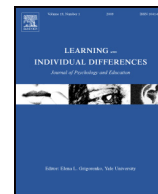




Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Learning and Individual Differences

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/lindif

The impact of academic competency teasing and self-concept on academic and psychological outcomes among gifted high school students

Kelly M. Lee, PhD^{a,b,*}, Martinque K. Jones, PhD^{a,c}, Susan X Day, PhD^a

^a University of Houston, Department of Psychological, Health, and Learning Sciences, Houston, TX, United States

^b University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES), Champaign, IL, United States

^c Teachers College, Columbia University, Department of Counseling and Clinical Psychology, New York City, NY, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 22 June 2015

Received in revised form 6 October 2016

Accepted 15 October 2016

Available online xxxxx

Keywords:

Academic achievement

Teasing

Academic self-concept

Giftedness

ABSTRACT

The relationships between low competency teasing, academic self-concept, and academic outcomes (i.e., GPA and academic psychological engagement) were analyzed using data from approximately 200 artistically and academically gifted students (62.2% female) recruited from two high schools. Results demonstrated two significant models for academic outcomes: the negative relationship between low academic competency teasing and GPA was mediated by academic self-concept, and the negative relationship between low academic competency teasing and academic psychological engagement was mediated by academic self-concept. When the sample was split based on giftedness domain, the mediation using GPA was significant only for academically gifted students, whereas the mediation using academic psychological engagement was significant only for artistically gifted students. All mediations were confirmed using Sobel's test (1982). Results suggest that academic self-concept is a significant variable partially mediating the effects of teasing on gifted students' academic outcomes. Furthermore, giftedness domain should be emphasized because academic outcomes may vary by domain.

© 2016 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Several variables can thwart a student's success in school, two of which include peer victimization and low academic self-concept (Marsh & Martin, 2011; Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2010). Peer victimization is "a form of peer abuse in which a child is frequently the target of peer aggression" (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996, p. 1305). To explain the association between peer victimization and academic outcomes, we investigated the mediating role of academic self-concept (ASC) conceptualized as one's academic identity (Arens, Yeung, Craven, & Hasselhorn, 2011; Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976), based on understandings of the self-system process (i.e., the context-self-action-outcome model from Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Our study focused on gifted students, a population overlooked because they are stereotypically considered free of academic challenges and frailties (Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius, & Worrell, 2011). We use *gifted* and *non-gifted* as shorthand terms; they indicate student groups that have been identified as such, realizing these groups are not consistently categorized. When giftedness is explored, it is typically studied unidimensionally, capturing high intellect (IQ at 130 or higher; for example, Chae, Kim, & Noh, 2003).

The current study makes a unique contribution by examining the relationships between victimization, academic outcomes (i.e., grade point average [GPA] and academic psychological engagement), and ASC among gifted students.

1.1. Victimization and academic outcomes

Literature evidences the negative effects of peer victimization (Hawker & Boulton, 2000; Nansel et al., 2001; Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009), including decreased academic achievement and increased negative attitudes toward school (Espelage, Hong, Rao, & Low, 2013). This relationship has been studied through several research designs (e.g., structural equation modeling [SEM] path analysis, longitudinal approach). The associations of victimization with GPA (Hammig & Jozkowski, 2013), achievement (Beran, Hughes, & Lupart, 2008), absenteeism (Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2000), and engagement (Graham, Bellmore, & Mize, 2006) imply that victimization is a significant variable to consider in understanding students academically.

One new form of victimization, academic competency teasing, has not been explored in relation to achievement; however, it aligns theoretically with the evidenced relationship between victimization and academic outcomes. Academic competency teasing is verbal victimization based on a student's academic successes (i.e., high competency) or challenges (i.e., low competency; Lee, 2014; Storch et al., 2004; Thompson, Cattarin, Fowler, & Fisher, 1995). In an environment where all students

* Corresponding author at: UIUC Disability Resources and Educational Services, 1207 S. Oak Street, Champaign, IL 61821, United States.

E-mail addresses: kml536@comcast.net (K.M. Lee), mkj2123@tc.columbia.edu (M.K. Jones), sxday1@gmail.com (S. X Day).

are gifted, some individuals may be particularly prone to low competency teasing. Because academic competency teasing specifically assails a person's academic identity and classroom behavior, it is hypothesized to be associated with lowered academic achievement.

1.2. Academic self-concept

ASC is defined as an individual's perception of his or her academic self (Arens et al., 2011; Shavelson et al., 1976). According to the self-system process of context-self-actions-outcome (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, Wellborn, & Connell, 1990), context affects self, which then affects an individual's actions and subsequent outcomes; the authors stipulate this process develops from the interaction between an individual's social context, psychological needs, and fundamental drive for competence.

Several studies support the association between victimization and decreased ASC. Ma, Phelps, Lerner, and Lerner (2009) found being a victim of bullying predicted lowered perceived academic competence and Buhs (2005) noted peer rejection and negative treatment lead to lower academic self-confidence. Other studies confirm this association using cross-sectional designs (Jenkins & DeMaray, 2015; Thijs & Verkuyten, 2008; Totura, Karver & Gesten, 2014). This relationship may be particularly strong for gifted students who may be teased academically because of the potential salience of their academic identity.

