

BULLYING IN NIGERIAN SECNDARY SCHOOLS:  
A TEST OF GOTTFREDSON AND HIRSCHI'S GENERAL THEORY OF CRIME

by

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This Dissertation is dedicated to the memory of “sister” Ibiba Fenny Harry, a trail blazer and great example on all fronts. Goodnight sister!

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DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of  
The University of Texas at Dallas  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN  
CRIMINOLOGY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

May 2018

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This was a community project. The whole “village” chimed in to bring this to fruition, and I will be eternally grateful for their support. The journey was long, windy, and discouraging, but well worth the sorrow, tears, and blood along the way. This is evidence of God’s faithfulness! Many people supported me, held my hands, prayed for me, and pushed me along until I got to the finish line. They are too numerous to mention, but I will acknowledge a few. My chair, Dr. Nadine Connell went over and above the call of duty to ensure that I finished my dissertation. Her confidence in my ability, support and constant encouragement was priceless. My committee members, Dr. Nicole Piquero, Dr. Lynne Vieraitis, and Dr. Andrew Wheeler, were very supportive, and I thank them for taking a chance on me.

To my Jesus House Birmingham family, I give unquantifiable thanks for covering my nakedness. Many thanks to my Bread of Life family, especially Pastors Chris and Jumoke Adetoro.

My colleagues, Haley, Stephanie, Nina, Steve, Crystal, Turgut, Zachary, Chidike, Amny, Jennifer, Wendy, Lily, Richard. Thanks for being there for me when I needed you.

My children, Tonte and Boma, constantly challenged me to stay focused and finish this project. My friends Dele, Tolu, Yemisi, Zika, aunty Ebite, aunty Funmi, Christy, Charity, Choice, Nseobong, Azinge, Nike, and aunty Folu. Special thanks to Baba Aanu, without whom this project would have been delayed.

To Enefaa Fenny who has loved, supported, and invested in me all these years. Blessed are you among husbands!

March 2018

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The University of Texas at Dallas, 2018

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Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime's claim to explain crime, at all times and in all places, has received considerable empirical support using Western, Scandinavian, and Asian samples. However, the theory is yet to be tested using a Nigerian sample. Similarly, school bullying has received considerable criminological, psychological, educational, and governmental attention. However, much of the attention is focused on bullying in Western, Asian, and Scandinavian countries. There appears to be scant, if any, attention paid to this problem on the African continent. Using cross-sectional data from a sample of 1,192 junior secondary school (middle school) students in Nigeria, this study examines the prevalence of bullying in Nigeria, and the explanatory power of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime (GTC) in predicting bullying in that context and culture. This is the first test of the GTC with a Nigerian sample and is a spring board for effective bullying prevention policy/programs in Nigerian schools. The public policy implications of the findings are discussed

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) General Theory of Crime (GTC) has been described as one of the most influential theories in criminology (Pratt & Cullen, 2000). Criminological theories seek to aid our understanding of criminal behavior, and these theories succeed in varying degrees in achieving this goal. GTC's claim to explain all crimes, at all times, in all places, across race, sex, and gender has been tested in Western, Asian, and Scandinavian samples, but has yet to be tested using a Nigerian sample. The theory posits that an individual level explanation for crime and analogous behavior is a latent trait called self-control. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) defined self-control as "the tendency to avoid acts whose long-term costs exceed their momentary advantages"; and crime, as "acts of force or fraud undertaken in pursuit of self-interest" (p. 14).

Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) GTC is arguably the most tested theory in explaining not just crime (Grasmick, Tittle, Bursik, & Arneklev, 1993; Piquero & Tibetts, 1996; Vazsonyi, Pickering, Junger, & Hessing, 2001; Wright & Cullen, 2001) and deviant behavior (Gibbs & Giever, 1995; Forde & Kennedy, 1997; Higgins & Ricketts, 2004; Reisig & Pratt, 2011; Piquero & Bouffard, 2007), but also victimization (Schreck, Stewart & Fisher, 2006; Pratt, Turanovic, Fox, & Wright, 2014) and cuts across race, sex, and age (Tittle, Ward, & Grasmick, 2003).

Self-control is a robust predictor of both crime and analogous behavior (Pratt & Cullen, 2000), self-reported juvenile delinquency (LaGrange & Silverman, 1999), bullying (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2011), police officer misconduct (Donna & Jennings, 2014), crime among the elderly (Wolfe, 2015), school misconduct (Smith & Crichlow, 2013), victimization and offending (Flexon, Meldrum & Piquero, 2016), homelessness (Baron, 2003), and employee theft (Langton,

Piquero, & Hollinger, 2006), among others. Although the theory was developed to explain offending, it has also been used to explain victimization (Schreck, Stewart, & Fisher, 2006; Pratt et al., 2014; Turanovic & Pratt, 2014; Turanovic, Reisig, & Pratt, 2015).

Bullying has been described as a universal problem (Hong & Espelage, 2012), and a significant public health concern (Espelage & Holt, 2013). Olweus' (1978; 1987; 1991; &1993). Olweus pioneering and extensive research on bullying drew attention to the prevalence of bullying among school children and its long-term impact. His findings were validated when three adolescent boys committed suicide, presumably resulting from bullying incidents they endured in school (Olweus, 1993), and the Norwegian Ministry of education consequently initiated anti-bullying campaign in schools. Increases in bullying occurrences in schools led to increased media focus (Maguire et al., 2002; Newman, Woodcock and Dunham, 2006; Muschert, 2007), prompting American researchers to study school bullying (Vega & Comer, 2005; Hymel & Swearer, 2015).

According to Olweus, “a student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students. Negative actions can include physical contact, words, making faces or dirty gestures, and intentional exclusion from a group...it is an imbalance in strength (an asymmetric power relationship) ...and the victim has difficulty defending himself or herself” (Olweus, 1995, p. 197). Similarly, Roland (1989) described bullying as “longstanding violence, physical or mental, conducted by an individual or group and directed against an individual who is not able to defend himself in the actual situation” (pg. 143). In the same vein, Sharp and Smith (2002) defined bullying as occurring “when another student says nasty and unpleasant things” and “when a

student is hit, kicked, threatened, locked inside a room, sent nasty notes, and when no one ever talks to him” (pg. 1). There is substantive agreement that bullying occurrences involve: (a) a bully(ies) and a victim(s); (b) repetition over time; (c) an imbalance of power; and, (d) a victim who is unable to defend himself or herself.

Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior (Popp, Pequero, Day & Kahle, 2014) which can be direct or indirect - encompassing physical, (hitting, kicking, and pushing), verbal, (threatening and gossiping), psychological, (exclusion from activities and social isolation), and cyber bullying (using electronic devices) (Espelage & Swearer, 2010; Klein, 2012; Williams & Pequero, 2013). Concern about, and interest in, the bullying phenomenon is underscored by the fact that, compared with just over 190 studies on bullying during the 20-year period from 1980-2000, there have been over 600 studies published in the 10-year period from 2000-2010 (Cook, Williams, Guerra, Tim, & Sadek, 2010). Likewise, studies show that between 10%-30% of children have experienced bullying in school (Olweus, 1993). In a nationally representative sample of 15,686 American adolescents in the 6th through 10th grade in the United States, Nansel et al. (2001) found that roughly 30% of middle school students were involved in bullying in some way; 13% were bullies, 10.6% were victims, and 6.3% were both bullies and victims.

Research on school bullying has burgeoned in recent years due to unprecedented media focus on school violence (Maguire et al., 2002; Newman et al., 2006; Muschert, 2007), the increasing seriousness of delinquent activities in schools (Salas-Wright, Nelson, Vaughn, Reingle Gonzalez, & Cordova, 2017), and the negative long-term effect of bullying on both victims and perpetrators (Owusu, Hart, Oliver, & Kang, 2011; Rodkin et al., 2015; McDougall & Vaillancourt, 2015). Risks include adult mental health outcomes (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005),

significant health problems (Arsenault, Bowles & Shakoor, 2010), depression (Cornell & Mehta, 2011), higher risk of offending (Piquero, Connell, Piquero, Farrington, & Jennings, 2013), and PTSD (Khamis, 2015).

Research on bullying has gained considerable attention in the social sciences; psychologists (Olweus, 1993; Espelage & Holt, 2013; Smokowski, Cotter, Robertson, & Guo (2013), sociologists (Chui & Chan, 2015), criminologists (Unnever & Cornell, 2003; Holt, Turner & Exum, 2014), and educators (Modecki, Minchin, Harbaugh, Guerra, & Runions, 2014) have devoted considerable time to the examination and understanding of this social problem. School bullying is not new (Omoteso, 2010; Hymel & Swearer, 2015); it used to be viewed as a rite of passage (Popp, Pequero, Day & Kahle, 2014; Opara, 2014). At the White House Conference on Bullying Prevention in March 2011, President Obama put it succinctly when he stated that “We’ve got to dispel this myth that bullying is just a normal rite of passage -that it’s some inevitable part of growing up. It’s not. We have an obligation to ensure that our schools are safe for all of our kids” (Obama, 2011). The president further observed that “bullying doesn’t even end at the school bell -- it can follow our children from the (school) hallways, to their cell phones, to their computer screens...” (Obama, 2011). It is no longer a private matter, and its consequences transcends the early school years (Olweus, 2001).

It is important to note that children do not go to school by choice; they are legally obligated to attend school (Hymel & Swearer, 2015). In both the United States and Nigeria, there is free, and compulsory, education from elementary to high school (UBE Act 2004). Consequently, students spend a significant part of their waking hours (about 1,200 hours a year) in school and around their peers, engaged in both academic and extra-curricular activities. The

well-documented negative consequences of bullying (Popp, Peguero, Day & Kahle, 2014) makes it imperative to study the behavior with a view to finding evidence-based, cross-national prevention strategies that ensures the safety of children in school.

Although bullying problems pervades many countries and cultures (Vazsonyi, Pickering & Junger, 2001; Hong & Espelage, 2012; Chui & Chan, 2015), and has a host of long-term negative consequences (Popp et al., 2014), the availability of data has concentrated the bulk of the research in Western, Asian, and Scandinavian countries, with samples of typically western children. However, in an increasingly globalized world, we are all linked together not just by economics, but also by social issues. The relatively limited knowledge of the prevalence of bullying, and lack of theoretically anchored explanations for the behavior on the African continent, has hampered the development and implementation of bullying prevention strategies in schools on this strategic continent, and consequently, makes children less safe in the school environment.

The importance of the African continent cannot be over emphasized; in 2015, 226 million youths live in Africa (UN, 2015). According to the United Nations (2013), over 70% of Africa's population are young people under the age of 30, and the continent is home to more than 70% of the world's youngest population. The United Nations population projections (2012) reported that while the global fertility rate has been declining by half since 1960, sub-Saharan Africa not only has the highest fertility rate in the world, but the fertility rate has only declined by 1.8 births since 1960. No comprehensive school policy on bullying exists in most of the African countries and GTC has yet to be tested with a Nigerian sample. This research seeks to bridge that gap.

Data from this study are from Nigeria, West Africa. This is an understudied population in criminological research. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2013), Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, the 10th largest oil-producing country in the world, has the largest economy in Africa, and is home to the first television station in Africa. One in every four Africans is a Nigerian, and youth make up half of the country's 170 million citizens. By United Nations (2012) estimates, this is projected to increase by 42% by the year 2030 (U.S. Bureau of Census, 2010). Sadly, research on the prevalence of bullying in Nigeria is scant (Ndetei et al., 2007; Ehindero, 2010) and most of the schools do not have bully prevention policy/programs (Okanlawon, 2015). The 2012 World Health Organization (WHO) study of the health behavior of school-aged children 10-13 and 15 years old in 43 countries across Europe and North America, found that victimization rates varied from 2% to 32% across countries. Most importantly, the study recorded a decline in peer victimization in most of the countries. These findings, though instructive, contain no information on Africa in general or Nigeria in particular. This dissertation is therefore long overdue as it fills a gap in our knowledge of the prevalence of bullying among 11-15-year-old Nigerian junior secondary school students. Additionally, this is the first test of the explanatory power of the General Theory of Crime on bullying behavior in a Nigerian sample.

Theoretical explanations for crime and analogous behavior include rational choice, social learning, differential association, and self-control, but this dissertation tests the General Theory of Crime not only because it claims to explain crimes in all places, but also due to its focus on effective parenting as the source of self-control. There is a cultural emphasis on good parenting, and the influence of the "village" in children's upbringing in Nigeria (Umunna, 2012). A

Nigerian proverb says “ile latin kesho rode,” meaning that the home is the principal place for the transmission of good values. Both the Nigerian culture and GTC places high premium on good parenting as the bedrock of “self-control”; the country is therefore an ideal culture to test the explanatory value of GTC on bullying behavior.

### *Nigeria*

According to UNICEF (2016), Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with a population of about 171 million people, including 40 million children. Nigeria has 36 states and Abuja is the federal capital territory. Nigeria is an English-speaking, West African country that gained independence from Britain in 1960. With a total area of 923,768 kilometers (356,669 square miles), the country shares borders with Benin Republic, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon (CIA, 2011). The country is multilingual and multicultural and over 250 ethnic groups live within its borders. The three main tribes are the Yoruba’s in the south west, the Igbos in the east, and the predominantly Muslim Hausa/Fulani’s in the northern part of the country (Mberu &White, 2011). English is the official language and language of instruction in the schools. Nigeria is a very conservative society where family honor is jealously guarded, and what happens in the family, almost always stays in the family (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2013; Ayodele, 2017).

It is important to note that Nigeria (especially the southwestern region), has a culture of respect where younger children do not address older ones by their first names (Nwadiora, 1996) and are required to obey instructions without question (Fadipe, 1970). Though this culture is gradually fading, relics of it remain in some schools and families. In some schools, students in the lower grades are expected to defer to those in the upper grades and are not allowed to address

their “seniors” (students in upper grades) by their first names. It will be instructive to see if this culture of respect creates an atmosphere that fosters bullying behavior in schools. This cultural peculiarity and the lack of school policy on bullying, discourage reporting of bullying incidents, but in an increasingly globalized world, it behooves us not only to be aware, but also be proactive in responding to, and addressing, issues of global concern. This is especially salient in view of findings on the link between bullying and a wide range of negative mental health, social, and academic outcomes (Swearer et al., 2010; Popp et al, 2014).

The explanatory value of low self-control in explaining offending and deviant behavior has been established in studies of juveniles (LaGrange & Silverman, 1999; Hwang & Akers, 2003), college students (Gibbs & Giever, 1995; Piquero, Gomez-Smith & Langton, 2004), homeless people (Baron, 2003), and adult criminal offenders (Longshore et al., 1996), as well as across gender (Higgins & Tewksbury, 2006; Mason & Windle, 2002) and birth cohorts (Wright, Caspi, Moffitt & Silva, 1999). Low self-control is also a significant factor in crimes of force and fraud (Grasmick et al., 1993); drunk driving (Nagin & Paternoster, 1993; Piquero & Tibbetts, 1996); shoplifting (Piquero & Tibbetts, 1996); binge drinking (Piquero, et al., 2002); analogous or undesirable social behaviors (Arneklev, Grasmick, Tittle & Bursik, 1993; Evans et al., 1997; Paternoster & Brame, 1997; Piquero & Bouffard, 2007), repeat sex offenses (Tittle, Ward, & Grasmick, 2003), shopliftings (Moffitt et al., 2011), and software piracy (Higgins, 2004). Research has also shown the effect of low self-control on victimization (Stewart et al., 2004; Pratt et al., 2014).

Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) claim that “a single theory can encompass the reality of cross-cultural differences in crime rates” (p. 175) has also been largely supported using

American (Unnever & Cornell, 2003), English (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2011), Thai (Kerley, Xu & Sirisunyaluck, 2008), Roma (Vazsonyi, Jiskrova, Ksinan & Blatny, 2016), Hungarian (Vazsonyi, Pickering & Junger, 2001), Swiss (Vazsonyi, et al., 2001), Korean (J-F & Yu, 2016), Macanese (Chui & Chan, 2015), Canadian (LaGrange & Silverman, 1999), Hong Kong (Cheng, Cheung, & Cheung, 2008), and Chinese (Zhu & Chan, 2015) samples, as well as in cross-national research (Vazsonyi, et al., 2001). However, this theory has not been tested in a Nigerian sample.

### *The Nigerian School Context*

Nigerians are different culturally and contextually from other countries, especially the United States. The educational system in Nigeria although patterned after the United States, is different because it emphasizes the culture of the region where the school is located. Boarding schools are more common in Nigeria than in the US, and, due to underfunding of public schools, there are more private schools per capita in Nigeria than public schools (Sunday & Olufunmilayo, 2008). In addition, religion is an integral part of the educational system in Nigeria; not only are students required to take religious classes of their choice, devotion is part of the curriculum in the schools. It will therefore be instructive to see if these differences in culture and context influence the explanatory power of the GTC on bullying behavior in Nigeria.

Furthermore, like in the United States, the federal, state, and local governments run education, although the Federal government is primarily involved in tertiary education. The country operates the 6-3-3-4 system of education; elementary education is for 6 years, junior secondary school (JSS or middle school) covers JSS 1-3, and the senior secondary school (SS or high school) covers SS 1-3. University education (college) covers 4 years for a bachelor's degree. Basic curriculum in elementary and secondary schools covers English, mathematics, a

(Nigerian) language (of the student's choice), basic science and technology, religion and national values, cultural and creative arts, and the Arabic language. Pre-vocational studies incorporated in the curriculum include home economics, agriculture, and entrepreneurship. Due to government neglect and inadequate funding of public education, students from lower-class families are more likely to attend public schools (Inuwa & Yusof, 2012). Private schools attended by middle and upper-class children have largely overtaken the public schools in terms of reputation and academic achievement. The private schools' curriculum runs from elementary through secondary schools or K-12, and students are typically prepared to take international examinations like the SAT, ACT, and Cambridge exams.

A typical Nigerian child spends a significant part of their day in school and in after school "lesson" or preparatory classes that run sometimes until late in the evening. For some, Saturdays are not exempt from attending the tutorial sessions, and the older the child, the more time spent in these tutorial classes. Investment in education is a top priority for most families in Nigeria, as it is in the US, and education is considered the gateway for admission to competitive schools and consequently a prosperous future. It is common that children in the same neighborhood attend regular and after-school tutorials and most times, this could leave the door open to opportunities for repeat victimization outside of school.

The following sections presents a discussion of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime, the bullying literature, empirical tests of the GTC, and a discussion of the limitations of previous research and the gap this study intends to fill. The purpose of this study is to provide the first test of the predictive power of self-control on bullying perpetration and

victimization among a sample of Nigerian students, who have been underrepresented in the literature on bullying to date.

## CHAPTER 2

### CHAPTER TITLE

#### *The General Theory of Crime*

Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) General Theory of Crime (GTC) is probably the most researched (Siegfried & Woessner, 2016), one of the most cited (Cohn & Farrington 1998), and possibly the most controversial criminological theory (Kerley, Xu, & Sirisunyaluck, 2008; Pratt, 2016). The theory not only argues that an individual trait called low self-control, is the main explanation for crime and analogous behaviors, but rejects prior sociological explanations of crime and delinquency. The theory further claims to explain all crimes, at all times, in all places, across race, sex, and gender (1990, p.117).

