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**PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING
BULLYING AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN
OGBOMOSO NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

**AN ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF
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ABSTRACT

Bullying is a menace. It is a concern all over the world. Not many research projects on bullying have been conducted in Nigeria even though the newspapers abound with cases of bullying. Such a matter that keeps educators, psychologists and stakeholders in the educational system busy seeking solutions is worth researching into.

This research was carried out to investigate psychological, social and economic factors influencing bullying among adolescent senior secondary school students in Ogbomoso North Local Government Area in Oyo State. The sample used for the study consists of 400 respondents from four senior secondary schools (198 male and 182 female) in the Ogbomoso North Local Government Area. Data was collected using a self developed questionnaire with two sections. The sections raised questions on personal data relating to economic, social and psychosocial issues (among others) for the respondents to answer. The data collected was analyzed using t-tests statistical method tested at 0.05 level of significance.

It was discovered that even though sex and economic factors are among causative factors of bullying, they were not found to be significant among the sample. Both male and female bullies had about the same reasons for bullying. Adolescents from well-to-do and not-so-well-to-do families had similar reasons for bullying.

However, the psychosocial family background of respondents was significant with regard to causes for bullying. Psychological and social exposure to bullying aided tendencies to bully and were significant factors in causes of bullying. Adolescents from polygamous homes tend to bully more than those from a monogamous background.

CONCLUSIONS

Research work on bullying among adolescents is a universal phenomenon. The findings of the present study are significant not only because they predict the bullying of adolescents, but also because they contribute to existing knowledge on bullying, and of course reduce the dearth of literature on the subject in this part of the world. The present study did not set out specifically to match the extent of bullying against schools' strategies but some pointers can perhaps be given as to how schools must proceed. It has also been found that schools which have taken action, have been successful in reducing the level of bullying and that the single most effective thing that any school can do is to develop a policy to which everybody is committed. One way of getting commitment is to work with adolescents, psychologists, teachers and others to reduce the extent of bullying. This raises awareness and signals the school's intention to do something about it.

The victims of bullying need the support of their families, teachers, counselors and friends to listen and to help but any advice given must be appropriate. It is not realistic to expect an adolescent to ignore taunting, and so on. Telling a bullied person (victim) to hit back seldom works. The victim rather should speak out. Parents and guardians should instill warmth and get involved with their children. The administration of the school also needs to have adequate adult supervision over students so as to provide proper discipline among adolescents in their school.

The Government and religious associations could embark on massive campaigns to assist and educate parents on the way of improving child rearing so as to reduce home background influence on bullying. Bullying as has been pointed out in many sections of the work is inimical to a healthy teaching learning situation. Efforts should therefore be made by the Ministry of Education to ensure peace in school.

Each school should explore the establishment of adequate counseling and be equipped with qualified personnel to handle any case relating to misbehavior. Doing this would promote a healthy interpersonal relationship among adolescents in school and thereby make learning thrive well.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Implications of the present study essentially hinge on the fact that there is serious need to address the issue of bullying among adolescents with particular reference to the identifies variable. Although several strategies have been used all over the world to reduce the problem of bullying, the findings in the present study are still significant. They provide baseline data which will open one to verification and which can stimulate further research into wide area of interpersonal relationship who regards to violence among adolescents.

The messages that teachers and other significant adults in the society convey to adolescents appear to have an important impact on their behaviour. Adults need to be mindful of the messages they are passing across through the use of violence in their everyday interactions with family and community members. One of the significances of belief supportive of violence and confidence in using non violent strategies on future bullying behavior suggests a role for teaching pro social skills and providing students the opportunity to use those behaviour. However, teaching social skills alone may not be effective in reducing bullying. Research is needed to explore whether teaching pro-social skills alone or in combination with other prevention strategies such as changing the school environment or providing training and support to parents may lower rates of bullying behavior.