THE EFFECTS OF PEER HARASSMENT IN A SCHOOL CURRICULUM: A CASE STUDY OF BOTSWANA JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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by

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This research project has been examined and approved as meeting the required standards of scholarship for partial fulfilment of the requirement for Masters of Education in the field of Guidance and Counselling.

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Supervisor        Date

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External examiner  Date
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this piece of work to my husband Mr Keletso Mosenki. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to him for being supportive throughout the period of my study. May God bless him.
STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

The researcher has completed this supervised special research project through the assistance of two supervisors who are both lecturers at the North West University. The work is original and all the sources used have been indicated and acknowledged by way of references.

.......................................................... ................................

Student’s Signature Date
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the following people and institutions for making this study a success and for allowing me to reach my goal.

First and foremost, I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to Almighty God for giving me sustenance throughout my study. I am also indebted to my supervisors Dr M W Lumadi and Mr N Shaikhnag who assisted me in making this project a success. I would like to further extend my gratitude to Mr N Ncube who assisted me so much on how to conduct research, Ms Malefsane and Ms Masalilia who acted as my second readers and offered helpful and critical evaluations.

Thanks to the administration of all the schools that I used to carry out my research. These schools are Bokamoso Junior Secondary School, Maikano Junior Secondary School, Marang Junior Secondary School, Motswedi Junior Secondary School and Ledumadumane Junior Secondary School.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband Mr Keletso Mosenki and my daughters Abang and Sefiwa Mosenki, who strongly supported me throughout the duration of this study.

I thank you.
ABSTRACT

The opening chapter states the problem, purpose of study and also provides background to the problem as well as preliminary literature of the study. The other chapter that has substantially enriched the project is chapter two, which provided all the literature, related to the research. The third chapter explains the methodology used in this research study. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires from learners in Gaborone Junior Secondary Schools. All in all, a sample of sixty (60) (n=60) subjects were used to collect data. Chapter four is about data presentation, analysis and interpretation and lastly the recommendations, which are provided to help the authorities as well as the school administrators.

The study sought to find out the causes and effects of peer harassment in Gaborone Junior Secondary Schools, as well as the prevalent forms of bullying and the effort undertaken by school administrators and other stakeholders to support victims of peer harassment in the educational system. The researchers' hypotheses were that home background, peer pressure, and popularity are some of the major causes of school bullying, physical and verbal abuse are the prevalent forms of bullying in secondary school, there is a significant positive relationship between school bullying and learners' low academic achievement and that school administrators and teachers are not supportive to learners who are victims of peer harassment.

The findings revealed that indeed, children who come from violent homes, homes faced with divorce, alcoholism, lack of maternal affection and poverty, become bullies. The other causes of bullying behaviour according to the study, is negative peer pressure as well as the desire to be popular. The study also revealed that learners who are victims of bullying academically perform poorly, fear going to school, riding a school bus and develop low self-esteem and are depressed. Furthermore, the study found that the school administration and teachers do not make an effort to attend to victims of peer
harassment. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education through the work of curriculum developers should provide policies and programs that address unacceptable behaviour. These policies can include expansion of the school curriculum to cater for guidance and counselling. During the study, the researcher's schedule was affected especially during administration of questionnaires as a lot of schools were engaged in the Performance Management System exercise (P.M.S), thus some were reluctant to help.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

C.J.S.S – Community Junior Secondary School
F.S.U – Free State University
NDP – National Development Plan
P.M.S – Performance Management System
RNPE - Revised National Policy on Education
UNICEF – United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
U.S.A – United States of America
U.K – United Kingdom
CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

As social systems, schools are characterised by different behaviours from either individuals or groups. In school settings, behaviours that are termed ‘bad behaviours’ ultimately result in affecting learners in very negative ways. In most cases, learning institutions accommodate huge numbers of learners who portray different types of behaviour. Among many of the bad behaviours that affect learners is peer harassment.

The researcher developed interest in studying about peer harassment after realising that peers at school bully each other. Furthermore, as a Guidance and Counselling teacher, the researcher has often received reports from students that similarly suggest bullying in the school. In Gaborone, there have been an increasing number of bullies among secondary school learners. Press reports from the local newspaper, Botswana Voice (2003: 18), has an article about a schoolboy who was maimed by school bullies. All the aforementioned incidents prompted the researcher to have more interest in the topic, hence its study.

Bullying is one of the most awful behaviours experienced in schools and it affects learning in a variety of negative ways. It is one of the dark, hidden areas of social interaction, along with child physical and sexual abuse and adolescent violence in the home, which has thrived on the bed of secrecy and which has been neglected by professional investigation.

As defined by Besag (1995:04), bullying is a repeated attack - physical, psychological, social or verbal – by those in position of power, on those who
are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or gratification.

There are various reasons why some children become bullies. Some of the reasons according to Jenkins (1994:58) are that bullies might be very unhappy persons, angry with their own life and taking this anger out on others. They do not think much of themselves. Often, they dislike themselves, consequently, they find something or someone to pick on. By picking someone weaker than themselves, bullies feel better about themselves for a while. Bullies have also been bullied before.

The Botswana Curriculum, based on the Revised National Policy on Education, (1994) (RNPE), has no package or provision for bullying or any aggressive behaviour except for a provision on corporal punishment administered by teachers to learners. The nature of this act is such that emphasis is placed on child abuse and neglect student bullies. It is for this reason that teachers may not be aware of the incidents of bullying in schools among learners. This study assumes that perhaps most learners who quit school, drop out or become delinquents, have been victims of bullies with very little or no intervention at all.

The National Development Plan 8 (NDP 8) also suggests that in as far as education is concerned, Botswana should strengthen its Guidance and Counselling support services in order to cater for the ever changing needs, concerns and the rapidly changing socio-economic and cultural realities of growing people at various levels of education. In order to achieve this strengthened support, it was recommended.... “the Guidance and Counselling Division be expanded to provide adequate support for teachers as well as referral backup for schools on varied learner’s problems and concerns....” (NDP 8, 2003 : 13).
It has become clear that peer harassment takes place in most schools in Gaborone and probably to a greater extent than most educationists realise, since so many acts of bullying go unnoticed and victims usually are sceptical to report such incidents to relevant authorities.

The study is therefore intended to find out the causes, effects and nature of peer harassment as well as intervention strategies that can be put in place to try and curb the problem in Junior Secondary Schools in Botswana. The findings of the study therefore suggest how best the problem of peer harassment can be addressed by the schools, parents and other stakeholders.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although peer harassment may be one of the most persistent and widespread problems in school institutions, not much seems to be done to alleviate the problem. Instead, teachers and parents have been found battering each other for misbehaviour of some learners leaving behind the problem they should address. These authorities need to understand the immeasurable impact the problem is likely to cause to the learners for the rest of their lives if not addressed as a matter of urgency. The research therefore is intended to find out the causes, effects, nature as well as strategies that can be undertaken to address this problem in Junior Secondary Schools in Gaborone area of Botswana.

1.3 HYPOTHESES

- Home background, peer pressure, and popularity are some of the major causes peer harassment.

- Physical and verbal abuse are the prevalent forms (nature) of peer harassment in Junior Secondary Schools.
• There is a significant positive relationship between school peer harassment and learners' low academic achievement.

• There is a significant positive relationship between school peer harassment and learners' physical, emotional and psychological disturbance.

• School administrators, teachers and other stakeholders are not very supportive to learners who are victims of peer harassment.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study will be undertaken in order to:

1.4.1 Establish the causes of peer harassment in Junior Secondary Schools in Gaborone area of Botswana.

1.4.2 Identify the prevalent forms (nature) of peer harassment in Junior Secondary Schools in Gaborone area of Botswana.

1.4.3 Establish the effects of peer harassment on learners in a school curriculum of Botswana Junior Secondary Schools.

1.4.4 Establish the efforts undertaken by schools and other stakeholders to support victims of peer harassment.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

From the researcher's experience as a Guidance and Counselling teacher, there is a lot of peer harassment that is going on both in and outside the schools; unfortunately these incidents go unreported. Since these reports are not quantified and followed up in some systematic way, any record exists as to the causes, effects, nature as well as incidence of peer harassment in
Gaborone Junior Secondary Schools. This study will therefore provide empirical data that can assist educationists in knowing the real causes, effects and nature of peer harassment in Gaborone Secondary Schools. Furthermore, the study will encourage teachers, curriculum planners and policy makers to consider the inclusion of a bullying awareness and intervention package in the curriculum at all learning levels. The inclusion of such a package would alleviate bad behaviour of any nature especially those associated with peer harassment. This study may also provide information for other studies, which may later be conducted.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Some of the limitations of this study are as follows:

1.6.1 Sample size of sixty (60) is not adequate for generalisation purposes.

1.6.2 The situation in Gaborone City may be different from other areas.

1.6.3 The research covers the whole of Botswana, but only 6 (six) schools will be covered and this, therefore, may affect the results in terms of validity.

1.6.4 Misinterpretation of the questionnaires by respondents may make the results unreliable.

1.6.5 Time factor - most Junior Secondary Schools in Gaborone were sitting for their end of year examinations, as a result there was a delay in filling in the questionnaires. Teachers were also busy marking.

1.6.6 Financial constraints - having to move from one school to another and the typing and photocopying of this research paper required a lot of money.
1.7 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study's concern is limited to Junior Secondary Schools in Gaborone. This is merely due to the fact that a lot of reports and concerns pertaining to bullying are from Gaborone Junior Secondary schools. Primary and Senior schools will not be covered.

1.8 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.8.1 Peer harassment

Peer harassment is victimisation that entails face to face confrontation (for example, physical aggression, verbal abuse, nonverbal gesturing) or social manipulation through a third party (e.g., social ostracism, spreading rumours) (Juvonen and Graham, 2001:01).

Any form of behaviour that interferes with another person (especially of the same age)'s sense of safety, dignity, comfort, or productivity in the school environment. It may include name calling, teasing, phone calls, derogatory remarks, stalking and discrimination (http://www.his.lexingtonma.org).