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) posit that relative to others, individuals with low self-control are more likely to engage in crime and analogous behaviors. They describe self-control as a "latent trait", established early in life between birth and age 8 or 10 (p. 272), which predisposes an individual to either antisocial (low self-control) or conventional/pro social behavior (high self-control). In making this bold theoretical claim, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) claimed that prior explanations of crime and criminal behavior including biological explanations, social disorganization, social learning, strain, and social bonds display an obvious lack of understanding of the nature of crime. They asserted that crime requires no motivation, "says little about one's biological past...requires no planning, or skill" (Gottfredson & Hirschi 1990, p. xv); contending instead that individual differences in the perception of the consequences of crime is the primary cause of crime and analogous behavior.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) juxtaposed crime characteristics with the characteristics of individuals who are more likely to engage in criminal behavior. The theory posits that crime provides easy gratification, offers exciting, risky, thrilling rewards, requires little skill, or planning and causes pain and discomfort to the victim. In the same vein, individuals with low self-control are more likely to be; (i) impulsive; (ii) insensitive; (iii) risk seeking; (iv) self-centered; (v) seek immediate gratification; (vi) physical rather than mental; and, (vii) prefer simple tasks. They further claimed that relative to others, individuals with low self-control are more likely to engage in analogous behaviors, that is, “smoke, drink, use drugs, gamble, have children out of wedlock, and engage in illicit sex” (p.90). The relationship of low self-control to these “acts analogous to crime” that is, substance abuse, drunk driving, sexual promiscuity, public profanity, risky driving, and academic dishonesty, is well documented in the literature (Arneklev et al., 1993; Pratt & Cullen, 2000). The theory further asserts that level of self-control is relatively stable or fixed in individuals although the process of socialization is a lifelong experience. Consequently, individuals with low self-control at a young age are more likely to engage in crime later in life, relative to individuals with high self-control early in life.

*Self-control and opportunity.*

Although GTC claims that the primary explanation for crime and analogous behaviors is self-control, the availability of criminal opportunity is critical to the occurrence of either. The absence of criminal opportunity constrains criminal propensity. However, because criminal opportunity is ubiquitous, individuals with low self-control are less likely able to restrain themselves from taking advantage of readily available criminal opportunities. It is therefore conceivable to deduce from Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) theory that because students spend a

considerable amount of time in school engaged in supervised and unsupervised activities, the school environment will present opportunities for bullying incidents to occur. For example, Moon and Alarid, (2015) examined the relationship between self-control and opportunity in a sample of 298 middle school students. They found that while youths with low self-control were more likely to bully, bullying opportunity and association with delinquent peers was also predictive of the behavior.

#### *Sources of self-control*

According to the theory, self-control is developed early in life through effective parenting which consists of a three-pronged process of monitoring a child's behavior, recognizing deviant behavior when it occurs, and punishing the deviant behavior. Children who are effectively socialized are more likely to develop self-control, and less likely to give in to the temptation of analogous or criminal behavior. The theory claims that effective parental socialization of children in the first 8 to 12 years of life is critical to establishing a high level of self-control, which in turns makes it less likely to engage in deviant behavior (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990. P. 272).

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) stated that when parents fail to monitor, recognize, and sanction deviant behavior, children are less likely to develop self-control (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990, P. 97). Their theory further posits that factors such as family size, parental criminality, single-parent households, and mothers who work outside the home, can impact children's development of self-control. The theorists found a link between parental level of self-control and the children's self-control (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990, p. 100). They contend that parents with criminal records are less likely to recognize deviant behavior, and more likely to be lax in

disciplining their children. Also, children from single parent homes are said to be at a disadvantage in the development of self-control because they are less likely to be adequately supervised, and consequently less likely to develop self-control. Similarly, where the family is too large, or parents work outside the home, children are less likely to enjoy the emotional and psychological support they require from their mothers especially, and therefore more likely to exhibit low self-control.

Despite their emphasis on parental socialization as the main source of self-control, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) do not claim that it is the only source of self-control. They concede that schools also play a role in the socialization of children and in some circumstances, contribute to the development of self-control in children. They posited that:

“First (school) can more effectively monitor behavior than the family...second...teachers generally have no difficulty (in) recognizing deviant or disruptive behavior. Third...the school has such a clear interest in maintaining order and discipline...finally...the school in theory has the authority and the means to punish lapses in self-control” (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990, p. 105).

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) further insist that individuals with low self-control will exhibit problems at school, be unable to maintain gainful employment and are more likely to have a history of failed interpersonal relationships. They are also more likely to indulge in a variety of risky behaviors including smoking, substance abuse and unprotected sex. They argued that GTC as a general theory of crime predicts crime regardless of nationality, race, socio-economic status, context, culture or any other situation.

### *Empirical support for the GTC*

The GTC is probably the most tested criminological theory (Siegfried & Woessner, 2016).

Despite, or perhaps because of, misgivings by scholars (Akers 1991; Simpson & Piquero, 2002; Pratt, 2016) about the generalizability and versatile claims of the theory, it has enjoyed considerable scholarly and interdisciplinary attention (Burt, Simmons & Simmons, 2006).

Although Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) did not operationalize self-control, self-control has been measured both attitudinally and behaviorally. Regardless of how it is operationalized, self-control has been found to explain crime and analogous behavior across age, race, sex, socio-economic status and among varied population (Pratt & Cullen, 2000; Vazsonyi et al., 2001; Vazsonyi, Mikuska, & Kelley, 2016). Additionally, key concepts of the theory have enjoyed considerable support (Arneklev et al., 1993; Grasmick et al., 1993; Pratt & Cullen, 2000; Hay, 2001; Piquero, Gibson & Tibbetts, 2002; Kerley et al., 2008; Piquero et al., 2010; Moffitt et al., 2011).

Findings on the source of self-control have been inconsistent. While some studies offered almost unequivocal support for the proposition that parenting is the source of self-control (Unnever, Cullen, & Pratt, 2003; Vazsonyi & Belliston, 2007; Miller, Jennings, Alvarez-Rivera & Lanza-Kaduce, 2009; Vazsonyi et al., 2016), others offered qualified support for the proposition (Beaver, Wright, DeLisi, & Vaughn, 2008; Pratt et al., 2004; and Cullen & Agnew, 2006). For instance, using a nationally representative sample of over 130,000 respondents in the United States to measure the effect of parental efficacy on the development of self-control, Hay (2001) found that parental efficacy was a precondition to the development of self-control. Similarly, using the Grasmick et al., (1993) self-control scale to measure the effect of parental

management on self-control in a sample of 422 college students, Gibbs, Giever, and Higgings (2003) found a strong relationship between parental management and self-control. In a related study of the effect of parenting practices on the development of self-control, Nofziger (2008) evaluated data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) and found that parental monitoring and supervision helped in the development of children's self-control. The study found that children who were spanked at ages 6 and 7 were less likely to have a high level of self-control at ages 10 and 11.

In a more recent study test of the self-control theory on adolescents from Roma, a minority group living in Europe, Vazsonyi et al., (2016) using self-report data from 239 adolescents, found support for the parenting hypothesis of the theory. The study found support for both the direct and indirect effect of parenting on deviance through low self-control. The study showed that low self-control explained 32% of the variance in the sample independent of the background variables included in the study.

However, other studies have been less supportive of the role of parenting in the development of self-control (Burt, Simmons & Simmons, 2006). Using a survey of more than 2,400 middle school students from six schools in the United States to test the competing claims of both the GTC and social learning theory on the impact of bad parenting on delinquent behavior, Unnever, Cullen and Agnew (2006) found that ineffective parenting produced low self-control through both direct control, that is instilling values in the children, and modeling-parents exhibiting low self-control themselves. The implication of this finding is that modeling high self-control is more effective than instilling high self-control. Also, in a cross national self-report study of adolescents in 30 countries to assess the link between self-control and parenting,

Botchkovar, Marshall, Rocque and Posick, (2015) found only a modest effect of parenting on self-control, claiming instead, that the development of self-control is not attributable to just one factor but a series of multifaceted processes.

Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) claim that the theory explains crime in "all places" has also received considerable support in the literature. In a four-nation comparative study of the predictive value of self-control on deviance, Vazsonyi et al., (2001) found that in Hungary, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States, self-control predicted deviance for both males and females, aged 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19. Similarly, in a cross-cultural test of GTC, Kerley, Xu and Sirisunyal (2008), examined the role of self-control on both offending and victimization in a sample of 794 married women living in Bangkok, Thailand. Their findings showed that low self-control predicted intimate partner aggression, and the victimization experiences of the women in their sample. While the study found for the multidimensionality of self-control, it found that only the impulsivity dimension predicted both offending and victimization in this context (also, Vazsonyi & Belliston, 2007). Among Korean youths, self-control was found to be a positive risk factor for early onset of delinquency in pre-pubescent children (J-F. & Yu, 2016); predictive of adolescent substance use (Hwang & Akers, 2003); and bullying (Moon & Jang, 2014).

It is however important to mention that although Vazsonyi and Crosswhite (2004) found for the cross-cultural ability of low self-control to explain deviant behavior of both African Americans and Caucasians, they also found that low self-control had an overall gendered effect. The study found significant differences between African American and Caucasian males on school misconduct; for females, they found differences in the effects of self-control on alcohol use, drug use, and school misconduct. Consistent with Gottfredson and Hirschi's claim that self-

control explains deviance equally for both sexes, Blackwell and Piquero (2015) found that the level of parental control was significantly related to offending for both males and females. For both sexes, children who had higher levels of control were less likely to offend. However, none of these studies on the cross-cultural applicability of the theory include sample of Nigerians.

### *Self-control and Bullying*

Consistent finding in the literature show that self-control is a robust predictor of crime and analogous behaviors (Pratt & Cullen, 2000; Vazsonyi, et al., 2016). It is therefore conceivable that self-control should predict bullying behavior (Unnever & Cornell, 2003). Bullying behavior cuts across culture (Nansel et al., 2004; Lucia 2016; Moon, Monash, & McCluskey, 2012), gender (Cook et al., 2010), age (Smith & Gross, 2006; Varjas, Henrich, & Meyers, 2009), and socioeconomic status (J-F., & Yu, 2016). It is predicted by both individual and contextual factors (Klein, Cornell & Konold, 2012). The link between bullying and low self-control has been established in the literature (Endresen & Olweus, 2001; Unnever & Cornell, 2003; Unnever, 2005; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2011; Moon et al., 2011; Chui & Chan, 2015; Moon & Alarid, 2015).

Concepts of self-control including impulsivity, empathy and anger have been found to be predictive of bullying behavior (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2011). In a study on the relationship between levels of empathy and bullying in a sample of 131 school children in the United Kingdom, Warden and MacKinnon (2003) found that antisocial children had relatively lower levels of affective empathy, and consequently more likely to bully than prosocial children. The study also found a gendered pattern to this relationship; girls are less likely to bully due to their relatively higher level of affective empathy than boys. Similarly, in a study of 2,472 students

from 6 public schools in the United States, Unnever and Cornell (2003) found that students taking ADHD medications were more likely to have low self-control and consequently more likely to be both bullies and victims of bullying. The study also found that relative to other students, children with ADHD were at increased risk of being bully victims due to their level of self-control. Additionally, using a sample of 4,263 middle school students in a Maryland school district, Haynie et al., (2001) found that bullies in the sample scored lower on the self-control scale and showed signs of impulsivity. Also, in a sample of 720 UK adolescents, Jolliffe and Farrington, (2006) found that lower affective empathy and impulsivity dimensions of low self-control, predicted the bullying behavior of the males in the sample. The consistency of the findings on the impulsivity/empathy and self-control calls for a targeted bullying prevention programs that increase affective empathy and reduce impulsivity in children.

Empirical findings show that a wide array of behavioral problems in children are attributable to low self-control (Rigby & Sless, 1993; Hay, 2001; Wang et al., 2009; Perrone et al., 2004; Meece & Robinson, 2014). Children in school have some free time; they are often unsupervised while walking in school hallways. They spend time with each other for up to 6 hours daily, and those in the boarding schools, are around each other for extended periods of time, and are less likely to be constantly supervised (Chui & Chan, 2015). Without adult presence, the school can create an environment conducive for bullying behavior to foster.

Some scholars have found that social learning and general strain theory are better explanations for bullying behavior among adolescents than the GTC, (Higgins & Makin, 2004; Moon et al., 2011; Patchin & Hinduja, 2011). Also, J-F and Yu, (2016) found that low self-control accounted for early delinquency in prepubescent children, but consistent with Pratt and

Cullen (2000), the effect of low-self-control disappeared when social learning variables were included in the model. This study's preference for the general theory of crime is due to its explanatory power for diverse behaviors and offending across samples and cultures (Vazsonyi & Belliston, 2007); and its claim that parental socialization is the key to the development of self-control. This research therefore seeks to accomplish two major purposes: first, it uncovers the prevalence of bullying among this sample of Nigerian students, and secondly, it tests the explanatory power of GTC in an understudied population.

### *Bullying*

Bullying research began in the 1970's with the seminal work of Norwegian researcher Dan Olweus who identified the problem of bullying and initiated a study of 900 Swedish boys aged 12-16. This and subsequent studies showed that approximately 15% of elementary and junior high school students had experienced bullying in one form or the other (Olweus, 1978; 1987; 1991; 1993). Bullying research has extended to other parts of the world with researchers using American (Espelage & Holt, 2012), European (Vazsonyi et al., 2001), Chinese (Chui, & Chan, 2015), Japanese (Naito & Gielen, 2005), Korean (Moon, Hwang, & McCluskey, 2011), and diverse ethnic samples to investigate bullying behavior. Findings on the prevalence of bullying around the globe consistently show that bullying is very pervasive among adolescents, and it is an increasing global problem (Nansel et al., 2004; Lucia, 2016).

Research findings identified several dimensions of behavior in bullying incidents; physical, verbal, relational, and cyber (Kowalski & Limber, 2007). For instance, Hughes, Middleton, and Marshall, (2009) categorized bullying into physical- pushing, hitting, and taking things-, relational- name-calling, putdowns, hurtful teasing) and sexual- making sexual gestures,

sexual talk and touching. Verbal bullying involves name calling, teasing threats, humiliation, and/or abusive language. Relational bullying is indirect and not easily identified; it involves spreading rumors about the victim, excluding the victim from activities or attempts to damage the victims' relationship with others. Cyberbullying is described as repeated harassment through the internet by means of text messages, emails, instant messaging, postings on Facebook, Instagram, and another electronic device (Menesini & Spiel, 2012; Popp et al., 2014).

According to Nansel et al., (2001), verbal bullying is the most prevalent form of bullying experienced by both boys and girls. However, girls are more likely to experience relational bullying (spreading rumor, exclusion from activities). In their meta-analysis of 80 studies on bullying behavior, Modecki et al., (2014) found that traditional bullying was more prevalent than cyber bullying. The mean prevalence rate for cyber bullying was 15% compared to 35% for traditional bullying involvement. With technological advancements and the exponential increase in the number of available cell phones with cybernetic features, the internet has become the new "playground" for bullying (Connell, Schell-Busey, Pearce, & Negro, 2014). This development has not only increased the prevalence of bullying but has also heightened its consequences.

The prevalence of bullying varies depending on the type of bullying behavior. Nansel et al., (2001) reported a 30% rate of bullying among students in their sample; and in their cross-national study of bullying behavior of adolescents from 32 countries, Nansel et al., (2004) found that between 9% and 54% of the adolescents in the various countries were involved in bullying. Also, in a nationally representative data from the Health Behavior in School-Aged Children (HBSC) 2005 Survey administered to 7,182 United States students in the 6th to 10th grade, Wang, Iannotti, and Nansel, (2009) found that in the two months preceding their study, 20.8% of

their sample engaged in physical bullying, 53.6% in verbal bullying, 51.4% in relational bullying and 13.6% in cyber bullying. According to the U.S Department of Education (2013), in the 2010-2011 school year, 9% of adolescents aged 12-18 reported being victimized online. However, an anonymous survey of 2,437 middle school students in 6 schools, (Unnever and Cornell, 2004) found that 25% of the students who had experienced bullying did not tell anyone, and 40% refrained from telling an adult about their bullying victimization.

While direct bullying is easily identifiable, more subtle forms like emotional and relational bullying are not easily discernible. Russell et al., (2010) found that two-thirds of the sample, both male and female, reported personally experiencing some form of relational aggression. These findings emphasize the need for the current study as a precursor to the implementation of effective anti- bullying programs in Nigerian schools, especially in view of studies showing that adolescent bullying experiences predict later offending (Farrington & Ttofi, 2011).

Explanations for bullying behavior includes both personal and contextual factors. Individual factors shown in the literature to be related to bullying include age (Espelage & Swearer, 2003), race (Marsh & Cornell, 2001), and gender (Connell et al., 2017; Cook et al., 2010; Popp et al., 2014). Some researchers have also suggested that the adolescent and middle school years are the peak years for bullying victimization (Unnever & Cornell, 2003; Varjas, Henrich, & Meyers, 2009; Gendron, Williams, & Guerra, 2011). For instance, in a sample of 3,610 racially diverse youths from 28 rural schools in the United States, Smokowski, Cotter, Robertson, and Guo, (2013) found that younger students and those suffering from depression were at greater risk of being victimized. Also, the National Center for Educational Statistics

(2011) reported that 28% of children aged 12-18 reported bully victimization during the school year.

The United States Supreme Court evaluated professional testimony about the characteristics of juveniles in the celebrated case of *Roper v. Simmons* (2005) and took judicial notice of age as a mitigating factor in criminal sentencing. The Court therefore outlawed the death penalty for juvenile offenders. The undergirding principle of that decision is that adolescence is a developmental stage when juveniles are impulsive, susceptible to peer pressure, risk-takers, and lack matured reasoning capability. This finding emphasizes the need for developmentally sensitive effective policy on bullying guided by sound theory.

Consistent findings show that boys were more often involved in physical/direct bullying as both bullies and victims, while girls were disproportionately represented in relational bullying. Using self-report data from 3,867 students to examine whether the gender differences evident in traditional bullying applied to cyberbullying, Connell et al., (2014) found that females were disproportionately represented in cyberbullying. Kowalsky and Limber, (2007) also found that girls were more likely to be cyber bullies than boys. Also, in a nationally representative sample of 12, 987 students from both private and public schools in the US, Jeong, Kwak, Moon and Miguel, (2013) found a gendered pattern to bullying behavior; boys reporting being bullied physically, while girls reported relational bullying. Other research has documented significant gender differences in bullying and cyber bullying (Li, 2006), and that gender plays a role in the likelihood of victimization (Duncan, 1999).

The consequences of bullying also appear to be gendered. Using a nationally representative sample of 5,320 females and 5,120 male public school students in the US to

decipher the interaction between gender, bully victimization, and educational outcomes, Popp and colleagues, (2014) found that though bully victimization had a negative effect on educational outcome for both genders, the effect was greater for girls than the boys in the sample. In addition, Haddow and Haddow (2006) found that unlike the boys, girls who reported being bullied were more likely to lie and cheat than those who did not, have trouble sleeping and be unhappy. Taken together, these findings suggest that treatment strategies for bully victims should account for the gender difference in its consequences.

