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High School Band and Orchestra Musician's Willingness to Intervene in School-based Relational Victimization Experiences

School-based bullying is a serious issue facing adolescents within the United States and relational bullying and victimization behaviors within music ensemble classrooms have become a topic of inquiry among music education researchers. Using data from a convenience sample of high school youth enrolled in an instrumental music program, we examined the ensemble-level effects on self-reported frequency of relational victimization and perceptions of their willingness to intervene. Results indicated that a youth's self-reported willingness to intervene in bullying episodes varies among instrumental music ensembles. Moreover, self-reported willingness to intervene predicted a significant amount of variance in relational victimization scores. The current study suggests that instrumental music ensembles may differ in terms of their prevalence of relational victimization experiences and how youth are willing to intervene in these bullying episodes.

Keywords: instrumental music; relational victimization; willingness to intervene; caring; upstander

Introduction

Large performing ensembles are a prominent feature of North American music education. Elpus and Abril (2019) reported that 24% of the class of 2013 enrolled in at least one year of a course in band, choir, or orchestra at some point during high school and there are perhaps “up to 50,000 specialists in ensemble teaching” (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2002).

Students are driven to participate in music ensembles for a variety of musical, academic, and social reasons (Dagaz, 2012) and these ensembles can play an important role in youth subculture (Adderley et al., 2003). Studies specifically examining school-based music ensemble participation have focused on sociological topics including gender bias in music instrument selection/assignment, identity formation, and musical meaning and motivation (Richmond, 2012).

Bullying is a serious issue facing adolescents within the United States (Polanin & Vera, 2013). Chronic victims of bullying or antisocial-aggression report higher levels of risky health behaviors (e.g., depression and suicide-related behaviors) when compared with students who are not victims (Hertz et al., 2013). Moreover, high school students who report being bullied are at a higher risk for depression and suicidal thoughts (Hertz et al., 2013) as well as suicide attempts later in life (Klomek et al., 2011). For the purpose of the current study, bullying is defined as “the repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful individual or group of persons” (Rigby, 2007, p. 15).

Researchers have demonstrated that bullying is perpetrated through social networks, as other adolescents can intervene, support, or ignore the aggressive behaviors of their peers (Midgett et al., 2018; Salmivalli, 2010; Salmivalli et al., 1996). Interpersonal transactions among youth are complex and relational aggression can manifest within these transactions during the transition from childhood to adolescence (Coyne & Ostrov, 2018). Relational aggression is a form of bullying that involves an intent to “harm others through the use of purposeful manipulation or exclusion in the context of the peer relationship” (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Ostensibly then, relational victimization involves experiencing harm through the use of purposeful manipulation or social exclusion.

Bullying behavior also manifests with music ensemble classrooms and has become a topic of inquiry within the music education community of researchers (Elpus & Carter, 2016; Palkki & Caldwell, 2018; Rawlings, 2016, 2017; Rawlings & Espelage, 2019). In order to clarify this phenomenon further, however, it is essential to understand an under-researched form of aggression in music ensembles; relational aggression and victimization. The aim of the current study was to examine music ensemble influence on relationally aggressive behavior.

Relational Bullying and Victimization Research in Music Education

Relational bullying and victimization are concerns for youth enrolled in PK-12 music classes. Rawlings (2016) reported that middle school band students ($N = 291$) experiencing peer victimization more frequently outside of the band classroom than inside the band classroom with male youth reporting higher frequen-

cies of physical victimization than females. In another study, Elpus and Carter (2016) examined data from the 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013 datasets of the School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) and found that the risk for male music and theater students experiencing face-to-face victimization was 69% greater than the risk for non-arts students, and male music and theater students were confronted with a 63% greater risk of being cyberbullied than non-arts participants. These studies suggest that students who participate in music classes are at more risk of experiencing bullying and a recent study demonstrated that being a target of homophobic name-calling led to significant health consequences (Rawlings & Espelage, 2019). For participants not enrolled in a music ensemble, results indicated that being a target of homophobic name-calling is a stronger predictor of negative mental health consequences when compared with music ensemble participants. Therefore, it is plausible that there may be potential mediating factors that influence the deleterious effects of bullying for youth who participate in a school-based music ensemble.

