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## School Bullying and Cultural Otherness: Vulnerable Social Groups and Education

(pp. 59–94)

### Abstract

Globalization and migration are now common. Internationally, societies are changing economically, culturally, and demographically. Greek society is becoming multicultural, causing many issues such as cultural diversity and the integration of new cultures. Education is affected by population changes and must manage multiculturalism. Interpersonal, social, and emotional interactions, relationships, and experiences occur in modern schools. Intercultural education is used in the multicultural school environment to encourage respect and eliminate preconceptions. School violence, aggression, and bullying are on the rise. It is a social phenomenon that affects more and more students. In this paper, school bullying, its relationship to student ethnocultural diversity, and its management are studied. The conclusion is that school bullying and violence must be prevented and treated systematically; to this end, teacher training, the school's program, and parent–child relationships should also be addressed.

*Keywords:* bullying, school violence, social, education, child victims, multicultural, student

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Conceptual definition of school bullying and school violence

In the European Conference of Utrecht (1997), school violence was defined as “imposing the will of one part of the educational process on another and causing damage or harm” (Artinopoulou, 2001). In any case, school violence is a reflection of social violence and a sign of poor education (Artinopoulou, 2001). According to Beze (1998), school-related aggression and violence cover four groups of interpersonal relationships and interactions: teachers toward students and students toward teachers. Artinopoulou (2001) adds teacher–administrator aggression to these relationships. As discussed below, bullying requires a power imbalance, which distinguishes it from school violence (UNESCO, 2017).

## 2. Object and subject of research

### 2.1. School bullying

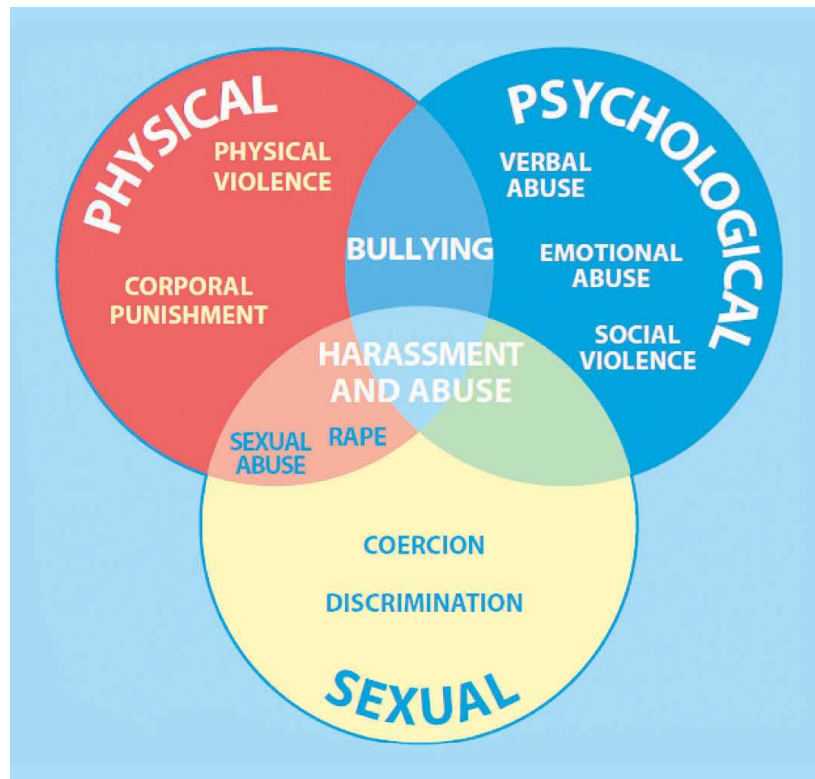
A Swedish school doctor Heinemann coined the term *mobbing* to describe school violence (Heinemann & Thorén, 1972). Heinemann defines mobbing as “all against one” in the context of racial prejudice, where a large part of a class unites against an individual who is very different from the group. The term has its origin in the science of zoology. Sjölander (Lagerspetz et al., 1982) translated the work of Austrian physician, zoologist, and ethologist Lorenz (1963), who used the term *mobbing* to denote animal aggression. Olweus (1972), a Norwegian psychology professor who studied school aggression for decades, coined the term *bullying*. Olweus questioned Heinemann and social psychologists’ use of the term mobbing to describe student aggression, because it refers to concepts that do not match school violence. *Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys* (Olweus, 1978) is an English translation of his seminal Swedish work, which initiated research worldwide on the phenomenon.

Dan Olweus was the first to study and define school bullying. “A student is bullied or victimized when he is repeatedly and consistently subjected to negative actions by one or more other students,” says Olweus (2010). All definitions in the literature on the subject follow this framework (Farrington, 1993; Smith et al., 2004; Smith & Sharp, 1994; Tattum, 1992). A new definition of bullying includes goal-directed behavior, a power imbalance, victim harm, and regular repetition (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017; Volk et al., 2014).

## 2.2. Forms of school bullying

The forms of school bullying are described below (Figure 1) (Lee, 2006; Rigby, 2007; Antoniou & Kampoli, 2014).

