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**BULLYING AND ITS EFFECTS ON EMOTIONS AND  
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF JUNIOR SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS STUDENTS IN IJEBU-ODE, OGUN STATE**

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**Abstract**

*This study investigated bullying and its effects on emotions and academic performance of Junior Secondary School students in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State. A simple random technique was used to select five secondary schools for the study, and purposive sampling technique was used to select 40 secondary school students from each of the five secondary schools used as sample. The instrument used in gathering data from respondents was 4 point Likert scale close-ended questionnaire titled "Bullying and its Effect on Emotions and Academic Performance of Students" (BEEAPS) with reliability of 0.76. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the four research questions raised. However, findings revealed that bullying led to depression which may affect a child academically; bullying led to fear which also led to lack of concentration; bullying has a very serious negative effect on students' academic performance and on social, emotional and psychological lives of members of the school communities both within and outside. Based on the findings, it was recommended*

*among others that, secondary schools should develop code of conduct that will encourage students to exhibit appropriate behaviours at all times, adequate and appropriate disciplinary measures should be taken against perpetrators of bullying and justice must be secured for victims.*

**Keywords:** Bullying, Emotional effect, Academic performance, Junior secondary school students.

## **Introduction**

Bullying has been observed as the most common form of violence in schools. Bullying is redundant, monotonous, and destructive, power based behavior of students. There are multiple forms of bullying such as name calling, hitting or threatening others and spreading false rumours (Jan, 2015). Bullying is defined as the dynamic interaction between the aggressor and the victim at which the power of the perpetrators increases while the power of the victims diminishes (Mbah, 2020). In his own words, Mickie, (2017) defines bullying as a pattern of behaviour in which one individual is chosen as the target of repeated aggression by one or others; the target person (the victim) generally has less power than those who engage in aggression (bullies). Bulling is the intentional, unprovoked abuse of power by one or more children to inflict pain or cause distress to another child on repeated occasions. Jan (2015) states further that bullying is primarily the use of abuse, blackmail, force or aggressively foreboding someone by others to harm other individuals mentally, physically or emotionally (Jan, 2015).

Furthermore, Abdulsalam, Aldaihani, and Francis (2017) describe bullying as a subcategory of inter-personal aggression characterized by intentionality, repetition, and an imbalance of power with abuse of power being the primary distinction between bullying and other forms of aggression. Garandeau, Yanagida, Vermande, Strohmeier, and Salmivalli (2019) opine that bullying is the act of intentionally harming someone, verbally, psychologically, or physically. It could be a threat or physical use of force aiming at an individual, another person, or a specific group, which can result

in injury, death, physical damage, and or mental disorder. In agreement with Garandeanu *et al* (2019), Tidy (2021) states that bullying is a repeated behaviour intended to hurt somebody either emotionally or physically, and this may be by using spoken words, physical violence, emotions, or the internet. It is worthy to note that it is bullying when a student is teased repeatedly in a way he or she does not like, but it is not a bullying when two students about the same strength quarrel or fight (Abdulsalam *et al*, 2017).

Adewoye and Plessis (2021) opine that school bullying is a widespread issue that affects school students in many parts of their lives psychologically; emotionally and educationally. This act goes on in many schools unnoticed. Vasanthakumani, Singh, Almashagbeh, Kumar and Ramesh (2022) observe that almost all public and private schools have some type of bullying, and the study found that bullying has a poor influence on students' academic achievement, both for those who have been bullied and for those who have bullied others. Al-Raqqad, Al-Bourini, Al Talahin, and Aranki, (2017) observe that bullying at school affects academic achievement since bullied children feel fear and weak and in the same time, it affects students' personality traits and self-confidence. Therefore such situation makes bullied students unable to follow or to pay attention for their study well and even they might do not like to go to school. Moreover they miss opportunities to participate with their colloquies or even enjoy school activities. It causes unhappiness and harm to physical and mental health, both at the time and sometimes into the future of the person being bullied (Tidy, 2021). As noted by Al-Raqqad *et al* (2017), various studies revealed that bullying makes schools to be unsafe places for schools' students and it contributes in the belief that some schools are become not safe anymore.

