

## The Extent of Bullying in Some Schools in Zimbabwe: A Psychological Perspective, with the Notion of Designing an Intervention Model

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**ABSTRACT** This study intended to investigate the extent of bullying in some high schools in Chegutu District with the notion of designing an intervention model. The major objective was to find out if there is bullying in the high schools and determine whether there would be need to come up with an intervention model. A survey research design was employed in this study. This study emerged as result of study of related literature, observation of situation on the ground, personal experience and general discussion with high school students from various schools in the country. Three schools were chosen from Chegutu district where one of the authors resides and a sample of 120 students and 90 teachers was drawn from them. The district was chosen not because bullying is rife there but for convenience purpose. A questionnaire of ten items was designed for students and another one was designed for teachers. A personal administration of questionnaires was made and the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, that is, tallies, percentages and graphs. The responses made by both the students and teachers showed high presence of bullying in their schools. It was concluded that bullying is rife in the high schools in Chegutu District. The subsequent recommendation made was that the extent of bullying in the high schools warrants an intervention model.

### INTRODUCTION

Bullying, especially from the standpoint of the victim, who is affected most, is one of the most undesirable behavior in high schools across the country. During one of the researcher's high school days in an all-boys high school in the early seventies, the problems of bullying in the schools were so pronounced that it was part and parcel of school life. Single sex schools were very notorious in bullying, and the major targets were first years, new students to schools or the weaker students in general. This was so, notwithstanding the fact that corporal punishment, which was almost legal then was very much in use, since it was a very dependable and powerful commonly used by teachers, but bullying was still very rife. Thompson et al. (2002) postulates that bullying has been a part of school culture for a long time. During the time one of the researchers joined high school, bullying has been a part of school culture, teachers were incapable of achieving much to stop or reduce it and would only deal with extreme cases. Harris

and Petrie (2003) found that students in general and bullying victims in particular feel that school staff responds poorly to the bullying problems at their schools. Much of the bullying was targeted on younger or weaker students who were not able to defend themselves. Rigby (1997) asserts that bullying is an undesirable form of behavior which is widely prevalent in schools. In support Erikson et al. (2012) citing (Olweus 1997) put it forward that bullying is the exposure to repeated negative actions over time on the part of one or more students. In the same vein Waldman (2012) citing The Journal of the American Medical Association defines "bullying" as "a specific type of aggression in which (1) the behavior is intended to harm or disturb, (2) the behavior occurs repeatedly over time, and (3) there is an imbalance of power, with a more powerful person or group attacking a less powerful one."(4) The asymmetry of power could be physical.

This is to echo the idea that bullying may also be rife in Zimbabwean high schools. The unfortunate part of the whole scenario is that a good number of teachers in Zimbabwe may not regard bullying as any real threat to the general running of their schools. In fact a number of teachers used to quote their own experiences of

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bullying and being bullied by senior students. This is supported by Rigby (1997), who writes that bullying, to many has been simply the way things are, a natural course of events, human nature, unchangeable. Furthermore, Hoisko et al. (2012) citing (Salmivalli 2010) postulate that bullying is a subtype of aggressive behavior, in which an individual or a group of individuals repeatedly attacks, humiliates, and/or excludes a relatively powerless person Suckling and Temple (2001) in their book on bullying postulate that there is no doubt that bullying in schools is insidious and difficult to manage and deal with, a complex issue that urgently demands effective action. Thompson et al. (2002) assert that there was virtually no research carried out in bullying before 1980. This is a testimony to show that research on bullying is still fairly young, and in developing country like Zimbabwe, there is still a lot of ground to excavate because bullying in high schools of any particular country is unique in its own way. They claim that researchers were deterred by the difficulties of the way in which bullying seemed to be part of social life in schools. Newman et al. (2000) postulate that the school is not always the safe environment it was intended to be because of the harsh realities of the bully/victim dyad which is experienced by thousands of students in school every day.

