Serious Crime Act (2015), controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship includes a person repeatedly engaging in controlling or coercive behaviour towards another; the two people are personally connected; the behaviour has a serious effect on the victim, and; the perpetrator ought to know the behaviour will have an effect on the victim. Within university halls accommodation, the relationships are akin to family units with many students living together closely. Subsequently, repetitive, controlling, and coercive behaviour that students use against each other could be comparable to this criminal offence.

The research further suggests the maintenance of certain roles throughout the lifespan, as previous victimisation was linked to current victimisation. If one is bullied in school due to a lack of power for any reason, one might also be bullied in university because this lack of power has transferred from one context to another. This could be due to individual characteristics that allow the perpetuation of a lack of power but also because the social context may be upholding these power differences. Not only was past victimisation linked to current victimisation, but the research also supports the suggestion that victimisation is related to relationship abuse; they may be two behaviours that are part of the same spectrum. It can be suggested that those who are victims of bullying in school may be vulnerable to becoming victims of bullying and/or abusive controlling behaviour at university, showing a pattern of roles for perpetrators and victims. Controlling behaviour was found in the focus group data, and patterns of abusive behaviour include coercion, threats, isolation, and intimidation (DAIP, 2011). This supports the recent significant research by Monckton-Smith (2019) who identified eight stages of relationship progression of a person killing their partner within an abusive relationship, where stage one is a previous history of abusive behaviour. It is possible that the literature on relationship abuse could be consulted to further our understanding of the underlying motivations of bullying in general. There may also be implications for tackling bullying whilst considering the underlying intention of needing control. For example, it has been suggested that children respond better to interventions when other children are doing the intervening. By giving children (especially those more likely to be aggressive) increased responsibility in an organised way (e.g. one school trained children as problem police; Nassem & Harris, 2015) this may satisfy their goal-

directed need for control, alleviating the motivation to bully others for control. Consequently, in the HE context, students may be best placed to tackle fellow student behaviour, though it would be difficult to identify those who are most at risk of being aggressive and employ them as interveners or mentors. These findings highlight the need to take a holistic stance when researching similar constructs, that is, knowledge and intervention ideas can be gained when consulting research from different contexts that are looking at the same constructs (i.e. victimisation).

The types of victimisation behaviour at university are also seen in the workplace context (Scott, 2018), adding credence to the theory that bullying evolves from traditional types (e.g. physical and verbal) to more mature and covert types. HE bullying types are consistent with examples from the power and control wheel, for example, emotional abuse was seen in the form of mind games and humiliating, isolation, controlling who can join a group or use resources, using others for their own gain, and minimising or denying the importance of negative behaviour. The original power and control wheel also shows a segment on male privilege, and Scott's adapted workplace model translates this into employer privilege. In the HE context, privilege could take any of the forms mentioned, for example, being a certain ethnicity, social class, sex, or being financially comfortable. Consequently, due to the similarities with abusive controlling behaviours, bullying in HE may be especially difficult to detect and address; a respectful environment must be emphasised as much as possible (e.g. in lectures, module guides, training) within the university community. Accidental exclusion can still cause the target harm, and ambiguous harassment in the form of jokes can confuse a person about what is happening. To ensure we do not

unintentionally bully or harass, a respectful stance should be adopted in all aspects of life.

This research also shows the importance of investigating the barriers that students face when considering intervening in bullying. If these barriers are fully explored, interventions can be designed that will help these pro-active students. This may start to have a broader impact and alter structural power imbalances. It may only take one or two students to intervene in bullying and overtly question the morality of the situation; the effects of change may start to ripple outwards and change the norm of harmless banter into something that is always unacceptable. Although it would be ideal if every student had the capacity and inclination to intervene in a bullying situation, this is likely an implausible goal, as the types of cognitions about intervening are representative of why people tend to not get involved. However, evidence from this study shows that some students want to help in some way; therefore, training could be offered to these motivated students; it could be in the form of a titled role (e.g. intervention champion) just like other student-led initiatives within universities, such as peer supporters and ambassadors. A Greek peer support system at the University of Athens, where students were trained in active listening and empathy, was found to be effective at helping student issues (Giovazolias & Malikiosi-Loizos, 2016). Change is more likely to happen if the students modelling the desirable behaviour are within ones friendship groups (Duffy & Nesdale, 2010), or if they are *social referents*, that is, individuals with psychologically salient beliefs who are widely known across social networks (Tankard & Paluck, 2016). One study surveyed American high school students at the start of a new school year to identify those who were social referents (Paluck & Shepherd, 2012). These individuals were then trained to

model anti-harassment behaviour the rest of the year, through speaking in school assemblies, talking to peers, and selling wristbands. It was found that students with more social network connections to the referents were more likely to perceive harassment as undesirable and were less likely to have been disciplined for peer conflict. Unfortunately, the commitment to train students and address the student behavioural issues is not apparent at most universities (Myers & Cowie, 2018).

Prevention is the main aim of research into negative behaviour, as the negative effects of being bullied can be longstanding and difficult to address. So, alongside interventions, prevention is the ultimate goal. This is especially important considering the evidence showing links between initiating one type of abuse (bullying) and later perpetrating another type of abuse (relationship abuse or sexual harassment). Consequently, if bullying is prevented or addressed early, this may reduce or eliminate any subsequent abusive behaviour. Preventative measures will need to consider all levels of experience, instead of placing blame on the individual. For example, at university, there are widening participation schemes and equality, inclusivity, and diversity groups set up to tackle the organisational issues from the outset. Students of all backgrounds should be recruited and be able to attend university, and this initial inclusive step attempts to eliminate discrimination. If the student population is diverse without vast noticeable divides in majority/minority or in/out-groups, students may be less likely to get involved with bullying. This has been shown in childhood bullying research, where minority groups experienced less peer victimisation in schools with higher proportions of minority students (Vitoroulis et al., 2016). Research by Keele University also suggests that when the minority disappears (i.e. there are

balanced groups between BME and White students) the attainment gap seems to be eliminated (Hulme et al., unpublished).

These findings also highlight that minority LGB+ and lower SES groups may be most at risk of victimisation, mental health issues, and feeling like they do not belong at university. Accordingly, it is recommended that universities pay particular attention to these vulnerable groups and set up inclusive activities. Group activities specific to these identities may help individuals identifying as LGB+ or from a low-income background to settle into university and feel like they belong there. Again, similar to recommendations that school teachers play a role in breaking up social hierarchies, redistributing power, and encouraging prosocial behaviour (Myers & Cowie, 2019), it should be stressed by university staff that respectful behaviour is expected and the norm at university. The aim is to create an open, diverse, and inclusive environment where everyone can feel safe to live and study.

To achieve this aim, it is recommended that all universities have an anti-bullying policy, and this policy needs to include all the relevant HE bullying features (e.g. material bullying and bullying under the influence of alcohol were rarely mentioned in policies, even though the evidence shows they happen). A sustainable and collaborative university anti-bullying and harassment policy should be in place so that bullying can be dealt with responsibly and the negative effects are minimised (see Chapter 7 for policy review). If a university does not have a policy, this sends a negative message of how important the university perceives bullying and how little attention they are dedicating to it. Second, this leaves students in an impossible position of having little idea of what to do if they encounter a bullying situation. And last, with no instructions or formal guidelines

for staff, incidents are likely to be dealt with inconsistently or unfairly, leading to dissatisfaction amongst all parties involved. It is therefore highly recommended that every university create and implement an anti-bullying policy.

As mentioned, most policies rightly referenced a power imbalance or abuse of power, but this may be an abstract phrase to someone unfamiliar with bullying terminology. It would be useful to have several explicit examples of what this could look like in HE, for example, a group purposely excluding a member when doing group work, or a housemate purposely throwing away someone's food. Students may only have formal hierarchies in mind when reading about a power imbalance; lecturers above students in the formal hierarchy can abuse their power also, but it would be better to include student-to-student examples too. This applies to all types of bullying experienced in HE. By giving a concrete situational example of every type, this is informing students of unacceptable behaviour and sends a message that they have a right to feel aggrieved about being treated in a certain way.

Policies also need to improve how they state they would respond to bullying. The reader may feel ill-informed to decide whether to report, as it would be unclear what would happen next. The information in the policy was sometimes so vague that it was not clear who ought to do the responding and what next steps they ought to take. A general move to increase openness and transparency would benefit the policies. Exact actions should be outlined to inform the student thinking about reporting, and to instruct the person responsible for acting on the report. Existing reports and cases can identify what types of actions have worked. Students could be included in this process; volunteer focus groups could be used to gain ideas of what steps they would like to happen to feel listened to and taken

seriously when reporting. These could then be added to initial training modules when starting university. This should be in combination with consulting the literature on evidence-based initiatives tackling bullying. The policies were also poor at instructing how students could help if they witnessed bullying. It would be helpful if there was clear advice on how students could intervene safely. Each student matters and the person perpetrating needs to be made aware of their actions and the effect it is having to have the opportunity to change their behaviour. Relatedly, most policies did not include sanctions, nor outline help for the perpetrator to change their behaviour. This information should be in a policy for all students to see; a victim may wish to know that the university is being proactive and doing something about their bullying report. If they can see that action will be taken to illuminate the perpetrator to their wrongdoings, they may have more confidence in the university, and more confidence in themselves, because the university has affirmed that they have been wronged.

Preventative measures were also lacking within policies, which suggested that they had not been given enough attention. Some campaigns have been identified, such as the #NeverOk campaign to end all forms of discriminatory behaviour and violence in the university community, though their usefulness has not been examined. Perhaps preventative approaches adopted by schools could be adapted for the HE context. Of note is the Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme, which assumes a systemic approach. At the individual level, talks are held with bullying individuals and their parents; at the class level, there are class rules and meetings about bullying; at the school level there are conference days, effective lunchtime supervision, staff discussion groups, and coordinating committees. By evoking a school-wide approach, the Olweus programme was

seen to have a favourable long-term reduction in bullying reports compared to comparable schools without the programme (Olweus, Solberg, Breivik, 2018). Perhaps universities should adopt a similar approach by communicating directly with individuals who are involved in bullying, by having talks in lectures or seminars about bullying (or maybe more generally, respect), *and* embedding university-wide campaigns.

Another important point regards the informal resolution stage a student is instructed to implement when being bullied. This item was included in most policies; however, it may require rethinking. The results from the third survey study showed that 60% (297) of students gave a score of 5 or above (1 being *extremely easy*, 10 is *not easy at all*) of how easy they would find it to directly ask their perpetrator to stop. Asking students to confront their perpetrator is asking them to place themselves in an imbalanced power dynamic because the perpetrator has already asserted their power by bullying. Requiring students in a university setting to do this may not be suitable. The university overall has a duty of care to its students and therefore must take some responsibility to protect them. Also, because most students are in a still-developing cognitive and emotional stage of EA, this type of assertiveness may be difficult; even adults in the workplace find it difficult. Subsequently, this item needs to be discussed with students themselves. Some may believe that instructing students to confront a perpetrator is preparing them for healthy adult relationships, asserting boundaries confidently and clearly, but evidence shows that students would not find this easy, so they probably would not attempt it. The problems are obvious with universities issuing instructions that students are unable to follow. Consequently, it may be recommended that policies acknowledge the difficulty students might have of

directly addressing their perpetrator and refer them to a suitable person to discuss the matter with.

8.7. Summary

To draw the findings together, see Figure 8.1, which relates to Figure 2.1. and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. This research investigated multi-level variables of interactions between victimisation and outcomes in the form of positive and negative wellbeing. In the centre of the figure is the individual; the person brings their internal characteristics in the form of IWMs built up during childhood, their past victimisation experiences, and their external characteristics of demographic features (i.e. gender and ethnicity) to any social interaction. Within the university macrosystem, individual characteristics may influence or interact with social level variables, such as when demographic or internal characteristics make you feel part of a group (either an in-group or out-group), which could influence feelings of social connectedness, and connectedness to the university in attendance. Whilst these interactions are taking place (mesosystem), the individual characteristics, such as negative IWMs and past victimisation experiences, may lead to increased vulnerability to being victimised at university. Being victimised at university may alter the ability to feel belonging or connected to others or the university. Resulting from these interactions is how one is feeling and functioning presently, with past victimisation, negative IWMs, current victimisation, and low levels of social connectedness and belonging, associating with positive and negative wellbeing. Also, some group-level characteristics (low SES and LGB+ group members) may influence vulnerability to poorer wellbeing at university. The macrosystem variable of anti-bullying policies was the organisational variable in this research, but unfortunately, it could not be

practically compared with the other variables due to a lack of responses from students from the same institutions. However, some important insights were identified from the university policies, including whether students ought to directly address a perpetrator. The broad social behaviour of bullying is influenced by a variety of multilevel variables interacting in different ways, rather than the directional process of A = B.

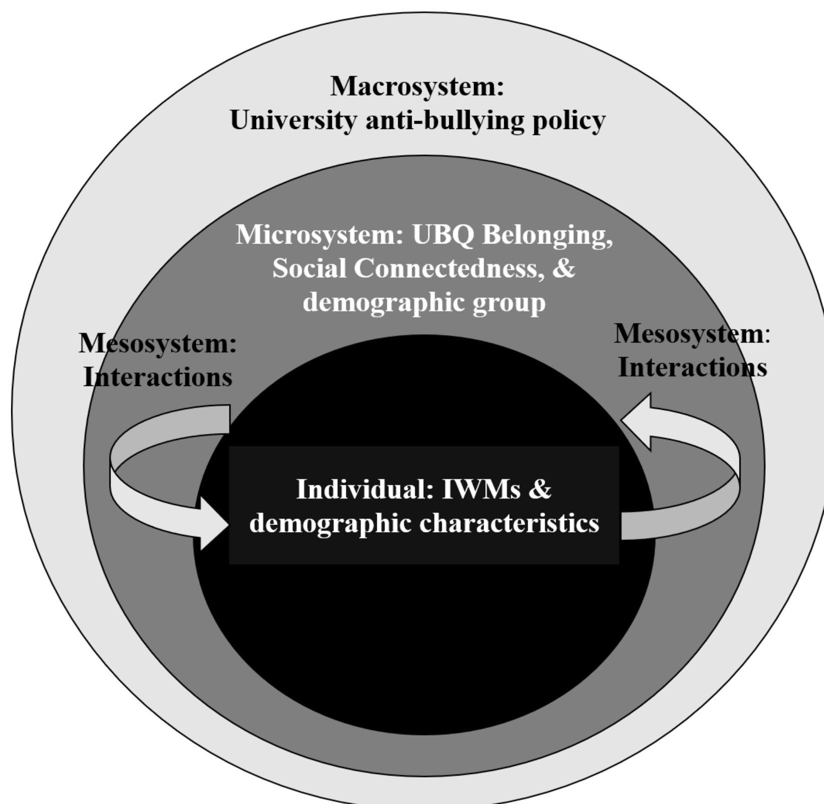

Figure 8.1. Model based on Bronfenbrenner showing the variables in this research

These findings may be used to help universities tackle negative student behaviour; the research contributes to several stages of Sullivan's (2016) anti-bullying initiative plan and may aid researchers and universities in implementing strategies to address this negative behaviour. If negative IWMs may predispose one to victimisation at university, the importance of bystanders can be emphasised. For example, people with a history of chronic victimisation may have

negative IWMs, dysregulated reactivity, and emotional distress in conflicts (Rosen et al., 2012), which could suggest that someone being bullied at university would find it difficult to not only maintain social connections but also speak up for oneself (Kendall-Tackett, 2002). Furthermore, regardless of an individual's IWMs, the social situation may make it difficult for one to be assertive when being bullied at university. For example, if you are a lone member of an out-group and a popular group is being aggressive, the balance of power is tipped in favour of the perpetrators, making it difficult for the victim to assert themselves, or to be heard and taken seriously if they do fight back. In these situations, it would be important for bystanders to step in and help. It is suggested the most helpful bystanders would be someone well-known and influential who could model positive helping behaviour. Pro-social helping behaviour amongst students may increase overall wellbeing, but also make it less likely that bullying is seen as acceptable, thus increasing the likelihood of someone stepping in. Intervening needs to become a group norm, and group norms can be influenced by individuals (Hornsey, 2008). Future research should highlight the importance of considering multiple levels of variables using complex statistical models that would highlight the relative importance of each variable. It is currently unknown how important individual, social, and organisational level factors are in contributing to university bullying, but together they are linked to student wellbeing in HE.

