

## **Effect of Peer Tutoring in Reducing Bullying Behaviour among Secondary School Students in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria.**

### **Abstract**

*This research investigated the effect of peer tutoring as a strategies to reducing bullying behaviours among students. The study was guided by objective from which research question and the corresponding null hypothesis were formulated, while the research design used for this study was a non-equivalent control group a quasi-experimental design. The area of study was Wukari Local Government area of Taraba State Nigeria, while the population of the study consist of 698 student's altogether, and 378 were selected as sample of the study. The instrument used for data collection was (FBS) while the data was analysed by the use of independent t-test. The major findings of the study indicate that teachers are aware of peer tutoring as strategy for reducing anti-social behaviour among secondary school students and that to a large extent, they are aware of the strategies in their classrooms. Based on this, recommendations were made that since peer tutoring was found to be effective in reducing bullying behaviour among secondary school students, teachers as well as parents should take this into consideration and use the technique whenever they observe bullying behaviour among students.*

**Key Words: Bullying Behaviour; Peer Tutoring; Secondary School Students.**

## Introduction

Education is an instrument to create a dynamic and productive society, offering fairness and opportunity to all. As a result, it is critical that students receive a comprehensive and balanced education that ensures both excellent academic achievement and emotional maturity Saka (2022). The school is an institution established for the formal education of the citizens of any country. Students acquire relevant knowledge, skills, positive behaviour, competencies, values and abilities for useful living in the society at school. While at school, students socialize with others as they work in groups for their positive development. Positive development of students morally, socially, intellectually, emotionally and physically cannot take place if they do not see the school environment as friendly, safe and secure.

School are expected to remain one of the safest place next to the home in a child's life. One wonders if that statement still holds way in our present society based on the increase spate of violence school. Violence in schools is an issue that has become more prominent in the last few years, as new articles about violent deeds among the students within the school setting are now on the increase side (Fareo, 2015). Despite the increasing rate of violence in schools, the society still hold believe that school should be a safe place for students. Thus in other to maintain a peaceful and safe school environment stakeholders in education have tended to concern themselves with the problem of violence in our schools (Aluede, 2011).

The problem behaviour among the secondary students has always been a great challenge for the academic institutions and the parents alike causing a bad impact on society at large. This issue can be solved by encouraging the positive relationships within the institution by creating awareness about the social behaviour of the students and the introduction of student-friendly disciplinary codes. (Kelly, 2018, as cited in Aisha, Ambreen & Muneeza, 2020). In Nigeria, secondary school students experience an increase in the rate of repeated acts of disturbances among them. On daily basis, there are a lot of media reports on students hurting their fellow students on several occasions through physical, verbal or cyber means that lead to suicide action by the victims to escape the seemingly endless negative relational behaviours. This situation or scenario indicates the daunting need for the study of negative relational acts among secondary school students that adversely affect their well-being and academic performances and how they could be properly managed to ensure safety of students and other school community members. Therefore, the key variable looking into in the context of this research work are peer tutoring and bullying behaviours respectively.

According to (Olweus 1999, as cited in Metin, 2022) a pioneer in this area of research, defined bullying or victimization as instances when a child is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students. This definition stressed the direct physical nature of the behaviour (hitting, pushing, pulling, etc.), as well as its direct verbal nature (teasing, threatening, calling hurtful names, etc.). Additionally, bullying can sometimes take the form of more indirect behaviours like social exclusion and rumour spreading. They further described bullying with reference to three criteria:

- 1) It is aggressive behaviour or intentional harm doing
- 2) It is performed repeatedly and over time,
- 3) It takes place within the context of an interpersonal relationship characterized by an imbalance of power.

Bullying could also be seen as ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). OJJDP (2013) posited that Bullying occurs across all ages but tends to be at its peak in the middle school years. In 2010–2011, 6th graders reported being bullied at a rate of 37 percent, 8th graders at a rate of almost 31 percent, 10th graders at a rate of 28 percent, and 12th graders at a rate of 22 percent. Interestingly, this overall trend is not mirrored in cyberbullying, which tends to peak in the high school years. Sixth graders reported being cyberbullied at a rate of almost 7 percent, 8th graders at a rate approaching 9 percent, 10th graders at a rate of almost 12 percent, and 12th graders at a rate under 8 percent (“Indicators”).

