

**THE PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT OF CHILD DEFILEMENT AND SOCIAL  
WORK INTERVENTION IN EGOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA,  
EDO STATE**

**BY**

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**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK  
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BENIN CITY**

**JANUARY, 2023**

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**A RESEARCH WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL  
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## **CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that this work was carried out by **OMORODION PRECIOUS EHIS** with Matriculation Number **SSC1708538** in the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City.

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*(Head of Department)*

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**DATE**

## **DEDICATION**

This project work is dedicated to God Almighty for the love, favour and great grace He made available to me throughout my period of study in the University of Benin, Benin City.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

All things are possible for he who acknowledges the God factor in all his doings. I give thanks to God Almighty for granting me the grace, knowledge, ability, strength and divine support all through the period of my study to this very end.

My sincere and undiluted appreciation goes to my amiable project supervisor, Dr. O. Egharevba who with all his intellectual prowess and scholarly guide reviewed my work till the very last point, giving his suggestions, directives and encouragement through the period of this survey.

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## ABSTRACT

*The study examined the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention in Egor Local Government Area. The objective of the study was to examine the psychosocial impact of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area; to investigate the causes of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area; to know the societal responses to child defilement in Egor Local Government Area; to assess the roles of social workers in the issues of Child defilement and to find out possible ways child defilement be curbed.*

*The cross sectional research design was adopted for this study. Four hundred (400) copies of questionnaire were distributed to 400 respondents in Egor Local Government Area. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count, percentages and mean, with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 24.0.*

*The empirical result revealed child defilement often leads to poor childhood experiences and often leads low self-esteem and that the persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/or psychological needs makes children vulnerable to defilement. The study recommends that strict laws should be enforced to deal with abusers in the society and that parents should train up their children and always be on guard for their children not to fall victims.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of Study

Around the globe, every society has continuously been challenged by cases of defilement. The repercussion of defilement on sustainable development suggests that the perpetuation of these hideous acts denies the child the pleasure of developing at his/her expected rate of growth but rather is forced to experience mental, emotional and physical challenges. In Nigeria, child defilement has continued to be a menace in every society and this can be attributed to the economic situation that has seen families compromise the future of their children in a bid to survive as well as the failure of legal means established by the government to protect children (Bass, 2004). Defilement is a debilitating experience for the victimized children with negative psychological, social, educational and physical health outcomes that are not only detrimental to the affected child but also their families and society at large (Madu, Ndom & Ramashia 2010;WHO, 2014).

According to Ali and Ali, (2014) Child defilement in present day remains a cause for concern to parents, teachers, Government of nations as well as researchers all over the world. An annual estimation of 73 Million boys and 150 Million girls are involved in one form of sexual abuse or the other before their 18th birthday (East, Central and Southern African Health Community (ECSA\_HC), 2011); bringing global prevalence rates between 3-17% in boys 8-31% in girls (Barth, Bermetz,

Heim, Trelle & Tonia, 2013). In Nigeria, one in four girls and one in ten boys are said to be sexually abused before age 18 (UNICEF 2015). Although boys are also affected by CSA, evidence abounds of a higher prevalence among girls than boys, with most perpetrators being the masculine gender and primarily known to the victim (Bugaje, Ogunrinde, & Faruk, 2012). This fact could be responsible for the low disclosure rates of CSA in Nigeria as the adolescent is fearful of the outcomes of disclosure (Adeosun, 2015). Adeosun, (2015) revealed that The outcome of this reality plays out in the myriad of consequences the problem presents which include selfblame, anxiety, low self-esteem, low academic motivation, maladaptive behaviours, school dropout and even suicide, among others. Adigeb and Mbua (2015) expressed that the pupils and students who ought to be leaders of tomorrow continue to stand at risk of their future, it becomes threat to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and that, should not be taken for granted.

According to Umobong (2010), Children are significant to the future of a country. This is because they will become adults and leaders in the future. As a result, their welfare and well-being should be paramount to the government and reflect national policy. The well-being of children is crucial to the future wellbeing of society. In essence, whatever threaten the welfare of children is a challenge to the future of the country. What it takes to curb child defilement is a combination of strategies and efforts by everyone in society. In specific terms, people must desist from engaging in devilish acts such as going into rituals, parents should be closer and

be more sensitive to their children's needs, parents should teach their children sex education and scrutinize what their children watch in the media and on the Internet to be free from pornography and dangerous things, and available laws and legislation should be strengthened. States across the country should domesticate the Child's Rights Act and make its implementation easy while the bottlenecks militating against the smooth prosecution of similar cases in law courts should be removed to successfully fight child defilement in Nigeria (Obasanya, 2020).