8.8. Conclusion.

In conclusion, this was the first piece of research to explore student bullying at UK universities in-depth and consider different levels within an ecological systems framework. It provides bullying researchers with an evidence-based scale to build upon for measuring student bullying at university.

Furthermore, it has illuminated the need to consider the internal and external characteristics of each situation by examining the interaction between internal thought process and structural social/organisational processes in contributing to victimisation. Several directions for future research and numerous practical implications for policy and practice within the HE context have been identified.

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Appendices

Appendix A focus group inventory

Focus group inventory

1. **How would you define bullying?**

   What do you think bullying looks like at university?

   What types of bullying and methods are you aware of that are used within the Higher Education context?

2. **How much of a problem do you think cyberbullying is amongst students?**

   What types are there?

   Who is involved?

   Do you think this is harmful behaviour or harmless?

3. **Can you think of any other forms of harassment or aggression that happen on the university campus?**

   What does this look like?

   And is it a big problem?

4. **Where do you think bullying happens around the university?**

   Are there specific places?

5. **Who is involved in the bullying situations?**

   Are target and perpetrator certain types of people?

6. **What do you do if you see it happen?**

   What do other people do?

   Are you aware of any campaigns on your campus that promotes 'not standing by', and intervening in bullying situations?

7. **What do you think are the negative effects of being bullied at university?**

   Is the issue extensive enough to warrant intervention?

8. **Are you aware of what help is available on your campus if you were being bullied?**

   Who could be of help?

9. **For what reasons do you think bullying happens?**

   Would these reasons apply to other contexts? I.e. work or school.

10. **Can you think of any factors that might explain why some people are less affected by bullying?**

    Is it because of certain factors of them personally or factors in their lives?

Appendix B

Ethical approval letter for study one.

Ref: ERP1319

8th February 2017

Emma Harrison
School of Psychology
Keele University

Dear Emma,

Re: Exploring Students' Perceptions of Bullying within Higher Education

Thank you for submitting your revised application for review.

I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved by the Ethics Review Panel. The following documents have been reviewed and approved by the panel as follows:

Document(s)	Version Number	Date
Recruitment Poster	1	06-12-2016
Information Sheet and Consent Form	2	01-02-2017
Focus Group Guide	1	06-12-2016

If the fieldwork goes beyond the date stated in your application, **31st May 2017**, or there are any other amendments to your study you must submit an 'application to amend study' form to the **ERP** administrator at research.governance@keele.ac.uk stating **ERP1** in the subject line of the e-mail. This form is available via http://www.keele.ac.uk/researchsupport/researchethics/

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me via the ERP administrator on research.governance@keele.ac.uk stating **ERP1** in the subject line of the e-mail.

Yours sincerely

pp C H Bonnerman

Dr Andrew Rutherford
Vice Chair – Ethical Review Panel

Appendix C

Information Sheet and consent form to physical focus group participants

INFORMATION SHEET

Study Title: Exploring Students' Perceptions of Bullying within Higher Education

Invitation

You are being invited to consider taking part in this research study about bullying within Higher Education. This project is being undertaken by Emma Harrison, PhD candidate within the school of Psychology, supervised by Dr Claire Fox and Dr Julie Hulme.

Before you decide whether you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully and discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is unclear or if you would like more information.

Aims of the Research

This research aims to explore undergraduates' perceptions of bullying within Higher Education. The aim of the focus group is to create a comprehensible questionnaire from the information gathered, to investigate the possible impact bullying can have on students' lives.

Why have I been invited?

You have received this information sheet and consent form as a self-selected volunteer that indicated interest in the study.

Do I have to take part?

You are free to decide whether you wish to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign the consent form (as seen on the following page) whilst at the group – you will then retain one copy of this information sheet. You are free to physically withdraw yourself from this study at any time and without giving reasons. Any data already collected (i.e. your opinions) will not be quoted or used in the analysis. You can withdraw

consent for the use of your data up until a given date (TBC), thereafter the transcript is anonymised, and your data will be unidentifiable.

What will happen if I take part?

Focus groups are dynamic interactions between 6-8 participants who discuss a certain topic. The group will meet at a predetermined location (like a room in the library), and questions will be asked, in which the group have chance to voice their opinions and share knowledge. There are no right or wrong answers, and every view is valid. The groups will last no more than one hour, and will be audio recorded for analysis – only the principal researcher will have access to the recordings, and participants will be anonymised in the write-up. This means that your name and any other names or identifying information will be changed. The groups are completely voluntary and it is entirely your decision whether you wish to take part. You can leave/withdraw at any time with no obligation to give a reason.

It is also vital that you remember to always be respectful to the group; have your say, but also give others the chance to give their view. We stress that participants should maintain the confidentiality within the group – so what is said within the group, stays within the group. We cannot however guarantee each person will do so, therefore it is vital you are aware of this before joining the focus group. If something potentially harmful is admitted, it is with a duty of care for the university – and individual students within it – that confidentiality by the researcher will not be maintained, and this information will be passed on to a supervisor. However, in such a case, the principal researcher would endeavour to discuss this with you first, before passing on concerns to a supervisor.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

By taking part in this focus group research, you can have your voice heard in regards to bullying on campus. You will contribute to our knowledge in this area, which could inform the Student Support Services - here at Keele, and other universities - to combat the negative effects of bullying, but also to try to prevent it happening in the first place. If you are registered with the volunteering scheme at your university (Keele SU scheme for example) you can receive volunteering credits.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

Because of the information available to you now, the topic is explicit, and therefore any risks should be minimal during the focus groups. If this topic may potentially be upsetting, it is advised that you do not take part. If the content of the discussion upsets you, you can withdraw from the study by leaving the room. The research will not be confidential between the group (as it involves interacting with each other), and we cannot stress enough that what is said in the room, should stay in the room. However, we cannot guarantee other participants will adhere to this rule, but we hope that you all appreciate the values of respect and integrity. All data will be anonymised during the write-up phase.

How will information about me be used?

An audio recording will be made and then transcribed anonymously – from hereon, your data will be unidentifiable. The data will help inform a new survey design, but also stand alone in informing us about students' perceptions of bullying within higher education. The data will be used in the principal researchers' PhD thesis and possibly in published journal articles. Short snippets of conversation will be used in written reports and papers, but no names will be attached to quotes and any other identifying information will be changed.

Who will have access to information about me?

As mentioned above, we cannot control whether participants retain confidentiality outside the groups; we do however stress that it is important to be respectful, and what is said in the room should stay in the room. Discussion within the group will not be disclosed unless there is concern about risk of harm, only on such an occasion will this information be passed to a supervisor, and only after endeavouring to discuss it with you. In these instances, the researcher must work within the confines of a duty of care for the university, and confidentiality may be broken if there is concern over potential harm to yourself or others. The data will be used in a report that may be published, but it will be anonymous and individuals unidentifiable. The recordings will be stored on a password protected computer, only accessible to the principal researcher, and the anonymised transcripts will be accessible to the principal researcher and two supervisors. The recording and transcript will be kept for a minimum of five years post publication, thereafter the files will be deleted and the consent forms shredded.

Who is funding and organising the research?

The research is part of a PhD project at Keele University.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher(s) who will do their best to answer your questions. You should contact Emma Harrison on 01782 734402 or e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher(s) you may contact Dr Claire Fox on 01782 733330 c.fox@keele.ac.uk.

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the course of the study, please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:

Nicola Leighton

E-mail: n.leighton@ keele.ac.uk

Tel: 01782 733306

It should be noted, if you are currently experiencing issues relating to this matter, or are affected by experience, it is best not to participate in this research, as you may find it upsetting. We would advise you to seek support from campus agencies that can offer help or guidance, such as the

Student Services Centre and counselling, and SU web pages, found at the following links:

http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentservices/supportandwellbeing/bullyingandharassment/
http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentservices/supportandwellbeing/counsellingmentalhealth/
https://keelesu.com/advice/wellbeing/safetycrime/bullyingharassmentstalking/

(The information here will be changed to the relevant university/location specific service dependent on which university the student attends.)

Or if in immediate distress you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:

01782 213 555 (local call charges apply)
116 123 (this number is free to call)

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Exploring Students' Perceptions of Bullying within Higher Education

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator:

Emma Harrison

01782 734402

Dorothy Hodgkin Building

e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk

Please initial box if you agree with the statement

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated ……………… (version no …….) for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time

3. I agree to take part in this study

4. I agree to allow the dataset collected to be used for future research projects

5. I agree to be contacted about possible participation in future research projects

6. I agree for my quotes to be used. *(Withdrawal of data can be done up until a date TBC)*

______________________________	_________________	_____________________
Name of participant	Date	Signature

___________________________	_________________	_____________________
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix D

Information sheet to online focus group participants

INFORMATION SHEET

Study Title: Exploring Students' Perceptions of Bullying within Higher Education (Online)

Invitation

You are being invited to consider taking part in this research study about bullying within Higher Education. This project is being undertaken by Emma Harrison, PhD candidate within the school of Psychology, supervised by Dr Claire Fox and Dr Julie Hulme.

Before you decide whether you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully and discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is unclear or if you would like more information.

Aims of the Research

This research aims to explore undergraduates' perceptions of bullying within Higher Education. The aim of the online focus group is to create a comprehensible questionnaire from the information gathered, to investigate the possible impact bullying can have on students' lives.

Why have I been invited?

You have received this information sheet and consent form as a self-selected volunteer that indicated interest in the study.

Do I have to take part?

You are free to decide whether you wish to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to type sign the consent form (as seen on the following page) and email it back to myself (e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk). You are free to withdraw yourself from this study at any time and without giving reasons, this can be done by exiting the window. Any data already collected (i.e. your opinions) will not be quoted or used in the analysis if you express this wish up to a certain given date.

What will happen if I take part?

Focus groups are dynamic interactions between 6-8 participants who discuss a certain topic. The members of the group will sign in to the link on the website, and they will proceed in answering the questions posed; all members have a chance to voice their opinions, share knowledge, and interact with each other's answers. There are no right or wrong answers, and every view is valid. The groups will be 'open' to access for a few days, to give you time to participate when suits you. The participants will be anonymised in the group, and therefore in the write-up. This means that your name and any other names or identifying information will be changed. The groups are completely voluntary and it is entirely your decision whether you wish to take part. You can leave/withdraw at any time with no obligation to give a reason.

It is also vital that you remember to always be respectful to the group. We stress that participants should maintain the confidentiality within the online group – so what is said within the online group, stays within the group. We cannot however guarantee each person will do so, therefore it is vital you are aware of this before joining the focus group. We will not tolerate any abusive behaviour online, defined by stoponlineabuse.org:

"Abuse happens when someone acts in a way that causes harm and distress to others… People have the right to expect the same standards of behaviour online as those expected in face-to-face interactions. If something is illegal, unfair or unacceptable face-to-face, then it doesn't make it acceptable to behave that way online."

Therefore, if a participant makes abusive comments, their comments and participation in the study will be removed.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

By taking part in this focus group research, you can have your voice heard in regards to bullying on campus. You will contribute to our knowledge in this area, which could inform the Student Support Services at various universities to combat the negative effects of bullying, but also to try to prevent it happening in the first place. You will also receive a five-pound online amazon gift code, as a thank you.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

Because of the information available to you now, the topic is explicit, and therefore any risks should be minimal during the focus groups. If this topic may potentially be upsetting, it is advised that you do not take part. If the content of the discussion upsets you, you can withdraw from the study by exiting the window. We cannot control what is said outside of the group, but stress that what is written in the group, stays in the group. We cannot guarantee other participants will adhere to this rule, but we hope that you all appreciate the values of respect and integrity. All data will also be anonymised during the write-up phase.

How will information about me be used?

The data will help inform a new survey design, but also stand alone in informing us about students' perceptions of bullying within higher education. The data will be used in the principal researchers' PhD thesis and possibly in published journal

articles. Short snippets of text will be used in written reports and papers, but no names will be attached to quotes and any other identifying information will be changed.

Who will have access to information about me?

As mentioned above, we cannot control whether participants talk about the comments outside the groups; we do however stress that it is important to be respectful. The data will be used in a report that may be published, but it will be anonymous and individuals unidentifiable. The anonymous transcripts of the groups will be stored on a password protected computer, only accessible to the principal researcher. The transcript will be kept for a minimum of five years post publication, thereafter the files will be deleted.

Who is funding and organising the research?

The research is part of a PhD project at Keele University.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher(s) who will do their best to answer your questions. You should contact Emma Harrison on 01782 734402 or e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher(s) you may contact Dr Claire Fox on 01782 733330 c.fox@keele.ac.uk.

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the course of the study, please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:

Nicola Leighton

Research Governance Officer

Directorate of Engagement and Partnerships

IC2 Building

Keele University

ST5 5NH

E-mail: n.leighton@ keele.ac.uk

Tel: 01782 733306

It should be noted, if you are currently experiencing issues relating to this matter, or are affected by experience, it is best not to participate in this research, as you may find it upsetting. We would advise you to seek support from campus agencies that can offer help or guidance, such as the Student Services Centre and counselling, and SU web pages of your university

Or if in immediate distress you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:
116 123 (this number is free to call)

jo@samaritans.org

Appendix E

Demographic questionnaire for focus groups

Demographics Form

---

1. How old are you? Click or tap here to enter text.

2. What gender do you identify as?

☐Male
☐Female
☐Transgender
☐Other Click or tap here to enter text.
☐Prefer Not To Say

3. What is your preferred Sexual Orientation?

☐Heterosexual

☐Gay/Lesbian

☐Bisexual

☐Other **Click or tap here to enter text.**

4. What is your Ethnicity?

White

☐English/Welsh/Scottish/Irish

☐Any other White background **Click or tap here to enter text.**

Multiple Ethnic Groups

☐White and Black Caribean

☐White and Black African

☐White and Asian

☐Any other Mixed Ethnic Background

Asian/Asian British

☐Indian

☐Pakistani

☐Bangladeshi

☐Chinese

☐Any other Asian Background _____

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

☐African

☐Caribbean

☐Any other Black/African/Caribbean background ______

☐Other Ethnic Group Click or tap here to enter text.

5. **Do you have any Religious Preferences?**

☐No Religion

☐Christian

☐Buddhist

☐Hindu

☐Jewish

☐Muslim

☐Sikh

☐Other Click or tap here to enter text.

6. **Which UK Institution are you currently studying at?** Click or tap here to enter text.
7. **What is your Degree Subject?** Click or tap here to enter text.
8. **Are you part time or full time?**

☐Part time

☐Full time

☐Other (Please State) _____

9. **What year of Study are you in?** Click or tap here to enter text.

