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Parental Involvement, Peer Victimization and Achievement Strategy: What Parents Can Do When Their Children Are Victims of Bullying in Schools?

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The present study looks at how parental involvement and peer victimization influence students' use of achievement strategy in junior secondary schools in Hong Kong. It employs a systems perspective to look at how family and classroom factors uniquely combine to influence students. A number of 2,261 Secondary 1 and 2 students and their family members drawn from 19 secondary schools participated in the cross-sectional survey for the research. Findings suggest that parental involvement in school plays a moderating role on the association between peer victimization in the classroom and students' use of achievement strategy. The result of the research has important implications for home-school relations in Hong Kong, and for restructuring of the school process to create a more supportive and nurturing environment for learning and teaching.

Key words: parental involvement, peer victimization, learning strategy

This article describes the result of a cross-sectional survey on the effects of parental involvement in school and peer victimization on students' use of achievement strategy. The impacts, both directly and indirectly in the social contexts of the school, on students' behavior, affective as well as academic outcome, have been well established (Reynolds, Creemers, Stringfield, & Schaffer, 2002; Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000). The social organization of the school, normative relationships among staff and between teachers and students, the patterns of parental involvement, and the school culture, all affect teacher behavior and student outcomes, both through their direct impact on students and teachers and as mediated by effects on students and teachers. The mediating effects of group and institutional social contexts have come to the attention of researchers recently (Chang, 2004; Hoglund & Leadbeater, 2004). For example, Menzies Lyth's research suggests that medical professionals contained their anxiety and frustration in the work setting by depersonalizing relations with clients and by using organizational hierarchies (Menzies Lyth, 1988). Barth, Dunlap, Dane, Lochman, and Wells (2004) discovered that the influence of social contexts within the classroom on peer aggression and peer relations is both direct and indirect. Adverse classroom ethos is associated with higher levels of student aggression, poorer peer relations and inadequate academic focus, but the impacts on students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds were significantly larger.

The present study investigates the interacting contribution of family and classroom factors on student learning. The family factors include parental involvement and socioeconomic background. The classroom factors include victimization of fellow students. The author hypothesizes that parental involvement in school moderates the effect of peer victimization on students' achievement strategy in learning. There has been a wealth of research on students' learning strategies and school performance (e.g., Pintrich, 2004; Zusho, Pintrich, & Cortina, 2005) and the influence of the family (Hokoda & Fincham, 1995), but few researches attempt to explore how classroom processes influence the effects of family processes on student performances (Bellmore, Witkow, Graham, & Juvonen, 2004; Chang, 2004; Hoglund &

Leadbeater, 2004; Tam & Pun, 2006). It is by trying to explore how the social environment impinges upon the students, in particular their affective state, that one begins to understand which aspects of environment and which mechanisms enhance or reduce psychological success, and why students with inadequate social support are less well equipped to deal with school demands and frustration resulting from school failure than others.

Achievement Strategy

Existing literature on learning strategy assumes that students' motivation and use of learning strategies can be controlled by learners and changed through teaching. Learning strategies are behavioral skills learners can use to improve their understanding, integration, and retention of new information (Cross & Steadman, 1996), and include a wide variety of cognitive processes and behavioral skills like rehearsal, elaboration, organization, comprehension, metacognition, and resource management (Cross & Steadman, 1996; Weinstein & Meyer, 1991).

Biggs (1992) described three strategies that learners in Hong Kong mainly employed as their approach to learning. The surface strategy is the intention of the learner to try to get by with minimal trouble, or simply to pass the subjects without aiming high. They will tend to set low goals, focus on rote learning (memorization) and are unlikely to succeed in most learning situations. The deep strategy is present in learners who are intrinsically motivated tend to read widely, able to relate new content to what they already know, and can extract more meaning from their learning. However, the education system in Hong Kong emphasizes strong competition, which tends to force students to employ strategies other than the deep strategy (Biggs, 1996, 2001). The achievement strategy is present in learners who are motivated to achieve and they are likely to organize their own work and mobilize internal and external resources to accomplish their goals. They are also more able to focus their energy on learning and achieving goals for a longer period of time, and will monitor, control, and regulate certain aspects

of their own cognition and behaviors as well as some features of their environments in order to gain achievement success (Cross & Steadman, 1996; Pintrich, 2004). Students' use of achievement strategy enhances their ego and self-esteem through competition for success and is an important element in their identification with academic work and school lives (Biggs, 2001; Osborne, 2004). It is for this reason that achievement strategy is being employed as the dependent variable of this study.