Contextual factors also explain bullying behavior; that is, school climate and school characteristics explain why bullying is prevalent in some schools and not in others. Research shows bullying is less likely to be prevalent in schools where bullying is not tolerated, students are supervised, teachers are more likely to intervene, and sanction the behavior. Though juveniles are less likely to report bullying or violent encounters (Oliver & Candappa, 2007; Unnever & Cornell, 2004), positive school climate and teachers' intolerance of bullying were found to encourage reporting (Unnever & Cornell, 2004; Birkett, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009). For instance, examining the relationship between school characteristics and the level of crime and disorder, Gottfredson, Gottfredson, Payne, and Gottfredson, (2005) found that school climate was predictive of the level of disorder. Schools where the student's perception of fairness was high, had lower level of delinquent behavior and victimization. There is consistent agreement in the literature that students with a negative perception of their school environment are more likely to be bullied (Lucia, 2016), less likely to participate in school activities (Mehta, et al., 2013), and more likely to worry about potential victimization (Hughes et al., 2009). On the other hand, students whose perception of their school is positive, were less likely to be depressed/suicidal,

use alcohol/marijuana or report truancy (Birkett et al., 2009), and more likely to report bullying incidents and seek help (Eliot, Cornell, Gregory, & Fan, 2010).

School location is another contextual factor that predicts bullying occurrences. Olsen (2010) found that students from rural schools experienced a higher rate of verbal and physical bullying compared to those in urban schools. In a related study of 192 students from rural elementary and middle schools in the Appalachian region of the US, Dulmus, Sowers and Theriot, (2006) found a relatively higher percentage of bully-victims (11.5%) in their study than other bullying studies (between 1-7%). Smokowski, Cotter, Robertson, and Guo, (2013) study of 28 rural schools in the US also found that 23% of the students in their sample had been bullied; between 11%-38% of the bullying incidents took place on school grounds, younger students in their sample were more likely to be bullied than older ones, and minorities and females were more likely to experience a higher level of “hassles” than other students. Among Chinese students, Zhu and Chan, (2015) found that in rural schools, socio-cultural factors accounted for bullying behavior, and the prevalence of relational compared to direct bullying among the students.

While there is general agreement on the existence and prevalence of bullying behavior in schools (Popp et al., 2014; Zhu & Chan, 2015), the perception of what constitutes bullying varies among cultures and contexts. For instance, while name-calling is done openly in the United States, and is considered bullying, in Japanese society, name-calling is done behind the victim’s back (Naito & Gielen, 2005). Therefore, the perception of bullying in Japan is more of manipulative behavior than physical aggression, and Japanese students are more likely to perceive bullying as psychological, rather than physical aggression. The Nigerian context

presents similar challenges; Aluede (2011) states that “defining bullying has been a difficult task.” Therefore, studies on bullying in Nigeria adopt the behavioral measure of bullying (Popoola, 2005; Omoteso, 2010).

### *Cross-cultural bullying Research*

International and cross-national studies found that bullying is prevalent among adolescents in many different cultures. A four-nation comparative, cross-cultural study on bullying prevalence in Japan, Norway, Netherlands, and England (Morita, 2001) found that 13.9% of Japanese, 39.4% of English, 27% of Dutch, and 20.8% of Norwegian students had been bullied in the current semester. Also, in their cross-national study of 113,200 students from 25 countries, Nansel et al., (2004) noted differences in the prevalence of bullying between countries; the study found that across board, bullies were less likely to be socially adjusted physically, socially, and emotionally. The effect was worse for victims than bullies. In addition, in a study of 4,500 students in the 8th and 9th grade in Switzerland, Lucia (2016) found that between 1% and 8% of the students admitted to bullying someone else at least once a week in the 12 months preceding the study. Similarly, Zhu and Chan, (2015) examined a sample of 3,175 middle school students in Xi’an China and found that 54% had been bullied in their lifetime, while 44.6% had been bullied in the preceding 12 months. Findings from these studies show that although prevalence and frequency vary across the countries, overall, bullying victimization in schools is a global problem.

Although these studies give an international perspective to the prevalence and correlates of bullying, our knowledge is limited to Western, Asian, and Scandinavian countries. Majority of the African countries are different from these countries in terms of culture, context, and informal

social control; it will be instructive to see if the same level of bullying prevalence in the western and Asians culture exists in a culture than boasts of the village raising a child. The relative lack of empirical studies on bullying on the African continent is primarily due to lack of data. In Nigeria for example, official statistics are either non-existent or grossly inadequate and/or tainted for research purposes. No discerning researcher will rely on “official” data even if they are available and obtaining consent to collect data in schools can be a herculean task depending on the part of the country, and the researcher’s contacts. Another constraint is the Nigerian culture; Nigerians (ethnicity notwithstanding), do not readily divulge personal information, and much of what is openly discussed in the Western countries are still taboo in Nigeria (Ayodele, 2017).

It is also worth mentioning that in the United States, 49 states have anti-bullying laws with procedures for reporting bullying incidents, sanctions for bullies and rules for the implementation of bullying training and procedures in schools (Scrabstein, Beckman & Pyntikova, 2008). There is also a surfeit of anti-bullying programs at the school and the state levels, with at least 16 of the laws incorporating comprehensive basic public health anti-bullying principles (Scrabstein, Berkman, & Pyntikova, 2008). This is not the case in Nigeria; only a few schools acknowledge the problem, and there is no anti bullying policy in the schools. The prevalence of bullying across cultures emphasizes the need for a theoretically sound explanation of the behavior, and recommendations for culturally sensitive and effective prevention strategies.

### *Bullying in Europe*

Bullying is a global problem and a public health issue especially among adolescents (Hertz et al., 2013) and Europe has not been spared its effects. Comparative studies found little variation in bullying prevalence between European countries and the US (Vazsonyi et al., 2001). In a study

of national innovations in Norwegian schools, Roland (2000) found that approximately 5% of primary and secondary school students in Norway experienced bullying either as victims or perpetrators on a regular basis. Also, using a sample of 4,500 8th and 9th graders in Switzerland, Lucia (2016) found that between 1% and 8% of the students admitted to bullying at least once weekly in the 12 months preceding the study; boys were also more often involved in bullying incidences than girls.

Moreover, examining cross-national trends in bullying behavior among 11-15-year-old children from 1994-2006 in 27 countries and the US, Molcho, Craig, Pickett, Harel-Fisch and Overpeck (2009) found that while bullying and victimization was a problem, there were consistent decreases across the countries. The study found that one third of the children in the sample experienced some form of bullying, while 10% of them reported “chronic” bullying. Reported bullying varied substantially across the countries from a low of 14.6% and 15.4% reported in Sweden for victimization and bullying respectively, and highs of 56.3% and 54.9% in Lithuania. Decreases observed in countries like Denmark, Belgium and Czech Republic were attributed to the implementation of bullying intervention policies.

Consistent with Molcho et al., (2009), a World Health Organization supported study, (Currie et al., 2012) examined bullying perpetration and victimization behavior among 10-13, and 15-year old’s in 43 countries, and found that bullying was a problem in several European countries. Despite the observed decline in 2009/2010 across the countries in the study, bullying rates still ranged from 1% to 36%, while victimization rates hovered between 2% and 32% across the countries. Similarly, Klomek et al., (2016) examined the association between victimization and self-injurious behavior for a sample of 11,110 male and female adolescents,

from 10 European countries as part of the Saving and Empowering Young Lives in Europe study. The study found that victimization experiences of the adolescents were associated with direct self-injurious behavior and higher likelihood of depression. The findings emphasized the importance of peer and parental support as protective factors against victimization.

### *Bullying in Asia*

Research on bullying in Asian countries consistently report a high prevalence among school children (Chui & Chan, 2013; 2015). Bae (2016) compared the bullying involvement of Korean-German children living in Germany, with Korean children living in Korea. The study found the Korean-German children living in Germany were less likely to engage in bullying behavior but 21% of them had been bullied. On the other hand, approximately 36% of Korean children living in Korea bullied their peers. The study attributed the difference in bullying rates in the countries, to the emphasis on bullying intervention and prevention programs in Germany.

Using data from a sample of 3,175 Chinese middle school students in Xi'an, Zhu and Chan, (2015) found a significant rate of bullying victimization among this sample of Chinese students. Approximately 55% of the children had been bullied and for fewer than 45% of them, the bullying occurred in the preceding year. The study also found that correlates of bullying included borderline personality trait, posttraumatic stress disorder, and depression. In addition, using longitudinal data on 655 Korean youth to find a theoretical framework to explain school bullying, Moon, Hwang, and McCuskey, (2011) found that the school environment engenders strain that is predictive of bullying behavior. More importantly, the study found that GTC, General Strain, and Differential Association theory do not provide adequate explanation for bullying behavior. Similarly, Moon and Alarid, (2015) found that though low self-control

explained various types of bullying behavior in the sample, its effect waned when opportunity measures, and association with delinquent friends were added.

In a related study of Macanese middle school students, Chui and Chan, (2015) found that bullying was more prevalent among boarding school students as opposed to day students. Constant interaction between students who lived on campus created a conducive atmosphere and opportunity for bullying incidents to occur. The foregoing shows that both individual and contextual factors play differing but sometimes complementary roles in bullying occurrences among adolescents.

### *Bullying in Africa*

Relative to what we know about the Western, Asian, and Scandinavian countries, research in Africa is hampered by lack of data; available studies are either descriptive or do not employ rigorous statistical methodology. For instance, Zindi (1994) examined the prevalence of bullying among boarding school students in Zimbabwe and possible explanations for the behavior with a sample of 416 secondary school students aged 13 to 18. The sample drawn from 16 classes in 8 boarding schools comprised of 225 males and 191 female students. The study found that 85% of the students agreed that bullying was anti-social, 43% felt that bullying was a necessary part of the school experience, and 18% claimed that it was fun. The study also found that most bullying incidents took place at the dormitories and the playground. Consistent with prior findings, the study found that younger children were more likely to be victims; 13 to 14-year old were majority of the victims and only 2% of the victims were over 17 years old.

In a study of 1,012 Kenyan secondary school students, Nettie et al., (2007) reported that between 63% and 81% of the students reported bullying experiences in the six months preceding

the study. Also, among his sample of 200 Kenyan students, Mwangi (2013) found that contributory factors to bullying behavior included peer pressure and substance abuse. In a sample of South Africa students, Nabuzoka (2003) found that bullying was often overt physical aggression aimed at taking undue advantage of the victim by forcefully taking material things from the victim.

These studies are basically descriptive. None of them employed rigorous statistical methodology to predict bullying behavior or examined gender differences in the behavior. This dissertation is therefore, an important first step in a theoretical explanation of bullying behavior among Nigerian secondary school students.

#### *Bullying in Nigeria.*

In Nigeria, most of the research on bullying are descriptive studies that did not go beyond recognizing the problem and its prevalence. None of the studies have tested any criminological theory to explain bullying behavior or employed rigorous statistical analysis to tease out their findings. For instance, using a sample of 150 students each from both government and private/mission schools, Egbochuku (2007) examined the prevalence of bullying in Edo state. The study found that 78% of the sample had experienced bullying, with peaks in the middle school years and decreases during high school. Male victims accounted for 63.4% of the sample and were more likely to experience emotional problems due to their victimization. Consistent with Egbochuku (2007), Omoteso (2010), using a sample of 750 secondary school students from Osun state found that overall 67.2% of the students had experienced bullying. Physical bullying was most prevalent with 46.5% of the sample admitting to being bullied physically. The finding also showed that victims were more likely to be fearful and exhibit symptoms of depression. In a

related study of 412 secondary students in Lagos state, Adeosun et al., (2015) found that more than half of their sample (56.8%) had been bullied within the month preceding the survey.

However, contrary to prior findings, Omoteso (2010) found that girls were more likely to bully than were boys. This study however, maintained that girls were primarily involved in relational bullying. Perhaps the only nationwide survey of school violence in Nigeria was by the Federal Ministry of Education (2007). Findings showed that 85% of school violence was related to bullying, 90% of bullying took place in rural schools, and the southern part of the country experienced more bullying than the northern region. It is instructive to note that while these studies agree on the high prevalence of bullying in Nigerian schools, most of them are descriptive studies. This dissertation therefore represents the first comprehensive study of not just the prevalence of bullying in Nigeria, but also the only empirical test of a western criminological theory on bullying.

### *Consequences of bullying*

The effects of bullying are multifaceted, depending on the individual, age, and context. Its manifestation and consequences also vary across cultures and contexts (Nansel et al., 2004; Cook, Williams, Guerra, & Kim, 2009.). Cross-cultural studies show bullying affects both bullies and victims (Nansel et al., 2004; Owusu, Hart, Oliver, and Kang (2011). For instance, findings show that both bullies and victims are more likely to have significant health problems (Arsenault, Bowes & Shakoor, 2010), perform poorly in school (Cornell & Mehta, 2011), suffer depression (Cornell & Mehta, 2011), are less likely to feel safe (Mehta, Cornell, Fan, & Gregory, 2013), more likely to have substance abuse issues (Fleming & Jacobsen 2009), and are more likely to suffer from PTSD (Khamis, 2015). In a study of 4,807 adolescents aged 12-14, Haddow

and Haddow (2006), found that those who were victimized before the age of 12 exhibited fewer social skills than those who were not.

Nansel et al., (2004) cross-national study of bullying behavior of adolescents from 32 countries, also found that bullying was associated with a host of psychosocial adjustments; health problems, emotional adjustment, school adjustment, relationship with classmates, and alcohol use. Unfortunately, Nigeria was not included in the list of the participating countries, so we are unaware of what the statistics look like in that country.

### *Theoretical explanations of bullying*

Attempts to understand, explain, and proffer solutions to the bullying problem has led scholars to examine the explanatory power of criminological theories to bullying. Piquero (2010) posits that effective policies should be guided by sound theory. Though Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) claim theirs to be a general theory, studies have shown that GTC does not explain all crimes (Simpson & Piquero, 2002). In the first meta-analysis of the GTC, although Pratt and Cullen, (2000) found GTC to be a robust predictor of crime and analogous behavior, this claim was qualified by findings that social learning variables were equally significant. Nonetheless, in a study of 655 Korean youth to examine the predictive value of three competing theories- Differential Association, General Strain and GTC in explaining bullying behavior, Moon et al., (2011) found that GTC was a significant explanation for bullying. Though its effect waned when General Strain and Learning variables were included in the model, GTC was found to significantly predict bullying behavior among this Korean sample. In a related study on the explanatory power of the strain theory to explain bullying behavior in a sample of 1,963 middle school students, Patchin and Hinduja, (2011) found that students who reported strain were more

likely to engage in both bullying and cyberbullying behavior. They also found that while feelings of anger and frustration were related to bullying behavior among these students, contrary to General Strain Theory, expressions of anger and frustration did not mediate the relationship between bullying and strain. Also, examining the influence of early life events on adolescent bullying behavior in a sample of 763 American adolescents, Connell et al., (2014) suggested that Agnew's strain theory may be the key to understanding the mechanisms and processes from adverse early life events to adolescent bullying behavior. Moon, Morash, and McCluskey, (2012) also found that youths experiencing strain were more likely to engage in bullying behavior.

The above findings seem to challenge Gottfredson and Hirschi's claim that GTC is the main explanation for crime and analogous behavior but does not detract from consistent findings on the robustness of self-control as a predictor of crime and analogous behavior (Pratt & Cullen, 2000; Vazsonyi et al., 2016). Also, the above notwithstanding, this study hypothesizes that GTC will predict bullying perpetration behavior and the victimization experiences in this Nigerian sample. This hypothesis is predicated on the fact that in the Nigerian society, parents and the community take pride in children's upbringing. A constant instruction in all the ethnic groups in Nigeria is "ranti omo eniti iwo nse" meaning, remember whose child you are. The underlying implication is to represent the family well, and not "drag the family's name in the mud". This constant reminder coupled with parental and communal supervision is hypothesized to aid the development of self-control. Therefore, children in this culture should be less likely, relative to those in western countries, to engage in deviant behavior due to their relatively high level of parental and communal monitoring.

### *The current study*

Empirical findings offer support for Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), theory that low self-control is a robust predictor of crime and analogous behavior (Pratt & Cullen, 2000). It has predicted offending among adolescents (Olweus, 1993), in schools (Wang et al., 2009), among African-Americans (Vazsonyi & White, 2004), the homeless (Baron, 2003), the general population (Grasmick, et al., 1993), across cultures and cross-nationally (Vazsonyi et al., 2007). However, these studies have utilized western, Asian, and Scandinavian samples; it is yet to be tested using a Nigerian sample. The current study seeks to fill this gap in our knowledge and add to the international literature on bullying by investigating the prevalence, and patterns of bullying in this sample of Nigerian students. This is also the first test of the explanatory power of the theory with a Nigerian sample.

Furthermore, GTC posits that a child's level of self-control is established through effective parenting practices in early childhood. Nigeria is a communal society, parenting is seen as the responsibility of the entire "village" and not just the natural parents. It is therefore conceivable that children brought up by the "village" will exhibit higher level of self-control and be less likely to engage in bullying perpetration or victimization. All things being equal GTC should predict bullying behavior and those with low self-control will be more likely to bully and experience victimization.

The 2012 World Health Organization (WHO) study on bullying in 43 countries (Currie et al., 2012) did not include Nigeria in its list of countries, limiting our knowledge of bullying occurrences in that country. It is inconceivable that this dissertation will exhaustively answer all questions on bullying behavior in Nigeria, but it is an important first step in our understanding,

and it starts a much-needed criminological conversation. This study therefore asks the following questions: (1) How prevalent is bullying perpetration and victimization among this sample of students? (2) Does self-control explain bullying behavior among this sample of students? (3) Does low self-control explain victimization among this sample? (4) Is the relationship between self-control and bullying perpetration and victimization the same for both males and females in this sample?

Answers to these questions will add to the international body of literature on the prevalence of bullying and victimization and gender differences in these experiences. In addition, findings from this study have the potential to be the springboard for effective bullying prevention strategies in Nigerian secondary schools.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This study examines bullying behavior among a sample of Nigerian secondary school students and tests the ability of the General Theory of Crime (GTC), to explain this behavior. The cross-cultural applicability of the GTC has been tested in samples in Western, Asian and Scandinavian countries, but this is the first test of the theory with a Nigerian sample. In addition, although GTC argued that there is no difference between males and females in the level of self-control or deviant behavior, the current study posits that males are more likely to have lower levels of self-control, and consequently higher prevalence of bullying perpetration and victimization behavior, than females. This study therefore tests the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1: Self-reported bullying perpetration and victimization is prevalent among Nigerian secondary school students.*

*Hypothesis 2: As proposed by Gottfredson and Hirschi, bullying perpetration behavior will be negatively related to self-control.*

*Hypothesis 3: As proposed by Gottfredson and Hirschi, bullying victimization experiences of these students will be negatively related to self-control.*

*Hypothesis 4: Male students will exhibit lower levels of self-control, and consequently be involved in higher levels of bullying perpetration and victimization behavior than females.*

#### *Data*

Data were collected from a convenience sample of students from seven secondary schools in south-western Nigeria over a 10-day period in March 2016. Initially, twenty schools were contacted for this study but only nine schools gave permission; teacher strikes

in two of those schools prevented them from participating in the study. The goal of the study was to recruit a sample large enough to ensure that participants represented the population as much as possible in a non-randomized study. A total of 2,500 surveys were distributed to the schools based on the enthusiasm of the school principals for the study. Students in junior secondary school (middle school grades 6-8) were recruited, as they fell within the age range of interest for the study (11-15).

