

**EFFECTS OF BULLYING ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ABOGETA WARD MERU COUNTY, KENYA**

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EDU-G-4-1436-21

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF EDUCATION OF GREYSA UNIVERSITY**

DECEMBER 2024

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research project is my original work that has not been submitted for the award of a bachelor's degree or any similar purpose in any other institution.

Signature..........

Date. 06/12/2024.....

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SUPERVISOR

This research project has been submitted with my approval as the University supervisor

Signature..........

Date..... 06/12/2024.....

Madam Sheilla Tallam.

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ABSTRACT

This research project aimed at investigating the effects of bullying to the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru County. The study was conducted to help those who interact or associate with students who suffer the problem of bullying, which end up affecting their performance academically to be able to solve this problem and prevent it from happening to any other student. A sample of 178 respondents was selected for the study with the sample size of 28 teachers and 150 students. Simple random sampling method was employed. This study used questionnaires as a method of data collection. The various forms of bullying to students include physical bullying, verbal bullying and social bullying. The research sought to provide insights to teachers, school administrators and students' leaders on the various ways of bullying of students' in schools, how it affects their academic performance and how they can put a halt to students being bullied in schools. The researcher focused on three major forms of bullying to investigate the effects bullying has on the academic performance of the students. The three forms of bullying include; physical abuse, verbal abuse and social abuse. Under physical abuse, the researcher focused on physical violence, damaging of belongings and sexual harassment, which are the major forms of physical abuse. The study indicated that the highest percentage of students who suffered physical abuse underwent physical violence, whereby the victims suffered injuries, burns and fractures. This affected the academic performance of students in that the students who suffered physical abuse had to skip classes and school to go and seek medical attention. As a result of them skipping the classes, they ended up missing a lot of classroom content and ended up performing poorly academically. Under verbal abuse, the researcher focused on name calling and body shaming. In this form of abuse, the victims ended up being affected psychologically and mentally whereby their self esteem and confidence ended up being lowered and they lost focus in their studies and later ended up performing poorly academically. Under social abuse, the researcher focused on exclusion from social groups and the use of threatening gestures. In the case of exclusion from social groups, the victims were being excluded or denied the freedom of interacting with others. As a result, the students ended up trying to do things that would please the bullies. In that process of trying to please them, they ended up shifting their attention to doing other things and forgetting their books. This therefore leads to them performing poorly academically. Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations; clear policies should be established, regular workshops and seminars should be conducted to educate students and staff about bullying, it's impacts and how to prevent it, counselling and support should be provided for victims of bullying. Also, the researcher recommended that a positive school culture should be created by promoting values of kindness, acceptance and cooperation.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter entails the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, conceptual framework, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study limitation of the study and the delimitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Bullying of students in schools is the most pronounced form of violence in the schools in the world. Bullying is redundant, monotonous and destructive, power-based behavior of students. There are multiple forms of bullying such as name calling, hitting or threatening others and spreading false rumors. All these are known to affect the academic performance of students in a negative way.

According to National Association of School Psychologists (2012), school networking and text sending is considered a major form of bullying. The learners who are directly or indirectly involved in bullying are at increased risk of misbehavior, abuse and absenteeism from school. Various studies indicate that bullying makes schools unsafe places for students (Maliki et al., 2009). According to Shahria et al., (2015), bullying has negative impact on academic performance of the learners. Shafqat (2015) argued that bullying in schools mostly occurs in bathrooms, dorms, buses and in classes as well.

According to Whitney and Smith (1993) and Owens et al., (2000), the most common and frequent forms of bullying are insults, name calling and nicknames, hitting, direct aggression, thefts threats and social exclusion or isolation. According to Crick and Grotpeter (1995), hitting, direct and indirect aggression in the form of verbal abuse, gestures, threats and destruction of property are considered as major forms of bullying. Owens et al., (2001) and Smith et al., (2002) are also of same view about bullying form and they added that rumors, exclusion from play, name calling, and putting down, as major forms of verbal bullying.

Most school-aged children are exposed to bullying in some form of bullying due to the unequal balance of power and influence that is so common in youth's relationships and peer groups. Bullying and harassment in schools increases in late childhoods and peaks in early adolescents, specifically during middle school and typically takes place in unstructured settings such as cafeteria, hallways, and playground during recess. Despite the prevalence of bullying in schools in Kenya, little appears to have been done to reduce cases of bullying.

