

# Effect of Child Abuse on Children aged 3 – 13 Years in Ikotun Local Government area of Lagos State

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## Abstract

Child abuse presents major social and public health challenges, resulting in numerous negative outcomes for children and adolescents. This study examines the effects of child abuse on children aged 3-13 years in the Ikotun local government area of Lagos State. Employing a descriptive research design, a sample of 150 children was selected using a convenience sampling technique. Data collection was carried out through a semi-structured questionnaire with a reliability index of 0.858. Three research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while one hypothesis was tested through inferential statistics, specifically the Pearson correlation coefficient, at a significance level of 0.05.

The findings revealed that sexual abuse is the most common form of child abuse, with contributing factors including caregivers' lack of self-control and inadequate penalties for offenders. The primary effects of child abuse identified were unwanted pregnancies and early marriages. Hypothesis testing demonstrated a significant relationship between respondents' gender and the impact of child abuse ( $P=0.010$ ,  $P>0.05$ ).

Recommendations based on these findings include launching social awareness campaigns to educate the public on child abuse and its consequences, enacting and enforcing effective child protection laws, and implementing strict penalties for perpetrators.

**Keywords:** Effect, Child abuse, Children, Sexual abuse.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Child abuse refers to the mistreatment and neglect experienced by children under 18 years of age. It encompasses various forms of physical and emotional abuse, sexual exploitation, neglect, and commercial or other exploitation that result in actual or potential harm to a child's health, survival, development, or dignity within the context of a relationship of trust, responsibility, or power (World Health Organization, 2022). According to WHO (2022), nearly 75% of children—equivalent to 300 million children aged 2–4 years—regularly endure physical punishment or psychological violence from parents or caregivers. Additionally, 1 in 5 women and 1 in 13 men report being sexually abused during childhood (ages 0–17 years), and 120 million girls and young women under 20 have experienced some form of forced sexual contact. The long-term effects of child maltreatment include impaired physical and mental health, as well as social and occupational challenges, which can ultimately hinder a nation's economic and social progress.

Similarly, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2022) noted that at least 1 in 7 children in the United States experienced abuse or neglect in the past year, though this figure is likely

underestimated due to underreporting. In 2020 alone, 1,750 children in the U.S. died as a result of abuse and neglect (CDC, 2022). Children from families living in poverty are disproportionately affected, with abuse and neglect rates being five times higher in low socioeconomic households. Financial strain places significant stress on families, increasing the likelihood of abuse and neglect.

Neglect occurs when a child is deprived of consistent physical and emotional contact with their parents. This often includes children who have lost one or both parents, or whose parents are separated due to job commitments or divorce, leaving them in the care of other individuals such as relatives, schools, or orphanages. In such environments, especially in orphanages with many children, it becomes challenging to provide personalized attention to each child. Consequently, these children may be raised by caregivers, who might frequently change due to shift work schedules (Akehurt, 2015).

Child abuse, on the other hand, encompasses any intentional act or failure to act that causes harm or potential harm to a child. This deliberate harm is inflicted by others, rather than occurring accidentally (Culp, 2021). Child maltreatment transcends socioeconomic, religious, cultural, racial, and ethnic boundaries. The Child Welfare Information Gateway (2013) highlights several factors that increase the risk of child maltreatment, including parental or caregiver issues, child-related factors, and broader community, environmental, and family challenges.

A detailed examination of these risk factors indicates that child abuse is closely linked to societal issues such as poverty, unemployment, low parental or caregiver education, and cultural practices (Okoro, 2018). Forms of child abuse include physical

abuse, abandonment, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, child labor (e.g., hawking), and child trafficking. Parental responsibilities toward children encompass all legal duties, powers, responsibilities, and authority required to care for and protect children (Greenfield, 2020).

The harm experienced by a child or young person may result from a single significant event or the cumulative impact of prolonged abuse and neglect. While most parents genuinely care for their children, the combination of stress, exhaustion, lack of skills, insufficient information, and inadequate support can become overwhelming (Drotar, 2017). It is important to note that no child is ever responsible for the abuse inflicted by an adult, and abuse can occur even when no specific "child" factors are present. However, certain attributes may increase the risk of abuse by making parenting more challenging or by requiring heightened care. These factors might include being a premature baby, persistent crying, being part of a multiple birth, or exhibiting abnormal behavior or mental health issues (Rosenbaum, 2019).

This study aims to highlight the effects of child abuse on children aged 3–13 years in the Ijegan District of the Ikotun local government area in Lagos State.

## 1.2 Statement of Problem

The researcher's decision to explore the issue of child abuse and neglect in Ikotun, Lagos State, stems from the alarming number of children admitted to hospitals and the frequent reports of abuse cases—particularly sexual and physical abuse—filed at police stations across the state on a weekly basis. Despite these documented instances, there has been no significant research conducted to address the prevalence and activities surrounding child abuse and neglect in the region.

