



Prevalence and Patterns of Bullying Among In-School Adolescents in Calabar, Cross River State

Ekpenyong Nnette O^{1,2}, Isika Anastasia I^{1,2}, Asuquo Best J², Freedman Ita-Lincoln², Nkanu Ernest Esu¹, Obarein Ekpen Comfort¹, Ikeji Chukwukeluo Timothy¹, Ikwu Chukwuebuka Robert¹, Anyiekere Morgan Ekanem³

¹Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, University of Calabar, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

²Department of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of Calabar Teaching Hospital, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

³Department of Community Medicine, University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Abstract

Background: Bullying is a pervasive form of school violence with significant physical, psychological, and social consequences for adolescents. Despite extensive research in developed countries, limited data exist on the prevalence and patterns of bullying in Nigerian schools, particularly in Calabar, Cross River State. This study aimed to determine the prevalence and patterns of bullying among secondary school students in Calabar, Nigeria, and to provide evidence for policy and intervention strategies.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among 293 students selected through multistage sampling from 15 secondary schools in Calabar. Data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire adapted from the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire and analyzed with SPSS version 25.

Results: The prevalence of bullying experience was 91.8%, while 93.9% of students reported perpetrating bullying. Verbal bullying was the most common form experienced (86.0%) and perpetrated (83.3%), followed by physical (78.5% vs. 64.5%), relational (76.5% vs. 54.9%), and cyberbullying (33.1% vs. 31.7%).

Conclusion: Bullying among adolescents in Calabar is alarmingly prevalent, with most students reporting both victimization and perpetration. The findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive school-based violence prevention programs, mental health support services, and community engagement to address peer dynamics and power imbalances that sustain bullying. Aligning interventions with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 16.2 and SDG 4) will be critical in safeguarding adolescents' rights to education, health, and well-being.

Keywords: Bullying, School Violence, Adolescents, Prevalence, Nigeria

Introduction

Bullying, a common type of school violence is a virulent scourge affecting the adolescent population worldwide and it can occur anywhere, at home, school, or social events leading to negative physical and

Corresponding Author:

Ekpenyong, N.O.

Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Clinical Sciences, University of Calabar, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

nnekon2015@gmail.com

DOI: 10.61386/imj.v19i4.1375

mental effects. Bullying has three distinguishing features that separates it from other types of violence: intentionality, long term repetition, and a power imbalance between bullies and victims.¹ Bullying can be defined as any unwanted aggressive behavior by another youth or group of youths, who are not siblings or current dating partners and involves an observed or perceived power

imbalance, and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated.² It is an infringement of the rights to education, health and well-being.³ Those at a greater risk of being bullied are those seen as being "different" including racial, religious, and ethnic minorities, immigrants, and refugees; individuals with notable physical features or disabilities; and younger or more vulnerable children. Bullying episodes are usually unprovoked and deliberate, and bullies often seek visibility and prestige through their actions.⁴

Bullying can occur in various forms, such as physical bullying (e.g., striking, kicking, tripping, and pinching), verbal bullying (e.g., name calling, insults, and humiliation), social bullying (e.g., making jokes to shame, ostracizing, spreading stories, inflicting harm to someone's social reputation), and cyber bullying (e.g., causing others distress by using cell phones and the internet).⁵

Globally, about 30% of adolescents are affected, while in Eastern and Southern Africa, about 48% of students' experience bullying monthly, and in sub-Saharan Africa, about 48.2% of students report that they have been bullied.³ In Nigeria studies have shown bullying as a widespread problem⁶ with regional values ranging from 78.7% in Sokoto metropolis⁷, 81.3% in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State⁶, 82.2% in Port harcourt,⁸ 66.7% in Osun state⁹ and a national prevalence of 51.9%.^{10,11}

