Guest Editorial

Thematic Section Guest Editorial: 24th Workshop on Aggression: International Perspectives on Bullying, Segregation, and Inclusion

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This guest editorial has three aims: First, the highlights of the 24th Workshop on Aggression are summarized; second some theoretical and empirical insights regarding bullying, diversity, and migration are outlined; and third, the four manuscripts accepted for publication in this thematic section of IJDS are shortly introduced.

The 24th Workshop on Aggression 2019 was hosted by Norwegian Centre for Learning Environment and Behavioural Research in Education, University of Stavanger, Norway. The conference focused on *International Perspectives on Bullying, Segregation, and Inclusion.* After 40 years of research on bullying, we know much about motives, risks for, and consequences of bullying behaviour. However, there is still need for research due to influences of (increasing) migration, new forms of aggressive behavior etc. This is especially true for ethnic and/or other types of stigma, identity-based or bias based bullying (Mulway, Hoffman. Gönültas, Hope, & Cooper, 2018), cyberbullying, motives, and con-

sequences of these manifold forms of bullying as well as the long term follow-up after bullying happened (Fandrem, Strohmeier, Caravita & Stefanek, in press). Finally, it is necessary to find out more about how schools use the available scientific knowledge in their work to prevent and stop bullying.

Besides bullying, there is a large (and often unrelated) literature on social exclusion and segregation (Graham, 2018; Killen, Lee-Kim, McGlothlin, & Stangor, 2002). Importantly, segregation includes both structural and social dimensions. An important question that was discussed during the 24th Workshop on Aggression was: What are the consequences of segregation and how do schools justify their practices?

Both bullying and segregation may be seen as opposites of inclusion. Usually, the main aim of inclusion is, in an educational setting, to make people feel as "fully fledged" members of a class or school community. Relevant questions were: How can we foster and influence attitudes of head teachers, teachers, parents, and students to develop approaches that embrace diversity and promote equal opportunities for all learners in educational contexts and how are inclusive practices related to aggressive behavior?

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Bullying, Diversity, and Migration

Children and adolescents with international migration experiences constitute an increasing proportion of the population in many countries all over the world and cultural issues in bullying and cyberbullying research get increasingly important (Scheithauer, Smith, & Samara, 2016). Consequently, growing up in todays societies and dealing with diversity positively are considered new developmental tasks for young people (Larson, 2002; Reinders, Greb, & Grimm, 2006; Strohmeier, Fandrem, Caravita, & Stefanek, 2019). A huge body of research shows that bullying is a serious problem in school, however, systematic investigations in multicultural contexts are still limited. Nevertheless, the focus on diversity in school, and bullying among immigrants in particular, has increased during the last years (Strohmeier et al., 2019). Bullying is a threat for inclusive and diversity friendly societies and might be seen as a public health problem because of its manifold negative short and long-term consequences (Unesco, 2019). Therefore, a better understanding of the complex mechanisms behind the bullying in multicultural settings is of high importance.

The backdrop of our thinking is the assumption that both non-immigrant and immigrant youth experience some new cultural, social and psychological conditions because of acculturative processes (Berry, 1997), and that acculturation affects their peer relations and bullying behavior in particular. Consequently, it is important to gain more insight in the patterns behind bullying behavior in multicultural context, and it is one way to secure a better integration into and participation of immigrants in the society.

We will now introduce the main concepts of migration, acculturation, and bullying that were also discussed during the 24th Workshop on Aggression in Stavanger.

Migration is the movement of people who change their place of residence and who settle down in a new geographic region permanently or temporarily (Fandtem et al., in press). Those who themselves change their place of residence are labelled first-generation immigrants, while those who were born into a first generation immigrant family are labelled second-generation immigrants. Different from first-generation immigrants, second generation immigrants are born in the country of settlement, but as for first-generation immigrants they have parents that migrated from another country. It is important to take into account that migration is a complex social phenomenon and that therefore, it is imperative to distinguish immigrants based on several characteristics and to not uniformly put them into the monolithic category of "migrants".

