

## Adolescents Psychological Well Being in Relation to Bullying/CB Victimization: The Mediating Effect of Resilience and Self-Concept

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**Abstract :** Aggressive peer behaviors, particularly bullying and cyberbullying (CB) victimization during adolescence, are strongly and consistently linked to decreased levels of subjective well-being, potentially hindering a healthy and consistent developmental process. These negative effects might be expressed in emotional, physical, and behavioral difficulties. Adolescents victims of bullying/CB present more depressive moods, more loneliness, and more suicidal thoughts, while adolescents who had never been victims of bullying and CB acts present higher levels of well-being. These difficulties in their lives may be both a consequence of and a partial explanation for bullying/CB victimization. Interpersonal behavior styles and psychosocial factors may interact to create a vicious cycle in which adolescents place themselves at risk, which might explain the reduced well-being reported among victims. Yet, to the best of our knowledge, almost no study has examined the effect of two key variables in adolescents' lives, resilience and self-concept, in the relationship between bullying/CB victimization and low levels of psychological well-being among adolescents. Resilience is defined as the individual's capacity of maintaining stable functioning and make adjustments in the face of adversity; a capacity that promotes efficiently coping with environmental stressors and protects from psycho-social difficulties when facing various challenges. Self-concept relates to the way we perceive ourselves, influenced by many forces, including our interactions with the surroundings; a collection of beliefs about oneself. Accordingly, the current study has examined the possible mediating effect of these two main positive personal variables, resilience, and self-concept, through a mediation model analysis. 507 middle school students aged 11-16 (53% boys, 47% girls) completed questionnaires regarding bullying and CB behaviors, psychological well-being, resilience, and self-concept. A mediation model analysis was performed, whereas the hypothesized mediation model was accepted in full. More specifically, it was found that both self-concept and resilience mediated the relationship between bullying/CB victimization and a sense of well-being. High levels of both variables might buffer against a potential decrease in well-being associated with youth bullying/CB victimization. No gender differences were found, except a small stronger effect of resilience on well-being for boys. The study results suggest focusing on specific personal positive variables when developing youth intervention programs, creating an infrastructure for new programs that address increasing resilience and self-concept in schools and family-school contexts. Such revamped programs could diminish bullying/CB acts and the harmful negative implications for youth well-being. Future studies that will incorporate longitudinal data may further deepen the understanding of these examined relationships.

**Keywords :** adolescents, well being, bullying/CB victimization, resilience, self-concept

**Conference Title :** ICDPA 2025 : International Conference on Developmental Psychology and Adolescence

**Conference Location :** Tokyo, Japan

**Conference Dates :** May 27-28, 2025