10. **What is your Marital Status?**

☐Married/Civil Partnership

☐Single

☐Divorced

☐Widowed

☐Other (Please State) _____

Appendix F

A page of codes during the coding process

CODES

Line		Line	
1/5/14/63	Online bullying	43	Remarks to uni workers
11/9/148	Gendered/Sexual harassment	45	Majority target minority
55/50/6	Halls bullying	46	Priviledged target less priv
6	More occurences where more time is spent together	46	Private education target public edu
		48	Gender inequality lead to bullying
81/14/7	Verbal abuse	49	One-sex dominated subjects
7	Actions - loud music on purpose	50	Unintentional
11/8	Actions - throwing food	52	Not having common interests
12	Feeling crap	52	Not seen any bullying in classes
12	Moving on / disregarding it	52	Close & diverse group
13	Not easily recognisable	56	Slut-shaming
14	Rumours (online)	58	Perpetrators get chucked off course
31/15	Isolation	75/63	Posting on FB (groups)
32/24/16	Exclusion /51/55/77	73/71/64	Cyber is harmful
81/17	Clique groups	81/74/65	Cyber not a problem/harmful
79/18	Bully having power/control	67	Private messages
20	Targeting groups	66	SM too public
21	Using able student to do work	68	One to one or group
22	Public embarrassment	70	Bullying is harmful
34/29/24	Spreading rumours /55	72	Easy to manipulate images online
29/24	Slander	77	Depends on personality
29/25	Sharing personal info	78	Bullies lack confidence
26	Popular groups perpetrate	79	All forms are harmful
27	Pop groups have influence	82	Those more active on SM targets
28	Racist remarks	84	Insulting strangers on SC
37	Targeting differences	86	Permanency of SM posts
38	Differences make you stand out	89	Too visible to bully online via FB
40	Lecturer collusion	90	People join in on FB posts
41	Lecturer bullying	91	Joining in is just as bad

Appendix G

Original item pool for bullying at university questionnaire (BUQ)

1. Been called names to your face
2. Had nasty notes written about yourself
3. Been the target of unfriendly/nasty jokes
4. Been verbally intimidated or threatened
5. Been harassed online with a bombardment of messages
6. Been excluded from group chats or games online
7. Had nasty things said about you on Facebook posts or blogs
8. Had gossip or rumours spread about you online
9. Had personal information shared online without your consent
10. Been directly insulted online through private/direct messages
11. Been misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts
12. Had images of yourself shared or used for blackmail
13. Been intimidated or threatened in a public online domain
14. Been physically attacked i.e. kicked, punched, or hit
15. Had your food thrown away or eaten on purpose
16. Had possessions stolen
17. Had possessions sabotaged i.e. books torn up
18. Been prevented from using facilities i.e. people not letting you use computers in the library
19. Been the target of nasty graffiti
20. Had your studies sabotaged i.e. peers playing loud music on purpose when you're revising for exams
21. Had gossip or rumours spread about you (not-online)
22. Been manipulated
23. Felt threatened or intimidated
24. Been publicly humiliated
25. Had your personal info shared without consent (not-online)
26. Purposely been ignored (not-online)
27. Been mocked in public or private (not-online)

28. Had others turn against you on the will of another student
29. Felt obliged to take part in group initiations you didn't want to
30. Been used to do someone else's work
31. Experienced cruel looks
32. Been excluded from group work or social activities
33. Coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to
34. Been made fun of about your sexual health
35. Been stalked or followed on campus
36. Been stalked online
37. Experienced bitchiness from females
38. Experienced 'lad-behaviour'
39. Been put down so the perpetrator appears popular and gets laughs from others
40. Passive aggressiveness
41. Experienced negative clique-group behaviour

Appendix H

Ethical approval letter for pilot study one

Ref: ERP1353

17/11/2017

Dear Emma

PI: Emma Harrison
Title: Student Bullying within Higher Education
Application No: ERP1353

Thank you for submitting your revised application for review. The proposal was reviewed at the Ethical Review Panel meeting on 2nd November. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved by the Ethics Review Panel.

If the fieldwork goes beyond the date stated in your application, or there are any amendments to your study you must submit an 'application to amend study' form to the ERP administrator at research.governance@keele.ac.uk. This form is available via http://www.keele.ac.uk/researchsupport/researchethics/

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me, in writing, via the ERP administrator, at research.governance@keele.ac.uk stating ERP1353 in the subject line of the e-mail.

Yours sincerely
PP.

Andrew Rutherford
Vice Chair – Ethical Review Panel

Appendix I

Pilot questionnaire

Student Bullying within Higher Education

Q1 How old are you?

____

Q2 What gender do you identify as?

- ○ Male (1)
- ○ Female (2)
- ○ Transgender (3)
- ○ Other (4) ____
- ○ Prefer not to say (5)

Q3 What is your sexual orientation?

- ○ Heterosexual (1)
- ○ Gay/Lesbian (2)
- ○ Bisexual (3)
- ○ Other (4) ____
- ○ Prefer not to say (5)

Q4 What is your ethnicity?

○ Black/Black British (1)

○ Asian/Asian British (2)

○ Chinese (3)

○ Mixed (4)

○ White (5)

○ Other (6) ____

Q5 What is your nationality?

____

Q6 What is your religion?

- ◯ No religion (1)
- ◯ Christian (2)
- ◯ Buddhist (3)
- ◯ Hindu (4)
- ◯ Jewish (5)
- ◯ Muslim (6)
- ◯ Sikh (7)
- ◯ Any other religion (please state) (8) ____

Q7 Which UK university are you currently studying at?

____

Q8 What is your degree type?

- Undergraduate (1)
- Masters (2)
- PhD/Doctorate (3)
- Other (4) ____

Q9 What is your degree subject?

____

Q10 Mode of study?

- Part time (1)
- Full time (2)
- Other (3) ____

Q11 What is your student status?

- Home (1)
- Other EU (2)
- International (3)

Q12 Do you live in university-provided student accommodation on or off campus? (e.g. halls, shared houses/flats)

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

Q13 Marital status?

- ○ Single (1)
- ○ Married/Civil partnership (2)
- ○ Cohabiting (3)
- ○ Divorced (4)
- ○ Widowed (5)
- ○ Other (6) ____

Q14 What would you say is your family's standard of living?

- ○ Has more than enough money (1)
- ○ Is comfortable (2)
- ○ Has enough money for the basics (3)
- ○ Is living under meagre conditions (4)
- ○ Has extreme financial hardships (5)

Page Break

Q1 Bullying can be defined as: Aggressive, goal-directed behaviour, that harms another individual within the context of a power imbalance (not including within a romantic relationship), that may or may not be repetitive. Please answer the following questions with the definition in mind.

During the last academic year, how often have you experienced the following (e.g in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) from other students…?	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally, e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
1. Been called nasty names to your face (1)	○	○	○	○	○
2. Been the target of unfriendly/nasty jokes (2)	○	○	○	○	○
3. Been excluded from group work or social activities (3)	○	○	○	○	○
4. Been mocked in public or private (not-online) (4)	○	○	○	○	○
5. Had possessions hidden (5)	○	○	○	○	○
6. Been insulted about your appearance (7)	○	○	○	○	○
7. Been shouted at (8)	○	○	○	○	○
8. Been physically attacked e.g. pushed, tripped (9)	○	○	○	○	○
9. Had nasty notes written about yourself (10)	○	○	○	○	○

10. Been verbally harassed by a group (11)	○	○	○	○	○
11. Been set up to fail (12)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Had gossip or rumours spread about you (not-online) (13)	○	○	○	○	○

Q2 During the last academic year, how often have you experienced the following (e.g in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) from other students…?	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally, e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
1. Experienced negative clique-group behaviour (1)	o	o	o	o	o
2. Been the target of nasty graffiti (3)	o	o	o	o	o
3. Been verbally intimidated or threatened (4)	o	o	o	o	o
4. Experienced cruel looks (5)	o	o	o	o	o
5. Been pressured to do someone else's work (6)	o	o	o	o	o
6. Felt obliged to take part in group initiations you didn't want to (7)	o	o	o	o	o
7. Had others turn against you on the will of another student (8)	o	o	o	o	o
8. Had images of yourself shared or used for blackmail online (9)	o	o	o	o	o

9. Had your personal info shared without consent e.g. had secrets shared without consent (not-online) (10)	○	○	○	○	○
10. Been stalked online (11)	○	○	○	○	○
11. Felt threatened or intimidated by someone (not-online) (12)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Had your opinions belittled (e.g. in class) (13)	○	○	○	○	○

Q32 If in immediate distress and in need of help, you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:
116 123 (this number is free to call)
jo@samaritans.org If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher, Emma Harrison, on 01782 734402 or e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher, you may contact Dr Claire Fox on 01782 733330 c.fox@keele.ac.uk.

Page Break

Q3 During the last academic year, how often have you experienced the following (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) from other students…?	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally, e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
1. Had your studies deliberately sabotaged i.e. peers playing loud music on purpose when you're revising for exams (1)	○	○	○	○	○
2. Been excluded from group chats or games online (2)	○	○	○	○	○
3. Been prevented from using facilities e.g. people deliberately not letting you use computers in the library/access restricted to communal areas (3)	○	○	○	○	○
4. Had gossip or rumours spread about you online (4)	○	○	○	○	○
5. Experienced verbal malice or spitefulness (5)	○	○	○	○	○
6. Had possessions stolen (6)	○	○	○	○	○
7. Been misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts (7)	○	○	○	○	○
8. Been made fun of in a nasty way (8)	○	○	○	○	○
9. Been physically attacked seriously e.g. kicked, hit, had something thrown at you (9)	○	○	○	○	○

10. Experienced inappropriate sexual advances (10)	○	○	○	○	○
11. Had someone target abuse at you online, but not directly naming/tagging you in the post (11)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Felt manipulated or controlled by someone (16)	○	○	○	○	○

Q4 During the last academic year, how often have you experienced the following (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) from other students…?	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally, e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
1. Been harassed online with a bombardment of messages (1)	○	○	○	○	○
2. Been coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to do (2)	○	○	○	○	○
3. Had nasty things said about you on social network posts or blogs (3)	○	○	○	○	○
4. Had possessions sabotaged e.g. books or essays torn up (4)	○	○	○	○	○
5. Had personal information shared online without your consent (5)	○	○	○	○	○
6. Been directly insulted online through private/direct messages (6)	○	○	○	○	○
7. Had your food thrown away or eaten on purpose (7)	○	○	○	○	○

8. Purposely been ignored e.g. everyone stops talking to you (not-online) (8)	○	○	○	○	○
9. Been intimidated or threatened in a public online domain (9)	○	○	○	○	○
10. Been publicly humiliated (not online) (10)	○	○	○	○	○
11. Been stalked or followed on campus (11)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Been purposely blocked, unfriended, or deleted from groups or events, online (12)	○	○	○	○	○

Q5 If you experienced any of the previously mentioned behaviours because of apparent identity-related differences (i.e. ethnicity, sex, sexuality, disability, intelligence, socioeconomic status) can you say a bit about this...

____

Q33 If in immediate distress and in need of help, you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:
116 123 (this number is free to call)
jo@samaritans.org If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher, Emma Harrison, on 01782 734402 or e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher, you may contact Dr Claire Fox on 01782 733330 c.fox@keele.ac.uk.

Q6 During the last academic year, how often have you participated in the following behaviour (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) directed at other students?	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally, e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
1. Deliberately sabotaged someone's studies i.e. playing loud music on purpose when they're revising for exams (1)	○	○	○	○	○
2. Coerced or pressured someone into doing something they didn't want to (3)	○	○	○	○	○
3. Excluded someone from group work or social activities (4)	○	○	○	○	○
4. Sabotaged others' possessions e.g. tore up books or essays (5)	○	○	○	○	○
5. Pressured someone to do your work (6)	○	○	○	○	○
6. Stolen others' possessions (7)	○	○	○	○	○

7. Turned people against another student (8)	○	○	○	○	○
8. Shared or used images of others for blackmail (9)	○	○	○	○	○
9. Intimidated or threatened someone in a public online domain (10)	○	○	○	○	○
10. Publicly humiliated someone (not online) (11)	○	○	○	○	○
11. Set someone up to fail (12)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Manipulated or controlled someone (13)	○	○	○	○	○

Q7 During the last academic year, how often have you participated in the following behaviour (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) directed at other students…?	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally, e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
1. Called people names to their face (1)	○	○	○	○	○
2. Targeted nasty graffiti at someone (2)	○	○	○	○	○
3. Restricted someone accessing communal facilities e.g. deliberately not letting them use computers in the library (3)	○	○	○	○	○
4. Given someone cruel looks (4)	○	○	○	○	○
5. Shared personal information about someone online without their consent (5)	○	○	○	○	○
6. Directly insulted someone online through private/direct messages (6)	○	○	○	○	○
7. Thrown away or eaten someone else's food on purpose (7)	○	○	○	○	○

8. Made fun of someone in a nasty way (8)	○	○	○	○	○
9. Physically attacked someone seriously e.g. kicked, hit, thrown something at them (9)	○	○	○	○	○
10. Made inappropriate sexual advances towards someone (10)	○	○	○	○	○
11. Targeted abuse at someone online, but not directly naming/tagging them in the post (11)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Belittled someone else's opinion (e.g. in class) (12)	○	○	○	○	○

Q34 If in immediate distress and in need of help, you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:
116 123 (this number is free to call)
jo@samaritans.org If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher, Emma Harrison, on 01782 734402
or e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher, you may contact Dr Claire Fox on 01782 733330 c.fox@keele.ac.uk.

Page Break

Q8 During the last academic year, how often have you participated in the following behaviour (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) directed at other students…?	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally, e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
1. Harassed another student online with a bombardment of messages (1)	○	○	○	○	○
2. Excluded a student from group chats or games online (2)	○	○	○	○	○
3. Verbally intimidated or threatened someone (3)	○	○	○	○	○
4. Spread gossip or rumours about someone online (4)	○	○	○	○	○
5. Been verbally malicious or spiteful (5)	○	○	○	○	○
6. Coerced someone to take part in group initiations they didn’t want to do (6)	○	○	○	○	○
7. Misled/manipulated other people using fake accounts (7)	○	○	○	○	○
8. Purposely ignored someone and/or encouraged others to do the same (not-online) (8)	○	○	○	○	○
9. Shared someone's personal info without their consent e.g. shared secrets (not-online) (9)	○	○	○	○	○

10. Whilst in a group, verbally harassed an individual (10)	○	○	○	○	○
11. Stalked or followed someone on campus (11)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Purposely blocked, unfriended, or deleted someone from groups or events online (12)	○	○	○	○	○

Q9 During the last academic year, how often have you participated in the following behaviour (e.g. in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.) directed at other students…?	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally, e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
1. Participated in negative clique-group behaviour (1)	○	○	○	○	○
2. Targeted unfriendly/nasty jokes at others (2)	○	○	○	○	○
3. Posted nasty things about someone on social networks or blogs (3)	○	○	○	○	○
4. Mocked someone in public or private (not-online) (4)	○	○	○	○	○
5. Hidden others' possessions (5)	○	○	○	○	○
6. Insulted someone about their appearance (7)	○	○	○	○	○
7. Shouted at someone (8)	○	○	○	○	○
8. Physically attacked someone e.g. pushed, tripped them (9)	○	○	○	○	○
9. Written nasty notes about someone (10)	○	○	○	○	○

10. Stalked someone online (6)	○	○	○	○	○
11. Threatened or intimidated someone (not-online) (12)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Spread gossip or rumours about someone (not-online) (13)	○	○	○	○	○

Q10 If you participated in any of the previously mentioned behaviours because of the apparent identity-related differences of a student (i.e. ethnicity, sex, sexuality, disability, intelligence, socioeconomic status) can you say a bit about this...

____

____

____

____

____

Q36 If in immediate distress and in need of help, you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:
116 123 (this number is free to call)
jo@samaritans.org If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher, Emma Harrison, on 01782 734402
or e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher, you may contact Dr Claire Fox on 01782 733330 c.fox@keele.ac.uk.

End of Block: Participated in the behaviour

Start of Block: Other behaviour

Q11 Can you think of any other methods of bullying behaviour that students are involved in at university, that were not mentioned in this survey?

____

____

____

____

____

Q33
Questionnaire Debrief Information
Thank you for completing the questionnaire: Student Bullying within Higher Education

This research aims to investigate and record students' experiences of bullying within Higher Education. There has been little research thus far as to the extent of student bullying at university, therefore, this questionnaire sought to measure student bullying, alongside testing a new scale.

If you have any questions, please contact the researcher e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher, you may contact Dr Claire Fox on 01782 733330 c.fox@keele.ac.uk.

Due to the anonymous nature of the online questionnaire, you are no longer able to withdraw your responses.

If you feel you have been affected by the content of this questionnaire, and would like some information or to speak to someone, please seek help from your university student services, or one of the following agencies:

The Samaritans
116 123 (this number is free to call)
jo@samaritans.org

BullyingUK
http://www.bullying.co.uk/?_ga=2.210377237.1293575140.1505205581-1968194552.1478875815
0808 800 2222

MIND
https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/work/workplace-relations/#bullying
https://www.mind.org.uk/need-urgent-help/using-this-tool/

Appendix J

Information sheet and consent form for two-part pilot study.

INFORMATION SHEET

Study Title: Student Bullying within Higher Education

Invitation

You are invited to consider taking part in this research study about student bullying within Higher Education. This project is being undertaken by Emma Harrison, PhD candidate within the School of Psychology at Keele University, supervised by Dr Claire Fox and Dr Julie Hulme.

Before you decide whether to take part, it is important to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully and discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Ask us for more information if anything is unclear.

Aims of the Research

This research aims to investigate and record students' experiences of bullying within Higher Education.

Why have I been invited?

This information sheet and consent form is available to you as a self-selected volunteer who indicated interest in the study. The study is open to university students within the UK as long as you are not in your first year.

Do I have to take part?

You are free to decide whether to take part. If you do participate, you will be asked to check the boxes below to indicate consent before continuing. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving reasons; this can be done by exiting the window.

What will happen if I take part?