## **1.2 Problem of the Study**

Child sexual abuse is an important social problem worldwide which affects the physical, mental and psychological health of a child. It this is as a result of the fact that this cankerworm is threatening to destroy the future of Nigerian Children if not properly handled by all and sundry. Also discussed are the causes and consequences of child defilement. In Nigeria, it is widely accepted that children are the building blocks of any nation and they are the future leaders of tomorrow. Therefore, the development of future generations squarely lies on them and as such, it is important the security and psychological health of these children should be of utmost importance to all in order to uphold such a futuristic position.

However, their survival, development and protection hangs in balance as more and more of these children are been defiled. In fact, the high rate of sexual violation (paedophilia) in Nigeria which leads to the mental, physical, emotional and

psychological distraught of these children, makes it nearly impossible for these children to love themselves let alone their own country, especially when the perpetrators of this heinous act are left unpunished due to the “twisted” and relaxed nature of the law on sexual defilement of children. Child sexual abuse is also associated with high risk behaviors such as prostitution, multiple sexual partners and substance abuse. In Nigeria, child sexual abuse is also a very serious case. Studies have shown that the prevalence of child sexual abuse is often, not reported because of societal perspective to the issue (Akinbami, 2019).

Child defilement is one of the heinous and abhorrent crimes in society and in order to fight and eliminate child defilement as a social illness, the causes of child defilement should be well understood in terms of who commits the crime and why the crime is committed. The phenomenon is seriously affecting Nigerian children as victims especially those who are laboring are often being defiled by adults. It is condemnable, it is an unjustifiable act in our society and it is, finally, time that we rise as a nation to condemn and eradicate this despicable act. The severity of the offence of child defilement cannot be over emphasized. The challenge now is that child defilement remains one of the biggest social problems in Nigeria and the literature in Nigeria shows that there have been few studies on child defilement. Despite these scattered studies, the true extent to which child defilement impact on children is still poorly understood. This study will therefore address this gap by

examining the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to examine the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State. Other specific objectives are to;

1. To examine the psychosocial impact of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area.
2. To investigate the causes of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area.
3. To know the societal responses to child defilement in Egor Local Government Area.
4. To assess the roles of social workers in the issues of Child defilement
5. To find out possible ways child defilement be curbed.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following questions were raised to guide the study.

1. What is the psychosocial impact of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area?
2. What are the causes of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area?
3. What are the societal responses to child defilement in Egor Local Government Area?

4. What are the roles of social workers in the issues of Child defilement?
5. In what ways can child defilement be curbed?

### **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were stated in the null form to examine the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention in Egor Local Government Area.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study will examine the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention. The study is to contribute an understanding of dynamics and complexities on the increasing number of child defilement as the commonest sexual abuse inflicted on the girl child.

The study will help show and Recognize the importance of primary care relationships among children, Recognize that each child is unique, Have realistic expectations of young children, Supports relationships with families. By learning more about how child defilement, parents can help their kids grow in healthy ways and address challenges that might arise. In addition to learning things that can help make better parent, as they can gain greater insight into how your children behave, think, learn, and feel. Perhaps most importantly, studying child defilement, makes it

easier to spot possible signs of trouble as regards child defilement and abuse. As parents and caregivers are being able to identify problems with child defilement.

The study also compliments other studies about defilement and its associated impact carried out by various authors in Nigeria and fills in certain gaps which are uncovered. It is anticipated that the study will be of benefit to a wide range of stakeholders who include Government, politicians, youths, policy makers, local authorities, social workers, local communities, children, girl-child, women activists, and nongovernmental organizations especially through its policy recommendations.

In addition, the findings of the study will help the local community authorities, police and judiciary and government agencies to put more efforts in curbing child defilement as well as ensuring offenders are been punished according to the law. Finally, the study will serve as a guide for further future studies.

### **1.7 Scope and Delimitations of the Study**

This study will examine the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State. This study will held in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter is concerned with the review of relevant literature the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention. A number of studies and theories have provided reviews on the child defilement, some of which are examined in this study.