One would want to believe that since gaining of independence in Zimbabwe a lot of gains and improvements have been made in education and therefore behavior like bullying would be viewed as becoming minimal or toning down in schools with the passage of time. Unfortunately this may not be the case in the present situation in our high schools today since current research has alternate findings. A research conducted by Lee (2004) revealed that international evidence suggest that present day bullying occurs more frequently and with greater lethality than it did in the 1970s and 1980's. One would not be so bold as to make Zimbabwe an exception in the absence of concrete research to prove we are not included. Bullying is generally known as a secretive affair and as a result, a lot of issues may remain under the carpet until they are unearthed. Besag (1989) found that bullying in schools is one of the dark, hidden areas of social interaction, which has thrived on a bed of secretive nature of bullying and its seemingly manageable manner makes it ignored by professionals. Thompson et al. (2002) found that bul-

lying has been a part of school culture for a long time and asserts that apart from one or two far-sighted academics, there was virtually no research carried out in the topic before 1980. In Zimbabwe our situation may not be very different because students and teachers may have learned to accept bullying as a part of school culture. Staff members may not want to admit prevalence of bullying in their schools as a way of protecting their public image according to Thompson et al. (2002). The researchers' observation during high school days was that some bullying issues were headaches for staff members as well and they would be more comfortable with being spared the ordeal or arbitrary or solving bullying issues.

Researches on bullying in Zimbabwe which includes the one by Macklem (2003) are still minimal. There is need to expose what is happening on the ground through more research and thus expose to the powers that be a need for intervention or an action plan to reduce bullying levels in high schools. Zimbabwe needs more current information on the situation in high schools pertaining to bullying so as to open more avenues for research in bullying. Sometimes bullying behavior is upheld by attitude of students. In a research carried out by Harris and Petrie (2003), they found that some high school students report that bullying actually makes them strong and that they do not consider it a particular serious problem. They also went on to say older students are less likely to report bullying behaviors as a way of protecting their own images. Obviously responses given by such students do not reflect reality on the ground.

### **Rational Behind the Importance of Undertaking this Study**

It was prudent for the researchers to undertake this study based on the extent of bullying in schools. Research indicates that in most of the schools the world over, there is a culture of welcoming new students to schools by beating them, taking their food, taking their pocket money and doing all sort of things which make the new comers uncomfortable. Some of the new students end up absenting themselves from school or dropping out of school after having been tortured, others spend the whole day at school in an empty stomach and this affects their concentration span. This results in other stu-

dents developing a negative attitude towards school because of what they would have experienced. Others tend up changing their behavior due to what they would have gone through. It was therefore imperative that a study be conducted in one of the districts where one of the authors resides for convenience's purpose so as to establish the extent of bullying and consequently suggest solutions to curb it.

### **Bullying: An Overview**

In order to understand issues in their proper perspective, it would be logical to look at further definitions of bullying and also define what bullying is in relation to this study. Rigby (1997) defines bullying as repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or a group of persons. Suckling and Temple (2002: 69) had the following definition, 'Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior which is usually hurtful and deliberate; it is often persistent, sometimes continuing for weeks, months or even years and it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves'. Underlying most bullying behavior is an abuse of power and to desire to intimidate and dominate. Thompson et al. (2002:4) had the following definition, 'Bullying is long standing violence, physical or psychological conducted by an individual or group and directed against an individual, who is not able to defend himself in the actual situation, with a conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten that individual or put him under stress.' Physical bullying thus generally constitutes fighting, kicking, punching, hitting, shoving, pinching, abusive gestures and moving in close on the targets personal space. Rigby (1997:15) writes 'bullying is a repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons, it is important to notice that in all cases bullying occurs where there is an imbalance of power between students, those with less power are usually the victims and those with more power are generally likely to be bullies.

Bullying should be a cause for concern in Zimbabwe high schools just like it has proved to be in elementary and high schools of different countries of the world. Besag (1989) found out that parents of students all over the world have been concerned about the problem of bullying and goes on to say there is an escalating

anxiety to bring bullying to the open for examination and discussion through ongoing research. From experience, The researchers have noted that bullying behavior remains persistent because the bullies operate usually in secret and they threaten to make things worse for victims who expose them to authorities. In a study carried out by Rigby (1997) they found out that as many as 19.3 percent of boys and 14.6 percent of girls between the ages of ten and seventeen indicated being bullied at least once a week. In Zimbabwe high schools the situation may not be any better considering that the level of supervision which is usually left to the teacher on duty, boarding master or matron to control all the boys and girls respectively outside learning hours may not be thorough enough.

