THE PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS ABOUT SCHOOL BULLYING AND HOW IT

AFFECTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN CAMEROON

By

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Abstract

Many students in secondary schools in Cameroon in general and the North West and South West region get into schools to pursue an academic career. The educational journey is rich with several goals but most at times challenging with ups and downs as regards bullying in the school environment. This thesis research explored school bullying amongst high school students, their perspectives, and their effects on academic performance. Data was collected from over 30 participants, of whom 24 were students of upper sixth classes, and 6 were teachers in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon in secondary schools. All interviews were through WhatsApp with questioning, and it was found that most students go through kinds of bullying in secondary schools, and most often do not let anyone know about it. The findings showed that school bullying still exists in most schools and influences student's academic performance and school attendance. It was acknowledged that most students experienced bullying in their classes, and some students reported cases of bullying to their teachers. Bullying still exists and continues to affect the academic achievements of most students in Cameroon.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction of Bullying and Overview

Since the early 1990s, the school is not only a place characterized by learning, but an environment where students are harassed and experience peer harassment (Juvonen, Wang, & Espinoza, 2011). Bullying is a social problem, and one person in every three individuals randomly selected has been bullied physically, verbally, and socially (Misawa, 2010).

Bullying influences both the individual and the perpetrator and may lead to present and long-term effects (Aleem, 2016). Bullying and peer victimization always have either direct or indirect effects on the victims and may result in poor academic performance (Holt, Finkelhor, & Kantor, 2007). According to Nishina, Juvonen, and Witkow (2005), school harassment, peer victimization, and bullying have contributed to a decline in classroom activities and school engagement, which tend to impact academic performance and achievement negatively.

A school is a place where students spend most of their time on growth and development (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, & Osher, 2019). Students that are supported by their teachers feel an increased sense of belongingness, more engaged, have fewer behavioral problems, and perform better in their academics (Konishi, Hymel, Zumbo & Li, 2000). Conversely, unhealthy school environments have adverse effects on a student's academic achievement (Strøm, 2013). Academic achievement around the world is significant for schooling, and several studies are being carried out on the physical factors that could affect educational performance (Steinmayr, Crede, McElvany, & Wirthwein, 2016). Externalizing factors, which include theft and vandalism and oppositional problems, affect student's academic

achievement. Internalizing factors like depression symptoms and anxiety have a negative repercussion on a student's performance (Tremblay et al., 2012).

Bullying and peer victimization always have either a direct or indirect impact on the victims, and they lead to poor academic performance (Holt, Finkelhor, & Kantor, 2007). Any form of learning has a goal of excellent academic performance, and when it is not attained, learning is not effective. Based on such assumptions, several efforts must be made to ensure that academic achievement is achieved.

Academic achievement is the outcome that shows the level of performance recorded by any individual in the learning process with goals that were set for the instructional environment in schools, colleges, and universities (Steinmayr et al., 2016). Any form of motivation has a significant effect on academic achievement (Effie, 2005). For instance, in a case where students are not motivated but find themselves in environments that scare them away from studying, their academic achievement is low (Dweck, 2007).

Background Information on Education in Cameroon and Bullying

Cameroon is a country located in Central Africa and is bordered by Nigeria to the west, Chad to the Northeast, the Central African Republic to the East, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, The Republic of the Congo to the South. Cameroon's coastline lies on the Bight of Bonny, which is part of the Gulf of Guinea and the VFFD Atlantic Ocean (Njabe, 2006). The country is called "Africa in Miniature" for its geological and cultural diversity. Natural features in Cameroon include beaches, deserts, mountains, rainforests, and savannas (Njabe, 2006). The country is well-known for its native styles of music, particularly "Makossa" and "Bikutsi," and for its successful national football team. Also, English and French are the official languages (Gomez,

2016). Natural features in Cameroon include beaches, deserts, mountains, rainforests, and savannas (Njabe, 2006).

Educational structure and bullying in Cameroon.

Aki (2019) explained that the educational system in Cameroon is divided into four stages: primary (six years, compulsory), middle school (five years), secondary/high school (two years), and tertiary (university). The academic year runs from September to June, at which end-of-year-examinations are always written. The General Certificate of Education (GCE), an academic qualification awarding body, is responsible for the end of year exam, which are ordinary and Advanced levels. These exams are the two qualifying exams in the Anglophone part of Cameroon.

In the Cameroon English-speaking education sub-system, pupils leaving primary school to enter secondary school after passing the Government Common Entrance Examinations and when they obtain a First School Leaving Certificate in Class 6 (now) or 7 (formerly). The last two years in secondary school, after GCE O Levels, are referred to as high school. It is habitual to talk of secondary school for a school, which ends at the O Levels and high school for one which offers the complete secondary education program of seven years (or one which has lower and upper sixth classes) (Cameroon Education, 2019).

There are two separate secondary schooling systems in Cameroon: public and private secondary system. The majority of young people attend public schools because their parents are unable to afford private secondary school tuition. The different separate systems of education used in Cameroon developed after independence (Fonkeng, 2007). There are two secondary school systems, depending on whether to apply the British or French colonial models. East Cameroon's system was based on the French model and West Cameroon's on the British model.

At the time, the architects of independence perceived the policy as a symbol of national integration between West and East Cameroon. The two systems were merged by 1976, but studies suggest the two systems still do not blend properly (Fonkeng, 2007; Greene, 2015). Shortly after independence, French was considered the main language in the country, but the rise of English as the first commercial language in the world meant the balance switched to the latter. Due to language diversity, social bullying increased due to miscommunication and misunderstanding amongst French and English-speaking students (Roberge, 2011). Most of the social bullying occurs in bilingual schools, with a diverse population in terms of culture, language, and educational characteristics (Lim & Hoot, 2015).

In Cameroon, there is a significant difference between the numbers of girls and boys going to school (Gomez, 2016). Based on 2011 data, 47.7 % of girls and 56.7% of boys attended primary and secondary schools. This low rate of female enrolment was attributed to cost, early marriages, sexual harassment, unwanted pregnancy, domestic responsibilities, and certain socio-cultural biases (Njabe, 2006). Even though schools are almost evenly distributed throughout the regions, there is a gap in the capacity of the schools and the number of potential students. Based on the government study conducted in 2004, schools only had enough seats for 1.8 million students, although 2.9 million attended schools, either public or private schools (Cameroon Education, 2019).

Public and private schools. Class size is one of the major differences between public and private schools. Class size is usually a major determinant of bullying and victimization and influences academic performance (Garandeau, Yanagida, Vermande, Strohmeier, & Salmivalli, 2019). Public schools usually have a larger number of students, which could range from 25-30 or more, while private schools keep their class size closer to an average of about 15-16 students. It

is important to note that larger class size in public schools is associated with increased cases of bullies (Garandeau et al., 2019). This is because the increased number of students makes it somewhat difficult for the teacher to control their behaviors, hence enhancing more bullying activities, which will influence academic performance. Private schools usually have the tendency for every junior or new student to have an elder whom they call senior in a higher class. In most cases, the senior student ends up bullying the younger physically, mentally, psychologically, and socially. This form of bullying from senior students is common in private schools and very rare in public schools (Abdulsalam, Al Daihani, & Francis, 2017).

Lastly, there is also a difference in the behavioral aspect of the students in private and public schools. Usually, because private schools have selective admission processes, they can choose students who are really motivated to learn. Therefore, students in private schools are known to be well behaved and highly motivated to learn. Public education, on the other hand, takes all students except for some exceptions whereby a child may harm other students (Greene, 2014). Bullying in most school settings in Cameroon is socially or culturally ingrained from other bullies. When any student is bullied, he or she intends to bully other young ones in later years, making the chain inelastic.

Cameroon boasts many private and international schools. Tuition tends to be expensive based on local standards, but offers lofty standards of learning, boast smaller class sizes, first-rate facilities, and extracurricular activities (Cameroon Education, 2019).

Purpose of Research

The main purpose of this research was to examine and explore the effects of bullying on students' academic performance in private and public schools in Cameroon. The unprovoked use of power by some students on others and how these experiences shape the learning or

performance of other students is what this study intends to examine. Another purpose of this

research was to bring to light the concept of bullying in schools as directed towards students'

academic performance and to ascertain the extent to which bullying affects students'

performance.

Research Questions

      The research questions for the study include.

1. What is the impact of bullying on academic performance?

2. Which types of bullying are common among schools in Cameroon?

3. What are the experiences of students about bullying in schools?

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Bullying is no longer considered as a normal rite of passage, but a primary public health problem, which is known to pose serious long-term impacts in schools (Swartz, 2016). Some children and youths are victims of bullying in schools, and they are bullied through different electronic means (Swartz, 2016). It is well established that bullying among children and youths lead to different physical symptoms such as headache and sleep disturbances. Bullying in schools also leads to anxiety, depression, and substance use, especially among youths Menesini & Salmivalli, (2017). Similarly, perpetrators experience long-term consequences such as higher risks for depression and can engage in activities, such as vandalism and theft (Swartz, 2016). Bullying has been witnessed in some of the Cameroon schools. Elamé (2013) explained that in Cameroon, school children experienced different types of bullying, such as physical bullying, which has been an intercultural challenge. Bullying in Cameroon is attributed to intercultural education, and the majority of immigrants are the most affected population.

This chapter throws more light on the definition of bullying, the types of bullying which include physical, verbal, social, and cyberbullying, and the incidence/prevalence of bullying. The literature in this section was reviewed on bullying and school environment, bullying and academic performance, and bullying, and mental health.

Definition of Bullying

A major challenge in the research of bullying is the definition of bullying Espelage et al., (2003). Several unique definitions for bullying exist, but not everyone agrees to it (Cowie & Jennifer, 2008). Research on bullying began over 40 years ago and was defined as the aggressive behavior, which is conducted intentionally by an individual or group of people frequently for

some time against victims who have no ability to defend themselves (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). Most scholars agree to the definitions that bullying is an intentional aggressive act to harm another person and to cause a power imbalance between the aggressor and bullying victims (Dodge, 1991; Olweus, 1993; Rivers & Smith; 1994; Smith & Thompson, 1991). Also, 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. As the victims lose their power, they are unable to cope with or respond to the problem (Menesini et al. 2012; Swearer & Hymel, 2015). Bullying involves engaging in repeated actions, such as physical contact, verbal assault, nonverbal gesture, or deliberate social exclusion, and intentionally designed to inflict harm on individuals who are unable to defend themselves (Feldman, 2014). Nesbit (1999) defined bullying as the unprovoked abuse, which is repeated over an extended time to inflict distress upon a person perceived to be vulnerable in one -way exercise of power.