#### **2.1 Child Defilement**

The definition of child defilement varies in different jurisdictions as there is no universally accepted legal definition to it. According to Biodun, (2010), sexual defilement is any sexual activity that is undesired by one participant but forced on them nonetheless, especially when considered to be more sustained or frequent than an incident of sexual assault. Defilement is any sexual intercourse with a child under the age of 18, whether or not the child consents. Briere and Elliot (2012) see sexual defilement as a physical attack of a sexual nature on another person or a sexual act committed without explicit consent. A child by definition, under the Child's Rights Act (CRA), is any person under the age of 18 years.

The Cyber Crime (Prohibition, Prevention Etc) Act, 2015 in section 23 particularly subsection 5 defines a child or minor to mean any person below 18 years of age. By all standards, a child is vulnerable compared to the adult and as such

he/she require care and protection from anything that may occasion harm or threat to his/her well-being. In view of the above definition of a child, child sexual defilement was defined by the African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse (ANPPCAN), as a behaviour that exposes a child below 18 years of age to sexual content or which the child is used to obtain sexual stimulation and gratification. According to the report, the proof of sexual intercourse must be carnal evidence indicating penetration, however slightly. Also, medical examination report verifying the physical evidence such as the presence of blood, sperms in the vagina or bruises on the walls and margins of vagina may also be permitted as evidence (Akpoghome & Nwano, 2016). Mwangi, Ndungo and Masiga (2018) identified types of defilement:

- i. Incest, sex exploitation between blood relatives or surrogate relatives before victims reach the age of 18 years.
- ii. Commercial sex exploitation of children. The most common of these is child prostitution, which is using a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other considerations.
- iii. Sexual behaviour such as: “Penetration in the vaginal, oral sex, prolonged kissing, cuddling, French kissing, looking at children with or without clothing with the intent to be sexually aroused, touching, folding, or kissing a child’s genital, making a child fold an adult’s genitals, forcing a child to undress, spying on a child in the bathroom or bedroom, exposing the children to adult

sexuality, performing the acts in front of a child, exposing genitals, exposing one's nudity for the sexual gratification of the adult.

Others including telling dirty stories, videotaping or filming of children with the intent to create sexual stimulation, exploitation, exposing a child for sexual purposes on the internet, selling a child's services as a prostitute; having a child perform in pornography, exchanging or purchasing child pornography" (Mwangi, Ndungo & Masiga, 2018). Also, according to Moohey (2017), there are silent victims of defilement who have not gathered courage to report what they suffered or are suffering to anybody, not even their parents. The ten pointers include:

- Gradual or sudden changes in behavior such as becoming isolated, introverted, fearful, agitated, or excessively crying and depressed.
- Vaginal or rectal bleeding, pain, itching or swollen genitals.
- Difficulty walking or sittings
- Sexual acting out or inappropriate and unexpected sexual play and talk.
- Fear of a certain person or an intense dislike of being left somewhere or with someone.
- Trying to avoid a familiar adult or a change in behavior only around a specific person.
- Difficulty learning in school, inability to concentrate or short attention span.
- Unable to go to the bathroom or refuse to go; more likely around a particular person.

- Reversion to a more infantile behavior (bed-wetting/thumb sucking/excessive Crying).
- Nightmares and changes in eating habits.

## **2.2 Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Laws on Child Defilement and Abuse**

According to Olusegun and Idowu (2016), in spite of the numerous legal instruments employed both internationally and national to prevent the abuse of children, children continuously face numerous forms of child abuse. This can be linked to a number of factors which include:

- **Inefficient Implementation of Laws and Policies**

There are a number of laws and policies that have been stipulated to protect and guide issues relating to child defilement. Nevertheless, laws are only effective in situations where they appropriately imposed and effected by the relevant bodies. Poor implementation has caused a “wide gap” in the objectives and outcomes which is a mockery of the enacted regulations and policies. In the case of Nigeria, this can be partly attributed to the non-adoption of the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA) by all states in the federation. Ojo (2014) opines that in states that passed the CRA, insufficient commitment has been shown by relevant bodies in the implementation of its provision and this has consequently encouraged the propagation of this menace of children.