Child abuse manifests in various forms, including physical injuries, hunger, shock, bleeding, and, in extreme cases, death. Many parents or caregivers avoid seeking appropriate healthcare to prevent public scrutiny, often providing false information about the nature and extent of the problem to health personnel. Additionally, only a small fraction of child maltreatment cases are reported to the relevant authorities, even in situations where mandatory reporting is required.

As emphasized by Corso and Mercy (2018), addressing child abuse effectively involves creating public awareness and ensuring timely reporting to the appropriate authorities.

Despite the efforts and resources allocated by governments, the prevalence of child abuse and neglect in both developed and developing countries has not significantly decreased. Furthermore, researchers are yet to make substantial progress in identifying children at risk or determining which programs effectively alter long-term behaviors to prevent child maltreatment (Ber, 2020). In light of this, the researcher aims to examine the effects of child abuse on children aged 3–13 years in the Ijegan District of Ikotun Local Government Area, Lagos State.

### 1.3 Research Objectives

1. To determine the various types of child abuse on children aged 3-13 years in Ijegan District of Ikotun local government area of Lagos state
2. To ascertain the effects of child abuse on children aged 3-13 years in Ijegan District of Ikotun local government area of Lagos
3. To identify the factors contributing to child abuse among children aged 3-13

years in Ijegan District of Ikotun local government area of Lagos

### 1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the various types of child abuse on children aged 3-13 years in Ijegan District of Ikotun local government area of Lagos state?
2. What are the effects of child abuse on children aged 3-13 years in Ijegan District of Ikotun local government area of Lagos?
3. What are the factors contributing to child abuse among children aged 3-13 years in Ijegan District of Ikotun local government area of Lagos?

### 1.5 Hypothesis

There is a significant relationship between gender and effects of child abuse on children aged 3-13 years in Ijegan District of Ikotun local government area of Lagos State.

### 1.6 Scope of the Study

This study is delimited to children aged 3-13 years in Ijegan District of Ikotun local government area of Lagos State.

### 1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be valuable to the target population, the community involved, the nursing profession, and society as a whole. It will raise awareness among the target population and community about the definition of child abuse, its various forms, its effects, and strategies for prevention.

This research will serve as a reference for individuals interested in conducting further studies on the topic. Additionally, it will contribute to effective public health education by providing information on the meaning, causes, types, effects, and prevention of child abuse and neglect. The study will equip individuals with

knowledge about the signs and characteristics of abused or neglected children and effective nursing care approaches. It will also offer guidance to parents and guardians on the developmental stages, tasks, and needs associated with each stage of a child's growth, fostering better understanding and care.

### 1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

**Child:** A child is defined as a dependent person in the custody of parents or guardians for protection of his/her life (3-13 years).

**Abuse:** Any deliberate act by a person, group of persons in the society designed to inflict harm on the child's physical, mental, psychological and normal development of a child.

**Child abuse:** This refers to cruel treatment of children by adult involving violence of sexual activities which is capable of affecting the physical, mental and psychological wellbeing of a child.

**Effects:** refers to consequences of child abuse on children aged 3-13 years in the study area.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the review of relevant works of literature to the topic under study. It will be discussed under the following headings: conceptual review, theoretical review, empirical review, and summary of literature review.

#### 2.1 Conceptual Review

##### 2.1.1 Concept of Child Abuse

Clarifying the definition of child abuse in relation to physical punishment is important, as the two concepts frequently overlap in the literature. While the

definition of child abuse remains contentious, research indicates that most people agree that physical punishments categorized as "severe" are generally considered abusive, unlike "low" or "moderate" physical punishments (Castelli, 2017). However, the debate over what constitutes physical abuse is ongoing. Tenkorang and Gyimah (2019) attributed this disagreement to differing legal, psychological, and sociological interpretations, which vary across cultures. Practices deemed acceptable in one culture may be taboo in another, and these cultural beliefs evolve over time. For instance, during apartheid in South Africa, childhood physical abuse was racialized, with only white individuals recognized as lawful citizens (Richter & Dawes, 2018).

Muela, Lopez de Arana, Barandiara, Larrea, and Vitoria (2020) identified several factors contributing to the lack of consensus on an operational definition of child maltreatment. These include the absence of a universal agreement on what constitutes unacceptable or harmful parenting practices, uncertainty about the impact of adult behavior on children, confusion over whether harm criteria should be included in the definition, and debate on whether the definition should serve scientific, legal, or clinical purposes.