According to Durdle (2008), bullying has emerged across studies in Europe and later Australia, where it is perceived to be much noted as a global problem. According to Arseneaut et al. (2006), the victim of bullying is a risk factor for poor academic performance and mostly in elementary and middle age schools. Based on the 2009 report, it is known that 90% of students have been bullied, and their grades dropped (National Center for Education Statistics 2009). A previous literature review by Veentra et al. (2004) noted that bullying and victimization are common in elementary and secondary schools worldwide. The estimated rates of bullying and victimization range from 15% to 25% in Australia (Rigby & Slee, 1991; Kliepera & Gasteiger Kliwpera, 1996), England (Whitney & Smirth, 1993; Wolke, Woods, Stanford, & Schulz, 2001), Finland (Kumpulainen et al., 1998; Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000), Germany (Wolke et al., 2001), Norway (Olweus, 1978,1993b), and the United States (Nansel et al., 2001, p.672). A

school survey in about 40 countries found that Australian primary schools had higher incidences of bullying from junior high school, especially from grade 7 students (Mullis, Martin, & Foy, 2008).

Bullying is the act of intentionally harming someone, verbally, psychologically, or physically. Bullying is often repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power. The acts of bullying include hitting, pushing, or unwelcome physical contact, teasing and name-calling, reiterated omission of an individual from games and activities, sending threatening or mean-spirited messages in the form of text, chat or voicemails, and spreading of deleterious rumors (Olweus, 2005).

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. Bullying is also a state of discomfort that occurs in many parts of the world today (Bonke, 2005). Olweus (2001) defines 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. 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 (cyberbullying). Although physical and cyberbullying is often of greatest concern, social and verbal bullying is the most common form experienced by students (Vaillancourt, 2010). Espelage (2004) sees bullying as an ecological phenomenon that is established and perpetuated over time as a result of the complex interplay between the individual child, family, peer group, community, and culture. Bullying is usually inherited by some individuals from their parents to achieve some goals forcefully (Mitchel,

2015). Also, interaction in the culture, school, and other socio-political settings could cause others to learn bullying in one way or the other.

Types of Bullying

There are five types of bullying, which include physical bullying, verbal bullying, social bullying, reactive victims, and cyberbullying. Each of them has various context-based on bullying is conducted by the perpetrators (McLellan & Seddon, 1997). Physical bullying is the most generic form of bullying that exists around the world and the most prominent type of bullying in Cameroon, which occurs through stereotyping in schools (Elamé, 2013). Physical bullying includes hitting or kicking the victim, taking, or damaging the victim's property. This type of bullying is very easy to identify, and all physical bullies are always known by the entire population in schools (Elamé, 2013). Other types of school physical bullying include a broader range of physical bullying, defined as hitting, shoving, spitting, beating, stealing, or damaging property (White, 2008). Amongst the physical bullying that mostly occurs in Cameroon schools, some other petty forms of bullying usually occur unnoticeable like punishment by senior students on junior ones, kneeling, and flogging (Elamé, 2013).

Verbal bullying involves using specific names to mock, to cause hurtful teasing, for racist comments, sexual harassment, and humiliation, or to threaten someone (Naidoo, Satorius, de Vries, & Taylor, 2016). This type of bullying is easy to inflict on other children. It occurs in the least amount of time available, and its effect is more devastating in some ways than physical bullying because it has no physical scars (Naidoo et al., 2016. Relational bullies also known as social bullies are common among peers them trying to exclude the victim from his or her social connection. This is linked with verbal bullying that occurs with children, mostly girls, with the spread of nasty rumors about others (Stuart-Cassel, Terzian, & Bradshaw, 2013).

Reactive victims straddle a fence of being a bully and/or victim. They are often the most difficult to identify because, at first glance, they seem to be targeted for other bullies. However, reactive victims often taunt bullies and bully other people themselves. Such victims are defense-drive, and they use verbal or physical retaliation, including shouting and pushing (Burton, Florell, & Gore, 2013)

Cyberbullying. This type of bullying involves the imbalance of power, aggression, and repetitive, negative actions, but these occur online through instant messaging, emails, chat-room posts, or texting (Kowalski, Limber, & Agatston, 2008). The goal of cyberbullying is to socially embarrass or isolate the victim by having information witnessed publicly (Dehue, Bolman, & Vollinkl, 2009).

Incidence/ Prevalence of Bullying

Bullying is a major problem around the globe. Bullying is observed across race, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. It is prevalent in all grades and all schools in Cameroon- and can be mild, moderate, or even severe (Smith et al., 1999). Bullying has been the focus of recent international research, policy development, and student's performance (Smith et al., 1999). The estimated prevalence of bullying usually depends on how bullying is perceived and who reports the incidence. For example, teachers and parents frequently report fewer cases of bullying behaviors than children and young people (Lodge & Baxter, 2014). In Australia, many incidences of bullying have been obtained from questionnaire data. In a large study conducted, 1 in 6 students (aged between 7 and 17 years) reported being bullied at least once a week, with greater numbers from primary and secondary schools than university students (Rigby, 1997). The example of primary and secondary school students being more bullied than university students is

a similar example of the incident that occurred in schools in the north and southwest regions of

Cameroon (Smith et al., 1999).

An investigation by Juvonen (2011) showed that the incidences of bullying in schools

result from victimization, which leads to school adjustment problems of academic achievement,

school avoidance, and loneliness. Peer victimization and academic difficulty are also caused by

elevated levels of depression due to bullying (Schwartz et al., 2011). Elevated levels of bullying

have been witnessed, which is associated with Academic disengagement and poor grades in

school. Students who are more bullied fall in the range of rank order that receives low grades and

engaging less in the academic task than others that are not bullied. Students usually stop

classroom participation due to victimization by peers and fear of ridicule (Juvenon, 2011). Even

a very small manipulation of social exclusion negatively affects a student's school performance.

Two multi-level models examined the direct link between peer victimization and

academic performance to extend past research on peer victimization and academic outcome.

Data drawn from a long-term Australian study of bullying showed that 1 in 3 students between

the ages of 10-11 years of age reported being bullied by peers with name-calling far more

common than physical bullying (Lodge & Baxter, 2013). But name-calling in the Cameroon

setting in schools is not regarded as bullying. Most students see more of physical bullying, and

this is what really plays negative feedback with their academic performance (UNESCO, 2017).

Many young people who bully others have been bullied in the past (Solberg & Olweus,

2003). This is one of the origins of bullying in most areas in the world. Research has shown that

children who bully are self-focused, highly competitive, exhibitionistic, and aggressive

(Salmivalli, Kaukianiemi, & Lagerspetz, 1999). Other studies propose that children who bully

lack empathy and tend to be manipulative and self-seeking in their interpersonal relationships (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996).

In a study carried out by Salmivali et al. (1996), children who engage in bullying can be grouped by their level of involvement as follows;

Ringleaders- Organising a group of bullies and initiating bullying

Followers- who join in the bullying once it is started

Reinforcers or Bystanders - who do not actively join in but reinforce more passively by watching and laughing or encouraging the bullying.

Bullying is a significant problem with an impact on the physical and psychological health of those who are bullied (Moon et al., 2011). The students who bully their peers at an early age may gain undue boldness and confidence to engage in more anti-social acts (Moon et al., 2011). In the world, there exist diverse ways of bullying, including verbal harassment, physical assault, and maybe directed repeatedly towards victims, on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexuality, or ability, which have negative effects on the victim (Olweus 2007). The rate of bullying depends on who reports the present incident and how it occurred, but various researchers have come up with diverse ways of classifying bullying in the world. Given some of the problems associated with data collection, including access to data collection tools, the fact remains that bullying is taking place at unacceptable levels and is making school very unpleasant for many individuals.

Bullying and School Environment

The school environment is not only a safe haven for learning but a place where several activities take place (Smith, 2016). Relational leadership and ethics are complementary approaches applied in schools to regulate bullying (Bosu et al., 2011). For schools to be

effective, the school climate, curriculum, resources, and leadership must be balanced to avoid bullying. The leadership skills and characteristics of the school principals are very important in the everyday functioning of the school and in influencing the incidences of bullying in the school environment (Cunliffe et al., 2011).

In the African continent, school principals always face some challenges in executing their duties as they have no support from other agencies. Not only do these principals have to ensure that children are reaching their potential, but they are also tasked with creating environments that are conducive for learning, by ensuring that these environments are orderly, courteous and safe (Polanin et al., 2013). A conducive school climate is vital for the effectiveness of learning, as this will determine the level of trust (Maslowski, 2001). Trust within a school environment facilitates the processes necessary for the smooth functioning of the school and the prevention of bullying incidences. If trust is established, cooperation and communication will prevail, both of which are integral to productive relationships, which limits cases of school bullying. Leadership skills and leadership characteristics can mitigate bullying in schools and foster values-based behavior (Smit & Scherman, 2016). When school leaders adopt relational leadership and comply with ethical care, they can counteract overt and covert processes associated with school bullying. This, therefore, creates positive behaviors that contribute to social ways of behaving and exemplify equality and fairness (Smit & Scherman, 2016).

It is important to note that bullying within a social system is one of the most underestimated problems in schools, and it occurs at both primary and secondary schools. The principal is the main asset of most schools and has to use all skills available to keep all parties safe from all school activities, especially bullying (Smith, 2016).

