RICHTMANN
P U B L I S H I N G

Bullying and Academic Performance:
A Study of Selected Secondary Schools in Lagos, Nigeria

Victoria Agboola Oluwamumibori

Christiana Adetunde

George Tayo Ola

David Imhonopi

Matthew Egharevba

Ajibade Jegede

Mofoluwake Ajayi

Covenant University,
KM 10 Idiroko Rd, 112104,
Ota, Nigeria

Abstract

> *Bullying is inappropriate behaviour that children and adolescents face daily in schools all around the world. It is prevalent in today's schools and is commonly found in secondary schools. It is a complicated social problem that can have serious negative implications for both bullies and victims, especially when the victim is physically or psychologically harmed. Therefore, the study examines bullying and academic performance, in a study of selected secondary school students in Alimosho local government area, Lagos, Nigeria. A survey method was utilized using the structured questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. Utilizing a multi-stage random sampling, three hundred and fifty questionnaires were administered to students in the four secondary schools. Quantitative data were analyzed utilizing the descriptive statistics with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23. The analysis of the questionnaire was based on descriptive analysis with the use of frequency counts and percentages. The study's findings show a negative relationship between bullying and students' academic performance. Result also shows that addiction to alcohol and loss of concentration is the major effect of bullying on students' academic performance. This study recommends that teaching empathy and encouraging victims to make timely reports on the incidence of bullying are crucial to mitigating bullying and its consequences in secondary schools in Lagos state.*

Keywords: Bullying, academic performance, students, teaching empathy

1. Introduction

A school is a place where people in a country can get a formal education. At school, students learn useful information, skills, values, and ways to act that are important for living useful lives. Raab (2018) says that there are four reasons why people go to school: personal growth, social growth, social efficiency, and personal efficiency. She says that schooling helps each student reach his or her full potential by shaping how each student learns and grows. As for social possibility, she says that schooling shapes culture and social norms at both the micro and macro levels. As for social efficiency, she says that schooling keeps the social, economic, and political institutions that are already in place. Lastly, she says that the goal of individual efficiency is met when schooling makes it easier for people to navigate the education or social systems on their own.

Students get to know each other at school and work in groups, which helps them grow. Students won't grow morally, socially, intellectually, emotionally, or physically if they don't feel safe, happy, and secure at school. A study by Olabiyi in 2021, on the other hand, found that only a small number of students can get along with their classmates without getting into fights. In Nigerian schools, students' lives are in danger because of violence like bullying.

Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves using force or coercion to hurt someone else, especially when it happens over and over and there is a power difference (Owuamanam& Makinwa, 2015). Olweus (2013) says that bullying is a pattern of mean things done to a target over time, where there is a power difference (real or perceived) between the target and the bully or bullies. Bullying, according to (Hartley, Bauman, Nixon, & Davis, 2015), is when one or more people try to hurt or upset another person physically or mentally, usually without being asked to. As can be seen from the definitions, bullying behavior happens more than once or has the potential to happen more than once. Bullying is when someone is threatened, rumors are spread about them, they are hurt physically or verbally, or they are taken out of a group on purpose. Bullying happens when there is a difference in power between the bully and the victim, when the behavior happens more than once, and when it is not provoked.

Throughout the last few years, bullying in schools has grown into a major concern (Elgar et al. 2015; OECD 2017). Since the majority of bullying incidents occur during a student's normal school day, school bullying has been identified as a serious threat to educational output (Delprato, Akyeampong, and Dunne 2017). Furthermore, bullying can have a lasting influence on kids' long-term health and well-being (Carlisle, Rofes (2007); Woods and Wolke 2004). A review of the evidence about the link between bullying at school and academic performance shows that bullying at school affects academic performance in many ways. Nigeria Daily News (2017) says that bullying on campus has gotten a lot of attention at a time when policymakers are trying to change the educational system to help each student learn better (OECD 2016).