For the purposes of this research, peer harassment and bullying will be treated to mean the same and used interchangeably.

1.8.2 Bullying

Bullying refers to a behaviour which can be defined as the repeated attack - physical, psychological, social or verbal- by those in a position of power, which is formally or situationally defined on those who are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or gratification (Besag, 1995:04).
Bullying is an interaction in which a more dominant individual or group intentionally causes distress to a less dominant individual or group. The bully has higher dominance and will inevitably be the victor. The victim has lower dominance and will inevitably be the loser. Bullying is essentially the abuse of power (Elliott, 1991:16).

In my opinion, bullying is behaviour in which a person or group of people, usually youngsters purposely use their powers to kick, slap, emotionally and psychologically abuse the less powerful or less dominant ones.

1.8.3 Bully

A bully is someone who is responsible for premeditated continuous, malicious and belittling tyranny (Elliott, 1991:16). Or a person who deliberately intimidates or persecutes those who are weaker (Pearsall, 2001:184).

In my opinion, a bully is a person who is fond of purposely intimidating others especially if he/she assumes that they are weaker. Bullies usually use their physical strength to harass and intimidate the victims.

1.8.4 Victims

Victims are individuals who are not able to defend themselves in the situation of bullying (Tattum, 1993:44). Or a person harmed injured or killed as a result of crime or accident (Pearsall, 2001:1597).

For the purposes of this research, a victim is someone who is being exposed to bullying behaviour. He/she can either be physically, emotionally or psychologically intimidated. They are usually fearful and develop low self-esteem.
1.8.5 Emotional disturbance

Emotional disturbance means suffering from emotional or psychological problems (Pearsall, 2001:416). Or emotional disturbance is a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects educational performance: An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression or A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems (http://www.kidsource./NICHCY/emotional.disab.k12).

For the purposes of this research emotional disturbance means being abused emotionally such that your educational performance may be affected.

1.8.6 Physical disturbance

According to http://www.atoz.iqhealth.com physical disturbance/abuse is a forceful behaviour that can result in injury to another person. A victim of physical abuse might be assaulted with a weapon, bitten, choked, kicked, pushed, slapped, hit, and punched.

Physical disturbance refers to an act of inflicting pain of any sort in one's body. This may be through hitting, punching, kicking, pushing, slapping, pinching, or even pulling.

1.8.7 Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse means addressing someone verbally in an insulting or offensive manner (Pearsall, 2001:6). Verbal abuse refers to statements or comments
made about or to another person with the intent to inflict emotional pain or embarrassment, to create feelings of worthlessness, or to motivate a person to perform or conform out of fear (http://www.growthclimate.com).

http://members.aol.com/relationshop/definitions/verbal_abuse.html defines verbal abuse as, any statement of disapproval which is undeserved and which tends to cause lasting scars.

Verbal abuse means using insulting words, words that are threatening, unbecoming and provoking on another person.

1.8.8 Teacher

A teacher is a person who teaches in a school (Pearsall, 2001:1469). Or a person who teaches or instructs; an instructor, especially a person employed to teach in a school (Brown, 1995:44). A teacher is anyone who passes knowledge to another person (www.usingenglish.com/forum/ask-teacher/4406-definition-teacher-print.html).

A teacher is a person who is charged with the responsibility of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes to learners in an institution. Nowadays, teachers have other administrative duties to perform apart from the mere task of teaching.

1.8.9 School

A school is a place where children go to be educated (Wehmeier, 1998:553). A school is any institution at which instruction is given in a particular discipline (Pearsall, 2001:1281).

A school means an institution that provides education for children from the age of 13 – 14 years and above. In the context of Botswana education, it
ranges from grades 8 to 10, that is, from form one to form three. This is usually called a Junior Secondary School.

**1.8.10 Administration**

According to Wehmeier (1998:9) administration is a group of people who control something. Administration refers to the organisation and running of a system (Pearsall, 2001:17).

Administration refers to the Schoolhead, Deputy Head and Heads of Departments in a school. They are mainly responsible for the general welfare of the school students and staff. They are the people who are mainly charged with the responsibility of running the school in general.

**1.9 ACCESS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**1.9.1 Informed consent and confidentiality**

Permission will be sought through a letter (see p.72 for appendix 3) from the concerned school administrators to use students as participants of the study. To maintain strict ethical standards, the researcher will ensure that each questionnaire has a statement of confidentiality assurance for the respondents to read. They will be assured that the information provided would be treated with strict confidentiality and that no details of individual comments will appear in the final report.

After necessary arrangements with the schools, the researcher will personally take a trip to the concerned schools and hand in the questionnaires to the Schoolheads who will then hand them over to relevant personnel to be administered. The researcher will collect the questionnaires on one appointed afternoon.
The researcher is aware of other ethical considerations in research such as:

1.9.2 Subject's anonymity

Subjects have the right to anonymity. The researcher should not disclose the name of the subject who provided data. This will help to protect the subject from victimisation.

1.9.3 Non-participation of subjects

Subjects have the right not to participate if they so wish. The researcher should not force them.

1.9.4 Environment

The researcher should not jeopardise the environment in anyway as she conducts her research. For example, littering.

1.10 SYNTHESIS

This chapter discussed the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the hypotheses, the limitations of the study, delimitations and the clarification of concepts as well as ethical considerations.

A literature review will be undertaken in chapter two.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study is to investigate the causes and effects of peer harassment in the school curriculum in Junior Secondary Schools in Botswana in general and Gaborone in particular. To assist in directing and guiding this investigation, the researcher put forward some theoretical principles underpinning the study.

Relevant literature from written materials such as books, Journals, the Internet and dissertations was used. The literature explored ideas related to the present study both local and international on the causes and effects of peer harassment on learners.

2.2 BACKGROUND ON PEER HARASSMENT

Peer harassment in schools is a world-wide problem that can have negative consequences for the general school climate and for the right of students to learn in a safe environment without fear. Peer harassment can also have negative lifelong consequences both for students who bully and for their victims. Although much of the formal research on peer harassment has taken place in the Scandinavian countries, Great Britain and Japan, the problems associated with peer harassment have been noted and discussed wherever formal schooling environments exist (http://www.npin.org/library/pre1998).

http://www.npin.org/library/pre1998 further stated that, bullying is comprised of direct behaviours such as teasing, taunting, threatening and stealing that are initiated by one or more students against a victim. In addition to direct
attacks, bullying may also be more indirect by causing a student to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion.

Peer harassment has long been common among young people, but only recently, particularly after several widely publicised incidents of school shootings has this behaviour began to be seriously addressed by educators, school boards and the media at large. Many incidents of peer harassment involve learners who are considered to be somehow different. For instance, some students become victims to bullying based on their sex, religion, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or other personal characteristics that are perceived as uncommon...peer harassment has been considered as a contributing factor in a lot of violent behaviour: two thirds of 41 perpetrators in recent school shooting incidents described feeling persecuted, bullied or threatened by their peers (www.nasbe.org).

According to www.crisa.org.za peer victimisation among learners is not new. A lot of adults can still remember incidents of bullying in which they were either the bullies or victims. In fact, the common understanding has been that bullying is a relatively normal and harmless experience that most children should undergo. Bullying has only received research attention since the early seventies when a Norwegian researcher, named Olweus began to study this area. His book, *Aggression in the schools: bullies and whipping boys (1978)*, is still considered the first scientific study of peer victimisation. Although the literature on bullying has grown significantly since the 1980’s, little research has been published in this area.

Peer harassment has been around since time began. It actually equips children to cope better with life. Children who are worried about being bullies or who actually see their friends being bullied (bystanders) have a difficult time concentrating on learning. Learners who are bullies are seldom our best pupils. The effects of bullying can go on for years. One study revealed that bullies were more likely as adults to have committed crimes, to have battered
their children and to have difficulty with relationships than children who are not bullies. So we do bullies no favours by ignoring their behaviour (Elliot, 1991:2).

2.3 WHAT IS PEER HARASSMENT?

The transition from elementary to middle school is a vital developmental task for early adolescents. It is a time typically marked by increased academic demand, decreased personal attention in school, increased social stresses and a shift from adult focused to peer focused relationships. An important component of adaptation to middle school is the youth’s development of healthy social relationships with peers. A common maladaptive type of peer interaction among middle school youth is that of “peer harassment” (Mullin-Rindler, 2003:46).

There has been surprisingly little research or informed opinion published on the subject of bullying. The sparse research available is confounded by the terminology used. The majority of current studies have been carried out in the Scandinavian countries, where the definition of bullying differs from that widely accepted in Britain, USA and other countries. The Scandinavians consider bullying to necessarily involve more than one attacker harassing one or more others. The word "mobbing" is used to describe this form of bullying. A person is bullied when he or she is exposed regularly and overtime to negative actions on the part of one or more persons (Besag, 1995:3).

Mullin-Rindler (2003:47) stated that bullying is typically defined as aggressive peer to peer behaviour in which (1) there is an intention to harm or disturb the victim, (2) the aggression occurs repeatedly over time and (3) there is an imbalance of power with a more powerful person or group attacking a less powerful one. The aggressive behaviour may be verbal, (for example, name calling, threats), physical (for example, hitting), or psychological, (for example, rumours, exclusion).
According to Temple and Suckling (2002: 69) bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour, 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 behaviour is the abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate. Bullying takes many forms. It can be physical – hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings; verbal- name calling, insulting, repeated teasing, racist remarks; indirect- spreading nasty rumours, excluding someone from social groups.

Temple and Suckling (2002:69) further stated that peer harassment contains the following key features:

- An intention to be hurtful
- This intention is carried out
- The behaviour harms the target
- The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power
- There is often no justification for the action
- The behaviour repeats itself again and again
- The bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the target

Peer harassment among learners is best defined as intentional, repeated hurtful acts, words, or other behaviour, such as name-calling, threatening, committed by a child against another child. These negative acts are not necessarily provoked by the victim and for such acts to be identified as bullying, an imbalance in real or perceived power must exist between the bully and the victim (http://www.crisa.org.za).