Muela et al. (2020) offered a refined definition of child abuse and neglect, characterizing it as deliberate actions by caregivers that disrupt a child's physical, biological, cognitive, emotional, or social needs. According to Akpan and Oluwabamide (2016), abuse can be simply understood as the ill-treatment of a child by parents or caregivers. It may include life-threatening acts of physical violence such as severe beatings, burns, or strangulations. A broader definition encompasses inadequate care, which involves neglect, physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and

exploitation (Akpan & Oluwabamide, 2016). Other perspectives conceptualize child abuse and neglect as existing on a continuum. However, Muela et al. (2020) concluded that child abuse includes intentional and severe physical harm and, in its broadest sense, encompasses any action that hinders a child's optimal development.

Initially, the concept of child maltreatment was narrowly defined to focus on physical abuse. However, subsequent research exploring the relationships between various forms of child abuse and neglect led to an expanded definition, which includes emotional deprivation, malnutrition, neglect, and sexual abuse. This broader understanding acknowledges that not all parents intend to cause physical harm to their children. It also highlights the role of social factors in explaining the causes of child maltreatment, shifting the focus to the societal and environmental contexts that contribute to such behavior (Muela et al., 2020).

### 2.1.2 Types of Child Abuse

The American Federal Child Abuse and Protective Service Act (CAFTA) of 1974, later amended in 2003, defines child abuse as "any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caregiver which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; OR an act or failure to act which by any circumstances presents risk of serious harm" (CAFTA, 1974). The act recognizes four primary types of abuse nationwide: physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse. Jernbro, Eriksson, and Janson (2013) described physical abuse as instances where an adult causes physical harm, illness, pain, or renders a child helpless and ineffective. Examples include hitting, kicking, scratching, pinching, biting, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, or suffocating. They also defined physical neglect as the

failure of an adult or caregiver to meet a child's basic needs for health and development. Examples of physical neglect include the lack of food, hygiene, shelter, clothing, and healthcare (Jernbro et al., 2013).

### 2.1.3 Classification of Child abuse

Various types of maltreatment frequently occur together, and there is significant overlap between them. The four primary forms of abuse are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Additionally, intentionally fabricating, exaggerating, or misrepresenting a child's medical symptoms, leading to potentially harmful medical treatments, is considered a form of abuse.

#### Physical abuse

Physical abuse occurs when a caregiver causes physical harm or engages in actions that pose a significant risk of harm to a child. However, assaults by individuals who are not caregivers or responsible for the child (e.g., a shooter in a school shooting) are not classified as child abuse. Specific examples of physical abuse include shaking, dropping, hitting, biting, and burning (such as with scalding water or cigarette burns). Abuse is a leading cause of severe head injuries in infants, while abdominal injuries are more common in toddlers. Infants and toddlers are particularly vulnerable because their developmental challenges (e.g., colic, irregular sleep, temper tantrums, and toilet training) may frustrate caregivers. Additionally, this age group is at higher risk since they are unable to report the abuse, though the risk decreases as children enter the early school years.

## **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse is any action involving a child that is intended to provide sexual gratification to an adult or significantly older child. Types of sexual abuse include intercourse (oral, anal, or vaginal penetration), molestation (genital contact without intercourse), and acts that do not require physical contact by the perpetrator, such as exposing genitalia, showing sexually explicit material to a child, or coercing a child into participating in sexual acts with another child or in the production of sexual material.

Sexual abuse does not encompass sexual play, where children of similar ages explore or touch each other's genital areas without force or coercion. The distinction between sexual abuse and play varies by jurisdiction, but in general, sexual contact between individuals with more than a 4-year age gap (whether chronological or based on mental or physical development) is considered inappropriate.

## **Emotional abuse**

Emotional abuse involves causing emotional harm through verbal or behavioral actions. This can include yelling or screaming at a child, belittling their abilities or accomplishments, making threats to intimidate or terrorize, and encouraging deviant or criminal behavior. Emotional abuse can also occur through the omission or withholding of words or actions, effectively becoming emotional neglect. Examples of this form of abuse include ignoring or rejecting a child or isolating them from interactions with other children or adults.

## **Abuse in a medical setting**

Child abuse in a healthcare setting, formerly known as Munchausen syndrome by proxy and now classified as factitious disorder imposed on another in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental

Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5), occurs when caregivers intentionally create or fabricate physical or psychological symptoms in a child. Caregivers may harm the child by administering drugs or other substances, or by contaminating urine samples with blood or bacteria to mimic illness. Children subjected to this type of abuse undergo unnecessary and potentially harmful medical evaluations, tests, and treatments.

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

### **2.2.1 Various types of child abuse**

A cross-sectional study by Olatosi, Ogordi, Oredugba, and Sote (2018) examined the knowledge and experiences of child abuse and neglect (CAN) among dentists attending a postgraduate update course. The study collected data to evaluate respondents' understanding of the forms, indicators, and risk factors of CAN. It also assessed their professional experiences, actions taken, and barriers to reporting suspected cases. Data were gathered from 179 participants with an average age of  $33.1 \pm 5.2$  years. The respondents displayed a strong understanding of the forms of child abuse, achieving an average knowledge score of 95.2%.

