

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **An analysis of bullying in schools as presented by two Ugandan novels**

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**This paper analyzes the depictions of bullying in schools in two selected Ugandan novels: Goretta Kyomuhendo's *The First Daughter* (1996) and Mary Karoro Okurut's *The invisible Weevil* (1998). The study is about the vices that education transmits to the learners depending on the socio-cultural and political context. One of them that education transmits is the bullying of fellow students. Bullying is both physical and verbal violence and it can affect the emotional, social, and physical wellbeing of students (and staff). The study adopts a qualitative content analysis of two Ugandan novels to give interpretation of the text data. We have used qualitative content analysis to identify the theme and the main characters in the two novels and made interpretations. Content analysis helped us understand bullying as practiced in schools. The study found that the schools presented by both novels see bullying as severe and traumatizing. Both boys and girls are bullied, and it affects their emotional, social, and physical wellbeing. This behavior is probably a result of global influence in our school system. Traditional Ugandan education was characterized by close social, ethical, collective orientation and ensured progressive character development of the child. Some of the values transmitted in traditional Ugandan education included community-orientation, love and respect for others. The vice of bullying is likely to have originated from the formal type of education which is more individualistic oriented. We recommend that a more effective education system for Uganda is one that combines or inculcates the traditional values of community-orientation, love and respect for others with elements of modern education.**

**Key words:** Bullying, school, education, violence, Ugandan novels, Kyomuhendo, Okurut.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This paper analyzes the depictions of bullying in schools in two selected Ugandan novels: Goretta Kyomuhendo's *The First Daughter* (1996) and Mary Karoro Okurut's *The invisible Weevil* (1998). Education transmits values, knowledge and attitudes which bring about desirable

changes in the way one thinks, feels and acts (Mbiti, 1981; Ocitti, 1993). Education is crucial for the preservation or destruction of people's values. Ugandan traditional education was informal, and values were acquired by the young from elders in the society.

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According to Aghamelu (2017), Bullying in schools is a form of violence, which can be physical or psychological. Aghamelu also argues that physical violence is the infliction of painful injury by the use of instruments like whips, rape and fists. Psychological violence involves the use of hostile behaviour such as words to cause emotional damage or harm to the victim.

With the infiltration of globalization and formal education in Uganda, the basis of Ugandan ethical values, including indigenous education, was greatly undermined and replaced with foreign values, including the vice of bullying. Globalization has weakened this phrase so strong! It is better to state:

Globalization has somehow weakened the Ugandan indigenous values of love, kindness, honesty, hospitality and community orientation (Igboin, 2011; Okot p'Bitek, 1967; Omolewa, 2006). It has strengthened greed, selfishness, intolerance, disharmony, pride and loss of community spirit (Omolewa, 2006; Idang, 2015; Kyalo 2012; Igboin, 2011; Iguisi, 2014), which culminates into vices like bullying in schools.

### Thesis

Bullying in some schools in Uganda seems to be the norm in the education system.

### Problem statement

Excessive bullying is evidence of the drop in educational values in some Ugandan schools. It has resulted in students' fear, bitterness, depression and revenge in the real world with the consequence of long lasting depression in the lives of students (and teachers). This study is a virgin area because it has not been widely studied and there is hardly any research on Ugandan novels

### Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to examine how Kyomuhendo and Okurut portray bullying in two Ugandan Novels.

### Scope

This study analyzes the depictions of bullying in two selected schools in Ugandan novels: Goretti Kyomuhendo's *The First Daughter* (1996) and Mary Karoro Okurut's *The invisible Weevil* (1998).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Bullying in schools may be a global phenomenon. A study in South Africa by Ndebele and Msiza (2014) revealed that bullying manifests itself in screaming at others, kicking, beating, calling names, hurting and forcing others to do what they do not like. A study in United States by Hymel and Swearer (2015) found that bullying takes many forms: physical harm, verbal jeering and threats, exclusion, humiliation, and rumor-spreading, cyber bullying using texts, e-mails, or online mediums. A study in Kenya by Ndeti (2007) reports that bullying takes place in the dormitories, playgrounds, corridors and on the way to and from school.