Parental Influence on Students' Achievement Strategy

Although the influence of family socialization patterns on student's achievement has been well established, there appears to be a general belief that these patterns are more relevant in shaping their affective performances, such as attitudes, self-concept, motivation and causal attributions (Eccles, 1993; Gonzalez-Pienda et al., 2002; Wentzel, 1999; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992). The assumption behind this is that when students are aware of how they use their cognitive processes and strategies, parental behaviors can influence their learning habits and emotional disposition (Hokoda & Fincham, 1995; Klebanov & Brooks-Gunn, 1992).

The present study looks at how parental involvement affects children employ achievement strategy in learning. From a developmental competency perspective, a supportive family is instrumental in helping young adolescents to focus their energy in learning and to reduce aggressive behaviors (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). The relationship among family members has long been considered an important factor associated with children's self-esteem (Peterson & Rollins, 1999), personal and social competence (Felson & Zielinski, 1989), and academic identification (Osborne, 2004). Aggressive behavior takes root in broken homes (Laub & Sampson, 1988), larger families (Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986), where there is poor quality of family life and low parental attachment (Rankin & Kern, 1994), poor parenting skills (Wells & Rankin, 1988), child abuse and neglect (Gray, 1988), poor modeling of problem-solving skills and hostile discipline techniques (Loeber

& Dishion, 1983). A punitive parenting style, for example, has been found to be of great significance in the development of peer victimization among young boys (Olweus, 1993). Families of boys who victimize their peers are often lacking in warmth, use physical violence, and fail to monitor children's activities outside the school.

Parental involvement within a family is the degree to which parents invest attention, advice, support, interest, values, and care in children. Obviously, some minimum degree of adequate structure within the family is necessary, but the investment process is grounded in the parent-child relationships. Coleman and Hoffer (1987) used the term "functional deficiency" in families where there is an absence of strong relations between children and parents despite their physical presence in the household. Hence, a family may be structurally adequate, with both parents present, but functionally deficient when they are seldom home, or are abusive.

Parental involvement in schools is signified by a high degree of interconnectedness between students, parents, and teachers. It was reported that parental involvement in school can help students develop better self-concept and achieve higher grades through monitoring their daily activities, by keeping close track of their school progress (Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987; Gibson & Jefferson, 2006). In a recent study, parental involvement as a contextual factor of school is found to moderate the relationship between gender and mathematics performance (Tam & Pun, 2006). In one survey of school administrators, it was found that parental involvement in school is effective in helping at-risk students (Johnson, 1997). Such involvement includes parents' expectations of school performance, verbal encouragement or interactions regarding school work, direct reinforcement of improved school performance, general academic guidance and support. Despite the large amount of work on the effect of parental involvement on student learning, there is still insufficient evidence to demonstrate the interactive effects of parental involvement with school or classroom factors, especially for situations where peer victimization in the classroom is rife.

Peer Victimization and Students' Achievement Strategy

Most researchers categorize victimization as a subset of aggressive behaviors that involves an intention to hurt another person (Camodeca, Goossens, Schuengel, & Terwogt, 2003; Olweus, 1993; Smith & Thompson, 1991). It is inflicted repeatedly and regularly over time (Olweus, 1993), and it usually involves an imbalance in power, either real or perceived (Craig, 1998; Whitney & Smith, 1993). Victimization can be manifest in a variety of ways. Not only can it be displayed physically, through direct aggressive acts such as hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, and taking belongings or money, but by activities such as name calling and cruel teasing which may be covert and elusive. Rivers and Smith (1994) indicate that aggressive notes can be passed in the classroom without teachers even being aware that victimization is taking place. More recently, victimization has been labeled as a form of terrorism in that it involves an unprovoked attack with the intention to cause harm on the victim (Ross, 2002).