Bullying is a preventable event that can have short and long- term mental, physical, social and economic consequence. Mental health effects of bullying include emotional and behavioural problems¹² such as aggression, conduct disorder, substance abuse, low self-esteem, smoking, poor academic performance, depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideations. Physical effects of bullying can result in physical injuries, obesity, diabetes mellitus, and ischemic heart diseases. Stigma and discrimination have been described as social problems associated with bullying which usually results in a vicious cycle¹³. Economic impact can occur either directly or indirectly through poor academic performance, educational underachievement, loss of earning potentials, and increased social spending.¹¹ The emotional scars from childhood bullying lasts a lifetime and often resurface in later years to cause new problems.¹⁴

The recognition of violence against children as a

human right issue and a grave public health concern with devastating consequences led to its inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as target 16.2 – Elimination of all forms of violence against children.^{11,15} In addition, SDG 4 on quality education underscores the importance of safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments, where reforms promote anti-bullying programs and strengthen school systems to protect adolescents from violence and exploitation. Together, these targets highlight the global commitment to safeguarding children's rights and fostering secure educational spaces.¹⁵

Different studies have shown different patterns of bullying among adolescents. Common types of bullying include physical, verbal, social/relational, and cyber bullying with harm to the individual ranging from physical injury to emotional trauma and even social isolation as well as effect on academic performance.^{6,16,17} Physical bullying is the most common type of bullying especially among younger children in primary and secondary schools and it includes acts such as - hitting, pushing, damaging belongings and other forms of physical aggression.^{18,19} Verbal bullying involves activities such as insults, threats, and name-calling.^{20,21}

Social/relational bullying can occur through exclusion, rumor-spreading, humiliation and it is most prevalent with older adolescent girls.²²⁻²⁴

Cyberbullying is a form of harassment that can occur through social media, and messaging apps and it is more common in urban areas with increase access to internet.^{25,26} The prevalence of these forms of bullying varies by age, gender, and region, indicating the need for targeted interventions that address the specific challenges associated with each type.²⁴

Bullying is a rising trend globally and secondary school students are not exempted²⁷. Threats, viciousness, terror and intimidation should be unlikely occurrences in educational settings; yet the problem of bullying has remained pervasive for all stakeholders in education and this phenomenon has succeeded in making educational settings unsafe with institutions of learning becoming an ideal environment for bullying because of its decentralized nature.²⁸ This trend violates the United Nations fundamental human rights – rights to health, safety and freedom from fear and violence. No individual has the right to put another or others in

a position where they become victims of his or her malicious tendencies solely for self-gratification or pleasure.¹³

Although, bullying extensively studied in developed countries has been found to be the commonest form of violence in school and is linked to a broad spectrum of adverse outcome for both the victim and the perpetrator, bullying behavior in school has not gotten enough attention in Nigeria.⁷ Little is known about prevalence and patterns of bullying among secondary school students in the study area, as the few research done in Nigeria has been in other location. This research seeks to fill this gap by studying the prevalence and patterns of bullying among in school adolescent in Calabar Cross River State, Nigeria. Findings from this study will inform policy makers and stakeholders about the typology of bullying in the study setting and also form a baseline for further research into the subject area

Methodology

This study was carried out in Calabar metropolis which is the capital of Cross River state, in Southeastern Nigeria. It is made up of two administratively distinct Local Government Areas called Calabar south and Calabar Municipality. Calabar is often referred to as the tourism capital of Nigeria, the city is watered by the Calabar and Great Kwa rivers and creeks of the Cross River. The city of Calabar is home to the oldest secondary school established in Eastern Nigeria in 1895, Hope Waddell Training Institution, the Slave History Museum, an international airport and seaport, a cultural center, stadium complex, the University of Calabar, Tinapa Resort, a free trade zone, and several other prominent landmarks.

According to the Cross River State Ministry of Education 2023 records, there is a total of 134 secondary schools in Calabar. Calabar Municipality has 85 secondary schools of which 18 are public secondary schools and 67 are government approved private secondary schools. While Calabar South has 49 secondary schools, with 8 public and 41 private secondary schools. Calabar, the study setting has the largest number of private secondary schools in Cross River State.²⁹

Study design

This study was a cross-sectional descriptive design.