The reviewed literature above shows that research on the form and location of bullying are diverse. The review includes both developed and developing countries. Uganda being a developing country makes a good case for study and particularly the literary study of bullying which has hardly been handled.

Raskauskas and Modell (2011) found out that bullying is one of the biggest problems that children face in schools and it leads to health risks. Al-Raqad et al. (2017) observe that bullying is both physical and verbal violence and it can affect the emotional, social, and physical wellbeing of students (and staff). Addei (2014) argues that bullied students fear coming to school because they feel unsafe and this reduces their chances at academic success. Brank et al. (2012) found out that victims of bullying are anxious, shy, and weak and their performance in school is poor. A study in Nigeria by Omoteso (2010) found effects of bullying to be: fear, loneliness, depression and lack of confidence. A study in US by Hawker and Boulton (2000) found that students who are bullied suffered from anxiety, loneliness and depression.

From the foregoing, bullying is reported to have varied negative psychological impacts on students both in developed and developing countries. However, there are hardly any studies on the effects of bullying on the students in the Ugandan context and especially as portrayed by the Uganda novels.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Postcolonial theory is a literary critical approach which deals with literature written in countries that were once colonized to counteract the assumed supremacy of the colonizers. This theory is more suitable for this study because Uganda is one of the countries which was colonized by the British and was subjected to several inhuman treatment; its culture, religion, education, governance, food, language, etc were considered inferior. This theory also deals with literature written by citizens of colonizing countries that takes colonies or their peoples as its subject matter. Postcolonial theory became part of

the critical toolbox in the 1970s. Some of the proponents of this theory are Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi K. Bhabha. Post-colonial literary theory is used to explain, predict, and understand phenomena (Swanson, 2013), in this case the theme and characterization in the two Ugandan novels. One of the major proponents of the postcolonial literary theory: Edward W. Said, published his path-breaking book, *Orientalism* in 1978, and created a new way of theorizing how the imperialist West constructed the colonies as abnormal cultural and political objects, needing the civilizing efforts of the master races. Concentrating on Asia, Said analyzes ways in which the Europeans undermined non-Western culture, defining European culture as 'normal' and Asian (and African) culture as 'other'. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is another proponent of postcolonial theory who is considered "one of the most influential postcolonial intellectuals" and known for her book *Can the subaltern speak?* Another well-known promoter of the postcolonial theory is Homi K. Bhabha, well known for coining words like *mimicry*, *hybridity*, and *ambivalence*. Each of these proponents contributes to the explanation of how the West through colonialism and neo-colonialism has negatively impacted the otherwise friendly and harmonious non-western communities and their cultural values.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research design

This paper used a case study design and selected two Ugandan novels to analyze the portrayal of bullying. It also employed qualitative research approach which required us to read the texts several times, code and generate concepts from which the main theme was derived. The main theme is bullying but several characters were also identified. According to Creswell (2005), the main purpose of qualitative research is to investigate and analyze a phenomenon, which in this case is the depiction of bullying in the two Ugandan novels. To Yin (2003: 23) case study research is as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. According to Creswell (2003) case study design is in-depth, intensive enquiry reflecting on a rich and lively reality and exploration of a bounded system.

### Biography of the authors

#### Goretti Kyomuhendo

Goretti Kyomuhendo, born in 1965, is a Ugandan novelist who participated in the inaugural International Literature Festival in Berlin in 2001. She was born and grew up in Hoima District, Western Uganda. She obtained a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in English Studies in 2003, from the University of Natal, South Africa, and a Master of Arts in Creative Writing 2005, from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. Her first novel, *The First Daughter* (1996) was well received in Uganda, earning some regional – East African - attention as well. Her second novel, *Secrets No More*, (1999) won the National Book Trust of Uganda Award for 1999. Her third novel is *Waiting: A Novel of Uganda's Hidden War* (2000).