There is increasing evidence that peer victimization is damaging to a student's emotional and social development (Wang, Haertal, & Walberg, 1990). In schools, students' perception, attitudes and even victimization behaviors sometimes constitute a subculture that may directly challenge that of the school. Students form delinquent groups for status, safety, power and excitement (Spergel et al., 1994). They may even develop into more structured gangs of diverse types (Huff, 1989). Once they become gang members, they develop what Fleisher (1995) calls a "defensive world view" characterized by a feeling of vulnerability and a need to protect oneself, a belief that no one can be trusted, a need to maintain social distance, a willingness to use violence and intimidation to repel others, and an attraction to similar defensive people. In a study of 217 boys and girls, Bukowski and colleagues found that girls' and boys' attraction to aggressive peers increased upon the entry to secondary school (Bukowski, Sippola, & Newcomb, 2000).

The present investigation looks at students' experience of peer victimization and how this experience influences their use of achievement strategy. Classmates serve as significant reinforcements and models of

behaviors in the modern school system. Classrooms with high numbers of students with poor motivation or deviant social skills are likely to perpetuate these maladaptive behaviors, and these can easily become a behavioral norm in the classroom. Osborne (2001) suggests that the development of norms of peer victimization in the classroom may signify a process where students have developed a weak identification with academic performance in school. It has been reported that students who are being victimized tend to have poorer self-esteem (Karatzias, Power, & Swanson, 2002; Natvig, Albrektsen, & Qvarnstrom, 2001) and tend to be more depressed or anxious (Rigby, 1998). The effects of peer victimization have also been found to influence students' learning. Rigby (1998), for example, found that high school students who reported greater peer victimization were significantly less motivated in learning. This negative experience drains their emotional energy and causes them to retreat from active participation in learning activities.

Taken together, existing literature suggests that there are moderately strong links between peer victimization and students' academic difficulties (Juvonen, Nishina, & Graham, 2000; Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996), and between parental involvement and students' academic performance (Johnson, 1997). Although studies have been conducted to look at the interactive effect of family processes and peer victimization on students' academic performance (Bellmore et al., 2004; Chang, 2004; Hoglund & Leadbeater, 2004; Tam & Pun, 2006), there is still insufficient work being done on how these factors interactively influence the way students engage in learning strategy. Given that students need to mobilize internal energy and external resources, and to monitor, control, and regulate aspects of their own cognition and behaviors in order to engage in achievement strategy in learning, and it is assumed that both family processes and peer victimization are important factors that influence students' access to internal energy for learning. Therefore, the goal of the current project is to extend the existing work by investigating the direct and interacting influences of family processes and peer victimization on students' learning strategy, and in particular, the role of parental involvement in schools in this process.

Method

Sampling

The present study uses a cross-sectional survey conducted from May to June, 2002 using a systematic sampling method. The data were taken from a large scale research project on first and second language learning in secondary schools in one of the nineteen school districts in Hong Kong (Tam, 2003). The district was mainly populated by working class to lower-middle class families. According to government statistics, there were 22 secondary schools in the district, operating 121 secondary two classes, with a total of 4,888 students. Therefore, the average class size was 40.5.

All 22 secondary schools were invited to join the survey, but only 19 agreed to do so. One-third of the secondary one and secondary two students enrolled in these schools were selected randomly to complete the Student Survey — the questionnaire for assessing learning strategy and classroom processes. They were asked to complete the survey within a designated time inside the school hall or their classrooms. Students who completed the Student Survey were also asked to take the Parent Survey home for their parents to complete, and return it the next day.

A total of 1,595 students — 827 (51.8%) secondary one, 768 (48.2%) secondary two; 700 (43.9%) boys and 895 (56.1%) girls with an average mean age of 13.32 years (SD = 0.99) provided sufficient information for analysis. Also, 1,818 Parent Surveys were returned but only 1,577 of them were considered useful. Among the parents who provided sufficient information, 371 (23.3%) identified themselves as fathers, 1,206 (75.6%) identified themselves as mothers, 18 (1.1%) did not indicate their relationships with the students.