This can be linked to the financial burden that will be required to enforce the provisions of CRA. In order for the CRA to be implemented CRA effortlessly and effectively, the provision of facilities such as schools and court facilities as well as manpower which include; magistrates, law enforcement officers states, employees of non-governmental agencies and judges will have to undergo training regarding child protection laws, processes and the appropriate channels to seek redress. Scholars opine that there also operational bottlenecks that are associated or experienced in obtaining justice through the judicial system in situations when the guardians are the culprits of these abuse. This is as a result of the fact that the child is dependent on their guardians for judicial relied as such cannot take any legal action themselves. In addition, the duration and time constraints associated with a litigation process deter people from speaking up and reporting cases of abuse (Mishra, 2000; Ercelewa and Nauman, 2001; Piler, 2004 and Owolabi, 2012; Olusegun & Idowu, 2016). According to Olusegun & Idowu (2016) justice may fail to be gotten through the process of judicial process due to technicalities which sometimes lead to the offender winning the case. These therefore does not discourage offenders from carrying out abuse as a result of the fact that due to numerous technicalities which include insufficient evidence, there is an assumption that the can get away with any action they take.

- **Lack of Awareness**

It is notable that abuse towards children has continued to be rampant this can be linked under reporting by victims and families of victims. According to Abamara (2016) this under-reporting stems from lack of awareness that has encouraged by certain cultural beliefs and practices that infringe on the rights of the child and consequently encourage abuse. Ojo (2014) proposes that a significant number of persons in the society are unaware that this cultural practices are infringements on the rights of the child and seen as abuse as a result of the cultural acceptance of this practice. Buttressing this view, Owolabi (2012) establishes that numerous cultural beliefs and practices that are harmful to children particularly girls have been practiced over time. For instance, female genital mutilations, early child marriage, tribal marks, tattoos which are seen as a part of their culture and practice. Hence, it must be highlighted that cultural justification of numerous abuse that are linked with cultural practices and the sheer unwillingness of victims in this case children, to speak out concerning the abuse they have experienced has proved endemic to the sustainable development of the child and the nation at large.

### **2.3 The Girl-Child and Sexual Abuse**

Humans are gender-based beings with established biological category of male and female. This category is also affirmed and acknowledged by many ancient and modern religious scripts as against the modern domination of gender to include

transgender. However, the male and female maturity is determined by age of which we have children (toddlers, adolescent and teenager) and adults. In other words, the girl-child could be a toddler, an adolescent, or a teenager depending on her stage of psychological development, but cuts across between 0 year to 17 or 18. This category of children is by culture and constitutions considered minor and unstable for engagement in certain activities (sex and menial jobs) in the society. This cultural norm and constitutional laws are regularly violated through exploitation, neglect and molestation as seen in the increasing cases of child abuse report across the globe. Thus, child abuse “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” (World Health Organization 2002). Since child abuse is a broad range of subject, this work is concerned with child sexual abuse. Sexual abuse could be described as the violation of an individual sexual right. Kidman (1993) gave a broad definition as a violation perpetrated by someone with power over someone who is susceptible. This violation takes a sexual form and can include physical, verbal and emotional components. It includes rape, date rape, domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, incest and sexual molestation. It could be said to be any sexual contact between two individuals without agreement. It also involves the misuse of one’s sexual drive or force to achieve a desired purpose (pleasure, power, subjugation, defilement,

exploitation, diabolical). Such an act is not restricted to a gender, age or race and none is immune to it irrespective of religious and cultural background. This implies that perpetrators of sexual abuse could either be a man or women in a gang or individual, religious or secular of any age. However, when a child becomes a victim of such an act it is known as child sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse also involves a caretaker using a child for sexual gratification and can range from noncontact abuse (proposition, exhibition) to the extremes of actual penetration, to commercial sexual exploitation (Polonko, 2007).

Kayode (2019) sees it as the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, or is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that which violates the laws or social taboos of a society. This implies that child sexual abuse is a violation of societal norms. Simply put, child sexual abuse is associated with any sexual contact between a child and an adult. In this case there is no room for consent since the victim is a child who by the law should not engage or be involved in any form of sexual activity. Therefore, anybody found engaging a child (0-17years) in any form of sexual activity is abusing the child and misusing his/her sexual force. The perpetrator is punishable under constituted laws and traditions of many societies. These perpetrators are many a times well known to the child as earlier noted and as such may go free unsuspected. From the numerous cases of child sexual abuse, it can come in the form child marriage, parents sexually exploiting