Due to bullying, a 12 –year old , Rebecca Sedwick committed suicide in Florida following a year of bullying at the hands of two young girls . To Rebecca, the bullying was so serious and distressing that she took her own life.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem.

Despite the government putting in place measures to help in curbing cases of bullying of learners in schools, bullying cases are rampant in Meru County. According to Kiplagat in the year 2008, the various school administrators are working tirelessly to put an end to cases of bullying but their efforts seem to bear no fruits. This is because bullying is a case that is reported to be more rampant and pronounced in various institutions or schools in Kenya.

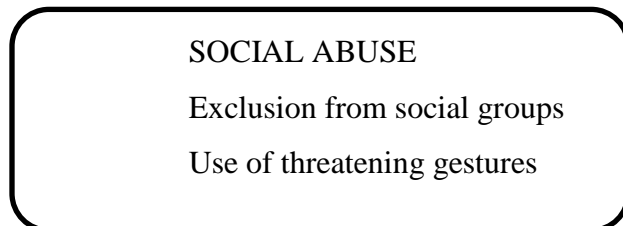
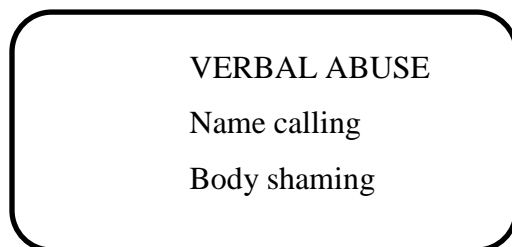
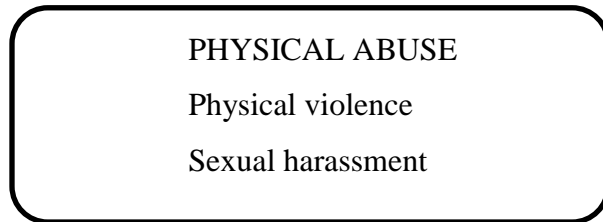
In the year 2009, Nyasato reported a case where six prefects were expelled from secondary schools in Manga sub – county, Kisii County for brutally bullying a form one student where one of the victims was seriously injured and admitted to the hospital. This study was carried out purposely to investigate the effects or impacts of bullying to the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta location, Meru County.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of bullying to the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta location, Meru County.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

Independent variables



Dependent

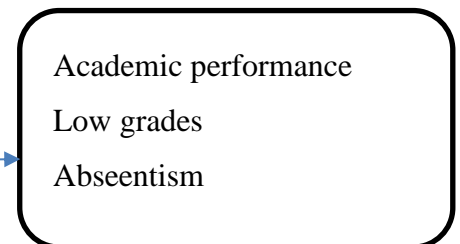


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

1.5 Research Questions

- i. How does physical abuse affect the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward, Meru County?
- ii. What are the effects of verbal abuse to the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru County?
- iii. How does social abuse affect the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru County?

1.6 Objectives of the Study

1.6.1 General Objectives

To identify the effects of bullying of students on their academic performance in Abogeta ward, Meru county.

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To identify the influence of physical abuse on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward, Meru County.
- ii. To investigate the effects of verbal abuse to the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward, Meru county.
- iii. To investigate the effects of social abuse to the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county.

1.7 Hypothesis of the Study

1. There is no relationship between physical abuse and academic performances of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward, Meru County.
2. There is no relationship between verbal abuse and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru County.
3. There is no relationship between social abuse and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward, Meru County.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the influence of bullying on students' academic performance. It shows and explains what various scholars and authors have found out from the various incidences of bullying of students in schools, which contribute to poor academic performance in public secondary schools in Kenya.

2.2 The Concept of Bullying

In the past years, there has been developing incidences of the superiority of bullying of students in public secondary schools in Kenya. It has become so obvious that the students who are bullied in schools end up being affected largely in their performance academically.

According to Cynthia (2014), there are differences in relationship between bullying level and academic performance depending on how the students achieve academically. That is, bullying has a great impact to the academic performance of a student. In most cases, bullying of learners causes them to perform poorly academically.