Measures

Two sets of survey questionnaires were used in the survey. The Student Survey contains instruments for assessing students' achievement strategy, which is the dependent variable of this study, and peer victimization. The

Parent Survey contains instruments for assessing family processes. The following section describes the individual scales and properties of the survey instruments.

Achievement Strategy The instrument for students' achievement strategy was adapted from Biggs' (1992) Learning Process Questionnaire (LPQ). The original version of LPQ contains 6 items for achievement strategy. The LPQ was originally published in 1979 and was later translated and published in Chinese (Biggs, 1979, 1992). Norm tables of the LPQ for the Chinese population were developed in Hong Kong, and reliability was reported to be within a range of 0.5 to 0.8 (Biggs, 1992). For the purpose of the present study, the author adapted only five items from the achievement strategy scale because the sixth item was deemed inappropriate for language learning. These items include: "I plan to review my lessons at home to ensure I understand what I have learned in school," "I will devise a plan so that I can get better grades," "When my teacher returns the tests or compositions back to me, I will try to understand my mistakes and make the corrections," "When I receive assignments from my teacher, I will try to finish them as soon as I can," and "I have my own why of keeping my books and notes so that I can retrieve them easily." Respondents are asked to rate each item on a five-point scale ranging from "totally agree" (5) to "totally disagree" (1). The alpha reliability of the scale is 0.7514.

Parental Involvement The instrument for parental involvement in school is based on Ho's (1995) conception that parents can be involved in two domains of activities in school. One domain is involvement in school activities, and the other is involvement in decision making. There are six items in each domain. Some of the items in the activity involvement domain include: "I will participate in seminars organized by the PTA," "I will participate in volunteer work of the school," and "I will participate in parent consultation meetings." Some of the items in the decision making domain are "I will voice out my opinions about operations of the school," "I will voice out my opinions about school policies to the PTA committee," and "I will voice out my opinions about instructional approaches of the school."

Respondents are asked to rate their level of involvement on a five-point scale ranging from "always" (5) to "never" (1). Alpha reliability of the composite scale reported in this study is 0.8781.

Peer victimization is conceptualized as the extent to which the student is being victimized in the classroom by fellow classmates within the current school year up until the time of the survey. There are six items in this scale. Behaviors described in these items are common victimization behaviors in Hong Kong secondary schools and are selected by a panel of four experienced secondary school teachers. These items include: "Threaten you," "Say mean things about you to fellow classmates," "Bully you in the school by forming gangs," "Ridicule you in the classroom," "Steal personal belongings from you," and "Fight with you." Respondents are asked to rate each item on a five-point scale ranging from "very often" (5) to "never" (1). Alpha reliability of the scale reported in this study is 0.8511.

The properties of these instruments, their means and standard deviations, number of items, number of response categories, and reported reliability are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Properties of the Survey Instruments: A Summary

Instrument	Respondent	No. of items	*M*	*SD*	Response categories	Reported reliability
Parental involvement in school	Parent	12	2.1540	0.8228	1 to 5	0.8781
Achievement strategy	Student	5	3.3379	0.6518	1 to 5	0.7514
Peer victimization	Student	6	2.2974	0.8958	1 to 5	0.8511

Results

Table 2 reports the zero-order correlation between the variables. Gender (male = 1, female = 2) is significantly related to parental involvement in school. The fact that parents tend to participate more in a child's school when the child is a boy may be explained in two ways. Within the same age cohort, boys tend to be less mature than girls and hence need more attention from their parents, even at the junior secondary level. In addition, in a male

dominated society such as China and Hong Kong, parents tend to put more resources into the boys upbringing than the girls. Also, in the same table, gender is negatively related to peer victimization, which suggests that boys are more likely to be victimized than girls. Finally, gender is significantly related to achievement strategy, which confirms the fact that girls in Hong Kong, in general, mature earlier and are more motivated than boys in doing well in school.

