# Assessment of Parents Perception on Secondary School Child Bully in Bauchi State-Nigeria: Implication for School Curriculum

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**Abstract** – Determining in percentages the parent perception on how often a secondary school child is bullied; the most frequent type of bully a secondary school child experience were among the objectives of the study. A survey design was used for the study. The population of the study consists of parents of both Junior Secondary (JS) and Senior Secondary (SS) Schools from the 20 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Bauchi State. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select five LGAs and 200(10 from each school) parents whose children were attending public secondary schools. Adaptation of Dore, (2016) questionnaire on Bullying was made and used for data collection. A Cronbach's Alpha 0.84 was established for the stability of the items. The data were analyzed using frequency count, percentages and bar charts. The frequency at which a secondary school child is bully is low ( Frequency percentage Never= 53%); the most frequent type of bully a secondary school child experience is threatened by force to do things he/she didn't want to do were among the findings from the study. The implication for the School Curriculum was discussed based on the findings from the study. School administrators' and PTA to organize public enlightenment campaign on bullying is one of the recommendations made from the study.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Parent Perception, Bully, School Curriculum.

## Introduction

Assessment as used in the study, refers to the direction for action by the curriculum planners based on the findings from the study.

Bullying is the repeated actions of one person, or group of people to deliberately cause hurts, harm and/or humiliation to another (Dore,2016). Colwin (2010) observed that bullying occurred when a person intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort upon another person through physical context, the use of abusive language or in other ways. Hyme and Swearer (2015) defined bullying as a subcategory of interpersonal aggression characterized by intentionality, repetition, and an in the balance of power. It is an aggressive intentional act carried out by a group or individual repeatedly and overtime against a victim who cannot easily defend him/herself(Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). Laftman, Alms, and Sandahl (2018) defined bullying as repeated negative actions performed by one or more other persons and directed towards an individual.

Bullying presents a significant and serious problem in many schools (Demaray, Summers, Jenkins & Becker, 2013; Menesini et al., 2017). It's the concern of parents, school administrators and experts in the field of school curriculum planning. It dominates the agenda in most of Parent Teachers Association (PTA) meeting. In school, bullying takes many forms from direct, physical harm to verbal taunts and threats, to exclusion, humiliation, and rumor- spreading to electronic harassment using text (Heyme and Swearer (2015)). Social and verbal bullying is the most common forms experienced by the student and is most often performed face-to-face in the school setting in school (Laftman, et al., 2018).

It has been documented ( Basile, Espelage, Rivers, Mcmahon & Simon ,2009; Heyme and Swearer (2015); Jan & Husain, 2015) that an association between certain bullying experience and low academic achievement; the correlation between positive attitude and bullying behavior is not only decrease student's academic performance but also cause mental health problems and physical injury.

Heyme and Swearer (2015) observed that positive relationships between teachers and students may enhance the likely hood of student reporting bullying but this relationship is not always observed.

Literature on bullying in schools had shown that parents often have limited knowledge of what happens at school and teachers may not actually witness or may choose to ignore it; and teachers and parents reports are more suspected given that bullying occurs primarily in the peer group especially in place with little adult supervision( Graham, 2014; Garandeau, Lee & Salmivalli, 2014: Heyme & Swearer, 2015). Basile et al (2009) observed that both family and peer environments have been found to be quite influential regarding bullying. Furthermore, bullying is less likely to occur when parents are aware of their children peer relationships and parental involvement is associated with a lower risk for bullying (Basile et al.).

However, Heyme and Swearer (2015) observed that parents often have limited knowledge of what happens at school, and teachers may not actually witness bullying or may choose to ignore it. It was based on this that the study assessed parents' perception on secondary school child bullying in Bauchi State.