Bullying commonly occurs in schools, and prevalence varies significantly between schools. Being a victim of peer bullying is associated with an increased risk of physical health problems engaging in health risk behaviors, long-term emotional behavioral and mental health problems, self-harm, suicide, and poorer educational attainment (Mundbjerg, 2014). Students who experience physical, verbal, and relational bullying on a regular basis tend to experience the most adverse health outcomes. There is a long-term effect of bullying on learners exposed to early bullying activities (Bonell et al., 2014), and the perpetrators of bullying face future effects of depression and anxiety. Inter-personal violence can cause physical injury and disability and is also associated with long-term emotional and mental health problems. Multiple risk behaviors in adolescence are subject to socioeconomic stratification and are strongly associated with poor health outcomes, social exclusion, educational failure, and poor mental health in adult life (Aluede, 2011).

School bullying can interfere with student's concentration in their studies, which can lead to failure and eventual drop out (Olweus, 2003). Bullying in school sometimes takes the form of a group of students taking advantage of one student and gaining the loyalty of bystanders who want to avoid becoming the next victim. These bullies may taunt and tease their target before physically bullying the target.

Bullying is prevalent in schools and boys, and girls are victims. Bullying remains a serious threat to the entire school population, and boys appear to be more involved in bullying than girls across all bully status groups (Cook, 2010). There are also some populations of students who are at an increased risk of peer victimization. Students with disabilities, especially those lacking age-appropriate social skills and displaying behavior problems, are at an increased risk of being targets of peer victimization.

Accumulating evidence suggests school climate and school connectedness are multidimensional constructs that include school safety, quality of relationships, discipline practices, and aspects of the physical environment. Youths who report low school connectedness tend to report more instances of physical, verbal, and relational forms of peer victimization and peer harassment due to lack of bullying prevention efforts (O'Brennan, & Furlong, 2010). Multi-level studies suggest schools with more positive student-teacher relationships tend to have reduced rates of bullying instances. Strong working relationships among staff and administration are often forged through shared leadership on schoolwide policies and interventions, which helps to reduce bullying.

Bullying and Academic Achievement

There exists a strong correlation between bullying and academic performance, as evidenced in the student's loss of concentration during lectures. Schools and homes are not always safe due to bullying, and the act of bullying affects the emotional, social, and physical wellbeing of a school-aged child. The family and the school are the principal areas where bullying is common and practiced (Rigby, 2012). The family is usually the first environment where learning begins, and any sort of bullying that occurs at home affects the child through anger, which would further be a threat to academic performance in any learning institution. Poor family cohesion, authoritarian parents, physical abuse, and aggressive behaviors are other forms of bullying a child can learn from home and apply at school, which negatively impacts academic performance (Bond et al., 2009). The victims of abuse are usually disruptive, aggressive, and very violent, causing harm to everyone in the school environment and making studies extremely difficult (Fanti, 2013). Violent behaviors are common within children of low income in the inner city with outcomes such as depression, anxiety, and poor educational achievement (Woolley,

2009). Both the victimized and the bully are hyperactive, have an attention problem, and are always less accepted by their peers (Fanti, 2013). Any problem associated with bullying has a negative impact on students' academic performance.

Exposing students to violence in schools, neighborhoods, and families is a factor that negatively influences academic achievements. Violent exposure, witnessing violent events either in school or neighborhood, and the impacts it has on students' academic achievement is experienced by youths. The concentration effects and social disorganization theory are two theories that show how bullying among youths could occur. The concentration of inner cities brought concentration effects. Youths who are exposed to violent behaviors are more likely to engage in similar acts. Boys are always seen to be more aggressive and more violent than girl's responses to violence due to their exposure to depressive symptoms, while boys respond to violence as a coping strategy. It is evident that boys are highly provoked into responding to their peers aggressively than girls. Aggressiveness among boys could be attributed to the frequency in which they experience peer victimization (Espelage, 2004). Adolescents, during their transition to high school, are usually faced with many challenges when exposed to bullying, which could either build up or affect their development. Exposure often leads to offenses carried back to the school and the community, and any violent behavior in the family will also be portrayed in the school.

It is important to note that not only the victims are usually affected by such bullying behavior but are also the perpetrators. According to Maliki (2009), everyone that is a bully had been bullied before. Students' ability to academically succeed is influenced by bullying as they feel unsafe and stay away from school. Bullied children are weak, shy, and anxious, and stay

away from school due to victimization and continuous victimization and victimization experiences lead to poor academic performance (Rose, 2011).

Being bullied is associated with being unsafe in schools, loneliness, not belonging at school, and skipping school to avoid victimization. Bullying and victimization are associated with poor academic achievement in schools due to their effects on the students (Kokkinos, 2012). Students do not feel safe and lose interest in attending schools due to harassment from fellow peers. Victimization is negatively associated with poor academic performance in both males and females as either of them will avoid school due to bully threats or feel very depressed to study in an environment where they feel unsafe. Bullying and victimization could be directly or indirectly related to psychological maladjustment, school engagement, and peer acceptance, as well as other factors that could mediate these acts of bullying and victimization (Wang, 2011). Victims of bullying are usually exposed to problems such as emotional, behavioral, psychiatric disorder, and poor or impaired academic performance (Nakamoto, 2010). At the mental health level, victims of bullying are faced with depression, insomnia, feelings of loneliness, hopelessness, low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, and suicidal attempt. It is important to note that the negative consequences of bullying do not usually end at the incident itself, but often continues to adulthood, and can have negative effects on the life of the individual. Physical violence can trigger violent behavior, which can be passed to peers and teachers in the classroom and the learning environment at large since bullying is a life-changing experience. The results of all the effects of bullying usually end up with poor academic performance in schools.

Another trigger of bullying and physical violence is poor negotiation between parents in the family setting. The family is always the first learning contact of any child, and any violent behavior portrayed at home by the parent will easily be picked up by the child who grows with

this character and always take it to the school level, which further multiplies into more bullies and victims.

Normally, victimization from bullying leads to mental health problems, school absenteeism, and low self-esteem (Farrington, 2009). A study by Juvonen (2011) showed that boys had lower numerical scores of physical victimizations while with girls, all types of bullying affected their scores. When students engage in aggressive behaviors, problems arise, which include low academic performance, delinquent behaviors, and early school dropout. This is supported in research by Orpinas (2015), which showed that the act of exclusion from other school activities is a social or delinquent behavior that exists in schools and very well-known by students, teachers, and parents. Similarly, José (2017) established that peer victimization is a center for depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Peer victimization has all negative effects on school performance as children stay away from school due to victimization, children fear school socialization due to victimization, and this plays negatively on school engagement and academic performance.

Aggressive children are liked in their classrooms. These children are most popular in classrooms where social status is also highly competitive and of equal range, where aggression is never experienced, and where learning proceeds in a fair environment (Garandeau, 2011). More quarrelsomeness is seen in a high-status environment than other lower status environment where everyone is very submissive. The disparity of social status always causes aggression in schools, which further distorts the learning environment and affects academic achievement (Garandeau, 2011). The school where adolescents spend most of their day will always be exposed to multiple victimizations. When children feel supported by the teacher, it increases their belongingness, engagement, and they have fewer behavioral problems, and this turns to increase academic

performance while an unhealthy school environment makes children perform poorly. When adolescents attend school with a high number of bullies, the tendency is for them to always perform poorly due to continuous victimization.

Bullying and Mental Health

Bullying victimization and mental health have become a growing concern amongst school staff, teachers, parents, and local authorities because they are part of the school community (Olivers & Candappa, 2003). Thus, enrolment of social networks that includes school staff, parents, and school authorities, which widens any kind of learning behavior in the school or at home always leads to any form of bullying. This is common because of diversified family background, human characteristics, and human nature (Olivers & Candappa, 2003). This supports information from other existing research, which indicates that targeted children by bullies always show signs of distress, depression, and anxiety (Hawker & Boulton, 2000).

Arseneault (2010) examined some key factors as the potential risks to mental health problems caused by bullying victimization. Individual characteristics and family factors predict children who become targets of bullies (Arseneault, 2010). Children with internalizing problems such as withdrawal and anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and reduced assertiveness have increased the risk of being bullied in childhood. Both are internalizing and externalizing behaviors of bullying among youths result from modeling or copying them from family members who practiced them (Ruther et al., 2009). Exposure to bullying behaviors at home is also another factor which shows that family setting plays a great role in bullying victimization (Brendgen et al., 2008). This is the first environment at which learning begins, and this is always where the first characteristic that any child takes to the social world. Home is the place associated with increased bullying victimization like child maltreatment, domestic violence, parental depression,

low social economic status. Other places out of homes that have increased bullying victimization include school overcrowding, the number of children receiving free meals. Being bullied is not a situational event, and it can last for a period of years, and childhood bullying victimization does not usually lead to adulthood bullying victimization as situations could change, or individuals could have several ways of coping with bullying.

Bullied children show severe symptoms of mental health problems, which include psychological distress such as worry, nightmares, or sadness. Bullying victimization does not only lead to minor difficulty, but also a wide range of serious mental health problems. Victims of bullying do not only show social isolation, depression, and anxiety but also show increased self-harm behavior and suicidal ideations (Feorero et al., 1999). Suicidal ideation is mostly seen from homes due to rejection by parents with internalizing problems (Herba et al., 2008).

The impact of being bullied does not end at either internalizing or externalizing problems; however, both the bully and the victim show externalizing problems of violent behavior and carrying weapons (Nansel et al., 2003).

Besides the effects of bullying like depression and anxiety, other effects could occur, which involve headache and abdominal pain, low self-esteem, and reduced social functioning. There is also a higher rate of individuals that are referred to psychiatric assessment because of observing bullying actions (Nansel et al., 2001). The effects of bullying at times could involve several individuals with distinct roles, and this involves assistant bully, reinforcer, outsider, and the defender. Any activity being played by anyone always has a negative or mental health effect in the future (Salmivalli et al., 1996). It is also worth noting that a child who in any way has witnessed domestic violence requires counseling to overcome whatever they went through to avoid further effects that may arise in any other social gathering that may involve bullying. There

always exists a bad behavioral effect with any child that witnesses interparental violence with non-witness one. Several effects are seen in children exposed to community violence and neighborhood violence with effects such as poor school behavior, symptoms of emotional disturbance, posttraumatic stress, drugs and alcohol, and suicidal tendency in extreme cases. The continuous exposure to witnessing bullying and victimization can lead to a state of having inconsistent thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes, which are negative aspects of mental health. The individual witnessing the event may have been in the same situation before that made the person go through psychological trauma, and it simply brings back that same event as observed (Rivers, 2009).