- a. Verbal abuse – often done in public, it incites fear; the instigator insults, mocks, and degrades
- b. Physical abuse – involves punching, kicking, and stealing or destroying personal items
- c. Social or direct intimidation – involves removing someone from a social group on purpose
- d. Racist bullying – targets people of different races, religions, nationalities, colors, and socioeconomic statuses
- e. Psychological bullying – involves threats, exploitation, and emotional blackmail
- f. Cyberbullying – psychological and verbal; uses messages, emails, and websites
- g. Sexual bullying – includes gestures, touches, “teasing jokes,” comments, sketches, and photographs of sexual content to embarrass, shame, and humiliate the victim
- h. Visual bullying – posting offensive notes in public places

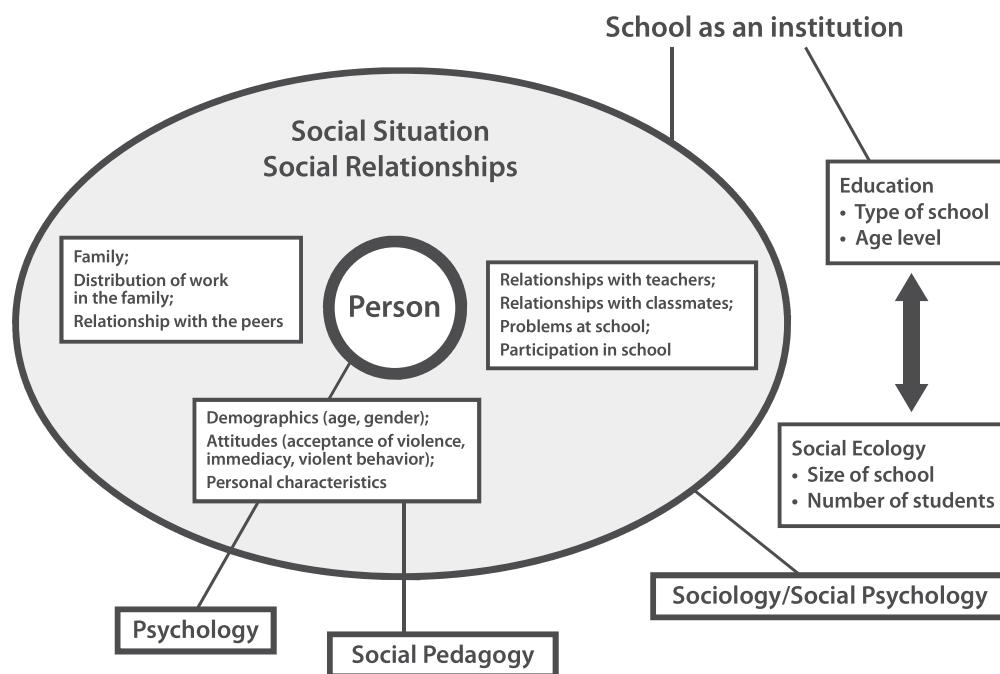
**Figure 1. Forms of school violence and school bullying.**

Source: (UNESCO, 2017)

### 2.3. Factors that cause school violence and school bullying

The school focuses on psychosocial adaptation, communication, and socialization as well as cognitive development (Bambalis, 2011). School violence is complicated by psychological, familial, social, cognitive, and emotional factors that reinforce antisocial behavior (Figure 2), in particular, one's temperament, developmental course, traumatic experiences, and family environment (very strict or very flexible parenting methods, patterns of aggressive behavior, violence between parents or from parents to children, child's insecure bond with parents).

**Figure 2. Factors related to school violence and bullying in the school context.**



Source: Artinopoulou (2001)

The school environment (inadequate supervision, overcrowding, staff shortages, and lack of stimuli), psychological atmosphere (competitive, controlling, impersonal, restrictive in a hostile manner, performance-oriented, not relationship-oriented), and policies of the education system also play a role (excessive use of punishment and expulsion as a means of discipline or disproportionately rewarding socially positive behaviors). Finally, general social problems that reinforce antisocial behaviors, the attitudes of children, parents, and teachers toward violence, and how the mass media portrays violence must be mentioned.

Multiculturalism dominates today's schools. Racism leads to violence and bullying against foreign students, with boys being more likely to bully (Pepler et al., 2008).

#### 2.4. The frequency of school violence and school bullying

In a pan-Hellenic survey by the Ministry of Education, Research, and Religion (Y.P.E.Th), three out of ten middle and high school students were

victims of bullying. Boys (30.6%) outnumbered girls (3.18%) (Artinopoulou et al., 2016). School bullying in Greece is mostly verbal (Pateraki & Houndoumadi, 2001; Artinopoulou et al., 2016). In one study, 56.7% of primary school students had witnessed verbal abuse and mockery, while 30.5% had witnessed physical bullying. Finally, 27.8% of schoolchildren had experienced social bullying (Artinopoulou et al., 2016). In Greece, boys bully more than girls (Pateraki & Houndoumadi, 2001; Artinopoulou et al., 2016). Physical bullying affects boys more than girls (Pateraki & Houndoumadi, 2001; Sapouna, 2008). Girls are especially bullied verbally (Pateraki & Houndoumadi, 2001; Sapouna, 2008). As boys get older, they bully more verbally, while girls mostly bully by spreading rumors, according to research (Pateraki & Houndoumadi, 2001). According to UNESCO, 246 million adolescents and children are affected by such situations each year (UNESCO, 2017). School bullying affects 10% to 65% of children worldwide, making school violence and bullying a global issue. The following findings are also mentioned in the same report (UNESCO, 2017):

