

TANZANIA

Reducing Child to Child Bullying in Primary Schools in Tanzania, the Case of Kongowe Primary School in Kibaha District

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1 Frame of reference

Introduction

Tanzania ratified the UN convention in 1991 and the African charter and the Rights and Welfare of the Child in 2003. The ratification of the convention followed by establishment of policies, legislation, services, resources and administrative reform to ensure that the right of the child is upheld and the implementation of CRC is in place. This is followed by enactment of the Landmark law of the child 2009.

1.1 Concept and types of bullying

The incidents of children bullying as reflected in various studies done in Tanzania and elsewhere, are wide spread. Bullying in Tanzanian context is an act of a person being picked on over and over again by an individual or group with more power, either in terms of physical strength or social standing. In the study by Dedham, 1997& Olweus, 1994) conducted in the beginning of the 70's in Norway and Sweden, involving millions of students from primary, secondary and high school, bullying is considered an intentional behaviour, with the specific goal of doing harm to

someone weaker. To be considered bullying in either context, the interactions must show:

an intentional nature - the bully deliberately brings damage to the victim;
persistence - the attacks are repeated over time;
an imbalance of power – often the bully is stronger than the victim, who is not able to react effectively.

According to Fekkes, M., Pijpers, F. & Verloove-Vanhorick (2005), the most common categories of bullying include:- Name calling and hurling insults; "teasing" or consistent comments about height, weight, appearance, possessions, abilities, religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation; physical contact including hitting, kicking, punching, pinching, pushing, hair pulling or spitting; stealing, hiding, defacing or breaking one's possessions; spreading rumours about someone; shouting at or about someone, ignoring and/or singling out for exclusion from activities; making sexually suggestive comments to or about someone; making unwanted sexual advances toward you; sending you insulting or harmful emails, text messages or instant messages; posting hurtful information, rumours or pictures of someone on a website or blog and putting pressure on someone to say or do something with which he/she is uncomfortable.

Other scholars like (Bullock, 2002) have, however, categorized bullying into three types which are physical or direct, psychological and indirect bullying. The physical or direct includes behaviours such as to hit, to kick, to push, to steal, to threaten, to play in an intimidating way and to use weapons. The psychological one refers to calling names, to tease or to annoy someone, to be sarcastic, insulting or injurious, to make faces and to threaten. The indirect one, less visible, includes to exclude or to reject somebody from a group.

1.2 Baseline study

In order to get the magnitude of the Problem the baseline study was conducted in September 2010 at:

- Ubungu National housing Primary School – Dar es Salaam
- Kunduchi Primary School – Dar es Salaam
- Kongowe Primary School – Coast Region

The sample comprised of 100 pupils per school. In order to collect information within a short time, the following instruments were used:

- Interviews for teachers
- Questionnaires for pupils

Study findings

Victims	Ubungo Pr.Sch	Kunduchi Pr.Sch	Kongowe Pr. Sch
Young's	98	80	85
Girls	79	80	80
Lower classes	90	85	80
Disables	05	16	20

Out of 300 pupils,

- 263 (87%) said elder pupils bull young ones
- 239 (79%) said boys bull girls
- 255 (85%) said higher classes bull lower classes
- 41 (13%) said able bull disabled
- 202 (67%) said biting is the most common bullying type
- 262 (87%) take their complains to the teachers
- 214(71%) admitted to have been bulled

1.2 Reasons for bullying

There is no one single cause of bullying among children. Rather, individual, family, peer, school, and community factors can place a child or youth at risk for bullying his or her peers

However, studies reveal two main reasons why people are bullied. The first is because of appearance and second is social status. Bullies pick on the people they think don't fit in, maybe because of how they look, how they act (for example, children who are shy and withdrawn), their race or religion. Bullying is also psychological, In fact, positive interactions as well as conflicts and disputes with a brother or a sister provide a natural context in which children can learn mediations skills, respect of the others, empathy and caring in a relatively protected environment . If younger chil-

dren have older brothers, they can experience a higher level of aggression and assimilate and transfer this problematic behaviour into the school context. Children who experience high levels of conflict and low levels of affect are more likely to show social problems in the peer context (Fekkes, M., Pijpers, F. & Verloove-Vanhorick (2005).