Key risk factors identified included children with physical or mental disabilities (153 respondents, 85.5%), those from unwanted pregnancies (151 respondents, 84.4%), children in polygamous families (128 respondents, 71.5%), and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds (122 respondents, 68.2%). Major signs of physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and neglect were identified as bruises behind the ears (162 respondents, 90.5%), oral warts (114 respondents, 63.7%), poor self-esteem (158 respondents, 88.3%), and untreated rampant caries (137 respondents, 76.5%), respectively.

Despite these findings, 74 respondents (46.5%) did not assess children for CAN, and only 12 (14.1%) of those who identified suspected cases reported them to social services. The primary barriers to reporting included a lack of knowledge about referral procedures and concerns about confidentiality.

Welson and Mohamed (2019) conducted a quantitative study using a descriptive design to examine awareness of different forms of child abuse among students from health science and non-health science colleges at Beni Suef University, Egypt. A total of 1,688 students participated and completed a two-part questionnaire. The first part gathered demographic information and personal experiences of child abuse, while the second assessed their opinions and awareness of child abuse, comparing the levels of awareness between health and non-health science students. Results indicated that health science students reported higher life satisfaction and a greater sense of being loved. Approximately one-third of participants identified verbal punishment, such as threats or humiliation, as the most common form of child abuse and considered primary school-aged children the most at-risk group. Additionally, 68.36% of students recognized sexual abuse as a significant societal issue, and only 21.56% opposed corporal punishment. Over half of the students identified psychological consequences, such as depression, as the most severe complication of child abuse.

Preethy and Somasundaram (2020) carried out a KAP (knowledge, attitude, and practice) survey to assess awareness of child abuse and neglect among working parents in Chennai, India. A questionnaire with 14 questions was distributed to 212 randomly selected working parents, and the responses were analyzed. Most parents were aware of various parental and

environmental factors contributing to child maltreatment. However, only about half had taken active steps to prevent such occurrences in their families. The study highlighted the need for both parents and society to take collective action to reduce child abuse and neglect. It also evaluated parents' understanding and attitudes toward physical abuse, their knowledge of emotional and psychological neglect, and their proactive measures to ensure a better future for children.

### **2.2.2 Effects of Child Abuse**

Achema, Emmanuel, and Odinigwe (2019) investigated the practices and effects of child abuse on children and their families in selected villages in Enugwu-Ukwu, Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State. They also sought to identify factors contributing to child abuse among children in the area. The findings revealed that common abusive practices included starving children and physically harming them through kicking or shaking. The effects of child abuse were found to include early marriage and unwanted pregnancies. The study recommended social awareness campaigns on child abuse and its effects, as well as the enactment of stricter child abuse laws with severe penalties for offenders. Bada (2021) explored the causes and effects of child abuse as perceived by parents in Ondo State, Nigeria. The study targeted all parents in the state, and a sample of 200 respondents was selected using a purposive sampling technique. The sample was further stratified by gender, educational status, and residence. Data were collected using a researcher-designed instrument called the Child Abuse Questionnaire (CAQ), which demonstrated validity and a reliability coefficient of 0.79. Percentages and t-tests were used for data analysis. Results indicated that parents identified poverty, marital crises, and illiteracy as the primary causes of child

abuse. The effects of abuse included school dropout, poor academic performance, sexual assaults, and emotional breakdowns. Significant differences were observed in parents' perceptions of the causes and effects of child abuse based on educational status and residence, but not on gender. The study concluded that parents' views on the causes and effects of child abuse were largely influenced by their educational background and location. It was recommended that policymakers develop more comprehensive awareness programs about the effects of child abuse, targeting both rural and urban areas

### **2.2.3 Factors Responsible for Child Abuse**

Welson and Mohamed (2019) conducted a study to assess the awareness of various forms of child abuse among students at Beni Suef University. Participants completed a two-part questionnaire. The findings revealed that most students indicated they would speak with the child's parents and offer advice if they encountered a case of abuse, while only a few stated they would report the issue to the police. Approximately half of the participants disapproved of female genital mutilation (FGM), identifying rural residence and male gender as the strongest predictors for supporting the practice. Students primarily regarded FGM as a cultural tradition performed for ethical reasons, and about half approved of legal punishment for individuals performing FGM.

Al Dosari et al. (2019) investigated parents' perceptions of child abuse and its physical and emotional impacts at primary health care centers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The study revealed that 34% of parents reported experiencing physical abuse during their own childhood, and 18% admitted to using physical punishment on their children. Significant risk factors for child abuse

included parents' history of physical abuse, young parental age, exposure to domestic violence, and poor self-control. Child-related risk factors involved children who were difficult to manage or had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Additionally, parents who did not own a home were more likely to use physical punishment. Abusive parental beliefs contributing to child abuse included viewing physical punishment as an effective disciplinary tool, endorsing its use for noisy children, difficulty distinguishing physical punishment from abuse, asserting their right to discipline their children as they see fit, and believing there is no need for a system to prevent child abuse.