The situation in Chegutu District which has the majority of day schools may not be any better either because in addition to the secret nature of bullying, bullies are able to track their victims outside the school fence. The nature of bullying is such that the teachers may be aware or partially aware of what is going on but since they also went through a similar mill, they may choose to ignore bullying unless the cases are very serious. Elias and Zins (2003:2) wrote that 70% of the student body is affected by bullying. They went on to expose that bullying in schools internationally has been and continues to be overlooked, ignored or viewed as a normal developmental behavior. The findings of the two authors and researchers are primarily what most high school students in Zimbabwe ought to be experiencing pertaining to bullying. This may also be fuelled by the large turnover of teachers in the recent years, as well as job apathy emanating from working conditions and poor remuneration of teachers. Elias and Zins (2003) found out that within the last decade, the phenomenon of bullying has been recognized as a serious problem for the quality of school life among students. One would wonder why there is need to research on bullying.

Elias and Zins (2003) also found out that bullying and victimization appear to pose negative consequences not only at the time they occur within a student's life, but also in their future. It may be for this very reason why some students have bad memories and poor association of certain high schools which they attended in the country. Lee (2004) found out that for too long, bullying among American children and

adolescents have been ignored. They went on to postulate that this is odd considering that every adult can recount some childhood experiences with bullying. This cannot be better put for developing countries like Zimbabwe where almost all teachers and school leavers may have experienced bullying as bullies, victims or by standards.

### Effects of Bullying

According to the findings of Lee (2004), bullying has an impact on learning as it affects the academic work of those who are constantly victimized. Many bullies end up with a criminal conviction. Rigby (1997) posit that students who have been identified as bullies at school stand as much higher chance than other at a later stage in coming before the courts on charges of delinquency. The same author and researcher goes on to say a student who is being bullied continually at school by a more powerful peer or group of peers may be unable or unwilling to retaliate directly but may be motivated to take it out on someone else. Another innocent victim may suffer. The emotional scars for both victims and bystanders can last a lifetime. Learners who are repeatedly victimized resort a drastic means to escape, including suicide. Bullies are eventually disliked by the majority of their peers. According to Macklem (2003), bullying behavior is among the warning signs of later higher aggressive behavior. School bullies are more likely than others to break the law when they reach adolescence. Bullying has been linked with low self-esteem, anxiety, impaired concentration, truancy, depression, stress and suicidal thoughts. Students who are constantly bullied find comfort in truancy. Another author, Rigby (1997) posits that when bullying is serious and sustained, a student decides to avoid going to school if possible. The same author goes onto say that the general health of students who are victimized by their peers at school can be seriously affected. In a study carried out by Thompson et al. (2002), they found that students who were persistently bullied were more anxious and insecure than other students, they had a negative view of themselves, were often lonely and neglected by peers and generally had low self-esteem.

From the above literature, it is very clear that bullying has a very bad effect on victims and

there is need to view it more seriously. Bullying at international level may help give a picture of what is taking place in countries other than our own and how other nations are viewing bullying behavior in their schools.

### METHODOLOGY

A survey research design under descriptive research was adopted in this study. A survey is a non-experimental type of research which is based on questionnaires or interviews (Johnson and Christensen 2004). This method was found to be the most appropriate in eliciting information in this study. This method is extremely important in providing a large amount of data in a relatively short time. It also allows anonymity which encourages students and teachers to be frank in their responses. The target population in the study was all the high school students in Chegutu District. Three schools which were representative of the school group in this district were chosen. One rural day school, one urban day school and one church boarding school were sampled using stratified random sampling technique. A total number of 120 students and 60 teachers were sampled in this study. Data were collected using questionnaires.