their children for economic purpose, sexual touching of any part of the body, whether the child is wearing clothes or not, forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity, making a child take their clothes off or touch someone else's genitals, rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus, making a child masturbate and encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts. The above forms of sexual activities are unstable for a child. Thus, it is viewed as a dehumanizing act ravaging the globe with specific cure or remedy. Child sexual abuse has become sexual decadence menacing the moral fabric of many nation of which Nigeria is not exempted. However, this flare or passion for sex with a child is not a modern dilemma, rather has been in existence for ages but only intensified in this present era of globalization. To portray that child sexual abuse is not strange; Yuill and Evans (2007) stated that Pedophilia was coined by Krafft-Ebing in *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1892), to mean a range of desires and practices associated with adult sexual attraction to children. The adult misuse of their sexual force has led to the increase of child sexual abuse in the country.

Although child defilement involves both the male and female children respectively, the girl-child suffers more than the male. This is because of their vulnerability and sensitivity of sexual matters in the society. That is why one of the greatest challenges besetting the remedy of girl-child sexual abuse is the stigma and shame associated with such act which restrains victims and victim's family from reporting the case. Affirming the above claim, Abeid et al. (2014) study on rape was

perceived to be seldomly reported due to several barriers that favor the acceptance and non-disclosure of sexual violence. Rape of a child perpetrated by a known person or relative was not normally disclosed to legal authorities, as reporting it was seen as putting the family's honor and reputation at stake. For this reason, amongst others, the incessant cases of girl-child sexual abuse are on the increase in the country. Ascertaining the increase of child sexual abuse in the country, Famumng (2017) gave the following statistic of rape in Nigerian states in the year 2017. According to statistics, 4035 rape cases were reported in Lagos State in 2017, 1000 in Kwara State in 2017, 600 in Gombe State in 2017 and 1200 in River States in 2017. These statistics is indeed alarming because Nigeria has laws protecting the children from sexual abuse. In the Nigerian law code, the Child Rights Act states that sex with a minor is rape, and anyone who has sexual intercourse with a child is liable to imprisonment for life upon conviction. Furthermore, Famumng (2017) opines that despite the above statistics and Nigerian law code, only 18 persons have ever been convicted of rape in Nigeria legal system. This implies impunity on the part of Nigerian law, and this has consequently led to a raise in girl-child sexual abuse. In view of the alarming rise in girl-child sexual abuse, Egbejule (2016) reported the case of a girl named Imade who was sexually abused by her teacher when she was seven years. According to the girl, the teacher lured her with deceptive words and gave her a little sum of money. Afterwards he sexually abused her after school hours. The girl-child reported the case to her mother who complained to the school

authority. All the school management could do was to relieve the teacher of his duties. The likelihood of this same teacher committing same offense is therefore high as there was no recorded report of the crime to the appropriate authority for onward prosecution of the teacher. Consequently, allowing child sexual abusers to roam the street are a threat to the moral fabric of the society which is being constantly destroyed by their activities. This is because the victims of the act and their life is permanently bruised by the stigma associated with the abuse (Punch newspaper (May 19, 2016)). In other words, the lifelong trauma aside, sexual molestation can trigger fatality.

#### **2.4 Prevalent Forms of Child Abuse/Defilement in Nigeria**

Globally, child abuse manifests itself in different forms in formal and informal sectors. Many scholars have studied different aspects or forms that constitute child abuse. The different forms identified by scholars include child labour, sex trade, early and forced marriages, female genital mutilation, street hawking, child beggars, early marriage, female genital mutilation, child witches, bullying, child trafficking and corporal punishment, bus conducting, etc. (Umobong, 2010; Owolabi, 2012; Ogunniran, 2010; Ijaiya, 2005; Opara, 2005; Sossou & Yogtiba, 2009)

The Human Rights Report (2010) identified the human rights problems during the year to include the abridgement of citizens' right to change their government; politically motivated and extrajudicial killings by security forces,

including summary executions; torture, rape, and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of prisoners, detainees, and criminal suspects; harsh and life-threatening prison and detention center conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; prolonged pretrial detention; denial of fair public trial; executive influence on the judiciary and judicial corruption; infringement on citizens' privacy rights; restrictions on freedom of speech, press, assembly, religion, and movement; official corruption and impunity; violence and discrimination against women; the killing of children suspected of witchcraft; female genital mutilation (FGM); child abuse and child sexual exploitation; societal violence; ethnic, regional, and religious discrimination and violence; vigilante killings; trafficking in persons for the purpose of prostitution and forced labor; discrimination against persons with disabilities; discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity; child labor; forced and bonded labor; and abductions by militant groups.