Table 2 Correlation Coefficients of the Variables

Variables	1	2	4	5
1 Gender (girls = 2; boy = 1)	—			
2 Parental involvement in school	−0.121***	—		
4 Achievement strategy	0.088***	0.103***	—	
5 Peer victimization	−0.098***	−0.049*	−0.227***	—

* $p < 0.05$ *** $p < 0.005$

Base model

The present study uses the regression method to analyze the contribution of family and classroom factors to students' strategy in learning. The regression model takes gender, parental involvement in school and peer victimization as independent variables, and students' achievement strategy in learning as the dependent variable. Table 3 (Model 1) shows the result of the basic model without interaction effect.

Consistent with the correlation results in Table 2, only parental involvement in school contributes significantly to achievement strategy ($\beta = 0.098$, $p < 0.005$). Furthermore, peer victimization contributes significantly to achievement strategy ($\beta = -0.229$, $p < 0.005$), and the standardized coefficient for the contribution of peer victimization is larger than that of parental involvement in school. This is reasonable since peer victimization is the extent to which a student feels he/she has been victimized in the classroom within the current school year, it is expected to have a more direct impact on learning than parental involvement in school, which is actually expected to have an indirect impact.

Interaction effects

Interaction effects are perhaps more interesting and insightful than the main effect because these show the complex interactions of the different social ecological systems. After adding the interaction terms, the adjusted *R*-square, which is the percentage of total variance accounted for in the regression equation, was increased from 0.068 to 0.075. Hence, the percentage of the total variance explained by the interaction effect, although significant, is not high. Table 3 (Model 2) shows the result of the regression analysis, with interaction between parental involvement and peer victimization included in the analysis.

Table 3 Parental Involvement and Peer Victimization on Achievement Strategy

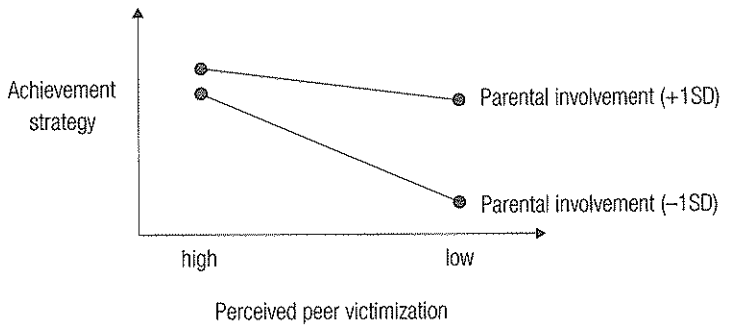
	Model 1		Model 2	
Main effect	Std. coef.	(*t* statistics)	Std. coef.	(*t* statistics)
Gender	0.063	2.739**	0.064	2.766**
Parental involvement in school	0.098	4.262***	0.099	4.316***
Peer victimization	−0.229	−10.009***	−0.225	−9.831***
Interaction effects				
Gender x peer victimization			0.001	0.065
Parental involvement x peer victimization			0.061	2.654**
R-square	0.068		0.076	

** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.005$

In Table 3, interaction of peer victimization with parental involvement in school contributes to achievement strategy ($\beta = 0.061$, $p < 0.01$). The significant contribution suggests that there may be a differential effect by peer victimization on achievement strategy. To illustrate this interaction effect, a plot of the regression lines for peer victimization as a function of achievement strategy for students with high and low parental involvement in school is drawn and shown in Figure 1. The two lines in the plot are two groups of students with high (+1 *SD* above the *M*) and low (−1 *SD* below the *M*) levels of parental involvement. While both gradients are negative, the gradient of the line for cases with lower level of parental involvement in school is higher (more negative) than the line for cases with higher level of

parental involvement. The explanation for this may be that peer victimization has been known to have a negative impact on students' use of achievement strategy, however, a higher level of parental involvement in school tends to reduce this negative impact. This suggests that parents who are more involved in their children's schools (those who are supposedly more concerned and collaborate more with teachers) can enable their children to be more assertive in development learning strategies even when their children are being placed in an environment where peer victimization is rife.

