

# Students' Perception of Causes and Effect of Teachers' Psychological Abuse in Senior Secondary Schools in Borno State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

This study was carried out on the students' perception of the causes and effect of teachers' psychological abuse in senior secondary schools in Borno State, Nigeria. Different forms of psychological abuse, perceptions, causes and effect of psychological abuse were discussed. The main objective of the study is to determine the perception of students on the cause and effect of psychological abuse. Two hypotheses were raised and analysed, and the first was concluded that, there was no significant difference between male and female students perception on the causes of psychological abuse, the second hypothesis also conclude that there was no significant difference between male and female students' perception on the effect of psychological abuse. It was revealed that students of senior secondary school in Borno State perceived causes of psychological abuse to be late coming, poor performance and the use of vulgar language by the teachers. It was therefore recommended that awareness programme such as workshops, seminars and conferences should be conducted by the stakeholders, for teachers, parents and students to enlighten them on dimensions of psychological abuses within the school context and home, and the effect of psychological abuse on students. School administrators should also set up body to check the prevalence of psychological abuse and possible control measures. The school counsellor should always educate the teachers and the students on the indicators of psychological abuse in schools. Teachers should develop effective verbal communication and good listening skills in the classrooms.

**Keywords:** students, teacher, causes, effect, psychological, abuse.

## 1. Introduction

Child abuse, also known as Child maltreatment, is a serious problem in the contemporary society around the world including Nigeria. Furthermore, Shumba (2009) opined that abuse of students by teachers in schools is now a social problem locally and globally. In Nigeria, child abuse is defined as a form of cruelty to a child's physical, moral or marital, wellbeing of a child of 18 years old or below (National Child Rights Implementation Committee, NCRIC, 1995). Child abuse is different from parents' use of corporal punishment to discipline. Often parents, as well as counsellors, view occasional spankings (without causing injury) and the like, as appropriate and even necessary when offenses are serious. Therefore, it is necessary to ascertain whether the punishments represent a pattern of abuse rather than an isolated incident. In an attempt to clarify the concept of abuse, Murdock and Miller (2003) reviewed literatures and concluded that child abuse or neglect can be classified according to three separate categories of maltreatment. One of these is physical child abuse; like injuries from beatings inflicted on children by parents or guardians; another category of child abuse is sexual exploitation of a child by adult. A third category is psychological abuse, especially through damaging words.

Psychological abuse is a form of abuse characterized by a person subjecting or exposing another to behaviour that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder. Such abuse is often associated with situations of power imbalance, such as abusive relationships, bullying, abuse in the workplace, and in schools, (Dutton, Goodman, Bennett, 2000). According to the University of Illinois Counselling Centre (2007), psychological abuse is any kind of abuse that is emotional rather than physical in nature. It can include anything from verbal abuse and constant criticism to more subtle tactics, such as intimidation, manipulation, and refusal to ever be pleased; and the psychological abuse can take many forms. Three general patterns of abusive behaviour include aggressing, denying, and minimizing. Blaming, shaming, and name calling are a few identifiers of verbal abuse which can affect a victim psychologically. The victim's self-worth and psychological well-being is altered and even diminished by the verbal abuse and the result is psychologically abused victim (Smith and Segal, 2014). Furthermore, it is probably the most prevalent, the most cruel and most destructive of all forms of abuse (Aluede, 2004; Hein, 2006). High prevalence of emotional child abuse was reported from Nigeria, India, United States, Zimbabwe and Cyprus (Theoklitou, Kabitsis and Kabitsi, 2012).

The Psychological maltreatment or abuse is the most devastating form of all the three forms of child abuse (sexual, psychological and physical), because of its traumatic effects in the development of school children. It is different from other forms of child abuse because it cannot be easily detected. Unlike other forms of abuse, a perpetrator of psychological maltreatment can abuse many victims at one particular moment. It has even been reported that some students experience their first psychological abuse at school (Kacker, Varadan and Kumar,

2007). This matter has been recognized as a universal, complicated and persistent problem, which is increasing but unfortunately it has not been studied decisively (Ahmed, Wan-Yuen, Marret, Guat-Sim, Othman and Chinna, 2015). Psychological abuse is classified into the following forms: rejecting, ignoring, terrorizing, isolating, corrupting, exploiting. In the school setting, where teaching and learning take place, the importance of children's mental health should not be underestimated. Excessive psychological abuse from teachers can negatively affect children and may have adverse effects on their learning (Okoza, Aluede, and Ojugo, 2011).