Roman and Murillo (2011) found out that aggression in schools has a negative effect on the academic performance in Latin America. They affirmed that students who have been physically or verbally or socially abused perform poorly academically. This poor academic performance of the students was attributed to bullying cases.

Olweus (1997), bullying is a negative behavior that causes a person to feel uncomfortable or injured and usually occurs repeatedly, which is characterized by an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim.

According to Hoy and Miskei (2011), bullying occurs in a cycle or chain forming a long-term bullying culture in secondary schools. Bullying is as a result of permanent grudges one forms from bullying of learners. Today, most bullying goes unnoticed by anyone in the school; the school administration, teachers and students' councils.

2.3 Physical Abuse and Students' Academic Performance

Physical abuse is intentional bodily injury. Some examples include slapping, pinching, choking, kicking, shoving or inappropriately using drugs or physical restraints.

Physical abuse, one of the forms of bullying comprises of physical violence, sexual harassment and damaging of belongings. This form of bullying has a great impact on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools.

Nyasato (2009) reported a case where six prefects were expelled from secondary schools in Manga sub-county, Kisii County for brutally bullying a form one student where one of the victims was seriously injured and admitted to a hospital.

Damaging of belongings is also a form of bullying in secondary schools. Property damage occurs whereby a student's property is destroyed or damaged. Belongings of students that are commonly damaged are books, shoes, clothes, bags, etc. This causes the students to end up not having some things that are the key needs and by so doing end up being distressed and this ends up affecting their academic performance because they live uncomfortably in the school and end up not liking the school environment.

Sexual harassment is a type of harassment involving the use of explicit or implicit sexual overtones, including the unwelcome and inappropriate private promises of rewards in exchange for sexual favors. Under Title IX of the education amendments of 1972, sexual or gender harassment is a form of discrimination or bullying and affects the academic performance of students in secondary schools.

2.4 Verbal Abuse and Students' Academic Performance.

Verbal abuse is a range of words or behaviors used to manipulate, intimidate, and maintain power and control over someone. These include insults, humiliation and ridicule, the silent treatment, and attempts to scare, isolate and control. The main verbal abuse forms in public secondary schools are name calling and body shaming.

Bredgen, et al (2008) revealed that verbal abuse is especially likely to lead to the development of negative self-perceptions and consequently emotional problems. The academic performance of students who are undergoing verbal abuse is affected and they get into vices, they become not participative in class or prefer to be absent. This fact was proven by Wang who revealed that physical and verbal abuse results in aggressive behavior and poor academic performance and may result in a gap between parents and adolescents.

2.5 Social Abuse and Students' Academic Performance.

Social abuse is a behavior that aims to cut off from a person's family, friends or community. Social abuse can also involve a person or people trying to damage one's relationship with others. People who are socially abusive may also attempt to make one look bad or ruin one's reputation.

Possessiveness, escalating suspicion, allegations of infidelity and fear that the victim will leave were identified as antecedents of social abuse in perpetrators.

Additionally, the experience of social abuse had negative consequences on victim's social relationships, mental health, and help-seeking behaviors. Social abuse can have a significant impact on the academic performance of the students. It can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and low self-esteem, which can affect their concentration, motivation, and overall well-being.

Skrzpiec (2008) found that third of students who had been seriously bullied reported having serious difficulties in concentrating and paying attention in class because of bullying and the fear associated with it. Also, students seek to avoid attending school classes for the purpose of avoiding victimization.

Mishna (2003) indicated that bullying is a form of aggression in which there is an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim that occurs largely in the context of a peer group.

Glew et.al (2005) reported that social abuse prevents concentration and subsequent academic performance since bullying victims lose interest in learning and experience a drop in academic grades because their attention is distracted from learning.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

2.6.1 General Strain Theory.

This theory was brought forward by Agnew. This theory, according to Agnew states that individuals experience negative reaction and emotion, especially anger when they are treated unjustly and unfairly (Agnew, 2001, p.321).

Agnew maintains that individuals who experience strain are more at risk to engage in deviant or delinquent behaviors. The relationship of the elements of general strain theory to the phenomenon of bullying has been suggested in several studies.