It is defined as systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt and or psychological distress on one or more students http://www.nasbe.org. Bullying is the general term applied to a pattern of behaviours whereby one person with a lot of internal anger, resentment and aggression and lacking interpersonal skills chooses to displace their aggression on to another person
chosen for their vulnerability with respect to the bully using tactics of constant criticism, nit-picking, exclusion, isolation, teasing with verbal, psychological, emotional and or physical violence, especially with children. When asked to account, the bully will typically exhibit the denial, counterattack, and feigning victimhood response to evade accountability, often with success. Child bullies are adept at manipulating the perceptions of adults, especially parents who are inexperienced (http://www.bully.org).

Bullying is a long-standing violence, physical or psychological, conducted by an individual or group of people 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 or her under stress (Smith & Sharp, 2002:04).

Munthe and Ronald (1989:69) stated that most bullies are of the fact that bullying is not a behaviour that is acceptable in the society. They know what the norms are and if spoken to about this behaviour, they will often agree completely that bullying is not good and yet they continue bullying others.

In a nutshell, Smith and Sharp (2002:53) stated that, we can say a child is being bullied when another child or young person or group of children or young people say nasty or unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a young person is hit, kicked, threatened, locked inside a room, sent nasty notes, when no-one ever talks to them. These things can happen frequently and it is difficult for a young person being bullied to defend himself/herself. It is also bullying when a young person is teased repeatedly in a nasty way. But it is not bullying when two young people of about the same strength have the odd fight or quarrel.
2.4 CAUSES OF PEER HARASSMENT

The reason why peer harassment occurs are many and complex. The bully may:

- Be bullied by others, hence deflects this towards another student
- Act in this way for money, possessions and favours
- Be confused in his or her notions of leadership
- Be seeking love and attention
- Be bored
- Be seeking revenge
- Want to have fun
- Have a disruptive family life
- Be in the school that does not take bullying seriously (Temple & Suckling, 2002:77).

According to Munthe and Ronald (1989:107), bullying may be a temporary response to a change in a child’s life such as a divorce, the birth of a baby, the death of someone they love, moving, going to a new school. Most often, bullies have been bullied before. They grow up feeling insecure, inadequate, humiliated, and stupid. As youngsters, they were not allowed to show feelings of tenderness, were put under great pressure to succeed, but never complimented or felt a sense of accomplishment. In growing up, these children have often:

- Felt insecure, humiliated, inadequate
- Been bullied by parents or siblings
- Been made the scapegoat in the family
- Been physically, emotionally and sexually abused
- Not been allowed to show feelings
- Been subjected to enormous pressure to succeed.
Students who engage in bullying behaviours seem to have a need to feel powerful and in control. They appear to derive satisfaction from inflicting and suffering on others, seem to have little empathy for their victims, and often defend their actions by saying that their victims provoked them in some way. Research indicate that bullies often come from homes where physical punishment is used, where the children are taught to strike back physically as a way to handle problems, and where parental involvement and warmth are frequently lacking (http://www.npin.org).

Some children are bullied for no particular reasons, but normally it is because they are different – perhaps it is the colour of their skin, the way they talk, their size or their name. Sometimes children are bullied because they look like they won't stand up for themselves - they are viewed as lacking confidence to take action. Family behaviour, the child's personality, the school climate can contribute to bullying (Garret, 2003:19).

Olweus (1993) in Munthe and Ronald (1989:72-73) stated the following causes of peer harassment:

2.4.1 Home Environment

Olweus has mostly studied bullies and has found out that their home environment is often a violent one. The boy's father often uses violent means of punishing their child and the result of this could be reflected in the fact that the boy again uses violence towards others. He also found that, the more negative a mother is towards her child, the more aggressive the child would be.

To support Olweus' view on home environment, Mendler and Curwin (2004:10) asserted that the causes of bullying are complex and interwoven. Abused children grow up to be abusive adults who perpetuate a cycle of violence directed towards those they can victimise. Other causes include the
continuing erosion of a nurturing family structure, the absence of fathers, increasing depersonalisation within our communities, and the diminishing role of values and community in many lives.

Besag (1995:61) also noted that an overpunitive, authoritarian, rather than authoritative style of family, could result in the child becoming hostile and aggressive. Furthermore, Besag (1995: 67) stated that a high proportion of bullies are from problematic family backgrounds. Factors such as divorce, alcoholism, poverty, lack of maternal affection and inconsistent discipline have been cited in relation to the bullies.

2.4.2 Popularity

Bullies were slightly more popular than their victims. Garrett (2003:16) supports this view when he stated that, one of the reasons why children bully, is because they may see it as a way of being popular, or making themselves look tough and in charge. Some bullies do it to get attention or to make others afraid of them. Others may be jealous of the person they are bullying. They may be being bullied themselves. Some bullies may not even understand how wrong their behaviour is and how it makes the victim feel.

2.4.3 Physical strength

Boy bullies have been found to be physically stronger than other boys not involved in bullying, and especially stronger than victims. There seem to be a tendency that boys use more physical means in their bullying, like kicking, hitting, threatening, besides plain teasing. Girls are usually psychological in their way of bullying and have tended to use more subtle means like teasing and exclusion (Munthe and Ronald, 1989: 73).

According to Garrett (2003:121), some children are more at risk of becoming bullies than others, although this is in no way predetermined. It depends on a
combination of individual, family, peer, school and broader experiences. Individual characteristics of the child, difficult temperament, attention problems and hyperactivity.

2.4.4 Family atmosphere

Aggression within the home, ineffective planning, family stress, Peer influences – aggressive peers, rejection, marginalisation. School climate - ignoring antisocial behavior, inconsistent consequences all contribute to bullying behaviour.

Children bully for the following reasons:

- Frustration – a child may be impaired in some way and resentful only because the source of their problem has not been identified.
- Poor or no role model – the child has no role model at home or school.
- Sometimes the child has a poor role model for one or both parents.
- Undue influence – the child has socialised with the wrong crowd (http://www.bullyonline.org).

Unfortunately, power abuse and intimidation are part of the social fabrics at all schools. The hierarchical arrangement of classes according to size, age, learner ability and where teachers have ultimate power offer an institutional foundation for the “pecking order” so often found in peer harassment. Sometimes schools encourage conformity and physical intellectual competition as well as endurance of hardships and firm discipline. For most children, these conditions provide opportunities for power abuse (http://www.sadtu.org.za).

2.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF BULLIES AND VICTIMS

Characteristics of child in the major categories of bullies and victims are described by Olweus (1993:45).
2.5.1 Bullies

- Aggressive to parents, teachers, peers, siblings, impulsive.
- Positive attitude to aggression and aggressive means, little anxiety.
- Not guilty, shame or embarrassment, little empathy with victims.
- Strong, tough, powerful, well-coordinated, dominant, confident, peers perhaps confuse these with leadership skills.
- Good communicator, quick witted, fast verbal responses, able to talk way out of trouble.
- A sense of fun, more popular than victim, popularity decreases with age.
- Bullying may be only one component of a general pattern of antisocial and rule breaking behavior in adulthood.
- Girls, an exaggerated loudness, shouting, rudeness to staff, domineering to staff and peers.
- Aggression is considered to be an acceptable form of behaviour.

2.5.2 Victims

Students who are victims of peer harassment are anxious, insecure, cautious and have low self esteem. They rarely defend themselves when confronted by bullies. They may lack social skills and friends and they are often socially isolated. Victims are usually closer to their parents and the parents are mostly overprotective (www.kidsource.com).

Victims of peer harassment are:

- Anxious, insecure, cautious, sensitive quiet, submissive.
- React to attack by crying, yelling, withdrawal, helpless anger, ineffective retaliation, temper outburst.
- **Negative view of self and the situation**
- Feels a failure, no single friend, supporter in the school, not provocative, bewildered and confused, unable to find ways to become accepted.
• Poor communicator, unable to talk way out of trouble.
• Secondary nervous habits for example, stammering, biting nails.
• Physically weaker, poor coordination, frequently younger than the attacker, small stature.
• Their behaviour and attitude signal to others that they feel insecure and worthless and will not retaliate if attacked (Olweus, 1993:45).

2.6 FORMS OF PEER HARASSMENT

According to Smith and Sharp (2002:8-9), school bullying can come in various forms. Some are direct and physical - hitting, tripping up, taking belongings; some are direct and verbal - name calling and taunting, perhaps about race, or disability; and some are indirect - passing nasty stories or rumours about someone behind their back, or excluding someone from a social group.

Mendler and Curwin (2004:10) supports the view above when they stated that bullying is defined as an assault to one person and that may take three forms: bodily (physical injury), esteem (verbal harassment such as name calling), and property (things one owns). It is bred in the atmosphere of hostility and aggression, where it feels and looks better to hurt than it is to resolve and tolerate.

Bullying takes many forms. It can be physical, like a child being pushed, beaten, or thumped with knuckles. It can involve a weapon and threats. *One seven-year-old boy had a knife pulled on him in the playground.* Bullying can also be verbal and emotional. *One group of girls told a thirteen-year old girl she was dirty and ugly. She used to wash two to three times a day to try and win their approval, which was never forthcoming* (Elliott, 1991:9).

According to Temple and Suckling (2002:69), it is important that students understand that bullying comes in many forms. If they can identify these bullying behaviours, students can report more accurately what is happening
and how they are affected. Physical bullying – fighting, punching, kicking, hitting, shoving, pinching, abusive gestures and moving in close on the target’s personal space. Verbal bullying – this is when the bully uses words in a malicious way to cause distress to another and thus feels powerful. Extortion – this is when bullies blackmail and force you to give them your money.