There is a relationship between bullying and psychosocial adjustment with a poor emotional adjustment being portrayed by bullies and victims compared to those not involved in such bullying activities (Bowker, 2010). Being bullied and aggressive in childhood is poor and always leads to consequences, such as poor self-esteem, depression, and suicidal behavior (Undheim, 2010).

School bullying is mostly noted for lower academic performance, low level of attachment, and commitment to school (Schneider, 2012). The aforementioned effects are noticeable because school bullying is confined to the school environment while cyberbullying is usually out of the school setting, and not a lot is noticed, but all kinds of bullying are associated with psychological distress.

Perpetrators and victims of bullying are both affected in poor social, emotional, and psychological health outcomes (Owusu, 2011). Some physical symptoms associated with bullying victimization include headache, stomach upsets, and backache, while psychological victimization is associated with nervousness, depression, helplessness, and loneliness. Also

included with the long-term reactions are some short-term reactions of bullying victimization, which include irritability, ongoing sense of panic/fear, repeated memory of victimization, and impaired concentration. Adolescents exposed to bullying victimization face psychological effects, which include depression, suicide ideation, and loneliness (Frisen, 2007). Bullied students always turn to give a negative report as they face all the consequences, but those that are not bullied do not give such complaints.

There is an increased risk of young adults to have mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and self-harm due to peer bullying. Maltreatment does not have any effect on mental health if bullying is not involved (Lereya, 2015). Maltreatment is seen in all forms of any social gathering and especially in schools. Maltreatment and bullying usually look the same, but all have different effects on different individuals. Maltreatment differs from bullying as it entails the cruel or ill-treatment of another person, whereas bullying in an aggressive act conducted intentionally to harm a person. Maltreatment entails the ill-treatment of a person, while bullying involves intimidating or seeking to cause harm to another person by taking oppressive actions (Wang et al., 2019). Not everyone feels the effect of maltreatment, but everyone, when bullied, will feel the pinch (Lereya, 2015).

Fourteen (14%) of children belonging to high school think of suicide, and approximately 7% actually attempt it every year (CABCIG, 2007). The number of student deaths by suicide is rising day by day as the bullying epidemic continues to spread (CABCIG, 2007). A teacher or adult might stop physical abuse, but no one can put a stop to the verbal comments that a child has to face (CABCIG, 2007). It is said that despite being the smallest part of the body, the tongue can inflict damage to the highest degree. This is indeed true, but the main dilemma is that many people choose to overlook bullying. The presence of bullying is common, but research on

bullying in Cameroon schools is limited, with most studies investigating only the existence of

bullying in schools, and this is the reason why this research tries to uncover the hiding aspects of

bullying and its effects on academic performance.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Introduction

   In this chapter, the methodology used in the study with a focus on the research method and design is presented. Discussion on mixed explanatory design is discussed. This method uses qualitative data obtained with the aid of an in-depth interview (IDI) with the teachers to support the quantitative data and an online survey with students. The chapter also presents sampling procedures, data collection methods, data analysis, and the relevant ethical considerations applied while exploring the methodology.

   My research study was completed in Bamenda and Buea in Cameroon. The context of this study extends to the nature of school bullying, the perception of students about school bullying, students experiences of bullying as related to academic performance and bullying types, teachers' perspectives about school bullying their reaction, and reported forms of bullying Possible policy solution whose implementations must reduce bullying in schools and how to manage bullying and ways to make those being bullied to report about it.

   The research questions that guided the study were as follows;

 i. What is the impact of bullying on academic performance?

 ii. What type of bullying is most common in your school?

 iii. What are the experiences of students about bullying in schools?

Research Method

  A mixed research approach was used in the study. A mixed research method lays emphasis on the in-depth probing of people's customs, beliefs, assumptions, understanding, opinions, and actions (Doyle, 2014) by using qualitative (in-depth interviews) and quantitative (Survey) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Hesse-Buber (2010) stipulates that mixed-method research

attempts to get in-between two approaches (quantitative and qualitative) seeking to respect each

by using both in a research study. According to Creswell (2014), a mixed research method is an

approach to theory and practice that uses several approaches, perspectives, people's positions,

and ideas to address the problem under study. Mixed method looks at various viewpoints of

individuals that include questionnaires, interviews, observations (data collection), experiments,

ethnography (Method of research), and related philosophical issues of ontology, epistemology

(Turner, 2007, p.118). As such, a mixed research method was suitable for the study to examine

and explore perceptions of high school students and teachers about school bullying and impacts

on education performance. Also, a mixed research approach was appropriate to allow for data

collection with the use of multiple sources like surveys and interviews to obtain detailed

information to answer research questions.

Research Design

An explanatory research design was used in the study. An explanatory research design is

a two-phase research design whereby quantitative data are collected in the first phase, and

qualitative data are obtained during the second phase to build upon to validate the quantitative

findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2001). Also, an explanatory design is used to follow up on the

quantitative results to provide detailed information with qualitative data that best describe the

findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2001). As such, an explanatory design was used in the study,

and it helped in substantiating the quantitative results with qualitative findings. Also, an

explanatory design was useful in the study as it helped in answering the research questions in a

detailed manner.

Context and Sampling Procedure

The sampling procedure was done in this study using a random sampling technique. The sampling technique is where all people are believed to have the potential to participate as a study sample (Taherdoost, 2016). In this technique, participants have an equal chance to participate in the study, which reduces selection bias during selection (Taherdoost, 2016). As such, random sampling was used to select high school students and teachers to take part in the study. In the study, schools were randomly selected to participate in the study in the two Anglophone regions. The research selected the two English regions of Cameroon because they are evidence of school bullying, and none or very little research has been done about school bullying in Cameroon. Upper sixth students aged between 15-17 years were selected randomly from the schools to participate in the interviews. The students had the option to accept or reject participation. Also, teachers were selected randomly from the chosen schools.

The main reason for sampling in high school students and teachers was to permit the researcher to access the opinion of teachers of upper sixth classes rather than use the general population of the school (Ross 2005).

Role of the Researcher

The researcher was used as a data collection instrument in the study. The researcher is used as an instrument to collect the necessary data rather than using machines. An example is during survey research, where researchers take part in collecting data from the students using surveys or questionnaires (Doyle 2014). In this study, the researcher played the role of collecting data from students and teachers. The researcher collected data to try to understand the perceptions of teachers and the experiences of students through interviews and surveys. As a result, the researcher was concerned about being objective and to conquer any bias of both information coming from teachers and students. Also, the researcher developed a rigorous data

analysis strategy. The researcher focused on collecting data using an online survey and interviews and sought to express only what the data implied and what participants had to say.

Data Collection Methods

Since the mixed-method approach was used in the study, both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were utilized. Online surveys and interviews were used in collecting the data.

Online survey.

During data collection, all 24 students' participants were engaged in the online survey (See Appendix A). The online survey was carried out from respondents of twelve schools, mostly in urban areas from upper sixth students in high schools in the North West and southwest regions of Cameroon. All students answered standardized questionnaires via electronic media. The participants were requested to answer the questions in the survey and were informed not to write their names or any identifiable information in the survey forms. This was aimed to protect their identity, hence allowing them to respond to questions and which allow them to answer freely without inducement whatsoever, as discussed by Creswell and Plano Clark (2001). Eleven questions existed with various responses that guided the participants to choose or tick one that suited them. Each respondent had the right to or not to answer the questions based on the responses given (See Appendix A). Sample questions from the survey included; "Have you witnessed any form of bullying"? Yes/No/Maybe, and "What was the form of bullying"? Physical bullying, verbal bullying, social bullying?"

A follow-up interview was again carried out online to gather more information about school bullying with the students (see Appendix B). The interview was still carried out online via WhatsApp with a link with a new set of students to the same respondents. The questions

included: Can you tell me a bit about being bullied, and how did the bullying happen? Where did

it occur, and how often did you get bullied? Are you aware of whether the person(s) who bullied

you in school has or has also bullied someone else? Why do you think that people bully others?

Only sixteen students were able to respond to the follow up with an online survey.

Interviews.

The interviews were carried out with six teachers from the selected schools. The

interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions (See Appendix C) to enable freedom

of participants to discuss further on what they know and expound on the questions to provide

adequate information to describe the problem under investigation as recommended by Creswell

(2012). Interviews were used in this study because it is necessary to explore feelings, behaviors,

or how people interpret the world beyond them (Merriam, 2009, pp. 88). To get the

psychological and social world of any respondent, a semi-structured interview is necessary

(Smith, & Osborn, 2003, pp. 59). Interviews also give the respondent the opportunity to express

themselves in their own words (Brunner, 2006). Thus, using semi-structured interviews as data

collection instruments made the researcher be more objective while given the participants the

opportunity to express themselves in a manner that they want. Very important themes could

emerge during some structured questions between the researcher and respondents during

interviews (Legards, Keegan, & Ward, 2003, pp.140). As such, interviews with six teachers in

the North West and South regions of Cameroon provided a detailed insight for them to express

their minds about what students tell them about school bullying and what they experience on a

daily basis due to their observation.

The interviews provided the researcher with rich information obtained from teachers

about school bullying and academic performance. The cases reported how teachers manage the

situation and frequent occurrences. Two interviews were face-to-face and took place at convenient places for the respondent, while four were conducted through WhatsApp voice note and took place at a time which the respondents chose. Interviews were done through WhatsApp voice notes, and each interview lasted for approximately 20-40 minutes. After the interviews that occurred on different dates and times, the responses and voice notes were transcribed and saved in word documents. There were later sent to all participants to confirm if the transcriptions depicted what they intended to say if they needed any updates.

