

## **Social Bullying Among Adolescents in School Settings in Nigeria: A Comparative Review of Counselling and Parenting Intervention Strategies**

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| <b>Keyword</b>                                                                                                           | <b>Abstract:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| Social bullying, adolescents, counselling, and parental interventions.                                                   | Social bullying is a widespread problem amongst adolescents, with far-reaching consequences for their mental health, well-being and academic achievement. This comparative review examines the effectiveness of counselling strategies and parental interventions in preventing social bullying amongst adolescents. The study is grounded in Social-Ecological Systems Theory, which explains how adolescent behaviour is shaped by observation, imitation, and interactions within the family, school, and wider social environments. Methodologically, this study employs a systematic literature review, drawing on empirical and theoretical studies from peer-reviewed journals, books, and credible reports. Sources were selected based on relevance, recency, and methodological rigour, with an emphasis on studies addressing adolescent bullying, counselling interventions, and the role of parents. The findings of this review reveal that both counselling strategies and parental interventions are effective in preventing social bullying; however, counselling appears to be more impactful in addressing underlying psychological issues and equipping adolescents with coping and social skills. This research further highlights that a multifaceted approach combining counselling, parental involvement, school-based interventions, and community support yields more sustainable outcomes. This review underlines important implications for policymakers, educators, and mental health |
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professionals seeking to prevent social bullying and promote positive adolescent development. It is recommended that policymakers support evidence-based interventions; educators integrate social-emotional learning into the curriculum; mental health professionals provide targeted counselling services; and parents maintain open communication, model positive behaviour, and seek professional support when necessary.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Bullying is repeated behaviour intended to hurt or intimidate someone. It is often carried out by someone with greater power or status (UNICEF, 2019). Bullying is a complex phenomenon involving the interaction of individual, social, and environmental factors (Swearer & Espelage, 2004). It is a form of aggressive behaviour in which one or more children deliberately intimidate, harass, or harm another child. According to Olweus, a person is considered a victim of bullying when they are exposed, repeatedly and over a prolonged period, to negative actions carried out by one or more other people (Olweus, 1993). According to the World Health Organisation (2018), bullying is a form of violence that can have long-term effects on a child's physical and mental health. Bullying can take various forms, including physical, verbal, and relational aggression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

The problem of bullying has become widespread and affects millions of children worldwide, with serious consequences for their mental health, well-being, and academic achievement (Hertz, Jelen, & Wilfert, 2017; Olweus, 2013). Bullying also occurs in Nigeria, where it has become a significant problem, particularly amongst school-age adolescents (Ogunfowora, 2015; Oyinlola, 2017). Bullying in Nigeria is often perpetrated by peers and can be influenced by cultural and social factors (Ogunfowora, 2015). For example, a study conducted in Lagos State found that 51.9 per cent of secondary school pupils reported having been victims of bullying, with the majority of perpetrators being peers (Ighaede-Edwards, Xiaoqun, Olawade, Ling, & Odetayo, 2023; Oyinlola, 2017).

Another systematic review conducted in 2025 reported prevalence rates ranging from 10% to 40% amongst adolescents, with relational bullying identified as one of the most common forms experienced by pupils. Victims were found to exhibit increased levels of anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and social withdrawal (Aleje & Adejumo, 2025). Further recent studies indicate that bullying behaviour is increasingly occurring via digital platforms and social media, thereby broadening the scope of social victimisation amongst adolescents (Falana, Ilevbare, & Adenike, 2025).

There are various complex factors influencing the prevalence of bullying amongst adolescents. For the majority of adolescents involved in bullying, the

behaviour stems from their psychological and social development. One of the main motivators is the desire to gain social status, power, or popularity within their peer group. By socially excluding or belittling others, adolescents may believe that they can enhance their own standing amongst their peers (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Peer pressure also plays a significant role; many adolescents engage in social bullying in an attempt to fit in or avoid becoming targets of bullying themselves, in response to the influence and expectations of their peer group (Hertz et al., 2017).