The schools included: one co-educational private school in Lagos; two co-educational rural schools in Osun state; one single-sex (boys) school in Ibadan; a single-sex (girls) school in Ibadan; and two urban co-educational public schools in Ibadan. All schools in Nigeria are licensed by the government; like in the US, public schools are run and funded by the government. Private schools are owned and run by individuals or by churches/private charities. Some of the government run schools were originally established by foreign missionaries, but sometime in 1977, the Nigerian government took administrative control and ownership of the schools (Amaghionyeodiwe & Osinubi, 2006)

Nigeria is a secular state, but religion is an intrinsic part of the school curriculum. The religion promoted in schools are those of the missionaries who originally established that school. One of the schools in this sample was established by Islamic missionaries, while six were established by Christian missionaries. The only private school, and one of the urban public schools (both are Christian schools), have boarding and day students; the boarding students live in the dormitory, but go home during school holidays. School holidays in Nigeria are comparable to US school holidays; boarding students go home for midterm break, Easter, Christmas, and end

of term breaks. Parents and guardians visit on pre-determined school visitation days, which varies from school to school.

One of the schools is in Lagos, four are in the Ibadan, and two are in a village in Osun state, outside of Ibadan. Lagos was the capital of Nigeria from 1914 until 1991, when the federal capital moved to Abuja. Lagos has a population of 12 million people, is very cosmopolitan, and is one of the fastest growing cities in the world (Adepoju, Millington, & Tansey, 2006; Myers & Murray, 2006). Ibadan, the capital of Oyo state, has a population of 3 million people (National Population Commission, 1999). Ibadan is the third largest city in Africa, and home to the first television station in Africa. Osun state was created out of Oyo state in 1991. The state is home to important Yoruba cultural landmarks including the Osun River, the Oduduwa statute, Osun-Oshogbo shrine and the ancient city of Ile-Ife. The Lagos state government did not grant permission to administer the survey in their schools; consequently, the survey was administered in the one private school in Lagos that allowed the researcher to conduct the study. Figure 3.1. shows the location of these states on the Nigerian Map.

Letters explaining the nature, purpose, and procedures of this study were sent to about 20 schools requesting their support and permission to conduct the survey. The researcher followed up with telephone calls, but some of the schools declined to participate. Consent forms explained the purpose of the study, assured participants of anonymity, and required the signature of a parent. Parental consent forms were sent home two weeks in advance and teachers regularly reminded interested students to return signed parental consent forms. A few parents were concerned and called the school for clarifications about the purpose of the study; some parents did decline to give their children permission to participate in the study. Only the students who

returned signed parental consent forms and gave assent participated in the study. Out of the 2,500 parental forms sent to the seven schools, 1,194 were returned, and 1,192 surveys were completed.

School principals identified classes where the study posed minimal disruption to the school schedule, and the researcher administered the survey during those class periods. In the two schools that have assembly halls, eligible students were brought to the assembly hall for the administration of the survey. The researcher emphasized the students' right to refrain from answering any of the questions or even withdraw participation from the study at any time. School officials were present during the survey, but otherwise did not participate in survey administration. The researcher was on hand to answer any questions/concerns and ensure that participants exercised their right to refrain from participation at will. Nigeria is an English-speaking country, so the survey was written in English. The questionnaire had 135 questions and took approximately 45 minutes to complete. Data were processed using the Remark OMR 13 to scan responses and subsequently entered into Stata 14.0 database for analysis.

### *Sample*

Data for this study were collected from a sample of 1,192 students enrolled in junior secondary school. Six hundred and sixty-seven (55.6%) were female, and the average age was 14.2 years. The sample included students in grades 6-8. Two hundred and two (17%) of the students attended a private school, two hundred and ninety-one (24.4%) attended single-sex schools, and one hundred and sixty-one (13.5%) attended rural schools. Eight hundred and sixty-seven students (72.7%) lived with their biological parents, while 254 (21.4% of the students lived with either a parent or other family members. One hundred and twenty students (10.6%) were

boarding students, seven hundred and sixty-two (66.3%) were Christians, and 381 (32%) were Muslims. Schools in this study are in the southwestern region of Nigeria, which is a Yoruba speaking area, so most of the students in the sample (74.7%) were Yoruba. However, a small proportion are from other ethnic groups; 194 (16.3%) were Ibo (a southeastern ethnic tribe in Nigeria), and 28 (2.4%) were Hausas (a tribe in the northern part of Nigeria).

| Variable                        | n    | %              |
|---------------------------------|------|----------------|
| Female                          | 667  | 55.6           |
| <b>Family Structure</b>         |      |                |
| Living with both parents        | 867  | 72.7           |
| Living with one parent          | 191  | 16.0           |
| Living with other family member | 49   | 4.1            |
| Others                          | 14   | 1.3            |
| <b>Religion</b>                 |      |                |
| Christian                       | 762  | 66.9           |
| Muslim                          | 381  | 32.0           |
| <b>Private school</b>           |      |                |
| Yes                             | 202  | 17.0           |
| No                              | 990  | 83.0           |
| <b>Rural school</b>             |      |                |
| Yes                             | 161  | 13.5           |
| No                              | 1031 | 86.5           |
| <b>Single-sex school</b>        |      |                |
| Yes                             | 291  | 24.4           |
| No                              | 901  | 75.6           |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                |      |                |
| Yoruba                          | 890  | 74.7           |
| Ibo                             | 194  | 16.3           |
| Hausa                           | 28   | 2.4            |
| <b>Age</b>                      |      | $\bar{x}=14.2$ |

Number of Missing data: Gender = 51, Family structure = 71, Religion = 49, Ethnicity = 80

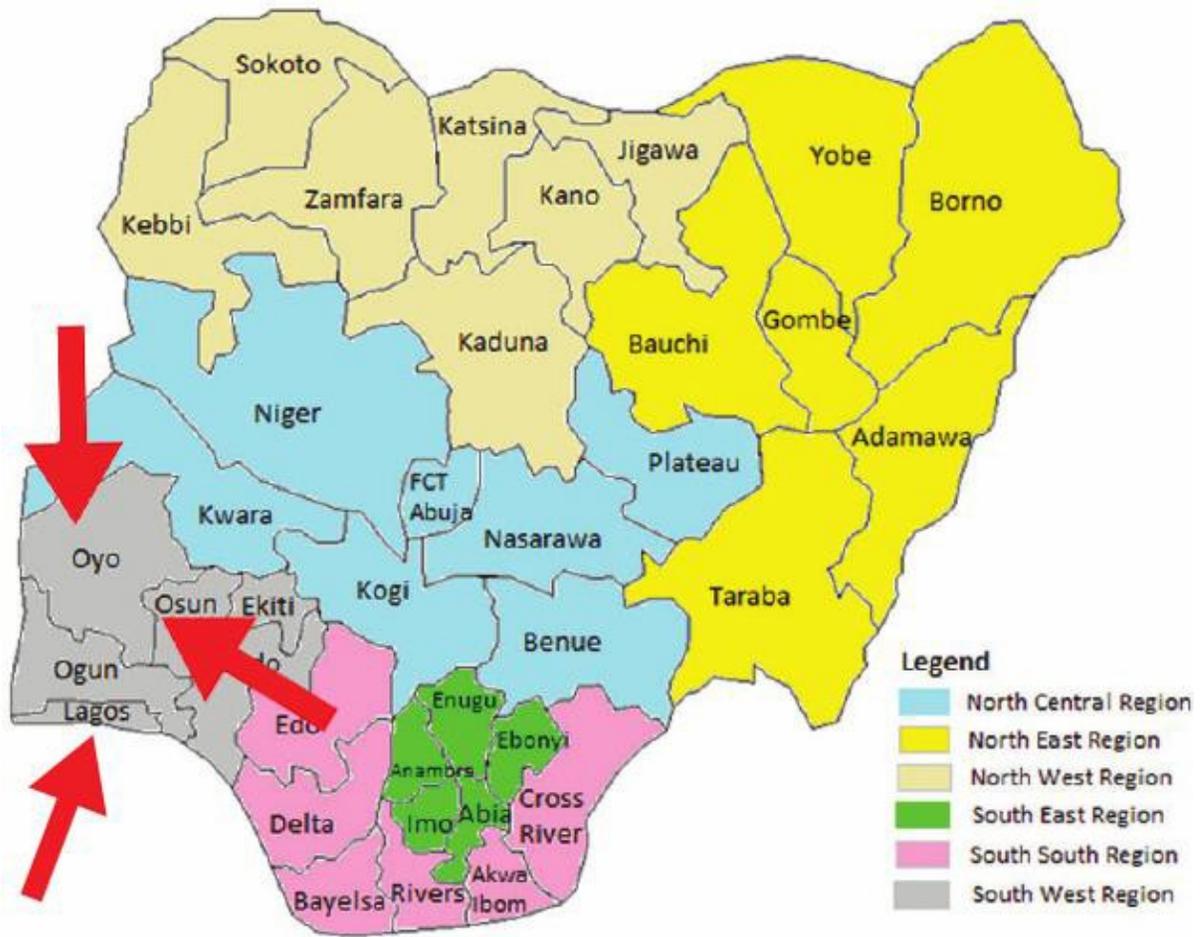


Figure 3.1. Map of Nigeria with arrows pointing to the states where the survey was administered. Source: The Premium Times, Nigeria, *The tribalization of Nigeria's politics*

### *Measures*

### *Dependent variables*

The dependent variables in this study are bullying perpetration and victimization. Tables 3.2 and 3.3, respectively, report the frequencies for both bullying perpetration and bullying victimization. To measure bullying perpetration, students were asked to self-report on their bullying behavior and eight items measuring this behavior were combined into a bullying index tapping into whether the respondent had bullied another person in the past year (KR20=.71).

The Kuder–Richardson Formula 20 (KR 20) is a variant of the Cronbach’s alpha appropriate for dichotomous variables (Kuder & Richardson, 1937). Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to ensure that all items loaded on the same factor; factor analysis showed that the variables loaded on one factor (Eigenvalue=1.71674). The mean for bullying perpetration is 1.46, (SD= 1.73) with responses ranging from 0 to 8. Items are adapted from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) measuring different forms of direct and indirect bullying behavior that occurred in the past year (Kim et al., 2004). Items include have you: (i) made fun of someone; (ii) spread rumors about someone; (iii) threatened someone with harm; (iv) pushed someone; (v) tried to make someone do things that they did not want to do, like give you money or things; (vi) have you excluded someone from activities; (vii) destroyed someone else’s property; and, (viii) have you bullied a junior student. The response option is dichotomous; 0 = no, and 1=yes. To be described as a bully, the respondent must be involved in at least one form of bullying in the past year. Higher score on the bullying index is indicative of a higher involvement in bullying behavior.

The most prevalent form of perpetration was name-calling; 505 students (42.7%) reported having made fun of someone, called them names or insulted them in a hurtful way. Two hundred and six students (17.53%) reported bullying a junior student, 214 students (18.1%) pushed someone, made them fall or spit on them, and 153 students (12.9%) threatened someone with harm. One hundred and eighty-two students (15.3%) spread rumor about someone or tried to make others dislike them, 161 students (13.6%) tried to make someone do things that they did not want to do, 178 students (15.1%) excluded someone from activities, and 136 students

(11.5%) destroyed someone else’s property on purpose. Overall, 38.2% of the students had no bully perpetration behavior.

Table 3.2. Bullying Perpetration N=1,192

| <b>Since the start of the school year, have you</b>                                      | <b>N (yes)</b> | <b>Frequency (%)</b> |
|--|----------------|----------------------|
| Made fun of someone, called them names, or insulted them in a hurtful way?               | 505            | 42.7                 |
| Spread rumors about someone or tried to make others dislike someone?                     | 182            | 15.3                 |
| Threatened someone with harm?  | 153            | 12.9                 |
| Pushed someone, made them fall, or spit on someone?                                      | 214            | 18.1                 |
| Tried to make someone do things that they did not want to do, like give money or things? | 161            | 13.6                 |
| Excluded someone from activities on Purpose?   | 178            | 15.1                 |
| Destroyed someone else's property on purpose?  | 136            | 11.5                 |
| Have you bullied a junior student?   | 206            | 17.53                |

Student’s victimization experiences were also measured using 8 binary items measuring respondents’ experiences with various types of victimization- verbal, physical and psychological- in the year preceding the study. Students were asked whether, since the start of the school year, another student: (i) made fun of you, called you names or insulted you in any hurtful way; (ii) spread rumors about you or tried to make others dislike you; (iii) beat you up; iv) tried to force you to do things you did not want to do, like give them money or things; (v) excluded you from activities; (vi) destroyed your property on purpose; (vii) have you been bullied by someone in your class; and, (viii) have you been bullied by a senior (an upper-class student). The response option is dichotomous; 0 = no, and 1=yes.

Victimization experiences of these students were varied. The most prevalent form of victimization was name-calling, with 667 students (56.4%) reported having made fun of

someone, called them names, or insulted them in a hurtful way. Four hundred and twenty-seven students (36.6%) reported being bullied by a senior student, 324 students (27.4%) were beaten (assaulted), and 378 students (32.2%) had been bullied by someone in their class. One hundred and eighty-two students (38.9%) had someone spread rumor about them or tried to make others dislike them, 301 students (25.3%) had someone try to make them do things that they did not want to do, 335 students (28.5%) were excluded someone from activities, and 311 students (26.2%) had their properties destroyed on purpose.

Respondents who experienced at least one of these behaviors at least once in the past year were coded as being victimized. The average score for bullying victimization (mean = 2.69) and the range was from 0 to 8, with a standard deviation of 2.07. The victimization index was the summation of all the items asking about students' victimization experiences (KR20 =.74). The Kuder–Richardson Formula 20 (KR 20) is a variant of the Cronbach's alpha appropriate for dichotomous variables (Kuder & Richardson, 1937). Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to ensure that all items loaded on the same factor (Eigenvalue=1.99387). A higher score on the victimization index is indicative of a relatively higher rate of victimization experience.

It is worth mentioning that the most prevalent form of bully perpetration and victimization among this sample of students was name calling; forty two percent of the students had called other names, while 56% had been called names or insulted by others. Also, 206 students (17.53%) of the students reported having bullied a junior student, 427 (36.6%) reported being victimized by a senior student.

Table 3.3. Bullying Victimization N=1,192

| <b>Since the start of the school year, has another student:</b>                              | <b>N (yes)</b> | <b>Frequency (%)</b> |
|--|----------------|----------------------|
| Made fun of you, called you names or insulted you I any hurtful way?                         | 667            | 56.4                 |
| Spread rumors about you or tried to make others dislike                                      | 463            | 38.9                 |
| Beat you up?   | 324            | 27.4                 |
| Tried to force you to do things that you did not want to do, like give them money or things? | 301            | 25.3                 |
| Excluded you from activities on purpose?   | 335            | 28.5                 |
| Destroyed your property on purpose?  | 311            | 26.2                 |
| Since the start of the school year, have you been bullied by someone in your class?          | 378            | 32.2                 |
| Since the start of the school year, have you been bullied by a senior student?               | 427            | 36.6                 |

*Independent Variables*

To measure self-control, a modified Grasmick et al., (1993) scale comprised of 17 items measuring various dimensions of self-control such as impulsivity, preference for simple tasks, risk taking, and temper was used. Students responded to the following statements: (i) sometimes I get restless when I sit in a chair for very long; (ii) generally say things without stopping to think; (iii) sometimes break the rule without thinking things out; (iv) need a lot of self-control to keep myself out of trouble; (v) sometimes put down the first answer that comes to my head during a test and forget to check it later; (vi) often get in trouble because I do things without stopping to think; (vii) usually think carefully before doing anything; (viii) mostly speak without thinking things out; (ix) often get involved in things I later wish I can get out of; (x) usually think carefully before doing anything; (xi) mostly speak without thinking things out; (xii) often get involved in things you later wish you could get out of; (xiii) get bored more easily than most

people doing the same old things; (xiv) get very annoyed if someone keeps me waiting; (xv) get very restless if I have to stay around home for any length of time; (xvi) usually work quickly without checking my answer; and, (xvii) sometimes break the rules without thinking about it. The response option is dichotomous; 0 = no, and 1 = yes. The mean of the self-control index was 8.10 (SD = 3.53), ranging from 0 to 16. The self-control index was the summation of all the items (KR20 = .75). The Kuder–Richardson Formula 20 (KR 20) is a variant of the Cronbach’s alpha appropriate for dichotomous variables (Kuder & Richardson, 1937). Self-control is a multifaceted construct and variables consistent with prior research were included in the study. Confirmatory factor analysis of the self-control variables shows one factor (Eigenvalue= 3.08158). The self-control index was coded so that a higher score on the self-control index is indicative of low self-control.

Table 3.4. Self-Control Variables

| Variable                                    | N   | %    |
|---|-----|------|
| I get restless                              | 911 | 77.2 |
| Need self-control to stay out of trouble    | 831 | 70.7 |
| Very annoyed if kept waiting                | 731 | 62.2 |
| Get restless staying around for long time   | 697 | 59.5 |
| Get bored easily                            | 662 | 56.6 |
| Often involved in things I wish not         | 574 | 49.0 |
| Put down wrong answer and forget to check   | 558 | 47.6 |
| Often get involved in things I wish not     | 534 | 45.8 |
| Work without checking my answers            | 495 | 42.0 |
| Say things without stopping to think        | 497 | 42.3 |
| Often in trouble because I don’t think      | 407 | 34.6 |
| Speak without thinking things out           | 382 | 32.0 |
| Mostly speak without thinking               | 367 | 31.2 |
| Break rules without thinking about it       | 363 | 30.0 |
| Sometime break rules without thinking       | 340 | 29.0 |
| I think carefully before doing anything     | 248 | 21.0 |
| Usually think carefully before doing things | 264 | 22.5 |

Table 3.5. Dependent, Independent and Control Variables (Continuous)

|                      | Mean  | SD   | Minimum | Maximum |
|----------------------|-------|------|---------|---------|
| Bullying Index       | 1.46  | 1.73 | 0       | 8       |
| Victimization Index  | 2.69  | 2.07 | 0       | 8       |
| Self-control Index   | 8.10  | 3.53 | 0       | 16      |
| School Climate Index | 21.34 | 3.96 | 4       | 28      |

| Variable       | Mean | SD   | Minimum | Maximum |
|----------------|------|------|---------|---------|
| Age            | 14.2 | 1.48 | 11      | 18      |
| School climate | 21.3 | 3.95 | 4       | 28      |

*Control variables*

Variables found in prior studies to be significantly related to school bullying were included as control variables in this study. Sex is coded as male=0, and female = 1. Self-control score ranged from 1-16. For males, the mean self-control is 8.2 (SD=3.39); perpetration=1.8, and victimization=3.1. On the other hand, for females, mean=7.9 (SD=3.61), perpetration=1.2, and victimization=2.3. Age is a continuous variable measured in years with an average age of 14.2 years (SD=1.4) ranging from 11 to 18 years. Family structure is a dummy variable coded as, living with both parents=1, others = 0. Religion was coded 1=Christians, Muslim=0; while ethnicity was disaggregated into, Yoruba, Ibo, and Hausa. Schools were coded as Rural=1, others=0; private=1, others=0, and single-sex=1, others=0.

School climate has been found in prior studies to impact students bullying behavior (Connell, et al., 2014; Azeredo et al., 2015); positive perceptions of school climate has been found to be correlated with lower levels of bullying behavior (Gendron, Williams & Guerra, 2010). A school climate index was therefore created to account for the effect of school climate on the bullying behavior of the sample. A seven-variable school climate index (Cronbach's  $\alpha$  =.62) was

included. The response options for the index was from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Questions include: (i) everyone knows what school rules are; (ii) the school rules are okay; (iii) the punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are; (iv) school rules are strictly enforced; (v) if a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow; (vi) teachers treat students with respect; and, (vii) teachers care about students. Higher scores indicate positive school climate, while lower scores are indicative of a negative school climate. The mean for school climate was 21.34 (SD=3.95) with scores ranging from 4 to 28.