These forms of abuses are inflicted on children intentionally or unintentionally by parents, guardians, caregivers, employers, elders, religious leaders and other members of the society. Umobong (2010) summarized the different forms of child abuse into 5 subheadings which are: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglects and child exploitation (child labour) discussed below:

**Physical abuse:** Physical abuse may be seen as the inflicting of a non-accidental bodily injury on a child. The injury may not have been intended by the parent or caretaker and is not an accident but may be due to over-discipline or corporal

punishment that may not be appropriate or is unjustifiable for the child at that age. According to the above definition, physical abuse may take the form of severe beating in the name of chastisement and correction or subjecting the child to degrading and inhuman conditions or lack of proper care and maintenance or abandonment (Owolabi, 2012). Flogging, kneeling, frog jumping and tough physical drill are frequent forms of physical abuse in juvenile homes (Alemika et al., 2005).

**Emotional abuse:** Emotional abuse is also known as verbal abuse, mental abuse or psychological maltreatment. The National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information (2006) defines emotional abuse as acts or omissions by the parents or other caregivers that have caused, or could cause serious behavioural, cognitive, emotional or mental disorders”. Emotional abuse can thus be seen as any attitude, behaviour or failure to act on the part of a caregiver which interferes with a child’s mental health, social development or sense of self-worth. It is probably the least understood, yet the most prevalent, cruelest and destructive type of abuse. It attacks the child self-concept making the child see his/herself as unworthy, worthless and incapable. When a child is constantly humiliated, shamed, terrorized or rejected the child suffers more than if he/she had been physically maltreated. The resulting effect is that most children often withdraw to themselves leading to depression and lack of concentration in school (Khartri, 2004). According to Umobong (2010), bullying is another form of emotional abuse that takes place in schools and at homes by the senior or older children.

**Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse is defined by CAPTA (Khartri, 2004) as the employment, use of persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct. It is the rape, and in cases of caretaker or interfamilial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other forms of sexual exploitation of children or incest with children. As a result of the secrecy that characterizes these cases; sexual abuse is the most often under-reported form of child maltreatment. Sexually abused children experience emotional problems from a feeling of guilt and shame (Corwin and Olafson, 1997). Owolabi (2012) defined child sexual abuse as the involvement of a child in sexual activities that he/she does not fully comprehend and is unable to give informal consent. It constitutes a serious infringement of a child's right to health and protection.

**Neglect:** This is a failure to provide basic needed care for the child such as shelter, food, clothing, education, supervision, medical care and other basic necessities needed for the child physical, intellectual and emotional development (Umobong, 2010). It is a situation where the guardians or parents fail to perform tasks that are necessary for the well-being of the child which invariably can lead to the child's health and safety being endangered. As cited by Owolabi (2012), the Criminal Code (1990: section 301) provides that failure to supply the necessities of life without lawful excuse for those to whom one owes such a duty is a felony punishable with a

term of imprisonment where the life of that other is thus endangered. Child in thuggery, child in crime, and child labour were all categorized by Adimula (2005) to be the products of child neglect.

**Child Exploitation:** Child exploitation often referred to as child labour or child trafficking involves the use of a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. Child exploitation is a systematic process of using children to work with little or no compensation and consideration for their health and safety (Newton, 2001). These children are used to do hard works in the farms that are above their ages and some are made to hawk wares for long hours without food. Such children rarely benefit from education and will eventually drop out of school. By the time these children reach adulthood, they are physically, emotionally, morally and intellectually damaged.

## **2.5 Social Workers' Intervention**

Social work in Nigeria has continued to experience a steady growth. More and more professionals are being trained on regular basis. This has led to the formation of various social work associations in Nigeria which include the Nigerian Association of Social Workers (NASOWS), the Association of Medical Social Workers in Nigeria (AMSWON) and the Nigerian Association of Social Work Educators. Presently a bill on professionalization of social work is with the National

Assembly, waiting for legislative actions, as it was denied presidential assent by President Muhammadu Buhari on February 6, 2018 (Okoye, 2014; Ogbonna, 2018).