## **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.3.1 Theory of Reasoned Action**

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a framework rooted in social science, developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). This model explains the relationships among beliefs, attitudes, norms, expectations, and individual behaviors. According to TRA, an individual's behavioral intention determines their actions. This intention is influenced by personal attitudes toward the behavior and subjective norms. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) define subjective norms as "an individual's perception of whether people important to them believe the behavior in question should or should not be performed."

TRA asserts that a person's attitude toward a behavior is shaped by their expectations of the behavior's outcomes and their evaluation of those outcomes. Beliefs are understood as the subjective probability that engaging in a specific behavior will lead to particular results. The model also suggests that external stimuli influence attitudes by altering the belief structure of an individual.



Additionally, behavioral intention is influenced by subjective norms, which are determined by a person's moral values and their motivation to adhere to those norms. TRA proposes that all other factors impacting behavior do so indirectly by shaping attitudes or moral norms. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) refer to these influences as external variables.

### **2.3.2 Application to the Study**

Child abuse is a significant social issue that primarily impacts children within their family environments. Effective interventions for both victims and perpetrators depend on the reporting of abuse; however, many cases go unreported. The Theory of Reasoned Action provides a framework for understanding the factors influencing reporting behavior in children. Social norms and personal attitudes are key predictors of the intention to report abuse, which in turn influences actual reporting behavior. In this context, reporting behavior refers to informing any individual not directly involved in the abuse, such as law enforcement personnel or others who can offer assistance. Gaining insight into how attitudes and social norms shape reporting behavior can benefit agencies that support individuals affected by child abuse.

### **2.4 Summary of Literature**

Child abuse encompasses any behavior that causes harm to a child, defined as anyone under the age of 18. It can manifest in various forms, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, as well as neglect and exploitation. Nurses play a crucial role in identifying signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and are responsible for acting when there is reason to suspect such occurrences. They should also educate parents about child abuse and strategies for prevention. Parental attitudes significantly influence the likelihood of child abuse, with positive attitudes, supportive norms, and

strong perceived behavioral control enhancing parents' intentions to engage in positive behaviors. Support, monitoring, and appropriate discipline are critical aspects of parental behavior that promote children's adjustment, development, and well-being. However, homes can sometimes become sources of physical and psychological harm for children. Parental abuse and punitive practices are key contributors to social, emotional, and behavioral disorders in children. Nurses and midwives must actively educate parents on the physical and psychological consequences of child abuse and measures to prevent it.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter was identified and explain the methods used for the study like study design, study setting, population of the study, sample size and technique, instrument of data collection, validity and reliability of instrument, method of data collection, method of data analysis and ethical consideration.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

A descriptive survey design is a design used to estimate the prevalence of certain characteristics in a population. This study utilized the descriptive survey design in order to examine the effect of child abuse on children aged 3-13 years in Ikotun local government area of Lagos state. This design is considered appropriate because it involves collection of primary data from the population under study with no manipulation of any of the variables.

#### **3.2 Research Setting**

This research was conducted in the effects of child abuse on children aged 3-13 years in Ijegan of Ikotun local government area of Lagos. Ikotun is a local government area

(LGA) in Lagos. It is located in Southwest Nigeria; North of Lagos city and its administrative headquarters is located on Durosimi Street. Ikotun Local Government is part of the Lagos East Senatorial Zone and a lawmaker represents the district at the Federal House of Representatives. Ijegan District of Ikotun is plagued by problems of poor sanity, high rent, overall poverty and youth criminal subculture. It is also known for its printing industry, which is the largest in Lagos and one of the most diverse in the world. Most notably, offset and digital print shops can be found on the Bajulaiye Road.

### 3.3. Target Population

The target population is made up of all children in Ijegan Ikotun LGA Lagos state.

### 3.4 Sampling and Sampling Technique

Cochran's formula for sample size determination will be to determine the sample size for this study. According to Cochran's formula,

Where;

$Z = 1.96$  (1.96 obtained from z table)

$P =$  is the estimated proportion of the population which has the attribute

$Q = 1-P$

$e =$  is the desired level of precision (the margin of error)

Therefore,

$d = 0.05$

$p =$  expected proportion of children in Ijegan of Ikotun (estimated proportion, 11%). Thus, "p" is taken as 0.11.

$q = 1-p$

$Z = 1.96$

Thus,

$$= (1.96)^2 * 0.11(1-0.11) / (0.05)^2$$

$$= 3.84 * 0.0979 / 0.0025$$

$$= 0.3759 / 0.0025$$

$= 150$  (sample size to be used for the study).