At the student and school levels, students' academic performance may be negatively impacted by bullying victimization (Mundy, Canterford, Kosola, Degenhardt, Allen, Patton (2017) and the bullying atmosphere (Konishi& Liz 2010). Massive attempts have been made to remove or reduce school bullying's impact on kids' learning, but little empirical research has been done to understand the mechanisms that underlie this association. School bullying has been demonstrated to harm students' sense of belonging to the school community (Zerillo & Osterman, 2011; Waasdorp, O'Brennan, and Bradshaw. 2011). In turn, this could lead to a decrease in academic performance (Furrer and Skinner 2003). Bullying has long-term and short-term effects on both the bullied and the bullied's friends and family (Aleem, 2016). Students who are bullied or victimized by their peers are more likely to have poor academic performance (Holt, Finkelhor, & Kantor, 2015). According to Espelage, Low, Rao, Hong, & Little, (2014), peer victimization, bullying, and school harassment have all led to a drop in classroom activities and school involvement, which hurts students' academic performance.

Bullying is common in secondary schools today, and it's hard to find one that doesn't have it. (Tambawa& Rukyaatt 2017). The Journal of the American Association found that about 30% of more

than 15,000 public school students in the United States said they were bullies, targets, or both regularly. (Nanse&Ruan,2015). The British School Health Education unit found that 25% of 10–11-year-olds in the UK were bullied every day or "often." Another report says that 15% of Australian children say they are bullied once a week. (Nansel, Ruan, Morton& Scheidt, 2015). Nigerian secondary schools may not be any different if the proper statistics are taken into consideration. The authors (Tambawal and Rukyyat, 2017) cited in this article These percentages may be higher or lower, depending on the scope of the problem and the general public's perception of it. If we consider nicknaming children and banning them from games to be bullying, we observe a 100% increase in the percentages we are seeing. As of 2017, (Tambawal and Rukyyat) Every third student was bullied in 2019, with 205 victims in grades 9-12 and 70% of high school students witnessed bullying (US Department of Health and Human Services, (D HS),2020).

According to national trends from the youth risk behavior survey (YRBS) for the same year, 20 percent of bullied kids were absent from school at least once a month before the interview, which equates to more than 600,000 high school students (41 percent of all high school students) based on the 15.2 million student enrollments (De brey, Synder, Zhang, Dillow,2021). Smaller studies reveal that as many as 18.5 percent of students between the ages of 12 and 17 skipped school in 2015 because of bullying (Hindjus& pathin,2016). Bullying is still a concern in high schools, and it can hurt student's academic performance if they frequently miss classes. However, if they do attend school, their major focus may be on their safety rather than their academic achievement (GPA), which may have an adverse effect on short-term and long-term outcomes such as their ability to complete high school.

Bullying in schools is not a new phenomenon in the United States, but its prevalence has only recently made it a public health concern (Gladden, 2014). Nearly 20 percent of high school students were bullied during the school day, and an equal amount of those students were bullied online (CDC, 2016). Bullying victimization in schools is a direct cause of pupils' escapism and avoidance of school (Astor, Benbenishty, Zeira, & Vinokur, 2012). Some harassed students would do anything to avoid attending class, such as lying about being sick or missing altogether, in order to escape further harassment (Neang, 2022). Victimization by bullies in schools costs schools tens of thousands of dollars every year. California loses an estimated $276 million per year due to pupils who skip school because they are terrified, according to Baams, Talmage and Russell (2017). Due to bullying victimization, students' academic performance suffers as a result of high levels of absenteeism (2020). Accomplishment in school is an important factor in a student's life because it is seen as an important predictor of future success and determines the career route they choose (Raza, Qazi, & Yousufi, 2020).