## **2. Statement of Problems**

Teachers are employed in schools to perform specific roles that will support students' crave for academic excellence. For students to realize this, the academic environment must be devoid of psychological abuse and intimidation. Studies have shown that in school settings teachers are not expected to serve only as educators but also as important socialising agents whose responsibility will include fulfilling basic social-emotional needs, such as belongingness and esteem needs of students. Teachers differ from others in that they are more likely to have the opportunity to observe behavioural changes in students when psychological abuse occurs. They are unique in identifying change in the students' behaviour and academic performance.

Researches on child abuse have been plagued with much attention placed on physical and sexual abuse. However, psychological abuse has been largely ignored and scarcely studied (Ahmed, Wan-Yuen, Marret, Guat-Sim, Othman and Chinna, 2015). Yet, psychological abuse produces the most destructive consequences of all forms of child abuse. The duty of an adult in educational setting is to provide a safe environment that is capable of supporting and promoting students' dignity and development. The researcher observed that this wasn't the case in our public secondary schools in Jere local government area of Borno state. Students have been abused under the excuse of corporal discipline in the name of modelling the students' behaviour. Studies even reported that some students have their first experience of psychological abuse in school this matter has been recognised as universal, complicated and persistence that is increasing but unfortunately has not been studied decisively (Kacker, Varadan and Kumar, 2007). These therefore, have prompted the researcher to carry out a study; on students' perception of causes and effect of psychological abuse by teachers in public secondary schools in Jere local government area.

## **3. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are to determine the:

1. Perception of student on causes of psychological abuse by teachers
2. Differences between male and female students' perception on causes of psychological abuse
3. Perception of students on effect psychological abuse by teachers
4. Differences between male and female students' perception on the effects of psychological abuse

### **3.1 Research Question**

1. What is the perception of students on the causes of psychological abuse?
2. What is the perception of students on the effect of psychological abuse?

### **3.2 Hypothesis**

For the purpose of this study the following hypotheses were put forward for determination.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female students perception of causes of psychological abuse.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female students perception of effects of psychological abuse.

## **4 Review of Related Literature**

The theoretical framework of this study is based on Rogers' theory of the self (1951), which is considered to be humanistic, existential, and phenomenological. His theory is based directly on the "phenomenal field" The central concept in Rogers's theory is the self, an organized, consistent set of perceptions of and beliefs about oneself (Rogers, 1959). Once formed, plays a powerful role in guiding our perceptions and directing our behaviour. Rogers believed that our behaviour is not a reaction to unconscious conflicts, but a response (European Journal of Educational Studies, 2009) to our immediate conscious experience of self and environment (Rogers, 1951). Rogers (1951) believed that, without undue pressure from others, individuals naturally move toward personal growth, self-acceptance, and self-actualization, which is the fulfilment of their potential for love, creativity, and meaning. Psychological abuse is an undue pressure that can stifle such fulfilment in the life of children.

Rogers (1902-1987) began his inquiry about human nature with people who were troubled. Furthermore, Rogers (1961) examined the conditioned controlling world that kept them from having positive self-concept and

reaching their full potential as human beings. Under the stress of pressure from society and family, however, people can develop rigid and distorted perspectives of self and can lose touch with their own values and needs. This can lead to emotional distress, unhealthy behaviour, and even loss of touch with reality. Psychological abuse will remove genuineness, acceptance and empathy that are the water, sun and nutrients that enable people to grow like vigorous oak tree. For “as persons are accepted and prized, they tend to develop a more caring attitude towards themselves” (Rogers, 1980).