Specifically, the study assessed by determined in percentages parents perception on:-
   i.    How often a secondary school child is bullied.
   ii.   Most frequent type of bully a secondary school child experience.
   iii.  Most frequent strategy for handling bullying situation in school.
   iv.   Most frequent source of obtaining information on bully in school.
   v.    The extent to which the school responds on the information of the bully.
The following research questions guided the study.
   i.    How often a secondary school child is bullied?
   ii.   What is the most frequent category of bully a secondary school child experience?
   iii.  What is the most frequent strategy for handling bullying in school?
   iv.   What is the most frequent source of obtaining information on bully in school?
   v.    To what extent the school administrators respond to the information on the bully?

**Methodology**
A survey design was used for the study. The population of the study consists of parents of both Junior Secondary(JS) and Senior Secondary(SS) Schools from the 20 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Bauchi State. Multi-stage sampling technique was used. The initial stage involved selecting five LGAs at random. In the second stage, four ( two each from JS and SS) schools were randomly selected from each of the five LGAs from which the first two were selected from the LGA Head quarts while the remaining were from outside the LGA Headquarters. The third stage involved the use of random sampling technique to select 200(10 from each school) parents whose children were attending public secondary schools. Adaptation of Dore ( 2016 ) questionnaire on bullying was made and used for data collection. The adapted questionnaire was named Bullying in School Questionnaire _(BSQ). The BSQ consists of two sections (A & B). Section A is the introductory section while section B consists of seven items. Item 2, 5, 6 and 7 required the respondent to select from two (Yes or No) options while the remaining items required the respondent to select and tick in the most appropriate from the available options.
At the initial stage, the BSQ consists of ten items. As a result of validation of these (10) items by Senior Lecturer in Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Education Foundations, Faculty of Technology Education, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU) , Bauchi, two items were dropped based on the assessor advice retaining only eight items. The BS Q was pilot tested using 30 purposively selected parents from ATBU Model Staff School and General Hassan Usman Katsina Unity School, Bauchi. A Cronbach's Alpha 0.78 was established for the stability of the items. However, when item four was dropped using factor Analysis the reliability was improved to 0.84.
 The administration and collection of data were assisted by 30 undergraduate Long Vocation Training (LVT) 2017/2018 Contact 3, Academic Session students in group D from Department of Education Foundations Faculty of Technology Education ATBU, Bauchi. The assistants were sub-divided into six groups each covering one LGA. The method for data administration and collection depends on the contact address obtained from the Guidance and Counselling masters in each of the selected school, as such; two different methods (70% through direct administration and 30% through Email address) were used. The data were analyzed using frequency count, percentages and bar charts.

## Results

Table1. Frequency percentages on parents response on how often a secondary school child is bullied.

| Response | Never | Once per week | Twice per week |
|---|---|---|---|
| Frequency percentages | 53% | 36% | 11% |

Table 1 above, shows the parents responses in percentages on how often a secondary school child is bullied.

Table2. Frequency in percentages on parent response on the most frequent type of bully a secondary school child experience

| S/N | Type | Frequency in percentages |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Called by name which the child does not like | 17% |
| 2. | Ignored by friends | 11% |
| 3. | Hit, kicked or locked indoors. | 12% |
| 4. | Lied or spread false rumors about him/her. | 19% |
| 5. | Had money or other thing taken away or damaged | 7% |
| 6. | Was threatened or forced to do things he/she didn't want to do. | 22% |
| 7. | Called names about his /her religious affiliation. | 12% |

Table 2 above, shows frequency in percentages on the most frequent type of bully a secondary school child experience.

Table 3 Frequency in percentages on parent response on the most frequent strategy for handling bullying situation in school.

| S/N | Strategy | percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Just take it. | 16% |
| 2. | Walk away. | 4% |
| 3. | Ignore the bully. | 3% |
| 4. | Hit or fight back. | 5% |
| 5. | Tell the bully to stop. | 22% |
| 6. | Tell me or another family member. | 15% |
| 7. | Tell the class teacher or any other staff. | 26% |
| 8. | Get help from friends. | 9% |