### RESULTS

In Table 1, 64% of the students admitted there was bullying in their schools, 28% refuted the presence of bullying in their schools and 8% were undecided. Table 2 shows that 42% admitted they had been bullied, 54% said they had not been bullied and 4% were undecided. Table 3 shows that 83% of the respondents believed that boys were worse bullies than girls while 17% thought otherwise. Table 4 demonstrates that 56% said teachers are doing enough while 35% said teachers were not doing enough and 9% were uncertain. According to 69% in Table 5, other methods were being used in their schools to control bullying, 35% said there were no other methods being used and 9% were not sure. Table 6 shows that 55% of the students felt that teachers were aware of bullying in their schools, 33% felt that the teachers were not aware and 12% were not sure. In Table 7, 9% said yes bullying was part of school culture, 85% said it was not and 6% were not sure. This could mean that students generally don't believe bullying is part

of school culture. In Table 8, 13% said bullying helps students to become strong, 85% said no, and 2% were unsure. From the results, it is clear that the majority of students in the three schools does not believe bullying helps to make anyone strong. According to Table 9, threatening had the highest with 26% of the sample indicating it, beating had 25%, demanding had 18% and sending other students on errands 15% while monopolizing of resources had also 15% of the ticks. Table 10 shows that 56% of the respondents said most of the bullying is secret, 34% said no, it is not secret while 10% was unsure. In Table 11, 84% of the respondents admitted the presence of bullying in their schools, 13% said there was no bullying and 3% were not sure. In Table 12, 78% of the respondents felt it better to send bullying cases to the administration, 20% felt it was not and 2% were not sure.

**Students' Responses to the Questionnaires**

**Table 1: Is there any bullying in this school? N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	29	21	27	77
N	9	16	9	34
U	2	3	4	9

**Key: UHS: Urban High School RHS: Rural High School CHS: Church high School**

**Table 2: Have you ever been bullied at this school? N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	16	15	19	50
N	23	23	19	65
U	1	2	2	5

**Table 3: Who are worse bullies boys or girls? N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Boys	36	33	30	99
Girls	4	7	10	21

**Table 4: Are teachers doing enough to control bullying? N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	24	28	15	67
N	11	10	21	42
U	5	2	4	11

**Table 5: Does this school use other methods apart from corporal punishment? N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	28	30	25	83
N	8	9	9	26
U	4	1	6	11

**Table 6: Are teachers aware of bullying in this school? N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	22	22	20	64
N	16	12	11	39
U	2	6	9	17

**Table 7: Do you think bullying is part of the school culture? N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	3	3	5	11
N	35	33	34	102
U	2	4	1	7

**Table 8: Does bullying help students to become strong? N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	3	6	6	15
N	36	33	33	102
U	1	1	1	3

**Table 9: Common forms of bullying in schools N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Beat	24	25	18	67
Threat	19	14	35	68
Demand	19	8	22	49
Send	11	18	11	40
Monopolising	7	13	21	41

**Table 10: Is most of the bullying secret? N=120**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	19	15	33	67
N	16	21	4	41
U	5	4	3	12

**Table 11: Does this school experience bullying cases? N=60**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	17	16	17	50
N	1	4	3	8
U	2	0	0	2

**Table 12: Do you send bullying cases to the administrator? N=60**

	<i>UHS</i>	<i>RHS</i>	<i>CHS</i>	<i>Total</i>
Y	18	16	13	47
N	2	4	6	12
U	0	0	1	1

## DISCUSSION

### Attitudes of Students and Teachers

An analysis of the responses made by students and teachers will help to understand the question of the prevalence and extent of bullying in Chegutu District High Schools. In response to the question “is there any bullying in this school” a look at table 1 shows that 64% of the students in the sample admitted there was bullying in their school while 28% of the students said there was no bullying in their schools. The percentage of those who admitted the presence of bullying against those who refuted shows there is good measure of bullying going on in the schools. The percentage of students who admitted is in line with the findings by Elias and Zins (2003) who posit that 70% the student body is affected by bullying. The other 28% of students refuted the presence of bullying in their schools. Some of those students may never have been bullies or victims themselves but it would be very unlikely that such a percentage of students never witnessed bullying as bystanders, especially in the wake of much bigger percentage admitting the presence of the behavior in the schools. Among the 28%, could be some who never bullied or became victims, there could also be the bullies themselves who are not likely to admit presence of bullying because they are the direct beneficiaries and would be concerned to unearth it, in this case it necessitates changes to the status quo. Some students among those who refuted could be due to the fact that admittance would reveal a dent in their self-image. This is in line with assertions by Salmivalli (2010).