In spite of reported instances of bullying in many Nigerian schools, this aberrant behavior does not always receive the attention it deserves. Furthermore, there is currently no data on the number of students who have been bullied or victimized in Nigerian schools, making it difficult to estimate the rate of bullying incidents in Nigerian schools. (Aluede & Fajoju, 2011). Bullying in Nigerian schools has been documented to be a problem, but the research of some secondary school students in Benin City found that nearly four out of every five participants (78 percent) reported being bullied and 85 percent admitted to bullying others at least once. (Nwafor, Ibeagha, Anazonwu, & Obi-Nwosu, 2020). Among secondary school students in Osun, Fenny, & Falola, (2020) noticed physical, social, verbal, and property attacks. Physical and psychological violence accounted for 85% and 50% of all violence against children in schools, according to a 2007 situational analysis conducted by the Federal Ministry of Education in Nigeria. (UNICEF,2007) In all school sites, physical aggressiveness was more prevalent in rural areas (90 percent) than in urban areas (80 percent). Physical violence in schools is more prevalent in the southern Nigerian region than in the northern Nigerian region (90 percent) (79 percent). More than 60 percent of Nigerians have experienced psychological violence, but just 38.7 percent have experienced it in Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, in Nigerian schools, males and females are roughly equal in terms of physical and psychological violence. (Elizabeth & Mary, 2015)

There is a strong correlation between bullying and academic success, and it can raise the

expense of schooling. (Nikolaou,2022) Students who have been bullied at school may be reluctant to return because of the heightened risk of re-victimization. Bullied children may spend more time improving their health rather than focusing on their education because bullying is both physical and psychological. This may have a negative impact on their ability to acquire academic abilities. Even though bullying in Nigerian secondary schools has been well-documented (e.g. in Nwafor et al. (2007), Fenny et al. (2020), Aluede (2011)), and the Federal Ministry of Education (2007) there are few empirical studies in Nigeria on the relationship between bullying in secondary schools and academic performance. Therefore, this research attempts to examine the bullying and academic performance, a study of selected secondary school students in Lagos, Nigeria

1.1 Research Question

What is the relationship between bullying and academic performance?

Aim and objective of the study

1. Examine the relationship between bullying and academic performance of secondary school student

1.2 Research Methodology

The survey techniques were utilized in gathering data from the field with the use of a questionnaire to help the researcher test for bullying and academic performance among selected secondary schools in command secondary school, Elias secondary school, Good shepherd secondary school, and Ikotun high school. This method involves the collection of data, through the use of a structured questionnaire. The objective populace for the examination were the students at the selected secondary schools which in the long run helped to estimate the sample size. Quantitative data was analysed utilizing descriptive statistics with the aid of the statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 23. The total number from the selected secondary school was 6,490

2. Results

This section presents the distribution based on the characteristics of the respondents of the study, which include gender, age, class, religion, parents' marital status, parents' income level, and weight are presented in this section.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents		
Variable	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Male	162	49.1
Female	167	50.6
No Response	1	.3
Total	330	100.0
Number Of Siblings		
1-2	92	27.9
3-4	131	39.7
5-6	52	15.8
7-8	18	5.5
8 And above	13	3.9
No Response	24	7.3
Total	330	100.0
Age Of Respondent		
10-13 Years	128	38.8
14-16years	157	47.6

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents		
Variable	Frequency	Percent
17-19years	36	10.9
20 And above	3	.9
No Response	6	1.8
Class In School		
Jss1	76	23.0
Jss2	83	25.2
Jss3	53	16.1
Sss1	41	12.4
Sss2	53	16.1
Sss3	24	7.3
Religion		
Christianity	224	67.9
Muslim	101	30.6
Others	2	.6
No Response	3	.9
Parents Marital Status		
Single	61	18.5
Married	234	70.9
Separated	16	4.8
Divorced	2	.6
Widowed	10	3.0
No Response	7	2.1
Parents Income		
N11,000	66	20.0
N11,000-N30,000	73	22.1
N31,000-60,000	50	15.2
N61,000-90,000	34	10.3
N91,000 and above	74	22.4
No Response	33	10.0