Browne and Falshaw (1996) for instance, have reported a sample of youth placed at a youth treatment service and found that bullies were more likely to have experienced and suffered childhood physical and emotional abuse, as indicated by their placement on the child protection register. Another study of diverse samples (Olweus, 1993) revealed that youths experience of physical punishment, maltreatment, and rejection by parents, peers and teachers are significantly related to bullying.

In addition, some studies (Bosworth, et. al., 1999; Espelage et al., 2000) indicate that anger has a significant positive impact on bullying. Overall, these findings would be consistent in considering General strain theory as an explanation because they indicate that individuals who experienced physical or emotional abuse, maltreatment, rejection and or anger are more likely to engage in bullying.

2.7 Research Gap

This study reviewed literature that is relevant to the research under investigation. It sought to determine if at all there is an existing relationship between bullying and academic performance of learners or students in public secondary schools.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

3.1 Introduction

This topic covers the following subtitles; research design, study area , target population , sampling techniques , sample size , measurement of variables, research instruments , validity of measurements , data collection techniques , data analysis and logistical and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

Kothari(2018) defined a research design as the structure, outline written within which a research will be carried out in order to discover solutions of the problem under investigation.

This study will employ a descriptive research design since it allows a researcher to provide insights into why and how of research , in that the researcher clearly present the problem statement in order to allow others to understand better the need of study being carried out. The study therefore sought to understand what influence bullying has on academic performance of the students. The design will enable the researchers to collect both primary and secondary data on the phenomenon under study.

3.3 Study Area

The research was conducted in Abogeta location Meru County. The research preferred to use this area because of personal interest in knowing how bullying affects the academic performance of the learners. The research specifically used students from six public secondary schools in Abogeta location, Meru County.

3.4 Target Population

The study targeted students and teachers of four public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru County. The targeted number of students was 5000 and 93 teachers.

The formula of 30% of total population was used. Therefore,

Table 1 Students' Target Population

Name of school	Students' population
Ntharene Day school	805
Igandene Boys' secondary school	975
Igoki Boys' secondary school	1700
Yururu Girls' secondary school	1520
Total	5000

Therefore, the sample population of the students was calculated as follows:

$$30/100 \times 5000 = 150 \text{ students}$$

For the population of teachers, four teachers were sampled in each school giving a total teachers' sample size population of 28.

Therefore, the total sample population of this study was 178.

3.5 Sampling Techniques

Gay (2009) a sample is used to make generalization of the characteristics being indicated within the entire population. For this study, the samples were drawn from the students and the teachers of public secondary schools in Abogeta ward, Meru County. The study employed simple random sampling because it required a clearly defined group of people with the same characteristics and required no complexity in using it.

3.6 Sample Size

Sample size refers to the number of participants or people to be included in a research study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the sample size of the population should be at least 30% of the total population.

Table 2 Sample size

DESCRIPTION SIZE	TOTAL POPULATION	SAMPLE
Students	5000	150
Teachers	93	28

3.7 Measurement of Variables

Table 3 Measurement of variables

Variable	Indicators	Measurement scale	Qtn
Physical abuse	Physical violence	Interval scale	1
Verbal abuse	Name calling	Interval scale	2
Social abuse	Exclusion from social groups	Ordinal scale	3

3.8 Research Instrument

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), research instruments are the tools used by the researcher to collect data relevant to the objectives and the research questions of the study. This study employed questionnaires in the collection of data basing on the objectives of this study. Berr, (2006) Questionnaires are important because they enable a researcher to obtain a lot of information within a very short period of time for a large population.

3.9 Validity of Measurements

Validity refers to the extent to which a test, experiment or measurement accurately assesses what is intended to measure. It ensures that the data and results are meaningful. To ensure validity, the researcher wrote the questionnaires and presented them to the supervisor to go through them and give necessary corrections.

3.10 Reliability of Measurements

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of measurements or data overtime and across different conditions. To ensure reliability the results, the researcher conducted piloting with the target population.

3.11 Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques are the methods used to gather information and data from various sources. The researcher used questionnaires as the instrument to obtain data from the sample population. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the sample of the students and teachers of public secondary schools in Abogeta location, Meru County.

3.12 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to the process of bringing orderly structured and meaning to the most of information collected from the field (Grixx 2001). The information that was obtained from the sample size of the population was analyzed using SPSS statistical software and will also employ descriptive statistics in analyzing the data.