Furthermore, Rogers theorized that at the beginning of their lives, children cannot distinguish between themselves and their environment. As they interact with their world, children begin to distinguish between the “me” and “not me.” The self-concept continues to develop in response to our life experiences, though many aspects of it remain quite stable over time (Passer & Smith, 2001). Once the self – concept is established, there is a tendency to maintain it, for it helps us to understand ourselves in relation to the world. We therefore have needs for self-consistency (an absence of conflict among self –perceptions) and congruence (consistency between self – perceptions and experience). The self is a whole, consisting of one’s self – perceptions (how attractive I am, how well I get along with others, how good a scholar I am) and the value we attach to these perceptions (good / bad, worthy/ unworthy for example). Self –concept refers to individuals’ overall perception of their abilities, behaviour, and personality. In Rogers’s view, a person who has an inaccurate self-concept is likely to be maladjusted. It is believed that psychological abuse can cause such maladjustment in children. A child who is abused emotionally will suffer severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, self-harming behaviour or aggressive behaviour towards others. Carl Rogers’s humanistic theory is relevant to research work on psychological abuse of students by teachers based on these reasons:

Firstly, we are born with an innate need for positive regard that is, for acceptance, sympathy and love from others, says Rogers. Psychological abuse of students will negate such fulfilments in students’ lives. A teacher who spurn, reject, ignore, hurts, and isolate children will stifle the fulfilment of Rogers’s species specific characteristics. Consequently, development and productivity of children may be hampered. It is therefore apparent that when we are abreast with Rogers innate tendencies of human needs, we may be able to conduct good classroom management that will foster positive interaction in teacher children relationship and learning.

Secondly, self – concept is a central theme in Rogers’ and other humanists views. Self – concept is individuals’ total perceptions of their abilities, behaviour, and personality. Psychological abuse of students may adversely affect development of positive self-concept. Students who are verbally assaulted, denigrated, belittled will not thrive in developing positive self – concept. Self – concept is still being developed in childhood and adolescence, much more than in adulthood (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2004). A period of significant experience of psychological abuse of students by teachers in the classroom while one’s self- concept is undergoing substantial change may have long – lasting effects on the content or structure of self – concept. It is obvious that any experience we may come across that will be at variance with our self – concept may predispose us to threat and anxiety. Psychological abuse is a key toxic ingredient in the development of such neuropsychiatric problems. Rogers’s theory serves as an awareness process in the avoidance of circumstances that will lead to emotional block in the lives of growing children.

Thirdly, Rogers Unconditional Positive Regard, empathy and genuineness should serve as guiding principles in classroom management. Rogers recognized that when person’s behaviour is below acceptable standards, inappropriate or even obnoxious, the person still needs respects, comfort and love of others. A classroom where there is incidence and prevalence of psychological abuse of students, these humanistic characteristics are conspicuously absent. To develop good classroom ambience, we need to cultivate the spirit of empathy, genuineness and good listening ability. When unconditional positive regard is given little attention and conditional positive regard is highly emphasized, it leads to lower self-esteem. Psychological abuse which is also known as emotional abuse/maltreatment occurs at home, school and workplace. It is described as the hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviours which are directed at gaining compliance from others (Keashly, 1998). Furthermore, abuse of students by teachers in schools is now a social problem locally and globally (Shumba, 2009).

Teachers play multifaceted roles within schools including acting in loco–parentis, counsellors, advisers and researchers within the school and in society as agents of social change. As such, the society entrust authority, power and respect and also students look up to teachers for their guidance and assistance in dealing with their social problems (Makura and Shumba, 2009). It is expected that teachers have a mutual working relationship with both students and society. However, some teachers abuse the trust and their loco–parentis role within the school and abuse their students and take advantage of young children who cannot make their own decisions. (Shumba 1999). Research also shows that most child abuse victims rarely report their perpetrators to the law enforcing agents for fear of reprisals and reported cases are merely a tip of the iceberg (Shumba, 2004). Studies on child abuse show that the problem is widespread and varies from culture to culture and from society to society. A study by Shumba, (2011) on Student Teachers’ Perceptions of the Nature, Extent and Causes of Child Abuse

by Teachers in Zimbabwean Secondary Schools using a sample of 28 participants (15 male, 13 female; aged 21 to 45 years) who were attached to experienced teachers as their mentors for a whole year using the qualitative research design on the purposively sampling show that the participants' responses about child abuse by teachers is viewed as the maltreatment of children that involve 'irresponsible behaviour by an adult in charge of learners.