Therefore, the sample size will comprise 150 children

Convenience sampling technique will be used to share the questionnaire due to the small number of the sample size. For inclusion criteria, only parents who reside in Ijegan District of Ikotun will be selected to undertake the study.

### 3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

The instrument used for this study will be a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A cover the demographic data of the respondents while Section B assess various types of child abuse, Section C covered effects of child abuse and, Section D assess factors contributing to child abuse.

### 3.6 Validity of Instrument

Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it supposed to measure while reliability is the extent to which an instrument consistently measures what it supposed to measure. Types of validity include face validity, content validity and construct validity. After the instrument for data collection in this study will be constructed, it will be given to the researcher's supervisor for evaluation, correction and for content validity. The validity of the study will be ensured by making sure that the scope of the research is covered during the research process.

### 3.8 Reliability of Instrument

Test-retest method and the split-half method are the major types of reliability. The reliability of instrument was

ascertained using the test-retest method for determining reliability. Here the researcher will administer 15 questionnaires to parents who are not in Ijegan District of Ikotun LGA. The administration was once and the scores computed. A reliability coefficient was ascertained after the computation.

### 3.9 Method of Data Collection

Firstly, permission was obtained from the Primary Health Care Coordinator Ijegan District of Ikotun LGA to carry out the study in their research area. Thereafter, selected parents for the study were educated on the importance of this study and steps to filling of the questionnaire. Furthermore, the aid of an interpreter will be utilized if where parents are illiterates. A structured research questionnaire will be using for data collection; the questionnaire was administered to the respondents through face-to-face administration with the help of a research assistant. All copies of the questionnaire administered was retrieved on the spot after being correctly completed. Data collection lasted for one week, thereafter all questionnaires was numbered for coding and data analysis.

### 3.10 Method of Data Analysis

Data was using statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS vs. 25). The demographic data generated by Section A for the questionnaire was analyzed and summarized using simple percentage and the results were presented in tables. Section B, C, D was coded for analysis. A Pearson

moment correlation coefficient was obtained as a result of reliability analysis.

### 3.11 Ethical Consideration

A letter of permission to carry out the study was obtained from the head of department of nursing science, and submitted to the Primary Health care coordinator, Ijegan District of Ikotun LGA to obtain administrative permission and same was forwarded to the Ethical Committee for consideration. Confidentiality will be assured and maintained by asking respondents to avoid writing their details. The respondents will be assured of respect for freedom of their choice and that they were not being prejudiced in anyway. This was done by encouraging the participants to answer research questions based on individual knowledge and experience. Also, their names werenot be required during the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Results and Data Analysis

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter dealt with analysis of data collected through the questionnaires administered and retrieved in order to examine the Effect of Child Abuse on Children Aged 3-13 years in Ikotun Local Government Area of Lagos State.

The responses were collected while Paired sample T-test with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was adopted in analyzing the responses and testing the hypothesis respectively.

#### 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

**Table 4.1: Frequency Distribution of Socio-Demographic Variables.**

S/N	Question	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age 3-5	44	29.3%

	<b>6-8</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12.7%</b>
	<b>9-10</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>18.0%</b>
	<b>11-13</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40.0%</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Gender</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>46.7%</b>
	<b>Female</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>53.3%</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Religion</b>		
	<b>Christianity</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>59.4%</b>
	<b>Islamic</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>40.7%</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Occupation of parents</b>		
	<b>Employed</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>46.7%</b>
	<b>Self Employed</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>53.3%</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Educational status of parents</b>		
	<b>Primary</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>38.0%</b>
	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>33.4%</b>
	<b>Tertiary</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>28.6%</b>

#### Field survey 2024

able 4.1 reveals that 60 children (40.0%) were aged 11–13 years, while 19 (12.7%) were aged 6–8 years. The majority of respondents, 80 (53.3%), were female, and an equal proportion, 80 (53.3%), were self-

employed, with the remainder being employed. Regarding religion, 61 Respondents (40.7%) identified as Muslim, while 89 (59.4%) identified as Christian. In terms of education, most respondents, 57 (38.0%), had attained only a primary level of education.

#### 4.2 Analysis of Data According to Research Questions

**Table 4.2.1: Frequency Distribution of Respondents on the Various Types of Child Abuse and Neglect.**

S/N	Question		SA	A	D	SD
<b>6.</b>	Child abuse refers to any deliberate action or cruel treatment of children by adult involving violence which is capable of affecting the physical, mental and psychological wellbeing of a child.	<b>F</b>	75	65	10	0
		<b>%</b>	50.0%	43.3%	6.7%	0