Furthermore, feelings of insecurity and low self-esteem are other psychological drivers. Adolescents who feel powerless or lack self-confidence may use social bullying as a mechanism to assert dominance or gain a sense of control over their environment (Ostrov, Kamper, & Hart, 2013). Another factor is a lack of empathy. Those who struggle to understand or care about others' feelings may not fully realise the negative impact of their behaviour, making them more likely to engage in bullying (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). Environmental factors also play a significant role; adolescents often learn by observing others, including family members, peers, or even media figures. When they witness bullying being rewarded or not challenged, they may imitate similar behavior (Bandura, 1973). Furthermore, some adolescents use social bullying as a coping mechanism to deal with anxiety or stress. In such cases, bullying can serve as a distraction or an outlet for emotions (Hertz et al., 2017). Finally, social bullying often occurs within group dynamics. It can take the form of a collective action, in which several individuals collaborate to target a victim, reinforcing each other's actions and creating a more hostile social environment (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

The consequences of bullying can be severe and long-lasting, including an increased risk of anxiety, depression, and, ultimately, suicidal thoughts (Hertz et al., 2017; Olweus, 2013). Bullying can also affect academic performance, as victims may avoid school or find it difficult to concentrate (Juvonen, Wang, & Espinoza, 2011). Furthermore, bullying can have a negative impact on adolescents' social and emotional development, including reduced self-esteem, social isolation, and difficulties in forming healthy relationships (Hinduja & Patchin, 2012). Social bullying is often subtle yet highly damaging; it remains a persistent and worrying problem amongst adolescents in Nigerian schools. Social bullying affects victims' emotional well-being, academic performance and long-term psychosocial development. Social bullying in Nigeria is characterised by behaviours such as ostracism, the spreading of rumours, and the manipulation of peer relationships. Although awareness of this issue is growing, many schools and families still struggle to identify effective strategies to prevent and address it.

Several empirical studies have shown that social bullying has significant psychosocial impacts amongst adolescents. For example, a study by (Kowalski, Limber, & Agatston, 2023) found that adolescents who experienced social exclusion, the spreading of rumours, and peer rejection reported higher levels of anxiety,

depression, and loneliness compared to adolescents who did not experience bullying. Similarly, Hutson et al. (2022) reported that victims of social bullying often exhibit low self-esteem and poor social adjustment, which negatively impacts their academic and interpersonal functioning. Furthermore, research by (Zych, Farrington, & Ttofi, 2022) revealed that social bullying is associated with increased emotional distress and reduced peer support amongst adolescents. In the Nigerian context, (Ojedokun & Balogun, 2021) found that students who experienced bullying were more likely to report psychological distress and social withdrawal. Similarly, Adewale et al. (2024) observed that social bullying significantly predicts emotional instability, poor peer relationships, and reduced engagement at school amongst secondary school pupils. These findings indicate that social bullying poses a serious threat to the social and emotional well-being of adolescents, highlighting the need for effective prevention and intervention strategies within school settings. For the reasons outlined above, it is crucial to investigate the prevalence, causes, and consequences of bullying amongst school-age adolescents in Nigeria, in order to develop effective strategies to prevent and address this issue.

This paper presents a comparative review of these strategies, examining their effectiveness, limitations, and implications for creating a safer and more supportive school environment. To conduct an in-depth examination of the prevalence of social bullying amongst school-aged adolescents in Nigeria, the Social-Ecological Model will be utilised, as this model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding bullying behaviour (Swearer & Espelage, 2004). The Social-Ecological Model explains bullying as a behaviour influenced by various interacting factors operating at different levels of the individual's environment. At the individual level, personal characteristics such as age, gender, personality traits, social skills, and prior experiences can increase or decrease the likelihood of engaging in bullying behavior (Hertz et al., 2017). For example, pupils with poor emotional regulation, aggressive tendencies, or inadequate social skills may be more likely to bully their peers. At the peer level, relationships and interactions amongst pupils play a significant role in shaping bullying behaviour. Rejection by peers, social exclusion, and the desire to gain acceptance or dominance within a peer group can drive bullying behaviour (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Pupils experiencing negative relationships with their peers may become either perpetrators or victims of bullying.