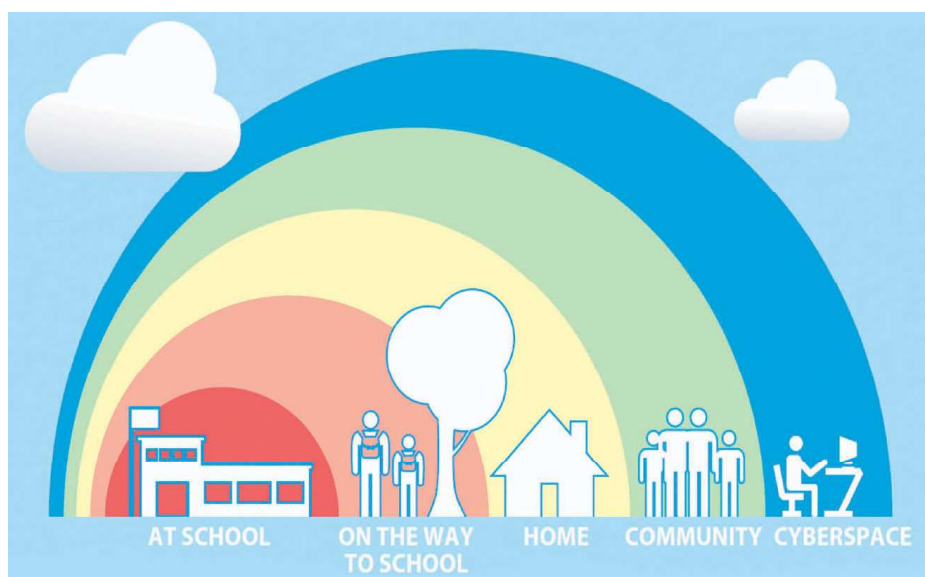
- a. Industrialized nations struggle with cyberbullying. Girls are more likely to experience cyberbullying, which affects 5% to 21% of young people.
- b. Non-heterosexual students are subjected to the most psychological, emotional, and physical violence (16% to 85%).

Finally, studies show that foreign students are more likely to be victimized than native students (Fandrem et al., 2010; Strohmeier et al., 2011).

### 2.5. Where school bullying occurs

The European Anti-Bullying Network campaign's large European survey found that school bullying was most common in classrooms (Europe's Anti-Bullying Campaign, 2012) (Figure 3). According to the same study, Greece has more school bullying outside of school. Regarding the bullying that takes place on school grounds, a survey carried out in primary schools in Germany revealed that the playground is where most incidents of school bullying take place (Fekkes et al., 2005).

**Figure 3. Places where school bullying occurs.**



Source: UNESCO (2017)

Secondary school students are more likely than primary school students to witness or experience school bullying in school corridors and classrooms. This difference in the location of violence between younger and older age groups supports earlier research (Whitney & Smith, 1993).

### **2.6. Characteristics of the intimidator, the bullied, and the observer**

- a. Bullies are mean, cruel, and self-centered. They are introverted, lonely, and lack self-control, making them impulsive (Andreou & Smith, 2002). They also engage in vandalism, theft, and substance abuse. According to Olweus (1993), the abusers seem indifferent to their victims' feelings.
- b. Bullied victims are weak. Victimized children lack friends; they are insecure, do not express their feelings, and avoid going to school after being bullied. Submissive, anxious, and cautious, they cry out of fear and weakness, making them easier "victims" of bullies (Andreou & Smith, 2002).
- c. Bystanders are also involved in school violence. Research suggests that 85% of school bullying observers are assistants, reinforcers, neutral or uninvolved outsiders, or defenders (Mestry, 2006).

## 2.7. Consequences of school bullying

School violence and bullying are multifaceted (Tsiantis & Asimopoulos, 2010). School violence harms the perpetrator, victim, and school. Abusers may exhibit behavioral disorders, defiance, and antisocial behavior and may join fringe groups that are hard to leave. Many exhibit social pathogenic phenomena such as violence and crime; they may become domestic abusers (Rigby, 2007). Olweus (1993) found that 60% of high school bullies committed at least one crime as adults and that 35%–40% committed three or more offenses before the age of 24. Bullying affects victims as well. School refusal, low performance, school phobia, low self-esteem, anxiety, avoidant behavior, psychosomatic disturbances, and others are common in victims (Antoniou & Kampoli, 2014; Artinopoulou, 2007). According to Andreou and Smith (2002) and Antoniou and Kampoli (2014), victims are more likely to have mental disorders, depression, and suicidal thoughts. School violence also harms the students and teachers who witness it. Their presence at the violent episodes causes emotional and behavioral issues. It also increases anger, which can lead to aggressive behavior. The observer is a “potential” perpetrator (Artinopoulou, 2007).

## 3. National and cultural otherness – conceptual demarcations

### 3.1. Cultural identity

Culture encompasses a wide range of systems, including knowledge, beliefs, arts, morality, customs, languages, and nonverbal communication. It is a lifestyle shaped by historical, social, economic, and political factors. It includes rules, behavior, symbols, values, conditions, and other factors that distinguish a social group from others. Teaching and learning pass on cultural context. Under these conditions, a person’s cultural identity is formed (Nicolaou, 2005).

Identity is ambiguous, making it difficult to define. Identity can mean complete similarity or equality between people, groups, opinions, things, and symbols. It can also mean the traits that distinguish one thing from another. Psychologists define identity as a person’s or group’s subjective



qualities (Gotovos, 2002). Personality includes identity; it is an ego-identification. The self is formed in relation to others starting in childhood (Erikson, 1990; Vryzas, 1997).

Ego identity is personal and social. Social identity means that the subject belongs to social categories and is studied in groups (Gotovos, 2002). Social identity includes cultural identity (Georgoyiannis, 1995; Damanakis, 2001). Cultural identity – belonging to a specific ethno-cultural group – is the most inclusive identity term (Phinney, 1990). National identity is the dominant cultural identity of a nation-state, while ethnic identity is the cultural identity of immigrants and other groups from outside the country. Thus, each person's cultural identity is always linked to nationality, ethnicity, religion, and language, which define their diversity (Nicolaou, 2005).

### **3.2. National and ethnic identity**

A person's ability to identify with a national group and share its values, beliefs, and behaviors is called national identity. National identity is a collective identity that defines a nation's way of life in terms of nationality, religion, language, culture, and customs (Gotovos, 2002). Ethnic groups and nations play different roles in national identity formation according to the literature. In the 1970s and 1980s, historiography was dominated by the earlier modern approach to nation-building and national identity, in which national identity is material, social, and political and reflects common institutions, obligations, and rights. A group of people becomes a nation when they recognize each other's rights and obligations based on their ethnicity (Gellner, 1992). Thus, the nation is modern and characterized by:

- a) A common legal code of rights and obligations,
- b) A unified economy,
- c) A compact territory, and
- d) A national political culture.