3.13 Logical and Ethical Considerations

Mutual (2018), says that researcher ethics is intangible set of values, standards and institutional schemes that help establish and control scientific activities. The researcher highly considered the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents by ensuring that their personal details are not disclosed. The researcher ensured that the data obtained from the field were voluntary participation of the respondents by asking the consent of the gathered information were used for the purpose of the research and education purpose only. The respondents were highly assured of confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents classified and summarized data of the research findings. It displays the findings giving the analysis of the data collected from different respondents who filled the questionnaires distributed to them.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 178 questionnaires were given out to teachers and students. 150 questionnaires were given to the students and 28 questionnaires were given to the teachers. All the questionnaires were returned giving a total of 178 responses; resulting to 100% response rate.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a 50% response rate is adequate, 60% response is good and above 70% is rated as very well. Basing on Mugenda and Mugenda's claim therefore, the response rate in this case is 100% and thus was excellent.

4.2.1 Analysis of Demographic Information

This study sought to establish the response or the feedback of the respondents, who in this case focused on both the teachers and the students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county.

Table 4 Respondents' Analysis

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Teachers	28	15.73
Students	150	84.27
Total	178	100.00

The table 4 indicated that a majority 150 (84.27%) of the respondents were students while 28 (15.73%) of the respondents were teachers. This indicated that the study involved both the teachers and students in the schools sampled for the study.

4.3 Effects of Bullying on the Academic Performance of Students

The general objective of the study was to find out the effects of bullying on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county.

4.4.1 Effects of Physical Abuse on the Academic Performance of Students

The first specific objective of the study was to identify how physical abuse affects the academic performance of the students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. The study used the closed ended questions and used various forms of physical abuse such as physical violence, sexual harassment and damaging of the belongings to measure which form of physical abuse was more rampant among the students. The teachers' questionnaires also majored on the three forms of physical abuse as well.

Table 5 Students' responses

Forms of physical abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Physical violence	56	37.33
Sexual harassment	42	28
Damaging of belongings	52	34.67
Total	150	100.00

The table 5 indicated the student's responses on the effects of physical abuse on the academic performance of the respondents. From the table, basing on various forms of physical abuse, it is evident that there was high frequency of 56(37.33%) indicating that physical violence which had the highest frequency and percentage affected the academic performance of students more, followed by damaging of belongings which had a frequency of 52(34.67%) and then sexual harassment which had the lowest frequency of of 42 students and a percentage of 28%.

It can therefore be concluded that physical violence is the greatest form of physical abuse which affects the academic performance of the students.

Table 6 Teachers' responses

Forms of physical abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Physical violence	12	42.86
Sexual harassment	6	21.43
Damaging of belongings	10	35.71
Total	28	100.00

The table 6 indicated the teachers' responses on the effects of physical abuse on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. From the table, basing on the various forms of physical abuse, it is evident that there was high frequency of 12(42.86%) indicating that physical violence which had the highest frequency and hence the highest percentage affected the academic performance of the students more, followed by damaging of belongings which had a frequency of 10 teachers and a percentage of 35.71 %and then lastly sexual harassment which had a frequency of 6 teachers which gave a 21. 43%.

How Physical Abuse Affects the Academic Performance of Students

According to the findings, it is crystal clear that physical violence, which is one of the forms of physical abuse is the one that affects the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county greatly. Physical violence among students leads them to suffer injuries , burns or fractures. As a result of all those, the learners end up skipping school and classes in the process of looking for medical attention. In other cases, some get serious injuries or bruises and end up being admitted in hospital for a long time and they end up missing alot of concepts and in return end up performing poorly.

Also, damaging of belongings which is also another form of physical abuse contributes alot in the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. Under this form of physical abuse, it was discovered that most of the learners belongings such as books or reading materials were the ones that are damaged mostly. In other instances, the boarding materials for those in boarding schools were also damaged. As a result of all this, students end up performing poorly because for instance where the reading materials are damaged, it becomes so

hard for them to study without suffering or having to borrow from other students. This therefore leads to them performing poorly academically.

Sexual harassment, which is also another form of physical abuse also affects the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. Although this form affects the academic performance of students in a small percentage, it also has to be addressed because it affects some of the students. Sexual harassment affects the academic performance of students in that it causes them to have a low self esteem and in some cases shifts their attention from studies therefore leading to poor academic performance of students.