Sample Size Estimation

Sample size was estimated using the Cochran's formula: $n = Z^2PQ/d^2$, using a proportion of 78% of students bullied from a previous study done in similar study setting²⁸ and assuming a 15% non-response, the minimum estimated sample size was 270 and this was approximated to 300.

Eligibility criteria

All students of public and private secondary schools in Calabar, Cross River state were eligible for this study. However, students who were not present in school, those who were too ill to participate, and those whose parents or school authorities did not consent to their participation in the study were excluded from the study. Also, those in examination classes (Junior Secondary School 3 and Senior Secondary School 3) were excluded from the study as examination was ongoing during the period of data collection.

Sampling methodology

A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 300 students from 15 schools out of the total of 134 secondary schools in Calabar, and systematic random sampling was used to select the final participants recruited into this study. In the first stage, 10 schools and 5 schools were randomly selected from Calabar municipality and Calabar South LGA respectively following proportionate allocation. In stage two, to ensure fair representation, one class each from Junior Secondary School (JSS) and Senior Secondary School (SSS) were randomly selected by balloting. Where there was more than one arm in the selected class, simple random sampling by balloting was used to select an arm of the class. In the final stage, the list of enrolled students was obtained from each included class, from which students were recruited into the study using systematic random sampling method. The sampling interval was determined using the formula $k = N/n$ where k = Sampling interval

N = Total selected class size and n = Desired class sample size, which was 10 in this study.

The starting point was randomly allocated by balloting, thereafter the sampling interval was maintained to recruit participants into the study until 10 students per selected class was achieved (10 for junior secondary and 10 for senior secondary).

Tools for data collection

A semi-structured questionnaire was self-administered to the study population. The questionnaire was adapted from standardized bullying measurement tools used in educational and psychological research, particularly those based on the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (OBQ)^{30,31} and related international bullying scale³² that have been standardized and used previously in Nigerian school contexts.^{19,21} The OBQ was adapted to fit the study setting. Reliability analysis indicated an acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$).

Method of data collection

Pretesting of the questionnaire was done in a selected secondary school in Akpabuyo. Amendments and revisions were made to the questionnaire following the pretest. Before data collection, permission was sought for from the parents and relevant school authorities. Thereafter, the questionnaires were administered to the respondents after informed consent and/or assent was obtained.

Data analysis

Data was entered into excel and cleaned before exporting to IBM SPSS Statistical for Windows version 25. Numerical data was reported as mean $\pm$ SD while categorical data were reported using frequency and percentages.

Ethical considerations

Approval for conduct of the study was gotten from the Ethics Committee of the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital. Permission was sought for from the authorities of the selected schools and the parents of the study participants, before commencement of the study. Informed consent was obtained from all the respondents ≥ 18 years and assent from those below 18 years after obtaining informed consent from their parents/caregivers before administration of questionnaires. The study participants were assured of confidentiality at every

stage of the study process.

Results

Socio-demographic characteristics

A total of 300 questionnaire was given to the respondent, out of which 293 were appropriately filled and returned for analysis giving a response rate of 97.6%.

Most of the students (65.5%) were aged between 14-17 years with the mean age of 14.3 ± 1.6 , males were 43.7%, females were 56.3% and mostly of Efik tribe (33.8%). Majority of the respondents were Christians of the Roman Catholic denomination (43.0%).

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of secondary school students in Calabar, Cross River State (N=293)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Age Group (years)		
10-13	95	32.4
14-17	192	65.5
≥ 18	6	2.1
Mean age $\pm$ SD	14.3 $\pm$ 1.6	
Sex		
Male	128	43.7
Female	165	56.3
Tribe		
Efik	99	33.8
Ibibio	69	23.5
Qua	6	2.0
Ejagham	28	9.6
Igbo	31	10.6
Yoruba	6	2.0
Hausa	3	1.0
Others	51	17.5
Religion		
Catholic	126	43.0
Protestant	35	11.9
Pentecostal	100	34.1
Islam	1	0.3
Traditional	4	1.4
Class of study		
JSS1-JSS3	48	16.4
SS1-SS3	245	83.6

The experience of being bullied

Figure 1 shows that 91.81% of the students have experienced at least one form of bullying in the school year.