After recruiting six interested participants, the informed consent form was sent to them via emails and interview questions for review and to go through important points. Participants contacted the researcher and suggested appropriate time and place that were suitable for them to participate due to the political situation of the country. The interviews that were sent through WhatsApp note were strictly followed from one question to the next. Face-to-face interviews had to commence by creating a cordial relationship with the teacher to build trust, asking how they were coping with the political situation, and explaining the main point and objectives of the study. Participants were informed about audio recording and that their names were protected with pseudonyms. Consent forms were signed after they understood what was to be done. All information gathered during the interview or WhatsApp voice notes were transcribed for all six participants and sent to them for review.

Data Collection Procedure

The same questions for interviews were used for all the schools and students, but the interview questions were not chronological and changed with every student base on how the interview unfolds. Also, a consent letter was sent to the parents/guardians of the selected student via students of the school to inform them about the objective of the study and their child's

participation in the interviews. Only students whose parents or guardians signed and returned informed consent forms participated in the study. For students whose parents did not want the child to participate or signed the consent letter, a response was sent to the school, and the child was excluded from the study. Also, teachers received informed consent forms before data collection. The consent forms were sent through their email address obtained from their respective schools based on the consent, and they were informed to sign and return them during the date set for the interview. Only teachers who signed and returned inform consent forms participated in the study. During the interviews, teachers were informed that anytime they feel uncomfortable to continue the interview, they were allowed to leave, and what has been recorded was deleted immediately. Participants were interviewed about their bullying experience and how it affects/ or has affected their daily school activities, their health, and academic performance.

During data collection, students received surveys with questions to answer. Their surveys were kept in a folder, and those downloaded were kept in envelopes. Also, during the interview process, teachers were interviewed in their respective places, and their responses were recorded via an electronic storage device. Their responses were later transcribed by converting the raw data into written forms and were kept in envelopes for analysis.

Data Analysis

Since both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, descriptive analysis and thematic analyses were performed, respectively. Descriptive analysis was used for quantitative data, and this analysis approach is mainly used to determine the differences in the relationship between groups. The approach analyses the data quantitatively to assist in comparing how different variables affect each other (Kaliyadan & Kulkarni, 2019). As such, descriptive analysis was used to determine how bullying impacts academic performance among high school students

Additionally, thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. The narrative analysis approach is becoming increasingly popular, especially in social sciences (Cresswell 2012). Interview transcripts from teachers were compared before looking for interpretations. Each interview was analyzed while looking for insights and meanings that were used to determine common phrases for theme development.

Trustworthiness

Added to the study are strategies to improve trustworthiness and to validate the accuracy of data. Creswell (2012) stipulates three steps to ensure the credibility of findings in qualitative research, and they are triangulation, member checking, and external audit. Creswell (2012) defines triangulation as "the steps where evidence from different individuals or sources types of data, or where different methods of data collection are used. In this study, triangulation, in which where different methods of data collection were used, helped in ensuring the credibility of research findings. Information was obtained from the interviews done with teachers and the online survey and interviews by students. As such, it was easy to see similar issues arising from data analysis of different sources through the survey and interview process.

Member checking was also used to ensure data transcribed was accurate as participants were presented with the audio version and transcribed word document as well as the WhatsApp voice note, and the information transcribed. They were asked to verify for accuracy, and all participants were satisfied with the information transcribed.

The last strategy employed was external auditing, which is done by asking an outside person to conduct a thorough review of the study and report back (Creswell, 2012, P. 260). My supervisor played the role of an external auditor.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval to conduct the study was obtained from the ICEHR of the Memorial University of Newfoundland. Also, during data collection, students were informed not to write their names, email addresses, or any identifiable information on the surveys to protect their identity. Also, during the interview process with teachers, the audio recordings were checked for any identifiable information. Instead of participants' names or any other sensitive information, pseudonyms were used to maintain their privacy and anonymity. The researcher listened to audio recordings, and any names mentioned were deleted. Also, interview transcripts and survey forms, and any hard copies of the data used in the study were kept in a lockable drawer for security purposes. Additionally, interview responses were kept in a password-protected folder in the laptop only accessible to the researcher. All the data used in the study will be kept for five years and will be destroyed. Data kept in the form of hard copies were destroyed by shredding them while those on soft copies were destroyed by deleting them.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

The chapter provides the results that were established from the analysis of primary data obtained from 24 students and six teachers sampled from private and public schools in Cameroon. The analysis aimed to establish the effects of bullying on students' academic performance in private and public schools of Cameroon. The purpose of the study was to bring to light the concept of bullying in schools as directed towards students' academic performance and to ascertain the extent to which bullying affects students' performance. Descriptive analysis was performed to establish the descriptive properties of the study variables considered. In addition, thematic analysis was conducted to determine the perceptions of teachers.

The first section of the chapter presents the response rate of the participants. The second section of the analysis chapter presents the quantitative descriptive results established. The third section presents the qualitative findings based on the themes established from the thematic analysis of the teachers' interviews. Lastly, a summary of the chapter is provided

Response Rate

A total of 24 students out of a population of 50 participants volunteered to participate in the survey research. The participants filled a questionnaire that was disseminated to the sampled students by the researcher. Questionnaires submitted back were checked for completeness and errors. All the participants sampled in the research completed and resubmit the questionnaires to the researcher. The response rate was adequate for the researcher to work with the data collected and obtain meaningful results for the research. Table 1 presents the response rate results.

Table 1

Response Rate of Student Study Participants (N=24)

	Questionnaires	Percentage %
Questionnaires fully completed	24	100.0%
Questionnaires not fully completed	0	0.0%
Total	24	100.0%

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was conducted to analyze the data feedback of the various questions regarding bullying in schools. The process enabled the researcher to describe the data properties in relation to bullying behaviors in public schools. The descriptive statistics used in the study included frequencies and percentages.

Bullying in schools.

The student participants were asked whether they have ever witnessed any form of bullying in their school. Of the students who answered the question, 83.3% indicated that they have witnessed bullying in their school before. Moreover, 8.3% of the students stated that they had not experienced any form of bullying in their school, while 8.3% of the students were not sure whether they had experienced a form of bullying in their schools. The results indicate that bullying can be a student experience in both public and private schools in Cameroon. The descriptive results established are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Descriptive Report on Bullying Witnessed (N =24)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Have you ever witnessed any form of bullying in your school?		
Yes	20	28.6
No	2	14.3
Maybe	2	31.4
Total	24	100.0

Students were also asked to indicate the form of bullying that they have witnessed. Most of the students indicated that the form of bullying witnessed was physical bullying and verbal bullying, representing 37.5% of the study participants. Of the participants who responded to the question, those who indicated that they experienced physical bullying alone represented 33.3% of the study participants, and 16.7% of the study participants indicated that they experienced verbal bullying alone. In addition, 4.2 % of the study participants indicated that they experienced verbal and social bullying; 4.2 % of the study participants indicated that they experienced other forms of bullying not listed while 4.2% of the study participants indicated that they never experienced any form of bullying before. None of the students indicated that they had experienced social bullying alone or cyberbullying. The results suggest that physical and verbal bullying are the most experienced and most common forms of bullying witnessed by a majority of the students in private and public schools of Cameroon. The descriptive results established are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Descriptive Report on Form of Bullying Witnessed (N =24)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
What was the form of bullying?		
Physical bullying	8	33.3
Verbal bullying	4	16.7
Physical and verbal bullying	9	37.5
Verbal and social bullying	1	4.2
Other	1	4.2
Never experienced bullying	1	4.2
Total	24	100.0

The study also aimed to establish where students mostly report any case of bullying that they witnessed. Students were, therefore, asked to indicate where they report any form of bullying that they experienced. Half of the student respondents indicated that they did not report to anyone when they are bullied representing 50% of the study participants. The least number of the students indicated that they reported to their parents when they were bullied in school representing 8.3% of the study participants. Those students who indicated that they reported to the school authority when they were bullied represented 25% of the study participants while those students who indicated that they informed their friends when they were bullied in school represented 16.7% of the respondents. The results established suggest that students mostly do not report to anyone including the school authority, parents, and friends when they are bullied. The descriptive results established are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Descriptive Report on Students Reporting on Bullying (N =24)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Who did you report to that you were bullied?		
School Authority	6	25.0
Parents	2	8.3
Friends	4	16.7
None	12	50.0
Total	24	100.0

Students were asked to indicate whether they have ever been a perpetrator of bullying. Based on the results established, most of the students are not perpetrators of bullying in their schools representing 58.3% of the study respondents. However, a quarter of the students (25%) who participated in the study indicated that they had before been perpetrators of bullying in their schools. Also, 16.7% were not sure whether they had before been perpetrators of bullying in their schools. The results suggest most students do not involve themselves with bullying in schools. Only a few of the students have adopted the vice of bullying others. The descriptive results established are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Descriptive Report on Perpetrating Bullying in Schools (N =24)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Have you ever been a perpetrator of bullying?		
Yes	6	25.0
No	14	58.3
Maybe	4	16.7
Total	24	100.0

The study further explored how those who indicated they were perpetrators felt when they bullied someone. Students who said they were perpetrators were asked to indicate how they felt when they bullied another student. Of those who responded to the questions, half of the participants (50%) indicated that they did not feel anything when they bullied someone. The least of the students representing 4.2% of the respondents indicated that they felt very satisfied when they bullied someone. Students who felt satisfied after bullying someone and those students who felt unsatisfied after bullying someone each represented 16.7% of the study participants. None of the students was found to be very unsatisfied after bullying someone. The results established suggest that most of the perpetrators of bullying do not feel anything after bullying someone. The descriptive results established are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Descriptive Report on the Feeling of Bullying Someone in School (N =21)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
How did you feel when you bullied someone?		
Very Satisfied	1	4.2
Satisfied	4	16.7
Unsatisfied	4	16.7
None	12	50.0
Total	21	100.0

The study also sought to establish who were the most affected by bullying between males and females in private and boarding school classes as well as how often students experienced bullying in schools. The results established as presented in Table 7 below indicates that male students are the most affected population with bullying in school than female students representing 20.8% of the study participants. Students who indicated that both males and females experience equal measures of bullying incidents represented 66.7% of the study participants. Therefore, the results suggest that both male and female students experience equal measures of bullying incidents. The results presented in Table 7 also indicate that most of the student's experience bullying on a weekly basis (58.3%) rather than on a daily basis (41.7%).