When examining aggressive behaviors within music classrooms, researchers have demonstrated the importance of also examining a variety of prosocial behaviors. For the purpose of the current study, we are defining prosocial behaviors as actions that are meant to protect or further the welfare of others. Rawlings (2017) examined the effect of middle school music ensemble participation on the potential of school connectedness to predict bullying behavior. Participants ($N = 470$) reported low frequencies of experiencing bullying behaviors and elevated levels of school connectedness. Multiple-group structural equation modeling analyses demonstrated that a stronger negative association between perceptions of school connectedness and cyberbullying perpetration exist for music ensemble students than for adolescents not enrolled in a school-based music ensemble. In a more recent investigation, Rawlings and Young (2020) studied the peer group effects of relational victimization and empowerment among high school instrumental music students. Participants ($N = 131$) reported that participation in marching band significantly impacted feelings of empowerment, reducing self-reported relational victimization, even after controlling for gender, caring behaviors, and positive attitudes toward bullying. Given this previous aggression research within music classrooms, it appears that school music ensemble students are likely targets of victimization; however, there is still much research needed to determine the prevalence of relational bullying and additional prosocial behaviors in various settings.

Many studies have demonstrated strong within-group similarities with peer victimization experiences (Espelage et al., 2003; Rawlings, 2017) and Rawlings and Young (2020) introduced methods for examining relational aggression using

hierarchical linear regression. These authors provided further evidence highlighting the importance of examining prosocial behaviors alongside forms of aggressive behaviors. The aim of the current study is to validate and extend this body of research by examining upstander behaviors and approaches to examine music ensemble influence on relational victimization.

Upstander Behavior Among Youth

Researchers categorize bystander behaviors into three categories: upstanding (intervening), reinforcing (supporting), and passive (ignoring) behaviors (Salmivalli et al., 2011). Upstander behavior (i.e., a third party decides to defend a victim when witnessing a conflict) has been reported as an effective strategy to resolve bullying incidents and researchers demonstrate that a youth's willingness to intervene (WTI) is a significant predictor of upstander behavior (Nickerson et al., 2014). Recent findings have suggested that bystander behaviors be studied in a large group context while also controlling for group bystander tendencies including caring behavior (Espelage et al., 2012; Salmivalli et al., 2011). Moreover, Ingram and her colleagues (2020) examined the longitudinal trends of bystander WTI in bullying among middle school boys. They reported that WTI may longitudinally change across adolescence and recommend examining WTI with various populations.

Youth's WTI in episodes involving relational aggression may be dependent on a myriad of factors including peer-group or class-level beliefs (Ingram et al., 2020). Taken altogether, an individual's frequency of enacting caring behavior toward their peers is an influential factor associated with upstander behavior (Hart Barnett et al., 2019). Thus, prior theoretical and empirical work provides support for examining the role of WTI as it may dampen the frequency of relational victimization (Ingram et al., 2020). However, missing from the literature is an investigation of how these behaviors may differ by instrumental music ensemble.

Purpose of Study

The aim of the current study was to validate and extend the previous research on relational victimization among high school instrumentalists through examining three questions. As such, the purpose of the current study was to validate and extend this body of research by examining upstander behaviors and approaches to examine music ensemble influence on relational victimization. First, we investigated which demographic characteristics were associated with the prevalence of relational victimization. Second, we examined self-reported upstander behaviors and explored differences between instrumental music ensembles. Third, we as-

sessed whether a participant's willingness to intervene in bullying episodes was able to predict a significant amount of variance in relational victimization scores while controlling for perceptions of caring as an indicator of upstander behavior.

Hypotheses were generated based on prior literature. First, we expected females to demonstrate higher levels of relational victimization (Mishna, 2012). Next, we predicted that self-reported relational victimization experiences and upstander behavior would differ between instrumental ensembles. Third, we hypothesized that participant self-reports of their WTI in bullying episodes would be predictive of relational victimization, whereas an increase in a participant's WTI would be predictive of a decrease in victimization.

Method

Investigative Design and Parent Study

In the current study, we sought to compare the prevalence of relational victimization and upstander behavior between participants enrolled in four high school instrumental music ensembles. The present study was nested within a larger parent study aimed at using multiple theoretical frameworks and methodologies to examine high school instrumentalists' perceptions of upstander behavior and relational aggression. We designed a questionnaire as the data collection tool rather than interviewing participants because of its feasibility and scope addressing all aspects of the explorative parent study. Given the broad, descriptive purpose of the parent study, we chose to develop a structured questionnaire utilizing closed-response items directly addressing our present and global research questions. The parent study was a two-year longitudinal, school-wide assessment of upstander behavior and bullying.