Table 3.6. School Climate variables

| <b>Variable</b>   | <b>Mean</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>Min</b> | <b>Max</b> |
|---|-------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Everyone knows what school rules are  | 3.30        | 0.87      | 0          | 4          |
| School rules are okay   | 3.13        | 0.95      | 0          | 4          |
| The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are    | 3.15        | 1.07      | 0          | 4          |
| Schools rules are strictly enforced   | 3.02        | 1.01      | 0          | 4          |
| If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow | 3.15        | 0.95      | 0          | 4          |
| Teachers treat students with respect  | 2.59        | 1.21      | 0          | 4          |
| Teachers care about students  | 2.99        | 0.98      | 0          | 4          |

Table 3.7. Control Variables (categorical)

| <b>Variable</b>        | <b>N (yes)</b> | <b>%</b> |
|------------------------|----------------|----------|
| Female sex             | 667            | 66.0     |
| Resident parent (both) | 867            | 72.7     |
| Religion (Pentecostal) | 762            | 63.9     |
| Private school         | 538            | 45.1     |
| Rural school           | 161            | 13.5     |
| Same-sex school        |                |          |
| Boys only              | 45             | 3.8      |
| Girls only             | 246            | 20.6     |
| Yoruba                 | 890            | 74.7     |

### *Missing variables*

This was a voluntary data collection exercise and respondents were informed that they could refrain from answering questions, or even stop participating in the survey at any time; consequently, there were missing data in the survey. The total sample was 1,192; 839 respondents (70.4%) had no missing data, while 353 (29.6%) respondents had at least one missing response. Overall, as Tables 3.8 shows, the percentage of individual missing data is small, spread evenly across the variables, and none of the individual variables contain more than 10% missing data. In addition, Table 3.9 shows T-test and chi-square analysis showing no statistical differences in the results for the 839 students with completed data, and the 353 students with at least one missing variable. The lack of pattern for missing data indicates that the missing data are completely at random and dispenses with the need for either mean imputation or multiple imputation.

Table 3.8. Frequencies of missing data in individual variables

|                              | Frequencies | %    |
|------------------------------|-------------|------|
| Self-control index           | 125         | 10.5 |
| Bullying perpetration score  | 57          | 4.8  |
| Bullying victimization score | 65          | 5.5  |
| Age                          | 35          | 2.9  |
| Female                       | 51          | 4.3  |
| Family structure             | 71          | 5.9  |
| Religion                     | 43          | 3.6  |
| Rural school                 | 0           | 0    |
| Private school               | 0           | 0    |
| Single-sex school            | 0           | 0    |
| Ethnicity                    | 80          | 6.7  |
| School climate score         | 96          | 8.2  |

Table 3.9. Missing data Analysis.

|   | Individuals with completed data | Individuals with at least one missing data | p value* |
|---|---------------------------------|--|----------|
|   | n = 839 (70.4)                  | n = 353 (29.6%)                            |          |
|   | N (%)**                         | N (%)**                                    |          |
| <b>Variable</b>                             |                                 |  |          |
| Female                                      | 490 (58.4)                      | 177 (58.6)                                 | 0.95     |
| <b>Family Structure</b>                     |                                 |  | 0.46     |
| Living with both parents                    | 615 (76.9)                      | 252 (78.5)                                 |          |
| Living with one parent                      | 139 (17.4)                      | 52 (16.2)                                  |          |
| Living with other family member             | 38 (4.8)                        | 11 (3.4)                                   |          |
| Others                                      | 8 (1.0)                         | 6 (1.9)                                    |          |
| <b>Religion</b>                             |                                 |  | 0.8      |
| Christian                                   | 549 (66.9)                      | 213 (64.9)                                 |          |
| Muslim                                      | 268 (32.6)                      | 113 (34.5)                                 |          |
| <b>Private school</b>                       | 139 (16.6)                      | 63 (17.9)                                  | 0.59     |
| <b>Rural school</b>                         | 123 (14.7)                      | 38 (10.8)                                  | 0.07     |
| <b>Single-sex school</b>                    | 215 (25.6)                      | 76 (21.5)                                  | 0.13     |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                            |                                 |  | 0.28     |
| Yoruba                                      | 664 (79.1)                      | 226 (82.8)                                 |          |
| Ibo   | 151 (18.0)                      | 43 (15.8)                                  |          |
| Hausa                                       | 24 (2.9)                        | 4 (1.5)                                    |          |
| <b>Age, median (range)</b>                  | 14 (11-18)                      | 14 (11-18)                                 | 0.57     |
| <b>School Climate Score, median (range)</b> | 22 (7-28)                       | 22 (4-28)                                  | 0.16     |
| <b>General Theory of Crime (GTC)</b>        |                                 |  | 0.3      |
| 0-5   | 218 (25.9)                      | 55 (24.1)                                  |          |
| 6-10  | 420 (50.1)                      | 107 (46.9)                                 |          |
| 11-16                                       | 201 (24.0)                      | 66 (29.0)                                  |          |
| <b>Perpetration composite score</b>         |                                 |  | 0.65     |
| 0   | 334 (39.8)                      | 122 (41.2)                                 |          |
| 1-2   | 323 (38.5)                      | 103 (34.8)                                 |          |

|                                      |     |            |            |      |
|--------------------------------------|-----|------------|------------|------|
|                                      | 3-5 | 153 (18.2) | 58 (19.6)  |      |
|                                      | 6-8 | 29 (3.5)   | 13 (4.4)   |      |
| <b>Victimization composite score</b> |     |            |            | 0.82 |
|                                      | 0   | 145 (17.3) | 46 (16.0)  |      |
|                                      | 1-2 | 284 (33.9) | 96 (33.3)  |      |
|                                      | 3-5 | 308 (36.7) | 114 (39.6) |      |
|                                      | 6-8 | 102 (12.2) | 32 (11.1)  |      |

\*P value: chi-square for categorical variables and non-parametric Wilcoxon Two-Sample test for continuous variables

\*\* Frequencies and percentages reported except age and school climate

### *Analysis*

Analyses for this study will proceed in several related steps. Descriptive statistics of the variables included in the study are presented to show the prevalence of bullying perpetration and victimization experiences of the students. Bivariate correlation table showing the correlations among the dependent, independent and control variables are also presented. Result shows that the correlation values are well below the traditional .70 threshold. There appears to be no multicollinearity in the sample. Also, bivariate analysis examining significant relationships and/or associations (or lack thereof) between the dependent, independent, and control variables as hypothesized in this study are presented.

Furthermore, two different methods of analysis were employed: 1) negative binomial regression, due to the positive skew observed in the data, and 2) binomial logistic regression, due to the dichotomous nature of the dependent variables, and the bounded nature of the data. Results from the two methods were comparable, but the decision was made to report results for the binomial logistic regression.

The first model tests the second hypothesis that bullying perpetration behavior in the sample will be negatively related to self-control. The second model tests the hypothesis that the victimization experiences of the students will be negatively related to self-control. Since gender is an important variable in this study, t-tests were performed to determine the gender difference in the levels of self-control between males and females in the sample. Also, gender differences on the levels of self-control and in bullying and perpetration rates in this study are examined. Finally, binomial logistic regression results for the gender specific models, testing the gender differences in the relationship between self-control and bullying perpetration and victimization are presented.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

*Hypothesis 1: Self-reported bullying perpetration and victimization are prevalent among Nigerian secondary school students*

The current study explores bullying perpetration and victimization among this sample of Nigerian students and the explanatory power of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime (GTC) in explaining this behavior. The frequency of bullying perpetration is presented in Table 4.1. Overall, 679 students (56.9%) were engaged in at least one bullying perpetration incident, while 1,127 students (78.5%) were victimized at least once in the preceding year. This result indicates that bullying perpetration and victimization was prevalent among this sample of students. The result was further disaggregated by sex, school classification and ethnicity.

Consistent with previous research on bullying, males were more likely to engage in bullying perpetration behavior than females. Finding shows that 288 (45.2%) of the females were not involved in any form of perpetration behavior. Conversely, only 150 (33%) of males had zero perpetration scores. Also, 303 (66.8%) of the males were involved in bullying perpetration behavior, compared to 348 (54.7%) of the females in the sample. Among the ethnic groups, 379 (44.4%) of the Yoruba's, 43(22.7%) of the Ibos, and (33.3%) of the Hausas had zero perpetration scores, while 18 (66.6%) of the Hausas, 146 (77.2%) of the Ibos and 467 (55.2%) of the Yoruba's were engaged in one or more bullying perpetration behavior.

Table 4.3 presents and Figure 4.1. shows the perpetration distribution in the schools. Result shows a lower prevalence of bullying perpetration behavior in the rural schools. Eighty-one (52.6%) of the students in rural schools, 38 (19.6%) of private school students and 132

(48.2%) of students in single-sex schools had zero perpetration scores.

The bullying victimization scores of these students are presented in Table 4.2. Also Figure 4.2. shows the distribution of the victimization data. As can be seen, overall, 936 (78.5%) were at different levels of the victimization score, while 191 (16%) of the students had no victimization experiences. The average score for bully perpetration was 1.46, while the victimization score was 2.69. This indicates that the students self-reported more victimization experiences than bully perpetration behavior.

Disaggregation by sex shows that 391 (87.2%) of the males, and 503 (79.4%) of the females had at least one victimization experience. Conversely, 57(12.7%) of the males, and 130 (20.5%) of females had zero victimization score. Among the ethnic groups, 689 (81.9%) of the Yoruba's, 163 (87.1%) of the Ibos and 24 (88.8%) of the Hausas had experienced at least one victimization experience, while 151 (18.2%) of the Yorubas, 24 (12.8%) of Ibos and 3 (11.1%) of Hausas had zero victimization scores. The victimization index among the schools showed that the percentage of students with zero victimization experiences were higher in single-sex schools (25.5%) than both private (8.3%) and rural schools (22.3%).

Table 4.5 presents the correlation coefficient between the variables in the study. As expected, correlation between the dependent and the independent variables were both positive and significant. It is important to note that high self-control score is indicative of low self-control. These correlations were therefore in the right direction. Other variables in the matrix also show weak but significant relationships with bullying perpetration and victimization.

Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics of Bullying Perpetration

| <b>Perpetration</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---------------------|------------------|----------|
| 0                   | 456              | 38.2     |
| 1                   | 264              | 22.1     |
| 2                   | 162              | 13.5     |
| 3                   | 96               | 8.0      |
| 4                   | 67               | 5.6      |
| 5                   | 48               | 4.0      |
| 6                   | 28               | 2.3      |
| 7                   | 9                | .76      |
| 8                   | 5                | .42      |
| Missing             | 57               | 4.7      |

Table 4.2. Descriptive Statistics of Bullying Victimization

| <b>Victimization</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b> |
|----------------------|------------------|----------|
| 0                    | 191              | 16.0     |
| 1                    | 189              | 15.8     |
| 2                    | 191              | 16.0     |
| 3                    | 200              | 16.7     |
| 4                    | 121              | 16.7     |
| 5                    | 101              | 10.1     |
| 6                    | 76               | 8.4      |
| 7                    | 44               | 6.3      |
| 8                    | 14               | 3.6      |
| Missing              | 65               | 1.1      |

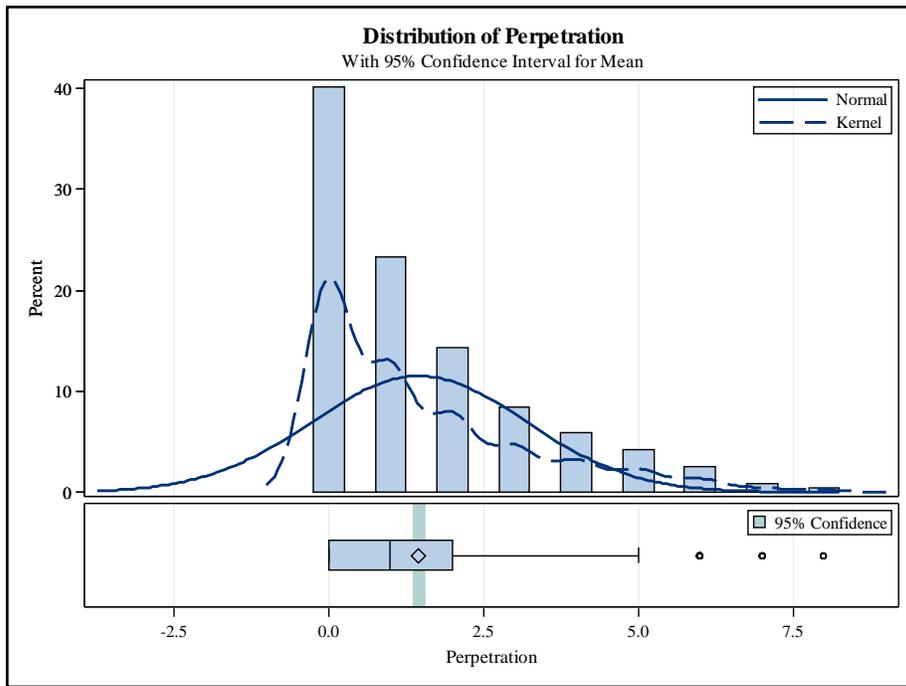


Figure 4.1. showing distribution of bullying perpetration data

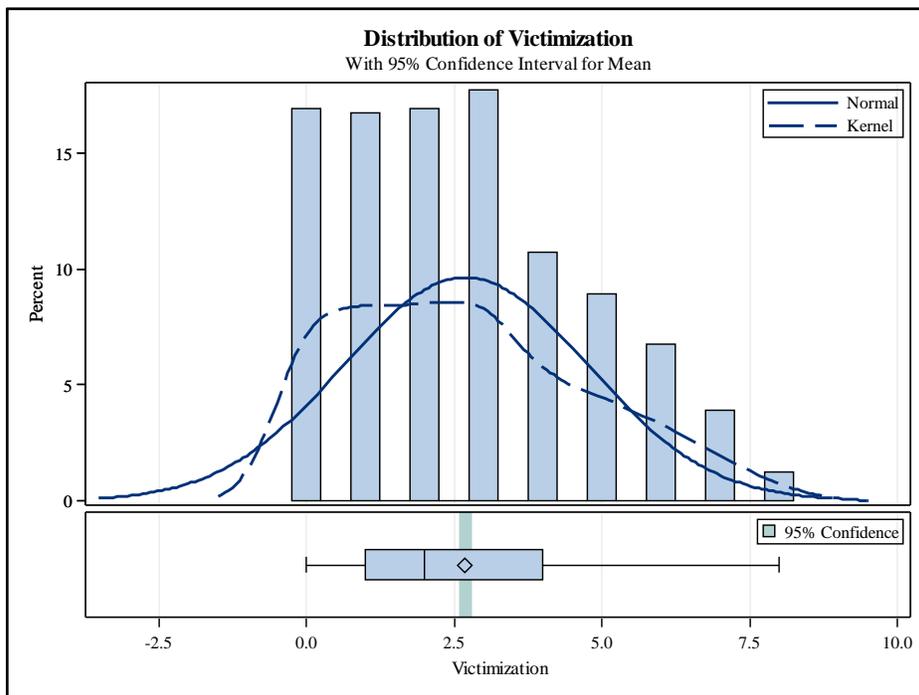


Figure 4.2. Distribution of Bully perpetration data

Table 4.3. Frequencies of categorical variables

| Gender            | Perpetration |      | Victimization |      |
|-------------------|--------------|------|---------------|------|
|                   | Frequency    | %    | Frequency     | %    |
| Male              | 303          | 67.6 | 391           | 87.2 |
| Female            | 348          | 54.7 | 503           | 79.4 |
| Rural school      | 73           | 47.4 | 118           | 77.6 |
| Private school    | 156          | 54.7 | 175           | 91.6 |
| Single sex school | 142          | 51.8 | 207           | 74.4 |
| Ethnicity         |              |      |               |      |
| Yoruba            | 467          | 55.2 | 687           | 81.9 |
| Ibo               | 146          | 77.2 | 163           | 87.1 |
| Hausa             | 18           | 66.7 | 24            | 88.8 |

Table 4.4. Gender differences in reported experiences

|                              | Males (N=431) |     | Females (N=667) |     | <i>t-test</i> | <i>p</i> |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----|-----------------|-----|---------------|----------|
|                              | Mean          | SD  | Mean            | SD  |               |          |
| Perpetration                 | 1.8           | 1.9 | 1.2             | 1.5 | 5.81          | <0.0001  |
| Victimization                | 3.1           | 2.2 | 2.3             | 1.9 | 6.45          | <0.0001  |
| Self-control <sup>a</sup>    | 8.2           | 3.4 | 7.9             | 3.6 | 1.79          | 0.07     |
| Age                          | 14.4          | 1.7 | 14.2            | 1.3 | 2.61          | 0.009    |
| School climate               | 20.6          | 4.1 | 21.9            | 3.7 | -5.96         | <0.0001  |
|                              |               | N   | %               | N   | %             |          |
| Not living with both parents |               | 117 | 27.2            | 175 | 26.2          |          |
| Ethnicity                    |               |     |                 |     |               |          |
| Yoruba                       |               | 301 | 73.8            | 530 | 82.9          |          |
| Ibo                          |               | 93  | 22.8            | 96  | 15.0          |          |
| Hausa                        |               | 14  | 3.4             | 13  | 2.0           |          |
| Religion                     |               |     |                 |     |               |          |
| Christian                    |               | 255 | 61.6            | 450 | 69.1          |          |
| Muslim                       |               | 155 | 37.4            | 200 | 30.7          |          |
| School classification A      |               |     |                 |     |               |          |
| Urban                        |               | 363 | 84.2            | 580 | 86.9          |          |
| Rural                        |               | 68  | 15.8            | 87  | 13.0          |          |
| School classification B      |               |     |                 |     |               |          |
| Public                       |               | 332 | 77.0            | 574 | 86.1          |          |
| Private                      |               | 99  | 23.0            | 93  | 13.9          |          |
| School classification C      |               |     |                 |     |               |          |
| Single sex                   |               | 431 | 90.9            | 427 | 64.0          |          |
| Co-educational               |               | 43  | 9.1             | 240 | 36.0          |          |

<sup>a</sup>Higher score indicates low self-control

Table 4.5. Correlation Matrix

| Variables                 | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6     | 7     | 8     | 9     | 10   |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| <b>1 Self-control</b>     | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| <b>2 Perpetration</b>     | .37*  | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| <b>3 Victimization</b>    | .34*  | .46*  | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| <b>4 Age</b>              | -.04  | -.006 | -.06* | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| <b>5 School climate</b>   | -.19  | -.21* | -.29* | -.02  | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |      |
| <b>6 Sex</b>              | -.05  | -.18* | -.19* | -.08* | .18*  | 1.00  |       |       |       |      |
| <b>7 Ethnicity</b>        | .13*  | .14*  | .06*  | -.11* | -.06* | -.10* | 1.00  |       |       |      |
| <b>8 Religion</b>         | -.11* | .01   | -.05  | .22*  | -.04  | -.07* | -.21* | 1.00  |       |      |
| <b>9 Family Structure</b> | .04   | .06   | .08*  | .11*  | -.03  | -.01  | -.08* | .11*  | 1.00  |      |
| <b>10 School</b>          | .16*  | .05   | -.01  | -.13* | -.08* | .19*  | .26*  | -.26* | -.11* | 1.00 |

Table 4.6. presents the bivariate analysis of all the variables in this study. Statistically significant variables at the bivariate level for both bullying perpetration and victimization were gender (female), rural/urban school, single-sex/co-educational school, private/public school, and ethnicity. The mean perpetration score was higher for males than females, and those living with their parents had a lesser likelihood of bully perpetration and victimization than those not living with both parents. There was no difference between Christians and Muslims for perpetration, but there were significant differences between private/public, rural/urban and single-sex/coeducational school in the likelihood of bully perpetration. Among the ethnic groups, Tukey's post hoc test shows that Ibo ethnicity's perpetration score was statistically greater than Yoruba, but similar to Hausa's score.