Studies (Nesbit and Philpot, 2002; Okoza, Aluede and Ojugo, 2009) have indicated that psychological abuse experienced by students in the classroom can take several forms. These forms range from rejecting, isolating, discriminating, degrading, terrorising, dominating, ignoring through to verbal assaulting. A study carried out by Oluede, Ojugo and Okoza, (2012) on Emotional abuse of secondary school students by teachers a survey of 1559 sampled students was used. The result reveals percentage of students that experienced each of the eight forms of psychological abuse were: terrorizing (86.2 per cent); dominating (83.3 per cent); discriminating (82.8 per cent); rejecting (74.7 per cent); verbal assaulting (74.1 per cent); ignoring (69 per cent); degrading (66.4 per cent) and isolating (33.6 per cent). The study reveals that 66.4 per cent and 86.2 per cent of the students are victims of psychological abuse. Benbenishty, Zeira, Astor, and Khoury-Kassabri, (2002), also have presented evidence that indicate incidents of psychological maltreatment of students especially among junior high and senior high school students by educational staff in Israel. It was also revealed that about a quarter (24.9 percent) of their sample reported being humiliated or cursed at least once during the month prior to survey administration. They further observed that physical victimization and sexual harassment, the students maintained were less frequent. Shumba, (2002) also reports very similar situation in Zimbabwe. Hence it may be correct to conclude that incidents of psychological maltreatment of students by their educational staff seem high across the world.

Some teachers are unaware of the impact of their behaviour upon children. It is possible that teachers are also unaware that psychological abuse is a form of child abuse that has serious damaging consequences on the development of children. They may perceive psychological abuse as a means of molding and shaping children's behaviour. Teachers may also lack alternatives in dealing with children who misbehave in schools. In a study by Shumba, (2011) on Student Teachers' Perceptions of the Nature, Extent and Causes of Child Abuse by Teachers in Zimbabwean Secondary Schools, A retrospective study was conducted using a purposive sample of 28 participants (15 male, 13 female; aged 21 to 45 years), using content analysis. The study discovered that the teachers in Zimbabwean schools sexually, physically and psychologically abuse their students in schools. The study also revealed that most prevailing form of child abuse perpetrated by teachers on their pupils, indicated by participants in their responses is psychological or emotional abuse. Students view psychological or emotional abuse within the school context as: 'the ill-treatment of children by people entrusted for their upkeep, An action or verbal act of misconduct by teachers against students, using abusive language on pupils because of family or professional frustration, using all forms of foul language on pupils that hurts their self-concept; verbal abuse by both male and female teachers, that is, verbal assault or use of vulgar language at assembly. This may cause psychological or emotional damage on the child; scolding, humiliating misbehaving pupils in front of the whole class that is, degrading, stress, and embarrassment. Calling pupils names in front of other pupils is an act of emotional abuse on pupils, use of vulgar language by teachers, for example, male and female teachers; labelling pupils as useless, stupid, and dull; causes the students to be psychologically abused.

According to Shumba (2002), in true cases of psychological abuse, the consequences of being subjected to it is that it becomes the dominant characteristic in the child's life. As a result, those who are psychologically abused don't become competent adults, capable of developing to their full potentials. In the same vein, Shumba (2004) warned that students should not be psychologically maltreated because: it humiliates and dehumanizes them; it destroys their self-concept or image; it makes them to hate school; it de-motivates and discourages them learning; it deforms their character; it makes them shy; it makes them confused; it disgraces them; and it frightens them. In addition, psychologically abused school children tend to exhibit the following symptoms: excessive worry about school performance; change from positive to negative self-perception; verbalized fear that teacher would hurt them; excessive crying about school; headaches; stomach aches; decreased functioning in social situation outside class; nightmares or sleep disturbances; school avoidance; and withdrawal behaviour or depression. Psychological abuse can severely damage a person's sense of self-worth and perception. In children, it can impair emotional/psychological development including intelligence, recognition, perception, attention, imagination, and moral development. Furthermore, psychologically abused students tend to suffer a greater decline in psychological development which usually lowers their self-esteem, and also tend to have a negative perception about themselves, their abilities and the world around.