The school environment also contributes significantly to bullying behaviour. Factors such as school policies, disciplinary practices, teacher supervision, and the overall school climate can either hinder or facilitate bullying (Olweus, 2013). Schools with ineffective anti-bullying policies or weak enforcement mechanisms may experience higher levels of bullying, as perpetrators often assume their actions will go unpunished. Outside the school environment, societal influences also shape bullying behaviour. Social norms, values, and expectations can influence how

aggression and interpersonal conflict are perceived and managed. Societies that tolerate or promote aggressive and competitive behaviour may inadvertently increase the prevalence of bullying amongst adolescents (Hinduja & Patchin, 2012). Furthermore, cultural factors play a significant role in influencing bullying behaviour. Beliefs, values, and socio-cultural norms often determine patterns of interaction and acceptable behaviour within a society.

In the Nigerian context, cultural expectations regarding power relations, discipline, and social hierarchy may contribute to the occurrence of bullying amongst adolescents (Ogunfowora, 2015). Therefore, the Social Ecological Model suggests that bullying is a complex phenomenon arising from interactions among individual, peer, school, community, and cultural factors, all of which can contribute to the development and persistence of bullying behaviour.

Based on the above reasons, it can be emphasised that in order to develop effective strategies to prevent and address social bullying amongst school-age adolescents in Nigeria, A multidimensional approach is required in tackling social bullying. This study therefore aims to analyse the two most critical response mechanisms in preventing bullying in Nigeria, namely counselling and parenting intervention, which play a central role in shaping adolescents' behaviour and resilience.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative systematic literature review design to examine the effectiveness of counselling strategies and parental interventions in preventing social bullying amongst adolescents. A systematic literature review is suitable for synthesising existing empirical evidence and identifying patterns, themes and knowledge gaps relating to a specific phenomenon (Snyder, 2019). Data were collected from secondary sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, conference papers, and reports from leading organisations. Relevant literature was obtained via electronic databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, Scopus, and ERIC. The search process utilised keywords and phrases, including social bullying, relational bullying, bullying prevention among adolescents, counselling interventions, parental involvement, and anti-bullying strategies. The use of multiple databases enhanced the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the review process (Xiao & Watson, 2019). Studies were selected based on pre-defined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria comprised peer-reviewed studies published in English, studies focusing on adolescents, and studies addressing social bullying, counselling interventions, parental involvement, or bullying prevention strategies. Conversely, studies that were duplicates, unrelated to the research objectives, non-empirical, or focused exclusively on forms of bullying other than social bullying were excluded from this review. This selection process is in line with recommendations for conducting systematic reviews in social science research (Page et al., 2021).

Data extracted from the selected studies were analysed using thematic analysis. This approach enabled the identification, organisation and interpretation of recurring themes and patterns relating to the causes and consequences of social bullying, counselling interventions, the role of parents, and integrated prevention strategies. Thematic analysis is widely recognised as an effective method for synthesising qualitative evidence from various studies (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To ensure validity and reliability, only credible and scientific sources were included in this review, and findings were cross-checked across different studies to ensure consistency.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Prevalence of Bullying in Nigeria**

Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour characterised by deliberate, repeated and harmful actions directed at an individual or group, often involving a power imbalance between the perpetrator and the victim. It is a widespread social issue affecting individuals from various age groups, cultures, and backgrounds, particularly in school settings. Bullying can take various forms, each with unique characteristics but sharing the common aim of causing physical, emotional, psychological, or social harm to the victim.