Table 3 above shows the parents perception on various of strategies in percentages for handling bullying situation in school.
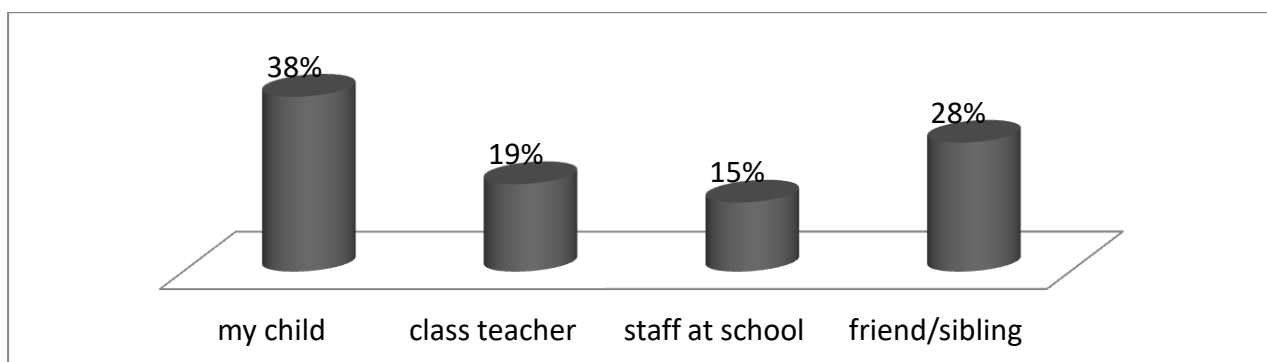


Figure1. Percentages of parents' responses on the most frequent source of obtaining information on bully in school.

Figure 1 above shows the bar chart in percentages of parents' responses on the most frequent source of obtaining information on bully in school.
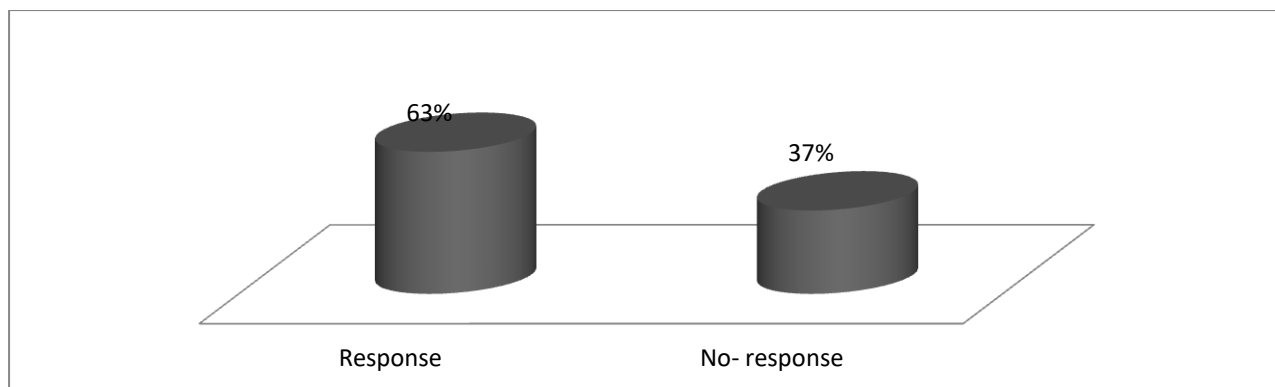


Figure2a. Parents responses in percentages on the extent to which the school responds on the information of the bully.

Figure 2 above shows the bar chart in percentages on the parents responses on the extent to which the school responds on the information of the bully.

**Findings**

- The frequency at which the child is bullied in school is low ( *Frequency percentage Never= 53%).*
- The most frequent type of bully a secondary school child experience is *threatened by force to do things he/she didn't want to do.*
- The most frequent strategy parents used in helping the child to cope up with bullying situation in school is *Tell the class teacher or any other staff.*
- The most frequent source of obtaining information from parents on the issue of bullying in school is from *the child.*
- 76 % of the parents were of the view that school responds to information on bullying.