Table 4.4 also shows significant differences between victimization score for males and females. Males were more likely to be victimized (mean=3.16;  $t=5.81$ ;  $p<0.0001$ ) relative to females (mean=2.3). There were observed differences between the victimization score for Christians and Muslims. Christians were more likely to be victimized (mean=2.77;  $t= -2.54$ ;  $p=0.01$ ) than Muslims (mean=2.50;  $t= -2.04$ ;  $p=0.04$ ). The mean differences between the types of schools was also significantly different. Students in rural schools were less likely to engage in bully perpetration behavior (mean=1.06;  $t=3.50$ ;  $p=0.0006$ ), relative to private school (mean=2.21;  $t=-5.87$ ;  $p<0.0001$ ) and co-educational school (mean=1.58;  $t=7.00$ ;  $p<0.0001$ ).

Among the ethnic groups, the victimization score for Ibos (mean=3.02;  $t=3.29$ ;  $p=0.04$ ) was higher than both Yoruba (mean=2.60) and Hausa (mean=2.81), but Tukey's posttest shows that while Ibos victimization score was statistically greater than the Yoruba's, it was not different from Hausas.

The overall bullying perpetration rate among this sample of students was 56.9%, and the victimization rate was 78.5%. The first hypothesis is supported. Self-reported bullying perpetration and victimization is prevalent among this sample of Nigerian middle school students.

*Hypothesis 2: As proposed by Gottfredson and Hirschi, bullying perpetration will be negatively related to self-control.*

Table 4.4 shows the distribution of the self-control scores in this sample. It is important to note that lower scores on this scale indicate a high level of self-control. The distribution shows that majority of the students were in the middle of the scale (Mean=8.10), with a minority at the lower end. Table 4.5 presents the result of the binomial logistic regression examining the relationship between bully perpetration, self-control, and the control variables in this study. Results from the model suggest that self-control, gender, ethnicity (Ibo), religion (Muslim), rural school and school climate significantly predicted bullying perpetration behavior. The self-control score is positive and significant (OR=1.27;  $p<.001$ ). Indicating that for each unit increase in the self-control score, the odds of bullying perpetration increased by 27%. The odds of bullying perpetration for females was 34% less than males (OR=0.66;  $p<.05$ ). Muslims in the sample showed a 30% odd of bullying perpetration relative to the Christians in the sample, while attending rural school reduced the odds of bullying perpetration by 40%. The perception of a negative school climate increased the odds of bullying perpetration by 6%.

Overall, this suggests that holding other variables constant, individuals with low self-control were more likely to engage in bully perpetration behavior than those with a high level of

self-control. Females, students attending rural schools, Christians, and Yoruba and Ibo students were less likely to engage in bully perpetration; and students reporting a perception of positive climate were less likely to report bullying perpetration. Figure 4.2 graphically teases out the relationship between bully perpetration and self-control among this sample of students. Students were split into three groups based on percentile ranking on the self-control index. The group comprised of the top 25%, (those with low self-control), the middle 50%, (those with moderate self-control) and the lowest 25% (those with high self-control). The result shows that the average bullying perpetration score for those with high self-control is 0.7, while the average score for those with low self-control was 2.31, indicating a lower perpetration score for those with high self-control relative to those with low self-control. Although the mean perpetration score for those with high self-control is not zero, the difference between the scores is evidence that bullying perpetration is negatively related to self-control. Our second hypothesis is supported; consistent with Gottfredson and Hirschi, students in this sample with low self-control were more likely to engage in bully perpetration behavior relative to those with high self-control.

Table 4.6. Bivariate analysis

|                                | Perpetration |                          |                                   |                       | Victimization |                          |                                   |          |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
|                                | N            | Index Score<br>Mean (SD) | <i>t or f</i><br><i>statistic</i> | <i>p</i> <sup>*</sup> | N             | Index Score<br>Mean (SD) | <i>t or f</i><br><i>statistic</i> | <i>p</i> |
| <b>Gender</b>                  |              |                          | 5.81                              | <0.0001               |               |                          | 6.45                              | <0.0001  |
| Male                           | 453          | 1.81 (1.9)               |                                   |                       | 448           | 3.16 (2.2)               |                                   |          |
| Female                         | 636          | 1.17 (1.5)               |                                   |                       | 633           | 2.3 (1.9)                |                                   |          |
| <b>Family structure</b>        |              |                          | -1.82                             | 0.07                  |               |                          | -2.50                             | 0.01     |
| Living with both parents       | 830          | 1.40 (1.7)               |                                   |                       | 817           | 2.59 (2.0)               |                                   |          |
| Not living with both parents   | 305          | 1.62 (1.6)               |                                   |                       | 310           | 2.95 (2.2)               |                                   |          |
| <b>Religion<sup>a</sup></b>    |              |                          | 1.11                              | 0.25                  |               |                          | -2.04                             | 0.04     |
| Christian                      | 726          | 1.44 (1.7)               |                                   |                       | 721           | 2.77 (2.1)               |                                   |          |
| Muslim                         | 366          | 1.44 (1.8)               |                                   |                       | 362           | 2.50 (2.0)               |                                   |          |
| <b>Religiosity<sup>b</sup></b> |              |                          | 0.56                              | 0.57                  |               |                          | 2.63                              | 0.008    |
| Highly religious               | 327          | 1.32 (1.7)               |                                   |                       | 321           | 2.39 (2.0)               |                                   |          |
| Not highly religious           | 641          | 1.39 (1.7)               |                                   |                       | 640           | 2.75 (2.1)               |                                   |          |
| <b>School classification A</b> |              |                          | 3.50                              | 0.0006                |               |                          | 2.52                              | 0.013    |
| Rural                          | 154          | 1.06 (1.5)               |                                   |                       | 152           | 2.33 (1.9)               |                                   |          |
| Urban                          | 981          | 1.52 (1.8)               |                                   |                       | 975           | 1.75 (2.1)               |                                   |          |
| <b>School classification B</b> |              |                          | -5.87                             | <0.0001               |               |                          | -4.24                             | <0.0001  |
| Private                        | 194          | 2.21 (2.0)               |                                   |                       | 191           | 3.28 (2.1)               |                                   |          |
| Public                         | 941          | 1.30 (1.6)               |                                   |                       | 936           | 2.57 (2.0)               |                                   |          |
| <b>School classification C</b> |              |                          | 7.00                              | <0.0001               |               |                          | 6.58                              | <0.0001  |
| Single sex (female)            | 232          | 0.86 (1.3)               |                                   |                       | 234           | 1.91 (1.9)               |                                   |          |
| Co-educational                 | 861          | 1.58 (1.8)               |                                   |                       | 849           | 2.84 (2.0)               |                                   |          |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>               |              |                          | 15.25                             | <0.0001               |               |                          | 3.29                              | 0.04     |
| Yoruba                         | 890          | 1.30 (1.7)               |                                   |                       | 838           | 2.60 (2.0)               |                                   |          |
| Ibo                            | 194          | 2.05 (1.9) <sup>c</sup>  |                                   |                       | 187           | 3.02 (2.1) <sup>c</sup>  |                                   |          |
| Hausa                          | 28           | 1.63 (1.9)               |                                   |                       | 27            | 2.81 (2.2)               |                                   |          |

\*Student t-test or Analysis of variance (ANOVA). <sup>a</sup>Other religions removed due to small number (n = 5). <sup>b</sup>“Highly religious” defined as upper 25 percentile in terms how often the individual prays. <sup>c</sup>Tukey’s posthoc test shows Ibo ethnicity’s perpetration & victimization scores are statistically significantly greater than Yoruba but not different from Hausa.

Table 4.7. Bullying Perpetration and self-control (binomial logistic regression)

| Full Sample (N = 853)                 |                |      |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|------|
|                                       | $\beta$ (SE)   | OR   |
| <b>Self-control index<sup>b</sup></b> | 0.24 (0.03)*** | 1.27 |
| <b>Female gender</b>                  | -0.41 (0.16)*  | 0.66 |
| <b>Age</b>                            | -0.015 (0.06)  | 0.99 |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                      |                |      |
| Yoruba                                | Reference      |      |
| Ibo                                   | 0.77 (0.24)    | 2.17 |
| Hausa                                 | 0.091 (0.48)   | 1.10 |
| <b>Muslim religion (vs Christian)</b> | 0.53 (0.18)    | 1.70 |
| <b>Not living with both parents</b>   | -0.031 (0.18)  | 0.97 |
| <b>Rural school (vs Urban)</b>        | -0.51 (0.24)*  | 1.60 |
| <b>School climate index</b>           | -0.06 (0.02)** | 0.94 |

Note. OR = Odds ratio;

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001.

<sup>b</sup>Higher score indicates low self-control index.

Table 4.8. Distribution of self-control variables

| <b>Variable</b>                        | <b>Mean</b> | <b>SD</b> | <b>Min</b> | <b>Ma</b> |
|--|-------------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| I get restless                         | .772        | .41       | 0          | 1         |
| Generally speak without thinking       | .042        | .49       | 0          | 1         |
| Often get in trouble                   | .034        | .04       | 0          | 1         |
| Work quickly without checking answer   | .421        | .49       | 0          | 1         |
| Do not think carefully                 | .789        | .40       | 0          | 1         |
| Often break the rules without          | .308        | .46       | 0          | 1         |
| Speak without thinking things out      | .324        | .46       | 0          | 1         |
| Often get involved in things           | .490        | .50       | 0          | 1         |
| Usually think carefully before talking | .077        | .41       | 0          | 1         |
| Sometimes break the rules              | .290        | .45       | 0          | 1         |
| Mostly speak without thinking things   | .031        | .46       | 0          | 1         |
| Do things I regret                     | .458        | .49       | 0          | 1         |
| Get bored more easily than others      | .056        | .49       | 0          | 1         |
| Need to use a lot of self-control      | .707        | .45       | 0          | 1         |
| Annoyed if someone keeps me waiting    | .623        | .48       | 0          | 1         |
| Get very restless                      | .595        | .49       | 0          | 1         |
| Put down answer without checking       | .476        | .49       | 0          | 1         |

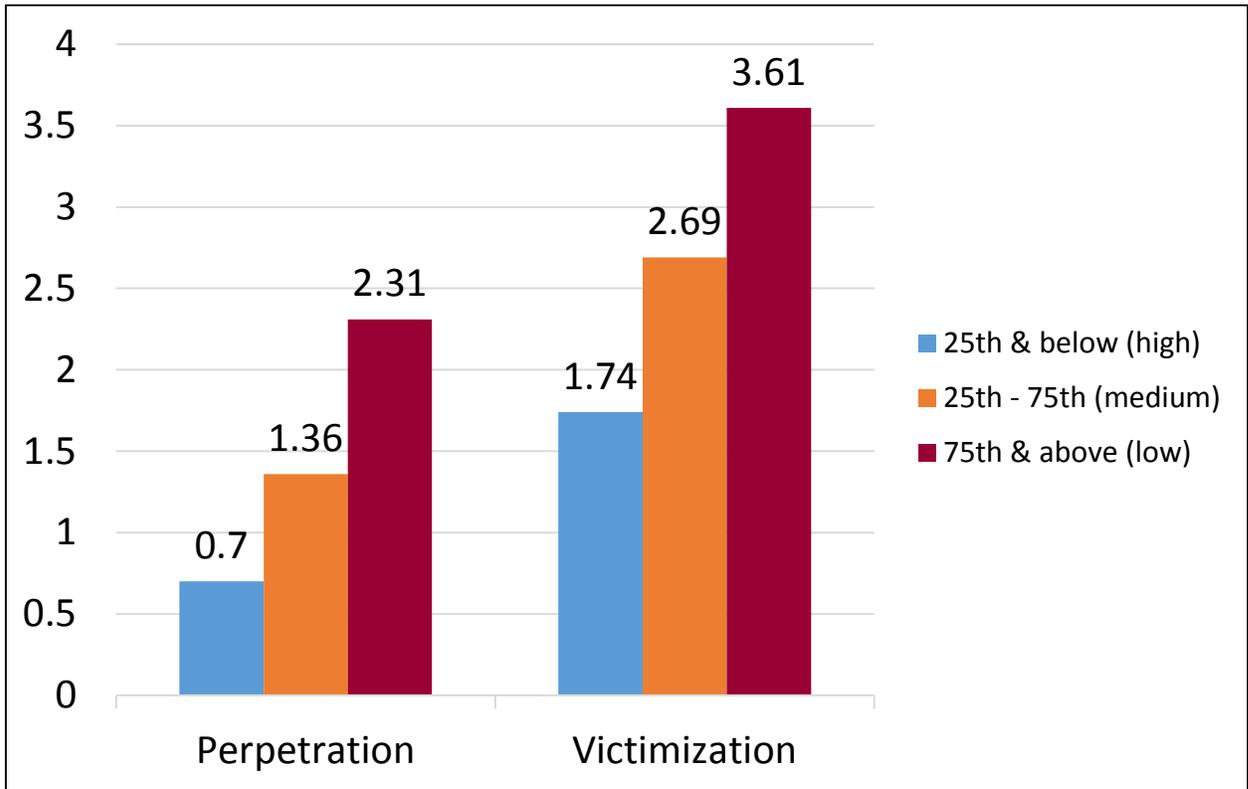


Figure 4.3. Self-control's inverse relationship with bullying and victimization

*Hypothesis 3: As proposed by Gottfredson and Hirschi, bullying victimization experiences of these students will be negatively related to self-control in this sample.*

Table 4.9. presents and Figure 4.3. shows the result of the relationship between self-control and bully victimization. Results shows that bully perpetration and victimization were significantly related to self-control. Specifically, for each unit increase in the self-control index (i.e. low self-control), the odds of bullying victimization increased by 30% (OR=1.30;  $p < .001$ ). Indicating that for students with low self-control there was a 30% increase in the odds of bullying perpetration behavior. Conversely, school climate showed negative but statistical significance; indicating that for every unit increase in the school climate score (negative school

climate), there was a 9% increase in the odds of bullying victimization. This implies that in schools where students have a positive perception of the school climate, they were less likely to be susceptible to bullying victimization.

Contrary to expectations, ethnicity, religion, parental structure, and attending rural school showed no statistical significance in this model. These results showing a correlation between low self-control and bully victimization provides support for the hypothesis that low self-control is negatively related to bullying victimization.

A graphic representation of this relationship between self-control and victimization is presented in Figure 4.3. Students in the top 25% of the self-control index (those with low self-control), had the highest victimization score in the sample (mean=3.61). Though the victimization rate for those with high self-control was not zero, their risk of victimization was relatively less than those students with low self-control. The figure shows that while the mean victimization score for students with low self-control was 3.61, students with high self-control, had a mean victimization score of 1.74. This is an indication that those with low self-control were more likely to be both bully perpetrators and bully victims. It is important to note that in this model, significant factors for victimization was low self-control and school climate. None of the other control variables found to predict perpetration was significant for victimization. Result shows support for our third hypothesis. Students bullying victimization experiences were negatively related to their level of self-control.

Table 4.9. Bullying Victimization and self-control (binomial logistic regression)

|                                       | Full Sample (N = 840) |      |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|------|
|                                       | $\beta$ (SE)          | OR   |
| <b>Self-control index<sup>b</sup></b> | 0.26 (0.03)***        | 1.30 |
| <b>Female gender</b>                  | -0.38 (0.21)          | 0.69 |
| <b>Age</b>                            | -0.05 (0.08)          | 0.92 |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                      |                       |      |
| Yoruba                                | Reference             |      |
| Ibo                                   | -0.26 (0.29)          | 0.78 |
| Hausa                                 | 0.16 (0.68)           | 1.17 |
| <b>Muslim religion (vs Christian)</b> | 0.02 (0.22)           | 1.02 |
| <b>Not living with both parents</b>   | -0.10 (0.23)          | 0.91 |
| <b>Rural school (vs Urban)</b>        | -0.04 (0.29)          | 0.97 |
| <b>School climate index</b>           | -0.100 (0.03)***      | 0.91 |

Note. OR = Odds ratio;

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001.

<sup>b</sup>Higher score indicates low self-control index.

*Hypothesis 4: Males will exhibit lower levels of self-control, and consequently be involved in higher levels of bullying perpetration and victimization behavior than females.*

Table 4.4. reports the gender differences in self-control between males and females.

The table shows that for males, mean=8.2; SD=3.4; while for females, the mean self-control score was 7.9; SD=3.6. T-test analysis shows that the difference in the level of self-control between the genders was only marginally statistically significant (t=0.07). To examine the explanatory values of self-control for bully perpetration and victimization for males and females in the sample, we ran six binomial logistic regression models; two with the full sample (one for perpetration, and another for victimization) and two separate models for males and females. Table 4.10. presents the results of the three binomial logistic regression models predicting bully perpetration through gender stratification, and Table 4.11. presents the results of the three binomial logistic regression models predicting bully victimization through gender

stratification. As hypothesized, the results show that across the models, self-control predicted bully perpetration and victimization experiences for males and females. In the full model for both bullying perpetration and victimization, self-control showed statistical significance (OR=1.27;  $p<.001$ ) and (OR=1.30;  $p<.001$ ); indicating that for every unit increase in self-control score (low self-control), there was a 27% increase in the odds of bully perpetration, while for victimization, every unit increase in the self-control score resulted in a 30% increase in the odds of bully victimization.

The gender specific models examining the relationship between self-control and bullying perpetration shows a curious but interesting pattern. For males, each unit increase in the self-control index resulted in a 32% increase in the odds of bullying perpetration (OR=1.32;  $p<.001$ ). Indicating that low self-control increased the odds of bullying perpetration for males in the sample by 32%. However, for females, each unit increase in the self-control index resulted in a 20% decrease in the odds of bully perpetration (OR=0.80;  $p<.001$ ); indicating that females with low self-control were less likely to engage in bullying perpetration behavior. Also, being Ibo had a positive and significant relationship with bullying victimization for males, (OR=4.08;  $p<.001$ ). Suggesting that the odds of bullying perpetration for Ibos in the sample was four times that of the Yorubas. Religion (Muslim) showed positive statistical significance with bullying perpetration for males in the model. The model shows that relative to Christian males in the sample, a Muslim male, had an elevated odd of bullying perpetration (OR=2.52;  $p<.01$ ). A negative perception of school climate also increased the odds of bullying perpetration behavior for males by 11% (OR=0.89;  $p<.01$ ). On the other hand, for females, a positive school climate increased the odds of bullying perpetration by 3% (OR=1.03;  $p<.01$ ).

As shown in Table 4.11., the relationship between self-control and victimization is positively significant for both males and females. For males, a unit increase in the self-control score resulted in a 24% increase in the odds of bullying victimization (OR=1.24;  $p<.001$ ), indicating that males with low self-control had higher odds of bullying victimization experience. Similarly, females with low self-control had a 35% increase in the odds of bullying victimization (OR=1.35;  $p<.001$ ). Not living with both parents increased the odds of bullying victimization experiences for males (OR=2.61;  $p<.05$ ), but not for females. A negative perception of school climate increased the odds for both males and females in the sample. For each unit increase in school climate score (negative school climate), the odds of bullying victimization increased by 7% for males (OR=0.91;  $p<.001$ ), and 11% for females (OR=0.89;  $p<.001$ ).