1.3 Age Demographics of Children in Tanzania and the essence of protection

According to REPOA (2007), Tanzania's child population is large. Half the total population is under the age of 18 years. Current projections are that over 18 million Tanzanians are below the age of 18. Since children represent more than half of Tanzania's population, and because they are weak, they must rely upon others who are committed to respecting, protecting and fulfilling their rights. This includes leaders at all levels, including members of parliament, councilors, government officials at national, district and local level, religious leaders, judges, lawyers, police, social workers teachers, health workers, media professionals and many more.

1.4 Vulnerability of children

Vulnerability refers to the risk of adverse outcome, such as social exclusion like being denied right to education. If vulnerability is a reflection of lack of control and protection, then all children, and especially young children, are vulnerable simply because of their age. Child participation is important because a society that listens to and engages with children, and respects their rights, is a society that respects the core principles of equality, non-discrimination and social protection for the most vulnerable. It is a society that will listen to children more closely when they are abused, exploited and at their most vulnerable. Child participation in school governance improves school attendance and results, reduces abuse and conflict and keeps more children in school for longer.

1.5 The scope of child rights in Tanzania

Tanzania ratified the UN Convention in 1991 and the African Charter and the Rights and Welfare of the Child in 2003 also has put in place the Child Development Policy in 1995 (URT, 1995) and enacted the landmark law of the child in 2009 (URT, 2009). Ratification of regional and international Conventions on the rights of a child in itself is an important step in recognition of the child in the country. The enactment of the law of the child which is a very recent product of the Parliament of Tanzania, and the policy on the development of the child give provisions for child protection against all kinds of humiliation in the country. Tanzania's leading children's organizations have joined The Children's Agenda, an initiative that aims to ensure children's issues are well represented in the October 2010 elections, featuring in party manifestos and commitments of the future government

1.6 Effects of bullying in schools

A study carried out in Dar es Salaam-based primary schools in 2009 indicated that punishments, bullying and other forms of violence are among unpleasant behaviour done to children in 201 schools in Dar es Salaam region, according to reports by Plan International. (Staff Writer ICHIKAELI, 27th March 2009).

According to Winhold, B. (2000), one of the most painful aspects of bullying is that it is relentless. Most people can take one episode of teasing or name calling. However, when it goes on and on, bullying can put a person in a state of constant fear. Bullying isn't just another form of aggressive conflict. It's about repeatedly harassing a vulnerable, lower-status victim. When this is done to weaker pupils any of the following effects is inevitable: Frequently be absent from school, be afraid of, or even change the route to and from school, and skipping certain classes and activities. Others are decline in schoolwork and marks, losing confidence in themselves and their abilities, have frequent and unexplained cuts, scrapes and/or bruises, become withdrawn and anxious, seem sad and cry more frequently, seem angry and become violent or have outbursts more frequently.

2 Purpose

The broad aim of this project was to eliminate all types of bullying in primary schools in order to create a conducive environment for learning. Specifically, the project sought to:

- Establish functioning structures and processes in schools to handle bullying cases.
- Make anti bullying campaigns in schools sustainable.

3 Methodology

The project employed various samples, techniques, and procedures such as observation, interviews, questionnaires, documentary review and actions like consultations, holding meetings, forming committees, and preparing posters and T-shirts.

3.1 Sample for the project

The population for the project included 18 teachers, and 1080 students of Kongowe Primary school in Kibaha district. However, for easy management and handling of the project an initial sample of 12 teachers and 30 students was drawn from the population after carrying out awareness creating meeting to all the school community.

3.2 Observation

The change agents visited the school openly and observed various activities going on with focus on types of bullying involved. However, in order to eliminate mimicked behaviours shown when one knows that some is observing, sometimes change agents visited the school compound unnoticed and went on observing things happening.

3.3 Interviews and questionnaires

Students and teachers were exposed to interviews and questionnaires in order to ascertain if bullying is a problem and how it was formally handled by the school community. Open and closed ended questions were employed to get facts and opinions.

3.4 Documentary review

Documents like school regulations, school and class meetings records, punishment records and attendance registers were perused to see if incidents of students to students bullying were part of the records and if there are truancy cases related to bullying.

3.5 Consultation

The organizations consulted for advice and any relevant assistance were TEN/MET (Tanzania Education Network) together with HAKIELIMU. Others were CO-

CACOLA and IPPMEDIA for financial support and broadcasting anti bullying campaigns in the media.

3.6 Holding meetings

Change agents held meetings with teachers and students. The meetings were meant for creating awareness about observing child rights at school.