Figure 1 Regression Lines for Perceived Peer Victimization as a Function of Students' Achievement Strategy with Strong and Weak Parental Involvement in School



Discussion

In understanding the process by which children develop learning strategies, the present study draws on an ecological framework to outline the different but intertwined ecosystems where family and school interact and reinforce one another in creating a social support system. The findings provide modest support for our hypotheses that the contribution of peer victimization in the classroom to students' employment of learning strategy is moderated by parenting behaviors. Peer victimization in the classroom contributed negatively to the use of achievement strategy by students but the effect is reduced when there is active involvement of parents in school. In light of these findings, the following paragraphs will discuss the unique

and interactive contributions of the ecology of the family and the classroom to student learning, as well as the implications of these findings for school improvement.

Previous research shows that parental involvement in school contributes positively to student's academic achievement (Ho & Willms, 1996), but that the motivation to involve is less for parents in poor socioeconomic and disadvantaged communities (Epstein, 2001; Lareau, 2003). Findings in the present study suggest that parental involvement contributes directly and indirectly to students' use of achievement strategy. It shows that parental involvement in schools not only supports children emotionally so that they will strive to develop integrative strategies to achieve, it also helps them by reducing or clearing social obstacles in learning, such as victimization in the classroom. Despite the fact that many schools in Hong Kong do not welcome too much involvement by parents in decision making and the school curriculum, the active participation of parents in school is actually very important (Lau & Leung, 2003; Tam & Pun, 2006). Parental involvement in school provides a positive example to children that adults do care about them and are willing to sacrifice time for their welfare. Also when parents become aware that their children are learning in a less than desirable environment, parents can intervene by informing the teachers about the situation and collaborating with teachers to solve problems in the classroom. Clark (1983) suggested that even the simple action of frequent visits to schools by parents can make a great difference to the academic performance of students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The present study provides evidence for the fact that the impact of peer victimization on students' achievement strategy in learning is negative, which suggests that peer victimization does post a threat to learning in schools. The peer group within the classroom provides an important social context because peers exert considerable influence on one another's behaviors (Coie, Dodge, & Kupersmidt, 1990; Cornell & Brockenbrough, 2004). Peers provide or withhold attention and affiliation. Students seek information from their peers as a way to estimate their social competence, popularity and

ability in a variety of situations. Peer social networks serve to establish, modify and support the social norms in classrooms (Farmer, VanAcker, Pearl, & Rodkin, 1999). Classroom social networks reflect both selection and socialization processes that are influenced by a complex array of factors, and social skills is just one such factor. Nevertheless, students who lack social skills to interact with other classmates may easily be isolated and victimized (Rodkin, Parmer, Pearly, & VanAcker, 2000).

In light of the fact that parental involvement in schools moderates the contribution of peer victimization to students' use of achievement strategy, teachers and school administrators should pay more attention to the social lives of students in the classroom. In particular, effective measures should be implemented to ensure that the classroom is free of aggression and victimization, and education programmes should be designed to help students develop a prosocial attitude and a positive peer relationship. Also, pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes should pay more attention to enabling teachers to develop instructional skills that are conducive to learning motivation, as well as on skills in classroom management and ways of developing a supportive and nurturing relationship with the students.

Many researchers have asserted the importance of parental involvement for at-risk students but few mentioned how parents should involve themselves when their children are being victimized in school, or are being placed in an at-risk classroom. The following are some recommendations for parents based on findings of previous studies on peer victimization and school violence (Bennett-Johnson, 2004; Christenson, Hirsch, & Hurley, 1997; Gerler, 2004; Goldstein & Conoley, 1997).

1. A positive family relationship is an indispensable resource which provides emotional support to children even when they are going through stressful experiences in school. Parents can provide emotional support by frequently encouraging their children to talk about what took place in school, the positive events in school life, and regularly celebrate with them their accomplishments in learning and behavioral improvement.

2. Victims of school bullying often have low self-esteem and poor social skills. Parents of bully victims may help their children by demonstrating to them such social skills as being assertive among peers, resolving conflicts peacefully, feeling good about themselves by making an effort with school work, and developing lasting friendship.

3. Parents should keep their eyes open for any adverse changes in their children and discuss these changes with the teachers. Regular discussions with teachers would help parents understand if their children are going through any particularly difficult situations in school or within the community environment. Parents, together with school officials, should also collaborate closely with the school to set the parameters of normal behavior within their homes, the class and school, with the aim of developing the personal and social responsibility of all children within the school.