The study involves completing a questionnaire on your experiences of bullying within Higher Education. After completing some demographic questions, there are a set of questions about whether you have been on the receiving end of bullying behaviours within the last year. You are then asked to consider whether you have engaged in any of the same behaviours. The final question is open-ended, asking if there are any other bullying behaviours noticed at university, that are not included in the questionnaire. On consenting to participate, you will

be asked to click through to the next page and answer the questions as truthfully as possible. Please remember to click the final arrow within Qualtrics (the software used to deliver the online study) to submit your responses, and a debrief page will then appear. On submitting your responses, it will not be possible to withdraw your consent because the responses are anonymous. If you exit the questionnaire before reaching the end, and/or submitting your responses, your data will be automatically recorded within Qualtrics, but will not be used for analysis. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire is voluntary, and it is your decision whether to take part. You can leave the questionnaire window at any time without giving a reason. The submitted forms are anonymous; it is the collective data set that is of interest, not individual responses.

What are the benefits of taking part?

On completing the questionnaire, you will contribute to the limited knowledge in this area, which could help inform Student Support Services within universities to prevent and combat the negative effects of bullying in the future. You will be helping to test and develop a new scale to measure student bullying within Higher Education.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

If this topic may be too upsetting, or you are currently experiencing issues relating to this matter, it is advised that you do not take part, and seek the appropriate help and guidance from your university Student Support centre. In addition, at the bottom of each page are details of support services that you can note down if you decide to exit the study before the end. These details will also appear on the debrief page at the end of the questionnaire. If you are midway through and the content of the questionnaire upsets you, you can withdraw by exiting the window. All data are anonymous throughout the research.

How will information about me be used?

The data will help to inform us about students' experiences of bullying within Higher Education. The data will be used in the principal researcher's PhD thesis and possibly in published journal articles.

Who will have access to information about me?

All responses will be kept confidential and are anonymous. Anonymous data will be stored for analysis in a statistics software package such as SPSS, and will be password protected. Only the research team (myself and my supervisors) will have access to this data. The data will be used in a report that may be published, but it will be anonymous and individuals unidentifiable. The data within Qualtrics, which my supervisors and I will have access to, will be kept for a minimum of five years post publication, thereafter, the data within Qualtrics will be deleted. If you include information within the open-ended comments box that makes you identifiable, this information will be changed before saving as an SPSS data file.

Who is funding and organising the research?

The research is part of a PhD project at Keele University.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher, Emma Harrison, on 01782 734402 or e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher, you may contact Dr Claire Fox on 01782 733330 c.fox@keele.ac.uk. If you are part way through the

questionnaire and have a question then please contact the researcher keeping your browser window open. If we are unable to respond within a reasonable amount of time, you will need to exit the questionnaire. Unfortunately, it is not possible to save your progress or start again.

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the course of the study, please write to Nicola Leighton who is the University's contact for complaints regarding research at the following address:

Nicola Leighton
Research Governance Officer
Directorate of Engagement and Partnerships
IC2 Building
Keele University
ST5 5NH
E-mail: n.leighton@ keele.ac.uk
Tel: 01782 733306

If in immediate distress and in need of help, you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:
116 123 (this number is free to call)
jo@samaritans.org

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Student Bullying within Higher Education

Name and contact details of Principal Investigator:

Emma Harrison

01782 734402

Dorothy Hodgkin Building

e.d.harrison@keele.ac.uk

Please check the box if you agree with the statement

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the study Student Bullying within Higher Education and have had the opportunity to ask questions

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time

3. I agree to take part in this study

4. I confirm I am not a first-year student

5. I agree for my open-ended comments to be quoted anonymously in reports and papers about the research.

Appendix K

Ethical approval letter for pilot study two

02/02/2018

Dear Emma

PI: Emma Harrison
Title: Student Bullying within Higher Education
Ref: ERP1353

Thank you for your request to amend your study.

I am pleased to inform you that your request, received on 28th January 2018, has been approved by the Ethical Review Panel.

If the fieldwork goes beyond the date stated or there are any other amendments to your study you must submit an 'application to amend study' form to the ERP administrator at research.governance@keele.ac.uk stating ERP1353 in the subject line of the e-mail. This form is available via http://www.keele.ac.uk/researchsupport/researchethics/

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely
PP.

Dr Andrew Rutherford
Chair – Ethical Review Panel

Appendix L

Final BUQ scale

Bullying at University Questionnaire BUQ

For the purpose of this question, **bullying** can be defined as:

Aggressive, goal-directed behaviour, that harms another individual within the context of a power imbalance (not including within a romantic relationship), that may or may not be repetitive.

Please answer the following questions with the definition in mind.

During the past semester, how often have you experienced the following from other students? (e.g in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.)

	Never	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions	Occasionally e.g. two to three times a month	About once a week	Multiple times a week
Been the target of unfriendly/nasty jokes	○	○	○	○	○
Had possessions sabotaged e.g. books or essays torn up	○	○	○	○	○
Been insulted about your appearance	○	○	○	○	○
Been called nasty names to your face	○	○	○	○	○

Been mocked in public or private (not-online)	○	○	○	○	○
Felt threatened or intimidated by someone (not-online)	○	○	○	○	○
Been shouted at	○	○	○	○	○
Been made fun of in a nasty way	○	○	○	○	○
Had images of yourself shared or used for blackmail online	○	○	○	○	○
Been misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts	○	○	○	○	○
Been physically attacked seriously e.g. kicked, hit, had something thrown at you	○	○	○	○	○
Been physically attacked e.g. pushed, tripped	○	○	○	○	○
Had nasty things said about you on social network posts or blogs	○	○	○	○	○
Had your food thrown away or eaten on purpose	○	○	○	○	○

	Never	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions	Occasionally e.g. two to three times a month	About once a week	Multiple times a week
Experienced inappropriate sexual advances	○	○	○	○	○
Been prevented from using facilities e.g. people deliberately not letting you use computers in the library/access restricted to communal areas	○	○	○	○	○
Had possessions stolen	○	○	○	○	○
Been stalked or followed on campus	○	○	○	○	○
Been harassed online with a bombardment of messages	○	○	○	○	○
Been coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to do	○	○	○	○	○
Felt manipulated or controlled by someone	○	○	○	○	○
Purposely been ignored e.g. everyone stops talking to you (not-online)	○	○	○	○	○

Been excluded from group chats or games online	○	○	○	○	○
Had others turn against you on the will of another student	○	○	○	○	○
Had your opinions belittled (e.g. in class)	○	○	○	○	○
Been set up to fail	○	○	○	○	○
Experienced negative clique-group behaviour	○	○	○	○	○
Been excluded from a social activity you wanted to be included in	○	○	○	○	○

If you experienced any of the previously mentioned behaviours because of apparent identity-related differences (i.e. ethnicity, sex, sexuality, disability, intelligence, socioeconomic status) can you say a bit about this...

If in immediate distress and in need of help, you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:
116 123 (this number is free to call)
jo@samaritans.org

Appendix M

Ethical approval for main study

20/07/2018

Dear Emma

PI: Emma Harrison
Title: Student Bullying and Wellbeing within Higher Education
Ref: ERP3156

Thank you for submitting your application for review. The proposal was reviewed by the Panel Chair. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved by the Ethics Review Panel.

If the fieldwork goes beyond the date stated in your application, or there are any amendments to your study you must submit an 'application to amend study' form to the ERP administrator at research.governance@keele.ac.uk. This form is available via https://www.keele.ac.uk/raise/researchsupport/projectassurance/researchethics/

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me, in writing, via the ERP administrator, at research.governance@keele.ac.uk stating ERP3156 in the subject line of the e-mail.

Yours sincerely
PP.

Dr Valerie Ball
Chair – Ethical Review Panel

Appendix N

Information and consent form for main study

Study Title: *Student Bullying and Wellbeing within Higher Education*

Invitation

You are invited to consider taking part in this research study about student bullying and wellbeing within Higher Education. This project is being undertaken by Emma Harrison, PhD candidate within the School of Psychology at Keele University, supervised by Prof Claire Fox and Dr Julie Hulme.

Before deciding whether to take part, it is important to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please read this information carefully and ask us for more information if anything is unclear.

Aims of the Research

This research aims to investigate and record students' experiences of being on the receiving end of bullying within Higher Education and in childhood, thoughts about the self and others, and wellbeing.

Why have I been invited?

This information is available to you as a self-selected volunteer who indicated interest in the study. The study is open to students studying at a UK university.

Do I have to take part?

It is your decision whether to take part. If you do participate, you will be asked to check the consent boxes below before continuing. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving reasons, up until submitting the questionnaire; this can be done by exiting the window

What will happen if I take part?

The study is a questionnaire on your experiences of bullying within Higher Education. After completing some demographic questions, there are a set of questions about your wellbeing. Next is a short set of questions about your relationship with your university, followed by questions about how you feel about yourself and others. Lastly, there are questions on whether you were bullied as a child, and whether you are experiencing bullying currently, as a student at university. On consenting to participate, you will be asked to click through to the next page and answer the questions as truthfully as possible. Please remember to click the final arrow within Qualtrics (the software used to deliver the online study) to submit your responses, and a debrief page will then appear, with the option of submitting an email address through an anonymous Google Form, to enter the prize draw. On submitting your responses, it will not be possible to withdraw because the responses are anonymous. If you have submitted an email address through the Google form, this cannot be matched up to your data in Qualtrics, and the email addresses will be deleted once the prize draw has taken place. If you exit the questionnaire before finishing, and/or submitting your responses, your data will be automatically recorded within Qualtrics, but will not be used for analysis. It takes on average 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. You can leave the questionnaire window at any time without giving a reason. The submitted forms are anonymous; it is the collective data set that is of interest, not individual responses.

What are the benefits of taking part?

On completing the questionnaire, you will contribute to the limited knowledge on bullying within Higher Education, which could help inform Student Support Services within universities to prevent and combat the negative effects of bullying in the future. There is also the opportunity to win one of five Amazon vouchers, ranging from £10 to £100 in value.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

The topic may be upsetting if you are currently experiencing issues relating to this matter, therefore, it is advised that you do not take part, and seek the appropriate help and guidance from your university Student Support centre if this is so. In addition, at the bottom of each page are details of the Samaritans service that you can note down if you decide to exit the study before the end. These details will also appear on the debrief page at the end of the questionnaire. If you are midway through and the content of the questionnaire upsets you, you can withdraw by exiting the window. All data are anonymous throughout the research.

How will information about me be used?

The data will help to inform us about students' experiences of bullying within Higher Education. The data will be used in the principal researcher's PhD thesis and possibly in published journal articles.

If you remain unhappy about the research and/or wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of the way that you have been approached or treated during the course of the study, please write to:

Research Integrity Team
Directorate of Research, Innovation and Engagement
IC2 Building
Keele University
ST5 5NE

Tel: 01782 733371
Email: research.governance@keele.ac.uk

If in immediate distress and in need of help, you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:
116 123 (this number is free to call)
jo@samaritans.org

Consent

- ☐ I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the study Student Bullying and Wellbeing within Higher Education and have had the opportunity to ask questions
- ☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time up until submission of the questionnaire
- ☐ I agree for my open-ended comments to be quoted anonymously in reports and papers about the research
- ☐ I am studying at a UK university
- ☐ I agree for my data to be used for future research

Appendix O

Full questionnaire for main study

Student Bullying and Wellbeing in Higher Education

Start of Block: Information and Consent

How old are you?

____

What best describes your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Prefer to self describe... (3) ____
- Prefer not to say (4)

What is your sexual orientation?

- ○ Heterosexual (1)
- ○ Gay/Lesbian (2)
- ○ Bisexual (3)
- ○ Other (4) ____
- ○ Prefer not to say (5)

What is your ethnicity?

- ○ Black/Black British (1)
- ○ Asian/Asian British (2)
- ○ Chinese (3)
- ○ Mixed (4) ____
- ○ White (5)
- ○ Other (6) ____

What is your nationality?

____

What is your religion?

- ◯ Buddhist (1)
- ◯ Christian (2)
- ◯ Hindu (3)
- ◯ Jewish (4)
- ◯ Muslim (5)
- ◯ Sikh (6)
- ◯ Other religion (7) ____
- ◯ No religion (8)

Which UK university are you currently studying at?

▼ Aberdeen (1) ... Other (151)

If you answered other to the above question...

____

What is your degree type?

- ◯ Undergrad (1)
- ◯ Masters (2)
- ◯ PhD/Doctorate (3)
- ◯ Other (4) ____

What is your degree subject?

____

What is your mode of study?

- ○ Full time (1)
- ○ Part time (2)
- ○ Other (3) ____

What is your student status?

- ○ Home (1)
- ○ Other EU (2)
- ○ International (3)

Do you live in university accommodation? (E.g. on campus halls, off campus house/flat)

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (2)

What is your marital status?

- ◯ Married/Civil partnership (1)
- ◯ Single (2)
- ◯ Divorced (3)
- ◯ In a relationship (4)
- ◯ Cohabiting (5)
- ◯ Other (6) ____

What would you say is your family's standard of living?

- ◯ Has more than enough money (1)
- ◯ Is comfortable (2)
- ◯ Has enough money for the basics (3)
- ◯ Is living under meagre conditions (4)
- ◯ Has extreme financial hardships (5)

Page Break

For the next set of questions, please be as honest and accurate as you can throughout. Try not to let your response to one statement influence your responses to other

statements. There are no "correct" or "incorrect" answers. Answer according to your own feelings, rather than how you think "most people" would answer.

	I agree a lot (1)	I agree a little (2)	I neither agree nor disagree (3)	I disagree a little (4)	I disagree a lot (5)
1. In uncertain times, I usually expect the best. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
2. It's easy for me to relax. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
3. If something can go wrong for me, it will. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
4. I'm always optimistic about my future. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
5. I enjoy my friends a lot. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
6. It's important for me to keep busy. (6)	○	○	○	○	○
7. I hardly ever expect things to go my way. (7)	○	○	○	○	○
8. I don't get upset too easily. (8)	○	○	○	○	○
9. I rarely count on good things happening to me. (9)	○	○	○	○	○
10. Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad. (10)	○	○	○	○	○

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Disagree (3)	Strongly Disagree (4)
1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. (1)	○	○	○	○
2. At times I think I am no good at all. (2)	○	○	○	○
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. (3)	○	○	○	○
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. (4)	○	○	○	○
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (5)	○	○	○	○
6. I certainly feel useless at times. (6)	○	○	○	○
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. (7)	○	○	○	○
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. (8)	○	○	○	○
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (9)	○	○	○	○
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself. (10)	○	○	○	○

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How much of the time during the past week…

	None or almost none of the time (1)	Some of the time (2)	Most of the time (3)	All or almost all of the time (4)
…you felt depressed? (1)	○	○	○	○
…you felt everything you did was an effort? (2)	○	○	○	○
…your sleep was restless? (3)	○	○	○	○
…you were happy? (4)	○	○	○	○
…you felt lonely? (5)	○	○	○	○
…you enjoyed life? (6)	○	○	○	○
…you felt sad? (7)	○	○	○	○
…you could not get going? (8)	○	○	○	○

Please indicate your degree of agreement to the following sentences:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
A1 I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people. R (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
EM2 In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live R (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PG3 I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PR4 Most people see me as loving and affectionate. R (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
P5 I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
SA6 When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out. R (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

A7 My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing R (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
EM8 The demands of everyday life often get me down. (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PG9 I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world. R (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PR10 Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me. (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please indicate your degree of agreement to the following sentences:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
P11 I have a sense of direction and purpose in life. R (11)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
SA12 In general, I feel confident and positive about myself R (12)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A13 I tend to worry about what other people think of me. (13)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
EM14 I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me (14)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PG15 When I think about it, I haven’t really improved much as a person over the years (15)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PR16 I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns. (16)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
P17 My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me (17)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

SA18 I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have. (18)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A19 I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions. (19)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
EM20 I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life. R (20)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PG21 I have a sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time. R (21)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Please indicate your degree of agreement to the following sentences:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
PR22 I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends. R (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
P23 I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
SA24 I like most aspects of my personality R (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A25 I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus. R (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
EM26 I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PG27 I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things. (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

PR28 People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others. R (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
P29 I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality. R (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
SA30 In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A31 It’s difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters. (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
EM32 I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me. (11)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please indicate your degree of agreement to the following sentences:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
PG33 For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing and growth. R (12)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PR34 I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others. (13)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
P35 Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them. R (14)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
SA36 My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves. (15)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A37 I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important. R (16)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

EM38 I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking. R (17)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PG39 I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago (18)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PR40 I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me. R (19)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
P41 I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life. (20)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
SA42 When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am. R (21)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Please read each of the following items carefully, thinking about how it relates to your life, and then indicate how true it is for you. Use the following scale to respond:

	Not true at all (1)	- (2)	- (3)	Somewhat true (4)	- (5)	- (6)	Very true (7)
1. I feel like I am free to decide for myself how to live my life. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
2. I really like the people I interact with (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
3. Often, I do not feel very competent. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
4. I feel pressured in my life. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
5. People I know tell me I am good at what I do. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
6. I get along with people I come into contact with. (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
7. I pretty much keep to myself and don't have a lot of social contacts. (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
8. I generally feel free to express my ideas and opinions. (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

9. I consider the people I regularly interact with to be my friends. (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
10. I have been able to learn interesting new skills recently. (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please read each of the following items carefully, thinking about how it relates to your life, and then indicate how true it is for you. Use the following scale to respond:

	Not true at all (1)	- (2)	- (3)	Somewhat true (4)	- (5)	- (6)	Very true (7)
11. In my daily life, I frequently have to do what I am told. (11)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
12. People in my life care about me. (12)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
13. Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment from what I do (13)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
14. People I interact with on a daily basis tend to take my feelings into consideration. (14)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
15. In my life I do not get much of a chance to show how capable I am. (15)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
16. There are not many people that I am close to. (16)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
17. I feel like I can pretty much be myself in my daily situations (17)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
18. The people I interact with regularly do not seem to like me much (18)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
19. I often do not feel very capable (19)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

20. There is not much opportunity for me to decide for myself how to do things in my daily life. (20)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
21. People are generally pretty friendly towards me (21)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then indicate on the scale below, the extent you have felt this way over the past week

	Very slightly or not at all (1)	A little (2)	Moderately (3)	Quite a bit (4)	Extremely (5)
1. Interested (1)	○	○	○	○	○
2. Distressed (2)	○	○	○	○	○
3. Excited (3)	○	○	○	○	○
4. Upset (4)	○	○	○	○	○
5. Strong (5)	○	○	○	○	○
6. Guilty (6)	○	○	○	○	○
7. Scared (7)	○	○	○	○	○
8. Hostile (8)	○	○	○	○	○
9. Enthusiastic (9)	○	○	○	○	○
10. Proud (10)	○	○	○	○	○
11. Irritable (11)	○	○	○	○	○
12. Alert (12)	○	○	○	○	○
13. Ashamed (13)	○	○	○	○	○
14. Inspired (14)	○	○	○	○	○
15. Nervous (15)	○	○	○	○	○
16. Determined (16)	○	○	○	○	○

17. Attentive (17)	○	○	○	○	○
18. Jittery (18)	○	○	○	○	○
19. Active (19)	○	○	○	○	○
20. Afraid (20)	○	○	○	○	○

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End of Block: Wellbeing 2

Start of Block: UBQ

These questions will ask about university experiences and your relationship to your university.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)
F1I take pride in wearing my university colours/clothing (1)	○	○	○	○
F1I tend to associate myself with my academic department (2)	○	○	○	○
F1One of the things I like to tell people is about my university (3)	○	○	○	○
F1I feel a sense of pride when I meet someone from my university off campus (4)	○	○	○	○
F1I would be proud to support my university in any way I can in the future (5)	○	○	○	○
F1I have university-branded material that others can see (pens, notebooks, stickers) (6)	○	○	○	○
F1I am proud to be a student at my university (7)	○	○	○	○
F1I attend university sporting events to support my university (8)	○	○	○	○
F1I feel at home on campus (9)	○	○	○	○
F1I feel like I belong to my university when I represent my academic department off campus (10)	○	○	○	○

F1I have found it easy to establish relationships at my university (11)	○	○	○	○
F1I feel similar to other people on my degree (12)	○	○	○	○

These questions will ask about university experiences and your relationship to your university.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)
F2My university provides opportunities to engage in meaningful activities (13)	○	○	○	○
F2I believe there are supportive resources available to me on campus (14)	○	○	○	○
F2My university environment provides me with an opportunity to grow (15)	○	○	○	○
F2My university provides opportunities to have diverse experiences (16)	○	○	○	○
F2My cultural customs are accepted at my university (17)	○	○	○	○
F2I believe I have enough academic support to get me through university (18)	○	○	○	○
F2I am satisfied with the academic opportunities at my university (19)	○	○	○	○
F2The university I attend values individual differences (20)	○	○	○	○
F3I believe that a faculty/staff member at my university cares about me (21)	○	○	○	○

F3I feel connected to a faculty/staff member at my university (22)	○	○	○	○
F3I feel that a faculty/staff member has appreciated me (23)	○	○	○	○
F3I feel that a faculty/staff member has valued my contributions in class (24)	○	○	○	○

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Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements...

	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Slightly agree (3)	Slightly Disagree (4)	Disagree (5)	Strongly Disagree (6)
I feel disconnected from the world around me (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Even around people I know, I don't feel that I really belong (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel so distant from people (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I have no sense of togetherness with my peers (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I don't feel related to anyone (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I catch myself losing all sense of connectedness with society (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Even among my friends, there is no sense of brother/sisterhood (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○
I don't feel that I participate with anyone or any group (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○

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The following statements are about how you see yourself and others, please indicate how much you agree...

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
Strangers usually speak the truth (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I have low expectations of people I don't know (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Strangers are attentive to me when I need them to be (3)	○	○	○	○	○
I assign very little worth to people I do not know (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I am always uncertain of how strangers will react (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I am highly defensive around strangers (6)	○	○	○	○	○
It is easy to trust my loved ones (7)	○	○	○	○	○
My family and friends are adequate in relating to people (8)	○	○	○	○	○
I am effective at communicating with people I know (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I should not be blamed for everything (10)	○	○	○	○	○
I have very little self-respect (11)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that I am an incompetent person (12)	○	○	○	○	○

I don't think I am important (13)	○	○	○	○	○
I see myself as adequate (14)	○	○	○	○	○
I am usually to blame for bad things that happen (15)	○	○	○	○	○

The following statements are about how you see yourself and others, please indicate how much you agree...

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
Most people I don't know seem insensitive (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I tend to see strangers in a favourable light (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Strangers usually lack the ability to relate (3)	○	○	○	○	○
I do not want to socialise with people I don't know (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I am not bothered if I am rebuffed by strangers (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I connect easily with strangers (6)	○	○	○	○	○
My friends and family are not available when I require them (7)	○	○	○	○	○
My loved ones are very important (8)	○	○	○	○	○
I think my loved ones are socially incompetent (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy socialising with family and friends (10)	○	○	○	○	○
I like to hide my true thoughts and feelings from friends and family (11)	○	○	○	○	○

I am incapable of communicating with loved ones (12)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel I am a person of worth (13)	○	○	○	○	○
I have successfully accepted myself for who I am (14)	○	○	○	○	○
I am not satisfied with the person I am (15)	○	○	○	○	○

The following statements are about how you see yourself and others, please indicate how much you agree...

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
Unknown people around me seem to find it easy to connect socially (1)	○	○	○	○	○
It is easy to be friendly towards strangers (2)	○	○	○	○	○
If people I don't know don't like me, it is terrible (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Talking to people I don't know is very difficult (4)	○	○	○	○	○
The people closest to me are unreliable (5)	○	○	○	○	○
My loved ones are perceptive of my needs (6)	○	○	○	○	○
The people closest to me are unworthy of my love (7)	○	○	○	○	○
I never know what to expect from my family and friends (8)	○	○	○	○	○
I know how my loved ones will react when I need them (9)	○	○	○	○	○

I am indifferent towards loved ones (10)	○	○	○	○	○
There is always a good reason if my loved ones reject me (11)	○	○	○	○	○
I can freely talk with loved ones about anything (12)	○	○	○	○	○
I generally have a favourable impression of myself (13)	○	○	○	○	○

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End of Block: IWM

Start of Block: Retrospective victimisation

During your childhood, how often did other kids at school do these things to you in a deliberately hurtful way?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	More than half the time (4)	Most or all of the time (5)
Hit you (1)					
Kicked you (2)					
Pushed you (3)					
Teased in a hurtful way (4)					
Called nasty names (5)					
Verbally insulted (6)					
Left you out on purpose (7)					
Not asked you to join in (8)					
Ignored you (9)					
Damaged your friendships (10)					
Tried to make other people dislike you (11)					
Spoilt your relationships (12)					
Sent you nasty texts/emails or posted nasty things on social network sites (13)					
Shared photos or information online without your consent (14)					

Excluded you from online group chat or games (15)	

If you experienced any of these behaviours due to apparent identity-related differences (e.g. race, religion, intelligence, gender), please say a bit about this...

____

Whilst growing up, did you live with other kids? E.g. siblings or cousins.

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

During your childhood, how often did other kids you lived with (e.g. siblings, cousins) do these things to you in a deliberately hurtful way?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	More than half the time (4)	Most or all of the time (5)
Hit you (1)					
Kicked you (2)					
Pushed you (3)					
Teased in a hurtful way (4)					
Called nasty names (5)					
Verbally insulted (6)					
Left you out on purpose (7)					
Not asked you to join in (8)					
Ignored you (9)					
Damaged your friendships (10)					
Tried to make other people dislike you (11)					
Spoilt your relationships (12)					
Sent you nasty texts/emails or posted nasty things on social network sites (13)					
Share photos or information online without your consent (14)					

Excluded from online group chat or games (15)

If you experienced any of these behaviours due to apparent identity-related differences (e.g. race, religion, intelligence, gender), please say a bit about this...

____

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End of Block: Retrospective victimisation

Start of Block: Bullying at University Questionnaire BUQ

For the purpose of this question, **bullying** can be defined as: **Aggressive, goal-directed behaviour, that harms another individual within the context of a power imbalance (not including within a romantic relationship), that may or may not be repetitive.** Please answer the following questions with the definition in mind.

During the past semester, how often have you experienced the following from other students? (e.g in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.)

	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
Been the target of unfriendly/nasty jokes (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Had possessions sabotaged e.g. books or essays torn up (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Been insulted about your appearance (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Been called nasty names to your face (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Been mocked in public or private (not-online) (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Felt threatened or intimidated by someone (not-online) (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Been shouted at (7)	○	○	○	○	○
Been made fun of in a nasty way (8)	○	○	○	○	○
Had images of yourself shared or used for blackmail online (9)	○	○	○	○	○
Been misled/manipulated by people using fake accounts (10)	○	○	○	○	○
Been physically attacked seriously e.g. kicked, hit, had something thrown at you (11)	○	○	○	○	○
Been physically attacked e.g. pushed, tripped (12)	○	○	○	○	○

Had nasty things said about you on social network posts or blogs (13)	○	○	○	○	○
Had your food thrown away or eaten on purpose (14)	○	○	○	○	○

During the past semester, how often have you experienced the following from other students? (e.g in lectures, halls, social clubs, communal spaces etc.)

	Never (1)	Rarely, e.g. only a handful of occasions (2)	Occasionally e.g. two to three times a month (3)	About once a week (4)	Multiple times a week (5)
Experienced inappropriate sexual advances (15)	○	○	○	○	○
Been prevented from using facilities e.g. people deliberately not letting you use computers in the library/access restricted to communal areas (16)	○	○	○	○	○
Had possessions stolen (17)	○	○	○	○	○
Been stalked or followed on campus (18)	○	○	○	○	○
Been harassed online with a bombardment of messages (19)	○	○	○	○	○
Been coerced or pressured into doing something you didn't want to do (20)	○	○	○	○	○
Felt manipulated or controlled by someone (21)	○	○	○	○	○
Purposely been ignored e.g. everyone stops talking to you (not-online) (22)	○	○	○	○	○

Been excluded from group chats or games online (23)	○	○	○	○	○
Had others turn against you on the will of another student (24)	○	○	○	○	○
Had your opinions belittled (e.g. in class) (25)	○	○	○	○	○
Been set up to fail (26)	○	○	○	○	○
Experienced negative clique-group behaviour (27)	○	○	○	○	○
Been excluded from a social activity you wanted to be included in (28)	○	○	○	○	○

If you experienced any of the previously mentioned behaviours because of apparent identity-related differences (i.e. ethnicity, sex, sexuality, disability, intelligence, socioeconomic status) can you say a bit about this...

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If in immediate distress and in need of help, you may wish to contact The Samaritans on:
116 123 (this number is free to call)
jo@samaritans.org

End of Block: Bullying at University Questionnaire BUQ

Start of Block: Policy

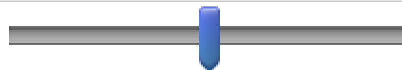
Are you aware of your university's anti-bullying policy?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If so, have you read it?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- N/A (3)

Most anti-bullying policies suggest that in the first instance, when being bullied, you should ask the perpetrator directly to stop.

	Very easy	Not easy at all
	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
How easy would it be for you to do this? ()		

If you have any feedback or comments on the questionnaire...

____

Appendix P

Tables of non-significant MANOVA tests

P1 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of sexual orientation and victimisation of those with siblings

	Heterosexual (N = 64)	LGBO (N = 274)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η²
Sibling			.05	1,07(14, 309)	.386	.05
Physical	5.33 (2.66)	5.73 (2.61)				
Verbal	5.82 (2.96)	6.15 (2.99)				
Social Exclusion	4.98 (2.78)	5.44 (2.48)				
Relational	3.87 (2.25)	3.65 (2.17)				
Cyber	3.41 (1.50)	3.17 (.67)				
School						
Physical	4.53 (2.07)	4.83 (2.20)				
Verbal	7.26 (3.33)	8.52 (3.63)				
Social Exclusion	7.15 (3.46)	8.77 (3.67)				
Relational	6.30 (3.12)	7.36 (3.50)				
Cyber	4.76 (2.51)	5.52 (3.24)				
HE						
Social	8.72 (2.80)	9.05 (2.83)				
Physical	7.43 (1.40)	7.20 (.47)				
Psychological	8.13 (1.96)	8.24 (1.87)				
Verbal	8.68 (2.97)	9.06 (2.91)				

P2 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on sexual orientation and school and HE victimisation

	Heterosexual (N = 334)	LGBO (N = 82)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η²
			.05	2.40 (9, 392)	.012*	.05
School						
Physical (3-15)	4.59 (2.27)	4.74 (2.11)				
Verbal (3-15)	7.23 (3.44)	8.73 (3.82)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	7.12 (3.54)	8.89 (3.88)				
Relational (3-15)	6.23 (3.17)	7.57 (3.69)				
Cyber (3-15)	4.73 (2.52)	5.65 (7.39)				
HE						
Social (7-35)	8.73 (2.87)	9.13 (2.77)				
Physical (7-35)	7.57 (1.77)	7.23 (.53)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.17 (2.17)	8.27 (1.80)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.72 (2.95)	9.00 (2.83)				

P3 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of ethnicity and victimisation of those with siblings

	BME (N = 76)	White (N = 268)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
Sibling			.06	1.42(14, 309)	.141	.06
Physical	5.72 (2.92)	5.32 (2.57)				
Verbal	6.30 (3.10)	5.77 (2.92)				
Social Exclusion	5.61 (3.35)	4.92 (2.50)				
Relational	4.41 (2.88)	3.66 (1.99)				
Cyber	3.72 (2.02)	3.26 (1.10)				
School						
Physical	4.61 (2.33)	4.58 (2.03)				
Verbal	6.91 (2.95)	7.68 (3.53)				
Social Exclusion	7.00 (3.57)	7.60 (3.55)				
Relational	6.47 (3.17)	6.52 (3.24)				
Cyber	4.53 (2.38)	5.02 (2.75)				
HE						
Social	8.64 (2.78)	8.82 (2.82)				
Physical	7.46 (1.55)	7.36 (1.18)				
Psychological	8.20 (2.14)	7.90 (1.88)				
Verbal	8.82 (3.14)	8.74 (2.91)				

P4 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on ethnicity and school and HE victimisation

	BME (N = 95)	White (N = 321)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η²
			.04	1.92 (9,392)	.048*	.04
School						
Physical (3-15)	4.57 (2.35)	4.63 (2.21)				
Verbal (3-15)	6.83 (3.16)	7.73 (3.66)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	6.92 (3.61)	7.63 (3.69)				
Relational (3-15)	6.28 (3.25)	6.55 (3.34)				
Cyber (3-15)	4.45 (2.25)	5.04 (2.85)				
HE						
Social (7-35)	8.91 (3.09)	8.78 (2.78)				
Physical (7-35)	7.75 (2.14)	7.43 (1.41)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.47 (2.57)	8.11 (1.94)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.91 (3.07)	8.74 (2.88)				