One of the most visible forms of bullying is physical bullying, which involves the use of physical force or violence to intimidate, control, or harm another person. This can include behaviours such as hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, pinching, damaging personal belongings, or threatening to use physical violence (Olweus, 1993). Physical bullying often results in physical injury and can also cause emotional trauma and fear amongst victims. Another common form is verbal bullying, which involves using words to insult, mock, threaten, or humiliate another individual. Examples include calling someone by a derogatory name, mocking them, spreading hurtful rumours, and making demeaning comments (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Although verbal bullying does not involve physical contact, its impact can be just as damaging, often contributing to low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal.

Bullying is a widespread problem in Nigerian schools, with alarming statistics highlighting its prevalence. According to a 2023 study, 51.9 per cent of secondary school pupils in Nigeria reported having experienced at least one form of bullying, whilst 27.9 per cent admitted to being victims of bullying (Ighaede-Edwards et al., 2023). The study also revealed that 75% of bullying incidents occurred primarily in the classroom, and 58.3% of the perpetrators were classmates. Bullying rates in both urban and rural areas of Nigeria remain high, at around 90%; however, there are significant regional variations, with the southern region recording a rate of around 90% whilst the northern region remains at around 70% (Chidiebere Obioha et al., 2024). Further statistical analysis indicates that

between 70% and 85% of schoolchildren have experienced bullying (Adeosun et al., 2015), 40.4% of pupils aged 10–14 reported having been bullied, and 57.8 per cent of pupils in mainstream schools reported having experienced bullying (Raji et al., 2019).

In the North-East Ibadan Local Government Area, Oyo State, a study found that 67% of pupils in state secondary schools reported having experienced bullying within a six-month period. Common forms of bullying in the region include derogatory name-calling (70 per cent) and social exclusion (52.3 per cent) (Ibadan, 2018). These statistics highlight the urgent need for effective anti-bullying measures in Nigerian schools. Tackling social bullying in Nigeria requires a multifaceted approach involving schools, families, and policymakers. Intervention strategies that raise awareness, encourage positive social interaction and address the root causes of bullying such as family dynamics and socio-economic inequalities are crucial to reducing the prevalence of social bullying and its negative impact on adolescents.

### **Social Bullying in Nigeria and Its Evolution in the Digital Sphere**

Social bullying takes various forms. One of the most common is social exclusion, in which an individual is deliberately excluded from group activities, friendships, or social interactions, leading to feelings of rejection and isolation (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). A form of bullying closely linked to exclusion is social ostracism, which involves deliberately ignoring or avoiding someone to make them feel unwanted or cut off from their peers. Another common form is the spread of rumours, in which false or malicious information is circulated to damage a person's reputation and relationships (Ostrov et al., 2013). Similarly, gossip involves the dissemination of personal, embarrassing, or sensitive information about someone with the aim of humiliating or belittling them (Hertz et al., 2017).

Social or relational bullying focuses on damaging a person's relationships, social status, or reputation within a peer group. This form of bullying may involve spreading rumours, excluding someone from social activities, manipulating friendships, humiliating others in public, or encouraging peers to reject a particular individual (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Social bullying is often subtle and difficult to detect, yet it can have profound psychological and emotional consequences for the victim. Social bullying amongst adolescents in Nigerian schools has become a serious issue, with various studies revealing its high prevalence and diverse contributing factors. A study conducted in Ogun State found that 42.3 per cent of secondary school pupils reported having experienced social bullying, including behaviours such as social exclusion and the spreading of rumours (Adebanjo & Oladejo, 2021). Similarly, a study conducted in Calabar showed that 52.7% of pupils experienced social manipulation, a form of social bullying that affects their social status among their peers (Ige & Akintaro, 2023). At the national level, approximately 51.9 per cent of adolescents reported having been victims of at least one form of

bullying, with social bullying being one of the most common forms (Fawole, Okedare, & Reed, 2021).

