



# Annals of Pediatrics and Child Care

ISSN 2652-4473

## Research Article

Adeyemi OO, et al. Ann Pediatr Child Care: APCC-100011

## Experience of Child Abuse Among Secondary School Students in Baptist High School, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria

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Citation: Adeyemi OO\*, Sally GG, Chiamaka OOS, Oghogho EA, Rimamfatem AJ (2020) Experience of Child Abuse Among Secondary School Students in Baptist High School, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria. Ann Pediatr Child Care: APCC-100011

Received date: 16 December, 2019; Accepted date: 21 January, 2020; Published date: 29 January, 2020

### Abstract

**Background:** Child abuse is a major social problem in the world millions of children are being forced to work on extremely difficult circumstances of exploitation which affect their physical mental developments. In school-aged children, subtle clinical manifestation may include sudden onset of anxiety, fear, depression, insomnia, hysteria and sudden massive weights loss, or weight gain, school failure, truancy or running away. As children grow older we find more serious delinquency accompanied by self-esteem.

**Objective:** This study was carried out to gain an understanding on the experience of child abuse among secondary school students in Ede, Osun State.

**Methodology:** This was a descriptive cross-sectional study. A multistage sampling method was adopted in administering the questionnaire to the secondary school students in Ede, Osun state. Data was analysed using SPSS version 21.

**Results:** The mean age of the respondents was  $16.12 \pm 1.21$  years, 74% were aged 16 – 20 years, 60% were females, 74% were Muslims, 76% of the respondents have been slapped on the face or head, 62% have experienced hitting by throwing object at them, 54% reported that they have been hit with a close punch, 76% have been insulted and 66% said they have been called hurtful names.

**Conclusion:** Child abuse as discussed has serious implications on the educational system in Nigeria. It presents a serious draw back on the child educational development and thus hinders societal growth and development. The problem of child abuse in the education system requires adequate and efficient handling in order to improve educational development.

**Keywords:** Experience; Child; Abuse

### Introduction

According to the World health organization report on the consultation on child abuse and prevention (1999) "Child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power". Furthermore, Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act CAPTA (1974) defines child abuse and neglect as "any recent act or failure

to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm". Child abuse is a major social problem in the world millions of children are being forced to work on extremely difficult circumstances of exploitation which affect their physical mental developments. Child abuse generally is human originated acts of commission or omission and human created or tolerated conditions to inhibit or preclude the development of inherent potentials of children. Child abuse is a serious global problem that is deeply rooted in cultural, economic and social practices and occurs in a variety of ways and places.

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According to International Labour Organization (2012) estimated that about 250 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are abuse, mostly in developing countries. Almost half are sexually abuse all around the world. According to the world health organization (WHO, 2013), there were an estimated 57,000 deaths attributed to homicide among children less than 15 years of age in 2013. Global estimations of homicide suggest that infants and very young children are at greatest risk with rate for the 0-4-year-old age group more than double those of 5-14 years old. According to a UNICEF report (2012) approximately 40% of the total child population under the age of 5years suffered malnutrition, 63% between 7year to 16year stunted growth anaemic and underweight and infant mortality rate is 81%. Poor conditions extend to the education sector too. Children without official identity are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Another report indicated almost 1,549 case of sexual abuse reported in the year 2013 representing a rate of four case per day and 1,184 girls were sexually by the end of 2009 (SPARC, 2013).

In Nigeria in (2012) it was estimated that fifteen million children are abuse in Nigeria with 40% are physically abuse, psychologically and sexually abuse according to International Labour Organization (ILO, 2004). It is evident that child abuse is a serious global problem that is deeply rooted in cultural, economic and social practices and occurs in a variety of ways and places. According to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDA, 2006) reported by [1] in the United States for instance, more than 900,000 children suffer severe or life threatening injury and some (1,000 to 2,000) children die as a result of abuse and those who survive often suffer emotional trauma that may take

long for the bruises to be healed [2-5].

## Materials and Methods

### Study area

The study was carried out in Ede, Osun State. Ede is one of the Local Government Area in Osun State located in the south-west part of Nigeria and the indigenes are Yoruba language speaking. It lies along the Osun River at a point on the railroad from Lagos, 112 miles (80km) southwest, and at the intercession road from Osogbo, Ogbomosho and Ife. Ede is one of the older towns of the Yoruba people. Ede is predominantly Muslim town with about 90% of the population. Ede is well known as a Hospitable Land [6].

### Study population

The study population comprises of the Adventist High School Students in the Community of Ede, Osun State, Nigeria

**Study design and sampling:** A cross-sectional descriptive method was adopted. A multistage sampling method was used in selecting the targeted population. The sample was drawn from the total population of fifty (50) students in the Senior Secondary School Class Two (SS2) [7-10].

**Data collection and analysis methods:** Information was collected using self-administered questionnaire. Questionnaire was pretested and used to collect data from the sample of population. The questionnaire comprised of questions on Socio-Demographic Information, Physical, Emotional, Sexual Abuse and Neglect. The responses of the respondents were analysed using Statistical Package for Service Solutions (SPSS) Version 21.