Figure II showed the pattern of bullying experience with most of the students experiencing verbal bullying (86.0%), followed by physical bullying (78.5%), then social bullying (76.5%) and the least experience was cyber/virtual bullying (33.1%).

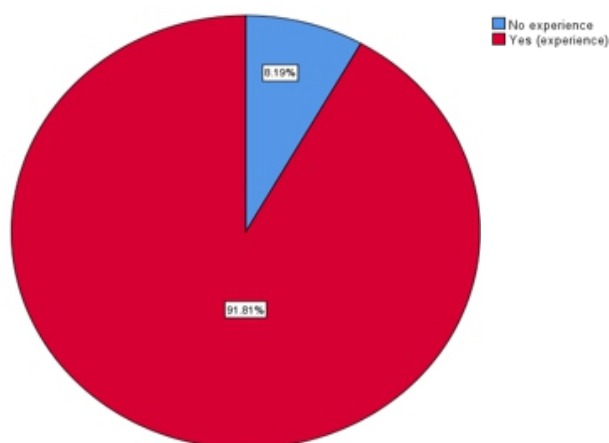


Figure I: Prevalence of the experience of being bullied among secondary school students in Calabar, Cross River State.

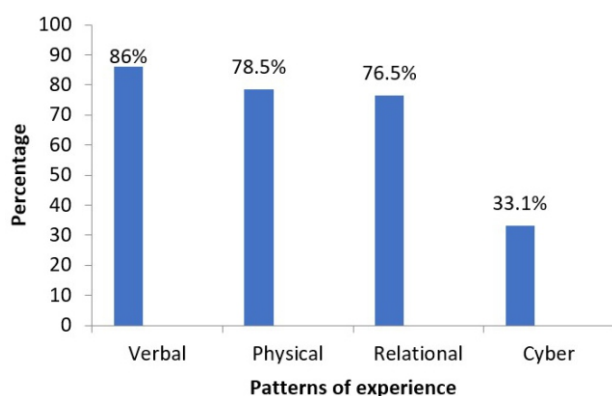


Figure II: Pattern of the experience of being bullied among secondary school students in Calabar, Cross River State.

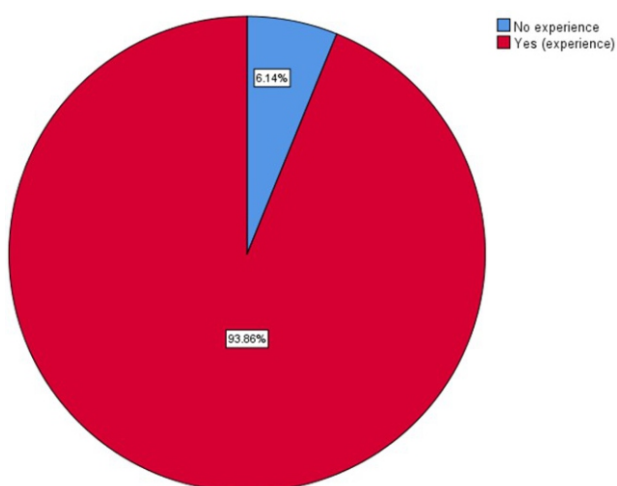


Figure III: Prevalence of the act of bullying among secondary school students in Calabar, Cross River State.

The act of bullying

Results from the study showed that 93.86% of the students have perpetrated the act of bullying. This can be visualized in Figure III.

Figure IV shows the categorization of the act of bullying into verbal abuser, physical abuser, relational abuser, and cyber abuser. The prevalence of the act of bullying in each category was obtained and it was revealed that the verbal abuser group scored the highest with 83.3% and was followed in order by the physical abuser group (64.5%), the relational abuser group (54.9%), and the virtual abuser group (31.7%).