P5 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of religion and victimisation of those with siblings

	Religion (N = 134)	No Religion (N = 204)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η²
Sibling			.07	1.78(14, 309)	.041*	.07
Physical	5.87 (3.10)	5.11 (2.27)				
Verbal	6.27 (3.40)	5.64 (2.62)				
Social Exclusion	5.40 (3.23)	4.85 (2.31)				
Relational	3.78 (2.86)	3.53 (1.65)				
Cyber	3.69 (1.99)	3.15 (.66)				
School						
Physical	4.74 (2.41)	4.49 (1.87)				
Verbal	7.57 (3.59)	7.46 (3.32)				
Social Exclusion	7.94 (3.82)	7.15 (3.35)				
Relational	6.87 (3.62)	6.26 (2.91)				
Cyber	4.93 (2.74)	4.90 (2.64)				
HE						
Social	9.03 (3.30)	8.62 (2.42)				
Physical	7.60 (1.77)	7.24 (.56)				
Psychological	8.39 (2.44)	7.99 (1.51)				
Verbal	9.16 (3.73)	8.49 (2.29)				

P6 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on religion and school and HE victimisation

	Religion (N = 167)	No Religion (N = 249)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.05	2.14 (9, 392)	.026*	.05
School						
Physical (3-15)	4.96 (2.71)	4.39 (1.83)				
Verbal (3-15)	7.75 (3.85)	7.37 (3.36)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	8.02 (3.96)	7.09 (3.43)				
Relational (3-15)	6.93 (3.72)	6.20 (2.99)				
Cyber (3-15)	5.08 (2.92)	4.79 (2.60)				
HE						
Social (7-35)	9.21 (3.41)	8.54 (2.37)				
Physical (7-35)	7.80 (2.26)	7.30 (.91)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.58 (2.74)	7.93 (1.49)				
Verbal (7-35)	9.17 (3.64)	8.51 (2.29)				

P7 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of University accommodation and victimisation of those with siblings

	Uni Accommodation (N = 130)	Non-Uni Accommodation (N = 208)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
Sibling			.08	1.84(14, 309)	.033*	.08
Physical	5.22 (2.68)	5.52 (2.64)				
Verbal	5.92 (3.02)	5.87 (2.94)				
Social Exclusion	4.95 (2.51)	5.14 (2.85)				
Relational	3.69 (2.04)	3.91 (2.35)				
Cyber	3.35 (1.44)	3.37 (1.34)				
School						
Physical	4.55 (2.07)	4.61 (2.12)				
Verbal	7.31 (3.30)	7.63 (3.50)				
Social Exclusion	7.66 (3.37)	7.34 (3.67)				
Relational	6.73 (3.25)	6.37 (3.20)				
Cyber	5.03 (2.48)	4.83 (2.79)				
HE						
Social	9.07 (2.92)	8.60 (2.72)				
Physical	7.52 (1.50)	7.29 (1.10)				
Psychological	8.59 (2.17)	7.87 (1.72)				
Verbal	9.28 (3.15)	8.42 (2.79)				

P8 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on University accommodation and school and HE victimisation

	Uni Accommodation (N = 162)	Non-Uni Accommodation (N = 254)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.05	2.08 (9, 392)	.031*	.05
School						
Physical (3-15)	4.62 (2.14)	4.61 (2.30)				
Verbal (3-15)	7.30 (3.50)	7.67 (3.61)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	7.52 (3.61)	7.43 (3.79)				
Relational (3-15)	6.62 (3.31)	6.41 (3.32)				
Cyber (3-15)	5.05 (2.65)	4.82 (2.78)				
HE						
Social (7-35)	9.09 (2.89)	8.63 (2.81)				
Physical (7-35)	7.68 (1.88)	7.39 (1.40)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.69 (2.41)	7.88 (1.81)				
Verbal (7-35)	9.25 (3.09)	8.48 (2.77)				

P9 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of degree type and victimisation of those with siblings

	Undergraduate (N = 221)	Masters (N = 69)	Doctorate (N = 48)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.08	.91 (28,620)	.596	.04
Sibling							
Physical (3-15)	5.55 (2.71)	5.28 (2.88)	4.93 (1.94)				
Verbal (3-15)	5.94 (2.98)	5.87 (2.87)	5.67 (3.05)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	5.05 (2.73)	5.17 (2.67)	5.02 (2.82)				
Relational (3-15)	3.75 (2.12)	4.04 (2.46)	3.85 (2.44)				
Cyber (3-15)	3.44 (1.57)	3.36 (1.12)	3.02 (.14)				
School							
Physical	4.66 (2.30)	4.30 (1.49)	4.67 (1.88)				
Verbal	7.74 (3.47)	6.99 (3.46)	7.17 (3.07)				
Social Exclusion	7.78 (3.63)	6.74 (3.53)	7.04 (3.11)				
Relational	7.00 (3.42)	5.58 (2.60)	5.56 (2.53)				
Cyber	5.34 (2.97)	4.28 (1.85)	3.81 (1.52)				
HE							
Social (7-35)	9.02 (3.09)	8.51 (2.50)	8.04 (1.37)				
Physical (7-35)	7.46 (1.38)	7.35 (1.29)	7.08 (.35)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.40 (2.11)	7.88 (1.79)	7.38 (.61)				
Verbal (7-35)	9.04 (3.21)	8.33 (2.35)	8.04 (2.33)				

P10 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on degree type and school and HE victimisation

	Undergraduate (N = 277)	Masters (N = 85)	Doctorate (N = 54)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial ŋ²
				.05	1.09 (18, 786)	.355	.02
School							
Physical (3-15)	4.70 (2.46)	4.26 (1.43)	4.74 (2.07)				
Verbal (3-15)	7.69 (3.64)	7.00 (3.51)	7.48 (3.27)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	7.69 (3.76)	6.89 (3.63)	7.22 (3.24)				
Relational (3-15)	6.90 (3.48)	5.72 (2.96)	5.61 (2.55)				
Cyber (3-15)	5.28 (3.02)	4.34 (2.02)	3.91 (1.52)				
HE							
Social (7-35)	8.95 (9.02)	8.60 (2.51)	8.39 (2.40)				
Physical (7-35)	7.55 (1.67)	7.46 (1.38)	7.33 (1.67)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.38 (2.21)	7.94 (1.81)	7.63 (1.85)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.98 (3.13)	8.47 (2.41)	8.20 (2.44)				

P11 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of student status and victimisation of those with siblings

	Home (N = 273)	EU (N = 38)	International (N = 27)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.15	1.73(28, 620)	.012*	.07
Sibling							
Physical (3-15)	5.44 (2.67)	4.71 (2.46)	6.04 (2.68)				
Verbal (3-15)	5.94 (2.97)	5.11 (2.73)	6.48 (3.07)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	5.10 (2.76)	4.95 (2.89)	4.93 (2.13)				
Relational (3-15)	3.77 (2.23)	3.82 (2.06)	4.37 (2.56)				
Cyber (3-15)	3.32 (1.27)	3.66 (1.96)	3.37 (1.39)				
School							
Physical	4.52 (2.08)	4.92 (2.07)	4.74 (2.35)				
Verbal	7.61 (3.40)	7.23 (3.72)	6.81 (3.27)				
Social Exclusion	7.48 (3.49)	7.29 (4.05)	7.59 (3.68)				
Relational	6.53 (3.29)	6.29 (2.93)	6.59 (2.98)				
Cyber	5.01 (2.73)	3.95 (1.90)	5.22 (2.81)				
HE							
Social (7-35)	8.78 (2.80)	8.92 (3.36)	9.63 (1.94)				
Physical (7-35)	7.31 (1.00)	7.89 (2.60)	7.41 (.69)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.08 (1.74)	8.66 (3.05)	8.07 (1.84)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.69 (2.79)	8.89 (3.45)	9.26 (3.85)				

P12 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on student status and school and HE victimisation

	Home (N = 333)	EU (N = 45)	International (N = 38)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.07	1.61 (18, 786)	.052	.04
School							
Physical (3-15)	4.56 (2.20)	4.98 (2.49)	4.68 (2.28)				
Verbal (3-15)	7.61 (3.50)	7.29 (3.85)	7.03 (3.72)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	7.47 (3.61)	7.40 (4.05)	7.47 (3.91)				
Relational (3-15)	6.52 (3.34)	6.29 (3.07)	6.50 (3.40)				
Cyber (3-15)	5.00 (2.80)	4.04 (2.01)	5.13 (2.72)				
HE							
Social (7-35)	8.76 (2.80)	8.93 (3.31)	9.08 (2.73)				
Physical (7-35)	7.43 (1.47)	7.89 (2.52)	7.63 (1.42)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.11 (1.95)	8.60 (2.96)	8.42 (2.20)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.71 (2.80)	8.87 (3.33)	9.24 (3.45)				

P13 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of mode of study and victimisation of those with siblings

	Full-Time (N = 316)	Part-Time (N = 22)	Multivariate test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
Sibling			.07	1.53(14, 309)	.099	.07
Physical	5.47 (2.63)	4.55 (2.84)				
Verbal	5.90 (2.92)	5.73 (3.66)				
Social Exclusion	5.06 (2.72)	5.23 (2.86)				
Relational	3.80 (2.16)	4.18 (3.14)				
Cyber	3.38 (1.41)	3.14 (.64)				
School						
Physical	4.56 (2.11)	5.00 (1.93)				
Verbal	7.47 (3.42)	7.95 (3.50)				
Social Exclusion	7.46 (3.56)	7.60 (3.58)				
Relational	6.56 (3.25)	5.73 (2.69)				
Cyber	4.97 (2.72)	4.00 (1.66)				
HE						
Social	8.87 (2.87)	7.55 (1.10)				
Physical	7.37 (1.25)	7.55 (1.57)				
Psychological	8.21 (1.99)	7.27 (.55)				
Verbal	8.78 (2.93)	8.36 (3.40)				

P14 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on mode of study and school and HE victimisation

	Full-Time (N = 390)	Part-Time (N = 26)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η²
			.05	2.18 (9, 392)	.023*	.05
School						
Physical (3-15)	4.57 (2.20)	5.27 (2.69)				
Verbal (3-15)	7.45 (3.53)	8.69 (3.98)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	7.04 (3.64)	8.38 (4.10)				
Relational (3-15)	6.51 (3.30)	6.23 (3.65)				
Cyber (3-15)	4.94 (2.74)	4.46 (2.67)				
HE						
Social (7-35)	8.83 (2.78)	8.54 (3.81)				
Physical (7-35)	7.46 (1.47)	8.08 (3.02)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.21 (2.05)	7.88 (2.78)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.77 (2.84)	8.88 (4.02)				

P15 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of SES and victimisation of those with siblings

	More Than Enough (N = 32)	Comfortable (N = 181)	Financially Insecure (N = 125)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.12	1.35(28, 618)	.112	.06
Sibling							
Physical (3-15)	4.88 (1.84)	5.21 (2.42)	5.83 (3.08)				
Verbal (3-15)	5.50 (2.37)	5.63 (2.69)	6.36 (3.41)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	4.78 (2.35)	4.65 (2.26)	5.76 (3.25)				
Relational (3-15)	3.66 (1.62)	3.54 (1.84)	4.28 (2.77)				
Cyber (3-15)	3.38 (1.07)	3.20 (1.03)	3.59 (1.80)				
School							
Physical	4.00 (1.52)	4.24 (1.66)	5.24 (2.59)				
Verbal	6.00 (2.57)	7.12 (3.23)	8.46 (3.65)				
Social Exclusion	6.56 (3.14)	7.05 (3.33)	8.30 (3.84)				
Relational	5.59 (3.03)	6.14 (3.02)	7.26 (2.41)				
Cyber	4.72 (2.23)	4.67 (2.45)	5.30 (3.04)				
HE							
Social (7-35)	8.66 (2.59)	8.32 (2.29)	9.48 (3.36)				
Physical (7-35)	7.31 (.82)	7.24 (.86)	7.60 (1.76)				
Psychological (7-35)	8.31 (1.99)	7.94 (1.59)	8.41 (2.33)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.60 (3.07)	8.31 (2.37)	9.44 (3.54)				

P16 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of relationship status and victimisation of those with siblings

	Married (N = 23)	Single (N = 173)	Relationship (N = 113)	Cohabiting (N = 29)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η²
					.16	1.27(42, 933)	.121	.05
Sibling								
Physical (3-15)	5.91 (3.09)	5.33 (2.60)	5.41 (2.72)	5.48 (2.46)				
Verbal (3-15)	6.83 (3.35)	5.78 (2.84)	5.84 (3.16)	5.97 (2.51)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	6.26 (3.47)	4.87 (2.49)	5.12 (2.95)	5.17 (2.33)				
Relational (3-15)	4.87 (3.22)	3.69 (2.00)	3.93 (2.53)	3.38 (.82)				
Cyber (3-15)	3.09 (.42)	3.28 (1.26)	3.62 (1.75)	3.03 (.19)				
School								
Physical	5.30 (1.74)	4.45 (2.04)	4.65 (2.20)	4.62 (2.24)				
Verbal	7.95 (4.04)	7.10 (3.15)	7.97 (3.63)	7.76 (3.48)				
Social Exclusion	7.65 (3.75)	7.34 (3.37)	7.57 (3.93)	7.69 (3.11)				
Relational	6.35 (3.54)	6.43 (3.16)	6.82 (3.34)	5.83 (2.77)				
Cyber	3.78 (1.38)	4.81 (2.47)	5.42 (3.12)	4.41 (2.37)				
HE								
Social (7-35)	7.91 (1.31)	8.69 (2.51)	9.22 (3.39)	8.31 (2.70)				
Physical (7-35)	7.30 (.70)	7.42 (1.41)	7.38 (1.22)	7.24 (.95)				
Psychological (7-35)	7.48 (1.20)	8.24 (1.93)	8.32 (2.15)	7.48 (1.35)				
Verbal (7-35)	7.74 (1.66)	8.95 (3.00)	8.80 (3.04)	8.24 (3.03)				

P17 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of each participant on relationship status and school and HE victimisation

	Married (N = 27)	Single (N = 214)	Relationship (N = 144)	Cohabiting (N = 31)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
					.08	1.25 (27, 1182)	.174	.03
School								
Physical (3-15)	5.52 (2.06)	4.46 (2.14)	4.70 (2.38)	4.52 (2.20)				
Verbal (3-15)	8.30 (4.15)	7.12 (3.34)	7.96 (3.75)	7.65 (3.48)				
Social Exclusion (3-15)	8.00 (3.89)	7.24 (3.55)	7.67 (3.94)	7.65 (3.05)				
Relational (3-15)	6.81 (3.77)	6.28 (3.19)	6.85 (3.48)	6.03 (2.89)				
Cyber (3-15)	4.19 (2.39)	4.76 (2.47)	5.38 (3.17)	4.39 (2.30)				
HE								
Social (7-35)	8.30 (1.92)	8.67 (2.56)	9.21 (3.37)	8.35 (2.63)				
Physical (7-35)	7.78 (2.36)	7.50 (1.54)	7.51 (1.66)	7.23 (.92)				
Psychological (7-35)	7.93 (2.66)	8.19 (1.95)	8.39 (2.31)	7.55 (1.39)				
Verbal (7-35)	8.19 (2.39)	8.89 (2.89)	8.84 (3.06)	8.23 (2.94)				

P18 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of ethnicity on positive wellbeing

	BME (N = 95)	White (N = 321)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.03	1.05(12, 389)	.407	.03
LOT	18.46 (5.34)	17.92 (5.42)				
Self-Esteem	26.95 (5.30)	26.56 (6.35)				
Ryff Autonomy	30.73 (6.72)	30.84 (7.22)				
Ryff Environmental Mastery	27.49 (7.65)	29.18 (7.84)				
Ryff Personal Growth	35.86 (6.53)	35.71 (6.73)				
Ryff Positive Relations	34.02 (6.79)	34.17 (7.27)				
Ryff Purpose In Life	33.10 (6.81)	33.92 (7.81)				
Ryff Acceptance	28.99 (8.51)	29.21 (9.33)				
BPN Autonomy	4.42 (.97)	4.62 (.99)				
BPN Relatedness	4.94 (1.08)	5.05 (1.05)				
BPN Competence	4.48 (1.14)	4.46 (1.17)				
Positive Affect	29.96 (8.27)	29.29 (9.21)				

P19 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of religion on positive wellbeing