In the late 1980s, the traditional approach complemented the earlier theory, but was often pitted against it. This approach's main theorist,

Anthony D. Smith (2000), views national identity as a constant throughout each nation's history. Ethnicity, shared history, and culture – not territory – define the nation. Even after immigrating, a person's ethnicity, language, and traditions matter. Since kinship ties are emphasized and people are not treated as a political community, an ethnic consciousness is formed as a "super-family." All of these elements indicate a historical, culture-based community with a sense of identity. Nationhood includes elements of other collective identities, so it can be combined with religious identities. National identity is shaped by ethnicity (Smith, 2000).

Nations share a history, culture, laws, and politics. While ethnic communities may not live in the ancestral land or share common obligations and culture, they feel national identity symbolically. Nations without a dominant ethnic identity are created by culturally mixing many waves of immigrants, imposing a common language and religion, or creating a political religion. Thus, a new ethnic identity and consciousness unites ethnic communities and integrates their cultures (Smith, 2000).

A person may identify with multiple ethnic communities on different levels (Smith, 2000). Immigrant children, especially those born in the host country, experience something similar.

### 3.3. Multiculturalism and ethnocultural otherness

*Multiculturalism* is accepting otherness in a group with universal values, critical communication, and consensus without fear or denial of social change. The collective that accepts otherness as a natural factor in human societies and not as a necessary evil must accept social cohesion, equality, and justice.

"Any sociocognitive system of categorizations and representations of the environment" requires the concept of otherness (Konstantopoulou et al., 1999). Otherness refers to human quirks. Origin, race, color, language, religion, and culture define a person or group and distinguish them from the majority. Otherness can be ethnic, linguistic, racial, or religious. Otherness often leads to exclusion or marginalization. Apart from the idea of absolute similarity or equality, identity includes the idea of difference from others (Bolle De Bal, 1997).

Modern otherness is related to both the dominant ethnocentric view of the other and a culture's authenticity, purity, and non-mixedness. Otherness can mean national diversity, cultural specificity, or social expression. Postmodern diversity defines those who think differently and question technological progress as the only truth (Konstantopoulou et al., 1999).

The abolition of borders and globalization have conceptually differentiated otherness in terms of its philological content, pedagogical function, and epistemological definition. Thus, cultural differences are central to theoretical dialogue because how we understand others shapes society's communication structure (Konstantopoulou et al., 1999). Western nations accept immigrants from poorer nations. All human activity has rearranged social, economic, and political systems, resulting in multiculturalism. Multiculturalism affects geopolitical, economic, and political changes. Modernity has limited otherness questions to create a homogeneous society. Instead of homogenizing, ethnocultural groups were differentiated by creating minority groups, which fueled social inequality. Since education kept society homogeneous and marginalized minority groups, postmodern states ignored the issue without solving it (Nicolaou, 2005).

Modern thought emphasizes cultural alterity and according to Nikolaou (2005):

- a. Humanity evolves, presenting a wide variety of social and cultural forms,
- b. Cultures intertwine and interact, and no culture evolves alone,
- c. In a global environment that risks homogenization, cultural diversity must be preserved, and
- d. Tolerance, understanding, and respect are necessary for peaceful co-existence.

*Otherness* matters when it creates power and inequality between minorities and states and between natives and immigrants. Otherness is indifferent without such relationships and social contrasts. Modern schools are the site of many cultural encounters between linguistically diverse groups, which shape a specific identity and can stigmatize the individual

(Cummins, 2005). To avoid stigma and marginalization, modern teachers should know how to handle multicultural classroom issues.

The diversity of ethnocultural identities is ethnocultural otherness. The individual's ethnocultural identity is experiential and formed through interaction with their immediate social, economic, and cultural environment. In order to function in host societies, ethnoculturally diverse people reinterpret their cultural symbols (Oikonomidis & Kontogiannis, 2011).

From the 1990s onward, Greece received a large wave of immigrants from the former Eastern bloc and Asian and African nations, bringing cultural diversity. Foreign students are integrated into schools with caution and reactions due to cultural diversity. Some schools foster xenophobia, racism, inequality, and a lack of respect for diversity, which further divides native and foreign students (Nicolaou, 2005).

### 3.4. Multiculturalism, cultural diversity, and interculturalism

*Multiculturalism* and *interculturalism* differ. Multiculturalism is a “political term” that describes a multicultural society, while interculturalism is a pedagogical term that focuses on the individual as a member of society and provides directions for achieving social justice, harmony, and cohesion (Georgoyiannis, 2009). Cultural diversity refers to an individual's adoption of different cultures, while multiculturalism emphasizes a community's diversity. Interculturality, multiculturalism, and cultural diversity require people, groups, and communities to interact. Intercultural education intentionally creates exchange, mutual influence, and cultural intersection to teach democracy. A stable cultural potential enhances diversity and complexity (Council of Europe, 2003). Interculturality is a creative process that emphasizes group interaction, planning, responsibility, and identity (Fennes & Hapgood, 1997). Multiculturalism and interculturalism differ in education. Multicultural education teaches acceptance or tolerance of other cultures. Intercultural education promotes understanding, respect, and dialogue between cultural groups to create a sustainable multicultural society (UNESCO, 2006).

UNESCO's 2006 *Guidelines on Intercultural Education* set an educational framework and addressed UN member countries' assimilation

policies. The following three intercultural education principles can be used as goals:

- a. Principle I: Intercultural education respects the cultural identity of the learner through the provision of culturally appropriate, culturally sensitive, and quality education for all.
- b. Principle II: Intercultural education provides each student with the cultural knowledge and attitudes and skills necessary to achieve active and full participation in society.
- c. Principle III: Intercultural education gives all students the cultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills to promote respect, understanding, and solidarity between individuals, ethnic, social, cultural, and religious groups, and nations (UNESCO, 2006).