Table 7

Descriptive Report on most Affected Student population based on Gender and Frequency of

Bullying (N =24)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Who are most affected by bullying in your class?		
Males	5	20.8
Females	3	12.5
Both	16	66.7
Total	24	100.0
How often do you experience bullying in school?		
Daily	10	41.7
Weekly	14	58.3
Total	24	100.0

Effect of bullying on student academic performance. Students were asked to indicate

whether they thought bullying affects their academic performance. According to the results

established from the descriptive analysis, 79.2% of the students indicated that bullying affected

their academic performance. In addition, 8.3% indicated that bullying did not affect their

academic performance while 12.5% of the students were not sure whether bullying affects or

does not affect their performance. The results established suggests that bullying at private and

public schools in Cameroon affects the academic performance of most of the students who are

victims of the vice. Most students commented that their performances were very poor due to

bullying. The descriptive results established are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8

Descriptive Report on Effect of Bullying on Academic Performance (N =24)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
When you were bullied, did it affect your academic performance?		
Yes	19	79.2
No	2	8.3
Maybe	3	12.5
Total	24	100.0

To explore the extent at which bullying interferes with student academics, the study

investigated whether bullying affected students' performance in all subjects or only the subject

shared with the perpetrator of bullying. Students were asked to indicate whether bullying had an

effect on all their subjects' performance or just one where the perpetrator was taking the subject.

Based on the descriptive results established and presented in Table 9 below, more than half the

student respondents, representing 54.2%, indicated that bullying affected their performance in

one subject, the subject they took in which the perpetrator of the bullying was taking. Some of

the respondents representing 20.8% of the student participants indicated that bullying affected

their academic performance in all subjects. Other respondents representing 12.5% of the

participants indicated that bullying did not affect their academic performance in any of the

subjects that they were taking while 12.5% indicated that bullying was not related with their

subjects' academic performance. The results established suggest that the performance of most

students is affected because they are usually in the same class with the perpetrator of their

bullying.

Table 9

Descriptive Report on Subjects Affected Because of Bullying (N =24)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Did bullying affect your performance in all subjects or it affected you only in the subject in which the perpetrator was in?		
One subject	13	54.2
All subjects	5	20.8
No subjects	3	12.5
None of the above	3	12.5
Total	24	100.0

From the results in Table 9, Students commented that being in the same class with the

perpetrators made them lose concentration, experience fear, and associated bullying which, in

result, led them to have less time to study because of being involved with verbal exchange and

sometimes fights with the perpetrators. Students also waste study time thinking about what had

happened and what will or might happen to them the following day. One of the students

commentated that he dropped out of school due to bullying. The findings indicate that bullying

has a negative effect on the academic performance of students.

Qualitative Analysis on Teachers' Perspectives on Bullying

Data collected through interviews with teachers in Cameroon were used to generate themes that describe the research questions.

In this subsection, the results of the study are presented in form of themes. The themes are developed using the information collected during the interviews with the teachers. The themes obtained are: frequency of bullying and types, location of bullying, effects of bullying, cases reported, and strategies to reduce bullying. Coding process was done and codes that yielded the theme of *frequency of bullying and types* were: Verbal bullying, Social bullying, Physical bullying, and Number of times being bullied as indicated in Appendix D. The coding process for location of bullying was done and specific codes that yielded the theme were: Bullying mainly occurs within the school, Bullying in class after the teacher left, and Bullying occurs on way home or to school as indicated in Appendix E. Theme three on *effects of bullying* emerged following the coding process using the codes of decreased academic performance, student's death, school dropout, and bullying as a survival mechanism as indicated in Appendix F. The theme of *cases reported* emerged based on the code identified, which included Reported cases of out of class bullying as shown in Appendix G. Theme 5 on *strategies to reduce bullying* was identified from the coding process based on the following codes: Rules and policies and Disciplinary measures as indicated in Appendix H

Frequency of bullying and types. From the data collected, thematic analysis was done for the data collected through interviews. The data analysis as done and the theme of *frequency of bullying and types* were developed. Manual coding process was done during the analysis, which helped in generating the theme. Six teachers provided responses that were coded to create the themes. The teachers and students shared their perceptions on the types and frequency of bullying they witnessed. The patterns that form the theme of frequency of bullying and types are

verbal bullying, social bullying, physical bullying, and number of times being bullied as presented in Appendix D. Appendix D indicates the codes used in generating the theme of frequency of bullying and types based on the perceptions of teachers.

All teachers presented their perceptions on bullying, types, and their frequency. From the responses given by teachers, the most common types of bullying teachers witness in secondary schools are verbal, social, and physical bullying. Teachers mentioned that verbal bullying that commonly occurs in their schools are taunting, teasing, and name calling. Also, teachers shared that social bullying through spreading rumour about someone and leaving someone out on purpose are common among students. Further, examples of physical bullying that mostly occur in schools are hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, and taking someone's thing.Teachers shared that the bullying activities occur daily, with some teachers witnessing bullying five times. For instance, Teacher 1 said,

> Physical and social bullying are very common within my students and it exists almost on daily basis… Bullying can be verbal (taunting, teasing, name calling), social (spreading rumour about someone, leaving someone out on purpose), physically which is most common (hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, taking or ceasing someone's thing…In a year, I can experience cases of bullying maximum five times.

> Similarly, Teacher 2 shared the same responses that, "The most common type of bullying in this school is physical bullying…bullying mainly occurs within the school that is, in the playground, classroom, between classes, while commuting to and from school." Also, Teacher 3 said that, "Physical bullying is the most common types… It occurs almost every day, especially when teachers are absent from class and the students are idling."

Also, teachers were asked to share their perceptions regarding bullying in the school. Teachers shared that physical, social, and verbal bullying are common in schools and they happen either at school or on their way home. For instance, teacher 1 said, "The students were physically bullied by a senior student in my class. He seized another student candy with the use of force…the student was bullied on campus immediately after lessons. The student gets bullied at least twice a month." Also, teacher 2 shared that, "They attack other students on their way and this time they did not just use verbal threat, but they gave 3 spanks on another students' cheek … After school hours, ones in a while." Further, teacher 5 mentioned that, "Students were bullied socially. The bullied student was excluded from the school football team… This was during our weekly practices in school."

From the teachers' perceptions, it is evident that physical, verbal, and social bullying practices are common in schools, which occur at different times and they are mainly practiced by students.

Location of bullying. Manual coding was done on teachers' response and the theme of location of bullying was identified. Codes that formed the theme are bullying mainly occurs within the school, bullying in class after the teacher left, and bullying occurs on way home or to school as presented in Appendix E. The participants also shared the locations where the bullying takes place. From the responses it was found that bullying occurs either at school or when students are going home.

Teachers mentioned specific locations in schools like class, dormitories, and in playground where bullying occurs. Teachers shared that students practice bullying in school, especially in classrooms after their teacher left class. Others engage in bullying during class hours due to idleness. For instance, Teacher 2 mentioned that, "Bullying is very common in the classroom. In the classroom we often find students making fun of others and especially when

they try to respond to a question in class." Also, Teacher 3 maintained similar responses and shared that, "Bullying is a common phenomenon in class especially when teachers are absent from class and the students are idling."

It is evident that bullying occurs at school, such as in class and dormitories, on way home, and during games. Teachers shared that students bully themselves in class when teachers left and other are bullied in the dormitories by their colleagues. Also, bullying occurs on way home or when going to school. For instance, Teacher 3 said, "It occurs in class after the teacher left the class…especially when I keep answering questions in class." Similarly, Teacher 4 mentioned that, "It mostly happens in dormitories." "…. seniors come to dormitories and order everyone to lay down on the floor at midnight others have us beaten for no just cause and everything was normal as bullying was passed on generation to generation." Other teachers shared that bullying occur in campus especially in dormitories and others are bullied during their academic years. For instance, Teacher 5 said that, "On the school campus, the student was bullied every day for about a month each academic year, especially those in form 3 and form 4."

Similarly, Teacher 6 explained that, "Bullying occurs in the school dormitory, school ground, the library and school restaurant. Bullying affected many students' stop coming to read, stop eating etc." Teacher 6 further explained that, "Some of my mates have been bullied mostly on their way to school or on their way home."

Effects of bullying. Teachers were asked to share their perceptions on effects bullying like in students' performances. Codes that formed the theme are decreased academic performance, student's death, school dropout, and bullying as a survival mechanism as presented in Appendix F. All teachers shared their views and presented valuable information that were

used in developing appropriate themes. Manual coding process was done and the theme was generated from participants' responses.

Teachers presented their perceptions on bullying and its effects. From the response found, teachers reported that bullying reduces academic performance and cause other students to dropout of or change the school. Also, they share similar responses that bullying can result in student's death and other use as a mechanism of survival. For instance, Teacher 4 shared that "…. And they resort to bullying as a survival mechanism to keep themselves relevant and noticeable." Similarly, Teacher 2 mentioned,

> …bullying is a bad thing for it can create an unsecured and tense environment for other students which adversely affect their ability to assimilate what they are being taught. Thus, it can lead to poor performance, class repetition by students and even school dropout.

Teachers shared that some students engage in bullying behaviours as a way of power of possession or to show physical strength. For instance, Teacher 4 shared that, "Bullying even caused a junior student to stab a senior student to death in my school… People bully others to show physical strength or power in the possession." Teacher 5 mentioned that, "Some students dropped out from school and changed school. This caused them to repeat one class." Teacher 6 also shared the perceptions that bullying affected students' psychology and panic, which mostly affected the school performance. Teacher 6 said that, "Bullying affects   students psychologically and gives them panic which intent affects my school performance." Also, Teacher 6 indicated that, "Bullying affected study habit of students and made them to be afraid even to talk."

Cases reported. The participants shared the perceptions regarding on reported cases of class bullying. Teachers provided valuable information that was analysed and coded to find the

appropriate theme. The theme generated from the participants' responses is *case reported*. Coding that formed the themes is reported cases of out of class bullying as presented in appendix G.

