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## **ABSTRACT**

Factors in bullying: Relationship between bullying, instability of self-image and level of self-esteem

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This study investigated the relationship between bullying, being bullied, instability of self-image and level of self-esteem in 148 junior high school students in Japan. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis indicated a significant effect on bullying behavior in students who have both an unstable self-image and experience with being bullied. Simple slope analysis revealed a higher rate of bullying in students who have had a high rate of being bullied and have an unstable self-image compared to those with a stable self-image. These results suggest that although an unstable self-image itself does not necessarily lead to bullying behavior, the experience of being bullied and an unstable self-image combined are related to students who are more likely to bully others. On the other hand, positive or negative self-esteem had no significant effect on bullying; the level of self-esteem may have plus or minus effects on aggression. Future studies are necessary to determine the relationships of self-esteem and other similar concepts with bullying behavior.

**Key Words:** bullying, instability of self-image, level of self-esteem

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