Source: Field Survey,2021

The table above shows the frequency distribution for the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. About half (50.6%) of the population of this survey were female while the remaining were male and only 1(0.3%) respondent did not answer the question. Apart from 7.3% who did not respond to the number of siblings they had. 40% of the respondents have between 3 and 4 siblings and 27.9% have 1 to 2 siblings only less than 4% of respondents had more than 8 siblings. A tenth of the respondents were between the ages of 17-19 years while most (39.7%) were between the ages of 14—16 years old. Out of the total respondents, 23.05 were from JSS1 class, 25.25 are from Jss2 class, 16.1% of the respondents are in Jss3,12.4% are in Ss1, 16.1% of the respondents are in Ss2, while 7.3% of the respondents are in Ss3. Most (70.9%) of the respondent's parents were married, while 18.5% were from a single parenting household. About $2/3^{rd}$ of all respondents were Christians, while 30.6% reported being Muslim. Majority of the respondents' parents earned between N91,000 and above, while 20.0% earn N11,000, 22.1% of the respondent's parent earn 11,000-30,00, 15.2% earn N31,000-N60,000, 10.3% earn N61,000-N90,000 and 10.0% did not give their response.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between bullying and academic performance

Table 2: Regression Summary showing the relationship Bullying has on students' academic performance

Correlation Value	R Square	Adjusted R	Std. Error of Estimate	Durbin-Watson
-0.022	0.000	-0.083	0.33254	1.712

Table no.2 presents the result of the relationship Bullying has on students' academic performance. It

shows a correlation coefficient of -0.022, the implication of which is there is a negative relationship between Bullying and Students' Academic Performance (p=0.942[b], p<0.05). To examine whether there is a presence of autocorrelation, the Durbin-Watson test was used, which yielded a Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.712. Since the result of 1.712 was obtained, which is greater than 1 and less than 3, this means that there is no evidence of autocorrelation.

3. Discussion of Findings

The study examined t bullying and academic performance a study of selected secondary school students in Alimosho local government area, Lagos State. The study was guided by two research questions and objectives. Survey method of quantitative research was employed. Data that was gathered was analysed using simple percentage and correlation.

In discussing the research question which was on bullying and academic performance among secondary schools".The finding from the study also shows that there is a negative relationship between bullying and the academic performance of students in the selected secondary schools in Alimosho local government area, Lagos, Nigeria. This is in line with the study conducted by Konishi, Hymel, Zumbo, & Li, Z (2010) in Canada that there is a negative relationship between bullying and students' academic performance.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the findings, bullying negatively affects the academic performance of students in the selected secondary schools. Students identify the types of bullying that occurs in school. This includes being punished by seniors, beaten, pushed, slapped, stigmatized, mocked, gossiped, made fun of, and threatened for one reason they are unaware of. This study recommends that encouraging victims to make timely reports on the incidence of bullying are crucial to mitigating bullying and its consequence in school in Lagos State.

5. Acknowledgment

References

Adeyeye, B., Ojih, S. E., Bello, D., Adesina, E., Yartey, D., Ben-Enukora, C., & Adeyeye, Q. (2022). Online learning platforms and Covenant university students' academic performance in practical related courses during covid-19 pandemic. *Sustainability*, *14*(2), 878.

Aluede, O., & Fajoju, S. A. (2011). Bullying behaviour among secondary school students in the Benin Metropolis of Nigeria. *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research*, *23*(2), 102–119.

AZEEZ, N. A., Misra, S., LAWAL, O. I., & Oluranti, J. (2021). Identification and Detection of Cyberbullying on Facebook Using Machine Learning Algorithms. *Journal of Cases on Information Technology (JCIT)*, *23*(4), 1–21.

Baams, L., Talmage, C. A., & Russell, S. T. (2017). *An economic analysis of bias-based bullying and school absenteeism*. Society for Research on Child Development (SRCD) 2017.

Berger, C., Brotfeld, C., & Espelage, D. L. (2021). Extracurricular activities and peer relational victimization: Role of gender and school social norms. *Journal of School Violence*, *20*(4), 611–626.

Berkowitz, R., & Benbenishty, R. (2012). Perceptions of teachers' support, safety, and absence from school because of fear among victims, bullies, and bully-victims. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *82*(1), 67.

Delprato, M., Akyeampong, K., & Dunne, M. (2017). The impact of bullying on students' learning in Latin America: A matching approach for 15 countries. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *52*, 37–57.