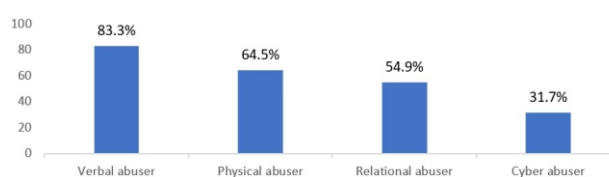


Figure IV: Pattern of the act of bullying among secondary school students in Calabar, Cross River State

Discussion

This study which determined the prevalence and pattern of bullying among secondary school students in Calabar, Cross River State was a cross-sectional descriptive study design that employed the multistage sampling method to recruit 293 secondary school students as study participants from 15 secondary schools. Most of the students (65.5%) were aged between 14-17 years with the mean age of 14.3 ± 1.6 , males were 43.7%, females were 56.3% and mostly of Efik tribe (33.8%).

The prevalence of bullying in this study (91.8%) is significantly higher than the national average of 51.9% reported by a UNICEF and CDC sponsored survey in Nigeria.¹¹ Similarly high rates have been observed in Sokoto (78.7%),⁷ Yenagoa (81.3%),⁶ and Port Harcourt (82.2%),³³ suggesting that bullying is a widespread issue across Nigerian secondary schools. However, the Calabar figures are among the highest reported, indicating a particularly severe problem in this region. This aligns with findings from a study that also linked bullying in Calabar schools to mental health symptoms such as depression, anxiety, and conduct disorders.¹² This recent study might also be

corroborating recent evidence of a global increase in bullying.³⁴ The high prevalence of bullying in this study area might be a reflection of the high rate of substance abuse among youth in the area^{35,36} as studies have linked bullying to substance abuse.^{36,37}

This finding has implication for the continuous cycles of bullying in the wider community.

Verbal bullying (86.0%) was the most prevalent, followed by physical (78.5%), social/relational (76.5%), and cyberbullying (33.1%). This pattern is in cognizance with other studies across several location in Nigeria where verbal bullying dominates.^{6,7} However, other studies found physical bullying as the most prevalent type of bullying.^{10,33}

This may be because these studies employed non-probability sampling method. The prevalence of physical bullying in this study is higher than that of a study done in Ebonyi state where the prevalence of physical bullying was 43.1%³⁸ but comparable with a previous study where physical bullying was found to be 61%¹² The relatively lower prevalence of cyberbullying reflects limited internet access in some areas, but as urbanization and digital penetration increase, cyberbullying is expected to rise.

Strikingly, 93.9% of students admitted to perpetrating bullying, with verbal abuse again being the most common (83.3%). This dual role of students as both victims and perpetrators suggests a normalized culture of aggression within schools, reinforcing cycles of violence. These findings echo global meta-analyses showing that bullying is both a victimization and perpetration phenomenon, often linked to peer dynamics and power imbalances.^{27,34}

these findings are worrisome because studies have further demonstrated that adolescents involved in bullying were more likely to engage in psychoactive substance use, compounding risks for poor academic performance and long-term social dysfunction.^{12,39}

The findings from this study underscore the urgent need for school-based violence prevention programs in this study setting, including: anti-bullying policies enforced by school authorities, mental health support services integrated into school health programs, community engagement to challenge harmful norms such as violent discipline, digital literacy and cyber safety education, given the expected rise in trend of cyberbullying. These

interventions align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 16.2), which call for the elimination of all forms of violence against children, and SDG 4, which emphasizes safe learning environments.

Limitations and Future Research

The study's cross-sectional design limits causal inference and self-reported data may be subject to bias, with underreporting or exaggeration possible. Also, there may be limited generalisability from selecting schools in urban areas only for this study.

Future research should adopt longitudinal designs and interventional studies to track bullying trends over time as well as test and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and should also include schools in rural settings.