### **3.5. National and cultural diversity and school bullying**

Bullying and violence in different ethnocultural groups are contradictory in the Greek literature on the subject. Alexopoulos and Kokkinos (2018) found that nationality affects school bullying. Psaltis and Constantinou (2007) found that bullies' ethnocultural identity did not affect the bullying. Foreign students are more often victims, but they do not report it (Psalti & Konstantinou, 2007). According to contact theory, international research (Hoglund & Hosan, 2013; Thijs et al., 2014) suggests that increased ethnocultural heterogeneity in school composition may reduce ethnocultural aggression. Intergroup contact can reduce prejudice when groups have equal social status, common goals, and institutional support from competent authorities (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

In his article on school violence and otherness in Greece, Maniatis (2010) claims that multiculturalism in the same sociopolitical context leads to conflict, because immigrant groups demand public recognition. Aggression against students from different cultures also amounts to racism. Otherness can also cause fear and rejection, he claims. Thus, bullying is more intense. Bullying based on ethnicity or culture affects the entire group, not just the individual.

Cultural otherness and school bullying have conflicting results worldwide. Research links school bullying to anti-foreigner attitudes (Cobia & Carney, 2002; Pagani et al., 2011). Foreign students are also isolated and bullied by native peers (Pagani et al., 2011). Interpersonal issues may increase the risk of victimization for immigrants (Strohmeier et al., 2011). Children of immigrants struggle to make friends and fit in. Their classmates struggle to accept and incorporate other cultures into their own (Hamarus & Kaikkonen, 2008).

Other studies either find no correlation between bullying, otherness, and multiculturalism (Larochette et al., 2010) or they find a higher risk of victimization for natives than immigrants (Strohmeier et al., 2008).

The school's refusal to acknowledge ethnocultural diversity can make it hard to identify bullying and victimization of different ethnic groups (Cobia & Carney, 2002). Another reason is that ethnocultural factors (language, demographics, ethnicity, and external characteristics) affect their many measurements and students' subjectivity (Strohmeier et al., 2008).

A class's ethnicity may affect bullying and victimization. Ethnic diversity may protect against bullying because it balances power between groups. In ethnically diverse classrooms, groups are evenly distributed, power is balanced, and ethnically marginalized students are less likely to be bullied (Stefanek et al., 2011).

Studies suggest that ethnic minority-dominated classrooms may have higher rates of bullying and victimization (Vervoort et al., 2010). In the Netherlands, ethnic minority adolescents are bullied more in classes with a high percentage of minority students than in classes with a low percentage (Vervoort et al., 2010). Verkuyten and Thijs (2002) found that indigenous students are bullied more in classes with a low percentage of indigenous students. Another US study (Hanish & Guerra, 2000) found that in multicultural schools with high ethnic integration, white students were more likely to be victimized, African-American students were less likely, and Hispanic students were almost never victimized. These studies show that classroom ethnicity affects student bullying.

According to the above reports, bullying in multiculturalism involves not only foreigners' culture and ethnicity, but also their racism (Strohmeier

et al., 2008). Western schools are increasingly multicultural. Thus, conflicting research shows that diversity is the norm and implicates diversity in bullying.

#### **4. Theoretical approaches to the interpretation of bullying due to ethnic and cultural diversity**

The international literature attempts to explain the relationship between bullying and ethnocultural victimization. The most crucial theories are described below.

a. Contact theory

Intergroup contact can reduce prejudices when groups are asked to cooperate, have common goals and equal social status, and when competent authorities support and promote it. Wagner, Van Dick, Pettigrew, and Christ (2003) found that school-based intergroup contact reduces prejudice.

b. Group threat theory

Blalock (1967) states that schools are controlled by ethnocultural groups. When the number of different groups increases significantly, the dominant ethnocultural group feels threatened and creates conflicts to defend their social position. Agirdag et al. (2011) conclude that because there is a power struggle between different groups in the school, any group can become victims of aggression, even when they coexist in equal numbers.

c. Imbalance of power thesis

Graham (2006) and Juvonen et al. (2006) also say that a group's power depends on its size. Thus, minority students are more likely to be victims than majority students and ethnocultural aggression may be linked to school composition.

d. Conflict theory

Conflict theory, by Quillian (1995), states that the more ethnocultural groups are in a given context, the greater their sense of threat.

Scheepers et al. (2002) found that this threat increases intergroup prejudice and bullying. The perpetrators and victims are usually from the dominant and non-dominant groups, respectively.

e. Social identity theory

Tajfel (1978) states that group members develop a strong sense of belonging by identifying with the group's traits. Thus, they feel a special identity that they must preserve and they develop a positive attitude toward group members. This positive attitude toward their group may explain their negative and discriminatory attitude toward other groups.