A psychologically maltreated student may learn to fear the teacher rather than respect him/ her. The teacher becomes an aversive individual in the student's life, someone to escape from or avoid. At other times, these children are usually hyper vigilant by being fearful, suspicious and mistrustful, or always on the lookout for potential dangers. Often, they are moody and afraid to express their feelings (Aluede, 2004).

## 5. Methodology

This chapter is discussed under the following sub-headings: Research design, population and sample, research

instrument, procedure for data collection and method of data analysis.

### **5.1 Research Design**

This study adopted survey design. Survey according to bandele, (2004) is a descriptive design that uses a representative sample to collect data for systematic description of existing situation or phenomenon. It is concerned with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting existing conditions, prevailing practices, beliefs, and attitudes among others. Oche, (2007) defines survey design as one in which a group of people is studied by collecting and analysing data through the use of such instrument as questionnaire from only a few population considered to be a representative sample of the entire population. Survey design was therefore considered applicable to this study for its particular interest in collecting data using just a few students considered to be a representative sample of the entire students of government day secondary school in Jere local government area of Borno state.

### **5.2 Population and Sample Size**

The two initial government day secondary schools in Jere Local Government Area form the population for this study, which comprises of 160 students. Stratified random sampling was used to select the sample. In school A, 50 students were sampled consisting of 25 male and 25 female while school B consist of 15 male and 15 female were sampled making it a total of 30, summing up to 80 students which form the sample size. Questionnaires were administered to the 80 students and out of the 80 questionnaires, 80 were retrieved and analysed.

### **5.3 Research Instrument**

The instrument used for data collection during the course of this study was a questionnaire designed by the researcher and was tagged; Students Perception of Causes and Effect of Psychological Abuse by Teachers (SPCEPAT). The instrument consist of sections, section A which contains the demographic characteristics of the students, section B determines the students' perceptions on causes of psychological abuse and also the students' perception on effects of psychological abuse by teachers.

The instrument was validated and made reliable by some expert in measurement and evaluation unit of the education department. Validation according to Odo, (1992) is the process of making sure that the instrument really test the variables or categories the researcher has claimed he/she wants to test wants to test in he/her studies. In this study therefore, the researcher, haven constructed the instrument, provided the respondents with clear guidelines on what is expected of them. The guideline included among other things, the purpose of the study, research questions or hypotheses. This idea was to help the respondent to determine which item actually elicited the information they intended to elicit.

Reliability of instrument according to Odo, (1992) involves the use of same measuring object to measure, test or evaluate the same object at different periods in time and at each time receiving the same or similar result. The researcher therefore employed test-re-test technique to determine the reliability of the research instrument used in the present study. The researcher administered the instrument on 10 respondents who had the same characteristics as the main survey group and this were randomly selected. The instrument was re-administered to the same group of respondents and the score of the reliability coefficient was 0.81 which shows that the instrument was reliable.

### **5.4 Methods of Data Analysis**

The data gathered from the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistic, the descriptive comprises of percentage and frequency; it was employed to regroup the data and analyses the demographic variables and research questions. While t-test was used to test hypothesis 1 which is the test of significance difference between the perception of male and female students on the causes of psychological abuse by teachers. T-test according to Nwana (2005) is one the family of statistical techniques which can enable an investigator to determine whether group of values are essentially the same or significantly different from each other. It is a technique that is specifically suited for comparing the means of two groups which are independent of each other and whose numbers relatively small. In the same way, hypothesis 2 was tested using t-test to find out if there is any significant difference between perception of male and female students on the effect of psychological abuse by teachers.

### **5.5 Data Analysis, Results and Discussion**

This chapter dealt with data analyses, results and discussions. The methods of analyses used include descriptive statistics, t-test was employed to test the hypotheses. Eighty (80) questionnaires were administered to the respondents (students of Government day secondary school Mairi and government day secondary school Sanda Kyarimi).