Besag (1989) found out that victims may feel so ashamed and degraded by bullying attacks and insults that they are unable to admit to this social failure. Rigby (1997) posit that students may not know but feel reluctant to tell for a variety of reasons. The issue of bystanders in this situation would be worth putting into focus. This

is so because question number 9 on the students’ questionnaire was designed to check the truth of responses in number 1, and is very interesting to note that 98% of the respondents wrote some types of bullying that are very common in their schools. Out of a total of 120 respondents 118 ticked on various types of bullying experienced in their schools and some had forgotten that they had said there is no bullying in their schools. Only two girls out of the 120 respondents had nothing to write on number nine and incidentally they were among those who refuted any bullying in their schools. It could mean they never experienced bullying in the school as victims, bullies themselves or as bystanders, or it could mean they were careful respondents who noted that putting a tick on number nine would counter their refusal response in question number one. The 98% would make it very difficult to reject the assumption of the study which asserts that every student has experienced bullying behavior either as a bully, a bystander or a victim. Responding to the same question 83% of the teachers who responded admitted that there was bullying in their schools, 10% said there was no bullying in their schools and 7% said they were not sure.

As shown in Table 11, the pattern of response by the teachers in all the three schools is very uniform. No teacher sample in each of the 3 schools had a response of less than 80% in admittance of the presence of bullying. The percentage of teachers who admitted presence of bullying in their schools, despite the general feeling to want to present their schools in better light, could show that bullying is still quite rife in the schools. There could be some reasons why 10% of the teacher sample refuted the presence of bullying in their schools. Firstly it might be that bullying behavior, being a secretive affair could have escaped their attention as Macklem (2003) postulated that bullying can continue undetected by teacher for years. The second aspect could have been caused by response bias, for instance the social desirability bias where respondent do not respond according to what they feel or know but according to how they think they should respond, that is, the desire to portray their schools in good images (Johnson and Christensen 2004; Hoiskos et al. 2012).

Question number two on the students’ questionnaire was very personal, it was framed,

“Have you ever been bullied ever since you enrolled at this school?” The main issue in this question was to detect the percentage of those who have been bullied so as to compare it with the research findings by other international researchers to determine how well we as Zimbabweans are performing. While 54% of the students responded that they were never bullied, 24% admitted having been bullied. The 42% of those who were bullied is in line with the findings made by Lee (2004) who found out that from a sample of 4000 students, 38% had been bullied badly by other students. The trend was almost the same when considering the responses according to stratification. From form one to form four, the percentage of those who said they had never been bullied was found to be bigger than those admitted to have been bullied. This could mean that the majority of students in the school never experienced any bullying during their stay in the school, suggesting that fewer students in the school were the victims. When viewing the results of this question from a stratified point of view one notices that the percentage of those who said were never bullied rises steadily from form one to form four. In form one 50% was recorded, in form two 53%, in form three 53% and form four 60%. While it is very logical to imagine that there are more bullying victims in form one than in form four, it would be illogical to imagine that 50% of students admit to having been bullied in form one, by the time they get to form four the percentage of those that got bullied ever since they enrolled drops to 40%. This could mean that as students grow older they feel ashamed to admit being bullied (Besag 1989). Another researcher, Macklem (2003) posit that researchers find that students are not as open when responding to self-report questionnaires, even when confidentiality is ensured.

#### *Students who are Generally Disadvantaged*

Question 2 of the research questions in this study focused on the students who are generally disadvantaged. Table 3 shows the responses students made to the question, “According to you who are worse bullies, boys or girls?” 83% of the respondents alleged that boys are worse bullies while 17% said that the girls are worse bullies than boys. This is in line with the findings by Lee (2004) who found out that boys

more frequently acted as bullies and more frequently reported bullying others. In a separate research, Rigby (1997) found out that there were more boys than girls in both bullying and being bullied. Rigby goes on to allege that the percentage of students who are bullied by their peers is somewhat higher for males and the differences are more pronounced in secondary schools. Boys are known from research to be more involved in physical bullying while girls tend to be more involved in verbal bullying and isolation. Boys are more likely to report being hit, slapped or pushed. As previously discussed the results from stratification show that bullying is more pronounced in the form ones and the percentages show that bullying becomes less and less as movement is made from the juniors to the seniors.