Panillo (2002) highlights some causes of bulling among school children to include low self-esteem, environmental factor, lack of compassion and empathy, societal factor, craving for attention, peer group and dysfunctional family. It is worth noting that bullying usually takes several forms, from direct physical harm (physical bullying) to verbal taunts and threats (verbal bullying); to exclusion, humiliation, and rumor-spreading (relational or social bullying);

to electronic harassment using text, emails, or online medium (cyber bullying) Cyber bullying is bullying through electronic means, such as phones, tablets and computers (Tidy, 2021). According to National Association of School Psychologists (2017), social networking and text sending is considered smajor form of bullying. Jan (2015) also confirm that hitting, direct and indirect aggression in the form of verbal abuse, gestures threats, and destruction of property are considered as major forms of bullying. More so, Smith and Shu, (2000) added rumors, exclusion from play, name calling, and putting down, as major forms of verbal bullying. Thus, bullying creates a barrier to learning with negative outcomes on part of both students and institutions. Students may be burlier and sometimes act as bully according to the situations.

Emotional bullying is viewed as harm that occurs through exploitation of connection (Adewoye & Plessis, 2021). According to Adewoye and Plessis (2021) emotional bullying includes spreading malicious rumors about people, harassment, provocation, whispering to another in front of someone, getting certain people to gang up on others, which could affect academic performance among students. It has also been observed that academic performance of students is proportionally affected when bullying takes place. Jan (2015) reported that students who were bullied showed lower academic performance than the non-bullied ones. Jan (2015) went further to claim that studies show that bullying affects the bullied persons as they do not concentrate in class and they also feel afraid to attend classes. Bullying among students not only decreases their academic performance but also causes mental health problems and physical injury (Jan, 2015).

From the foregoing background, it is evident that bullying behaviour among students in junior secondary schools can influence emotions and academic performance of students, and these calls for investigations. Unfortunately, it seems that not much empirical studies exist on factors responsible for bullying and its effects on emotion and academic performance of students in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State of Nigeria. It is on this bedrock that the conduct of this study becomes imperative.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general purpose of the study is to investigate factors responsible for bullying and its effects on emotions and academic performance of junior secondary school students in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- i. find out the causes of bullying among junior secondary school students in Ijebu Ode Local Government, Ogun State;
- ii. examine the forms of bullying among junior secondary school students in Ijebu Ode Local Government, Ogun State;
- iii. examine the impact of bullying on emotions of junior secondary school students in Ijebu Ode Local Government Ogun State; and
- iv. assess the impact of bullying on academic performance of junior secondary school students in Ijebu Ode Local Government Ogun State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What are the causes of bullying among Junior Secondary School students in Ijebu Ode Local Government Ogun State?
- ii. What are the forms of bullying among Junior Secondary School students in Ijebu Ode Local Government Ogun State?
- iii. What are the impacts of bullying on emotions of Junior Secondary School students in Ijebu Ode Local Government Ogun State?
- iv. What are the impacts of bullying on academic performance Junior Secondary School students in Ijebu Ode Local Government Ogun State?

### **Methods**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was all Junior Secondary Schools' Students in Ijebu Ode Local Government area of Ogun State. A simple random technique was used to select five secondary schools in Ijebu Ode for the study, and purposive sampling technique was used to select forty

secondary school students from each of the five secondary schools used as samples. The instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled: “Bullying and its Effect on Emotions and Academic Performance of Students” (BEEAPS); and it was divided into two parts. Section A dealt with the demographic data of the respondents which included class, age, sex. While section B included items that explored the factors responsible for bullying and the effects of bullying on emotions and academic performance of Junior Secondary School students in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State. In order to ensure the validity of the research instrument for data collection, it was subjected to face and content validity with the assistance of some Social Studies experts. The reliability of this research instruments was ascertained using test and retest method in which 20 copies of the questionnaires were administered to a set of respondents outside the targeted population and was analysed using Crobach Alpha, and it gave a result of 0.76 reliability level.

