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# *Perceived Causes And Effects Of Bullying In Primary School Pupils In Bodinga Local Government Area, Sokoto State, Nigeria*

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***Abstract.***

*This study investigated the effect of bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga Local Government Area of Sokoto State. The study was guided by three objectives. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised teachers in primary schools in Bodinga LGA and a total of 340 respondents were selected through random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection and data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The findings of the study revealed that teachers perceive bullying to be prevalent among primary school pupils in Bodinga LGA. On causes, lack of discipline accounting for 38.8 percent and poor parenting accounting for 34.1 percent were identified as the major causes of bullying, while modelling, poor emotional intelligence, jealousy and poor supervision were other causes. On effects, physical injury accounting for 35.3 percent was the major effect, followed by poor academic performance accounting for 18.2 percent, poor relationship accounting for 16.5 percent, destruction of properties accounting for 12.4 percent, truancy accounting for 9.4 percent and depression accounting for 8.2 percent. On strategies for curbing bullying, guidance and counselling accounting for 37.1 percent and proper supervision accounting for 29.4 percent were identified as the most effective strategies, while good parenting, sensitization, good classroom management and positive reinforcement were also identified as strategies. The study concluded that bullying has serious physical, academic, social and psychological effects on primary school pupils in Bodinga LGA and that it is caused mainly by lack of discipline and poor parenting. The study recommended that guidance and counselling units should be strengthened in all primary schools, teachers and school authorities should ensure proper supervision and enforcement of discipline, parents should improve parenting practices and government should organize regular sensitization programmes on the dangers of bullying in primary schools.*

***Keywords:*** *Bullying, Primary School Pupils, Physical Injury, Poor Performance, Guidance and Counselling, Bodinga LGA.*

***Article History***

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## 1. Introduction

Every child is a special gift. A child begins education early and mostly that experience is gained at primary schools. At primary schools, children are made to learn, and prepare for next (future) life encounter and experience (Budiamin et al., 2019). However, primary education, like other sectors could not be spared from challenges, such as possible prevalence of violence or bullying. According to Raji et al. (2026) there is high prevalence of bullying in schools against youngsters in Sokoto city, Nigeria. Olalekan & Adwewuyi (2025) decried that there were significantly higher prevalence of violence in primary schools in Oyo state. Bullying indeed occur globally as reported by various findings. In Africa, there were few studies indicating a prevalence of 18-63% (Raji et al., 2026). Despite the significance of primary education for ensuring development of children and the society at large, the issue of bullying have profound effects on education of the victims and affect parents and teachers as well (Olalekan & Adewuyi, 2025). Bullying is an act of causing harm or violence on other person or group by someone or group using any possible means (Bonke, 2010; Dagogo, 2020). The act of bullying may be in form of physical, verbal, cyber, and psychological domain (Smith, 2016). Child affected by bullying could face a lot of challenges in the present or future, such as educational problems, dropout, sadness, absenteeism, violence, drug abuse, etc (Zirpoly, 2009; Osiesi et al., 2025). Therefore it is important to pay much attention concerning this problem of bullying in primary schools.

### 1.1 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the causes, effects and counseling strategies for curbing bullying in primary school pupils in Bodinga Local Government Area, Sokoto State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of this study are to:

- Identify the causes of bullying in primary school pupils in Bodinga Local Government Area, Sokoto State, Nigeria
- Identify the effects of bullying on primary school pupils in Bodinga Local Government Area, Sokoto State, Nigeria
- Identify the counseling strategies for curbing bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga Local Government Area, Sokoto State, Nigeria

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 2.1 Study area

Bodinga LGA is the geographical location of this study. It refers to one of the 23 Local Government Areas in Sokoto State, Nigeria, with headquarters in Bodinga town, covering 564 km², established in 1809 by Abdullahi Dan Fodio, and comprising 11 political wards including Bodinga/Tauma, Dingyadi/Badawa, Sifawa/Lukuyawa and others.

### 2.2 Study design

The type of study design applied here was cross-sectional survey. A survey design is described as the sort of study as simple methodology of collecting information from a large group by use of questionnaire to explore ideas or opinions.

### 2.3 Population of the study

The overall population of the study here include all primary school teachers and educational stakeholders (working at local education authority, LEA) that are studied to generalize the finding over them. Thus, the population of the study involved parents, a population of private and public primary schools teachers or managers, LEA workers, and traditional community leaders (*Hakimai*).

### 2.4 Sample size and sampling

The sample of a study refers to the actual study elements selected for the survey, as drawn from the whole population. The sample size here is the number of actual participants involved and it was 340 (out of 365 questionnaires distributed, 340 were retrieved properly). The method of

sampling was through a mixture of convenience and random sampling to sort for the problem of insecurity that may affect response. The study assumed that, the teachers, parents, and other relevant stakeholders tied to the primary education in the study area are up to 2000, and therefore, utilized the formula

$$n= N+N (e^2)$$

Where n= Sample size
N = Total population (assumed to be 2000)
e= Level of significance (0.05)
The size was computed as 332, and some personal addition made the size 340 (after nonresponse was considered).