Visual bullying – it also hurtful and degrading for the target. It can take the form of insulting letters passed from student to student or a letter placed in the target’s bag or locker. Exclusion – this is when a student is deliberately left out of a game or group. Sexual bullying – consists of obscene drawings and gestures, rude jokes about the target, brushing up against the target, touching where the target does not want to be touched and asking her or him questions of sexual nature to shame and embarrass (Temple & Suckling, 2002:69).

The word bullying is used to describe many different types of behaviour. Sometimes bullying involves hitting, kicking or other violence. Most often it involves threats, teasing and taunting. Deliberately leaving someone out of a social event or ignoring them is also a form of bullying. Often bullying involves several different forms of cruel behaviour. Non-physical bullying can be even more hurtful than physical violence. The important thing is not the action but the effect on the victim. We should never underestimate the fear and humiliation that a bullied child feels regardless of the form the bullying takes (Allsopp, 2001:12).

Garrett (2003:27) stated that verbal abuse, spreading rumours, prejudice, physical hurting, pranks and mean games, destroying property, and isolation, are some of the bullying behaviours. Juvonen and Graham (2001:43) added that 1. Physical, including being hit, kicked 2. direct verbal such as being called names or threatened, 3. indirect verbal, in which children believe they are being talked about behind their backs, 4. general harassment such as
being picked on are some forms of bullying. He further explained that, because of the inherent nature of different types of peer aggression, it is reasonable to suspect that the types of adjustment problems children develop may depend on the form of harassment they undergo.

The following are common types or forms of peer victimisation:

- Physical bullying includes punching, poking, strangling, hair pulling, beating, biting, excessive tickling and direct vandalism.
- Verbal bullying includes such acts as hurtful name-calling, persistent teasing, gossip and racist remarks.
- Relational bullying – this occurs when a child is deliberately excluded from activities, this very often takes place during break times.
- Emotional bullying includes terrorising, extorting, defaming, humiliating, blackmailing, ranking of personal characteristics such as race, disability, manipulating friendships, ostracising and peer pressure.
- Sexual bullying includes many of the above as well as exhibitionism, sexual positioning, sexual harassment and abuse that involves actual physical contact and sexual assault [http://www.npin.org/library/pre1998](http://www.npin.org/library/pre1998).

The table below provides further definitions of the major forms of bullying:

**Table: 2.1 Descriptions of the common types or forms of bullying.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Direct bullying</th>
<th>Indirect bullying</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal bullying</td>
<td>Taunting, teasing, name calling</td>
<td>Spreading rumours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical bullying</td>
<td>Hitting, kicking, destruction or theft of property</td>
<td>Enlisting a friend to assault someone for you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-verbal/non-physical bullying</td>
<td>Threatening or obscene gestures</td>
<td>Excluding others from a group, manipulation of friendships.</td>
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2.7 PEER HARASSMENT IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES

Peer harassment is a relatively common phenomenon among early adolescents. Studies that have been done on the issue of bullying in America and abroad have contributed to a growing body of knowledge that shows the seriousness of the problem of bullying in the schools (Garret, 2003:14).

The following is a list based on the current research about peer harassment:

- 80% of adolescents reported being bullied during their school years.
- 90% of 4th through 8th graders report being victims.
- 15% of students bully regularly or are victims of bullies.
- Up to 7% of 8th grade students stay home at least once a month because of bullying.
- Students reported that 71% of teachers or other adults in the classroom ignore bullying incidents.
- Most bullying is verbal.
- Bullying can have devastating long term effects on its victims (Garret, 2003:15).

A few schools have surveyed their students to find out the extent of the problem. In 1986, Cornell University surveyed female students and found out that 78% of those responding had experienced peer harassment in the form of sexist comments and 68% had received unwelcome attention from their male peers (http://www.bernicesandler.com).
Toronto’s Board of Education has documented that in grades 4 to 8, one child in five was victimised periodically, while one in twelve was bullied daily or weekly. Most bullying takes place in and around the school and is often reinforced by an audience. In another study, lead by Dr Tonja Nansel and published in the Journal of the American Medical Association on April 25th, 2001 surveyed 16,000 students throughout the United States. The study concluded that if you are a teenager today, you are one of the many that are on the giving or receiving end of bullying. The study further revealed that almost a third of adolescents are either bullies or victims (Garrett, 2003:15).

Garrett (2003:36) further stated that, bullying occurs in every school and in every grade throughout the world. There are no exceptions and anyone who thinks otherwise is being extremely unrealistic and naïve. It is in the schools which say "there is no bullying here" that you are most likely to find it. Good schools are proactive and deal with it promptly, firmly and fairly. Bad schools deny it, ignore it rationalise it, handle it inappropriately, sweep it under the carpet, blame the victim of bullying, blame the parents of the victim of bullying, or make lots of impressive noises but take no substantive measures.

He went on to indicate that, The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction conducted a study in 1999 to determine the nature of safety and violence in the school setting. They interviewed parents, students and educators by telephone and questionnaires. The study concluded these findings: bullying and verbal abuse are the behaviours with which parents and principals are most concerned. Thirty percent of the responding principals said that violence/aggressive behaviour in general was getting worse at their school.

In one of the first major United Kingdom studies of bullying in schools, 10% of college students and 4% of secondary school pupils reported that they had been bullied at least three times a week. The Department for Education and Employment (1999) estimated that over 30% of girls are afraid of going to
school for fear of being bullied (Health Impact Assessment, Research and Development, June 2002.)

In a study of bullying in Spain, conducted through a multiple choice questionnaire and presented to 1200 Spanish children, most of them agreed that physical and verbal bullying is the most frequent, followed by physical aggression and lastly rejection. They stated that breaktime is the main period for bullying (Munthe & Ronald, 1989:46).

2.8 PEER HARASSMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, INCLUDING BOTSWANA

There is no evidence of studies in bullying in Southern Africa, let alone Botswana. However, some researchers in the developing countries such as Ethiopia, Malawi, Sierra Leone conducted some studies on bullying and share with their counterparts in the industrialised countries some awareness of the impact of bullying in schooling and some society in general (Smith, Morita, Olweus, Catalano & Slee, 1999:67).

According to http://www.crisa.za bullying is the type of violence which young people may have most knowledge, and there was a consensus that it is unacceptable. In Botswana, 67.5% agreed and agreed strongly that bullying by anyone is wrong. In Zimbabwe, 80.2% agreed and strongly agreed that bullying from any quarter was unacceptable, although 14.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

To date, little research on peer harassment has been conducted in South Africa. Nevertheless, there is so much concern among teachers, parents and learners themselves about the violence manifesting in South African public schools. Incidents of peer harassment among learners are noted frequently in the media. The television series "Yizo Yizo" presents a credible representation of situations found on schools such as learners carrying weapons and drugs,
corporal punishment, bullying behaviour, rape and other violent crimes in and outside the schools. This impacts on learners and teachers alike (http://www.sadtu.org.za).

According to http://www.sundaytimes.co.za peer harassment among learners is still common at schools and has been wrongly seen by many as a normal part of life, a Free State University (FSU) study has revealed. In South African Catholic Schools, where bullying was identified as a serious problem, more than 90% of students at a Johannesburg school said they had at some point been harassed (http://www.thesoutherncross.co.za).

Researchers at the University of Cape Town conducted an evaluation of an innovative school trauma support project on the Cape Flats. Project participants were interviewed to get a rightful picture of the project and its impact. Some of the findings were that, ...in many areas of the Cape Flats, the high levels of violence and abuse in homes are matched by violence and gang activities in the community and schools. One school principal stated that,

"There is so much abuse going on here.
There is so much physical abuse, there is mental abuse, there is verbal abuse-threats and it is a hell of violence out there"
(Desmond, 2003:58).

It is interesting to note that there are cases in Botswana that suggest clearly that bullying is carried out even at toddler level, and very minimal attention is made. The Botswana Gazette, 26th April, (2000:3) reported an incident whereby a toddler suffocated and died after playmates stuffed earth into his mouth. According to the report by Criminal Investigation Department (CID), cited in the Botswana Gazette (2000:3).
"...Four young boys...have caused death of a toddler at Motshegaletau village in the Central District. ...four playmates of the two –year old boy- all boys aged four and seven- stuffed earth into the toddler’s mouth. He was rushed to the hospital where he was certified dead on arrival."

In a recent article reported on Botswana Daily News, 17th January (2006: 9) entitled, ‘Moeding College Restores Discipline’, the college authorities have vowed to take stern measures against any problematic students who engage in violence and acts of indiscipline including bullying that have plagued the college in recent years. Addressing the parents, the authorities stated that, the college that had been known for its good performance and behaviour since the early 1960’s had lost its reputation because of indiscipline and violence by school- yard bullies. The school head, Mr David Tregilges, stated that some form five students had developed a tendency to ill-treat form fours as revenge after they were ill treated the previous year by their seniors. He told the packed college assembly hall that the situation of violence was bad during the third term last year when form fives students went on rampage, attacking and injuring some form four students.

"I had never seen such a situation", he said.

"It was shocking".

Mr Tregilges went on to say the school was forced to engage a private security company to patrol the hostels at night. The P60.000 spent on security could have been spent on development programmes. The college had organised a workshop for the form fives before the school first term begins in an effort to address the situation and have also established a strategy for school improvement to overcome areas of weaknesses. He said the school has introduced a form five/form four-brother/sister system. It also organises welcome parties which they are hopeful will help remedy the situation.
Chief Education officer Mr Albert Legwaila of the South Central Region concurred with Mr Trigilges that Moeding College had been a shining example of quality education, but had lost its glory because of violence and indiscipline perpetrated by the school-yard bullies. He said the Ministry would not allow the situation to continue because it affected performance of other students who are victimised by bullies.

"We are not going to hesitate to take action against any student caught ill-treating or beating other students as long as there is evidence."

Legwaila called on parents to help the teachers to fight indiscipline and violence at the college (Botswana Daily News, 2006:9).