**Discussion**

In the discussion, the results from the study, limitation on assessing the difference between parents perception on bullying in Junior and Senior secondary schools must be acknowledged. The discussion was based on 172 (86%) of the responses obtained from the parents as 28 (14%) of the parents' could not be traced through the address given by some schools.

The result in Table 1 revealed the frequency percentages on parents responses on how often a secondary school child is bullied. The result (Table1) was used to achieve objective 1 from the study. From the result, as shown in Table 1, it shows that the frequency often which a child is a bully/harass in school is low as 53% responded that the child is never bully/harass in school. Although 36% and 11% were obtained as the frequency percentages on how often a secondary school child is bullied. However, finding from the result (Table 1) revealed that the frequency at which the child is bullied in school is low (Frequency *percentage Never= 53%).* The finding is not similar to Rigby, (2017) who reported that 50.2% of the parents believed that their children had been bullied at school.

The research question ii on the most frequent type of bully a secondary school child experienced was answered and the result was shown in Table 2 and it was used to achieve objective ii from the study. From the result, as tabulated in Table 2, the most frequent type Most frequent type of bully a secondary school child experience is item 6(threatened or forced to do things he/she didn't want to do) as it is the mode with the highest frequency(22%) percentage. Finding from this, revealed that the most frequent type of bully a secondary school child experience is *threatened by force to do things he/she didn't want to do.* The finding is in disagreement with Heyme and Swearer (2015) ;Rugby and Johnson, (2016); Rugby, (2017) who observed from their different survey studies that social(exclusions) and verbal teasing bullying are the most common forms experienced by students.

To achieve objective iii from the study on most frequent strategy for handling bullying situation in school research question iii was answered. The result was tabulated in Table3. From the result in Table3, of the eight items , item 7 (Tell the class teacher or any other staff) has the highest (26%) percentage. Finding from this revealed that the most frequent strategy parents used in helping the child to cope up with bullying situation in  school  is  for the child to *tell the class teacher or any other staff.*

To determine the most frequent source of obtaining information by the parents on the bullied child in school, research question iv was answered and the    result was shown in Figureb1. From the result in Figure 1, it was evident  that *My child* had the highest (38%) percentage. Finding from this revealed that the most frequent source of obtaining information from parents on the issue of bullying in school is from *the child.* The finding is in agreement with Heyme  and Swearer  (2015)   that teacher report on bullying is more suspect, given that bullying occurs primarily in the peer group, especially in a place with little adult supervision.

To determine the extent to which the school respond on the information on the bullied child as evident from the parents  research question v was used  and the result   was shown in Figure 2 from the result in Figure 2, 76 % of the parents  were of the view that school respond on information of bully while 24% were of the view that the school did not respond to the information of bully  finding from this revealed that school administrators respond to any information regarding bullying .

## Implication for the School Curriculum

 In traditional none formal educations in Nigeria, prior to formal education,  a child mind is shaped   through folk tells by a grandparent. The objectives of such stories are to inculcate in the mind and attitude of the child against greediness and cruel acts such as bullying.

School curriculum planners' needs to integrate the non-formal education strategy to  in reach subjects like Social Studies, Civic Education with   topics related to causes, implication/impact of bullying in school and society at large. The curriculum should also include practical activities such as drama with the objective of enlightening a secondary school child   on the implication/impact of bullying in school.

## Conclusion

The study assed  parents perception on secondary school child bully in    Bauchi State-Nigeria and its implication for school curriculum. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 200 parents from five randomly selected LGAs in the State. The data was collected using BS questionnaire. The findings revealed parents perceptions and stage of bullying in secondary schools and  its  implication for school curriculum.

## Recommendation

School administrators'and PTA to organize public enlightenment campaign on bullying and its impact in secondary school at least once at the beginning of each Academic session. There is also a need for further study towards an understanding of parent's perception and strategies for coping with bullying in schools.

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