#### Mary Karoro Okurut

Mary Karoro Okurut was born in Bushenyi District, Western Uganda in 1954. She graduated from Makerere University with the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Literature in 1977 and in 1981 she got a Master of Arts in Literature. Between 1981 and 1993 she was Lecturer at Makerere University's Department of Literature. She took up employment as the press secretary to the Vice-President of Uganda from 1994 until 1996. Between 1996 and 1999 she served as Commissioner, Education Service Commission in the Ugandan Ministry of Education. From 1999 until 2004, she served as the press secretary of the President of Uganda. In 2004 she entered elective Ugandan politics. Her literary publications include: *The Curse of the Sacred Cow* (1993), *The Adventurous Sisters* (1993), *The Invisible Weevil* (1998) and *The Official Wife* (1997), *The Blood Brothers* (2003), *Potiphar's Grand Daughter* (2013) and *The Switch* (2016).

### Brief summary of the two novels

#### *Kyomuhendo's The First Daughter*

The main character of the book is Kasiimire. Her father is Kyamanywa and her mother's name is Ngozi (Abwooli). Kyamanywa is a polygamist. He is the only man who has taken his children to school. He treats his wives and children well and in return for total obedience. His word is not questioned. He is a hard working man (Kyomuhendo, 1996:6-7). Kyamanywa has special love for Kasemiire because she is a responsible young girl, beautiful like her mother.

Kasemiire means beautiful. Kyamanywa sees only beauty in his children. They have chocolate-brown complexion as their mother. The more Kyamanywa thinks about his daughter Kasemiire the more he feels the desire to take her to secondary school. She has passed highly the Primary Leaving Examination and the father is thinking of where to get the money and send his daughter to school (Kyomuhendo, 1996: 10).

Although Kasemiire's mother is not educated, she desires that her daughter goes to school. She knows that Kasemiire will be a great woman and that she will achieve this through education. She does not want her daughter Kasemiire to be a victim of early marriage like her. Abwooli's father is a polygamist and drunkard who has a habit of marrying off his daughters at an early age so that he drinks the bride-price (Kyomuhendo, 1996: 11). He marries off his daughters in exchange for the bride price which he spends on drinking sprees in bars.

Kasemiire gets her admission letter to go to secondary school. When the father tells Abwooli (Kasiimire's mother) about this decision, she is very excited. She goes shopping for her daughter, to Kasemiire's great surprise. She did not expect her mother to have kept any money for her. Kasemiire remembers that her mother has been saving this money from weaving the mats and the baskets, and she says that she will repay her back one day (Kyomuhendo, 1996: 26-27).

Kasemiire is escorted by her father to school. The headmaster checks on the admission list and finds Kasemiire. Jacent, is the best girl they have received with the total marks of 295 out of 300. The headmaster is impressed by her performance and he encourages her not to relax. He says that most girls tend to give more time to the boys than to the books (Kyomuhendo, 1996: 29-31).

Kasemiire is given Nightingale dormitory; she is escorted to the dormitory by her father and is received by the matron. After the matron has checked her suitcase and is satisfied with everything, Kasemiire is ushered into her room. Two of the girls are already in the room but none of them says a friendly word to Kasemiire. They all stared at her coldly. After sometime, a group of girls appear, all squeezed into the room. One of the girls who look to be their leader

says, this one is brand new, *I wonder from which zoo she has come from. She is cute though, another one responded, one of the girls tilted Kasemiire's head as if to kiss her but instead spat in her face* (p.32). This throws Kasemiire in fear and she backs away. This is the beginning of the bullying. They forced opened her suitcase and removed all the roasted groundnuts and maize, they shared among themselves and munched them noisily (Kyomuhendo, 1996: 31-32).

Kasemiire gets a hard slap on her face for failing to answer a funny question of whether she has ever slept with a man. The girls continue their bullying by laughing at her suitcase calling it a coffin, and asking her who is dead. Next Kasemiire is told to join the first year in the dance without music. They are told to take off their clothes and walk naked but before long the group of angry girls fall on them and tire off their clothes. They are forced to walk to the extreme end of the room and back amidst laughter from the spectators. Some of the girls pinch her buttocks and others comment on her body structure while others pour cold water on her (Kyomuhendo, 1996: 32-36).