Teachers presented the reported cases of bullying in schools. Teachers reported that they have witnessed cases of out of school bullying by their students. In addition, some of the students agreed that they have reported cases of bullying to respective authorities, which help in addressing the bullying behaviours in schools. Teachers explained that most of their students report several cases of out of school bullying, which assist them in using the appropriate measures to curb. For instance, Teacher 1 mentioned that, "Severally cases of out of class bullying have been brought to me. It could be on school campus or in the quarter." Teacher 2 responded that, "…out of class bullying case was brought to my attention and it was a case of threat given to a junior student by a senior not to participate in a scheduled rehearsal to a football encounter." Also, Teacher 3 shared similar responses and said that, "…Many students have reported cases of out of class bullying, especially when going back home after school."

Despite some teachers mentioned that they have not reported any cases of bullying, most of them accepted that they have experienced reported bullying cases either to school administration, counselling committee, and other respective authorities. For instance, Teacher 2 mentioned that, "I have several times. The bully was called for a disciplinary council, but he still came after me then next day." Also, Teacher 4 shared that, "Yes. The school authority just gave them few hours of punishment." Teacher 5 said that, "Yes. After so many students complain about them being bullied by same group of boys. They were dismissed."

Strategies to reduce bullying. The theme of strategies to reduce bullying was generated from the responses presented by teachers and students. Responses from teachers were analysed

and codes were accorded to similar phrases, which led to generation of the theme strategies to reduce bullying. Codes that were used to generate the main theme are rules and policies and Disciplinary measures as presented in Appendix H.

Teachers were asked to explain any mechanism set forth by the school authorities to assist in curbing the number of perpetrators of bullying and to increase academic performance. Teachers shared that the school have developed a set of school rules and policies to reduce cases of bullying in schools. Teachers also mentioned the disciplinary measures that have been developed in schools to punish students who engage and practice bullying. Relating to school rules and policies, teachers perceived that they are already in place, which assists teachers and students to understand the consequences of bullying in school. These rules and policies are developed and all teachers and students must comply with them. For instance, Teacher 1 mentioned,

> In my school for example, a set of rules and policies concerning bullying are put in place and enforced. These rules are made clear to students and teachers that bullying is not allowed and there are clear consequences for those who break the rules. Any bullying behaviour is therefore punished accordingly. The school to stamp out bullying and create a safe and healthy environment for all students has also resorted to rewarding students who provide good example of the school's policies in action.

 Also, Teacher 2 explained,

> Some mechanisms have been put in place to reduce the number of perpetrators of bullying; - first through the school rules and regulations that spell out sanctions for such acts. These sanctions range from simple warning, to punishment, suspension and even complete dismissal from school. Other measures include the recruitment of PTA auxiliary

staffs to reinforce discipline in school to identify and correct bullies. School and class prefects are also empowered so that they act as an arm of school administration to reduce the number of perpetrators of bullying in school.

Teacher 3 shared similar responses that disciplinary council is available at school and is essential in punishing the perpetrators. For instance, Teacher 3 said, "Yes. Most often harsh disciplinary measures are put in place to check this phenomenon. These include summoning the parents/guardian to school, temporary suspension and outright dismissal in chronic cases." Teacher 3 further explained that, "Yes! If caught and proven as a perpetrator, the disciplinary council awaits you and you are punished according to the norms of the council."

Despite the implementation of school rules and policies, some teachers perceived that they are ineffective in reducing the number of perpetrators. Students perceived that the rules and policies do not prevent some students from bullying. They perceive that bullying remains the everyday activity at school. For instance, Teacher 4 mentioned that, "Well the school administration always tries to punish students who bully others to serve as warning to the other students, but bully cases are still brought up every day." Also, Teacher 5 shared similar responses and said that, "…...To the discipline master, good results did not turn out well because when the suspended students came back, they multiplied the rate of bully upon us." However, Teacher 6 suggested the need to adopt school rules and report those practicing bullying to school authorities. Teacher 6 said that, "I think they should implement a rule that states dismissal for every bully, and also put students to look out for their classmates and report any case of bullying to the school authorities."

Chapter Summary

Data analysis and coding process provide valuable themes that discuss bullying in secondary schools in Cameroon. Teachers and students perceived that bullying is common in schools, which are practiced by students towards others. They perceived that bullying mainly occurs in school environment like in class, during games, and in dormitories. Teachers explained that out of school cases of bullying are reported by students, which primarily occur due either on way to school or when children are going to school. Also, the main location of bullying is when students are on the way or when going to school. Bullying in school was found to diminish student's academic performance, cause death to students, and even some may drop out of school while others change school. As such, teachers perceived that a set of school rules and policies, and disciplinary actions are in place to curb the bullying cases. However, students perceive that the strategies are not effective because cases of bullying continue to increase. Students perceived that the perpetrators who are punished or suspended in schools continue to bully others.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Chapter 5 of the study presents discussions of results obtained in the previous chapter based on research questions. Also, the study implications, limitations, and summary of findings are presented in the chapter. Finally, the chapter presents recommendations with a focus on recommendations of practice and recommendations for future practice.

Discussion of Results

What is the impact of bullying on academic performance?

The first research question explored the impact of bullying on academic performance. Teachers and students in the study reported that bullying in schools creates an insecure environment for students, which negatively impacts the ability to conform to class activities, hence causing poor performance in class. Also, teachers and students mentioned that bullying has adverse effects on the psychology of students and makes them panic and afraid in class, which negatively impacts their school performance. The results add value to the existing body knowledge that bullying in academic settings is a global problem that affects school performance among students. Bullying in schools negatively impacts academic performance because it affects the physical, social, psychological, and emotional wellbeing of students (Cynthia, 2014; Sekol, Farrington, & Ireland, 2016; Shafqat & Jan, 2015). Similarly, the existing literature indicates that bullied students develop fear and low self-confidence, which diminishes the personality traits in schools. Such students are unable to pay close attention to what is being taught in class, and this leads to poor performances (Al-Raqqad, Al-Bourini, Al Talahin, & Aranki, 2017; Mundbjerg, Nielsen, & Simonsen, 2014).

Also, bullying in schools is associated with death among students and school dropouts. Teachers and students shared that bullying causes senior students to use their force or physical

strength to hurt and harm junior students in school. Also, teachers and students revealed that bullied students might drop out of school while others seek for alternatives or change schools. The findings align with the literature that bullying in schools leads to high dropouts and the ability of students to change schools. Bullying causes fear, and students develop negative attitudes to school, and this leads to increased cases of school dropouts while other students switch to different schools (Gasper, DeLuca, & Estacion, 2012; Nadine, 2014).

What type of bullying is most common in your school?

The second research question of the study evaluated the types of bullying, which are common in secondary schools in Cameroon. Teachers and students revealed that different types of bullying occur in secondary schools. Teachers and students reported that verbal, social, and physical bullying is the main types found in the secondary schools across Cameroon. Teachers and students disclosed that taunting, teasing, name-calling, spreading rumors about someone, leaving someone out on purpose, hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, and taking someone's thing occur in schools. Teachers and students mentioned that these types of bullying occur at school during class hours when teachers left, during games, and in dormitories. Teachers and students reported that these types of bullying occur daily, occasionally, or weekly, which affect the profound development among students. The results support the research by other scholars that physical acts like restraining other students against their will, hitting, assault, kicking, and pinching are the main bullying in schools. Also, verbal bullying, like the use of nicknames, threats, and insults, are experienced by secondary school students (Price, Chin, Higa-McMillan, Kim, & Frueh, 2013). Also, the results align with the information in a review by Arseneault (2018), which showed that victims of bullying experience discrimination and prejudice, lack of support, or poor friendship, they are outnumbered in schools, face lack of confidence, and lack

physical strength. The studies indicated that such bullying occurs during in any class and in any other school activities.

What are the experiences of students about bullying in your school?

The third research question determined whether perpetrators of bullying are also the victims of bullying. Teachers and students reported that practicing bullying in schools is conducted by perpetrators and not victims. They are mainly senior students who bullied junior students and are also the victims because they believe in having the power of possession or physical strength than some juniors. Teachers and students shared that despite the development of school rules and policies, and disciplinary measures, senior students continue with their bullying behaviors. Teachers and students reported that rules and policies do not help in reducing the number of perpetrators of bullying in schools. The study's findings add value to the existing body of literature that perpetrators of bullying are not victims because perpetrators have increased power than the victims. This is because the victims have less power to cope or respond to the bullies made by perpetrators (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017; Swearer & Hymel, 2015). Also, the results support the existing studies that perpetrators have more power than victims; hence they use their physical strength and power to bully the juniors. The researchers shared that with increased power among the perpetrators and low power in victims, the imbalance in power, responding to bullying by those with less power is a challenge (Swearer & Hymel, 2015). Discussion of research question four. The fourth research question investigated the perceptions of students regarding bullying in schools. The question aimed to uncover students' experiences with bullying in their school. From the study's findings, teachers and students perceived that bullying in their schools negatively affects their academic performances. They perceived that bullying facilitates increased incidences of school dropouts. Also, teachers and students reported

experiences of poor concentrations in class, lack of participation in-class activities, and fear to share ideas or talk with classmates. They perceived that such experiences negatively affect their academic performance because some of them do not practice the necessary activities that can boost their class and school achievements. The results showed alignment with the existing body of knowledge that bullying affects student's involvement in-class activities that are essential towards improving their performance (Fraser, Edwards, & Williams, 2018; van der Werf, 2014). The review of the literature indicated that bullying is the major problem faced by the majority of students in schools, which leads to frustration, and students feel annoyed. Such behaviors affect their concentration in class, hence diminishing their performance in class (Fraser et al., 2018). Also, Najam and Kashif (2018) explained that students who are bullied in school disengage from several class activities that are essential in improving learning performance. The researchers cited that bullying students do not take part in class and are unable to follow teachers' instructions in class. Similarly, the results showed consistency with findings by Oliveira, de Menezes, Irffi, and Oliveira (2018) that bullying like physical abuse affects the social, emotional skills of students, which negatively impact school performances.