Conclusion

Bullying among secondary school students in Calabar is alarmingly prevalent, with verbal bullying being the most dominant form. The dual role of students as victims and perpetrators highlights a systemic issue requiring urgent intervention. Addressing bullying in schools demands a multi-sectoral approach involving educators, policymakers, parents, and mental health professionals to safeguard adolescents' rights to education, health, and well-being.

Conflicts of interests

The authors declared they have no conflicts of interest.

Authors' contributions

NOE conceived and designed the study, and oversaw its implementation. AII, BJA and FIL provided guidance and supervision throughout the design and implementation phases. EEN, CEO, CTI, and CRI prepared the initial draft of the manuscript under the mentorship of NOE, AII, BJA and FIL. All authors contributed to the critical revision of the manuscript, approved the final version, and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

Funding

The authors received no funding for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

References

- Mróz JT, Wójcik M, Poraj-Weder M. From definition to effective intervention. How to understand the phenomenon of bullying? *Advances in Educational Psychology*. 2024 Dec 12;71(29):5–22. doi:10.5604/01.3001.0054.8399
- CDC. Youth Violence Prevention [Internet]. 2025 [cited 2026 Aug 22]. Bullying. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/youth-violence/about/about-bullying.html>
- Behind the numbers: ending school violence and bullying | UNESCO [Internet]. [cited 2026 Aug 22]. Available from: <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/behind-numbers-ending-school-violence-and-bullying>
- Daley SF, Waseem M, Nickerson AB. Identifying and Addressing Bullying. In: *StatPearls* [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2026 [cited 2026 Aug 22]. Available from: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK441930/> PubMed PMID: 28722959.
- Olweus D, Limber SP, Breivik K. Addressing Specific Forms of Bullying: A Large-Scale Evaluation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. *Int Journal of Bullying Prevention*. 2019 Mar 1;1(1):70–84. doi:10.1007/s42380-019-00009-7
- Esther OO, Joseph E, Oliemen P, Olukayode AF, Ann OO. Prevalence and Pattern of Traditional Bullying, Amongst Secondary School Students in Yenagoa, Nigeria | *International Journal of TROPICAL DISEASE & Health* [Internet]. [cited 2026 Aug 22]. Available from: <https://journalijtdh.com/index.php/IJTDH/article/view/1484>
- Raji IA, Bashir SS, Stephen AA, Umeokonkwo CD, Sufiyan MB, Abubakar AU, et al. Predictors of bullying perpetration among adolescents attending secondary schools in Sokoto Metropolis, Nigeria, 2019. *Pan Afr Med J*. 2021 May 19;39:49. doi:10.11604/pamj.2021.39.49.22690 PubMed PMID: 34422172; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC8356924.
- Alex-Hart BA, Okagua J, Opara PI. Prevalence of bullying in secondary schools in Port Harcourt. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*. 2015 Nov 1;27(4):391–6. doi:10.1515/ijamh-2014-0038
- Olaoye AO, Olasunkanmi O. Bullying among secondary school students in Osun, Nigeria. *Journal of Education Research and Library Practice* [Internet]. 2024 May 31 [cited 2026 Aug 22]. Available from: <https://africanscholarpub.com/ajerlp/article/view/178>
- Ighaede-Edwards IG, Liu X, Olawade DB, Ling J, Odetayo A, David-Olawade AC. Prevalence and predictors of bullying among in-school adolescents in Nigeria. *J Taibah Univ Med Sci*. 2023 May 23;18(6):1329–41. doi:10.1016/j.jtumed.2023.05.009 PubMed PMID: 37293132; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC10244694.
- National Population Commission N, UNICEF N, U. S. Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. Together for Girls [Internet]. Abuja: UNICEF; 2016 [cited 2026 Aug 22]. Violence Against Children in Nigeria: Findings from a national survey. Available from: <https://www.togetherforgirls.org/en/resources/nigeria-vacs-report-2016>
- Asibong U, Okafor CJ, Etokidem A, Asibong I, Ayi E, Omoronyia O. Bullying Behavior and its Association with Mental Health Symptoms among Senior Secondary School Students in Calabar, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Medicine*. 2021 Apr 30;30(2):125–33.
- Shelton ML. Bullying Behaviour in the School Milieu. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. 2015 Jan 8;6(1 S1):42.
- Arseneault L. The long-term impact of bullying victimization on mental health. *World Psychiatry*. 2017 Feb;16(1):27–8. doi:10.1002/wps.20399 PubMed PMID: 28127927; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC5269482.
- THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development [Internet]. [cited 2026 Aug 23]. Available from: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- Johansson S, Englund G. Cyberbullying and its relationship with physical, verbal, and relational bullying: a structural equation modelling approach [Internet]. [cited 2026 Aug 30]. Available from: <https://www.researchgate.net/>

