

Bullying in Nigerian Schools: Prevalence Study and Implications for Counselling

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ABSTRACT School bullying is becoming a threat that no school can afford to dismiss. Although many demographic variables associated with bullying have been examined, there has been no study in Nigeria, which has looked into comparison between Government and Private/Mission schools. This study examined this neglected demographic variable in addition to establishing the incidence of bullying in schools in Benin City, Edo state. It was found that 78% of the children have been victims of bullying on at least one occasion and 71% have lashed out at others at least once. However, more boys than girls were found to be both bullies and victims ($\chi^2 = 18.570$, $p < 0.01$). Boys reported being kicked or hit more often than girls ($\chi^2 = 13.302$, $p < 0.01$). The result shows that it was more common for bullying to take place in the classroom in government schools than in private schools ($\chi^2 = 43.773$, $p < 0.05$). The result demonstrated significant differences between the schools investigated. However, significantly more private schools reported kicking and hitting taking place in the playground than in the government schools, whereas bullying is more likely to take place in the classroom in government schools. It is recommended that counsellors play a significant role in combating the patterns of unhappiness and violence out of which much bullying arises.