Elgar, F. J., McKinnon, B., Walsh, S. D., Freeman, J., Donnelly, P. D., de Matos, M. G., Gariepy, G., Aleman-Diaz, A. Y., Pickett, W., & Molcho, M. (2015). Structural determinants of youth bullying and fighting in 79 countries. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *57*(6), 643–650.

Espelage, D. L., Low, S., Rao, M. A., Hong, J. S., & Little, T. D. (2014). Family violence, bullying, fighting, and substance use among adolescents: A longitudinal mediational model. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *24*(2), 337–349.

Fanti, K. A., & Georgiou, S. N. (2013). Bullying, victimization, school performance, and mother-child relationship quality: Direct and transactional associations. *Journal of Criminology*, *2013*.

Fenny, O., & Falola, M. I. (2020). Prevalence and correlates of bullying behavior among Nigerian middle school students. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, *64*(5), 564–585.

Gladden, R. M., Vivolo-Kantor, A. M., Hamburger, M. E., & Lumpkin, C. D. (2014). *Bullying surveillance among youths: Uniform definitions for public health and recommended data elements, version 1.0*.

Holt, M. K. (2015). Suicidal risk as a function of bullying and other victimization exposures. *Youth Suicide and Bullying: Challenges and Strategies for Prevention and Intervention*, 31–38.

Konishi, C., Hymel, S., Zumbo, B. D., & Li, Z. (2010). Do school bullying and student—Teacher relationships matter for academic achievement? A multilevel analysis. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*

Maliki, A. E., Asagwara, C., & Ibu, J. E. (2009). Bullying problems among school children. *Journal of Human Ecology*, *25*(3), 209–213.

Mbah, R. M. (2020). *The perception of students about school bullying and how it affects academic performance in Cameroon*.

Mundy, L. K., Canterford, L., Kosola, S., Degenhardt, L., Allen, N. B., & Patton, G. C. (2017). Peer victimization and academic performance in primary school children. *Academic Pediatrics*, *17*(8), 830–836.

Neang, P. M. (2022). SCHOOL BULLYING: CAUSES, EFFECTS, AND SOLUTIONS. *CRITICAL ISSUES IN CAMBODIAN EDUCATION*, 71.

Nwafor, C. E., Ibeagha, P. N., Anazonwu, C. O., & Obi-Nwosu, H. (2020). Do callous-unemotional traits mediate the effect of family competence on bullying? *South African Journal of Psychology*, *50*(2), 239–249.

Olabiyi, O. (2021). Impact of Bullying on Psychosocial Adjustment of School-Aged Children in Nigeria. *ELECTRONIC JOURNAL OF SOCIAL AND STRATEGIC STUDIES*, *2*, 229–241.

Owuamanam, D. O., & Makinwa, V. I. (2015). Prevalence of bullying among secondary school students in Ondo state, Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*, *11*(20).

Owusu, B. (2020). *Exploring the Views of Students and School Management on Bullying in Ghanaian Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis*.

Raza, S. A., Qazi, W., & Yousufi, S. Q. (2020). The influence of psychological, motivational, and behavioral factors on university students' achievements: The mediating effect of academic adjustment. *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*.

Rigby, K. (2012). What schools may do to reduce bullying. In *Handbook of school violence and school safety* (pp. 397–408). Routledge.

Rose, C. A., Monda-Amaya, L. E., & Espelage, D. L. (2011). Bullying perpetration and victimization in special education: A review of the literature. *Remedial and Special Education*, *32*(2), 114–130.

Tambawal, M. U., & Rukayya, M. (2017). *Bullying and its effects on academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria: Implications for counselling*

Torres, C. E., D'Alessio, S. J., & Stolzenberg, L. (2020). The effect of social, verbal, physical, and cyberbullying victimization on academic performance. *Victims & Offenders*, *15*(1), 1–21.

Waasdorp, T. E., Pas, E. T., O'Brennan, L. M., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2011). A multilevel perspective on the climate of bullying: Discrepancies among students, school staff, and parents. *Journal of School Violence*, *10*(2), 115–132.

Zerillo, C., & Osterman, K. F. (2011). Teacher perceptions of teacher bullying. *Improving Schools*, *14*(3), 239–257.