2.9 TYPES OF BULLIES

Elliot (1991: 77-78) stated that it is helpful to make a distinction between the three main types of bullies because each one requires a rather different approach in the way they are managed.

- The aggressive bully - they are generally aggressive and are prepared to direct their aggression against teachers, parents and other adults as well as other children and they see little wrong in their aggression and bullying.

- The anxious bully- about 20% of bullies fall into category. They are generally more disturbed than any of the other types of bully or victim and they share many of the characteristics of the victim at the same time as being a bully, such as: anxious and aggressive, low self esteem, insecure and friendliness, emotionally unstable.

- The passive bully- the majority of bullying involves more people than just the bully and the victim. Bullies often gather a small group around them
and then select a single victim who is isolated from any protective relationships. The bully’s followers get involved partly to protect themselves and partly to have the status of belonging to the group.

According to http://www.balard.net/clients/bullysurvey.html three common categories of bullies are identified:

- Proactive bullies need no provocation and are naturally more aggressive towards others. This category usually has poor social skills and compensates for this lack by picking on others.

- Reactive bullies have often been victimised by other bullies and then revenge by becoming bullies themselves.

- Proactive victims provoke fights or aggressive encountered with others. They are quick to become oppositional or display exaggerated responses in conflict situations. This group is the most rejected by peers and has the very few friends.

2.0 EFFECTS OF PEER HARASSMENT ON LEARNERS

Victims of peer harassment often fear school and consider school to be an unsafe and unhappy place. As many as 7% of American’s 8th graders stay home at least once a month because of bullies. The act of being bullied tends to increase some students’ isolation because their peers do not want to loose status by associating with them. Being bullied leads to depression and low self-esteem, problems that can carry into adulthood (http://www.npin.org).

To support the view above, Garret (2003:40) stated that researchers in Finland conducted a study to investigate the association between bullying, depression and suicide among adolescents aged between 14 and 19 years of age. The study revealed that there is a positive correlation between bullying
and fear of going to school, feeling unsafe at school, unhappiness, depression and suicide. He further stated that, bullying may seem like a normal part of a child's world and a way they learn to stand up for themselves, but it makes many children feel unsafe, unhappy, lonely and frightened. Some victims blame themselves because they think there is something wrong with them.

Garret (2003:65) also indicated that, the effects of school bullying could be devastating. Students who are victims suffer low self-esteem, often have poor concentration in their studies and may refuse to continue in school. They feel stupid, ashamed, unattractive and gradually begin to perceive themselves as failures. Some begin to see suicide as the only possible solution.

Smith and Sharp (2002:71) also agree that, bullying has been linked with low self-esteem, anxiety, impaired concentration, truancy, depression and suicidal thoughts. According to Elliot, (2002:72), children who are bullied are unable to concentrate on their schoolwork. A few are physically hurt. Many are psychologically destroyed.

Peer harassment can have devastating effects on victims. As one middle-school student expressed, "There is another kind of violence, and that is violence by talking. It can leave you hurting more than a cut with a knife. It can leave you bruised inside”(National Association of Attonery Generals, 2000 in Lumsden, (2002:15). Lumsden further stated that, usually, when teachers and administrators fail to intervene, some victims of bullying ultimately take things into their own hands, often with grievous results. In its recent analysis of 37 school shooting incidents, the United States of America Secret Service learned that a majority of the shooters had suffered "bullying and harassment that was long-standing and severe”.

Research states that childhood bullies are more likely to commit crime in adult life, abuse their partners and children and produce another generation of bullies. In-school shootings and massacres have been attributed to bullied
children who have reached the limits of endurance. Some of the serious attacks in South African schools are now being understood as retaliation to bullying (http://www.sadtu.org.za).

Students who are targeted by bullies often have difficulty concentrating on their schoolwork, and their academic performance tends to be “marginal to poor”. Typically, bullied students feel anxious, and anxiety may in turn produce a variety of physical and emotional problems. Rates of absenteeism are higher among victimised students than rates among their non-bullied peers, as are drop out rates (Lumsden, 2002:19).

To support the view above www.nasbe.org stated that, the academic results of bullying include decreased interest in school, increased absences, and decreased concentration levels for learners. Bystanders are also affected by bullying. Many lack a sense of mental and physical well being. The perpetrators of bullying incidents also experience short-term problems such as depression, anxiety, loneliness, suicidal thoughts, problems with schoolwork and long-term problems such as low self-esteem and depression. The bully may also experience disturbing problems such as vandalism, shoplifting, truancy, and frequent drug use. One on four boys that bully will have a criminal record by age 30.

www.nasbe.org further stated that, the results are the same regardless of the type of bullying. Students who are victims of bullying are afraid to go to school, have difficulty concentrating on their studies, have lower academic achievement levels or are fearful of calling attention themselves by speaking in class. Ultimately, bullying creates a very poor learning environment for all students. Some parents of bullying victims find it necessary to have their children transferred to other schools when peer harassment persists.

Studies at British schools showed that on average 16 school children per year committed suicide because they were being bullied at school.
In the United States of America, an estimated 160000 children miss school every day because of peer harassment, until in September 1999, a law was passed legally obliging schools to adopt effective, active anti-bullying policies, failure of which was seen as a dereliction of care towards children. (http://www.thesoutherncross.co.za).

Victims of school bullying remember the pain forever, as one student recalled:

"I got picked on non-stop for two years. No one ever talked to me. I had not done anything to get blamed for and I still do not know the reason I got picked on. I wasn't any wealthier or poorer or a different race. I used to cry myself to sleep every night.....girl aged 14” (Garrett, 2003:60).

Peer harassment can have very serious effects in a young person. Every form of bullying causes serious emotional stress and suffering. In extreme cases bullying can make a child’s life a misery and do terrible psychological damage that is likely to last a lifetime (Allsopp, 2001:12).

2.11 SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF PEER HARASSMENT

According to Allsop (2001:12), the following are some of the things to watch out for in a child or teenager that may be signs that he/she is being bullied:

- Unexplained psychological changes such as lack of concentration, depression, withdrawal or sudden mood changes.
- A contrast in mood between weekends (up) and weekdays (down).
- A drop in school performance.
- Minor unexplained ailments such as stomach aches, headaches and sleep difficulties.
- Bed-wetting.
To support the view above, Elliot (1991:79) indicated that a child might indicate by signs or behavior that she or he is being bullied. Sometimes this is the only clue teachers and parents can have about what is happening because of the code of silence so often maintained about bullying. If a child is displaying some of these symptoms, the parents, teachers or guardians should try and find out exactly what is happening to the child. The child is most likely a victim of bullying or some other forms of abuse and needs help to get out of the situation. Children may:

- Be frightened of walking to or from school
- Be unwilling to go to school and make continual excuses to avoid going
- Beg to be driven to school
- Change their route to school everyday
- Begin doing poorly in their school work
- Regularly have clothes, books or schoolwork torn or destroyed
- Come home hungry because dinner money was taken by force
- Become withdrawn
- Start stammering
- Attempt suicide
- Develop stomach and headaches as a result of stress
- Cry themselves to sleep
- Have unexplained bruises, scratches, and cuts
- Have their possessions missing
- Begin stealing money to pay the bullies (Elliot 1991:79).

2.12 INTERVENTION

According to http://www.thesoutherncross.co.za anti-bullying programmes involve students being taught to understand their attitudes and to realise the damaging effects these attitudes can have on others. In South African Catholic Schools, where bullying was identified as a serious problem, (more than 90% of learners at a Johannesburg school last year said they have at
some point been bullied), a process has begun which is designed to create a "hurt-free" environment for all students.

The most effective preventative measure a school can employ is perhaps for all staff members and the local education authorities to establish clearly that bullying in school, in any form, will not be tolerated and indeed, will be dealt with seriously. A document should be drawn up by the school and be made familiar to all pupils, parents, staff, governors and all stakeholders responsible for education (Besag 1995:103).

Cromwell (2004:08) stated that, to prevent bullying, educators need to do nothing less than change school culture. To end bullying and violence, schools must do the following: “along with zero tolerance for weapons, schools must send a clear message of zero tolerance for harassment, put-downs, and bullying. Schools won’t eliminate cliques and differences among learners. They can, however, demand that students respect one another, despite those differences, and treat every student with the dignity he or she has the right to expect in the public school system”. Parents must be partners in any effort to change school culture. The expectations of schools must be supported and reinforced in the family and throughout the community.

Encouraging students to report cases of peer harassment is important, as bullying cannot be reduced without reporting of such incidents. Teachers can administer surveys and questionnaires to determine the exact location, frequency and type of bullying experienced by students, also to determine to whom the students report and how they are going about it (Temple & Suckling, 2002:50).

According to www.scre.as.uk/bully/bullying in Garrett (2003:85) parents have a first hand view of what peer harassment can do to their children and can be the key catalysts in anti-bullying measures. One concerned mother stated that:
My daughter has been bullied since she was at Primary School. She was daily called names like bitch, slag. We have tried everything but no-one listens. She has threatened to kill herself...... I do not want any parent to suffer what I have suffered. I shall continue to fight.

According to Lumsden (2002:22) schools are supposed to be places where children feel safe and secure and where they can count on being treated with respect. Unfortunately, the reality is that, a significant number of students are the targets of bullying episodes that result in serious, long term academic, physical and emotional consequences. Unfortunately, school personnel often minimise or disregard the extent of bullying and the harm it causes. In many occasions, bullying is tolerated or ignored.

School communities can come up with policies and programmes to deal with their own circumstances. Whole school vision and policies are needed to put strategies in place. Bullying can best be dealt with by means of a whole school program that is ongoing, long-term, proactive and preventative. Learners need to be included in a model of collaboration with staff and parents so that the emotional climate and ethos of the school become intolerant of bullying behaviour and previously marginalised children are no longer victimised by an officially sanctioned competitive model of schooling opposed to otherness in terms of ability, race, size, looks or gender, (http://www.sadtu.org.za). http://www.sadtu.org.za further stated that the following in-school programmes and strategies could be used to fight bullying:

2.12.1 Raising awareness

There should be a climate of anti-bullying in the school. Students can be brought to understand bullying, the harm it causes and the consequences for the bully, victim and bystanders.
2.12.2 Problem solving

Children who are victimised might be encouraged to solve the problem themselves.