A well-established body of literature demonstrates the positive association between ASC and academic achievement (Arens et al., 2011; Marsh & Martin, 2011; Pullmann & Allik, 2008). Longitudinal studies found ASC and academic self-esteem predicted current and future achievement (Green et al., 2012; Guay, Marsh, & Boivin, 2003; Preckel, Niepel, Schneider, & Brunner, 2013).

1.3. Peer victimization, academic self-concept, and academic outcomes

Three studies assessed the relationship between victimization and academic achievement, with ASC as a mediator. Jenkins and DeMaray (2015) used a SEM path analysis to demonstrate ASC mediated the relationship between victimization and academic success in middle school students. Among 6th graders, Thijs and Verkuyten (2008) found academic self-efficacy mediated the negative relationship between victimization (i.e., name-calling, teasing, exclusion) and achievement. Using path analysis, Totura, Karver, and Gesten (2014) found victimization was significantly related to psychological distress, which was negatively associated with student engagement. Low student engagement was then correlated with academic consequences. These studies suggest a pattern: school victimization may lead to academically-related psychological concerns, thereby preceding lower academic performance.

Only one study (Buhs, 2005) examined the aforementioned hypothesized relationship using a longitudinal design. Among 5th grade students, being rejected by peers during the fall semester predicted victimization and isolation the following semester. Experiences of victimization and exclusion negatively influenced students' ASC, thus adversely affecting students' classroom engagement and grades. Taken together, studies support a potential mediation relationship: peer victimization leads to psychological concerns that consequently affect students' academic outcomes.

1.4. Giftedness

While literature has established relationships among victimization, psychological states, and academic outcomes, limited literature concerns student subgroups. Gender and ethnic groups within general education have been examined (Jenkins & DeMaray, 2015; Thijs & Verkuyten, 2008); however, students who have atypical academic experiences, such as gifted students, may demonstrate outcomes differently from the general population. Accordingly, it is unclear how these relationships may appear among gifted students.

Giftedness is defined as demonstrating “outstanding levels of aptitude (defined as an exceptional ability to reason and learn) or competence (documented performance or achievement in top 10% or rarer) in one or more domains. Domains include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system (e.g., mathematics, music, language) and/or set of sensorimotor skills (e.g., painting, dance, sports)” (NAGC, n.d.). The Texas Education Code defines a gifted and talented student as “a child or youth who performs at or shows the potential for performing at a remarkably high level of accomplishment when compared to others of the same age, experience, or environment” (Education Programs for Gifted and Talented Students, 2009). Gifted students are often discounted in terms of their potential for peer victimization and lowered academic achievement because they are assumed to function well socially and academically (Dweck, 2006; Subotnik et al., 2011). This oversight is unfortunate considering gifted students experience emotional problems similar to their non-gifted peers (Reis & Renzulli, 2004) and struggle with academic underperformance (Matthews & McBee, 2007; Reis & McCoach, 2000) when they compare themselves to perceived peers.

1.4.1. Gifted victimization

The few studies focused on gifted students and victimization present mixed results. In one study, teachers anticipated academically gifted students to be the least likely bullied compared to general education students (Estell et al., 2009). Another study found students with high cognitive ability reported the most victimization (Kim & Glomb, 2010). A third study noted no difference between gifted and non-gifted students in self-reported victimization (Peters & Bain, 2011).

Although it is unclear whether gifted students are victimized at a different rate than others, the fact remains these students experience victimization. Indeed, 67% of gifted students sampled by Peterson and Ray (2006) reported experiencing some type of bullying, with 19% of teasing related to intelligence. Furthermore, Pelchar and Bain (2014) found for gifted 4th and 5th graders, victimization was associated with both internal ($r = 0.68$) and external ($r = 0.74$) distress.

1.4.2. Gifted academic self-concept

Studies show gifted students rate their ASC higher than their social self-concept (Lee, Olszewski-Kubilius & Thomson, 2012) and their ASC is significantly higher than non-gifted students' (for a review, see Litster & Roberts, 2011). According to the Big Fish Little Pond (BFLP) effect (Marsh, 1991), gifted students in self-contained classes may have lower ASC compared to those not in self-contained classes because gifted students are surrounded by other superior performing individuals. Shi, Li, and Zhang (2008) found gifted children's self-concept decreased between the ages of 11 to 13 while non-gifted children's self-concept increased. Several variables appear to influence this effect, including time in a self-contained program, anxiety, intelligence, and social cooperation (Makel, Lee, Olszewski-Kubilius, & Putallaz, 2012; Seaton, Marsh, & Craven, 2010; Wilson, Siegle, McCoach, Little, & Reis, 2014).

Psychological factors, such as ASC, are posited to play a significant role in gifted youth's development of talent. In a series of scholarly works (e.g., Jarvin & Subotnik, 2006; Jarvin & Subotnik, 2010; Subotnik & Jarvin, 2005), Jarvin and Subotnik propose a developmental model describing the means by which students achieve elite talent (described as “scholarly productivity/artistry” [SP/A]). In brief, researchers suggest there are mediating variables influencing development, including intrinsic motivation, social skills, and self-confidence — each of which are variables associated with ASC (Kucuker & Tekinarslan, 2015; Trautwein, Lüdtke, Köller, & Baumert, 2006; Weidinger, Spinath, & Steinmayr, 2016).

1.4.3. Gifted academic achievement

While a majority of gifted students are high achieving, there are also students who struggle with underachievement, generally defined as a discrepancy between one's ability and classroom achievement (Landis

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/4940053>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/4940053>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)