	Religion (N = 167)	No Religion (N = 249)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.04	1.29(12, 389)	.222	.04
LOT	18.52 (5.35)	17.73 (5.43)				
Self-Esteem	27.34 (6.27)	26.19 (5.99)				
Ryff Autonomy	31.48 (7.22)	30.37 (6.99)				
Ryff Environmental Mastery	28.98 (7.77)	28.67 (7.88)				
Ryff Personal Growth	36.44 (6.51)	35.28 (6.76)				
Ryff Positive Relations	34.68 (7.05)	33.77 (7.22)				
Ryff Purpose In Life	34.07 (7.32)	33.51 (7.78)				
Ryff Acceptance	30.15 (8.67)	27.32 (9.40)				
BPN Autonomy	4.56 (1.03)	4.58 (.95)				
BPN Relatedness	5.06 (1.06)	5.00 (1.05)				
BPN Competence	4.58 (1.15)	4.38 (1.16)				
Positive Affect	31.11 (8.41)	28.32 (9.22)				

P20 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of university accommodation on positive wellbeing

	Uni Accommodation (N = 162)	Non-Uni Accommodation (N = 254)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.02	.81(12, 389)	.638	.02
LOT	17.52 (4.95)	18.38 (5.66)				
Self-Esteem	26.12 (5.68)	26.99 (6.38)				
Ryff Autonomy	30.05 (7.21)	31.30 (6.99)				
Ryff Environmental Mastery	28.38 (6.88)	29.06 (8.38)				
Ryff Personal Growth	34.86 (6.15)	36.30 (6.95)				
Ryff Positive Relations	35.59 (7.04)	34.48 (7.22)				
Ryff Purpose In Life	33.91 (7.03)	34.20 (7.91)				
Ryff Acceptance	28.76 (8.61)	29.42 (9.47)				
BPN Autonomy	4.55 (.99)	4.59 (.98)				
BPN Relatedness	5.03 (1.07)	5.02 (1.05)				
BPN Competence	4.40 (1.13)	4.51 (1.18)				
Positive Affect	29.09 (8.74)	29.66 (9.17)				

P21 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of degree type on positive wellbeing

	Undergraduate (N = 277)	Masters (N = 85)	Doctorate (N = 54)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.09	2.17(24, 780)	.040*	.05
LOT	17.57 (5.21)	18.72 (5.54)	19.41 (5.93)				
Self-Esteem	25.94 (6.19)	28.28 (6.20)	27.74 (5.00)				
Ryff Autonomy	30.58 (7.17)	32.09 (6.69)	30.00 (7.31)				
Ryff Environmental Mastery	28.30 (7.54)	29.47 (8.78)	30.30 (7.55)				
Ryff Personal Growth	34.92 (6.51)	37.26 (7.27)	37.59 (5.80)				
Ryff Positive Relations	33.61 (7.09)	34.49 (7.62)	36.26 (6.39)				
Ryff Purpose In Life	32.88 (7.56)	34.20 (7.77)	37.39 (6.35)				
Ryff Acceptance	28.43 (9.20)	30.36 (9.20)	31.00 (8.43)				
BPN Autonomy	4.50 (.99)	4.75 (1.00)	4.65 (.91)				
BPN Relatedness	4.98 (1.06)	5.09 (1.08)	5.15 (.99)				
BPN Competence	4.35 (1.20)	4.67 (1.12)	4.72 (.95)				
Positive Affect	28.85 (9.07)	30.16 (8.92)	31.31 (8.56)				

P22 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of mode of study on positive wellbeing

	Full-Time (N = 390)	Part-Time (N = 26)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η²
			.03	1.13(12, 389)	.332	.03
LOT	17.97 (5.37)	19.19 (5.94)				
Self-Esteem	26.52 (6.10)	28.65 (6.17)				
Ryff Autonomy	30.95 (7.09)	28.84 (7.02)				
Ryff Environmental Mastery	28.72 (7.54)	29.88 (11.39)				
Ryff Personal Growth	35.59 (6.59)	38.04 (7.70)				
Ryff Positive Relations	34.02 (7.12)	35.88 (7.64)				
Ryff Purpose In Life	33.62 (7.51)	35.50 (8.64)				
Ryff Acceptance	29.00 (9.06)	31.58 (10.08)				
BPN Autonomy	4.58 (.96)	4.52 (1.35)				
BPN Relatedness	5.03 (1.03)	5.04 (1.33)				
BPN Competence	4.44 (1.17)	4.79 (1.06)				
Positive Affect	29.23 (9.00)	32.65 (8.56)				

P23 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of relationship status on positive wellbeing

	Married (N = 27)	Single (N = 214)	Relationship (N = 144)	Cohabiting (N = 31)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)		*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
					.10	1.11(36, 1173)	.305	.03
LOT	19.63 (5.33)	17.93 (5.22)	17.80 (5.67)	18.65 (5.43)				
Self-Esteem	27.81 (5.34)	26.57 (5.81)	26.38 (6.70)	27.45 (6.11)				
Ryff Autonomy	31.04 (6.01)	30.84 (6.93)	30.75 (7.38)	30.77 (8.03)				
Ryff Environmental Mastery	29.85 (8.45)	28.96 (7.36)	27.98 (8.30)	30.55 (8.02)				
Ryff Personal Growth	37.63 (6.64)	35.64 (6.60)	35.13 (6.72)	37.65 (6.71)				
Ryff Positive Relations	33.96 (6.89)	33.74 (7.17)	34.42 (7.23)	35.68 (6.95)				
Ryff Purpose In Life	35.93 (7.27)	33.29 (7.27)	33.42 (8.05)	36.39 (7.29)				
Ryff Acceptance	30.96 (8.78)	28.79 (8.70)	29.15 (9.74)	30.26 (9.66)				
BPN Autonomy	4.53 (.92)	4.65 (.94)	4.46 (1.07)	4.64 (.85)				
BPN Relatedness	4.95 (.88)	5.00 (1.07)	5.06 (1.08)	5.06 (1.03)				
BPN Competence	4.88 (1.02)	4.51 (1.11)	4.28 (1.23)	4.62 (1.22)				
Positive Affect	31.67 (9.03)	29.58 (8.99)	28.71 (8.94)	29.90 (9.32)				

P24 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of SES on positive wellbeing

	More than enough (N = 38)	Comfortable (N = 232)	Financially Insecure (N = 146)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.11	1.84(24, 780)	.009*	.05
LOT	19.82 (4.81)	18.39 (5.34)	17.03 (5.49)				
Self-Esteem	28.76 (6.04)	27.22 (6.01)	25.20 (6.05)				
Ryff Autonomy	30.08 (8.63)	30.85 (6.93)	30.95 (6.97)				
Ryff Environmental Mastery	30.97 (8.35)	29.80 (7.22)	26.63 (8.17)				
Ryff Personal Growth	36.42 (7.82)	36.00 (6.63)	35.14 (6.44)				
Ryff Positive Relations	36.87 (7.38)	34.86 (6.99)	32.27 (6.95)				
Ryff Purpose In Life	34.76 (9.06)	34.28 (7.45)	32.60 (7.32)				
Ryff Acceptance	33.02 (9.87)	29.77 (8.70)	27.19 (9.23)				
BPN Autonomy	4.91 (1.13)	4.65 (.87)	4.36 (1.07)				
BPN Relatedness	5.49 (.96)	5.09 (1.01)	4.81 (1.09)				
BPN Competence	4.64 (1.46)	4.53 (1.11)	4.32 (1.15)				
Positive Affect	30.00 (9.16)	30.02 (8.99)	28.37 (8.93)				

P25 Descriptive and multivariate statistics of gender on negative wellbeing

	Male (N = 78)	Female (N = 338)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.01	.92(2, 399)	.401	.01
CES-D	17.29 (3.13)	17.97 (3.45)				
Negative Affect	23.01 (8.91)	23.88 (9.11)				

P26 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for ethnicity and negative wellbeing

	BME (N = 95)	White (N = 321)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			<.00	.37(2, 299)	.688	<.00
CES-D	17.86 (3.29)	17.84 (3.44)				
Negative Affect	23.81 (8.02)	22.69 (9.36)				

P27 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for religion and negative wellbeing

	Religion (N = 167)	No Religion (N = 249)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			<.00	.47(2, 399)	.627	<.00
CES-D	17.85 (3.51)	17.84 (3.33)				
Negative Affect	23.77 (9.14)	23.68 (9.03)				

P28 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for accommodation and negative wellbeing

	Uni Accommodation (N = 162)	Non-Uni Accommodation (N = 254)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial ŋ²
			.01	2.93(2, 399)	.054	.01
CES-D	18.50 (3.27)	17.43 (3.42)				
Negative Affect	24.97 (9.13)	22.92 (8.95)				

P29 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for degree type and negative wellbeing

	Undergraduate (N = 277)	Masters (N = 85)	Doctorate (N = 54)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)		*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η²
				<.00	.33(4, 800)	.858	<.00
CES-D	18.24 (3.60)	17.33 (3.08)	16.02 (2.30)				
Negative Affect	24.46 (9.32)	22.72 (9.15)	21.46 (6.98)				

P30 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for mode of study and negative wellbeing

	Full-Time (N = 390)	Part-Time (N = 26)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η²
			<.00	1.09(2, 399)	.336	<.00
CES-D	17.89 (3.32)	17.15 (4.51)				
Negative Affect	23.92 (9.05)	20.65 (8.88)				

P31 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for relationship status and negative wellbeing

	Married (N = 27)	Single (N = 214)	Relationship (N = 144)	Cohabiting (N = 31)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)		*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial ŋ²
					.02	1.13(6, 800)	.343	.01
CES-D	16.74 (2.90)	17.88 (3.38)	18.22 (3.54)	16.81 (2.94)				
Negative Affect	21.85 (8.97)	23.57 (9.23)	24.63 (9.14)	22.10 (7.35)				

P32 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for ethnicity and IWM

	BME (N = 95)	White (N = 321)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.02	2.85(3, 398)	.037*	.02
IWM Stranger	35.38 (6.03)	34.25 (7.30)				
IWM Familiar	52.25 (10.20)	55.82 (9.22)				
IWM Self	35.03 (8.19)	34.12 (9.58)				

P33 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for religion and IWM

	Religion (N = 167)	No Religion (N = 249)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial ŋ²
			.01	1.59(3, 398)	.191	.01
IWM Stranger	35.47 (6.96)	33.86 (7.05)				
IWM Familiar	54.56 (9.83)	55.30 (9.38)				
IWM Self	35.45 (9.16)	33.59 (9.30)				

P34 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for accommodation and IWM

	Uni Accommodation (N = 162)	Non-Uni Accommodation (N = 254)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			<.00	.36(3, 398)	.782	<.00
IWM Stranger	33.85 (6.50)	34.93 (7.35)				
IWM Familiar	54.25 (9.44)	55.48 (9.63)				
IWM Self	33.65 (9.15)	34.78 (9.35)				

P35 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for degree type and IWM

	Undergraduate (N = 277)	Masters (N = 85)	Doctorate (N = 54)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)		*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.01	.77(6, 796)	.591	.01
IWM Stranger	32.96 (6.87)	35.85 (7.71)	36.19 (6.27)				
IWM Familiar	54.34 (9.21)	55.51 (10.40)	57.61 (9.62)				
IWM Self	33.38 (9.39)	36.39 (9.20)	36.04 (8.15)				

P36 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for student status and IWM

	Home (N = 333)	EU (N = 45)	International (N = 38)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.02	1.63(6, 798)	.138	.01
IWM Stranger	34.29 (7.21)	35.53 (5.89)	35.24 (6.80)				
IWM Familiar	54.91 (9.58)	57.02 (9.25)	53.45 (9.58)				
IWM Self	33.47 (9.47)	37.82 (7.57)	37.79 (7.63)				

P37 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for mode of study and IWM

	Full-Time (N = 390)	Part-Time (N = 26)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.02	2.14(3, 398)	.095	.02
IWM Stranger	34.32 (6.97)	37.38 (7.65)				
IWM Familiar	55.06 (9.46)	54.12 (11.10)				
IWM Self	34.13 (9.25)	37.42 (9.39)				

P38 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for relationship status and IWM

	Married (N = 27)	Single (N = 214)	Relationship (N = 144)	Cohabiting (N = 31)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)		*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
					.02	1.01(9, 1200)	.428	.01
IWM Stranger	35.41 (6.30)	34.75 (6.72)	33.72 (7.34)	35.71 (8.24)				
IWM Familiar	55.81 (8.61)	53.90 (9.68)	55.62 (9.49)	59.10 (8.78)				
IWM Self	36.59 (9.81)	34.22 (8.67)	33.92 (10.17)	35.16 (8.61)				

P39 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for belongingness and gender

	Male (N = 78)	Female (N = 338)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.01	1.17(4, 397)	.323	.01
UBQ Affiliation	31.99 (7.04)	31.97 (6.93)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance	24.73 (4.68)	24.93 (4.11)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations	11.94 (2.87)	11.13 (3.30)				
Social Connectedness	32.59 (10.43)	32.07 (10.31)				

P40 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for belongingness and ethnicity

	BME (N = 95)	White (N = 321)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.01	1.21(4, 397)	.305	.01
UBQ Affiliation	31.95 (6.95)	31.98 (6.95)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance	24.15 (4.16)	25.11 (4.22)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations	10.74 (3.23)	11.44 (3.23)				
Social Connectedness	32.09 (10.08)	32.18 (10.41)				

P41 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for belongingness and religion

	Religion (N = 167)	No Religion (N = 249)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial ŋ²
			.02	1.74(4, 397)	.140	.02
UBQ Affiliation	32.71 (7.16)	31.48 (6.77)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance	24.70 (4.42)	25.02 (4.08)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations	11.15 (3.28)	11.37 (3.22)				
Social Connectedness	33.23 (10.16)	31.45 (10.39)				

P42 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for belongingness and student status

	Home (N = 333)	EU (N = 45)	International (N = 38)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.01	.59(8, 796)	.790	.01
UBQ Affiliation	32.02 (6.97)	32.36 (6.38)	31.16 (7.43)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance	24.96 (4.26)	25.09 (4.47)	24.08 (3.51)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations	11.16 (3.37)	12.04 (2.60)	11.45 (2.66)				
Social Connectedness	32.00 (10.52)	34.11 (8.62)	31.21 (10.41)				

P43 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for belongingness and mode of study

	Full-Time (N = 390)	Part-Time (N = 26)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
			.01	.59(4, 397)	.670	.01
UBQ Affiliation	32.05 (6.88)	30.88 (7.88)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance	24.50 (4.07)	24.69 (6.16)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations	11.22 (3.22)	12.23 (3.43)				
Social Connectedness	31.99 (10.08)	34.77 (13.41)				

P44 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for belongingness and relationship status

	Married (N = 27)	Single (N = 214)	Relationship (N = 144)	Cohabiting (N = 31)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)		*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
					.02	.80(12, 1197)	.656	.01
UBQ Affiliation	31.85 (7.20)	32.23 (6.48)	32.03 (7.34)	30.03 (7.96)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance	23.81 (4.33)	24.76 (4.14)	25.26 (4.30)	24.97 (4.28)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations	11.96 (3.46)	11.06 (3.03)	11.23 (3.48)	12.42 (3.12)				
Social Connectedness	32.30 (9.91)	31.81 (9.90)	32.33 (11.00)	33.68 (10.70)				

P45 Descriptive and multivariate statistics for belongingness and SES

	More Than Enough (N = 38)	Comfortable (N = 232)	Financially Insecure (N = 146)	Multivariate Test			
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M(SD)	*V*	F(df)	*p*	Partial η^2
				.04	2.18(8, 796)	.027*	.02
UBQ Affiliation	31.79 (7.02)	32.53 (6.59)	31.13 (7.42)				
UBQ Support and Acceptance	25.82 (3.83)	25.11 (3.91)	24.30 (4.72)				
UBQ Faculty Staff Relations	10.95 (3.42)	11.54 (3.03)	10.95 (3.48)				
Social Connectedness	36.02 (8.45)	32.86 (10.27)	30.05 (10.47)				

Appendix Q

Original 26-item pool for policy analysis

1. Does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour?
2. Mention physical/actions?
3. Mentions verbal?
4. Mentions relational?
5. Mentions cyber?
6. Mentions material?
7. Mentions homophobic?
8. Mentions racial bullying?
9. Mentions sexual bullying?
10. Mention the issue of student-lecturer lecturer-student bullying?
11. State what victim should do?
12. Say how staff should respond to a report of bullying?
13. Mention the responsibilities of other university staff if they know of bullying?
14. Mention the responsibilities of student bystanders if they know of bullying?
15. State whether sanctions applied for bullying will depend on type or severity of incident?
16. Discuss what actions will be taken if the bullying persists?
17. Suggest how to support victim?
18. Suggest how to help the student doing the bullying to change their behaviour?
19. Mention will report of bullying be recorded?
20. Mention who is responsible for recording them?
21. Mention how this information will be used?
22. Mention periodic review and updating policy
23. Mention encouraging cooperative behaviour, rewarding good behaviour, improving uni climate, or creating a safe environment?
24. Discuss general issues of peer support?
25. Mention the preventative role of activities (societies?) and supervisors (bullying ambassadors?)?
26. Discuss issues of inclusiveness?