Questionnaire Development

We designed and developed our questionnaire utilizing the standards from the field of survey methodology (Stapleton, 2010). Following a brief section of demographic questions, participants were asked to estimate and describe their experiences with and perpetration of multiple actions associated with antisocial-aggressive behavior and perceptions of upstander behaviors. Identifying participant information was removed from the data file and protected until future investigation.

Research Setting, Participant Sampling, and Consent Procedures

All students in this school district may elect to begin instrument study in seventh grade and most small woodwind, brass, and string instruments are not provided by the school district. The school district offers curricular concert band and string orchestra classes during the high school grades of 10, 11, and 12. Accordingly, instrumental music classes are grouped by grade-level cohorts (10th grade band, 11th and 12th grade orchestra) providing a mixed-instrumentation experience for students. Therefore, Wind Symphony and Philharmonic Orchestra are comprised of youth in grades 11 and 12. Symphonic Band and Symphonic Orchestra are comprised of youth in 10th grade.

The school instrumental music website reported additional courses (e.g., marching band) that meet either before or after the academic school day; however, it is unknown if academic credit is offered in exchange for ensemble membership. Additionally, each music ensemble performs, on average, one evening concert per academic quarter (e.g., 10-week time period). Conversations with the instrumental music teachers revealed that there are three junior high schools that matriculate to the high school under investigation. Also, this instrumental music program participates in winter regional music competitions, which feature opportunities for mandatory full ensemble performance, voluntary instrumental solo performance, and voluntary small ensemble (i.e., mixed instrumentation for groups of 3–15).

These data are from Wave 1 of data collection of the parent study. Data were collected from 10th – 12th grade students living in and around a large metropolitan city within the Mountain West Region of the United States. Participants from one high school were selected for the following reasons: (a) music teacher, principal, and school district reciprocal interest and (b) the music curriculum and course offerings at this school were: representative of national course offerings in music (ensembles and classroom music) and regularly scheduled (holding a consistent place in the school weekly calendar with credit earned for participation). The total population available for sampling was 218 students enrolled in Grades 10, 11, and 12. Participants ($N = 131$) volunteered to complete the questionnaire for an overall response rate of 60.1%. As this was existing data, we calculated a post hoc algorithm of achieved power using G*Power 3.1 software (Faul et al., 2007). Given the achieved effect size ($f^2 = .15$), $\alpha = .05$, and total sample size of 131, the power is 98%. Although we have statistical power, we caution the readers that this is a convenience sample and not to generalize beyond the volunteer, racially-homogeneous population. Additional demographic data of participants appear in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Data of School Participants

Item	School A
Grade level	
10 th Grade	46
11 th Grade	35
12 th Grade	50
Gender	
% Male	52.3
% Female	46.9
% Other	0.8
Racial composition	
% White	91.5
% Non-White	8.5
Instrumentation	
% Woodwinds	27.7
% Brass	24.6
% Percussion	8.5
% Strings	39.2

An active consent protocol was approved by the university institutional review board and school district administration as part of the data collection procedures. For participants under the age of 18, written parental permission was required for all volunteers. Questionnaires were electronically administered and multiple safeguards were implemented to protect students from being negatively affected by the content of the questionnaires. Students were assured that their answers would always remain anonymous. Those students who elected not to participate or whose parents did not want them to participate had consent forms sent back and went to another supervised classroom. All instrumental music classes were taught by one music teacher.

Measures

Demographic Variables

The questionnaire included items that assessed the following demographic characteristics: sex assigned at birth; grade level; race; self-reported academic achievement; extracurricular activity participation; school-based music ensemble participation, and school attendance.

Relational Victimization

Relational aggression was assessed using four items from Crick and Grotpeter's (1995) scale. Participants were asked to indicate how many times, in the past 30 days, they experienced a specific behavior with five response options ranging from "Never" to "7 or more times." For instance, youth were asked "When mad,

other students get even by keeping me from being in their group of friends” and “Other students tried to keep me out of a friend group.” Higher scores indicated higher self-reported victimization. According to Crick (1996), the victimization subscale has good internal consistency ($\alpha = .89$) with the current study score reliability ($\alpha = .86$).