Acculturation is a process producing cultural changes in groups and psychological changes in individuals that follows intercultural contact (Berry, 1997). Two main dimensions are involved in the acculturation process: (1) maintenance of the heritage culture and identity, and (2) relationships sought with people from other cultures. Adapting to a different culture by changing attitudes, behaviours, and identifications is often accompanied by acculturative stress (Berry, 1997), which is the concept used for the process of adapting to a different culture is stressful (Berry, 1997). Peer relations may support immigrant youth in coping with psychosocial challenges (Tartakovsky, 2007), besides providing an increased feeling of belonging for all youth in multicultural settings. Nevertheless, peer relations can also create acculturative stress, because immigration to a new country is often related to loss of friends in the heritage country and less contact to same-ethnic peers in the receiving country (Bingham & Okagaki, 2018).

Bullying is a subcategory of aggressive behaviour characterized by 1) intentional harm doing, 2) imbalance of power, and 3) repetition over time (Olweus, 1993; Roland, 1989). There is an ongoing debate among scholars about how to define bullying (Thornberg & Delby, 2019), it is therefore important to emphasize that bullying, for several decades, has been considered a complex relationship problem. Most studies still use the traditional definition of bullying and adopt the bio-ecological framework emphasizing that bullying should be understood, examined and viewed as a social phenomenon established and perpetuated over time as the result of the interplay between individual and contextual factors (Bronfenbrenner & Cesi, 1994; Espelage & Swearer, 2004; Støen, Fandrem, & Roland, 2018).

Racially, culturally, or ethnically motivated forms of bullying are important to consider in multicultural contexts. These subtypes of bullying that are phenomena that are even more complex, have roots in group-based prejudice, and are often labelled as identity-based, bias-based, or stigma-based bullying (Earnshaw et al., 2018; Mulvey et al., 2018; Tippett, Houlston, & Smith, 2010). Importantly, research also shows that stigma-based bullying is more common in cyberspace than in real life (Earnshaw et al., 2018) and that online hate postings are important to

be considered as well (Strohmeier & Gradinger, in press).

It is important to better understand the unique challenges that immigrant children and adolescents have to cope with, because these challenges might operate as risk factors for bullying others or being victimized. We suggest that the perspectives of developmental and acculturation psychology can help conceptualizing the complexities of bullying in multicultural societies (Fandrem et al., in press). The age of a child or an adolescent at the time of migration may be seen as a major variable to better understand young persons' adaptation in the new environment. In addition, the timing of the transition (although often related with age) is important. Children who are forced to interrupt their school career in one country and restart schooling in another country face different educational and social challenges compared with children who migrated before school entry or adolescents whose migration was "just in time" regarding their normative school transition (e.g., from primary to secondary school).

To consider the specific developmental tasks that young people of a certain age have to cope with might be important, because they are related to social relationships and identity formation (Strohmeier et al., 2019). According to acculturation psychology, the relations between the immigrant groups and the host community is an additional aspect that needs to be considered as well. Importantly, intra- and interethnic bullying is also expressions of certain acculturation orientations (Fandrem et al., 2020). The ethnic origin of youth involved in bullying incidents needs also to be considered, because bullies and victims may belong to the same ethnic/social group (i.e., in-group members) or to a different ethnic/social group (i.e., out-group members). Last but not least, in order to better understand the bio-ecological nature of bullying (Bronfenbrenner & Cesi, 1994), social contexts such as the classroom, the school, the community and the country level, which affect the development and acculturation of young people, are also important to consider.