Implications

The aim of the study was to determine the effects of bullying on students' academic performance in both public and private schools in Cameroon. The first practical implication of the present study is that the findings provide the necessary empirical information on bullying activities in schools and their significant impacts on students' performance. Thus, the information allows the school administration to develop appropriate strategies and measures that would help in mitigating bullying cases in schools. Also, the information of the present research would allow the redesigning of school rules and policies that would help students and teachers to

comply with them and refrain from bullying behaviors. Further, the study being explorative provides in-depth information that offers an opportunity for students and teachers to understand the consequences of bullying on school and academic performance. The study provides the opportunity to identify different types of bullying common in schools and suggest possible strategies that are effective in mitigating them.

Limitations

The present study had some limitations. The first limitation is that the study only focused on private and public schools in Cameroon, which might have been different from other schools around the world. As a result, the findings of this study might not be generalized or used in other public or private schools worldwide. Second, only teachers and students from secondary schools in Cameroon were the study participants. Thus, it was not possible for the researcher to include other teachers and students from other schools. Third, the views given by the participants might not be true because they might have given biased perceptions so as to appear competent to the researcher. To address this, the participants were informed that their responses were for research proposes, and their responses would not be considered right or wrong. The fourth limitation was the sample size, and the limited number of questions created limitations for the study. The type of medium used for the survey and interviews also created limitations.

Summary of Findings

The study explored the impacts of bullying in public and private schools in Cameroon with a focus on the academic performance of students. The study indicated that verbal bullying, physical bullying, and social bullying are common in schools with negative effects. These bullying behaviors mainly occur within the school environment, such as in-class and dormitories, when students are on their way home or on the way to school. The study revealed that bullying in

schools negatively impacts student's behaviors in terms of behavior and academic performances. The study revealed that bullying results in students developing fear, panic, and disengaging in-class activities, which leads to poor academic performances.

The study also revealed that the perpetrators of bullying are mainly the senior students who bully their juniors, which results in many students dropping out of school while others are changing their schools. The findings of the study also demonstrated that victims of bullying develop negative attitudes towards education, which impacts their achievements. Cases of out of school bullying are reported by the victims where teachers and the school administration take actions to mitigate them. The study revealed that school rules and policies, and disciplinary measures had been put in place in schools to assist in preventing such bullying behaviors. However, they are not effective in addressing bullying because the incidence continues to rise, with most students engaging in such acts.

Recommendations

Recommendations for practice.

The bullying aspect in schools provides the basis for schools to assure conformity with school rules and policies. The study's findings provide the foundation to recommend private and public schools to ensure all students and teachers adhere to the set of rules and regulations to reduce the cases of bullying. The study revealed that teachers should be role models to the students in complying with the rules to avoid cases of bullying. This recommendation is given on the basis that the majority of students are highly affected by bullying. Thus, assuring adherence to school rules and policies with respect to bullying may help in preventing cases of bullying.

Recommendations for future research.

The study was conducted only with a focus on private and public schools in Cameroon. This provides the basis to recommend further research across other schools to enhance the quality and reliability of the study. Also, since only teachers and students provided their perceptions on cases of bullying in their school, further research is needed to explore the perceptions of policymakers on appropriate strategies that can be adopted in schools to reduce cases of bullying. Further, this study was qualitative in nature, which indicates future research with the use of other research methods like quantitative to determine whether bullying has a significant relationship with the academic performance of students.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire for Students

1. Have you ever witnessed any form of bullying in your school?

   Yes

   No

   Maybe

2. What was the form of bullying?

   Physical bullying

   Verbal bullying

   Social bullying

   Cyber bullying

   Physical and Verbal bullying

   Physical and social bullying

   Verbal and Social bullying

   Others

   Other:

3. Who did you report to that you were bullied?

   School Authority

   Friend

   Parents

   None

4. When you were bullied, did it affect your academic performance?

   Yes

   No

Maybe

5. Did bullying affect your performance in all subjects or it affected you only in the subject in which the perpetrator was in?

One subject

All subjects

No Subject

None of the above

Other:

6. Which is the most common type of bullying that exist in your school?

Physical bullying

Verbal bullying

Social bullying

Cyber bullying

Reactive victims

7. Have you ever been a perpetrator of bullying?

Yes

No

Maybe

8. If Yes to the Question 7, how did you feel when you bullied someone?

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Unsatisfied

Very Unsatisfied

None

Others

9. Who are those mostly affected by bullying in your class?

Males

Female

Prefer not to say

Both

10. How often do you experience bullying in school

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Yearly

11. What is the effect of bullying on your academic performance?

Appendix B: Follow-Up Interviews with Students

1. Can you tell me a bit about being bullied and how did the bullying happen?

2. Where did it occur and how often did you get bullied?

3. Are you aware whether the person(s) who bullied you in school has or have also bullied someone else?

4. Why do you think that people bully others?

5. Can you tell me about others being bullied and do they get bullied often?

6. Where do they get bullied and how do you think that being bullied affected them?

7. How has being bullied affected you?

8. Have you ever skipped class, felt unsafe, uncomfortable, or nervous on your way to and from class because of a school bully? If so, can you tell me more about that?

9. Do you feel you have ever performed badly in any subject caused by a bully thus misrepresenting your true ability in that subject? If so, can you tell me more about that?

10. Have you ever witnessed anyone being bullied in school throughout your student life? if so, Can you tell me more about it?

11. Do you think bullying is perceived to be an everyday part of the culture in your school?

12. Do you feel there are adequate strategies and regulations to discourage school bullying in your institutions?

13. What do you think can be done to stop bullying at school?

14. Have you ever reported any case of bullying to your school authorities and what did they do?

15. Who did you report the bullying to, and did you see any result from reporting the bullying?

Appendix C: Interview Questions with Teachers

1. What types of bullying exist in your school and how does it affect your students?

2. How often do you experience bullying in your class and how does it affect student's academic performance?

3. Have your students ever reported any case of out of class bullying to you and how it affects their performance and how did you handle the situation?

4. Are they any mechanism put forth by the school authorities to reduce the number of perpetrators of bullying to increase academic performance?

Appendix D: Coding process For Frequency of Bullying and Types from Interviews with

Teachers

Table 1.

Coding process for theme 1

Codes	Interview Evidence	Theme
1. **Verbal bullying** 2. **Social bullying** 3. **Physical bullying** 4. **Number of times being bullied**	"Physical and social bullying are very common within my students and it exist almost on daily basis……Bullying can be verbal (taunting, teasing, name calling), social (spreading rumour about someone, leaving someone out on purpose), physically which is most common (hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, taking or ceasing someone's thing… In a year, I can experience cases of bullying maximum five times"	Frequency of bullying and types

"The most common type of
bullying in this school is
physical bullying… It occurs
almost every day, especially
when teachers are absent from
class and the students are
idling.

Physical bullying prevails and
in few cases social bullying…
but verbal bullying and
physical common…
personally I only notice it on
occasional basis

"I was physically bullied by a
senior student in my class. He
seized my candies with the
use of force and took my
textbook…I was bullied on
campus immediately after
lessons. I get bullied at least
twice a month"

Appendix E: Coding For Location of Bullying

Table 2.

Coding for theme two

Codes	Interview Evidence	Theme
1. **Bullying mainly occurs within the school** 2. **Bullying in class after the teacher left** 3. **Bullying occurs on way home or to school**	"Bullying is very common in the classroom. In the classroom we often find students making fun of others and especially when they try to respond to a question in class" "Bullying is a common phenomenon in class especially when teachers are absent from class and the students are idling" "It occurs in class after the teacher left the class	Location of bullying

especially when I keep

answering questions in class"

"It mostly happens in our

dormitories"

"Some of my mates have

been bullied mostly on their

way to school or on their way

home"

Appendix F: Coding Process for Effects of Bullying

Table 3.

Coding process for theme three

Codes	Interview Evidence	Theme
1. **Decreased academic performance** 2. **Student's death** 3. **School dropout** 4. **Bullying as a survival mechanism** 5.	"…. And they resort to bullying as a survival mechanism to keep themselves relevant and noticeable." "…bullying is a bad thing for it can create an unsecured and tense environment for other students which adversely affect their ability to assimilate what they are being taught. Thus, it can lead to poor performance, class repetition by students and even school drop out." "Bullying even caused a junior student to stab a senior	Effects of bullying

student to death in my

school."

"I dropped out from school

and changed school. This

caused me to repeat one

class."

"Bullying affects my

psychology and gives me

panic which intent affects my

school performance."

"Bullying affected their study

habit and made them to be

afraid even to talk."

Appendix G: Coding Process for Cases Reported

Table 4.

Coding process for theme four

Codes	Interview Evidence	Theme
1. **Reported cases of out of class bullying**	"…Severally cases of out of class bullying have been brought to me. It could be on school campus or in the quarter." "…out of class bullying case was brought to my attention and it was a case of threat given to a junior student by a senior not to participate in a scheduled rehearsal to a football encounter." "…Many students have reported cases of out of class bullying, especially when going back home after school.".	Cases reported

"I have several times. The
bully was called for a
disciplinary council, but he
still came after me then next
day."

"Yes. The school authority
just gave them few hours of
punishment."

"Yes. After so many students
complain about them being
bullied by same group of
boys. They were dismissed."

Appendix H: Coding Process for Strategies to Reduce Bullying

Table 5.

Coding process for theme 5

Codes	Interview Evidence	Theme
1. **Rules and policies** 2. **Disciplinary measures**	"…a set of rules and policies concerning bullying are put in place and enforced. These rules are made clear to students and teachers that bullying is not related and there are clear consequences for those who break the rules." "First through the school rules and regulations that spell out sanctions for such acts." "…Most often harsh disciplinary measures are put in place to check this phenomenon."	Strategies to reduce bullying

"Well the school administration always tries to punish students who bully others to serve as warning to the other students but bully cases are Still brought up every day."

"…To the discipline master. Results didn't. Turn out well because when the suspended students came back they multiplied the rate of bully upon us."