4.4.2 Effects of Verbal Abuse on the Academic Performance of Students

The second specific objective of the study was to investigate the effects of verbal abuse on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. To investigate the effects of verbal abuse on the academic performance of the students, various forms of verbal abuse such as body shaming and name-calling were used.

Table 7 Students' responses

Forms of verbal abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Body shaming	61	40.67
Name-calling	89	59.33
Total	150	100.00

The table 7 indicated the students' responses on the effects of verbal abuse on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. From the table, basing on the various forms of verbal abuse, name calling had a high frequency of 89 students (59.33%) indicating that name calling was the highest form of verbal abuse that affected the academic performance of students followed by body shaming which recorded a frequency of 61 students (40.67%).

Table 8 Teachers' responses

Forms of verbal abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Body shaming	57	38
Name calling	93	72
Total	150	100

The table 8 indicated the teachers' responses on the effects of verbal abuse on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. From the table, based on the various forms of verbal abuse, name-calling recorded the highest frequency of 93 (72%) showing that name calling is the form of verbal abuse that affects the academic performance of students the most, followed by body shaming which recorded a frequency of 57 teachers and a percentage of 38%.

How Verbal Abuse Affects the Academic Performance of Students

Under verbal abuse, the researcher focused on two forms of verbal abuse namely name calling and body shaming. The form of verbal abuse that affected the academic performance of students greatly was name calling. This form of verbal abuse involved giving students names that are not theirs and names that made them feel hated and undermined. Many of the students were given or called names that made them be laughed at by others. This form of verbal abuse made the learners feel disrespected by others while others developed self esteem issues. Also, under verbal abuse, other learners ran away from school because they could not stand being called names by the other learners. When these learners run away from school, they end up skipping classes and concepts and end up performing poorly academically. Also, as a result of name calling, the students end up developing negative attitude towards studies and therefore lack motivation and the morale to study and end up performing poorly academically.

Body shaming, which is also another form of verbal abuse also affects the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. This form of verbal abuse involves the bullies treating the learners according to their physical appearance. In most cases, learners were judged based on their body sizes and in most cases those that are big. These students were forced to do heavy tasks by other learners because of their body sizes. These learners ended

up developing a negative attitude towards studies and others even ran away from school. Other students also ended up having low self esteem and their confidence levels were lowered and as a result ended up performing poorly academically.

4.4.3 Effects of Social Abuse on the Academic Performance of Students

The third specific objective of the study was to investigate the effects of social abuse on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. To investigate the effects social abuse had on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county, various forms of social abuse such as exclusion from social groups and use of threatening gestures were used.

Table 9 Students' responses

Forms of social abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Exclusion from social groups	83	55.33
Use of threatening gestures	67	44.67
Total	150	100.00

The table 9 indicated the students' responses on the effects of various forms of social abuse on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. From the table, based on the various forms of verbal abuse, exclusion from social groups recorded the highest frequency of 83 and therefore a percentage of 55.33% , followed by use of threatening gestures which recorded a frequency of 67 and therefore a percentage of 44.67%.

Table 10 Teachers' responses

Forms of social abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Exclusion from social groups	17	60.71
Use of threatening gestures	11	39.29
Totals	28	100.00

The table 10 indicated the teachers' responses on the effects of various forms of social abuse on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. From the table, basing on the various forms of social abuse, exclusion from social groups recorded the highest frequency of 17 and therefore a percentage of 60.71%, followed by use of threatening gestures which recorded a frequency of 11 and therefore a percentage of 39.29%.

How Social Abuse Affects the Academic Performance of Students

Under social abuse, the researcher focused on two forms namely exclusion from social groups and the use of threatening gestures. The form of social abuse which is exclusion from social groups affects the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county greatly. This form of social abuse involves the students being denied the right to socialize or associate with other learners in school. This form of social abuse makes the learners to feel less of a being and feel hated. In return, he or she ends up living a lonely life in school and ends up hating living in a place where he or she is not appreciated. Eventually, these students end up running away from school or even focusing on doing things that please others so that they can be loved or recognized by them. In this process of trying to get the attention of the other students so as to get rid of the loneliness, their attention shifts to another direction which is not books and therefore end up performing poorly academically.