## 5. Dealing with violence and bullying at school

### 5.1. Theoretical approaches to the prevention and management of school bullying

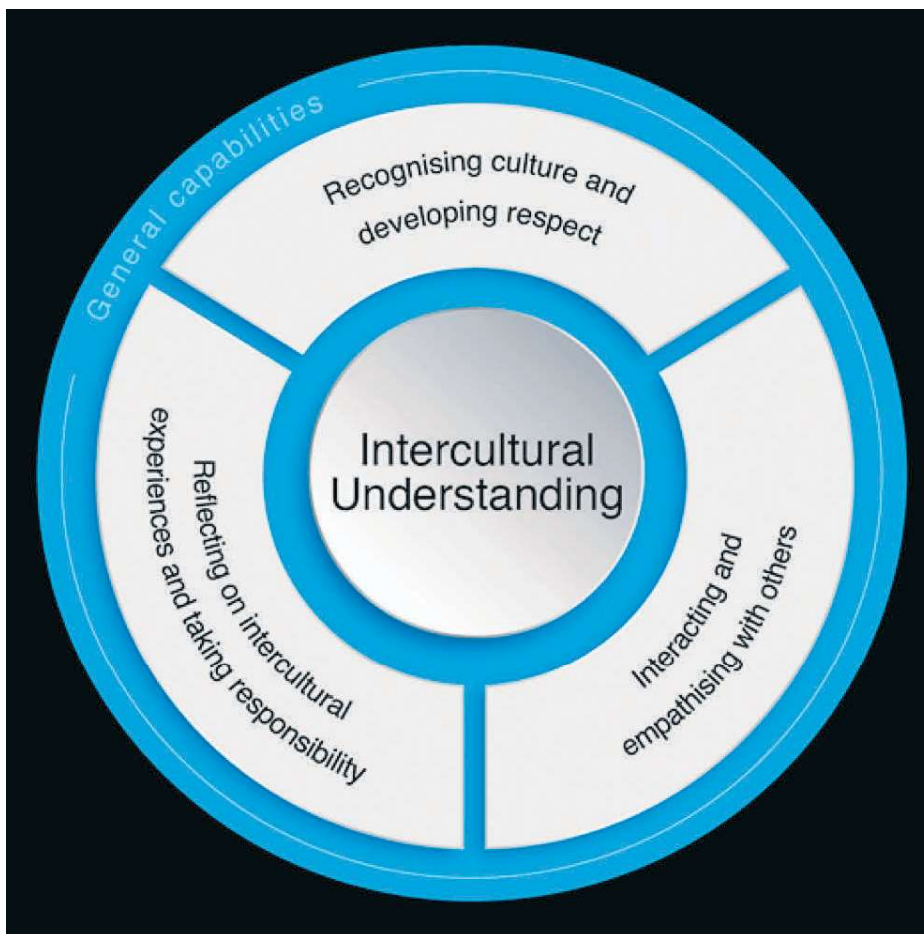
Given the diversity of the school community, multiple interventions and the ability to combine them are needed to combat school bullying. We will analyze the following methods to develop effective strategic practices against the phenomenon.

The socioecological approach views bullying as a result of the interaction of many factors, many of which are hidden and contribute to its perpetuation (Molnar & Lindquist, 2013). It assumes that everyone is part of an ecosystem and that any change in one member affects the others. Thus, fixing the system is the goal.

Open dialogue, trust, and community participation underpin the whole school approach. Power relations, gender, sociocultural background, and school hierarchy are considered in such approaches (Artinopoulou & Michael, 2014). In order to address the root causes of today's most pressing issues – cultural, social, and ethnic misunderstandings, favoritism, racism, and hatred –the holistic approach incorporates intercultural understanding into the school environment (Figure 4) (Leo, 2010).



**Figure 4. Elements of cross-cultural understanding.**



Source: ACARA (2015)

The Children’s Voice encourages creative participation in school life, strengthening the student’s voice and its impact on decision-making and policy-making (Cremin, 2007).

The Child Friendly School approach prioritizes child-friendly practices and school climate. Violence and bullying are analyzed as part of the school or community. The right of children to learn and attend school is important (United Nations, 2016).

Finally, Restorative Justice uses positive reframing to resolve conflicts, repair harm, and repair relationships. This approach emphasizes respect, equality, equal opportunities, and holistic learning through communication, dialogue, and experiential learning methods like role-playing (Rigby, 2007).

## 6. Ways to deal with the phenomenon

Educators believe that school bullying is common. Others deny the phenomenon or find it unimportant. People sometimes think that seemingly trivial events are exaggerated (Rigby, 2008). The topic of bullying is gaining popularity, though. The media are now covering the phenomenon and its solutions. Bullying can harm mental, emotional, and behavioral health (Brown et al., 2011).

Bullying has two approaches. The first view promotes positive behavior and constructivism (Rigby, 2008). Respect and cooperation enable smooth communication, eliminating the need for sanctions, threats, and punishment to manage behavior (Rigby, 2008). Punishing aggression is the second view. He believes that only recognition and severe punishment stop bullying (Rigby, 2008).

Modern societies' dysfunctional socializing institutions (family, school, and work) led to improper socialization and school delinquency. Thus, socializing agencies must monitor, coordinate, and staff welfare and support services to address the modern socioeconomic situation. To combat intimidation and delinquency caused by social and economic inequality, meritocracy must be strengthened (Panousis, 2009).

All who deal with school bullying agree that teachers need awareness, education, and training, as well as an official policy (Rigby, 2008). The state should create programs to combat intra-school violence, properly operate the Hellenic Observatory, appoint a Community Ombudsman in each municipality, and train teachers about violence and bullying through seminars and workshops (Panousis, 2009). The Ministry of Education, unions, parents' associations, and other organizations must take bullying seriously, educate themselves, and find solutions. Schools, kindergartens, and universities must address school bullying. Schools should design bullying policies based on research that address families' socioeconomic status, cultures, and other unique circumstances (Rigby, 2008). School bullying is addressed by state media control, especially when it harms children's moral, intellectual, and physical development. Mass media should limit violence and

increase educational and entertainment programs, adapting them to student schedules (Panou-sis, 2009).