3.7 Forming anti bullying committees and clubs

In collaboration with teachers the change agents formed teachers' anti bullying committees. The agents also formed students' anti bullying committees and clubs.

3.8 Preparing posters

Change agents prepared posters with messages that denounce bullying at school. These were posted on walls and notice boards for the whole school community and visitors to read.

3.9 Preparing T-shirts

To start with students' committee members were supplied with one T-shirts each with pictures and words with messages which do away with bullying within and outside the school.

4 Results

4.1 The observation conducted revealed numerous incidents of students bullying each other. The common types of bullying observed were hitting, hurling insults, threatening and taking some ones belongings forcibly. The observation also revealed that most bullying took place during break times and when students are on the way to school and when going back home.

4.2 The interviewed teachers provided that there were no formal procedures for dealing with students to students bullying in the school. They informed that bullying cases do happen but they are dealt with just like normal indiscipline cases. Likewise, the interviewed students revealed that bullying is a common phenomenon in their school and when it occurred they informed teachers on duty and the bullies were punished and that is all. The interviewed pupils also informed that there are some students who dogged classes in fear of bullies. Furthermore, the questionnaires

indicated that bullying among students is there and the handling is weak in that not always are reported cases dealt with. Sometimes teachers take them easily such that the bullies are pardoned.

4.3 The documents reviewed indicated that pupil to pupil bullying is treated as a normal indiscipline case whereby the bullies were either punished or pardoned. The attendance register also showed some of the names marked absent are among those who have been earmarked to have been bullied.

4.4 Consultation with COCACOLA was done and the response was not very good as they were not at a position to assist immediately. They, however, promised to assist in the future. TEN/MET on their side promised to give technical assistance like preparing programmes to be broadcasted in the media about ending pupil to pupil bullying in schools. They also promised to assist in the production of posters to be displayed in schools.

4.5 The meetings with teachers helped as eyes opener on what should be done at school level to provide students with basic necessities, protecting the children against all sorts of humiliation and enhancing their participation in almost everything that touch their lives directly or indirectly at school. Teachers were also asked to take their responsibility as guardians to ensure that children enjoy their stay at school. The meeting with students was also fruitful as they were given opportunity to air their complains about life at school in totality. They were free to ask and answer questions about their rights and responsibilities as children. Change agents explained to the children that there is the Law of the Child Act, 2009 in place for their protection and that international community is behind their rights so they should feel proud.

The photograph below shows students' committee members in the meeting with CRC agents at Kongowe primary school. The meeting was about the committee's responsibilities as anti bullying volunteers and champions of promoting child rights in their school.



4.6 Anti bullying committee for teachers was formed by five teachers including the Head teacher, two discipline teachers and two others. The responsibilities of the teachers' committee were discussed together with change agents. Teachers were also urged to put extra efforts on protecting children's welfare as they are trusted by the government.

Pupils' anti bullying committee was also formed. The committee comprised of twelve students from different classes. The committee members were told their responsibilities and asked to start their work as soon as possible.

The main responsibility of students' anti bullying committee is to work in collaboration with teachers' anti bullying committee to handle bullying cases in the school.

They have to investigate and adjudicate and suggest the action to be taken and send the report to the teachers' committee for action. They were also directed on how to keep records of bullying cases dealt with by the two committees.

The students' committee members for the year 2011 to 2012 are:

A group photo of pupils forming anti bullying committee for Kongowe primary school.

- Kongowe Primary School has 1,073 total number of students.
- About 548 are boys and 525 are girls and this is from standard one up to standard seven.

The group have 2-3 representatives from standard 3 up 7



4.7 Posters were prepared initially by hiring artists and in the long run they will be provided by HAKI ELIMU. The posters carry messages such as 'protect me from bullying I am weak'; another says 'education is my right stop bullying me.' The posters are stacked on walls and pin boards. Apart from text messages the posters have pictures showing bullies at work. Below each picture there are words that denounce bullying.

4.8 T-Shirts were printed with words and pictures and given initially to students' anti bullying committee members. Like posters the T-shirts carry with them picture and words that forbid bullying at school. CRC agents had to hire artist to do this work. Efforts are underway to involve other stake holders to contribute to enable all students at Kongowe Primary school to have a T-shirt.