Use of threatening gestures is another form of social abuse that also affects the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. This form of social abuse involves the bullies threatening the other students by using gestures that appear to be harmful or uncomfortable to them. This form causes the learners to live in fear while they are in

the school compound. They therefore live in fear and they end up being uncomfortable and not able to concentrate on their studies while in school and they therefore end up performing poorly academically. Others, due to the fear instilled in them by the bullies end up running away from school and they therefore miss out on some concepts in school and by so doing they end up performing poorly academically in school.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings of the research carried out on the effects of bullying on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. The summary of the findings is based on the research objectives. The study set three objectives, hypothesis and its corresponding questions.

5.2 What is the Effect of Physical Abuse on the Academic Performance of Students?

It was found that physical abuse, one of the forms of abuse and bullying as well was rampant in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru county. Moreover, it being rampant it also contributed greatly to the poor academic performance of students. From the research findings, it was discovered that most learners who recorded a decline in their grades in school had suffered physical abuse due to bullying.

Focusing on the forms of physical abuse such as physical violence, it was recorded that physical violence recorded a high percentage of 37.33% where 56 students were reported to have suffered physical violence. On physical violence, the students ended up getting hurt and others were injured severely which led to their absentims in school because they had to be away from school for some time so that they could seek medical attention. As a result, they ended up missing some concepts in class and this contributed greatly to their poor academic performance.

Damaging of belongings, which is also another form of physical abuse also affected the academic performance of students greatly. From the findings a percentage of 34.67 of the students suffered from damaging of belongings. Some of the belongings that were damaged mostly were books, stationaries, desks, bedding etc. When these belongings were damaged, the students found it hard to carry out their studies because for instance when books and stationeries got damaged, then their learning environment was tampered with and carrying out the academic activities was too hard and this contributed greatly to their poor academic performance.

Sexual harassment, which is also another form of physical abuse recorded a percentage of 28 whereby 42 students were victims of this form of physical abuse. Students who were victims of this form of abuse were said to end up recording a great decline in their grades in their academic performance. This is because it caused a great distraction and corruption to their minds and ended

up getting traumatized and eventually their focus on their academic performance declined hence leading to their poor academic performance.

5.3 What is the Effect of Verbal Abuse on the Academic Performance of Students?

Basing on the findings on the effects of verbal abuse on the academic performance of students and focusing on two forms of verbal abuse, that is, name calling and body shaming, it was found that this form of bullying has a great negative impact on the academic performance of students.

Name calling, a form of verbal abuse contributed greatly to the poor academic performance of students. 89 students (59.33%) suffered great consequences as a result of name calling, a form of verbal abuse. It was discovered that these students were given names that intimidated them and made them be laughed at by others and as a result their self-esteem was greatly affected and eventually it affected their academic performance because these students would at times choose not to attend school and others would escape and end up missing a lot of concepts in class and this led to them performing poorly academically.

Body shaming, another form of verbal abuse also contributed a 40.67% to the poor academic performance of students. This form of verbal abuse involved giving students names based on their appearance and looks. This would then result to the victims of this form of verbal abuse being laughed at and this would cause them to escape from school because the school environment is not favorable and conducive to them for learning to take place. This act of them escaping from school causes them to miss a lot of concepts in school and this leading to them performing poorly academically.

5.4 What is the Effect of Social Abuse on the Academic Performance of the Students ?

This study focused on two forms of social abuse which are exclusion from social groups and use of threatening gestures and each of them had effects on the academic performance of the students. Based on the findings of the study it was recorded that exclusion from social groups played a key role in affecting the academic performance of the students. A students' population of 83 and a percentage of 55.33% were affected greatly by the exclusion from social groups. As a result of them being excluded from social groups, they ended up feeling lonely and uncomfortable while

on the school environment. As a result, their morale, motivation and urge to go to school to study reduced leading to them performing poorly academically.

On the other form of social abuse which is use of threatening gestures, which posed a great impact on the poor academic performance of the students, a student population of 67 and a percentage of 44.67% was recorded. These students as a result of use of threatening gestures from the bullies, ended up developing fear while in schools and felt attacked at all times because these gestures were so scaring and horrifying to them. Their presence in school turned out to being a nightmare and this shifted their attention fully from studies to taking note of the orders given to them by the bullies through the gestures. As a result, these students ended up performing poorly in their academics.