## Results

Variables		Frequency (%)
Age (years)	11 – 15	13 (26%)
	16 – 20	37 (74%)
	Mean+Std = 16.12 + 1.21 years	
Sex	Male	20 (40%)
	Female	30 (60%)
Class	Grade 2/SSII	50 (100%)
	Christianity	13 (26%)
Religion	Islam	37 (74%)
Tribe	Yoruba	50 (100%)
Family type	Monogamy	21 (42%)
	Polygamy	18 (36%)
	Single parents	11 (22%)

**Table 1:** Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the respondents (n=50).

S/N	Characteristics	Yes	No
	Has anyone ever:		
1.	Slapped you on face or head?	38 (76%)	12 (24%)
2.	Pulled hair?	20 (40%)	30 (60%)
3.	Hit by throwing object at you?	31 (62%)	19 (38%)
4.	Hit you with closed fist/punch?	27 (54%)	23 (46%)
5.	Kicked you?	19 (38%)	31 (62%)
6.	Forced you to eat something against your wish?	16 (32%)	34 (68%)
7.	Choked you?	18 (36%)	32 (64%)
8.	Cut with sharp item?	7 (14%)	43 (86%)

**Table 2:** Physical Abuse (n=50).

S/N	Characteristics	Yes	No
	Has anyone ever:		
1.	Sworn to you?	24 (48%)	26 (52%)
2.	Insult/shout at you?	38 (76%)	12 (24%)
3.	Call hurtful names?	33 (66%)	17 (34%)
4.	Hurt on health issues?	17 (34%)	33 (66%)
5.	Made you feel stupid/foolish?	26 (52%)	24 (48%)
6.	Isolated you?	17 (34%)	33 (66%)
7.	Embarrassed you as been poor?	16 (32%)	34 (68%)

**Table 3:** Emotional Abuse (n=50).

S/N	Characteristics	Yes	No
	Has anyone ever:		
1.	Touched you sexually?	9 (18%)	41 (82%)
2.	Kissed you against your wish?	7 (14%)	43 (86%)
3.	Given you money to do sexual things?	3 (6%)	47 (94%)
4.	Made you touch their private parts?	5 (10%)	45 (90%)
5.	Touched your own private parts/breasts?	7 (14%)	43 (86%)
6.	Forced you to have sex?	3 (6%)	47 (94%)
7.	Shown you sexual pictures?	7 (14%)	43 (86%)
8.	Made you undress against your wish?	5 (10%)	45 (90%)

**Table 4:** Perceptions of Malaria in Pregnancy (n=50).

S/N	Characteristics	Yes	No
	Has anyone ever:		
1.	Denied you of food?	22 (44%)	28 (56%)
2.	Refused to cater for your whereabouts?	17 (34%)	33 (66%)
3.	Refused to take care of you when you are sick?	9 (18%)	41 (82%)
4.	Refused to buy you clothes to wear?	17 (34%)	33 (66%)
5.	Refused to cater about you?	13 (26%)	37 (74%)
6.	Refused to provide for your needs?	19 (38%)	31 (62%)
7.	Refused to cater about your personal hygiene?	10 (20%)	40 (80%)
8.	Not given adequate attention and supervision?	20 (40%)	30 (60%)

**Table 5:** Neglect (n = 50).

## Discussion

**Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents:** The respondents' ages were between 11-20 years and their mean age was  $16.12 \pm 1.21$  years. 37 (74%) were between 16-20 years, 30 (60%) were females, 50 (100%) were in Senior Secondary School Two (SS2), 37 (74%) were Muslims, all the respondents 50 (100%) were Yoruba and 21 (42%) of the respondents came from monogamous family [11-15].

**Physical Abuse:** 38 (76%) of the respondents reported that they have been slapped on face or head, 31 (62%) have once been hit by objects thrown at them, and 27 (54%) said they have been hit with a close fist.

**Emotional Abuse:** Of the 50 respondents, 38 (76%) have been insulted or shouted at, 33 (66%) have been called hurtful names, 26 (52%) have been.

**Sexual Abuse:** 9 (18%) have been touched sexually, 3 (6%) have been given money to do sexual things, 7 (14%) have been shown sexual pictures and 3 (6%) of the respondents have been forced to have sex.

**Neglect:** 22 (44%) have been denied food, 13 (26%) have been refused to be catered for, 17 (34%) have been refused to buy clothes for and 20 (40%) have not been given adequate attention.

## Conclusion

This study therefore concluded that there are various forms of child abuse ranging from physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglects that the students in Adventist High School, Ede, Osun State had experienced in the time past and till the time this research was conducted [16-20]. With Ede community moving rapidly towards urbanization, there is a widespread recognition that the level of child abuse reported has increased. It is crucial that the problem of child abuse be addressed because not only does it have an impact on the motivation and productivity of the individuals but also has adverse effects on the health of the individuals concerned [21-23].

## Acknowledgement

I appreciate the support and cooperation of the school authority, the students and all that participated in this study.

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