Furthermore, social bullying can take the form of social sabotage, which involves deliberate attempts to undermine a person's friendships, social status, or acceptance within a peer group through lies, manipulation, or misleading information (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Public humiliation is another common tactic, in which the victim is mocked or humiliated in front of others as a means of exerting power or control (Olweus, 2013). Some perpetrators also resort to manipulation, exploiting feelings of guilt, fear, threats, or emotional pressure to control the behaviour or relationships of others (Hertz et al., 2017). More subtle forms include gaslighting, in which individuals are manipulated into doubting their own perceptions, memories, or experiences, thereby undermining their self-confidence and emotional stability (Simon, 1996).

In contemporary society, social bullying has increasingly extended into the digital environment through cyberbullying, which involves the use of social media, messaging platforms, and other online technologies to harass, intimidate, humiliate, or socially isolate victims. The rapid development of digital technology has given rise to cyberbullying, which involves the use of electronic devices and online platforms to harass, intimidate, threaten, or humiliate others (Hinduja & Patchin, 2012). Cyberbullying can occur via social media, email, text messages, online gaming platforms, and other digital communication channels. Unlike traditional forms of bullying, cyberbullying can occur at any time and reach a wide audience, thereby exacerbating its impact on victims. Bullying can also take the form of psychological or emotional bullying, which involves manipulation, intimidation, coercion or emotional abuse aimed at undermining a person's self-confidence, self-esteem or emotional stability (Olweus, 1993). Such behaviour may include blackmail, threats, insults, ostracism, or deliberate attempts to instil fear and insecurity in the victim. In some cases, bullying is directed at specific personal characteristics or identities. Sexual bullying involves unwanted comments, gestures, jokes, rumours, or other inappropriate sexual behaviour intended to harass or intimidate a person (Association, 2015). Similarly, racial bullying occurs when individuals are targeted because of their race, ethnicity, skin colour, or cultural background through the use of racial slurs, stereotypes, discriminatory comments, or exclusionary practices (Benbenishty, Astor, & Marachi, 2002).

People with disabilities are often vulnerable to disability-based bullying, which involves harassment, exclusion, or victimisation on the basis of a physical, cognitive, emotional, or developmental disability (Mishna, 2003). Bullying may also be based on physical appearance or social characteristics. Weight-based bullying targets individuals because of their body size or weight, whether they are perceived to be overweight or underweight (Puhl, Peterson, & Luedicke, 2015). Similarly, appearance-based bullying focuses on physical traits such as facial features, skin

colour, hairstyle, clothing, or other visible characteristics (Eisenberg, Neumark-Sztainer, & Perry, 2003). Socio-economic bullying occurs when a person is teased, excluded or discriminated against because of their family's economic status, occupation, living conditions or access to resources (Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2010).

In online environments, bullying can take more specific forms. Cyberstalking involves the persistent use of digital technology to monitor, threaten, harass, or intimidate others, which often causes significant fear and emotional distress (Bocij, 2004). Another form, known as 'flaming', refers to the posting or sending of hostile, insulting, or aggressive messages on online forums, social media platforms, chat rooms, or other digital spaces (Leary, 2012). These behaviours contribute to a hostile online environment and can have severe psychological consequences for victims. Overall, bullying is a multifaceted phenomenon that extends beyond physical aggression to include verbal, social, psychological, and technology-mediated forms.

In the Nigerian context, the impact of social bullying is often exacerbated by cultural and institutional factors. Social norms that inhibit open discussion of emotional difficulties, coupled with inadequate enforcement of child protection and anti-bullying policies, often result in incidents of bullying being ignored or downplayed (Okoiye, Adebayo, & Ayodele, 2015). In many schools, social bullying is still regarded as a normal aspect of adolescent interaction, rather than a serious problem requiring intervention. Consequently, victims may suffer in silence, and the long-term psychological, academic, and social consequences may remain unaddressed. This highlights the need for comprehensive counselling services, effective parental involvement, and school-based intervention programmes aimed at creating a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment for adolescents.