2.12.3 Parental involvement

In some instances the school cannot solve the problem of peer harassment alone. Sometimes a parent may be the first adult to be aware that their children are harassed and might seek help from the school.

2.12.4 Suspension and legal action

Schools have a legal responsibility for the safety of all students. Bullies and their supporters must be alerted to the seriousness of their actions, otherwise they should face expulsion. Parents of bullied children are within their rights to take legal action against schools that turn a blind eye to bullying (http://www.sadtu.org.za).

http://www.kidsource.com emphasise the need to develop whole school bullying policies, implement curricular measures, improve the school ground environment, and empower students through conflict resolution, peer counselling and assertiveness training.

Every school should have a clear policy on bullying, endorsed by the school governors as well as teachers, students and parents. Students have a human right to be free from peer harassment, and it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that this right is enjoyed. "A school that does not have a policy on bullying or does not take action when bullying is reported is guilty of child abuse. Bullying is not a disease like smallpox, which can be eradicated by treating the victims. Schools must introduce preventative measures
designed to make bullying less likely, while improving their responses to episodes of bullying which continue to happen” UNICEF (Allsopp, 2001:12).

According to www.nasbe.org many educators simply are not aware of indirect and direct bullying that takes place in their schools. Effective policies provide training for both learners and teachers so that they can identify bullying behaviours and characteristics of a victim of bullying. To try and reduce the problem of bullying in schools, educators can:

- Investigate ways of addressing bullying through school-based programmes, strategies, and curriculum. Some examples of programmes include character education, cooperative discipline, conflict resolution, peer programmes, and assertiveness training for students. All these programmes and strategies should take place at all levels.

- Assure that bullying policies and safe school policies include language that is detailed and specific. For instance, language used should address bias-motivated harassment incidents that involve race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation differences. A common language in the description of bullying will increase the recognition of such acts in schools. Information should be readily accessible to learners, parents and community members.

- Familiarise themselves with research on bullying intervention programmes. Some highly publicised policies and programmes have had mixed results. For instance, the zero tolerance and three strikes policies adopted in recent years by many school districts expel or suspend student bullies from school. This policy only addresses one type of bullying (physical), and the serious punishment tends to discourage both students and teachers from reporting bullying incidents. Other polices that are also of questionable value including group treatment for bullies, and short-term solutions to bullying. (For example, a one shot, six-week curriculum on bullying). Policies that assist in changing the overall school climate and
behavioural norms and fostering school connectedness have been more successful (www.nasbe.org).

**A comprehensive school wide approach that includes some basic components and provides specific, practical strategies is essential. These are:**

- **Teaching learners how to be less violent, aggressive and hostile**

Learners behave differently as a way of trying to meet one or more of their basic needs. They may be expressing anger or frustration, showing off, seeking a sense of control or protecting themselves. Throughout their lives, children have learned how to express their feelings by observing their parents, teachers and other role models. The more tools available to students to meet their needs and to express their feelings, the greater the likelihood they will use them. Many of the methods of discipline with dignity teach alternatives to violence. Teaching learners basic ways of conflict resolution, peer mediation and controlling their anger may help to provide them with non-violent ways of settling disputes and getting their needs met. We can teach our children positive skills both for preventing disruptive events and for dealing with the consequences of violent encounters (Mendler & Curwin, 2004:11).

According to www.cfchildren.org students should be taught anger management and conflict resolution strategies as part of curricular content.

- **Create and Nurture Community Networks**

We need hugs big enough to surround the entire school environment. Nowadays it is impossible for teachers to meet the learning needs of all learners in a typical classroom, especially with the growth of inclusive education. No matter how talented, one teacher cannot teach five reading
groups at the same time, manage four students with attention deficit, facilitate conflict mediation between two unhappy students and take a child with autism problem for a walk. In view of this diversity, classroom teachers must create a network of resources in order to meet the needs of all their students. The regularly scheduled use of such resources as parents, senior citizens and volunteers is a trend that will need to be expanded in order to really make differences in the lives of students (Mendler & Curwin, 2004:11).

Reflecting upon his life, a child, ex-convict Kenneth Barksdale told what he needed when younger:

"I hated everyone, cops, my father, my mother. All of my life I was told I wouldn't live to see my 14th birthday...but deep down inside, I wanted someone to hold me, tell me I was special. I wanted the attention I never got when I was at home" (Mendler & Curwin, 2004:12).

www.achievebc.ca supported this when he stated that communities and schools should come together to respond to students antisocial behaviour and meet their learning needs. Community volunteers, parents and school staff can work together to come up with solutions that support behaviour change.

The following are potentially good solutions to prevent peer harassment:

- Talk about being bullied – schools need to encourage students to discuss this and then act against peer harassment.

- Establish behaviour contracts for bullies – some schools send bullies home for a couple of days before they can start again. The bullies are usually asked to return with their parents and sign a contract of good behaviour.
• Adopt a no-blame policy – in some schools a victim of bullying reports the situation to a coordinator who then talks to the bully in the presence of a witness. There is a meeting between the victim and the bully to air their differences, then an action plan is drawn to solve the problem. This approach is based in the theory that being nice to people brings out the best in them and is less punitive than some other solutions.

• Take a no bullying course – victims of bullying must learn to be positive, to stand their ground, to maintain eye contact and to surprise bullies by doing the unexpected. Schools can offer such course (Cromwell, 2004:10).

According to Fried and Fried (2003:186) it essential that schools adopt a policy statement that is "owned " by everyone in the system. Ownership can come about in a number of ways. The need for a committed principal who makes bullying prevention and intervention a high priority cannot be overstated. Mobilising the staff and the students is the crux of a successful programme. Writing a policy is one thing, enforcing it fairly and consistently is quite another.

Bullying can have very serious effects on a young person. Every form of peer harassment causes severe emotional stress and suffering. In serious cases, bullying can change a student's life into misery and do terrible psychological damage that can last a lifetime. Therefore it is very important to know when a child is being harassed, to know as soon as possible and to deal with the problem as quickly as possible (Allsopp, 2001:12).

2.13 SYNTHESIS

The studies reviewed in this chapter have drawn on a series of research findings undertaken by various researchers on the causes and effects of peer harassment on learners. The literature comprises written materials such as books, journals, dissertations and the Internet.

Chapter three will focus on research methodology
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the method of research that was employed to gather data on the causes and effects of peer harassment in a curriculum of Botswana Junior Secondary Schools. It outlines the research design, research instruments, population, sampling technique, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a general road map of how the researcher would conduct one’s study (Taylor & Bogdan: 1998:56). It is a detailed description of the procedures to be followed by a researcher to investigate a topic or problem (Gay & Airasian: 2003:45).

This study used descriptive survey design that employed use of questionnaires to find out the causes, effects and nature of bullying in Junior Secondary Schools in Gaborone area of Botswana.

According to Macmillan and Schumacher (1989:30) in survey design, the investigator selects a sample of subjects and administers questionnaires to collect data. Descriptive survey is a method of research “that looks with intense accuracy at the phenomena of the moment and then describes precisely what the researcher sees” (Leedy, 1987:257).

The researcher opted to use survey research because the questions according to this design are structured such that answers from individual interviews are added together to produce results, which apply to the whole sample.
Additionally, in this design the sample can be used as a basis for generalising and predicting what is likely to be observed in future on the basis of the current findings. It is less expensive than using an entire population for the study (Mwamwenda, 1995:15).

3.3 POPULATION SAMPLING AND PROCEDURE

3.3.1 POPULATION

According to Travers (1987:13) a population is any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. The population may be all the individuals of a particular type, or a more restricted part of that group.

The sample for this study consists of sixty (60), out of a population of three thousand three hundred and fifty (3 350) students. These students are from the Junior Secondary Schools in Gaborone (See table 3.1 below).

Table 3.1: The population and sample of students from each school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Student Population</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marang J.S.S</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motswedi J.S.S</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bokamoso J.S.S</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maikano J.S.S</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tlogatloga J.S.S</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ledumadumane J.S.S</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3 350</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3.2 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

In this study, a simple random technique was used. According to Gibson and Mitchell (1990:441) sampling is a research technique for selecting a specified number of people from a defined population as representative of that specific population. A sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis (Travers, 1987:13).

In this technique, individual observations or individuals are chosen in such a way that each has an equal chance of being selected, and each choice is independent of any other choice. If we wished to draw a sample of 50 individuals from a population of 600 (six hundred) students enrolled in a school, we could place the 600 names in a container and, blindfolded, draw one name at a time until the sample of 50 (fifty) was selected (Travers, 1987:15).

Six (6) Junior Secondary schools were randomly selected from the twelve Junior schools in Gaborone. From each of the randomly selected schools, ten (10) students will be randomly selected making the total number of all respondents to be sixty (60), (n=60). Purposive sampling was employed as the researcher had realised that her target population was knowledgeable, and experienced about the topic as she had earlier on made some interactions with them. Convenience sampling was also used so as to benefit the researcher as far as time and distance are concerned as the selected schools were very close to the researcher’s place of residence.

3.4 INSTRUMENTATION

In this study, the researcher used a questionnaire to collect data. Tsayang, Ngongola and Mannathoko (2001:84) stated that “this is a list of questions given to a person to write down answers on the question paper”. A questionnaire is a written list of appropriate questions to be answered by a
chosen sample for data collection. According to Neuman (2000:250) a questionnaire is used by a researcher to measure variables.

Although the researcher used a questionnaire to solicit information from respondents, she was quite aware that she could employ participant observation or interview method to collect data as it is the best method to use to collect data, especially in quantitative research. Taylor and Bogdan (1998:90) supported this view when he stated that, "no other method can provide the depth of understanding that comes from directly observing people and listening to what they have to say at the scene". It should, however, be noted that despite its merits, participant observation has its own dimerits, for example, it is time consuming and subjective.