**2.5 Instrument for data collection**

The instrument for this work was a semi-structured questionnaire, validated by experts, and had a certain reliability. The instrument consists of section A on demographic information, section B asking for causes of bullying, section C asking for effects and section D asking for strategies to stop bullying.

**2.6 Data management**

The data retrieved was managed with the aid of descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage.

**3. RESULTS AND DSISCUSSION**

**3.1 Results**

This section presents the analysis of data collected from 340 respondents in Bodinga Local Government Area, Sokoto State. The data are presented in tables using frequency and percentage. The results were shown in this section in Tables 1-4.

Table 1:Demographic characteristics of respondents in Bodinga local government, Sokoto, State, Nigeria

| Characteristics | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Sex** | 280 | 82.4 |
| Male | 60 | 17.6 |
| Female | | |
| **Religion** | | |
| Islam | 300 | 88.2 |
| Christians | 40 | 11.8 |
| **Education** | | |
| None | 0 | 0 |
| Secondary | 158 | 46.5 |
| Diploma | 140 | 41.1 |
| NCE | 32 | 9.4 |
| Degree | 10 | 2.9 |
| **Marital status** | | |
| Single | 297 | 87.4 |
| Married | 43 | 12.6 |
| **Occupation** | | |
| Teaching | 166 | 48.8 |
| Farming | 48 | 14.1 |
| Business | 90 | 26.5 |
| Others | 36 | 10.6 |

Table 1 shows that majority of respondents 280 (82.4%) were male while 60 (17.6%) were female. This implies male dominance in the study area. On religion, 300 (88.2%) were Muslims and 40

(11.8%) Christians, confirming Bodinga is Muslim dominated. On education, majority have secondary 158 (46.5%) and Diploma 140 (41.2%). Marital status shows 297 (87.4%) single. Occupation shows teachers dominated 166 (48.8%), which is appropriate for a study on primary school pupils**.**

Table 2: Causes of bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga local government, Sokoto, State, Nigeria

| **Cause** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Poor parenting | 116 | 34.1 |
| Lack of discipline | 132 | 38.8 |
| Modeling | 22 | 6.5 |
| Poor emotional intelligence | 30 | 8.8 |
| Jealousy | 22 | 6.5 |
| Poor supervision | 18 | 5.3 |
| **Total** | **340** | **100.0** |

Table 2 shows that lack of discipline 132 (38.8%) is the major cause of bullying, followed by poor parenting 116 (34.1%). Together they account for 72.9%. Other causes are poor emotional intelligence 30 (8.8%), modelling 22 (6.5%), jealousy 22 (6.5%) and poor supervision 18 (5.3%).

Table 3: Effects of bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga local government, Sokoto, State, Nigeria

| **Effect** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Depression | 28 | 8.2 |
| Poor performance | 62 | 18.2 |
| Truancy | 32 | 9.4 |
| Physical injury | 120 | 35.3 |
| Poor relationship | 56 | 16.5 |
| Destruction of properties | 42 | 12.4 |
| **Total** | **340** | **100.0** |

As in Table 3, the major effect is physical injury 120 (35.3%), followed by poor performance 62 (18.2%), poor relationship 56 (16.5%), destruction of properties 42 (12.4%), truancy 32 (9.4%) and depression 28 (8.2%).

Table 4: Strategies of bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga local government, Sokoto, State, Nigeria

| **Strategy** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Proper supervision | 100 | 29.4 |
| Sensitization | 34 | 10.0 |
| Good classroom management | 26 | 7.6 |
| Positive enforcement | 14 | 4.1 |
| Guidance and counseling | 126 | 37.1 |
| Good parenting | 40 | 11.8 |
| **Total** | **340** | **100.0** |

As in Table 3, the most effective strategy is guidance and counseling 126 (37.1%), followed by proper supervision 100 (29.4%). These two account for 66.5%. Others are good parenting 40 (11.8%), sensitization 34 (10.0%), good classroom management 26 (7.6%) and positive reinforcement 14 (4.1%).