### **Signs of Social Bullying in Victims**

Several factors have been identified as predictors of bullying amongst adolescents. For example, lower secondary school pupils are more likely to experience bullying than upper secondary school pupils. Gender also plays a role, as boys are more likely to engage in bullying behaviour, whilst girls are more likely to be victims of bullying, particularly social exclusion (Fawole et al., 2021). The school environment is another key factor, with pupils at boarding schools more likely to either perpetrate or experience bullying (Ige & Akintaro, 2023). Family dynamics, such as frequent parental conflict or the use of physical punishment, increase the likelihood of bullying behaviour, with adolescents experiencing family problems being more likely to bully others or to be victims themselves (Fawole et al., 2021). Furthermore, socio-economic status influences bullying, as pupils from low-income families are more likely to experience or be involved in bullying behavior (Ige & Akintaro, 2023).

When a school-aged adolescent becomes a victim of social bullying, they often display a range of emotional, behavioural, physical, social, and academic signs or symptoms. Emotionally, victims may experience anxiety, characterised by feelings of nervousness, fear, or unease, particularly around certain individuals or peer groups. Depression may also arise, where the individual feels persistently sad, hopeless, or emotionally detached from others. These emotional disturbances can lead to a decline in self-esteem, whereby the teenager begins to view themselves as worthless, inadequate, or unimportant. Consequently, they may withdraw emotionally, avoiding social interactions and activities due to the fear and pressure caused by bullying.

Behaviourally, victims may begin to avoid social situations or activities altogether. Marked behavioural changes may occur, such as becoming extremely aggressive or extremely passive. Sleep disturbances, including difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares, may also arise as a result of ongoing stress and anxiety. Furthermore, the teenager may lose interest in hobbies or activities they previously enjoyed, reflecting a deeper emotional impact. Physically, the effects of bullying can manifest through various somatic symptoms. These symptoms may include changes in appetite, frequent complaints of headaches or stomachaches, fatigue from lack of sleep, and signs of physical stress, such as muscle tension or trembling. Socially, these young people may become increasingly isolated, distancing themselves from friends and family. They may struggle to form new relationships or maintain existing ones, which often results in the loss of friendships. This social withdrawal can be exacerbated by feelings of alienation, where victims feel like outsiders or are treated as such by their peers.

Academically, social bullying negatively affects pupils' ability to concentrate, participate actively in class, and maintain motivation to learn. Victims often report increased absenteeism, a decline in academic performance, and reduced involvement in school activities due to fear of facing a hostile social environment (Akpan & Ojinnaka, 2010). A decline in academic performance may become apparent, and the student may begin to avoid school or certain classes altogether. Concentration in class may be disrupted, and the student may lose interest in both academic and extracurricular activities due to emotional stress.

In some cases, persistent victimisation can lead to a change of school or even dropping out altogether. Socially, victims often struggle to form and maintain healthy relationships with their peers. The ongoing experience of exclusion and rejection can cause adolescents to withdraw from social interaction, leading to isolation and reduced opportunities to develop effective communication and interpersonal skills. According to (Nansel et al., 2001), such social difficulties can have long-term consequences that extend into adulthood, affecting future relationships, workplace interactions, and overall social adjustment. Behaviourally, the consequences of social bullying may manifest as aggression, hostility, and

antisocial behaviour. Some victims respond to bullying with retaliatory aggression, whilst others adopt maladaptive coping mechanisms such as substance misuse, particularly in environments where drugs and alcohol are readily accessible (Atilola, 2012). These behaviours may further increase the risk of disciplinary problems, poor health outcomes, and ongoing bullying.

