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A cross-cultural examination of personality factors associated with text bullying in  
13 - 14-year-old girls

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## ABSTRACT

This research set out to determine factors associated with text bullying. It examined the relationship between personality traits and the level of hostility expressed by students in reaction to sample text messages. One hundred and ninety eight girls aged 13 and 14 in Canada and New Zealand volunteered to complete a questionnaire consisting of four personality measures - the impulsivity subscale of the PRF-E, cynical distrust scale (revised), needs for power scale (revised), and the rejection sensitivity scale (adult, short). The survey also rated their proposed likely response to eight sample text messages that covered four themes and to two levels of intensity. Results using Pearson's  $r$  correlation of .01 demonstrated a significant relationship between hostility and impulsivity. There was no significant difference in either the results of the personality measures or their level of hostility between the results of the Canadian and New Zealand participants. How these findings contribute to the current theoretical knowledge of adolescent bullying and the practical application of these findings for schools are also discussed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to all children who are victims of bullying, and the children who need our help to manage their aggression and stop bullying.

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## FOREWORD

The idea for this research grew out of my experience as a high school teacher in Canada. I noticed in my work with teenagers that there was a significant difference between the ways physical aggression was displayed in female high school students compared to male high school students. This led to questions about how aggression in general was displayed amongst males and females. I also realised that there was a lack of academic research on aggression in females, and this meant that there were few resources to support girls to deal with their aggression. When individuals who are training to work with adolescents are taught how to handle aggression in teenagers, if they received any training at all they are frequently taught how to handle physical and verbal aggression only. No mention is ever made in the training of how to handle indirect aggression. My goal was to understand better the factors related to indirect aggression, in the hopes that methods could be found to support young women to reduce the incidence of indirect aggression.

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