The fourth hypothesis is partially supported, that is, males in this sample exhibited marginally lower levels of self-control than the females. The perpetration and victimization behavior for males was statistically different from females. The result shows that males were involved in higher levels of bully perpetration behavior, but the females in the sample had higher odds of victimization experiences.

Table 4.10. Predicting bullying perpetration by gender using binomial logistic regression

|                                 | Full Sample<br>(N = 853) |      | Males only<br>(N = 354) |      | Females only<br>(N = 499) |      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|------|-------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|
|                                 | $\beta$ (SE)             | OR   | $\beta$ (SE)            | OR   | $\beta$ (SE)              | OR   |
| Self-control index <sup>b</sup> | 0.24(0.03)***            | 1.27 | 0.27 (0.05)***          | 1.32 | -0.22 (0.03)***           | 0.80 |
| Female gender                   | -0.41(0.16)*             | 0.66 | -                       | -    | -                         | -    |
| Age                             | -0.02 (0.06)             | 0.99 | 0.06 (0.09)             | 1.07 | 0.08 (1.00)               | 1.09 |
| Ethnicity                       |                          |      |                         |      |                           |      |
| Yoruba                          | Reference                | -    | Reference               |      | Reference                 |      |
| Ibo                             | 0.77(0.24)**             | 2.17 | 1.41 (0.42)***          | 4.08 | -0.49 (0.29)              | 0.61 |
| Hausa                           | 0.09 (0.48)              | 1.10 | -0.64 (0.65)            | 0.53 | -0.74 (0.73)              | 0.48 |
| Muslim religion (vs Christian)  | 0.53(0.18)**             | 1.70 | 0.93 (0.30)**           | 2.52 | -0.36 (0.23)              | 0.70 |
| Not living with both parents    | -0.03 (0.18)             | 0.97 | 0.18 (0.31)             | 1.19 | 0.12 (0.23)               | 1.13 |
| Rural school (vs Urban)         | -0.51 (0.24)*            | 0.60 | -0.68 (0.37)            | 0.51 | 0.36 (0.31)               | 1.43 |
| School climate index            | -0.06 (0.02)**           | 0.94 | -0.12 (0.04)**          | 0.89 | 0.03 (0.03)**             | 1.03 |
| <i>Model fitness: AIC</i>       | 999.3                    |      | 377.8                   |      | 624.5                     |      |
| <i>Deviance/df</i>              | 1.178**                  |      | 1.049                   |      | 1.264***                  |      |

Note: OR = Odds ratio; DF = degrees of freedom; AIC=Akaike information criterion. ns = not significant \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001.

<sup>a</sup>Z=(b1-b2)/sqrt(SEb<sub>1</sub><sup>2</sup> + SEb<sub>2</sub><sup>2</sup>) where Z = z score, b1 and b2 = beta estimates; SE = standard errors

<sup>b</sup>Higher score indicates low self-control index

Table 4.11. Predicting bullying victimization by gender using binomial logistic regression

|                                       | Full Sample<br>(N = 840) |      | Males only<br>(N = 349) |      | Females only<br>(N = 491) |                |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|------|-------------------------|------|---------------------------|----------------|
|                                       | $\beta$ (SE)             | OR   | $\beta$ (SE)            | OR   | $\beta$ (SE)              | OR             |
| <b>Self-control index<sup>b</sup></b> | 0.26 (0.03)***           | 1.30 | 0.21(0.06)***           | 1.24 | 0.30 (0.05)               | 1.35           |
| <b>Female gender</b>                  | -0.38 (0.21)             | 0.69 | -                       | -    | -                         | -              |
| <b>Age</b>                            | -0.05 (0.08)             | 0.92 | -0.18 (0.12)            | 0.83 | 0.08 (0.11)               | 1.08           |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                      |                          |      |                         |      |                           |                |
| Yoruba                                | Reference                | -    | Reference               |      | Reference                 |                |
| Ibo                                   | -0.25 (0.29)             | 0.78 | 0.33 (0.55)             | 1.38 | -0.58 (0.35)              | 0.56           |
| Hausa                                 | 0.16 (0.68)              | 1.17 | -1.17 (0.77)            | 0.31 | 14.35(734.0)              | <i>small n</i> |
| <b>Muslim religion (vs Christian)</b> | 0.02 (0.22)              | 1.02 | 0.19 (0.38)             | 1.21 | -0.12 (0.28)              | 0.88           |
| <b>Not living with both parents</b>   | -0.10 (0.23)             | 0.91 | 0.96 (0.47)*            | 2.61 | -0.44 (0.27)              | 0.65           |
| <b>Rural school (vs Urban)</b>        | -0.04 (0.29)             | 0.97 | -0.56 (0.47)            | 0.57 | 0.19 (0.39)               | 1.20           |
| <b>School climate index</b>           | -0.10(0.03)***           | 0.91 | -0.08 (0.05)            | 0.93 | -0.12 (0.04)              | 0.89           |
| <i>Model fitness: AIC</i>             | <i>684.0</i>             |      | <i>250.6</i>            |      | <i>426.3</i>              |                |
| <i>Deviance/df</i>                    | <i>0.787</i>             |      | <i>0.684</i>            |      | <i>0.825</i>              |                |

Note: OR = Odds ratio; DF = degrees of freedom; AIC=Akaike information criterion. ns = not significant \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001.

<sup>a</sup>Z=(b1-b2)/sqrt(SEb<sub>1</sub><sup>2</sup> + SEb<sub>2</sub><sup>2</sup>) where Z = z score, b1 and b2 = beta estimates; SE = standard errors

<sup>b</sup>Higher score indicates low self-control index.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) claim that low self-control is the main cause of crime and analogous behaviors has generated intense criminological discourse as well as disagreements (Akers, 1991; Pratt, 2016). The theory claims to explain all crimes, in all places, at all times, across race, sex and gender (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990).

Empirical support for the core concepts of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime has been found in studies with Caucasian, African American, Asian, English, and cross-cultural samples (Vazsonyi et al., 2001; Currie et al., 2004; Piquero et al., 2010; Vazsonyi & Huang, 2015; Bae, 2016). The theory has been found to be a consistent predictor of crime and analogous behavior (Pratt & Cullen, 2000; Hwang & Akers, 2003; Moon & Jang, 2014; Vazsonyi, Mikuska & Kelley, 2016). The realization that this theory had not been tested with a Nigerian sample was the impetus for this dissertation. The goal was to investigate the prevalence of bullying perpetration and victimization experiences among a sample of Nigerian students and examine the utility of the GTC in explaining these behaviors. The choice of the GTC was predicated on the theory's claim of cross-cultural applicability and the concept of effective parental socialization as the source of self-control (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

Based on the literature on self-control and bullying, four hypotheses were tested, and the results offered support for three of the hypotheses, and partial support for the fourth. In both the full samples and the gender specific models, low self-control consistently explained the bullying perpetration and victimization experiences of the students. The first hypothesis was

that self-reported bullying perpetration and victimization is prevalent among Nigerian secondary school students. Overall, approximately 57% of the students' self-reported bullying behavior, while almost 79% self-reported at least one victimization experience. Consistently across the models, students low in self-control were more likely to be perpetrators and victims. This was an expected finding and is consistent with previous research (Kerley et al., 2008; Turanovic & Pratt, 2014; Pratt et al., 2104).

Unexpected though, was the relatively high percentage of students that exhibited low self-control (56.9% for perpetration; and 78.5% for victimization). Considering the Nigerian culture, and the emphasis on good "home training", this is a very surprising but significant finding. There is a likelihood that the higher victimization rate uncovered in this study results from the human tendency to remember what has been done to them, and not what they did to someone else. It is therefore likely that these students were more likely to recall unpleasant victimization experiences, while they conveniently forgot, their own bullying behavior. Another possible explanation of this finding is that due to the cultural belief in protecting the family's honor, parents of bullies were less likely to allow their children to participate in the survey; and/or the bullies themselves were unwilling to participate.

The GTC hypothesized that the source of self-control is effective parental socialization early in life. The prevalence of bullying perpetration and victimization experiences in this sample suggests that students in this sample have low self-control. This finding among students raised in a culture that places a high premium on effective cultural and moral socialization of children suggests that a cultural shift in parenting practices that prevented these students from developing self-control early in life, as hypothesized by the GTC. The belief was that relative

to western students, children raised in Africa were communally raised, and consequently would be more likely to have higher levels of supervision and discipline which would translate into higher levels of self-control. As hypothesized by the GTC, the children lacking effective parental socialization were more likely to take advantage of ubiquitous opportunities to engage in analogous or criminal behavior. Unfortunately, data for this study did not include measures of attachment to parents or parental monitoring. It was therefore not possible to determine the level of socialization of these students or their level of attachment to their parents. Future research should include these measures.

Moreover, result from this study (though not generalizable), indicating a 56.9% and 78.5% perpetration and victimization levels respectively, suggests that the rate of bullying perpetration behavior found in this study may be comparable, and in some instances higher than those in studies of western students. Bullying perpetration rates in the United States hovers between 5% and 13%, and between 10% and 33% for victimization (Schneider, K., O'Donnell, L., Stove, & Coulter, R.W. 2012). Cross national trends from 1994-2006 (Molcho, Craig, Due, Pickett, Harel-Fisch & Overpeck, 2009) found that bullying rates varied substantially across the countries from a low of 4.6% and 15.4% reported in Sweden for victimization and bullying respectively, to highs of 56.3% and 54.9% for Lithuania. In the cross-cultural study of bullying and victimization behavior among 10-13 and 15-year olds in 30 countries, Currie et al., (2012) found a general decline in bullying and victimization rates across countries. The study found that bullying rates ranged from 1% to 36%, while victimization rates hovered between 2% and 32% across the countries. Zhu and Chan (2015) study of Chinese student reported a 44.6% bullying perpetration rate in the preceding year.

It is important to note that findings from this dissertation are consistent with local studies of bullying behavior in Nigeria. Egbochuku (2007) found a 78% bullying perpetration, and 63.5% victimization rate in his sample of middle school students, while Omoteso (2010) reported a 78% bullying perpetration rate, and 63% victimization rate. In addition, a Federal Ministry of Education national study recorded a bullying prevalence rate of 85%, while Adeosun, and colleagues (2015), found a 56% victimization rates in their sample of Lagos state students. The finding of 56% bullying perpetration, and a 78% victimization rate among this sample of students therefore confirms the prevalence of bullying perpetration and victimization among Nigerian students.

The second hypothesis was that the perpetration behavior of these students would be negatively related to self-control. This hypothesis was supported, and some interesting findings are worth discussing. Findings show that besides self-control, gender (female), ethnicity (Ibo), religion (Muslim), attending a rural school and reporting a negative school climate predicted bullying perpetration behavior of this sample of students. The finding that females were less likely to engage in perpetration, and that attending a rural school, is a protective factor from bully perpetration for females, makes conventional sense in the context and culture of Nigeria. Relative to western cultures, gender roles are still enforced in Nigeria, and standards of morality in the rural areas especially for females are higher than in the urban areas. Also, in the school setting, different expectations are set for females versus male students in terms of behavior and comporment. While there may be some female outliers, the fact that bullying behavior is a culturally unacceptable conduct for females, reduces the likelihood to indulge in such unconventional behavior.

Also, findings that relative to other ethnic groups and religion, Ibos and Muslims were significantly more likely to engage in bully perpetration behavior potentially raises some intense cultural debates and should be viewed with an abundance of caution. This study was conducted in the south western part of Nigeria, where Yorubas and Christians are in the majority. Ibos are from the eastern part of Nigeria and are a minority ethnic group in the southwest, where this study was conducted. Ethnic rivalry and tensions are normative in Nigeria, and Ibos and Muslims may be subject to name calling and some form of ostracization due to their different language and religion. It is also possible that the wording of the survey questions led to an overestimation of the prevalence of these behaviors. Also, the relatively small number of Ibos and Muslims in the sample is enough reason to put little, if any premium on this finding. A nationally representative sample of students will be ideal to investigate the veracity or otherwise of this finding.

Furthermore, the finding that relative to urban schools, rural schools were more likely to have lower rates of bullying perpetration behavior conforms to conventional wisdom. The rural areas are relatively insulated from the influence and impact of western culture. Relative to urban areas, they are more likely to be culturally and religiously conservative, with gender roles strictly enforced. Also, the relative lack of internet access keeps the communal values intact and presumably accounts for the relative lack of bullying perpetration behaviors in the rural schools. This cultural and conservative mindset arguably translated into a positive school climate that reduced the risk of bully perpetration in this sample.

Result indicating that “not living with both parents” decreased the likelihood of bully perpetration behavior for females is counter-intuitive and deserves some attention. A plausible

explanation for this finding especially in the Nigerian context, is that, these girls may have had some traumatic experiences at the hands of their caretakers or family members. The strain and stress from these experiences may cause depression and make them more likely to internalize their feelings and less likely to be involved in school activities or relationships (Connell et al., 2014). This relative isolation may explain the lower likelihood of bully perpetration behavior of these female students. It is however possible that these females exhibit their low self-control in other areas of life. Future research should investigate this finding and decipher alternative outlets of these females.

The third hypothesis states that bullying victimization experiences of these students will be negatively related to self-control. The result shows support for this hypothesis; self-control predicted perpetration and victimization experiences of these students across gender. The key finding in this study is that gender has opposing effect on the impact of self-control. Consistent with previous literature, males have higher odds of bullying perpetration and females have higher odds of victimization. However, this study shows only marginal difference in the self-control levels between the genders. This is an unexpected finding considering the Nigerian culture, and the context of the lives of these girls. The emphasis on gender roles in Nigeria influences what is acceptable female behavior. This affects the lifestyle of females and constrains them to more conservative feminine behavior, relative to girls in western societies. The opposite gender effect found in this study therefore requires further investigation. A mixed method or qualitative research approach may be necessary to aid our understanding of the dynamics of these findings. It is also important to mention that this finding may have resulted the relatively large number of females (55.6%) in the sample.

Another interesting and probably counter-intuitive finding, especially in the Nigerian context is the prevalence of bullying and victimization found in the different schools. Our finding that bullying victimization was more prevalent in private schools goes against the grain of opinion in Nigeria. Recall that private schools contacted for participation in this study refused on the long-held belief that bullying is only an issue in the public schools. Our finding contradicts that belief. Perhaps wide dissemination of these findings will encourage private school operators to be more receptive to researchers for the safety of their students.

Consistent with findings from Vazsonyi and Crosswhite (2004), that the effect of low self-control is gendered, results from hypothesis four shows that the relationships between self-control and bullying perpetration and victimization were different among males and females (Popp et al., 2014). This was an expected finding. In Nigeria, there is a cultural expectation for males to be “in charge” and show manliness by maintaining control over their turf, while females are socialized to be empathetic, nurturing, and protective of younger and more vulnerable people. However, the finding that self-control is predictive of bully victimization for both genders, is significant in a study involving Nigerian students. This is because, relative to males, females are subject to more supervision and less freedom in Nigeria than the western societies. Females spend more time at home, being “protected” from the consequences of a life on the streets. This cultural constraint presumably helps in the development of self-control and shields them from peer influence which should make them less likely to be bullied. A qualitative approach will be the ideal method to get at the nuances of this relationship.

Findings emphasized the importance of a positive school climate for both males and females. This indicates that in schools where students perceive that there was no structure, rules were not clearly defined, and the school environment permitted, students were at greater risk of bullying and victimization experiences. Consistent finding in the literature shows the importance of school climate; Gottfredson, et al., (2005) found that it predicts the level of disorder, increases reporting rate (Elliot et al., (2010), and is predictive of cyber bullying (Cornell et al., 2013). This finding strongly supports the need for teachers and school administrators to be more proactive in creating a safe and conducive atmosphere for students to learn and grow. The indication is that where students perceive that rules are in place and enforced, there is less likelihood of victimization (Azeredo et al., 2015).

Consistent with Gottfredson and Hirschi's claim, and previous research (Vazsonyi & Crosswhite, 2004; J-F. & Yu, 2016; Bae, 2016), this study provides support for the cross-cultural applicability of the GTC. Across the models; at the bivariate and the multivariate levels, across gender, school types and climate, low self-control explained the bullying behavior in this sample of Nigerian middle school students. Self-control shows strong statistical significance in all the models. This finding indicates that the explanatory power of the GTC is not limited by geography, or culture (Vazsonyi, et al., 2016). The "all places" reach of the theory extends to Nigeria.

#### *Public Policy Implications*

Apart from providing support for, and affirming the cross-cultural applicability of the GTC, this study also has some public policy implications. The current study shows that self-control is not the only predictive factor but may be the strongest predictor of both bully

perpetration and victimization experiences among this sample of students. Figure 4.3 shows two interesting but disturbing picture; (1) the victimization score for those with high self-control is not zero, (2) the rate of victimization is higher than perpetration. The implication is that these students need to be protected or there is a possibility that those with high self-control may become retaliatory bullies. Also, since findings show that self-control is the strongest predictor of these behaviors (it shows significance across the models), self-control improvement program may be sufficient to reduce bully perpetration and victimization.

It is important to mention that all the schools expressed reservations about the wording of the children's assent form. The children's assent was requested after the parents had given consent to their children's participation. In one of the schools, the principal showed the researcher a copy of the "Civics" textbook which emphasized the importance of unqualified submission to parental authority. The principal then requested that the survey be administered without requesting for the children's assent. The researcher painstakingly explained the IRB process and pleaded to be allowed to abide by the rules of the research. It was almost a deal breaker but after much persuasion, the principal relented and allowed the process to go on. In the Catholic private school, but for the intervention of one of the priests who was a graduate of an American university, the children's assent form would have meant the research had to stop. This was viewed as an affront to the biblical injunction, and Nigerian culture of absolute obedience to parents, especially for children in the age range (11-15) covered by the survey.

The finding has profound implications for programs to help boys and girls develop self-control. Consistent with GTC, the effect of self-control is gender neutral. Other factors may be responsible for the difference in the bullying perpetration and victimization experiences. Those

programs should be deployed in large doses to both male and female students. It is also imperative to investigate the context of these victimization experiences- are they retaliatory or lashing out episodes? Do they take place in hallways? Or during sporting activities? Knowledge of the context will be very crucial in policy decisions and implementations.

Findings from this study offers partial evidence that the village seems to be ineffective at helping these children develop high self-control. It is also evidence that an urgent need exists for the implementation of “early self-control improvement programs” (Piquero et al., 2010; Piquero et al., 2016). It is therefore imperative that schools, government, or community organizations develop and implement culturally sensitive intervention programs to improve the self-control of Nigerian children. In view of findings that early offending predicts later criminality (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011), the program should pay more attention to students attending urban schools who have been shown to be more likely to have lower levels of self-control.

The consistent significance and positive impact of a positive school climate highlights the need for anti-bullying programs and policies in schools. Such programs are currently in place in Mississippi and Georgia. Governmental support in the form of human, financial, and material resources for effective implementation of these programs across the schools will help move the needle (Swearer, et al., 2010). It is worth mentioning that decreases in bullying rates observed in cross-national bullying and victimization research in countries like Denmark, Belgium, and the Czech Republic was the result of the implementation of anti- bullying policies and programs (Molcho et al., 2009).