Willingness to Intervene

The University of Illinois Willingness to Intervene in Bullying Episodes (UI-WIB) scale is a 5-item scale developed from a series of interviews and questionnaires of students in third through eighth grade (Espelage et al., 2012). Participants were asked to what extent that they agree with statements about intervening directly or indirectly when they encounter bullying (e.g., “If a kid is being teased a lot, I will tell an adult at my school,” “When a kid is being teased, I stick up for him or her.”) Response options were presented on a 4-point Likert-type scale and youth were asked to select one category from *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*. Espelage and her colleagues (2012) reported a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .75 for Waves 1 and 2. The current study was $\alpha = .83$.

Caring Behavior

The caring of others (COO) scale (Crick, 1996) includes four items measuring caring behaviors directed toward other students. Youth were asked how often they engage in certain behaviors at school, such as “I try to cheer up other kids who feel upset or sad.” Response options were presented on 5-point Likert-type scale and youth were asked to select from *Never*, *Almost Never*, *Sometimes*, *Almost All of the Time*, and *All the Time*. Higher scores indicated higher self-report upstander behavior. Crick (1996) reported that a confirmatory factor analysis supported the scales’ construct validity and the scale’s Cronbach alpha was .89 in a similar school sample. The current study was $\alpha = .87$.

Data Analysis Protocol

Author 1 created a data file in SPSS 25.0 for Mac, and these data were cleaned and screened utilizing standard protocols (Pallant, 2013). Additionally, we explored patterns of missing data and determined that missingness per item for all scales ranged between 1% and 3%. Luengo et al. (2010) determined that missing data between 1% and 5% are manageable, and, therefore, multiple imputation to account for the missing data was not necessary. Following preparation of the data file, Author 1 computed additional variables including a composite relational vic-

timization scale score for each participant by summing the four items. The same protocol was used for the COO measure. Internal consistency for the UIWIB scale was acceptable ($\alpha = .83$) and mean score was calculated for each participant. Primary analyses and descriptive statistics were calculated to explore the data file for univariate and multivariate normality, linearity, and multicollinearity. Moreover, we investigated the individual correlates associated with relational victimization to corroborate past research.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Individual means and standard deviations for each variable appear in Table 2. No bivariate relationships indicated significantly large covariation (i.e., $r > 0.8$); therefore, multicollinearity was not a concern. All other assumptions of hierarchical multiple regression, as outlined by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), were met.

We expected females to demonstrate higher levels of relational victimization (Mishna, 2012). After comparing responses of relational victimization by sex, we accept the null hypothesis that female participants do not demonstrate significantly higher levels of relational victimization when compared to male participants.

Prevalence of self-reported upstanding behavior.

To test our second hypothesis, we calculated chronic prevalence of upstanding behavior. Adolescents who scored one standard deviation above the mean on the UIWIB scale were categorized as “upstanders” and those scoring one standard deviation below the mean on the UIWIB scale were categorized as “bystanders.” Based on this categorization, 28 (21.4%) participants in the overall sample were classified as upstanders. A Chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) indicated a large significant association between upstander status and ensemble enrollment, $\chi^2(1, n = 131) = 6.473, p = .04, \phi = .47$. These results indicate that a participant’s music ensemble is an important factor to consider when analyzing the data further.

Prevalence of Self-reported Relational Victimization

We calculated chronic prevalence of relational victimization. Adolescents who scored one standard deviation above the mean on the Victimization scale were categorized as “chronic victims” and those scoring one standard deviation below the mean on the Agent Scale were categorized as “non-victims.” Based on this cat-

egorization, 13 (10%) participants in the overall sample were classified as chronic victims of relational aggression. Chi-square test for independence indicated no significant association found between chronic victim status and ensemble enrollment.

Table 2
Demographic Differences Across Measures

Demographic Items	N	Relational Victimization ^a		Willingness to Intervene ^b		Caring ^c	
		M (SD)	t Sig	M (SD)	t Sig	M (SD)	t Sig
Gender							
Male	68	4.93 (2.12)	.97	3.17 (.58)	2.01 *	14.8 (3.97)	1.91 *
Female	61	5.31 (2.37)		3.36 (.45)		16.1 (3.9)	
Ensemble							
Philharmonic Orchestra ^d	40	4.95 (2.5)	2.40 *	3.26 (.51)	2.24 *	15.6 (3.77)	3.57 *
Symphonic Orchestra ^d	19	5.21 (2.44)		3.42 (.49)		13.0 (4.74)	
Symphonic Band ^d	25	4.84 (2.06)		3.32 (.45)		15.2 (3.89)	
Wind Symphony ^d	47	5.37 (2.23)		3.16 (.59)		16.4 (3.96)	
Race							
White	118	4.99 (2.05)	1.8	3.26 (.47)	.06	15.3 (4.06)	.01
Non-White	13	6.16 (3.36)		3.25 (.97)		15.3 (5.3)	