The 24th Workshop on Aggression

We were happy to have three excellent keynote speakers presenting their work at the 24th Workshop on Aggression. These were Simona C.S. Caravita who spoke about "moral disengagement as risk factor for general bullying and racial/ethnic bullying",

Sandra Graham who spoke about "psychosocial consequences of racial/ethnic segregation in schools", and finally Aysun Doğan who spoke about "promoting inclusion and preventing bullying in Turkish schools". Moreover, there were 40 oral presenters and seven poster presenters who shaded light on the above-mentioned questions and other topics related to aggressive behavior. Out of the total 50 presentations, twelve presentations dealt with cyberbullying/ online hate speech, or aspects that involve the use of new technologies. Twelve presentations focused on aggression, social exclusion, and inclusion related to migration and/or immigrants. Sometimes these two topics were also combined. One thematic session focused on bullying prevention and interventions, and one thematic session focussed on how to best following up students who were exposed to bullying. One session focused more generally on bullying, aggression, social exclusion related to the learning environment and diversity. Finally, a thematic session focused on other aggressive behaviours related to e.g. terrorist attacks or other more serious types of violence.

The 24th Workshop on Aggression included researchers not only from European countries, but also from Australia and the USA. Participants were from different stages in their scientific careers.

Thematic Section Papers

All presenters at the 24th Workshop on Aggression were invited to submit a manuscript to this thematic section of International Journal of Developmental Science, four authors, groups of authors respectively, accepted our invitation and following a regular review process, the following papers were finally accepted for publication.

Doğan, Strohmeier, Kızıltepe, Gümüşten, and Yanagida (2020) examined whether participating in the ViSC social competence program is able to reduce different types of reported problem behaviors including bullying perpetration and victimization as well as promoting various social competencies in elementary school children in Turkey. This study built on a large literature on the ViSc program (e.g., Doğan et al., 2017; Solomontos-Kountouri, & Strohmeier, 2018). A large sample of primary school children (<800) that were divided into intervention and control group were investigated before and after program implementation. Multilevel growth models revealed a more favorable development of the ViSC interven-

tion group compared with the control group in three student-reported and all teacher reported variables. Importantly, the program was not effective regarding the reduction of bullying and victimization. Findings were discussed with regard to the implementation of future bullying prevention programs and social policies in Turkish schools.

Dadswell and O'Brien (2020) focused on the experiences and support needs of adolescents who experience bullying leading to self-exclusion. The authors applied a participatory methodology and worked with adolescents who had self-excluded from school and the staff supporting them, to identify key issues on experiences and support needs involving four focus groups (15 adolescents). Thematic data analyses revealed that anxiety underpins self-exclusion due to bullying, which was shaped by friendship dynamics, issues around seeking support, and institutional factors in schools. This led to gradual withdrawal from school, and eventually self-exclusion. These results are important for future practices supporting bullied students who also self-exclude in schools.

Balle Tharaldsen (2020) focused on the question how schools are able to ensure a high quality, systematic approach when following up previously bullied pupils. She conducted four focus group interviews (N = 31) to find out what schools are actually doing when following up bullied students. The rich qualitative data were analysed via content analysis. Findings suggested that school-based psychosocial resource groups can ensure that follow-up work after bullying is systematic and of high quality. Overall, this study provides new knowledge on how schools can organize follow-up work and suggests support systems for schools to provide high-quality follow-up work and points out that further research how to best organize follow-up work in schools is urgently needed.

Baraldsnes (2020) investigated the association between teachers' efforts to prevent bullying and their perceptions of school climate. Data from 82 teachers running the Olweus Bully Prevention Program (OBPP) in Norwegian schools were collected. Analyses revealed that teachers acted differently within OBPP at the school, classroom, and individual levels, and that their perceptions of school climate also differed. Importantly, teachers' efforts within the OBPP was positively related to the perception of general school climate indicating that the social climate in which an anti-bullying program is implemented matters. The significance of the study results and the limitations of the study were also discussed.

We very much hope that this thematic section reaches a wide readership. Finally, we would like to thank the authors – as well as the many expert reviewers of the manuscripts – for their excellent contributions to this thematic section of IJDS. Our future hope, however, clearly is that the aggression and bullying research field more strongly integrates the topics of diversity, migration, and inclusion in both theoretical and empirical papers on this topic.

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Bio Sketches

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