Also bullying according (Smith, Helen, Ranger & Andy 2002; Polanin 2012; as cited in OJJDP 2013) bullying at root could be refers to as form of youth violence and aggressive behaviour

There are three aspects are often used to distinguish bullying from other types of aggression or violence:

- The behaviour stems from an intent to cause fear, distress, or harm
- The behaviour is repeated over time
- There is a real or perceived imbalance of power between the bully and victim (Nansel 2001; Ferguson et al. 2007; Merrell et al. 2008)

Many researchers provide generalized extra legal definitions of the phenomenon, but there are very few jurisdictions where legislators are keen on adopting legal definitions of the term bullying.

Another variable considered in this study by researcher peer tutoring, Peer tutoring is an effective teaching strategy for all students. Most students find it interesting to interact with their peer group and they ask their queries without any hesitation and comfortable while learning along with their peer group. Peer tutoring have been used non-systematically and hence most of the students could not use this method beneficially. Hence it becomes an area of thrust and creative approach in the teaching learning process. Teachers can also get rid of overburden of teaching and students strength. More and more systematic work can be promoted to increase the use of peer tutoring in classrooms. Peer tutoring is a teaching strategy that uses students as tutors. The student pairs might work on academic, social, behavioural, functional or even social skills. There are many different ways to pair students, such as by ability level, skills mastered, or age. Peer tutoring has been extensively researched as an effective strategy to engage students and promote academic success Yashvinder & Sujatha (2017).

The peer tutoring method enable the students to interact with their fellow peer group and clarify their doubts. They will be placed in a more comfortable zone. The students will also get an opportunity to share their ideas as well as individual's opinion, creativity can also be induced through peer tutoring method.

The following are five benefits that shows the importance of peer teaching:

- **Increased Literacy Scores-:** According to an Ohio University Pilot Study, Students who read and discuss story passages with their peers recall more content and score higher on assessments. The researcher divided four average-reading 6th grade students into pairs. The first pair participated in peer reading activities twice a week, whereas students in the second pair read the same passages individually at the same frequency. The first pair scored higher on each reading assessment.
- **Developed Reasoning and Critical Thinking Skills-:** Students who work in pairs and groups typically perform better on tests that involve reasoning and critical thinking, according an oft-cited study about science education. This is largely because students must become active learners, discussing and rationalizing lesson concepts in their own words.

- **Improved Confidence and Interpersonal Skills-:** Peer teaching point to students building confidence and communication abilities. Pioneering research from 1988 states tutors improve self-esteem and interpersonal skills by giving feedback. Tutees realize these benefits by asking questions and receiving immediate clarification. A later study of at-risk students echoed these advantages.
- **Increased Comfort and Openness-:** The same 1988 study indicates that “students generally identify more easily with peer helpers than with adult authority figures.” This helps create an environment in which students are more comfortable to ask questions and work through challenging problems in an environment free from class ridicule.
- **Versatility-:** You can run a range of peer teaching exercises based on different subjects and objectives, possibly involving other grades and classes. Lots of ideas can lead to lots of fun for your students.

#### **Below are the basis for choosing Peer Tutoring**

- It is a widely-researched practice across ages, grade levels, and subject areas
- The intervention allows students to receive one-to-one assistance
- Students have increased opportunities to respond in smaller groups
- It promotes academic and social development for both the tutor and tutee
- Student engagement and time on task increases
- Peer tutoring increases self-confidence and self-efficacy (Spencer, 2006)

The above strategy is supported by many strong research base such as, (Calhoon, Cihak, & Avalos, 2007; Kunsch, & Sood, 2007; Vasquez & Slocum, 2012).

#### **Research Objective**

To guide the study, the following objectives were stated:

To determine the effectiveness of peer tutoring in reducing bullying behaviour among secondary school students in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State

#### **Research Question**

Based on the above stated objective, the following research questions were answered.

To what extent is peer tutoring effective in reducing bullying behaviour among secondary school students in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State

## Research Hypothesis

The research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 5% level of significance in line with the above stated objective.

**Ho.** There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of peer tutoring in reducing bullying behaviour between experimental and control groups among secondary school students in in wukari local government of Taraba State.

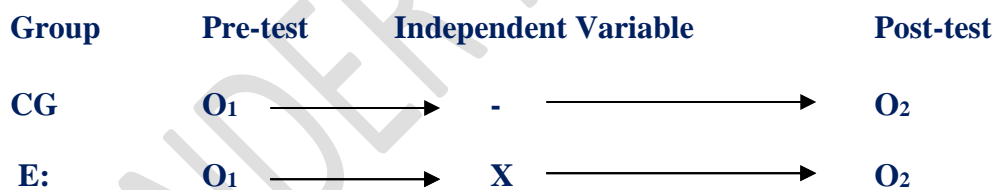
## Methodology

### Research Design

In this study, the researcher employed a non-equivalent control group design. This is a type of quasi-experimental research design where by two (or more) treatment groups are pretested, administered a treatment, and post tested (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012). This method involves random assignment of intact groups to treatments and not random assignment of individuals.