* $p < 0.05$

^aRelational Victimization Response items: *Never, Once or twice a month, Once a week, 5 – 6 times a month, 7 or more times*;

^bWillingness to Intervene response items: *Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree*;

^cCaring response items: *Never, Almost Never, Sometimes, Almost All of the Time, All of the Time*;

^dOrchestras are comprised of string instruments only and the Wind Symphony and Symphonic Bands are comprised of woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments.

Relational Victimization and Instrumental Music Ensemble Membership

To test our third hypothesis, regression equations were computed separately for each of the four peer groups (see Table 3). As hypothesized, instrumental ensemble membership differs in the predictive significance of willingness to intervene scores for relational victimization. After controlling for gender and caring behaviors, willingness to intervene scores significantly predicted self-reported relational victimization for participants enrolled in Wind Symphony ($\beta = -.37$; $f^2 = .32$) when compared to the other three, non-statistically significant groupings,

Philharmonic Orchestra ($\beta = .12$; $f^2 = .02$), Symphonic Orchestra ($\beta = .21$; $f^2 = .41$), and Symphonic Band ($\beta = -.98$; $f^2 = .61$). According to Cohen's (1988) guidelines, the effect size for wind symphony is interpreted as large.

Table 3

Hierarchical Regression Analyses Results for Empowerment Predicting Relational Aggression – Philharmonic Orchestra/Symphonic Orchestra /Symphonic Band/ Wind Symphony

Variable	R^2	ΔR^2	β
Dependent variable = RV			
Step 1: gender, COO	.01/.25*/.00/.11		-.09/.5*/-.02/.33
Step 2: UIWIB scale	.02/.29/.38/.24	.01/.04/.38/.13	.12/-.21/-.98/-.37*

Note. RV = Relational Victimization scale (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995); COO = Caring of Others scale (Crick, 1996); UIWIB = University of Illinois Willingness to Intervene in Bullying Episodes scale (Espelage, Green, & Polanin, 2012)

* $p < .05$.

Discussion

School violence has emerged as a significant public health crisis that include behaviors ranging from bullying, hate-based language, sexual harassment, and physical assaults (Robers et al., 2013). Over the past 20 years, much research effort has been placed on identifying individual risk factors and deleterious effects of bullying, toward the goal of better predicting how this phenomenon exists in schools. The purpose of the current study was to validate and extend this body of research by examining upstander behaviors and approaches to examine music ensemble influence on relational victimization. These findings are important because (a) although self-reported relational victimization may not necessarily differ between participants enrolled in instrumental music ensembles, a participant's willingness to intervene may be dependent on their ensemble membership, and (b) clustered, ensemble/class-level analysis matters when analyzing adolescent self-reports of behavior.

First, we investigated which demographic characteristics were associated with the prevalence of relational victimization. Based on previous studies examining relational victimization, we expected females to demonstrate higher levels of relational victimization; however, our population of female participants were not significantly different than male participants when mean scores of relational victimization were compared. Furthermore, our population of non-White participants self-reported more frequent experiences of relational victimization ($M = 6.16$, $SD = 3.36$) when compared to White participants ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 2.05$). Although this difference was not significant, we are concerned that these results may indi-

cate a greater issue related to music program and/or school climate. Specifically, non-White high school students participating in an instrumental music program that is predominantly White may be targets of relational aggression more often than their White peers and this could be influenced by social behavior norms. It remains unclear if this investigation corroborates past research as results from the current study only represent the population we studied and our findings could be due to factors that are difficult to quantify, such as measuring adolescent victimization with self-reports or using scales different from those in previous studies. Despite not being able to corroborate past research, we are interpreting these findings to mean that all participants reported relatively few instances of relational victimization.