### 5.6 Data Analyses and Results

Each of the research questions and hypotheses raised in this study was presented and analysed in the following tables.

**Table 4.1: Student's Perception on Causes of Psychological Abuse**

Causes of Psychological Abuse	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	f	%	f	%
Coming to school late	19	48%	18	45%	37	46%
Fighting in the class	07	18%	01	03%	08	10%
Poor performance in the class	02	05%	20	50%	22	28%
Leaving the school before closing time	12	30%	01	03%	13	16%
Habitual truancy	00	00%	00	00%	00	00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey

Table 4.1 revealed that Majority 46% of the respondents responded that coming late to school causes psychological abuse, 27% reported poor performance, 16.3% reported leaving school before closing time and 10% reported that fighting in class was the cause of psychological abuse. Hence it can be concluded that coming late to school was the predominant cause of psychological abuse followed by poor performance in class, in public secondary school in Jere local Government

**Table 4.2: Student's Perception on Effect of Psychological Abuse**

S/No.	Statements	Frequency and Percentage of Respondents					
		Yes		No		Not Sure	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Do you think low self-esteem is one the effect of psychological abuse?	53	66%	19	24%	08	10%
2.	After being abused, do you always worry about your school performance?	40	50%	23	29%	17	21%
3.	Do you fear your teacher?	47	59%	26	33%	07	09%
4.	Are you always moody and afraid to express yourself in the class?	49	61%	14	18%	17	21%

Source: Field Survey

Table 4.2 shows that majority (66.3%) of the students responded that low self-esteem was an effect of psychological abuse, 61.3% reported moodiness and being afraid of expressing themselves, 58.8% reported fear for their teacher and 50% reported worry about school performance. The result implies that low self-esteem, moodiness, fear of expressing self, having fear for teachers and worrying about school performance is the perception of students on **causes** of psychological abuse.

**Hypothesis Ho1:** There is no significant difference between male and female students' perceptions of causes of psychological abuse.

**Table 4.3: Show differences between male and female students' perception and causes of psychological abuse.**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SEM	df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Causes	Male	40	3.8250	1.31826	.20844	78	-0.383	0.703	Not Sig.
	Female	40	3.9250	.99711	.15766				

Source: Field Survey

Table 4.3 revealed that, the mean differences between the male and female students do not appear very insignificant, and  $t = -.383$  with a  $df = 78$  at a significant level of  $.703$ . therefore the null hypothesis which says there is no significant difference between male and female students' perception and causes of psychological abuses in the public Secondary school students in Jere local government is accepted.

**Hypothesis Ho2:** There is no significant difference between Male and Female students' perception on effect of psychological abuse.

**Table 4.4: Show Difference between Male and Female students' Perception on Effect of Psychological Abuse**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SEM	df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Effect	Male	40	9.3750	2.44622	.38678	78	-1.024	0.309	Not Sig.
	Female	40	9.8750	1.88363	.29783				

Source: Field Survey

Table 4.2.2b shows, t-test revealed that, the mean differences between the male and female students do not appear very insignificant, and  $t = -1.024$  with a  $df = 78$  at a significant level of  $.309$ . Therefore the null hypothesis which says there is no difference between male and female students' perception of the effects of

psychological abuse in public secondary school in Jere local Government is accepted.

### 5.7 Summary of Findings

1. The analysis revealed that 73% of the students don't have an idea of what psychological abuse is all about and it was revealed that coming to school late and poor performance were the dominant causes of psychological abuse as perceived by the students.
2. The study also revealed that low self-esteem, moodiness, fear of expressing self and fear of teachers are the prevailing effects of psychological abuse on students.
3. It was also discovered that there was no difference between the perceptions of students on the causes of psychological abuse base on gender.
4. The result also shows that there was no difference between the perceptions of the students on the effect of psychological abuse in schools based on gender.