7.	Physical abuse is a form of child abuse	F %	49 32.7%	38 25.5%	43 28.6%	20 13.2%
8.	One of the common type of child abuse is sexual abuse	F %	76 50.6%	71 47.4%	3 2.0%	0 0
9.	Making a child feel worthless is an emotional abuse	F %	55 36.9%	40 25.6%	35 23.8%	20 13.7%
10.	Psychological abuse is a type of child abuse	F %	20 17.5%	34 22.6%	58 38.6%	32 21.3%
11.	Physical neglect is a form of neglect	F %	51 34.0%	58 38.7%	24 16.0%	17 11.3%
12.	Another form of neglect is emotional neglect	F %	68 45.3%	50 33.4%	25 16.7%	7 4.6%
13.	Medical neglect is a common form of child abuse	F %	62 41.5%	46 30.6%	30 20.0%	12 8.0%

#### Field survey 2024

Table 4.2.1 displays the frequency distribution of respondents based on various types of child abuse and neglect. Sexual abuse was identified as the most common form of child abuse, with 76 respondents (50.6%) strongly agreeing. Emotional

Neglect emerged as the predominant form of neglect, cited by 68 respondents (45.3%) in the Ikotun local government area of Lagos. However, 58 respondents (38.6%) disagreed that psychological abuse constitutes a type of child abuse.

**Table 4.2.2: Frequency Distribution of Respondents on the Factors Responsible for Child Abuse and Neglect.**

S/N	Questions		SA	A	D	SD
14.	Poor parent-child relationship results in child abuse and neglect	F %	21 14.0%	30 20.0%	34 22.7%	65 43.3%
15.	Poor or lack of awareness campaign on child abuse and its effects on the child is also a factor responsible for child abuse and neglect	F %	49 32.7%	38 25.5%	43 28.6%	20 13.2%
16.	Parents and other caregivers with history of	F	58	53	27	12

	physical abuse (adverse childhood experiences) may abuse their children	%	38.6%	35.4%	18.0%	8.0%
17.	Low socio-economic status (poverty, unemployment etc.) of parents is one of the major factors responsible for child abuse and neglect	F %	39 26.0%	50 33.3%	20 13.5%	41 27.2%
18.	Parents who have witnessed child abuse know about it compared to those who have not	F %	22 14.6%	23 15.3%	55 36.6%	50 33.5%
19.	Caregivers with poor self-control are likely to abuse children	F %	70 46.7%	65 43.3%	10 6.5%	5 3.5%
20.	Lack of penalties and sanctions on perpetrators of child abuse promote the prevalence of child abuse and neglect	F %	67 44.6%	51 34.0%	24 16.1%	8 5.3%
21	Unwanted pregnancy resulting from social abuse and single parenthood could lead to child neglect and abandonment	F %	45 30.1%	50 33.3%	30 20.0%	25 16.6%

### Field survey, 2024

Table 4.2.2 illustrates the distribution of responses regarding the factors responsible for child abuse and neglect. The most commonly reported factor was caregivers with poor self-control, cited by 70 respondents (46.7%). However, 65 respondents (43.3%) strongly disagreed with the notion that parents and other

Caregivers with a history of physical abuse (adverse childhood experiences) are likely to abuse their children in the Ikotun local government area of Lagos State.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Discussion of Findings, Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 5.0 Introduction

This study was done to examine the Effect of Child Abuse on Children Aged 3-13

Years in Ikotun Local Government Area of Lagos State. The major findings from the study were discussed with respect to the specific objectives and research questions set for this study.

### 5.1 Discussion of Findings

#### 5.1.1 Finding on the Socio-Demographic Variable

The data analyzed in Table 4.1 shows that 60 children (40.0%) were aged 11-13 years, while 19 children (12.7%) were between 6-8 years. The majority of the respondents, 80 (53.3%), were female, and 80 (53.3%) were self-employed, with the remainder being employed. Regarding religion, 61 respondents (40.7%) were Muslim, while 89 (59.4%) were Christian. Most respondents, 57 (38.0%), had a primary level of education. These findings align with Achema et al. (2014), who examined the effects of child abuse on children and families in selected villages in Enugwu-Ukwu, Njikoka Local Government Area of

Anambra, Nigeria. Their study found that 53% of children were between the ages of 11-15 years, 73% were female, 43% were Christian, and 34% of respondents had attended primary school. The study reported that child abuse in Enugwu-Ukwu, Njikoka LGA was largely attributed to poverty and low socio-economic status.

### **5.1.2 Findings on Various Types of Child Abuse and Neglect.**

The findings indicated that sexual abuse and emotional neglect were the most prevalent forms of child abuse and neglect, as shown in the results in Table 4.2.1. This is consistent with the findings of Olatosi, Ogordi, Oredugba, and Sote (2020), who conducted a study on the experiences and knowledge of child abuse and neglect among dentists attending a postgraduate update course. The study, which was a cross-sectional survey with 179 respondents, revealed that the participants had a strong understanding of the different forms of child abuse and neglect, with physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect being prominently identified.