The questionnaire comprised 15 (fifteen) closed-ended questions in which the subjects were provided with statements and required to indicate whether they agree, disagree or uncertain about the statements. On the other part they were asked to indicate yes or No, by also placing a tick in the relevant box. The researcher has opted for the use of closed-ended questions because they allow the respondents to answer the same question(s) such that the responses can be easily and meaningfully compared. Furthermore, through the use of questionnaires, large amounts of data can be obtained at a lowest cost. Useful figures can also be obtained, relevant or specific questions can be asked.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

According to Anderson (1990:44) valid data collection requires clearly developed procedures and involvement of researchers or data collection personnel who can follow the procedures consistently and without tempering with the information collected. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires. After some necessary arrangements with the Schoolheads for the sampled schools, the researcher physically handed in the questionnaires
to the schools. They were administered and the researcher made an appointment to collect them.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

According to Frankel and Wallen (2000:18) data analysis involves synthesising information the researcher obtained into a coherent description of what has been observed.

Data collected was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively, using tables, and graphs to find out if data collected verifies the statement of the problem. The researcher opted to use both qualitative and quantitative approaches basing on Creswell's view (2003:15) when he stated that, the mixed methods approach have more advantages as compared to relying on one approach only for the following reasons:

- Since both the qualitative and quantitative approaches have limitations, combining the two would neutralise or cancel the biases inherent in each one of them.

- Mixing the two approaches would result in triangulating data sources, thus enhancing the reliability and validity of the data collected.

- The results from one method could help develop or inform the other method.

- One method could be nested with another to provide insight into different levels or units of analysis.

The researcher used both the computer and the calculator to aid her in writing, drawing and calculating. Detailed interpretation of data is outlined in chapter four.
3.7 SYNTHESIS

This chapter outlined the method of research used to collect data from learners. The chapter also explained population and sampling technique as well as how data was collected and analysed in order to get the learners’ perceptions on the causes and effects of peer harassment in a school curriculum of Gaborone Junior Secondary Schools.

Chapter four will deal with data analysis and interpretation.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study. The overall aim of the study was to investigate the causes and effects of peer harassment in a school curriculum of Junior Secondary Schools in Gaborone area Botswana.

Six schools were selected as research sites. The study was limited to students only. In this chapter, data was analysed using tables, pie charts, and percentages and presented using graphs. Data was also statistically analysed using chi squared.

The chapter is organised as follows:

SECTIONS A (table and figure 4.1) show biographic analysis of data.

SECTION B (Table 4.2) explores data in percentages (%) on causes and effects of peer harassment in a school curriculum.

SECTION C (Figures 4.2 and 4.3) explores data on the prevalence of forms of peer harassment in Junior Secondary Schools.
4.2 SECTION A

Table 4.1: Biographic analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Marang J.S.S</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Motswedi J.S.S</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bokamoso J.S.S</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Maikano J.S.S</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tlogatloga J.S.S</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ledumdumane J.S.S</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>32(53%)</td>
<td>28(47%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.1: Percentage of students who took part in the study

Both table and figure 4.1 above (gender composition) exhibit that 53% of the respondents were males while 47% were female.
### 4.3 SECTION B

#### 4.3 THE ANALYSIS OF LEARNERS RESPONSES REGARDING THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF PEER HARASSMENT IN A SCHOOL CURRICULUM

**Table 4.2: Percentages of student’s responses**

| Question                                                                 | Agree M (%) | Agree F (%) | Uncertain M (%) | Uncertain F (%) | Disagree M (%) | Disagree F (%) | Total |%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Children who come from violent homes, home faced with divorce, alcoholism, lack of maternal affection and poverty become bullies.</td>
<td>41.67</td>
<td>31.67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bullying behaviour is motivated by negative peer behaviour.</td>
<td>46.67</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The desire to be popular contributes to bullying behaviour.</td>
<td>36.67</td>
<td>36.67</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students who are victims of bullying cannot concentrate in class and as a result perform poorly at school.</td>
<td>43.33</td>
<td>41.67</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Victims of bullying commit suicide.</td>
<td>11.67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21.67</td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18.33</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Victims of bullying fear going to school, riding a school bus and going to the toilets.</td>
<td>36.67</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Victims of bullying develop low self esteem and depression.</td>
<td>41.67</td>
<td>38.33</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Students who have been physically bullied develop scars, blue eyes and bruises.</td>
<td>36.67</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The school administration and teaching staff make an effort to attend to victims off bullying in the school.</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the table above, 41.67% of males and 31.67% of females (in question one) agree that children who come from violent homes, homes faced with divorce, alcoholism, lack of maternal affection and poverty become bullies, while only 6.67% of males and 8.33% of females disagree and 5% of males and 6.67% of females were uncertain. This clearly supports Besag’s view (1995:67) when he stated that, factors such as divorce, alcoholism, poverty, lack of maternal affection and inconsistent discipline have been cited in relation to bullying.

46.67% of respondent males and 40% of respondent females (in question two) agreed that bullying behaviour is motivated by negative peer pressure, while no male and no female respondents disagreed to the statement and 6.7% of males and 6.67% of females were uncertain. This is clearly supported by the literature review that some children are more at risk of becoming bullies than others, although this is in no way predetermined. It depends on a combination of individual, family, peer influences (aggressive peers, rejection and marginalisation) school and broader experiences (Garrett, 2003:121).

36.67% of respondent males and 36.67% of respondent females (in question three) agreed that the desire to be popular contributes to bullying behaviour, while 6.7% of males and 0% of female respondents disagreed to the statement and 10% of males and 10% of female respondents were uncertain. This clearly supports Garret’s view (2003:16) in the literature review that, one of the reasons why children become bullies is because they may see it as a way of being popular, or making themselves look tough and in charge.

43.33% of respondent males and 41.67% of respondent females (in question four) agreed that students who are victims of bullying cannot concentrate in class and as a result perform poorly at school, while only 3.33% of males and 0% of female respondents disagreed to the statement and 6.67 % of males and 5% of female respondents were uncertain. This clearly strongly supports
the literature review that, learners who are targeted by bullies often have difficulty concentrating on their schoolwork and their academic performance tends to be “marginal to poor” Lumsden (2002:15). Elliot (2002:71) also supports this, when he stated that, children who are bullied are unable to concentrate on their schoolwork.

11.67% of respondent males and 5% of respondent females (in question five) agreed that victims of bullying commit suicide, while 20% of male respondents and 18.33% of females disagreed and 21.67% of males and 23.33% of females were not certain about the statement. A high number of respondents were not certain about this.

36.67% of male respondents and 33.33% of female respondents (in question six) agreed that victims of bullying fear going to school, riding the school bus and going to the toilets, while 15% of males and 8.3% of females disagree and 1.67% of males and 5% of females were not sure about the statement. This clearly supports the literature review that victims of bullying fear going to school or riding the bus (Garrett, 2003:15).

41.67% of male respondents and 38% of females (in question seven) agreed that victims of bullying develop low self esteem and depression, while 3.33% of males and 3.33% of females disagree, and 8.33% of males and 5% of females were not sure. This strongly supports the literature review that, bullying has been linked with low self-esteem, anxiety, impaired concentration, truancy, depression and suicidal thoughts (Smith & Sharp, 2002:71).

36.67% of males and 33.33% of female respondents (in question eight) agree that students who have been physically bullied develop scars, blue eyes and bruises, while 8.33% of males and 5% of female respondents disagreed and 8.33% of males and 8.33% of females were not certain about the statement.
33.33% of male respondents and 33.33% of females (in question nine) agreed that the school administration and teaching staff make an effort to attend to victims of bullying in the school, while 5% of males and 3.33% of female respondents disagreed and 15% of males and 10% of females were not sure about the statement. A high number (66.67%) of respondent males and females agree that school administration make an effort to attend to victims of bullying in schools.
4.4 SECTION C

4.4 THE ANALYSIS OF LEARNER’S RESPONSES REGARDING THE PREVALENCE OF FORMS OF PEER HARRASSMENT IN THEIR SCHOOLS

According to figure 4.2 above, 41.67% of males and 36.67% of females agreed that they were made fun of or teased by bullies. 38.33% of male respondents and 31.67% of females agreed that they were called hurtful names. 38.33% of male respondents and 38.33% of females agreed that their property was taken by bullies. This clearly confirms that a lot of students in the schools are undergoing a lot of bullying. They are made fun of or teased, called hurtful names and their property taken from them. This can hamper their academic performance, lower their self-esteem and make them miss school.
30% of males and 11.67% of females responded positively that they were pushed, punched, kicked and slapped by bullies. 33.33% of males and 26.67% of females agreed that they were verbally threatened by bullies. This also indicates that a large number of learners are undergoing both physical and verbal bullying.

20% of male respondents and 31.67% of female respondents agreed that school bullies spread false rumours about them. Almost half of the respondents agreed that bullies spread false rumours about them. This is also an indication that emotional bullying is prevalent in Junior Schools.

According to figure 4.3 above, 11.67% of male respondents and 10% of females did not agree that they were made fun of or teased by school bullies.15% of males and 15% of females disagreed that they were called hurtful names by school bullies. 15% of male respondents and 8.33% of female respondents disagreed that their property was taken from them by school bullies.
23.33% of males and 35% of females disagreed that they were kicked, punched, pushed or slapped by school bullies. 20% of male respondents and 20% of females did not agree that they were verbally threatened by the school bullies. Finally, 33.33% of males and 15% of females disagreed that school bullies passed false rumors about them around the school.

4.5 SYNTHESIS

This chapter outlined the findings of the empirical investigation conducted to determine the causes and effects of peer harassment in a school curriculum of Gaborone Junior secondary schools.