Appendix R

Added 49 items for policy analysis.

1. Does the definition of bullying include ‘misuse/abuse of power’?
2. Is it clear that academic debate/feedback is not bullying?
3. Give examples of bullying?
4. Mention ‘acceptable/unacceptable behaviour’?
5. Mention definition of harassment?
6. Give examples of harassment?
7. Mention harassment is against the law?
8. Mention the protected characteristics (all or some)?
9. Mention a definition of discrimination and include the different types?
10. Mention the Equality Act (2010)?
11. Mention a definition of victimisation?
12. Mention individual differences in perceptions/cultures (what one might not find offensive, another person might)?
13. Mention hate crime?
14. Mention uni responsibility for eliminating all forms of unfairness/discrimination?
15. Mention the students’ responsibilities for treating people acceptably/with respect?
16. Mention responsibility of student to read the policy?
17. Mention manager’s responsibilities for treating their staff acceptably/with respect?
18. Mention how being bullied can make you feel?
19. Mention how bullying can affect academic work?
20. Mention where you can get support from?
21. Mention the offer of mediation between complainant and accused and/or counselling?
22. Mention the opportunity to appeal if unsatisfied with formal outcome?
23. Mention the legal concept of reasonableness? (Whether behaviour could be classed as bullying/harassment by any reasonable person)
24. Mention that the policy applies even if behaviour was not intended to hurt?
25. Include a clear flow chart of what to do in a bullying situation?
26. Mention that ‘being under the influence’ does not excuse inappropriate behaviour?
27. Link to other related policies and procedures?
28. Mention all complaints will be taken seriously?
29. Mention fictitious/malicious complaints could lead to disciplinary action?
30. Mention that informal resolution should come first?
31. Mention formal resolution second?
32. Mention how a formal complainant will be supported?
33. Mention what happens if a complaint is made against you?
34. Mention how the policy is put into practice?
35. Mention advice and guidance on the procedures?
36. Mention confidentiality will be maintained where possible?
37. Mention the existence of a dignity advisor/bullying ambassador
38. Mention the aim of the policy?
39. Mention who the policy applies to?
40. Mention the importance of dignity & respect?
41. Mention equality and diversity?
42. Mention right to feeling safe/supported/belonging?
43. Mention that behaviour not coinciding with values is unacceptable/will not be tolerated?
44. Mention it is everyone’s responsibility to challenge unacceptable behaviour?
45. Mention duty of care and/or other legal responsibilities of university?
46. Mention it is relevant to students?
47. Mention it is relevant to staff?
48. Mentions relevance to university workers?
49. Mention where the policy applies (e.g. just on campus, or field trips)?

Appendix S

67-item improved codebook

Anti-Bullying Policy Analysis for UK Higher Education Institutions (based on TGUG list)

First sort universities depending on policy type:

1. Anti-bullying/harassment
2. Dignity and Respect
3. Equality and Diversity
4. Other _______
5. None

A – Definitions/Nature

1. Does the definition of bullying include 'misuse/abuse of power'?
2. Does the definition of bullying mention repetition or potential to be repeated?
3. Does the definition make it clear that bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour?
4. Is it clear that academic debate/feedback is not bullying?
5. Mention physical/actions?
6. Mentions verbal?
7. Mentions relational/social/indirect?
8. Mentions cyber?
9. Mentions material?
10. Mentions homophobic?
11. Mentions racial bullying?
12. Mentions sexual bullying?
13. Mentions disablist bullying?
14. Mention the issue of student-lecturer and/or lecturer-student bullying?
15. Give specific/detailed examples of bullying?
16. Mention definition of harassment?
17. Give examples of harassment?
18. Mention harassment is against the law?
19. Mention the protected characteristics (all or some)?
20. Mention a definition of discrimination and/or include the different types?
21. Mention the Equality Act (2010)?
22. Mention a definition of victimisation (regarding a complainant who has reported someone for abuse based on protected characteristics)?
23. Mention individual differences in perceptions/cultures (what one might not find offensive, another person might)?
24. Mention how being bullied can make you feel?
25. Mention how bullying can affect academic work?
26. Mention the legal concept of reasonableness?
27. Mention that the policy applies even if behaviour was not intended to hurt?
28. Mention that 'being under the influence' does not excuse inappropriate behaviour?

B – Initial Reporting and responding to bullying incidents/responsibilities

29. State what concrete steps the victim could do?
30. State concrete steps of how employees could respond to a report of bullying?
31. Mention the concrete steps other students could take if they know of bullying?
32. Mention what sanctions there are for bullying behaviour?

33. State whether sanctions applied for bullying will depend on type or severity of incident?
34. Mention support mechanisms for the victim?
35. Mention resolution mechanisms between complainant and accused (e.g. mediation and/or counselling)?
36. Suggest how to help the student doing the bullying to change their behaviour?
37. Mention the opportunity to appeal if unsatisfied with formal outcome?
38. Include a clear flow chart of what to do in a bullying situation?
39. Link to other related policies and procedures?

C - Recording bullying, communicating, and evaluating policy/procedure to follow

40. Mention that student should record evidence - where practical - of bullying/harassment incidences?
41. Mention that the report of bullying will be recorded?
42. Mention who is responsible for recording them?
43. Mention how this information will be used?
44. Mention periodic review and updating policy?
45. Mention all formal complaints will be taken seriously?
46. Mention fake complaints could lead to disciplinary action?
47. Mention that informal resolution should come first?
48. Mention formal resolution second?
49. Mention how a formal complainant will be supported?
50. Mention what happens if a complaint is made against you?
51. Mention how the policy is put into practice (e.g. whose responsibility it is to do what)?
52. Mention confidentiality will be maintained where possible?

D - Aims and Values/Strategies for preventing bullying

53. Discuss general issues of peer support?
54. Mention the preventative role of campaigns?
55. Discuss issues of inclusiveness?
56. Mention ‘acceptable/unacceptable behaviour’?
57. Mention the existence of a dignity advisor/bullying ambassador or equivalent
58. Mention everyone’s responsibility for treating people acceptably/with respect (e.g. good behaviour, creating a safe environment)?
59. Mention the aim of the policy?
60. Mention who the policy applies to?
61. Mention the importance of dignity &/or respect?
62. Mention equality and/or diversity?
63. Mention right to feeling safe/supported/belonging?
64. Mention that behaviour not coinciding with values is unacceptable/will not be tolerated?
65. Mention it is everyone’s responsibility to address unacceptable behaviour?
66. Mention duty of care and/or other legal responsibilities of university?
67. Mention where the policy applies (e.g. just on campus, or field trips)?

Appendix T

Coding guidelines

Section A Definitions/Nature

1. The concept of a perceived or actual abuse/misuse of power is included in the widely-used definition for school bullying: a systematic abuse of power, whereby intentionally aggressive behaviour is repeated against a victim who is unable to defend themselves (Smith, 2004). It is also included in the ACAS guide on bullying and harassment at work.
2. The concept of repetition is also included in the widely-used definition (as above), and the ACAS guide states the act can be a persistent or isolated incident.
3. Bullying is different from other kinds of aggressive behaviour, and the policy might compare it with harassment (concerns the protected characteristics), and crime, which tends to be a singular and serious aggressive act.
4. It should be clear that bullying does not include respectful academic debate or constructive feedback on assignments.
5. Are physical acts of bullying mentioned, like the school-type hitting, kicking, or pushing; or the more adult-type actions such as work sabotage.
6. Are verbal acts of bullying mentioned, such as name calling, threats, being the target of jokes or insults.
7. Is relational bullying mentioned (which may also be called social, emotional, or psychological/indirect), such as acts of exclusion, rumours, being manipulated or controlled.
8. Is electronic bullying mentioned (could use the term cyber), with examples of images shared without consent, excluded from group chats, had nasty messages posted on social networks.
9. Bullying involving property i.e. stealing, hiding, or damaging work or possessions.
10. Bullied because of actual sexual orientation (could be classed as harassment, as sexual orientation is a protected characteristic), or by association, i.e. the victim is friends with someone with the characteristic, or by perception i.e. bullied because you are perceived to be gay/lesbian when you are not.
11. Bullied on the grounds of colour/nationality/ethnic origin (could be classed as harassment, as race is a protected characteristic), or by association i.e. the victim is friends with someone with the characteristic, or by perception i.e. bullied because you are perceived to be of a certain nationality etc. but you are not.
12. Bullied in a sexually aggressive manner or on the grounds of their sex (could be classed as harassment, as sex is a protected characteristic), e.g. unwanted sexual advances, inappropriate sexual comments, making decisions on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected.
13. Bullied on the grounds of a disability (again, could be classed as harassment, as having a physical/mental disability is a protected characteristic), e.g. being made fun of for using disability aids (e.g. wheelchair, hearing aids, guide dog) or for having psychological problems that interfere with daily life.
14. Indicate that the bullying does not necessarily need to be between students, but could be an issue between student and lecturer. If it is the latter, they may be directed to a different policy.

15. Are there examples of the types of bullying mentioned for clear comparison of what behaviour constitutes bullying (could be in the appendix).
16. Is legal definition of harassment given (Protection from Harassment Act 1997) e.g. causing alarm or distress, putting people in fear of violence, repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a victim in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person. Alternately, harassment based on the protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010).
17. Are examples of harassment given, such as spoken or written words, abusive offensive emails, tweets or comments on social networking sites, images and graffiti, physical gestures, facial expressions, jokes, in relation to the protected characteristics, or in a manner related to the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
18. Does it state that harassment is unlawful.
19. Protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation.
20. Direct discrimination is when you are treated worse than someone else because you have a protected characteristic. Discrimination by association: you may be treated worse because of your connection or association with another person with a protected characteristic, even if you don't have the protected characteristic yourself. Discrimination by perception: you can also be treated worse because a person or organisation believes you do have a protected characteristic when you don't.
21. Mention the Equality Act (2010), which is to legally protect people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (could be in a footnote or appendix).
22. Victimisation is defined in the Equality Act as: Treating someone badly because they have reported someone for doing a 'protected act' (or because they believe that a person is going to do a protected act). A 'protected act' is: abusing someone/group of people based on their protected characteristics (e.g. Islamophobia).
23. Everyone is different, and what one might regard as a joke, another person may find offensive. This should be taken into consideration when interacting, being especially mindful with cultures different to your own.
24. Mention how bullying can make you feel? Examples could involve psychological effects such as depressed/anxious, feelings such as inadequacy, embarrassment, or emotions such as anger, sadness.
25. Mention how bullying can have a deleterious effect on academic work e.g. the person becomes demotivated, loses confidence, is too upset to study.
26. Mention whether behaviour could be classed as bullying/harassment by any reasonable person.
27. A perpetrator may not always be aware that their actions are harmful, yet the policy should still apply even when the actions were not intentional. The concept of 'reasonableness' should be applied.
28. Mention that being under the influence, intoxicated, or high, does not excuse inappropriate behaviour.

Section B Initial Reporting and Responding to Bullying Incidents/Responsibilities

29. Are there useful and clear guidelines to follow (i.e. concrete steps to take) in the event that a person feels they are being bullied or harassed. This will be a link to another webpage or policy, or will be instructions on how to proceed with either a complaint, or an informal approach.
30. Are there useful and clear guidelines to follow (i.e. concrete steps to take) in the event that an employee becomes aware of a student/colleague being bullied or harassed. This will be a link to another webpage or policy, a person to contact, or will be instructions on how to proceed with either a complaint, or an informal approach.
31. Are there useful and clear guidelines to follow (i.e. concrete steps to take) in the event that a student becomes aware of another student being bullied or harassed. This will be a link to another webpage or policy, a person to contact, or will be instructions on how to proceed with either a complaint, or an informal approach.
32. Mention what sanctions there are for being found guilty of perpetrating bullying or harassment (e.g. suspension from the University, apology to victim, obligatory mediation).
33. State whether the sanction will depend on the severity of the transgression (e.g. from an apology to the victim, to the more serious forced to leave university or police involvement).
34. Support mechanisms for victims could be giving advice, or directing to counselling or any other appropriate service.
35. Mention mechanisms for resolution before the behaviour escalates (e.g. counselling or mediation for both parties).
36. Suggest how the accused student/person can change their behaviour (e.g. self-awareness/assertiveness training, learning about communicating more effectively).
37. Give details about appealing if a victim is not happy with the outcome of a formal complaint.
38. Is there a flowchart of steps to take if in a bullying situation (could be in the appendix).
39. Are there links embedded to other related policies or forms to fill in to report bullying or harassment e.g. disciplinary policy, complaints procedure.

Section C Recording Bullying, Communicating, and Evaluating Policy/Procedure to Follow

40. Mention that evidence should be kept, where possible, of bullying and harassment incidences i.e. screenshots, emails, or even witness contact details who agree to come forward.
41. Does it state that all bullying incidences will be on record in order to be addressed, or for statistical purposes.
42. State who is responsible for recording bullying and harassment (e.g. student services)
43. State how the information will be used that is recorded, whether it is purely for statistical purposes, or to build a case against the accused.
44. Does it mention that the policy will be reviewed on a certain date or annually/biannually (could be in the footnotes, or appendix).
45. All complaints are taken seriously.
46. Malicious complaints will be taken equally seriously, and can have serious consequences.
47. Encouragement to attempt an informal resolution of the issue in the first instance (where possible).
48. Formal resolution should be a final step, once informal resolution has been attempted unsuccessfully (or if the incident is serious enough to warrant bypassing informal stage).
49. A student making a formal complaint should be supported by the university e.g. by an impartial advocate, bullying ambassador, student services.
50. Mention what happens if someone has complained about your behaviour e.g. given a warning, called to make a statement, have mediation with the accuser.
51. Whose responsibility is it to put the policy into practice, i.e. everyone that is a student or employed by the university.
52. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible, but in the case of a formal complaint, this will not be practicable.

Section D – Aims and Values, Strategies for Preventing Bullying

53. Mention that peers can support you through informal or formal processes of reporting e.g. by accompanying you to a hearing, or helping with informally asking an aggressor to stop their behaviour.
54. State that there are ongoing campaigns to raise awareness about what types of behaviour are not acceptable, and encourage people to call out unacceptable behaviour or tell someone.
55. Mention that the university is an inclusive environment that aims to make all students and staff welcome, regardless of background, religious beliefs etc.
56. Behaviour that does not coincide with the university values i.e. dignity and respect, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Each student and employee has a responsibility also to treat each other in an acceptable manner.
57. Does the university have specific roles to support students who are having issues with bullying and harassment i.e. bullying ambassadors.
58. Each person has a responsibility to treat each other in an acceptable manner and with respect, based on the values of the university. Every member of the university community has the right to feel safe in their work and study environment, and supported in what they do.
59. Outline the aim of the policy, usually at the beginning.
60. Does it state who the policy applies to, students, staff, both, other university workers e.g. cleaners, catering, builders.
61. Mention the importance of everyone's right to dignity and respect.
62. Mention equality and/or diversity, and that everyone ought to be treated equally regardless of differences.
63. Every member of the university community has the right to feel safe in their work and study environment, that they belong, and supported in what they do.
64. Behaviour that does not coincide with the university values i.e. dignity and respect, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated, and action will be taken against those who disregard this.
65. Mention that everyone has a responsibility to report bullying or harassment/unacceptable behaviour, if they witness it (or intervene where safe to and it is appropriate); this aligns with the principles of respecting and caring for fellow students/colleagues.
66. Does it specify that the university - and therefore the staff within - have a responsibility to respond to any bullying or harassment behaviour of students, morally, but also legally under the public sector equality duty/duty of care. Either in the form of direct intervention if they feel they have the appropriate skills/training, or talking to the alleged victim then informing an appropriate service.
67. Does it say where the policy applies, is it just on the university campus, or does it cover behaviour on field trips and social outings.