## **Results**

**Research Question 1:** What are the causes of bullying among Junior Secondary School students?

**Table 1: Mean Scores of respondents on the causes of bullying among junior secondary students**

S/N	Items	$\frac{N}{X_1} = 80$	Deci- sion	$\frac{N}{X_2} = 120$	Deci- sion	Average $\frac{X_1 + X_2}{2}$
1	Being from a broken home	3.27	Agree	2.50	Agree	2.89
2	Feeling stronger than others	3.03	Agree	2.70	Agree	2.87
3	Feeling older than others	3.60	Agree	2.50	Agree	2.95
4	Being from a well to do families	2.78	Agree	2.69	Agree	2.74
5	Teachers poor classroom management	3.01	Agree	2.74	Agree	2.88
6	Being a regular orphan	2.54	Agree	3.12	Agree	2.83
7	Enduring parenthood	3.03	Agree	3.47	Agree	3.25
8	Anger	2.48	Agree	3.11	Agree	2.80
9	Feeling of being intimidated	3.45	Agree	2.98	Agree	3.22
10	Intolerance	2.76	Agree	3.00	Agree	2.88
11	Non satisfaction	3.27	Agree	3.85	Agree	3.56

In Table 1, all the items had an average mean rating above 2.50 indicating that the respondents agreed that all the factors mentioned in the table which are: broken home (2.89), stronger than others (2.87), older than others (2.95), from well to do families (2.74), poor classroom management by teachers (2.88) being an orphan (2.83), enduring parenthood (3.25), anger (2.8), feeling of being intimidated (3.22), intolerance (2.88) and feeling of in-satisfaction (3.56) are all causes of bullying among Junior Secondary School students.

**Research Question 2:** What are the forms of bullying among Junior Secondary School students?

**Table 2: Mean Scores of forms of bullying among junior secondary school students**

S/N	Items	$\frac{N}{X_1} = 80$	Deci- sion	$\frac{N}{X_2} = 120$	Deci- sion	Average $\frac{X_1 + X_2}{2}$
1	Physical bullying such as hitting, kicking, spitting etc	3.54	Agree	3.51	Agree	3.53
2	Verbal bullying such as taunting, malicious teasing, name calling	3.18	Agree	3.73	Agree	3.46
3	Emotional bullying such as spreading rumours, manipulating social relationship and intimidation	3.27	Agree	3.85	Agree	3.56
4.	Sexual bullying like unwelcome touching and kissing, seducing girls by male counterpart	3.63	Agree	3.70	Agree	3.67
5.	Cyber bullying such as posting embarrassing pictures through phones and sending unwanted emails.	3.91	Agree	3.56	Agree	3.74

In Table 2, all the items had an average mean rating above 2.50 indicating that the respondents agreed that physical bullying (3.53) such as hitting, kicking and spitting; verbal bullying (3.46) such as taunting, malicious teasing, name calling; emotional bullying (3.56) such as spreading rumours, manipulating social relationship and intimidation; sexual bullying (3.67) such as unwelcome touching and kissing, seducing girls by male counterpart; cyber bullying (3.74) posting embarrassing pictures through phones and sending unwanted emails are all forms of bullying that are very common among Junior Secondary School students.

**Research Question 3:** What are the impacts of bullying on Junior Secondary School students' emotions?

**Table 3: Mean Scores of respondents on the impacts of bullying on junior secondary school students' emotions**

S/N	Items	$\frac{N}{X_1} = 80$	Deci- sion	$\frac{N}{X_2} = 120$	Deci- sion	Average $X_1 \& X_2$
1.	Bullying leads to lack of concentration.	3.15	Agree	2.55	Agree	2.85
2.	Victim of bullying may not have settled mind, hence lack concentration in class.	2.38	Agree	3.60	Agree	2.99
3.	Intimidating a student in class could affect his sense of belonging as well as ability to learn	4.00	Agree	3.77	Agree	3.89
4.	Making a scene to embarrass a student in school can affect his state of mind and will always show fear	3.26	Agree	2.98	Agree	3.12
5.	Students that have been bullied are nervous and feel intimidated and later depressed	2.48	Agree	3.11	Agree	2.80

In Table 3, all the items had an average mean rating above 2.50 indicating that the respondents agreed that bullying affects the emotions of the victims (2.85). Bullying may not let the minds of the victims settled (2.99); bullying affect the sense of belonging of the victims (3.89); bulling affects state of mind and create fear in the victims; and lastly, bullying makes victims nervous and depressed and (2.80).

**Research Question 4**

What are the impacts of bullying on JSS student academic performance?