### Okurut's *The Invisible Weevil*

The main character in Okurut's novel is Nkwazi. Nkwazi experiences a nasty welcome, normally given to all first years. The practice is enjoyable by the older students but to the new students it is a nightmare. When the senior girls announce that there is going to be a film that evening, Nkwazi is very excited, not knowing that it was about bullying. A mild form of teasing comes at 10:00pm when the lights are switched off. Nkwazi is ordered to blow off the bulb with her breath. As Nkwazi is wondering how to do it, she receives a slap on her cheek. She gets up and begins the impossible task of blowing off the bulb as the senior girls cheer and clap. The biggest girl known as Brigadier commands: "Harder, harder!" Nkwazi continues until her cheeks hurt, while all other newcomers are lined up to do the same. This goes on up to forty five minutes until they hear the teacher on duty's voice telling everybody to switch off the lights and go to bed (Okurut, 1998: 68).

Nkwazi's worst form of teasing comes towards mid night when the senior girls get out of bed and fake a holy table (Okurut, 1998: 68). The bigger girls urinate in the bucket and place it on the table and the leftover food ready to give to the first years. The Brigadier's voice is heard commanding: *All the tails get out of bed. It's time to come to the holy table and receive holy communion. Come quietly and quickly* (Okurut, 1998: 68). The new comers line up because of fear of what has happened to them before, so they are all in a line to receive the "holy communion" which is actually leftover food and urine from their fellow girls. A glass filled with rusty coloured liquid is placed on the table with a plate of leftover bits of foods. The "priest", dressed with white robes and a huge wooden cross on her neck shouts: *come, my children ... to eat his body and drink his blood and then sing a song of praise* (Okurut, 1998: 68). Without knowing what they are drinking, the first years receive "his blood and the body" but on swallowing it, Nkwazi realizes that the taste of the wine is salty and murky, she feels like vomiting it up wondering what staff this could be. The "bread" was equally nauseating. The "Brigadier" is standing with a big stick ready to hit anybody who dares to refuse her command. When the initiation ceremony is over they learn to their surprise that the "wine" is urine and the bread is food droppings. All the tails have to throw up. Nkwazi and Goora were in misery after this incident. They exclaimed: *what's good about being in senior? "It's hell," Nkwazi cried* (Okurut 1998: 69). Goora swears that she will make the newcomers suffer more than she has. The culture is that they must make the following year's newcomers suffer.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Portrayal of bullying by Kyomuhendo

In the selected novels, the bullying victims are Kasemiire, Nkwazi, Goora, Tingo and teacher Rose. In the school environment the senior students are expected to have acquired good values through the school system to welcome the new comers with love, equality, empathy, hospitality, honesty and respect; instead they are tortured and mistreated.

In the novels the bullying perpetrators are "Brigadier", Ojuka, Old boys and Old girls. Kyomuhendo depicts bullying as the one of the evils eating up students in a boarding school. Both the boys and the girls go through nasty welcomes upon arrival at school, and it may continue for a long time. When Kasemiire is ushered in the dormitory, two of the old girls were already in the room: But no one said a friendly word as Kasemiire organized to make her bed. They all stared at her coldly. After a while, a group of girls appeared in Kasemiire's room, all squeezed into the room (Kyomuhendo, 1996:32).

In this scenario Kyomuhendo is exposing the loss of African value of community spirit, hospitality, love and empathy. For one to go to a new home and she/he is not welcome, is not natural to Africans. For the two girls who are inside the dormitory to fail to receive Kasemiire's was an indication that danger was awaiting her. This is the beginning of bullying: failing to welcome someone is a sign of rejection.

One of the girls who looked like their leader said, 'This one is brand new, I wonder from which zoo she has come from'. One of the girls tilted Kasemiire's head as if to kiss her but instead spat in her face. We want "mineno", you goat. They forced opened her suitcase and removed all the roasted groundnuts and maize. Have you ever slept with a man? The leader asked. She gets a hard slap (Kyomuhendo, 1996:33).