The majority of learners perceived the following to be the main causes of peer harassment:

• Coming from violent homes
• Homes faced with divorce
• Alcoholism
• Lack of maternal affection and poverty
• Negative peer pressure
• Learners also agreed that learners who are victims of bullying cannot concentrate in class and as a result perform poorly. Majority of them also agreed that victims of bullying develop low self-esteem.

The final chapter is about conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary of the study. It outlines the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The study was an investigation of the causes and effects of peer harassment in a school curriculum of Botswana Junior Secondary Schools, in Gaborone.

The study sought to test the following hypotheses:

- Home background, peer pressure and popularity are some of the major causes of school peer harassment.

- Physical and verbal abuse are the prevalent forms of bullying in junior secondary schools.

- There is a significant positive relationship between school peer harassment and learners' low academic performance.

- There is a significant positive relationship between school harassment and learner's physical, emotional and psychological disturbance.

- The school administrators, teachers and others stakeholders are not very supportive to learners who are victims of bullying.
The study used a descriptive survey to collect data from students through the use of a questionnaire. Data was analysed by using qualitative and quantitative methods in which tables, pie charts and graphs were used to summarise the responses of respondents. The findings showed that children, who come from violent homes, homes faced with divorce, alcoholism, lack of maternal affection and poverty, become bullies. The study also revealed that negative peer influence as well as the desire to be popular are the catalysts of bullying behaviour. This supports hypothesis one, which states that, "home background, peer pressure and popularity are some of the major causes of school peer harassment".

There is a lot of bullying prevalent in Secondary Schools, for example, physical, verbal, psychological and emotional, the study revealed. This is in support of hypothesis two which states that, "physical and verbal abuse are the prevalent forms of bullying in Junior Secondary Schools". Furthermore, the findings of the study revealed that the school administrators, teachers and other stakeholders are not very supportive to students who are being bullied. This confirms hypothesis two, which states that, "school administrators, teachers and other stakeholders are not very supportive to students who are victims of peer harassment.

The statistical analysis has rejected hypothesis three, which states that, "there is a significant positive relationship between school peer harassment and learners low academic achievement". Hypothesis four which states that, "there is a significant positive relationship between school bullying and learners physical, emotional and psychological disturbance has also been rejected."
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study made the following recommendations:

5.3.1 Role of curriculum developers

The Ministry of Education through the work of Curriculum developers should provide polices and programmes that address unacceptable behaviour. These policies can include expansion of the school curriculum to cater for guidance and counseling. In theory this is the situation, but in reality teachers and school administrators are overwhelmed with their core activities and this in turn sideline children’s social issues like bullying. If the Ministry of Education places some provision of full-time counselors for students in schools, then wayward children can be assisted. Victims can also open up and tell their stories in confidence to those counselors. At the present moment school counselors are the same people who attend to the children’s academic needs. It has been observed that children are not prepared to confide with teachers about their social problems because some teachers also abuse the same children they are supposed to look after. Children also need to be profitably occupied if peer harassment is to be stopped. Activities like Physical Education, sports and cultural activities like drama, should be fully incorporated into the school curriculum so that children are occupied. Bullies can offload their stress and frustrations in physical activities.

5.3.2 Integrated policies

Schools should be encouraged through some means to have integrated positive behaviour policies. Schoolheads should acknowledge that peer harassment exists and put some mechanisms to deal with it. Such mechanisms can include encouraging victims to come forward with their problems to class teachers with guarantee that they will be protected. As noted, some victims have actually stated that bullies need counseling and
should be encouraged to stop the act. School authorities should deal with peer pressure. Most children emulate bullies subconsciously. If the scourge of peer pressure is highlighted to them, then they can stop copying the behaviour of bullies or making them their role models. Peer teaching in the form of debates and other social activities can also help to curb the problem of peer harassment.

5.3.3 Intervention strategies

The community, parents and other stakeholders should be included in the drawing of some intervention strategies for unacceptable behaviour. The researcher has pointed out that home is a key factor as far as bullying behaviour is concerned. Parents tend to leave school authorities to cater for all the needs of their children. Some parents are unaware of what their children are doing as far as peer harassment is concerned because they do not interact with school authorities. If such interaction is promoted, then parents can be more aware of their children’s behavior. More campaigns need to be carried out to stop domestic violence since it has far reaching impacts on children. Presently campaigns against domestic violence of children do not outline the effects of domestic violence on children’s performance and behavior at school and in their future lives. Media groups should be selective in the type of films they broadcast especially after school hours when most children have access to television and could watch films on violent behavior including peer harassment. There is a need for broadcasters to alert parents that children of a certain age group should not watch certain films. Some television stations and computer software nowadays block access to channels or websites, which are not suitable for viewing by children. Such facilities should be provided to parents so that they can use them to protect their children.
5.4 FURTHER AREA OF STUDY

- The Causes and Effects of Passion Killings in Botswana
- Significance of curriculum development in schools
- Factors that affect implementation of guidance and counseling programme in Botswana secondary schools
- An investigation into the influence of mass media on adolescents’ attitudes in Botswana secondary schools

5.5 SYNTHESIS

This chapter outlined the conclusions and recommendations of the investigation on the causes and effects of peer harassment in the school curriculum of Junior Secondary schools in Botswana. The recommendations include role of curriculum developers, integrated policies as well as intervention strategies.
6. LIST OF REFERENCES


Glasgow: Longman Publishers.


Health Impact Assessment (Research and Development). *Health Impacts of Bullying in Schools* (June 2002).

http://www.achievebc.ca

http://www.atoz.iqhealth.com

http://www.balard.net/clients/bullysurveyhtml

http://www.bernicasandler.com

http://www.bullyonline.org


7.1 APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on the causes and effects of peer harassment in the school curriculum of Botswana Junior Secondary Schools.

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Kindly complete this questionnaire by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box. Be assured that information provided in it will be treated with strictest confidentiality.

**Sex:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**SECTION A**

Please answer the following questions by placing a tick [✓] against the appropriate answer.

**KEY:**

A – Agree

NS – Not sure

D – Disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AN</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Children who come from violent homes, homes faced with divorce, alcoholism, lack of maternal affection and poverty become bullies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bullying behaviour is influenced by negative peer influence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The desire to be popular contributes to bullying behaviour.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students who are victims of bullying cannot concentrate in class and as a result perform poorly in at school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Victims of bullying commit suicide.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Victims of bullying fear going to school, riding a school bus, going to the school toilets.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Victims of bullying develop low self-esteem and depression.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Students who have been physically bullied develop scars, blue eyes and bruises.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The school administration and the teaching staff do not make an effort to attend to victims of bullying in the school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION: B

Please indicate by a tick [✓] from the list of questions below, any type of bullying behaviour you have suffered in the school.

10. Have you been made fun of or teased in an unpleasant way by other children in the school?

YES [ ]

NO [ ]

11. Have you been called hurtful names because of your physical appearance in the school?

YES [ ]

NO [ ]

12. Has anybody in the school taken your property without your permission?

YES [ ]

NO [ ]

12. Have you been kicked, punched, pushed or slapped by other children in the school?

YES [ ]

NO [ ]

14. Have you been verbally threatened by other students in the school?

YES [ ]

NO [ ]

15. Have any of the school children spread false rumours about you or behind your back?

YES [ ]

NO [ ]

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION
7.2 APPENDIX 2: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Hypothesis 3: There is a significant positive relationship between school peer harassment and learners low academic performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26 (a)</td>
<td>2 (b)</td>
<td>28 (n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25 (c)</td>
<td>0 (d)</td>
<td>25 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51 (k)</td>
<td>2 (l)</td>
<td>53 (N)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = \frac{N[(ad) - (bc)]^2}{k l m n} \]

\[ = \frac{53[(26 \times 0) - (25 \times 2)]^2}{51 \times 2 \times 25 \times 28} \]

\[ = \frac{53[(0) - (50)]^2}{51 \times 2 \times 25 \times 28} \]

\[ = \frac{53 \times 2500}{71400} \]

\[ = \frac{132500}{71400} \]

\[ \chi^2 = 1.856 \]

Level of significance: 0.05
Degrees of freedom = (r-1)(c-1) = (2-1)(2-1) = 1
Critical value of \( \chi^2 \) = 3.841

Conclusion: Since the value of the calculated \( \chi^2 \) is less than the critical value, there is no significant relationship, consequently the hypothesis three is rejected.

Hypothesis 4: There is a significant positive relationship between school peer harassment and learner’s physical, emotional and psychological disturbance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>54 (a)</td>
<td>23 (b)</td>
<td>77 (n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>46 (e)</td>
<td>18 (d)</td>
<td>64 (m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 (k)</td>
<td>41 (l)</td>
<td>141 (N)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = \frac{N[(ad) - (bc)]^2}{k l m n} \]
\[
\frac{141[(54*18) - (46*23)]^2}{100*41*64*77}
\]
\[
= \frac{141[(972) - (1058)]^2}{100*41*64*77}
\]
\[
= \frac{141*(-86)^2}{20204800}
\]
\[
= \frac{141*7396}{20204800}
\]
\[
= \frac{1042836}{20204800}
\]
\[\chi^2 = 0.052\]

Level of significance: 0.05
Degrees of freedom = (r-1)(c-1) = (2-1)(2-1) = 1
Critical value of \(\chi^2\) = 3.841

**Conclusion:** Since the value of the calculated \(\chi^2\) is less than the critical value, there is no significant relationship, consequently, the hypothesis four is rejected.
7.3 APPENDIX 3: LETTER TO SCHOOLS

Box 203298
Gaborone
31/11/2005

The schoolhead

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO ADMINISTER A RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a final year student at the North West University in South Africa pursuing my Master of Education Degree in Guidance and Counselling programme. I am conducting a research project as a fulfilment of the requirements for the programme.

This letter therefore seeks to ask for permission to administer a questionnaire in your school. The research investigates the causes and effects of peer harassment in a school curriculum in Gaborone Junior Secondary Schools.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully

Merapelo Kate Mosenki.