### **5.1.2 Findings on Factors Responsible for Child Abuse and Neglect.**

The findings revealed that a significant portion of the respondents in the study believed that caregivers with poor self-control are more likely to abuse children. Additionally, parents and caregivers with a history of physical abuse (adverse childhood experiences) were seen as more likely to mistreat their children. This aligns with the results of a study by Al Dosari et al. (2020), which examined parents' perceptions of child abuse and its impact on physical and emotional abuse in primary health care centers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The study found that 34% of parents reported a history of childhood physical abuse, with risk factors for child abuse including a history of physical abuse, young

age of parents, exposure to domestic violence, and poor self-control.

### **5.1.3 Findings on Effects of Child Abuse**

The findings indicate that the most common effect of child abuse is unwanted pregnancy, which can result in early marriage, as noted by the majority of respondents. This aligns with the study conducted by Achema, Emmanuel, and Odinigwe (2021), which examined the practices and effects of child abuse on children and families in selected villages in Enugwu-Ukwu, Njikoka Local Government Area of Anambra State. Their research also identified factors associated with child abuse among children. The study revealed that common abusive practices included starving children and physical acts like kicking or shaking them. It was found that the effects of child abuse often led to early marriage and unwanted pregnancy. The researchers recommended implementing social awareness campaigns on child abuse and its consequences, enacting effective child abuse laws, and imposing strict penalties and sanctions on offenders.

### **5.1.4 Findings on Relationship Between Gender of Respondents and Effect of Child Abuse on Children Aged 3-13 Years in Ikotun Local Government Area of Lagos State.**

The findings also revealed that there is no significant difference between the gender of respondents and the effects of child abuse on children aged 3–13 years in Ikotun Local Government Area of Lagos State. This aligns with the study by Bada (2020), which highlighted that parents' perceptions of the effects of child abuse did not significantly vary based on gender. Based on these findings, it was recommended that policymakers develop more awareness programs focused on the effects of child abuse.

## 5.2 Summary

This study investigates the effects of child abuse on children aged 3–13 years in Ikotun Local Government Area (LGA) of Lagos State. A descriptive survey design was employed, focusing on all children in the LGA. Using Cochran's formula, a total of 150 children were selected as the study sample. The inclusion criteria required participants to be parents residing in Ikotun LGA.

Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire administered on a one-on-one basis. Respondents completed the questionnaire with clarifications provided by the researcher when necessary. All completed questionnaires were retrieved on the spot, achieving a response rate of 96.4%. The data collection process spanned three days.

Collected data were collated, sorted, and processed into an Excel spreadsheet before being analyzed using SPSS version 25. Demographic data and research questions were presented using frequencies (f) and percentages (%), while descriptive statistics were applied to analyze the research questions

From the analysis of the socio-demographic data, 60 (40.0%) of the children were aged 11–13 years, the majority of respondents, 80 (53.3%), were female, and 57 (38.0%) had completed primary education. The findings further revealed that sexual abuse and emotional neglect were the most prevalent forms of child abuse and neglect. Additionally, caregivers with poor self-control or a history of physical abuse were identified as significant contributing factors, while unwanted pregnancies, potentially leading to early marriage, emerged as a notable effect of child abuse and neglect.

## 5.3 Conclusion

This study concludes that the primary effects of child abuse on children aged 3–13 years in Ikotun Local Government Area of Lagos State are largely attributed to poverty and low socio-economic status, which contribute to early marriage practices and, subsequently, unwanted pregnancies. A notable weakness identified was the lack of emphasis on educating parents and guardians about the health implications and preventive measures against child abuse, which leaves children vulnerable to abuse by perpetrators.

## 5.4 Limitation

This study faced the following limitations:

- **Time constraints:** Administering the instrument to respondents required significant time, posing a major limitation.
- **Financial limitations:** Insufficient funds restricted the researcher from covering a larger population that could have enhanced the generalizability of the findings.
- **Respondents' attitudes:** Some respondents displayed reluctance or lack of enthusiasm in answering the questionnaire.

## 5.5 Recommendation

The following recommendations were proposed:

- **Enforcement of penalties:** The government should implement strict penalties and sanctions against perpetrators of child abuse to curb its prevalence.
- **Community sensitization:** Public awareness campaigns should be conducted to enhance family support and reduce incidents of child abuse.



- **Role of non - governmental organizations** : Organizations such as religious groups, social clubs, and community associations should host seminars, health talks, conferences, and workshops to educate members on the health impacts of child abuse and neglect. These initiatives should also address the factors that predispose individuals to child abuse and provide strategies to prevent them.
- **Improving socio-economic conditions**: The government should work towards enhancing the socio-economic status of citizens to empower parents to meet their children's needs and reduce the risk of child abuse

### 5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

There is a lack of information regarding the effects of child abuse on postnatal care utilization, particularly in areas such as the comparative impact of child abuse on children in rural versus urban settings and the level of community awareness about the importance of enhancing family support to address child abuse.

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