For Kyomuhendo to portray Kasemiire being told that she *is brand new, I wonder from which zoo she has come from* is foreign to Africans. This reduces someone's self esteem. This is verbal bullying Kasemiire is equated to an animal coming from a zoo. To tilt her face as if to kiss her but only to receive spitting on her face is physical bullying. This kind of action dehumanizes Kasemiire and her identity is lost. This is one of the reasons why at the beginning she is told that she is coming from the zoo.

The physical violence is also portrayed by Kyomuhendo, when the older girls force Kasemiire's suitcase open and they eat all the ground nuts and maize as she watches. It is psychological torture as she cannot retaliate or defend herself.

And asking the young girl whether she has ever slept with a man is another kind of verbal bullying which follows with a slap resulting into physical torture. Having sex or not is a private matter that needs not to be announced on

the mountain top. Therefore to ask Kasemiire such a question is verbal bullying. All the above inappropriate treatment which Kasemiire receives exposes what goes on in boarding schools in Uganda, and generally elsewhere. The language which Kyomuhendo uses can be compared to that of force according to Fanon (1963) in *The Wretched of the Earth*:

The agents of government speak the language of pure force. The intermediary does not lighten the oppression, nor seek to hide the domination; he shows them up and puts them into practice with the clear conscience of an upholder of the peace; yet he is the bringer of violence into the home and into the mind of the native (Fanon, 1963:37).

This kind of pure force language motivates both physical and psychological violence to the natives as we witness from the bullying of Kasemiire (Kyomuhendo, 1996:35-38). A first year student who is tormented through bullying does not retaliate immediately but waits for the new comers and vents the whole anger on them. This is an awful abuse and traumatic experience to force the Africans into submission through the use of the language.

Kyomuhendo continues to depict evil which comes as a result of taking the children to boarding school:

Who is dead? Why do you bring here that coffin? Immediately emptied the wooded suitcase... and threw it in the dustbin. You, what do you call yourself?... She got hold of Kasemiire's ears and led her to room number four (Kyomuhendo, 1996:33).

Having a wooden suit case is not an issue. It is actually environmental friendly, but these students associated it with death. Could it be that they are meaning the death of African traditional values which they are regrettably representing at this moment?

Kyomuhendo depicts Kasemiire being ordered to remove her cloth and walk naked before her fellow girls. Gadin and Hammarrstrom (2005) observe that the most common form of bullying is verbal harassment - teasing and name calling - which is in line with what Kyomuhendo is portraying here:

Take off your clothes, they ordered her... A group of angry girls fell on her and tore her clothes. They forced her to walk to the end of the room and back, amidst laughter from the spectators. Some girls even pinched her buttocks as they commented on her figure and some even poured water on her (Kyomuhendo, 1996:34).

To order Kasemiire to remove all her clothes and walk naked while the rest of the girls are laughing is dehumanizing; showing her that she is useless. Not even worth of being in the school where she has joined. This is followed by physical torture when one of the girls pinches her buttocks and another one pours on her cold water.

This is both verbal and physical bullying. The girls in this novel are representing a foreign culture. This kind of bullying which Kyomuhendo is portraying is a replay of how African traditional education was treated by the West.

Kyomuhendo depicts bullying as not only practiced in the dormitory but even in the classroom:

Stand up you dung eaters, can't you see that the honourable headmaster has honoured you with a visit? What is your name? Kasemiire Jacent... from now onwards, you are the boss's wife in Senior One West (Kyomuhendo, 1996:34-35).

The 'headmaster' and the group calling the new comers *dung eaters* is verbal bullying causing the students great pain and harm. To impersonate the headmaster who is representing the leadership and the authority of the Western kind of education, Kyomuhendo is exposing the evil that comes with the leadership of this education system and what Africans have to go through to achieve this new education. Kasemiire is brought to school to learn but to her surprise she is told, from now on she is *the boss's wife in Senior One West*. A study by Asamu (2006) observes that bullying is mostly carried out by older students on the younger ones. The older students often expose the younger and weaker students to the act of bullying. Kyomuhendo is mimicking the leadership and the product of Western type of education. According to Crick et al. (2001) bullying exists in three forms: physical, verbal and relational. Crick et al. describe physical bullying as behaviours where perpetrator might punch, hit and/or steal. Kyomuhendo depicts bullying as not only happening in the dormitories and the classrooms but it extends even to the dining hall:

He had a piece of posho in his hands and he threw it at her buttocks. Everybody in the dining hall laughed and immediately started beating their forks on the plates, making deafening sounds. Ojuka was now behind her; he took hold of her waist and forced her to face him. Roughly, he started kissing her and the students shouted encouraging obscenities. After that he slapped her very hard and gave her a big shove. Kasemiire managed to retain her balance. With tears of rage and shame almost blinding her vision, she ran out of the dining hall (Kyomuhendo, 1996:34).

To throw food on someone is the worst thing to be done to any human being and even to throw it on her buttock is even worse. For Kyomuhendo to depict this kind of evil happening in the dining while the rest of the students are ridiculing her is truly demeaning. By Ojuka kissing Kasemiire without her consent is an act of sexual harassment. And after all this violence Ojuka slapped Kasemiire, which is physical violence. A study by Olweus (1993) revealed that males who bully have an aggressive personality combined with physical strength and have little empathy for victims and show no apologies for their

fellow students. This is why Ojuka is doing all these to Kasemiire without sympathy. Kyomuhendo is revealing to us the readers that even at the level of leadership in the school system there are issues.

### Portrayal of bullying by Okurut

One of the major characters behind the bullying of girls in Okurut's novel is 'Brigadier'. The commander, 'Brigadier' is giving the new comer, Nkwanzzi, an impossible task of blowing the light bulb with her breath. For Okurut to use Brigadier to impersonate the security personal is to let us know what is happening in the security organs:

One big senior girl approached Nkwanzzi's bed. You! Go and blow out the light, she commanded. ... are you deaf or just stubborn and arrogant?...and she hauled Nkwanzzi to her feet. Now blow it with your breath... A slap on her cheek did it. The brigadier's voice is heard commanding (Okurut, 1998:67).

Brigadier is military rank – one who enjoys military hierarchy. This senior military rank (Brigadier) is supposed to give the people security. They are also supposed to defend the citizens of the country. The Brigadier represents the leadership of the nation. For Okurut to depict the senior officer as the one mistreating the innocent citizen, she is exposing the evil that is in the security organs and how the leadership of the country has failed to defend its people. Okurut depicts bullying in school as a major threat to the new students joining school. This kind of behavior by the senior students is dehumanizing to the new comers.

Bullying continues in the dormitory. This time the students are impersonating the church. Fresh students are addressed as tail; this form of branding is verbal bullying. To mimic what the priests do, is a mockery of the church and their rituals, as presented below:

All the tails get out of bed. It's time for you to come to the holy table and receive Holy Communion. Come quietly and quickly. There was a glass with a rusty coloured liquid and ... bits of food of sorts. Come, my children... eat his body and drink his blood and then sing a song of praise. One by one, they went and received holy communion. The wine tested salt and murky. Nkwanzzi almost threw up...when the initiation ceremony was over, they learnt to their bitterness, that the wine had been urine and the bread, food droppings (Okurut, 1998:68).

Welcoming the first years to a fake holy table is mimicry (Bhabha, 1994) of what the priests do to their congregations. For Okurut to portray and imitate the priest giving urine and food leftovers as 'his blood and body', is to reveal to us that the church leadership has issues. The reason why the "so called" 'tails' line up to

drink what they later learn with bitterness that was urine is infuriating and totally unacceptable. A study by Rigby (1998; Rigby, 2001) observes that students who are bullied often have higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression and illness. He further argues that victims are withdrawn and anxious, characterized by tenseness, fears and worries and bullying negatively affects their education system.