- publication/342064472_Cyberbullying_and_its_relationship_with_physical_verbal_and_relational_bullying_a_structural_equation_modelling_approach doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2020.1769033>
17. Chikaodi O, Abdulmanan Y, Emmanuel AT, Muhammad J, Mohammed MA, Izeboy A, et al. Bullying, its effects on attitude towards class attendance and the contribution of physical and dentofacial features among adolescents in Northern Nigeria. *Int J Adolesc Med Health*. 2017 Jul 21;31(2):/j/ijamh.2019.31.issue-2/ijamh-2016-0149/ijamh-2016-0149.xml. doi:10.1515/ijamh-2016-0149 PubMed PMID: 28731856.
 18. Oladosu A, Abiodun O, Tunde-Ayinmode M. Self reported experience of physical abuse in schools in Nigeria | *European Psychiatry* | Cambridge Core [Internet]. [cited 2026 Aug 30]. Available from: <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/european-psychiatry/article/self-reported-experience-of-physical-abuse-in-schools-in-nigeria/946C5F6395130E28092FC34036F10844>
 19. Gabriel-Job N, Azubogu U. Bullying Behaviour: Experience in Secondary Schools in Obio Akpor Local Government Area in Rivers State, Nigeria [Internet]. *Asian Journal of Medicine and Health* 20(7): 1-7, 2022; 2022 [cited 2026 Aug 30]. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/360066647_Bullying_Behaviour_Experience_in_Secondary_Schools_in_Obio_Akpor_Local_Government_Area_in_Rivers_State_Nigeria doi:Article no.AJMAH.85603 ISSN: 2456-8414
 20. Fenny O, Falola MI. Prevalence and Correlates of Bullying Behavior Among Nigerian Middle School Students. *Int J Offender Ther Comp Criminol*. 2020 Apr;64(5):564–85. doi:10.1177/0306624X20902045 PubMed PMID: 32020822.
 21. Folayan MO, Oginni O, Arowolo O, El Tantawi M. Association between adverse childhood experiences, bullying, self-esteem, resilience, social support, caries and oral hygiene in children and adolescents in sub-urban Nigeria. *BMC Oral Health*. 2020 Jul 11;20:202. doi:10.1186/s12903-020-01160-0 PubMed PMID: 32652974; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC7353770.
 22. Adeyemi AO, Odedokun SA, Akanni OO. DETERMINANTS OF BULLYING AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MUSHIN, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA. *European Journal of Social Sciences Studies*. 2024 Jul 12;10(2). doi:10.46827/ejsss.v10i2.1773
 23. Orjiakor EC, Obioha WC. Differential impacts of bullying and sexual violence on girls' self-esteem in Nigeria: the buffering role of social support. *BMC Psychol*. 2026 Jan 31;14:281. doi:10.1186/s40359-026-04083-7 PubMed PMID: 41620632; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC12947488.
 24. Okoro CI, Guliyeva N, Eze KC, Mbang C. Understanding bullying in Nigerian schools: Insights on prevalence, impacts, and solutions. *Humanities Horizon*. 2025 Jun 8;2(2):87–94. doi:10.63373/3047-8014/21
 25. Akuneme CC, Nwosu KC. Cyberbullying In Nigeria: A Systematic Research Synthesis On Its Concepts, Prevalence, Outcomes, Interventions. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review*. 2023;10(2):92–100.
 26. Ojaga OE, Thompson O, Ogonye OP, Chinonyerem OC. Path-analytic investigation on moderating impact of cyberbullying on mental Health and academic wellbeing of teenagers' in Owerri Municipal Imo State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Science and Research Archive*. 2026;18(2):226–42. doi:10.30574/ijrsra.2026.18.2.0202
 27. Menesini E, Salmivalli C. Bullying in schools: the state of knowledge and effective interventions. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*. 2017 Mar 6;22(sup1):240–53. doi:10.1080/13548506.2017.1279740 PubMed PMID: 28114811.
 28. Egbochuku EO. Bullying in Nigerian Schools: Prevalence Study and Implications for Counselling. *Journal of Social Sciences*. 2017 Jan;14(1):65–71. doi:10.1080/09718923.2007.11978400
 29. Ekpenyong NO, Isika AI, Efanga MO, Asuquo BJ. Factors associated with School Health Program implementation in secondary schools in Cross River State: A Qualitative Study. *Ibom*

