Abstract

Victimized students’ cognitive appraisals (perceived threat, control) are related to emotional reactions. Furthermore, psychosocial wellbeing is differentially associated with from of victimization (direct vs. indirect), suggesting that emotional reactions to direct and indirect victimization may also differ. The present study therefore evaluated appraisals and emotional reactions within the context of verbal, physical, and indirect victimization experiences, testing a mediational model which considers appraisals to mediate the effect of victimization upon emotional reaction. Participants were 146 students (44% male) aged 10-13 years attending mainstream schools in Scotland (UK). Self-report measures assessed peer-victimization (physical, verbal, indirect), appraisal (control, threat) and emotional reaction (anger, sadness). All forms of victimization were positively associated with both emotions. Threat appraisals were positively associated with all forms of victimization and control appraisals were negatively associated with physical victimization. The relationships between appraisals and emotions varied according to victimization type. The effects of victimization upon emotions were not mediated via appraisals. These results extend our understanding of the relationships between victimization and affect.