Another character who is a victim of bullying in Okurut's text is Tingo. Okurut shows that bullying is not only in the girls' school but also boys' schools. Tingo is a brother of Nkwanzzi, who in his letter to his sister exposes the evil which the old boys in the school inflict on the new comers. This is how the letter reads, in part:

The first night, the senior boys paraded all the newcomers and each senior boy picked a servant. We were then given the rules for the servants; A servant must make his master's bed every morning, wash his plates, cups, clothes etc... He must collect bathing water for the master in the morning... He must surrender all the grab he brought to the master... The senior boys order the newcomers to accompany them to the farm; there, the big boys got hold of one of the pigs... They then forced the small boy to have sex with it... Most of us 're still sick when we think about this incident (Okurut, 1998:69-70).

Why should the new comers be paraded before the older boys? School is not a military barracks, why parading? Does it mean that the dormitory has been turned into a barrack? Education should help the students to acquire knowledge and this knowledge should change them for the better. Which knowledge have this new students received from the senior ones? And if education is the process of gaining knowledge what kind of knowledge do these students receive after being bullied. How do they interpret this kind of treatment which they have received from the old students?

Okurut portrays the picking of the servants to expose what comes with this education system. To be a servant may mean someone's labour is being used by another with or without pay. To make the new comers of a school lay the master's bed every morning, fetch water for the master, and to surrender all the grab are similar to Ngugi's contention that Africans are trained in Western education to serve the purpose of the white man (Ngugi, 1964). We expect the old students to give positive learning experience to the new comers but they are doing the opposite. Making the new comers to sleep with pigs is even worse; Tingo laments that they are still sick when they remember this incident. Tingo says that what kind of teasing is this? These boys are portrayed by Okurut as being bullied both verbally and physically - forcing them to do what they would never do.

Teacher Rose, a victim of bullying in Okurut's novel, is the last character. She is a person who helps others to acquire knowledge, competences or values but for Okurut

to depict her as the one students are bullying is a mimicry of the education system that Teacher Rose is representing. Thus, if a teacher is a source of knowledge, then the question is what kind of knowledge has she imparted into the students? This is the story of the “poor teacher”:

One particular teacher, called Rose, had it rough. Whenever she came to class, she would find sticks of bogoya on her table. The whole blackboard would be full of drawings of the banana. The students would start chanting in whisper: Bogoya, Bogoya. Soon the students started putting bogoya on the verandah of her house and on her doorstep. Whenever she sets out to go for a walk, some of her students on their way to the well would sight her. The one student would shout at the top of her voice; Bo-oo-oo! Another would hear and pick it up; Go-oo-oo and the third would round it up- Ya-aa-aa. Laughter would follow (Okurut, 1998: 70-71).

Okurut depicts teacher Rose being bullied verbally and psychologically. The torture which she is going through is an indication that the education which these students are receiving is highly questionable. As an authority of education, she is supposed to be respected by the students but instead the opposite occurs: the students are chanting in whisper, *Bogoya, Bogoya*, to her humiliation.

This bullying followed her at her house and even out of her house where she has gone for an evening walk. Okurut is revealing to us that this education given to the students has little positive impact on their behavior. A study by Olweus (1993) and Craig and Pepler (1997) is in agreement with what Okurut has depicted when they observed that those who bully are aggressive towards their peers, teachers, parents, and others and are easily provoked. This bad experience which teacher Rose goes through forces her to leave the school.

## Conclusion

From the forgoing discussion it can be clearly concluded that bullying presented by two Ugandan authors has unfortunately become part of our educational value system. Moreover, bullying in some schools is manifested in many forms - both verbally and physically, which sometimes affects the emotional, social, and physical wellbeing of students, as well as, teachers. As noted, this only serves to undermine and disrupt the educational system in Uganda.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this research, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1) The Ugandan educational system ought to endeavor to end bullying, as quickly as possible because it diminishes capacity of children to grow up as autonomous and responsible persons.
- 2) The teachers and school administration should inculcate more values/morals and principles to minimize/reduce this type of unacceptable behavior.
- 3) The Government of Uganda, through the ministry of education/social services, should be put in place good measure to totally eradicate bullying in all schools.
- 4) The church, religious organizations and NGOs should strongly condemn bullying and simultaneously inculcate more values/morals and principals.
- 5) The NGOs should liaise with the Government of Uganda, to abolish forever bullying in schools.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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