- Medical Journal. 2026 Apr 1;19(2):375–83. doi:10.61386/imj.v19i2.1069
30. Olweus D. Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire [Internet]. 2012 [cited 2026 Aug 30]. Available from: <https://doi.apa.org/doi/10.1037/t09634-000> doi:10.1037/t09634-000
 31. ePROVIDE - Mapi Research Trust [Internet]. 2025 [cited 2026 Aug 30]. OBVQ-R | Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire described in ePROVIDE. Available from: <https://eprovide.mapi-trust.org/instruments/revised-olweus-bully-victim-questionnaire>
 32. Waasdorp TE, Bradshaw CP. The Overlap Between Cyberbullying and Traditional Bullying. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 2015 May 1;56(5):483–8. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2014.12.002
 33. Alex-Hart BA, Okagua J, Opara PI. Prevalence of bullying in secondary schools in Port Harcourt. *Int J Adolesc Med Health*. 2015 Nov;27(4):391–6. doi:10.1515/ijamh-2014-0038 PubMed PMID: 25536659.
 34. Ariani TA, Putri AR, Firdausi FA, Aini N. Global prevalence and psychological impact of bullying among children and adolescents: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Affective Disorders*. 2025 Sep 15;385:119446. doi:10.1016/j.jad.2025.119446
 35. Anake PM. Adolescents' Drug Use/Addiction And Social Adjustment Pattern In Northern Cross River State, Nigeria [Internet]. 2016. doi:10.5281/ZENODO.15872345
 36. Umoh EO, Thomas IA. Prevalence and Determinants of Psychoactive Substances Use among Youths in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State. *GPH-International Journal of Health Sciences and Nursing*. 2024 Nov 28;7(06):01–26. doi:10.5281/zenodo.14252442
 37. Peprah-Donkor K, Hagan VM, Gbafu FB, Ansong-Aggrey SK, Okwei R, Afetor M, et al. Peer connectedness moderates the association of bullying victimisation with substance use among 135,881 in-school adolescents in 35 countries. *Children and Youth Services Review*. 2025 Dec 1;179:108603. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2025.108603
 38. Nwankwo GI, Nwankwo ONO, Anyanwu OU, Ezeonu CT, Uzomba CI, Akpoke MA, et al. Prevalence and Predictors of Peer Physical Violence Among Adolescents in a Sub-National Region of Nigeria. *Int J Public Health*. 2025;70:1608128. doi:10.3389/ijph.2025.1608128 PubMed PMID: 40746733; PubMed Central PMCID: PMC12310562.
 39. Kaltiala-Heino R, Rimpelä M, Rantanen P, Rimpelä A. Bullying at school--an indicator of adolescents at risk for mental disorders. *J Adolesc*. 2000 Dec;23(6):661–74. doi:10.1006/jado.2000.0351 PubMed PMID: 11161331.