### **6.1. The role of the family**

Families influence children most. Parental involvement educates, develops first social skills, and improves academic and psychological development. Teachers ignore family culture, which shapes each child's culture. Parent-teacher partnerships teach language, culture, and religion. They help teachers integrate their children into school and society and teach students to accept and respect others (Govaris, 2001; Beveridge, 2005). Parent-child bonds prevent child abuse. Parents must teach self-esteem, social skills, and pro-socialization (Rigby, 2008). Child abusers must respect others and avoid irritating and depressing their children through excessive control and punishment (Rigby, 2008). Bullying prevention depends on many factors, including the parents' role, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, and communication skills (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Bonia et al., 2008). Foreign parents do not actively support their children's education in Greece and abroad (Walther-Thomas et al., 2000). The causes for this are their difficult working conditions, ignorance, or limited use of the host country's language, which makes it difficult to communicate with teachers (Hatzidakis, 2006) and prevents them from helping their children with their homework; a fear that the teachers will mistreat them; and a lack of knowledge about the host country's detailed curriculum (Sosa, 1997). Encouraging foreign parents to participate in school life, educational activities, and their children's education reduces their underrepresentation (Sosa, 1997) and boosts their children's achievement and self-confidence (Baker, 2005).

### **6.2. The role of school**

Schools prevent and address all pre-adolescent and adolescent violence and bullying and help children manage emotional tensions, negative family experiences, and aggressive communication, interaction, and relationships at home (Panousis, 2009). Students, parents, and teachers represent the school. Respect and care for others – not as a duty – help

greatly. Schools' intellectual philosophy encourages this. Unfortunately, some schools disagree and approach bullying differently. Primary and secondary education differ most in coping (Rigby, 2008).

School programs must be specialized and tailored to all students with no gap between goals and resources to address the issue. School cooperation requires shared values and rules. Well-equipped and attractive facilities promote positive behavior and deter bullying (Olweus, 1993).

Immigrant students emphasize the importance of cultural identity, or understanding and internalizing one's immediate sociocultural environment (Kendall, 2015). In modern multicultural classes, the school must recognize all students' cultural identities and treat them equally. To achieve this goal, education must emphasize otherness. Intercultural pedagogy, which respects others, is linked to the shift from the hypothesis of deficit to the hypothesis of difference (Damanakis, 2000; Taylor, 2000) and to recognizing each person's unique identity based on their subjective cultural differences with their continuous and dynamic social negotiation (Damanakis, 2007) and equal participation in social goods. Interculturalism teaches that all students have equal cultural and educational capital. Schools value cognitive, linguistic, cultural, and experience differences between dominant group and migrant children without making hierarchical assessments. They also support equal opportunities, not to homogenize students but to allow each student to develop their personality based on their abilities and sociocultural conditions (Damanakis, 2000). However, theorists agree that inter-culturalism is for all students and centers on the student's creative use of diversity, proposing an integrative, collaborative, transformative classroom and education policy model (Banks, 2004). Differentiated teaching respects students' needs and learning profiles by finding each student's starting point and offering different learning paths and approaches to help them develop cognitively, socially, emotionally, and culturally (Tomlinson, 2015). Anti-racism education can also address ethnocultural otherness bullying using theoretical frameworks and teaching models to eliminate racism (Pantazis, 2015). It teaches children compassion, altruism, and respect (Blenesi, 2003). All levels of schooling must raise awareness of racism in order to end it

(Pantazis, 2015). Anti-racist schools teach students and teachers about discrimination, equality, democracy, and anti-racism (Pantazis, 2015).

### 6.3. The role of the teacher

Multi-ethnic students are being taught today. Racism, ethnicity, and culture affect educators. Teachers must understand race, ethnicity, and culture to adapt to students' cultural backgrounds (Costley, 2012). Cooperative, respectful, dialogue-focused, and problem-solving teachers create positive school cultures. Modern teachers must identify their role in the educational process, analyze all levels, and study discrimination issues in the following basic ways (Androusou & Magos, 2002):

- a. Being familiar with school life analysis, which allows them to draw many conclusions about interactions, rules, and strategies;
- b. Recognizing and eliminating their and others' prejudices;
- c. Showing respect for differences; and
- d. Questioning everyday school life.

These actions will help teachers accept diversity and manage student otherness.

Cultural pluralism's inevitable national/cultural composition among students raises intercultural teacher training and culturally responsive teachers. Interculturally competent teachers know that race, gender, social class, and culture can cause educational inequalities and exclusions.

Intercultural competence involves personal and professional development. The latter addresses the teacher's role in education, teaching, learning, and the sociocultural context. Villegas and Lukas (2002) developed a personal–professional typology. Teacher training programs may have these six characteristics of culturally competent teachers:

- a. Sociocultural consciousness – This requires the teacher to recognize that their worldview and perspective are not universal. Understanding their own sociocultural identity will help the teacher connect with students. According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), teachers must

understand the organic connection between school and society, go beyond meritocracy and neutrality, and understand the school's role in maintaining and reproducing society's inequalities and power relations to shape this consciousness.

- b. Cultural acceptance – Teachers should value diverse thinking, acting, behaving, and learning. Thus, they can view students of different ethnicities as having educational capital that benefits self-esteem, learning, and school performance.
- c. Transforming teachers – Reflective teachers' professional identities extend beyond methodological choices to epistemological, philosophical, and social assumptions. This requires teachers to see teaching as political and the school as a tool for social change and justice (Matsangouras, 1995).
- d. Constructivism – The teacher should encourage students to structure knowledge using past experiences, which are essential to learning. Given the importance of alterity in learning, constructivism lets teachers tailor lessons to each student's background. It prepares students to be active citizens and recognizes that knowledge is socially constructed.
- e. Students' lifestyles – Knowing their subject and students' lives outside of school helps teachers build positive relationships and improve learning. Thus, Darling-Hammond and Garcia-Lopez (2002) state that teacher candidates must understand the cultural and family context of foreign students to prepare for cultural diversity.
- f. Culture-sensitive teaching methods (culturally responsive teaching) – These can manage classroom dynamics and interactions based on four pillars to create a learning environment for student development: teacher behavior and expectations, intercultural classroom communication, culturally diverse curriculum content, and culturally relevant instructional strategies (Gay, 2010).

