

Impacts of School Bonding on Problem Behaviors: Ethnic differences

Carolyn Gentle-Genitty, PhD, cgentleg@iupui.edu
Jangmin Kim, PhD Student, kim795@umail.iu.edu

Isaac Karikari, PhD Student, isakarik@umail.iu.edu
Andricus Hutcherson, PhD
Student, hutchera@umail.iu.edu

Indiana University School of Social Work

Abstract

This study examined the different impacts of school bonding on problem behaviors between ethnic groups (minority students and white students). The study sample was a local Indiana Exemplar public school. A random number of fourth through eighth grade students (6-16 years of age) were asked to complete a survey. Teachers read to younger students to complete. Of the sample 48% were boys and 51% were girls. Of the six categories for ethnicity, 51% were white and 49% comprised the other ethnicity categories, accounting for a total of 192 students. The study specifically looked at the interaction effect of ethnicity on the relationship between school bonding (Attachment, Commitment, Involvement, and Belief) and misbehavior in school (delinquency). The variables were identified through a factor analysis from the copyrighted Gentle-Genitty Perception of School Social Bonding Instrument. The school bonding instrument is reliable and valid (Cronbach's Alpha .85).

The preliminary results show that...

- Involvement and belief are significantly associated with reduced misbehaviors in school.
- Minority students exhibit behavior that is perceived as delinquent more often than white students.
- Older students in higher-grade levels are more likely to exhibit negative behavior than younger students in lower grade levels.
- The impact of one of the social bonding variables (involvement-participation in activities) on problem behavior is significantly greater for minority students than white students, as seen in the graph below.

Interaction Model