In this study 50% of form ones accepted there is bullying in the school while in form four only 40% accepted there was bullying in the school. This could mean that boys are generally more disadvantaged due to bullying behavior in schools. It also shows that as students grow older and move up from form one to four, bullying decreases. If bullying is more pronounced in boys than girls and has a bearing on age, it would mean that the most advantaged are junior boys in form one. On this score it would be logical to accept the assumption of the study that bullying is mostly experienced by weaker students and new students to school especially the first years who are both new and young, although in this study the case of new students other than form ones has not been given attention. Harris and Petrie (2003) found out that high school students in general, and bullying victims in particular, feel that teachers or school staff respond poorly to the bullying problems in the school.

#### *Teacher Involvement in Bullying*

Table 12 shows that 78% of the teachers are more comfortable with sending bullying cases to the administration rather than dealing with bullying cases themselves. This kind of response by teachers is echoed by Besag (1989) who posit that it is easy for a teacher to find an effective and easy way of dealing with bullying cases reported by victims. 20% of the teachers felt they would rather deal with bullying cases themselves than sending to the administration. Table 12 shows that the majority of teachers are

not very confident to tackle cases of bullying themselves and would be more comfortable to cede the problem to the administration. While 78% said they would opt to send bullying cases to the administration given a choice, 20% of the teachers said they would be more comfortable to deal with bullying cases themselves and 2% were not sure. The pattern of responses was very similar in all the three schools and this may mean that the majority of teachers trust their administration to do a better job than they can or it could be caused by lack of many options to deal with bullying (Besag 1989; Waldman 2012). 72% of the teachers said the teachers are confident while 28% said they are not confident. This sounds like a contradiction to the responses made in the preceding question but it should be noted that at present in Zimbabwe the main tool to deal with bullying is the statutory instrument number 362 of 1998 which gives school authorities a mandate to apply corporal punishment in cases of severe bullying. So it may mean most teachers could have responded on the performance of their administration in handling bullying cases, not necessarily themselves.

The next question on whether the Ministry needs to do more in order for teachers to control bullying had very surprising results. 97% of the teachers said the Ministry needs to do more while 3% said there is no need and there was no teacher who was not sure or undecided. The resounding confession by teachers of a need for more skills shows an urgent call for help. It is testimony of a problem which may not be under played and coupled with the percentages of students who admitted presence of bullying in their schools. This may signify an extent of bullying which may need more support and skills to deal with bullying cases?" 98% of teachers responded positively while 2% said they did not need. Again there were no cases of teachers being unsure. This is clear that bullying is a thorn in the flesh of teachers and much more attention than what is, at present is needed. Suckling and Temple, (2001:1) write "Teachers in the majority of schools we visit are requesting assistance in dealing with the complex social issue of bullying."

### *Common Types of Bullying in Schools*

The types of bullying which are very common in Chegutu District High Schools are as

shown in Table 9. According to their frequency, from the most frequent to the least are a) threats b) beating c) demanding of resources d) monopolizing school resources and e) sending on errands. Threats and beating are top of the range. The percentages displayed in this figure are each a percentage of all the ticks put together. Threats scored 26% of the total ticks while beating scored 25%. Physical bullying in the form of beating is pronounced in all three schools. Research results show that in day schools, bullying goes beyond the school borders. In a study carried out by Lee (2004), he found out that many students felt that most bullying occurs outside the school. This could explain why beating would be more numerous in the day schools as opposed to the church boarding school. The figures show that the urban day school and rural day school have figures which are almost the same, but the figures of the church high school are third lower than the other two. This is not surprising because the church high school is the only boarding school among the three and there is much more supervision during and after school hours through the use of master on duty, the deputy head, boarding master or matron than would be the case in the day schools where students may be prone to bullying on the way to and from home. One would expect that the principals of the church may also take a toll in reducing physical bullying in the school.