Further, findings that students not living with both parents are at higher risk for perpetration and victimization emphasizes the need for family strengthening programs and

counseling for families. Community organizations and neighborhoods should be strengthened to sensitize individuals on the importance of two-parent families in the upbringing of children.

#### *Limitations and Future Direction*

This study has limitations. Perhaps most obvious is the fact that this is a convenience sample of students which does not represent the entirety of Nigerian students. Our findings are therefore not generalizable. This limitation does not detract from the fact that this is the first test of the GTC on a Nigerian sample and our findings should be the springboard to understanding bullying behavior and fashioning out policies to address the behavior. Future efforts should use a more diverse and nationally representative sample. Second, the limitation of self-report studies is very well documented. Though it is well recognized as the preferred method of studying behavior, it is also true that students may under or over-report their bullying and victimization experiences, thereby confounding our findings. Future studies should include other forms of data collection like peer report, teacher, and parent report to authenticate the self-report. Third, data only captured bullying behavior in the past year but did not include the context, consistency or seriousness of the behavior. For example, the most common form of bullying reported was name calling; understanding the context of this behavior would help us decipher whether it is a socialization experience, a rite of passage or a bullying behavior. An understanding of this will also aid the determination of prevention strategies needed to address the behavior.

Further, the data did not capture all ramifications of bullying perpetration and victimization behavior and the wording of the survey questions could also have resulted in overestimating the prevalence of bullying perpetration and victimization in this sample. The

internet has been described as the new “playground for bullies”; but this study focused on traditional forms of bullying due to the relatively lack of/limited internet access in Nigeria, and especially for students in the age group captured in this study. Future studies of Nigerian students should include measures of cyber bullying to capture the full ramification of the bullying behavior.

Also, this study is cross-sectional which makes it difficult to disentangle the effect of other explanatory factors of bullying than the students level of self-control. It does not allow for causality and other variables not included in this study may account for the findings apart from self-control. In addition, this study utilized a modified Grasmick et al., (1993) scale which does not capture all the different dimensions of self-control. This scale may not be the most robust measure of self-control in this population. Future research should consider a more robust and culturally sensitive measure of self-control among this population to test the robustness of our findings. Another important limitation is that, it was not possible to establish temporal order in our findings. There was no way to determine whether the bullying and victimization experiences of these students resulted from a negative school climate, or the bullying and victimization in the school created the negative perception of the school climate. A longitudinal study would be an important first step in overcoming this limitation.

This study tested the explanatory power of the GTC in the context of the limitations of the data. Study did not include measures of parental monitoring and supervision. It was therefore difficult to determine if ineffective parenting was the cause of the low self-control observed in the sample. Future research should test the parenting hypothesis of the GTC to understand the causes of low self-control and also account for the measurement invariance between schools.

Current study sought to understand bullying through the claims of the GTC and found support for the theory. However, prior studies found that the effect of self-control waned when variables of competing theories were added to the model (Moon et al, 2011). Future research should therefore include social learning and strain variables to see if GTC holds true as an explanation of the bullying behavior. Finally, there are nuances and contextual issues with a study like this that a quantitative study is unable to get at due to its design. A qualitative study will be ideal to study the nuances of the relationship among these students and the context of the perpetration and the victimization experiences that were uncovered in this study.

These limitations notwithstanding, this dissertation presents the first test of the explanatory power of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime with a Nigerian sample. Result shows that the theory has cross cultural applicability. Consistent with Gottfredson and Hirschi's claim, the theory is a strong and robust predictor of the bullying perpetration and victimization experiences in this sample across gender. Findings show that bullying perpetration and victimization is prevalent in these schools. None of the schools surveyed had any anti-bullying program or policies in place. Consequently, there is a need for bullying prevention and self-control improvement programs for Nigerian students.

Policy makers both at the school and governmental levels should pass and implement laws and programs that ensure student safety, and sanction bullying behavior in schools. All stakeholders-parents, teachers, community organizations and the government- should be brought to the table to get their buy-in and implement programs at all levels of society to tackle this festering, seemingly intractable problem. A uniform message from parents, teachers,

community and the government are an effective way for students to learn the behavior will not be tolerated.

## APPENDIX

### BULLYING AND DELINQUENCY SURVEY

This survey is voluntary. That means you do not have to take it. If you choose to take it, you may skip any question you don't want to answer.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. The survey asks about your opinion about a number of things in your life, including your school, your friends, other students, and your family. Your answer to these questions will be **confidential**. That means no one will know your answers. To help us keep your answers secret, please **do not** write your name on this survey form.

#### Instructions

1. This is not a test. There **are no right or wrong** answers.
2. If you don't find an answer that fits exactly, use one that comes closest. If any question does not apply to you, or you are not sure what it means, just leave it blank
3. Mark your answers clearly:

- It is best to use a pencil
- Completely fill in the circles
- Completely erase any answer you want to change
- Make no other markings or comments on answer pages

4. Some of the questions have the following format:  
Please fill in the circle for the word that best describes how you feel

Example: I am just as smart as other kids

|                       |                       |                                  |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Strongly<br>Agree     | Agree                 | Neither<br>Agree nor<br>Disagree | Disagree              | Strongly<br>Disagree  |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

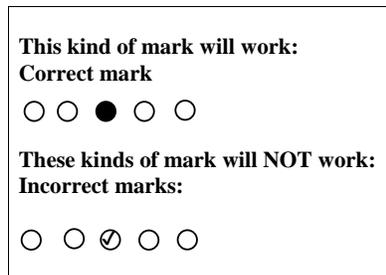
Mark **Strongly Agree** if you think the statement is definitely true for you

Mark **Agree** if you think the statement is mostly true for you

Mark **Neither Agree nor Disagree** if you are not sure

Mark **Disagree** if you think the statement is not true about you

Mark **Strongly Disagree** if you think the statement is definitely not true about you.



**Think about your school. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the following statements?**

|  | Strongly Agree        | Agree                 | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree              | Strongly disagree     |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Everyone knows what school rules are  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. The school rules are okay   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. The punishment for breaking school rules is the same no matter who you are    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. School rules are strictly enforced  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. If a school rule is broken, students know what kind of punishment will follow | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Think about your teachers at your school. Do you Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree with the following statements?**

|   | Strongly Agree        | Agree                 | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree              | Strongly disagree     |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 6. Teachers treat students with respect   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Teachers care about students   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Teachers do or say things that make students feel bad about themselves                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. At school, I have a friend I can talk to, who cares about my feelings and what happens to me | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**On a scale of 1 to 10, how safe do you feel at school?**

|                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     | 6                     | 7                     | 8                     | 9                     | 10                    |
| <input type="radio"/> |

**Since the start of the school year, has another student:**

|  | Yes                   | No                    |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 10. Made fun of you, called you names or insulted you in any hurtful way?                        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. Spread rumours about you or tried to make others dislike you?                                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. Threatened to harm you?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. Beat you up?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 14. Tried to force you to do things that you did not want to do, like give them money or things? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 15. Excluded you from activities on purpose?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

- |   | <b>Yes</b>            | <b>No</b>             |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 16. Destroyed your property on purpose?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 17. Posted hurtful information about you around the school, on Facebook or Instagram?                               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 18. Purposely shared your private information, photos, or videos on the internet or mobile phones in a hurtful way? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 19. Threatened or insulted you through instant messaging or chat?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 20. Threatened or insulted you through text messaging?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 21. Threatened or insulted you through gaming, like while playing GTA?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 22. Have you bullied a junior student?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Since the start of the school year, have YOU:**

- |  |                       |                       |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 23. Made fun of someone, called them names, or insulted them in a hurtful way?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 24. Spread rumours about someone or tried to make others dislike someone?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 25. Threatened someone with harm?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 26. Pushed someone, made them fall, or spit on someone?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 27. Tried to make someone do things that they did not want to do, like give you money or things?                           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 28. Excluded someone from activities on purpose?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 29. Destroyed someone else's property on purpose?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 30. Posted hurtful information about someone on the internet, like on a social networking site like Facebook or Instagram? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 31. Purposely shared someone's private information, photos, or videos on the internet or mobile phones in a hurtful way?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 32. Threatened or insulted someone through instant messaging or chat?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 33. Since the start of the school year, have you been bullied by someone in your class?                                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 34. Since the start of the school year, have you been bullied by a senior student?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 35. If yes, did you report to an adult?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 36. Was the adult able to help you?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 37. Would you ask the adult for help if it happened again?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

38. If yes, who did you report to?

- |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Teacher               | Parent                | Other adult           |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Here is a list of things that some students have done. In the last 12 months, have you:**

|  | Zero                  | Once                  | Twice                 | Three<br>Times        | Four<br>Times         | Five or<br>More Times |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 39. Got into physical fight in public?   | <input type="radio"/> |
| 40. Missed school for a whole day?   | <input type="radio"/> |
| 41. Defaced School building or Government property?                                      | <input type="radio"/> |
| 42. Carried a weapon, like a knife, gun, or piece of wood?                               | <input type="radio"/> |
| 43. Taken a vehicle (like a car or motorbike) for a ride without permission?             | <input type="radio"/> |
| 44. Stolen money or things from another person?  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 45. Run away from home and stayed overnight or longer?                                   | <input type="radio"/> |
| 46. Purposely damaged or destroyed others property?                                      | <input type="radio"/> |
| 47. Damaged a parked car?  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 48. Gone out with a group of 3 or more friends damaging property or getting into fights? | <input type="radio"/> |
| 49. Been suspended or expelled from school?  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 50. Broken into a house, flat or vehicle?  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 51. Stolen something out of a packed car?  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 52. Started a fire in a place where you should not burn anything?                        | <input type="radio"/> |
| 53. Used force or threats to get money or things from someone else?                      | <input type="radio"/> |
| 54. Been caught by police or neighborhood watch for something you have done?             | <input type="radio"/> |

I have just a few questions left, it will soon be over.

|   | Yes                   | No                    |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 55. Sometimes I get restless when I sit in a chair for very long?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 56. Generally say things without stopping to think?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 57. Often get in trouble because I do things without stopping to think?                                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 58. Usually work quickly without checking my answer?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 59. Usually think carefully before doing anything?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 60. Sometimes break the rules without thinking about it?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 61. Mostly speak without thinking things out?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 62. Often get involved in things I later wish I can get out of?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 63. Usually think carefully before doing anything?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 64. Sometimes break the rules without thinking about it?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 65. Mostly speak without thinking things out?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 66. Often get involved in things you later wish you could get out of?                                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 67. Get bored more easily than most people doing the same old things?                                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 68. Need to use a lot of self-control to keep myself out of trouble?                                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 69. Get very annoyed if someone keeps me waiting?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 70. Get very restless if I have to stay around home for any length of time?                               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 71. Sometimes put down the first answer that comes to my head during a test and forget to check it later? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

|  | Strongly Agree        | Agree                 | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree              | Strongly Disagree     |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 72. I lose my temper very easily.  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 73. Often when I'm angry at people, I feel more like hurting them than talking to them about why I am angry.                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 74. When I'm really angry, other people better stay away from me.  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 75. When I have a serious disagreement with someone, it's usually hard for me to talk calmly about it without getting upset. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

|  | Strongly<br>Agree     | Agree                 | Neither<br>Agree nor<br>Disagree | Disagree              | Strongl<br>Disagre    |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 76. I am good at school work   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 77. I am just as smart as other kids                                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 78. I am able to get my work done quickly                                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 79. I do very well at school   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 80. I almost always know the answer                                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 81. I find it easy to make friends                                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 82. I have lots of friends   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 83. I have as many friends as I want                                     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 84. I always do things with many other friends                           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 85. I think that most other students like me                             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 86. I am popular in school   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 87. I am very good at sports   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 88. I am good enough at sports   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 89. I can easily play a sport that I have never done before              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 90. I am better in sport than other students                             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 91. I am more likely to play a sport than to only watch a game or sport. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 92. I am immediately good in a new sport                                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 93. I am satisfied with my height and my weight                          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 94. I am satisfied with my appearance                                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 95. I am satisfied with my face and my hair                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 96. I think I look good  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 97. I am satisfied with the way I behave                                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 98. I usually have good manners  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 99. I usually do what is expected of me                                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 100. I usually don't do things that get me in trouble                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 101. I almost never do things that are not allowed                       | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 102. I behave very well  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**Tell us about your friends:**

103. How many good friends do you have?

- 1 or 2      3, 4, or 5      6 or more      I do not have any good friends
- 

**104. How old are your good friends?**

- About my age
- Mostly older than me
- Mostly younger than me
- I do not have any good friends

**What would you do if you have a good friend who was?**

|                                       | Join them             | Try to stop them      | Do nothing            | Report them           | Walk away             |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 105. Stealing from a store            | <input type="radio"/> |
| 106. Breaking into Houses             | <input type="radio"/> |
| 107. Stealing Cars                    | <input type="radio"/> |
| 108. Bullying other people            | <input type="radio"/> |
| 109. Vandalizing things               | <input type="radio"/> |
| 110. Always getting drunk             | <input type="radio"/> |
| 111. Using drugs                      | <input type="radio"/> |
| 112. Getting into fights              | <input type="radio"/> |
| 113. Riding their bike after drinking | <input type="radio"/> |
| 114. Driving after drinking           | <input type="radio"/> |
| 115. Driving without a license        | <input type="radio"/> |

**135. Who do you live with?**

- Both parents
- Mother and step father
- Father and step father
- Father only
- Mother only
- Other relatives
- Friends
- Other

**136. Are you:**

- Christian
  - Muslim
  - Other
- 137. If Christian, are you:**
- Pentecostal
  - Protestant
  - Catholic
  - Other

**138. How often do you pray?**

- Once a day
- Twice a day
- Three times a day
- Five times a day
- Don't know

**139. Would you describe your parents as?**

- Rich
- Middle class
- Average
- Poor
- Don't know

**140. Are you a:**

- Day student
- Boarding Student

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Roper v Simmons, 125 S Ct 1183 (2005)

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Omobolanle Atinuke Fenny was born in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. She got her LL. B at the University of Benin, Nigeria in 1988, and a Bachelor of Laws from the Nigerian Law School in 1989. Bola was in private legal practice in Nigeria until 2002 when she moved to the United States. She completed her master's degree in criminal justice at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 2011, after which she taught criminal justice and law courses at Miles College in Fairfield, Alabama. Bola is a licensed attorney in the state of Alabama and has family, criminal and immigration law practice experience. She began her PhD in criminology at The University of Texas at Dallas in 2014. In the summer of 2015, she participated in the prestigious Archer Graduate Program in Public Policy in Washington D.C. Bola's research interests include juvenile delinquency, gender, religion, international law, and policy.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### OMOBOLANLE “BOLA” FENNY, PhD

University of Texas at Dallas  
School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences  
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Richardson Texas 75080  
[bola.fenny@utdallas.edu](mailto:bola.fenny@utdallas.edu)

#### **EDUCATION**

Ph.D. (2018). Criminology, University of Texas at Dallas.

Dissertation: *Bullying in Nigerian Secondary Schools: A test of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime.*

Committee: Dr. Nadine Connell (Chair), Dr. Nicole Piquero, Dr. Lynne Vieraitis, and Dr. Andrew Wheeler.

M.S. (2011) Criminal Justice, University of Alabama at Birmingham

July (2010) Admitted to the Alabama State Bar

B.L. (1989) Nigerian law School. Lagos, Nigeria

LL. B (1988) University of Benin, Nigeria, 1988

#### **POSITIONS**

Senior Lecturer, University of Texas at Arlington, Texas. January 2017-Present

Adjunct Professor, University of Texas at Arlington, Texas. Fall 2015-Fall 2016

Teaching Assistant, University of Texas at Dallas, Texas. Fall 2015-Present

Adjunct Professor, University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Summer 2014

Instructor, Miles College, Fairfield Alabama. Summer 2011-Spring 2014

#### **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

- International Criminology
- Criminal law and policy
- International law and policy
- Gender and crime
- Money Laundering
- Religion

- Juvenile delinquency
- Intimate partner violence

*ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRIES*

Fenny, Omobolanle A. “Parens Patriae.” The Encyclopedia of Corrections, edited by Kent R. Kerley. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell

Fenny, Omobolanle A. “Birmingham jail, letter from.” The Encyclopedia of Corrections, edited by Kent R. Kerley. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

Ene-Korubo, Bola. (2013). Roundtable Discussion: Exploring the Need for Nationally Credentialing Criminal Justice Career Candidates. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, Dallas, Texas.

Fenny, Omobolanle (2016). Gun Ownership and Fear of Crime. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. Denver, Colorado.

Fenny, Omobolanle (2016). Bullying in Nigerian school settings. American Society of Criminology.

Fenny, Omobolanle (2017). Bullying in Nigerian Secondary schools: A test of Gottfredson and Hirschi’s General Theory of Crime. Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, Kansas City Missouri

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**Miles College:**

|                                  |                                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Crime and Criminality            | Fall 2011, Spring 2012                |
| Introduction to Criminal Justice | Summer 2013, Spring 2014              |
| Criminal Law                     | Fall 2011, Spring 2012, Fall 2012     |
| Criminal Justice Ethics          | Spring 2013, Fall 2013, Spring 2014   |
| Constitutional Law               | Fall 2011-Spring 2014                 |
| Criminology                      | Fall 2012-Spring 2014                 |
| Criminal Evidence                | Summer 2012, Spring 2013, Spring 2014 |
| Probation and Parole             | Summer 2013, Spring 2014              |
| Juvenile Justice                 | Summer 2014                           |

Criminal Procedure Summer 2012

**University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa**

Juvenile delinquency Summer 2014

**University of Texas at Dallas**

Crime and Justice Policy Fall 2015, Spring 2016

Youth, Crime, and Justice Fall 2016

Gender, Crime, and Justice Fall 2017 (Online class)

**University of Texas at Arlington**

Juvenile Justice Fall 2015- present

Race, Crime, and Justice Spring 2016-present

Women and Crime Spring 2016

American Judicial System Fall 2017

**LEGAL EXPERIENCE**

Partner, Fenny & Fenny LL.C, Attorneys, Birmingham. Alabama. 2010-present

Managing Partner, Ene Korubo & Co, Barristers and Solicitors, Lagos, Nigeria. 1995-2002

Junior Counsel, Adesanya & Adesanya, Solicitors and Advocates, Lagos, Nigeria. 1990-1995

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

2010-present Birmingham Volunteer Lawyers Program, Birmingham, Alabama

2010 Jefferson County Family Court, Birmingham, Alabama

2010-2011 Department of Forensic Science, UAB. Birmingham Alabama

2011-2012 Discovery Club of Alabama, Birmingham, Alabama

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

- Nigerian Bar Association
- Alabama State Bar
- American Society of Criminology
- Birmingham Volunteer Lawyers Program
- Birmingham Bar Association
- Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

## **AWARDS**

- Department of Justice Sciences tuition scholarship, University of Alabama at Birmingham
- Donald G. Carlson Scholarship, Archer Center. University of Texas System. 2015.
- The University of Texas System - Archer Center Graduate Program in Public Policy (Summer 2015) Competitively selected from The University of Texas System for a Washington, D.C., internship, and academic fellowship program
- ACJS Doctoral Student Summit representative for the University of Texas at Dallas criminology Program (March 2016)

## **UNIVERSITY CITIZENSHIP**

University of Texas at Dallas: Criminology Graduate Student Association (CGSA) Treasurer

University of Texas at Arlington: Scholarship Committee

University of Texas at Arlington College of Liberal Arts: Developmental Committee

University of Texas at Arlington: Faculty Mentor, Society of Criminal Justice Students