#### 6.4. Intervention programs

Local, state, and national programs aim to reduce bullying, especially in multicultural schools.

### **6.5. The “Olweus Bullying Prevention Program”**

The best-known anti-bullying program is from the Norwegian professor Dan Olweus (Olweus Bullying Prevention Program), who developed and implemented the program in the mid-1980s (Olweus, 1993). It reduces bullying and improves kindergarten, elementary, and middle school relationships. Stakeholder engagement drives this program. It targets school, class, and individual students. Students, parents, and school staff work together to educate, mediate, set clear bullying rules, and support and protect victims. Teachers and school staff organize and mediate aggressors, victims, and their parents in the program. The program seeks a bullying-free school.

### **6.6. “Learning to live together”**

The International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century promoted living together (Delors, 1996). All cooperating international institutions share its goals. In this multicultural program, intercultural learning is about living together. Human rights-based globalization is the goal (Council of Europe, 2003):

- a. politeness education
- b. peace education
- c. education for the democratic behavior of citizens
- d. intercultural education
- e. international education
- f. education for social capital

#### **6.6.1. Innovative programs in Greece**

Teachers and experts have implemented many programs in recent years to prevent and address school bullying. The innovative programs from the Adolescent Health Unit (M.E.Y.), 2nd University Pediatric Clinic, and P&A Children’s Hospital are examples:

- a. Emotional education and peer-to-peer education are the foundation of the EU-funded “ENABLE” project for fifth- and sixth-graders

in primary school and first-year pupils in secondary school. This is a Ministry of Education and Culture cooperation agreement (Circular F. 34.1/21/3942/9-5-2016 D/nsis P.E. II of Athens) with external bodies, supported by a Problematic Group (Think Tank) of 12 international experts and implemented by six key partners in five countries.

- b. The “YOUTH POWER” program, an integrated intervention to prevent high-risk behaviors, for fifth- and sixth-grade students, who are in the transitional phase of preadolescence; it can be implemented during the flexible zone. Its pedagogical and scientific framework is based on the Life Skills Development model and the principles of Social and Emotional Learning.

Early prevention and treatment of the problem also contribute to the following:

- a. The formulation of an agreed code of conduct and increased and effective supervision by teachers (Article 13, para. 2 of P.D. 201/1998 [Government Gazette 161/1998, Vol. A]),
- b. The implementation of health promotion programs in accordance with the circular of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 170596/GD4/13-10-2016,
- c. The updating of the school’s operating regulations, the creation of a school for parents, and the two-way communication between parents and teachers with the ultimate aim of informing them in time on matters of health promotion, contribute to combating this phenomenon, and
- d. The formation of prevention action groups (OPA) and the creation of the intra-school violence prevention network (in accordance with reference no. 448/18-02-2016 circular of the Ministry of Education and Culture).

### 6.7. Counseling and school bullying

The methods that a counselor can choose to intervene with counseling in bullying incidents are analyzed below. These methods of intervention



also complement each other, so that a more complete intervention can be achieved by using elements from each method.

### **6.8. Person-centered approach**

Carl Rogers, a psychotherapist and educator, developed the person-centered approach, which encourages the patient to trust their strengths while the therapist acts as a companion and supporter. The counseling relationship emphasizes strengths and changes behavior. Good counseling relationships include agreement, empathy, and understanding of the other person's thoughts and behavior (Geldard & Geldard, 2011). The therapist must accept, respect, and not judge the patient. The person-centered approach emphasizes the student–teacher–counselor relationship, which should have such traits. Person-centered techniques include reflection, clarification, encouragement, and self-disclosure (disclosure of the thoughts and feelings as well as the experiences of the counselor).

### **6.9. Ecological-Systemic approach**

The systemic approach is part of “context” theories, which hold that existence and knowledge are meaningful only in the social, environmental, and historical context examined each time. Any change to the system affects all its parts. The systemic approach emphasizes system dynamics, while the ecological approach emphasizes system interactions. These two approaches cover the system's internal and external dynamics holistically. The ecological-systemic approach emphasizes the system's cyclic action/reaction and interaction/communication (Payne, 2000). Thus, the school, family, and community must be studied and worked on for the counseling intervention to succeed. Finally, a child's school behavior problem is a systemic problem. Thus, school bullying requires individual and environmental change, guided by the counselor (Hatzi-christou, 2004):

- a. Reframing, i.e. attributing a different interpretation of an event or behavior
- b. Searching for and emphasizing a positive element in the behavior

- c. Using positive feedback
- d. Identifying and avoiding duplicate messages
- e. Avoiding the creation of scapegoats

## 7. Structuralism or constructivism

Constructivism is a cognitive theory that holds that everyone constructs knowledge. According to this theory, there are many realities because each person gives meaning and signals their own truth and worldview based on their experiences (Elliot et al., 2008). Experiences enrich and change one's worldview. Lev Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism theory holds that social interaction shapes people's thoughts. Thus, Vygotsky believes that children can accomplish much if they work together or with teachers. It emphasizes social interactions and confrontations among students in a group as conditions for mental reorganizations or conceptual changes. Open discussion and disagreements help form personal opinions. Vygotsky believed that society shapes knowledge first. Children discuss, reflect, and control meanings in social interaction, and adults (the teacher) can help create culturally appropriate meanings.

## 8. Conclusions

We showed how violence and school bullying affect children's psychosocial development inside and outside the classroom. Redefining education is necessary due to society's growing cultural and racial diversity. To maintain a positive culture and climate, modern schools must incorporate new data into their curriculum and teacher training. Intercultural education affects both immigrants and the dominant group in Greek society. Thus, school bullying and violence must be prevented and treated systematically. Teacher training, the school program, and parent–child relationships can be addressed.

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