5 Discussions and Reflection

Prevalence of bullying in school setting

Pupil to pupil bullying continues to be one of the most common forms of aggression and victimization experienced by school-aged children. As indicated in this project, typically it occurs in situations where there is a power or status difference. Despite the recent attention given to bullying, teachers and school staff tend to underestimate the prevalence of bullying. In order to better serve the needs of students, teachers and school staff need to be able to identify and understand the consequential effects of bullying in order to intervene effectively. Likewise, students and teachers

should aim to collaborate on bullying prevention efforts to better meet the needs of both groups and the school as a whole.

The invisible nature of pupil to pupil bullying

Much of what has been said and published on bullying among children takes for granted that a large majority of this violence is exercised by parents or other relatives inside the private space of the home. By contrast, there is very little record of the violence exercised in other settings; as a result, school based violence against children is largely 'invisible'. In rare cases when violence against children is registered, details on the context in which it occurred are often not included. In part this owes to the general assumption that schools are, by definition, a safe and protected place for children.

However, schools like any other social context are the sites of power relationships among teachers, staff and students, and among students themselves. In particular, the power relationships between elders and juniors that flourish in the home also exist in the school environment. Sometimes, these relationships are articulated in abusive ways. Further, schools are also designed and developed as places where children are socialized into, learn and internalize social rules in order to be prepared for the 'real' world.

The argument here is that it is necessary to have not only the school staff and pupils involved but also the parents of pupils. This would mean that they become aware of the issues surrounding violence in school and may start themselves questioning its existence.

Bullying has often been seen as a harmless, even useful ritual among children where adult intervention is not desirable or convenient. However, the increasing interest in quality of education in the country offers a potentially important window of opportunity to incorporate a nonviolent environment as a core part of the definition of quality education for all. Most efforts have been driven by the concept of creating a 'culture of peace' at schools and the recognition that a culture of peace is an essential part of children's rights in all settings.

Morris, D. (2008) in her study on social –demographic and psycho social determinants of bullying behaviour among secondary school students, found that bullying behaviour is a significant problem among secondary school students. She observed that children are bullied by the peers and teachers as well.

The study recommends different ways for addressing the problem. They include engaging school counsellors to help aggressive children to interact with peers in a more appropriate manner, intervention programmes which base on classroom instruction to address students bullying behaviour. It is noted that teachers' denial of the existence of bullying in school may amount to social approval of certain bullying

behaviour. Also, the teacher's insistence on punishment that hurts could constitute aggression at another level, and pass over the attitude to bully students. However, primary schools like secondary schools are prone to the same behaviours. Therefore, what Morris (et al) suggest to secondary schools is directly applicable to primary schools.

The essence of child rights in the development of the country

Fulfilment of the rights of children is not just an obligation it also makes good economic sense. Tanzania cannot achieve the Vision 2025 without healthy, well-nourished, and well-educated citizens. Every country that has made the breakthrough to middle-income status has made significant investments in children. In fact, the long-term losses that result from not investing in children are far greater than the cost of fulfilling their rights. Too many children in Tanzania are not able to achieve their potential because they are poorly nourished, inadequately educated, and exposed to violence, abuse and risks like HIV and AIDS that keep too many families living in poverty. If children cannot reach their potential, neither can the nation.

Children right to participation

The right of children to participate in decisions that are most relevant to their well-being is a central principle of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. It is also enshrined in Tanzanian law. The 2009 Law of the Child states that "A child shall have [...] the right to express an opinion, to be listened to and to participate in decisions which affect his well-being." (Part 2 Article 11).

In Tanzania the Children's Council was established in 2002 and acquired legal identity in 2010 when it was formally registered as a Trusteeship through the Ministry of Constitutional Affairs and Justice. This is a vital step towards the fulfilment of the participation rights of Tanzania's children since it will enable the council to potentially become fully functional as the nationally representative body for Tanzanian children.

Child participation is important because a society that listens to and engages with children, and respects their rights, is a society that respects the core principles of equality, non-discrimination and social protection for the most vulnerable. It is a society that will listen to children more closely when they are abused, exploited and at their most vulnerable. Child participation in school governance improves school attendance and results, reduces abuse and conflict and keeps more children in school for longer

Why focus on pupil to pupil bullying?

All of us are concerned about the levels of violence among young people in our communities and schools. Studies have shown that 60 percent of children identified as bullies in middle school go on to have arrest records. We need to address these children's behavioural problems at an early age, before they become even more serious.

In addition, victims of bullies may have problems with depression, poor school attendance, and low self-esteem. It is important to help create a school environment where all children feel safe and can learn to the best of their abilities.