4. Students who are victimized are often themselves aggressors (Ma, 2001). Children who exhibit aggressive behaviors in school often do so because of the poor role models they learn from at home. Hence, if the root of peer victimization is poor parent-children interaction skills, parents should try to improve their skills by joining parent education programs available in the community, so that they can learn and teach conflict resolution and anger management techniques to their children.

5. Peer mediation has been found to be an effective approach to combat peer victimization in schools (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). It utilizes a third-person mediator, who is also a student, to help settle a dispute and negotiate an integrative resolution to interpersonal conflicts among students. Through this approach, peer victimization may be dealt with harmoniously and students can learn the procedures, skills and attitudes required to resolve conflicts constructively.

6. The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), an organization within a school managed by the collaborative efforts of parents and teachers, is becoming

a significant partner in modern school administration. PTAs help to improve communication and build bridges of understanding between parents and teachers. In light of findings in the present study, when parents notice that peer victimization is taking place within the school, they can voice their concern through the PTA and ensure the school administration to take effective steps to curb the problems.

7. Problems of peer victimization are often contagious within a school and a whole-school approach to combating peer victimization can be more effective than the parents alone tackling the problem. A whole-school approach to combat peer victimization involves the efforts of all members of the school staff as well as the student body through establishing proper school policies, communication channels and decision making mechanisms. To initiate a whole-school approach to tackle peer victimization, a parent may present the problem to representatives of the school management board, discuss the depth of the problem with the school administration, and continuously monitor the progress of the issue.

8. Parents should be their children's advocates in education. Even when their children do not face adverse situations in the classroom, they should still involve themselves in setting school policies, and try to influence the school in matters relating to the deployment of teachers, teaching strategies and school discipline. This type of involvement can easily be interpreted as parents interfering with the autonomy of professional staff, so parents need to be careful not to advocate only for their own children but for the welfare and benefits of all children.

9. The best means of helping victims of bullying is by helping them develop resiliency, which is the capacity of children to overcome adversity to achieve good development outcomes (Smokowski, 1998). Children can be enabled to develop resiliency by experiencing a close relationship to caring parents; being connected to supportive extended family networks

or community network; parents using a parenting style that emphasizes warmth, structure and expectations; and being bonded to prosocial adults outside of the family.

There are, nevertheless, a number of limitations in the present study. First, this study has ignored the contribution of school contexts to student performance. The system of student allocation in Hong Kong secondary schools is operated in such a way that students of different academic ability are allocated to different schools. Because of this, it is conceivable that the patterns of learning motives and strategies in different secondary schools may be very different. Perhaps this is also the reason that the interaction effects in the present study account for only a small percentage of the total variances. Secondly, there is no achievement data to control for the effect of prior school achievement on students' achievement strategy. It is difficult to distinguish whether the achievement strategy is the result of family effects or classroom effects. Third, more family process variables, such as the actual amount of time parents spend on the care and education of their children and the frequency with which they perform such a role, can be added to the regression model which may shed more light on the relationship between family factors and student performance. Fourth, information about parental involvement in school was answered by parents. Yet, the items could be more valid if they were answered by the children. Finally, having considered only one classroom factor, namely peer victimization, as an effect contributed by the students, the present study neglects other classroom level factors, such as characteristics of the class master/mistress, student organization and grouping practices, that may have stronger explanatory power.

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家長參與、同輩欺凌及成就策略：當子女在學校成為欺凌對象時家長可以做什麼？

譚偉明

本研究由系統觀點出發，探討家庭因素與課堂因素的結合對學生的影響。研究的焦點是家長參與和同輩欺凌如何影響香港初中學生運用成就策略。本研究的資料來自問卷調查，對象是19所學校裡2,261位中一及中二學生，以及他們的家長。研究結果顯示，家長參與學校教育能在同輩欺凌與學生運用成就策略之間有著調整的角色。本研究對於香港家校合作關係、學校改革以建構更關愛的學與教環境，均具重要啟示。

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