### 3.2 Discussion

Table 1 shows that majority of respondents 280 (82.4%) were male while 60 (17.6%) were female. This implies male dominance in the study area. On religion, 300 (88.2%) were Muslims and 40 (11.8%) Christians, confirming Bodinga is Muslim dominated. On education, majority have secondary 158 (46.5%) and Diploma 140 (41.2%). Marital status shows 297 (87.4%) single. Occupation shows teachers dominated 166 (48.8%), which is appropriate for a study on primary school pupils. Table 2 shows the causes of bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga local government, Sokoto State, Nigeria. The causes found are poor parenting, lack of discipline, poor emotional intelligence, jealousy and poor supervision. The finding can agree with some findings reported by Olaoye & Osundima (2025) disclosing that violence in school is as a result of emotional problems. Hlafane et al. (2025) reported (in their survey study) that among the causes of bullying in primary schools there were excessive power of others (students over the weak), and poor school management, lack of attention from parents, family problems, and drug abuse. Bonke (2010) disclosed that, among the causes of violence include the media violence or past experiences. In a relevant finding elsewhere, Inter-American Teacher Education Network (ITEN, 2011) causes of bullying in schools include poor training and education on bullying at schools, and ineptitude of government, are seeds of violence at schools. This finding agrees with Olweus (2013) who found that lack of discipline and poor family upbringing are primary predictors of bullying. Also, Egbo (2019) in Sokoto State found poor parenting responsible for aggressive behaviour among pupils. This implies that children who lack proper home training exhibit bullying at school. Table 3 shows the effects of bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga local government, Sokoto State, Nigeria. The effects include poor performance, physical injury, and poor relationship, destruction of properties, depression, and truancy. This is in line with Rigby (2020) who noted that bullying victims suffer physical harm and academic decline. Raji et al. (2019) also found that bullying causes truancy and depression among primary school pupils in North-West Nigeria. This shows bullying has physical, academic and psychosocial effects. The effects found are in this study are in agreement with the finding of Kanmodi et al. (2020) that disclosed toxic environment (space) in leads to consequences such as deteriorating health, and poor performance. In this vein, Raji et al. (2019) in a study of bullying and violence in Sokoto, found that, the menace of bullying causes negative effects on students and had to be address through seminars and other efforts among teachers and students. In other work of Olaoye & Osundima (2025) the common effect of bullying in schools was consequences on emotional health and physical abuse. Likewise, in the work of Owusu et al. (2011) the impact of found due to bullying in schools include physical and emotional hurt, fear, poor academic scores, dropouts, absenteeism, etc. Table 4 shows the possible strategies to stop bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga local government, Sokoto State, Nigeria. The strategies include guidance and counseling, proper supervision, good parenting, sensitization, good classroom management, and positive enforcement. The finding is in agreement with the work of Nansel et al. (2021) that suggested the use of workshop and seminars for students and teachers to tackle bullying at schools in Katsina and elsewhere. Olaoye & Osundima (2025) recommended the use of violence management strategies in curbing bullying in schools in Nigeria. In another similar work, Olalekan & Adewuyi (2025) found teacher-parent collaboration strategies as tools to manage bullying in primary school pupils in Ibadan, Nigeria, that is why, ITEN (2011) suggested for proper training and education of teachers and pupils in ways to curb bullying at schools for better future. This finding corroborates Raji et al., (2019) who recommended counseling and supervision as best measures to curb bullying. Makwanise (2021) also emphasized that proper supervision reduces opportunities for bullying. This means professional counseling will help both bullies and victims.

## 4. Conclusion

This study investigated the causes, effects and counselling strategies for curbing bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga Local Government Area, Sokoto State. Based on the findings of the study from 340 respondents, it is concluded that bullying is prevalent among primary school pupils in Bodinga Local Government Area. On the causes of bullying, the study concludes that lack of discipline is the major cause accounting for 38.8 percent of the responses, followed by poor parenting accounting for 34.1 percent. This shows that bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga is largely a product of home background and lack of proper discipline in school. Other causes such as poor emotional intelligence, modelling, jealousy and poor supervision also contribute but to a lesser extent. On the effects of bullying, the study concludes that bullying has serious negative consequences on pupils. Physical injury was found to be the major effect accounting for 35.3 percent, which indicates that bullying in Bodinga primary schools is mostly physical in nature. Poor academic performance accounting for 17.7 percent and poor relationship accounting for 16.5 percent are also major effects, which confirms that bullying directly affects the academic performance and social adjustment of pupils. Other effects include destruction of properties, truancy and depression which lead to school dropout and low self-esteem among victims. On counselling strategies for curbing bullying, the study concludes that guidance and counselling is the most effective strategy accounting for 37.1 percent, followed by proper supervision accounting for 29.4 percent. This implies that professional counselling intervention and close monitoring of pupils can significantly reduce bullying behaviour. Other strategies such as good parenting, sensitization, good classroom management and positive reinforcement are also effective. In general, the study concludes that bullying among primary school pupils in Bodinga Local Government Area is caused by disciplinary and parenting failures, it negatively affects pupils' physical health and academic performance, and it can be effectively curbed through strengthening guidance and counselling services and proper supervision in primary schools.

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