**Table 4: Mean Scores of respondents on the impact of bullying on JSS student academic performance**

S/N	Items	$\frac{N}{X_i} = 80$	Deci- sion	$\frac{N}{X_2} = 120$	Deci- sion	Average $X_1 \& X_2$
1.	Bullying leads into isolation which may discourage students from coming to school	2.76	Agree	3.00	Agree	2.88
2.	Bullying leads into truancy	3.89	Agree	3.77	Agree	3.89
3.	Bullying leads into depression which may affect a child academically	3.07	Agree	2.84	Agree	2.96
4.	Bullying leads into learning disorder	3.25	Agree	2.88	Agree	3.02
5.	Bullying leads into dropout	3.10	Agree	2.53	Agree	2.84
6.	Bullying leads into physical damage in learning equipment	2.36	Agree	3.57	Agree	2.89
7.	Bullying may lead to physical which may hinder the students from coming to school	3.43	Agree	2.96	Agree	3.20
8.	Bullying leads to fear which also lead to lack of concentration	2.66	Agree	3.00	Agree	2.86
9.	Bullying may lack of concentration in class	3.06	Agree	2.85	Agree	2.96

In Table 4, the items had average mean rating above 2.50 indicating that the respondents agreed that bullying had negative effects on victims' academic performance.

## **Discussions**

The study found out that being from a broken home, feeling of being intimidated, being a regular orphan and teachers poor classroom management anger, intolerance are the causes of bullying among junior secondary school students. These findings are in line with the view of Panillo (2020), who highlighted low self-esteem, environmental factor, lack of compassion and empathy, societal factor, craving for attention, peer group and dysfunctional family as causes of bullying among students.

The study also found that physical, verbal, emotional, and sexual and cyber bullying are forms of bullying among junior secondary school students. This is in line with Tidy (2021), Smith and Shu (2000) and Jan (2015) who state that physical assault, making threat, teasing, name calling, cyber bullying, social networking and text sending, hitting, direct and indirect aggression in the form of verbal abuse, gestures threats, damage of property and so on are different forms of bullying among secondary school students.

The findings also revealed that bullying has effects on emotions and academic performances of the bullied students. This result is also in line with the submission of Adewoye and Plesis (2021) and Abdulsalam et.al (2017) which state that students who are bullied can experience negative physical and mental health issues. They are more likely to experience depression and anxiety, increased feelings of sadness and loneliness, changes in sleep and eating patterns, and loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy.

The study also found that bullying leads to truancy, depression, learning disorder, dropout lack of confidence and concentration in class, which all have effect on students' academic performance. In agreement with this finding Revathy (2018) observed that academic performance of students is proportionally affected when bullying takes place. More so, Skrzypiec (2008) as cited by Jan (2015) support this submission by affirming that students who have been seriously bullied always have difficulties in concentrating and paying attention in class because of bullying and its fear.

### **Conclusion**

Bulling is a bad behaviour among the Junior Secondary School students in recent times which need urgent attention. Bullying occurs among these students through passing foul statements on others, harassment, tormenting others, passing derogatory statements, ganging up against another, spreading malicious rumors, isolating members from groups, provoking others, damaging other reputations, playing school pranks, teasing others. The worst among others is cyber bullying. Bullying has dangerous effects on the victims, especially, on their emotions and academic performance. The effects on the victims may also extend outside the school premises, hence, the need for serious its attention to stop its spread.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the findings of the study, it was recommended that secondary school administrators should develop code of conduct that encourage students to exhibit appropriate behaviours at all times. School administrators should see to it that adequate and appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken against perpetrators of bullying and justice must be secured for the bullied (victims). Moreso, school counselors should be encouraged to intensify efforts in counseling sessions with students in schools, especially the bullied so as to boost their self-confidence and self-esteem in and outside schools. The bullies among the students also need counseling in order to have a positive change in their attitudes and to cease permanently from the vice. Schools administrators should always organize seminars for both teaching and non-teaching members of staff on how to handle and encourage different types of students so as to have peaceful and friendly school environments. Bullies must not be condemned by teachers or non-teaching staff, but they are to be reprimanded constructively. Conclusively, school management should always organize symposium for students on bullying and its effects on students, school and society; and all other important and acceptable virtues with the benefits associated with them should always be discussed with the students.

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