Effective Strategy to Counter Bullying in Schools

Enlisting the school headteacher's commitment and Involvement.

The school head teacher's commitment to and involvement in addressing school bullying are key. In fact, in comparing schools with high and low bullying rates, some research suggests that a head teacher's investment in preventing and controlling bullying contributes to low rates.

Using a multifaceted, comprehensive approach.

A multifaceted, comprehensive approach is more effective than one that focuses on only one or two aspects of school bullying. A multifaceted, comprehensive approach includes:

- i. Establishing a school wide policy that addresses indirect bullying
- ii. (e.g., rumor spreading, isolation, social exclusion), which is more hidden, as well as direct bullying (e.g., physical aggression).
- iii. Providing guidelines for teachers, other staff and students
- iv. (Including witnesses) on specific actions to take if bullying occurs.
- v. Educating and involving parents so they understand the problem, recognize its signs and intervene appropriately.
- vi. Adopting specific strategies to deal with individual bullies and victims, including meeting with their parents.
- vii. Encouraging students to report known bullying.
- viii. Developing a comprehensive reporting system to track bullying and the interventions used with specific bullies and victims.
- ix. Encouraging students to be helpful to classmates who may be bullied.
- x. Developing tailored strategies to counter bullying in specific school hot spots, using environmental redesign, increased supervision, (e.g., by teachers, other staff members, parents, volunteers).
- xi. Conducting post-intervention surveys to assess the strategies' impact on school bullying.

6 Way forward

The District Education Officer (DEO) for Kibaha has shown interest in transferring and implementing the same project to all primary schools in her district. She therefore urged the change agents to prepare for the work ahead of them. Also District Education Officer was very interested in this project because this is the first time and first project with the goals of *“Reducing Pupil to Pupil bullying in Primary Schools in Tanzania”* to be introduced in Kibaha. Moreover all teachers participation and awareness on the project made an impact on the DEO.

Kibaha having about 41 Primary Schools, so due to the problems of School Drop-outs and Failures, the Project introduced one solution on how to solve the Problems.

We Change Agents planned to collaborate with Kibaha town Director and District Education Office in order to sustain and develop the project through Seminars / Workshops in the rest of Schools around Kibaha.

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1 Introduction

The change agents intend to get the correct information on the presence of bullying which is being done among pupils themselves here at school. It should be remembered that, bullying among pupils is in different shapes such as beatings, being abused, being locked inside, harassments, to make love by force, etc.

In order to get the clear picture/ view of what is going on within the schools about bullying, please answer the following questions according to your knowledge/ experience/ what you know. All your answers shall not be exposed anywhere to anyone not concerned, they shall be kept as a secret, so answer them freely.

2 Questions

a) General Information

- i) Name of school
- ii) Class
- iii) Sex
- iv) Age
- v) Place

(b) Bullying Information

i) Put YES to the information you think is correct, or NO to the information you think is not correct

- Elder pupils are bullying young pupils here at school
- Boys are bullying girls here at school
- The upper class pupils are bullying the lower class pupils.....
- The disabled and orphans pupils are mostly being bullied here at school.....

ii) Choose the correct answer provided in brackets below to fill the blanks.

- What type of bullying is greatly practiced here at school?
(beating, abuses/insult, taking one's possession, ignored, put exile in class, teasing, all of these)
- At what time does the bullying take place? (break time, home time, on the way to school, during classes, all the time).

- What is the frequency of bullying per day?(many times, rarely).
- Which group is mostly being bullied? (young, disabled, orphans, girls, boys).

iii) Write the answer which you think is correct in the space provided below

- Where do the bullied pupils send their complains?
.....
.....
- What are the measures taken for the reported complains?
.....
.....
- Is there any pupils' committee dealing with bullying issues?
.....
.....
- Is there any teachers' committee dealing with bullying issues here at school?
.....
.....

iv) Answer the following questions correctly

- Have you ever been bullied?
.....
- Who bullied you (boy/girl?), and why?
.....
.....
- What did you do after being bullied?
.....
.....
- What measures were taken against it?
.....
.....

Interview to Teachers

1 Introduction

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2 Questions

1. Is there any bullying among pupils here at school?
2. What type of bullying exists here at school?
3. Which groups do this bullying facing the most?
4. Does the school management being informed once the bullying occurs?
5. What measures does the school management take after being informed the case?
6. Is there any documentation of such cases and the solution/measures taken against them?
7. What are the school strategies to eliminate or reduce bullying among pupils?