### 5.8 Discussions

Psychological abuse which is the most devastating form of abuse, has a traumatic effect on students' life. The result of the findings revealed that 72.5% of the students don't have an idea of psychological abuse and also brought to light the perceived causes of psychological abuse as perceived by secondary school students to be; coming to school late and poor performance. This finding confirms the statement made by Kabitsi and Kabitsis (2012) which states that psychological abuse is different from other forms of child abuse because it cannot be easily detected. Also Ahmed, Wan-Yuen, Marret, Guat-Sim, Othman and Chinna, (2015) states that this matter has been recognised as a universal, complicated and persistence problem which is increasing, but unfortunately has not been studied decisively.

It was also discovered that the students perceived; low self-esteem, moodiness, fear of expressing self and fear of teachers as effects of psychological abuse in public primary schools. According to Shumba (2002), in true cases of psychological abuse, the consequences of being subjected to it, is that it becomes the dominant characteristic in the child's life. As a result, those who are psychologically abused don't become competent adults, capable of developing to their full potentials. In the same vein, Shumba (2004) warned that students should not be psychologically maltreated because: it humiliates and dehumanizes them; it destroys their self-concept or image; it makes them to hate school; it de-motivates and discourages them learning; it deforms their character; it makes them shy; it makes them confused; it disgraces them; and it frightens them.

It was also discovered that there was no significant differences between the perceptions of male and female students on the causes of psychological abuse, with respect to hypothesis  $H_{01}$  which states that there is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on causes of psychological abuse, the result reveals that there was no significant difference between male and female students' perception on causes of psychological abuse in public secondary schools in Jere local government area of Borno state. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted and concluded that gender made no significant difference in the perception of students on the causes of psychological abuse in schools among the respondents.

With respect to hypothesis  $H_{02}$  which states that there is no significant difference between male and female students perception on the effect of psychological abuse in public primary schools in Borno State. The result also reveals that there is no differences between male and female students' perception on the effect of psychological abuse in schools. This further implies that psychologically maltreated student may learn to fear the teacher rather than respecting him or her. The teacher becomes an aversive individual in the students' life, someone to escape from and avoid. At other times these students are usually hyper-vigilant by being fearful, suspicious and mistrustful, or always on the lookout for potential dangers. Often, they are moody and afraid to express themselves (Aluede, 2004).

### 6 Summary and Conclusion

Psychological abuse is a form of abuse that can severely damage a person's sense of self-worth and perception. This study was conducted on the students' perception of the causes and effect of psychological abuse by teachers. The study was introduced with clearly described statement of the problem, the study was geared towards determining the students' perception of causes of psychological abuse, determining the perception of students on the effect of psychological abuse respectively. Two research questions and two hypotheses were clearly stated, which were determined and tested. The significance of the study was well expressed including the scope and operational definition of terms. The study also incorporated general introduction and review of related works under sub-headings such as theoretical frame work, which was based on Rogers's humanistic theory, summary of literature reviewed and uniqueness of the study. The methodology was clearly described and included research design, survey design was used and a representative sample of the population was selected. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, and t-test. Results were presented in tabular form and were discussed.

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that students of government day secondary schools of Jere local government have no knowledge of psychological abuse only few of them have prior knowledge of psychological abuse. The respondents indicated this because they don't whether they are psychologically abused or not. The study also revealed that there is no significant difference on male and female students' perception on the causes and effect of psychological abuse. There is therefore need to create an awareness among secondary school students on the word psychological abuse, its causes and effect what stimulates the teachers to abuse their students.

## 7 Recommendations

1. Awareness programmes such as workshops, seminars and conferences should be conducted by ministries of education and school boards for teachers, parents and students to enlighten them on dimensions of psychological abuses within the school context and home, the causes and effects of psychological abuse on students. This would go a long way in minimizing the prevalence of psychological abuse of students by teachers.
2. The school administration should also set up body to check the prevalence of psychological abuse and possible control measures and school counsellors should always educate the teachers and the students on the indications of psychological abuse in schools.
3. Teachers should be able to develop effective verbal communication in the classroom by adopting good skills in teaching, listening and overcoming barriers in verbal communication as they arise. In the case of school authorities, with the assistance of ministries of education, seminars and workshops should be organised for teachers where they can learn how to develop parental skills for students in the school environment in order to develop positive relationships that are free from psychological abuse.
4. The teachers should not be gender sensitive when dealing with students in the school.

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