Next, we examined self-reported prevalence of WTI and explored differences between instrumental music ensembles. According to our results, there are more upstanders enrolled in Wind Symphony ($n = 16$) than the other three ensembles (Philharmonic Orchestra, $n = 3$; Symphonic Orchestra, $n = 3$; Symphonic Band, $n = 6$) and this result is statistically significant. We are unclear as to why there are more upstanders enrolled in the Wind Symphony and it is unknown why participants enrolled in the Wind Symphony are more willing to intervene in a relational bullying episode. Perhaps there are moderating variables (e.g., peer group characteristics, popularity, prosocial behaviors, resiliency, voluntary nature of school-based music ensemble participation) that may explain the effects of youth's willingness to intervene and these moderating variables should be included in future research investigating upstander behavior and relational victimization. Moreover, school district residential boundaries may be a contributing factor to these results. Conversations with the instrumental music teachers revealed that there are three junior high schools that matriculate to the high school under investigation. Since the majority of youth enrolled in Wind Symphony are in grades 11 and 12, it is possible that a large proportion of the musicians attended the same junior high school. Future research would need to untangle this inquiry through a longitudinal study of instrumental musicians WTI during junior high school and high school. Alternatively, researchers may be able to address this inquiry through a demographic question for participants to categorically identify their junior high school.

Using WTI as a proxy measure for upstander behavior is an important consideration within studies examining antisocial-aggressive behaviors, such as relational aggression, and this new information makes clear a need to include valid instruments within music education research. Additionally, we recommend future investigations targeting participants who are agents/victims of relational aggress-

sion and determining where these aggressive exchanges occurring, within and/or outside music classrooms. Answering these questions may further explain this relationship and connect to past research related to safe space research in music education.

Third, we assessed whether participant's WTI in bullying episodes was able to predict a significant amount of variance in relational victimization scores while controlling for perceptions of caring, as a comorbid correlate of upstander behavior. Results demonstrated that a participant's WTI in bullying episodes significantly predicts a decrease in relational victimization, and this prediction is more encouraging for those participants enrolled in the Wind Symphony class. Our results provide additional evidence to past findings in music education stating that adolescents participating in school-based music ensembles possess behaviors related to upstanding for their peers during bullying episodes. Ingram and her colleagues (2020) reported that WTI may longitudinally change across adolescence. Given our high school population demonstrating that differences in youth's WTI may be a localized phenomenon, researchers should continue to refine their examination of participant latent class profiles to include curricular and extra-curricular school-based activities as these may influence upstander behavior.

Several future directions for research should be underscored based on both the limitations and findings of the current study. Conducting school-based research in music education research requires a theory that recognizes the complex social interactions among a musician's peer environments. Results from the current sample demonstrate the clustered nature of our data and our population does not resemble a national representation of youth enrolled in American music ensembles (Elpus & Abril, 2019). Additional research should replicate across diverse populations and geographic regions as factors associated with racial identity (among other intersecting identities) could be significant in considering reactions to being the target of relational aggression. As such, we recommend that indicators of school climate be included in future research with studies investigating musical behavior, social behavior, and well-being. Studying additional schools that are nationally-representative of curricular school music with similar music course offerings would allow for more robust, clustered analyses and greater generalizability relevant to teachers and administrators, including policies and school programming. Notwithstanding, exploring these phenomena utilizing a qualitative research design may uncover additional nuances not previously documented.

Conclusion

Significant progress has been made in understanding and preventing school-based bullying where research and meta-analyses have provided much needed guidance to school leaders and community members. However, there is a scarcity of research that utilizes established theoretical frameworks focusing on an adolescent's experience in the school-based music ensemble and how these factors predict, disrupt, or facilitate various forms of aggression that occur within and outside these learning spaces. The current study offers a foundation for future work by demonstrating that instrumental music ensembles may differ in terms of their prevalence of relational victimization and upstander behaviors.

Participants enrolled in the Wind Symphony demonstrated more WTI when compared to youth enrolled in different instrumental music ensembles, suggesting that this population should be the target of research on prosocial behavior. High school may be too late to start examining these behaviors and perhaps this upstanding behavior was learned in middle school. As youth attempt to adapt to a school environment during adolescence, the need to be accepted by their peers becomes increasingly prominent. Within instrumental music programs, this need is similar and high school instrumental music teachers need to include discussions on encouraging students to intervene in bullying episodes as a way of thwarting the deleterious effects of relational victimization. School-based music ensembles may provide a space for an enhanced, positive interaction among peers that may have similar interests, goals, and prosocial behaviors.

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