### **Strategies for Preventing Social Bullying Among Adolescents in School Settings in Nigeria**

Preventing social bullying in schools requires a collaborative effort between parents, counsellors, and the school system. Each of these stakeholders plays a vital role in creating a safe and inclusive environment for pupils. The following is a strategic framework for the prevention of social bullying in schools through a multi-collaborative approach:

Table 1: *Strategic Framework for the Prevention and Management of Social Bullying Among Adolescents*

| <b>Stakeholders</b> | <b>Prevention Strategies</b>                                                                                                                               | <b>Management Strategies</b>                                                                                                                                               | <b>Expected Outcomes</b>                                                                                          |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Parents             | Maintain open communication; teach empathy and respect; monitor online and offline activities; set a positive example; work in partnership with the school | Provide emotional support; strengthen the parent-child relationship; seek professional help if necessary; work together with teachers and counsellors to address incidents | Increased resilience, improved social behaviour, early detection of bullying, a stronger emotional support system |
| Teachers            | Integrate social-emotional learning (SEL); promote inclusive classroom practices; encourage positive peer relationships; reinforce anti-bullying rules     | Address incidents promptly; implement restorative practices; facilitate classroom discussions; refer cases to counselling                                                  | A positive classroom atmosphere, a reduction in incidents of bullying, and improved relationships between pupils  |

|                            |                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| School Counsellor          | Organise awareness programmes on bullying; teach social skills, empathy and conflict resolution; monitor the school climate; identify students at risk | Provide individual and group counselling; facilitate mediation; implement cognitive-behavioural interventions; support both victims and perpetrators | Improved problem-solving skills, behavioural change amongst perpetrators, improved emotional wellbeing of pupils |
| School Administration      | Develop and enforce anti-bullying policies; establish reporting mechanisms; organise awareness campaigns; train staff                                  | Investigating reported incidents; implementing disciplinary measures; coordinating support services; monitoring the outcomes of interventions        | A safe and inclusive school environment, accountability, and effective management of bullying                    |
| Community (Policy-Makers)  | Supporting anti-bullying legislation; funding intervention programmes; promoting public awareness campaigns                                            | Providing referral services; supporting rehabilitation programmes; monitoring policy implementation                                                  | A sustainable anti-bullying culture and a strengthened child protection system                                   |
| Collaborating Stakeholders | Strengthening partnerships between parents, schools, counsellors and the community; sharing information and resources                                  | Implementing multidisciplinary interventions; evaluating programme effectiveness using a data-driven approach                                        | Holistic prevention and long-term reduction of social bullying                                                   |

A review of Table 1 above concludes that the prevention and management of social bullying amongst adolescents requires a multi-stakeholder approach involving parents, counsellors, teachers, school administrators, and policymakers. Effective prevention is achieved through the development of empathy, social-emotional learning, a positive school climate, and parental involvement, whilst

response relies on timely counselling interventions, family support, restorative practices, and coordinated stakeholder collaboration. The integration of these strategies is expected to reduce bullying behaviour and improve adolescents' psychological, social, and academic well-being.

## **CONCLUSION**

In addressing social bullying amongst adolescents, this study found that schools require a collaborative approach involving counsellors, parents, teachers, school administrators, mental health professionals, and policymakers. These findings highlight the need for comprehensive prevention and intervention programmes that target the root causes of bullying, mitigate its negative consequences, and promote positive social interactions amongst adolescents. Schools should implement social-emotional learning programmes and provide adequate training for teachers and school staff on bullying prevention and intervention. Mental health professionals should offer evidence-based counselling interventions tailored to the developmental needs of adolescents, whilst policymakers should strengthen and enforce anti-bullying policies and provide adequate funding for prevention initiatives. Parents must remain actively involved in their children's lives through open communication, setting a positive example, and cooperating with the school. Through ongoing counselling services, supportive parental involvement, and coordinated efforts by stakeholders, a safer, more inclusive and emotionally healthy school environment can be created to enhance adolescents' overall well-being, academic success and social development.

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