The choice of this research design was based on the fact that the study was intended to examine the effect of positive reinforcement in reducing the rate of bullying behaviour among secondary school students in Wukari Local Government area of Taraba state, and the use of Non-equivalent Control Group Design is more appropriate since it is not possible to consider true experiments.

The structure of the design is graphically presented below:



**Figure 1:** Illustration for Research Design, where:

**O<sub>1</sub>:** refers to the observation before the commencement of treatment (pre-test)

**X:** refers to four weeks' treatment session

**O<sub>2</sub>:** refers to the observation after the commencement of treatment (post-test)

**CG:** refers to control group

**E:** refers to experimental group (peer tutoring).

### Population of the Study

Population of the study consist of all the public Secondary Schools II students in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State. At the time of conducting this study, there were a total number of students comprises of 6,968 students which spread in JSS II and SSS II across all the secondary schools in the zone, out of which 3,610 males and 3,358 females' altogether. Based on the Research Advisors (2006) guideline, from the total number of students, 346 students were selected as sample size from the entire population for this study.

### **Instrumentations**

Forms of Bullying Scale (FBS), developed and validated by Shaw, Dooley, Cross, Zubrick, and Waters (2013) was used to collect data for this study. The reliability coefficient of (FBS-V),  $r = .92$  was obtained which was reliable enough for the data collection. The data was collected by the researcher and, the data collection instrument was distributed to the respondents as pre-test. After which the responses were retrieved scored and tabulated, and the treatment sessions for experimental groups were slated for six weeks. For experimental group treatment administered was peer tutoring.

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Hypothesis Testing**

To be able to test the stated hypotheses, the use of inferential statistics was necessary. In this regard, the researcher used Independent Samples t-test statistic. The use of this statistics was based on the fact that the data collected was polytomous in nature and the sampling procedure was probabilistic. Therefore, the hypotheses were tested at 0.5% level if significance. The essence of using this statistics is hinged in the opinion of Mcqueen & Knussen (2006).

### **Result**

**Ho:** There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of peer tutoring in reducing bullying behaviour between experimental and control groups among secondary school students in wukari local government area of taraba state.

To test this hypothesis, Independent Sample statistic was used. The data was analysed using SPSS v.23.0, and the result was presented in the table below:

**Table 1 : Differences in the effectiveness of peer tutoring in reducing bullying behaviour between experimental and control groups among secondary school students in wukari local government area of taraba state.**

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	T	P
Control Group	100	44.0400	11.77390	262	22.935	.000
Experimental Group: Peer Tutoring	164	15.0183	8.69981			

From the table above, the difference in the effectiveness of peer tutoring in reducing bullying behaviour between experimental and control groups among secondary school students in Wukari Local government area of Taraba State was ( $t = 22.935$ ,  $df = 262$ , and  $P = .000$ ). Now since the p-value (.000) is less than the alpha value (.05), the null hypothesis is hereby rejected and the alternate hypothesis is adopted. So, the researcher concluded that there is a significant difference in the effectiveness of peer tutoring in reducing bullying behaviour between experimental and control groups among secondary school students in Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba state, in favour of the experimental group, who received peer tutoring as a treatment of reducing bullying behaviour among students.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This research explored the effectiveness of peer tutoring in reducing bully among secondary school students in Wukari Local Government of Taraba State Nigeria. During the analysis the null hypothesis were tested at .05 level of significance. From the results above, it was revealed that there was a significant difference in the effectiveness of peer tutoring in reducing bullying behaviour between experimental and control groups among secondary school students in Wukari Local Government area of Taraba state, in favour of the experimental groups, who received peer tutoring as treatments for reducing bullying behaviour among students. These findings agreed with that of other researchers that peer tutoring have positive effect in reducing bullying behaviour among students (Gaffney, Ttofi, & Farrington, 2018; Farrington & Ttofi, 2009; Adeyemi, 2013; Kärnä, Voeten, Little, Poskiparta, Alanen, & Salmivalli, 2013; and Petit, 2013; Yashvinder & Sujatha, 2017; Metin, 2022). In all these researches, findings indicated that school-based anti-bullying programs like peer tutoring, are effective in reducing both bullying perpetration and bullying victimization.



## Recommendations

Since peer tutoring was found to be effective in reducing bullying behaviour among secondary school students, teachers as well as parents should take this into consideration and use the technique whenever they observe bullying behaviour among students.

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