5.5 Conclusion

From the discussions and data analysis, it is clear that several forms of bullying such as physical abuse, verbal abuse and social abuse affect the academic performance of the students greatly. If these findings are a representative of other schools in the region or country, urgent measures are then needed to ensure that students feel free to be in school and perform well as well. Steps to achieve this should focus on dealing with these bullies and also educating teachers on how to win the trust of the students so that they can be close to them and be willing to share with them the difficulties they are facing and Incase the cases of bullying arise.

If these steps are taken and supported by everyone and embraced or appreciated, then bullying will come to a halt and the students will be able to build their dreams and passion as well, leading to improvement in the students' academic performance.

5.6 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations;

Clear policies should be established, that is, developing and enforcing a comprehensive anti-bullying policy and ensuring that the policy includes definitions, procedures for reporting and consequences for bullying behavior. Also, the policy should be clearly communicated to students, staff and parents.

Regular workshops and seminars should be conducted to educate students and staff about bullying, its impacts and how to prevent it.

A positive school culture should be created by for example promoting values of kindness, acceptance and cooperation. Diversification should be celebrated and students encouraged to appreciate differences.

Counseling and support should be provided for victims of bullying. Resources and programs should also be provided to help bullies change their behavior. Also, peer support groups and mentoring programs should be set up.

5.7 Suggestions for Further studies

Since the research was carried out on public secondary schools only, the researcher recommends that a similar study be carried out to private secondary schools as to how bullying affect their academic performance to compare the findings of the research with those of this study. The study can also be replicated with adjustments in scope and valuables to determine any similarities or differences with the findings of the study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for students

Dear respondents,

This is a humble request to spare your time and fill this questionnaire. I am as student from Gretsia University - Thika pursuing a Bachelor of Education – Arts. I am conducting academic research on the effects of bullying on the students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru County.

The information you will give will remain confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this research. Please do not write your name in the questionnaire.

SECTION A

Are you a victim or a friend to anyone who has suffered physical abuse, verbal abuse or social abuse? If so, please give answers according to your own perspective.

Technical Questions

1. Physical abuse

a) What form of physical abuse have you or your friend suffered from?

b) How has physical abuse affected your academic performance or your friends' academic performance?

c) Was it easy for you to access help from physical abuse?

d) what steps do you think should be taken to end physical abuse among secondary school students?

2 . Verbal abuse

- a) What form of verbal abuse have you or your friend suffered from?

- b) How has verbal abuse affected your academic performance or your friends' academic performance?

- c) Was it easy for you or your friend to access help from verbal abuse?

- d) What steps do you think should be taken to end verbal abuse among secondary school students?

3. Social abuse

- a) What form of social abuse have you or your friend suffered from?

- b) How has social abuse affected your or your friends' academic performance?

- c) Was it easy for you or your friend to access help from social abuse?

- d) What steps do you think should be taken to end social abuse among secondary schools students?

*** The end***

Thank you very much; your responses will be kept confidential.

Appendix 2: Teachers' questionnaire

Dear respondents,

This is a humble request to spare your time and fill this questionnaire. I am a student from Gretsia University – Thika pursuing Bachelor of Education- Arts. I am conducting academic research on the effects of bullying on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Abogeta ward Meru County.

The information you give will remain confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this research. Please do not write your name in the questionnaire.

Questionnaires for teachers

1. Physical Abuse

- a) What forms of physical abuse do students suffer from mostly?

- b) How does physical abuse affect the academic performance of students?

- c) How do you help students suffering from physical abuse?

2. Verbal abuse

- a) What forms of verbal abuse do students suffer from mostly?

- b) How does verbal abuse affect the academic performance of students in secondary schools?

- c) How do you help students suffering from verbal abuse?

Appendix 2: Work plan

Activities	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul			
Problems identification				¹										
Requirement gathering														
Data Collection														
Data Analysis														
Documentation														
submission														

¹

Appendix 3: Budget

Item	Amount
Food and accomodation	6500
Printing and photocopying	1000
Internet	1500
Communication	500
Total	9500