Threats are top of the range in the church boarding school but not necessarily in the other two. In the absence of too much freedom to exercise beating, threats would be a rational alternative in the church school. The boarding school has about double of the number of threats recorded in each of the other two schools. Of the three, the rural school is the one with the least number of recorded threats. This could be ascribed to the fact that students walk home instead of threatening it would be easier to bully physically, no wonder beating is highest. This is also primarily the same situation pertaining to the urban school. Demanding of things like money, tuck or resources is very common in all schools but the church high school is top of the range with the highest number of demands. This could be caused by the fact that unlike a day school where students have contact with home and community for replenishing their resources, in a boarding school the budget had better be good, where it is not, the resources dwindle faster



than the rate of replenishing and bullying in the form of demands, becomes an alternative. Demanding in the urban school is also very rife, and this may be due to the harsh economic environment and the differences in ability to acquire resources by parents of different students. Those who get resources easily fall victim to the demand form of bullying. The rural school has the least number of demand cases. Much less than half of the numbers recorded in the other two schools. This could be ascribed to the fact that due to the nature of rural life, the acquisition of resources is basically the same and there is not much variety on what students bring to school. When it comes to the type of bullying such as sending some other students on personal errands such as polishing shoes, all three schools are victims. The figure for the urban school and the church school are the same but it is interesting that sending is highest in the rural school. This may not be surprising considering that bullying goes beyond school orders and in rural areas sending the young or the weaker at the pastures is very common, and there is no reason why it cannot continue in a different form at school (Erikson et al. 2012).

Monopolizing of school resources like books is common in all schools but highest at the church school. Being a boarding school, survival of the fittest comes into play very easily; no wonder there is so much of monopolizing of resources. The urban day school has the least number of monopolizing cases. These may be reduced by the fact that the students get home daily and are able to get some of the resources from home or their schools may have books for the usage of almost everyone.

The issue of the attitudes of students or bullying victims on whether teachers are doing enough to control bullying may be answered by focusing on a few questions. Table 4 shows the responses by students to the question, "Are teachers doing enough to control bullying?" 56% of the respondents out of a total of 120 said teachers are doing enough to control bullying while 35% said no they are not doing enough and 9% were undecided. This signifies that slightly more than half of the students in all the three schools feel their teachers are doing enough while slightly less than half either could not agree or were unsure. It is important to note that the pattern or response by the day schools was very similar and both generally agree that teachers are doing enough.

### **A Proposed Intervention Model**

The proposed intervention model hereunder comes from the ideas on intervention by Lee (2004).

In effort to combat bullying, collaboration among all parties such as teachers, administrators, counselors and the clergy is necessary as opposed to the assumption that it is one person's responsibility

- ♦ Regard parents and caregivers as key players in your effort to control bullying
- ♦ Students ought to be empowered to take responsibility for changing and maintaining their behavior and influencing the behavior of others
- ♦ A member of staff should serve as a model and change agent for students

### **CONCLUSION**

In countries of the world such as Norway, England and America, there are serious studies that have been and are still being carried out with the aim to get out strategies or models to control bullying behavior which has become a serious threat to other students and of late even in Zimbabwe. When looking at the unveiling of events in countries that surround Zimbabwe, one can see that bullying is protruding its ugly head. From the results of this study, there is bullying in High Schools enough to warrant an intervention model and it is very clear that with time we may never be spared some of the atrocities caused by bullying behavior being experienced in other countries unless we rise and take action. The Ministry of Education would do very well to have a second look at bullying and come up with a policy for implementation of an intervention model. The time to take action is now and the sooner we formulate and implement an intervention model as a matter of urgency, the better our situation will be, action without delay will be our best way forward in an attempt to curb bullying which is rife in high schools.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study has left a number of areas untapped. In order to get a clearer picture, the following areas need to be investigated:

- ♦ The attitudes of bullies to causes and remedy to bullying behavior.

- ♦ The attitudes of victims on bullying and the way towards remedy.
- ♦ Parental attitudes to bullying in schools, causes and remedy.
- ♦ The attitudes of bystanders to causes and remedy of bullying in schools.

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