According to Thurrock, (2021) if a social worker learn a child is being harmed a social worker will go and talk to the parent or care giver to find out what is happening. They will also see and talk to the child. If the child is very young or if he or she has difficulties communicating, they will need to spend some time with them. And of If the social worker thinks that the child is at risk they will discuss what needs to happen to make them safe. The professionals investigating the referral will make a decision about the amount of risk that the child might be in. The decision will be sent in writing to the parent or care giver. If the decision is that the child is not being harmed or at risk of serious harm, then a social worker should be able to offer the parent or the care giver some extra help or support. A social worker may then visit again to see how they are getting on. If it is decided that the child or young person is being harmed or is at risk of serious harm, there will be a Child Protection Conference and action will be taken to protect the child (Thurrock, 2021). A Child Protection Plan will be developed to reduce the risk to the child, who will be allocated a social worker. The social worker will let you know the outcome of your concerns.

### **Taking a child into care**

This will only be done if the police and social worker think the child or young person is in immediate danger and/or the plan to protect the child is not working. The social worker has to get permission from the court before any child can be removed from home. This is called a Care Order. This will only be done if there is no other solution. Extended family or friends are always the preferred option and will always be explored as alternative care giver (Thurrock, 2021).

### **2.6 Examination of Incidences of Sexual Defilement of Children in Nigeria**

The incidence of sexual defilement of children in Nigeria has become more rampant with more cases being reported for prosecution by authorities. According to Finkelhor (2018), this mysterious crime often taking place within the family environment, usually leaves indelible marks on victims with negative manifestations later on in life. While it can be very difficult to acknowledge that sexual defilement of children happens every day, sexual abuse of children has become the subject of great community concern and the focus of many legislative and professional initiatives.

There are several cases of child defilement in different parts of Nigeria. In Northern Nigeria, Kaduna State precisely, over 300 persons were rescued by the police from an Islamic boarding school in September 2019. Among those rescued were children most of whom were between five years of age and under the age of

eighteen. The place where these people were was tagged “house of torture” as every child there had visible marks of torture on their mortal bodies. Most of them were also chained, and constantly beaten and raped by those who “teach” in the school, thereby violating their fundamental human rights (The Sun, 2019; and The Guardian, 2019).

Also in Benue State, the police arrested a young man by name Terna Taga. Taga was accused of raping and impregnating a 10-year-old girl. The girl, who happened to be an orphan, lives with one of her uncles who was planning and preparing to plunge her into child marriage by marrying her out to an old blind man. Having been put in the family way by the rapist, the little girl later delivered a baby girl at her tender age through caesarean section after three days of protracted labour (Pulse.ng, 2019). In Lagos State in April 2019, another case of rape against a minor surfaced. The 13-year-old victim whose name was withheld was frequently raped by a 44-year-old man, Kabiru Oke – the husband of the victim’s aunt whom she lives with, from October 2018 to January 2019. On the day the victim was first raped, she was sent by the man to fetch him some water for his bath. On returning from the errand, the man pushed her into the bathroom and raped her. Feeling uncomfortable with the act, the victim reported to her aunt but, she did nothing about it. With her (the aunt’s) levity or negligence therefore, the man continued with the heinous act of his until January 10 when the man’s 19-year-old son, Farouq caught him in the act and even joined in violating the minor. In the same January however, the girl fled the

place for her mother's house in Ogun State where she was later discovered to be pregnant (allAfrica.com, 2019).

Further, in Aambra State, Eastern Nigeria, some women were arrested for child trafficking. The women, who pretend to be blind, lent little children from other human traffickers for 1,000 Naira per day to beg for money from road users on their behalf. People, of course, never knew the women were fake blind beggars and exploiters of young children until a taskforce team under the umbrella of Anambra Ministry of Women Affairs, Social Welfare and Children bumped into them and arrested them. In an interaction with the children after the arrest, the Commissioner in-charge of the Ministry came to know that the children were not the biological sons and daughters of the fake blind beggars and that they don't even know where their parents are (Legit, 2018).

In Lagos, the Nigerian Police Force arrested a lady who allegedly caged a young boy who lived with them in the same cage with a dog. The 10-year-old boy who was brought to Lagos State from Anambra State in 2012 with his two siblings after they lost their parents was flogged with belt and later locked up with a dog in the kennel by a 24-year-old Onyinye Mbadike. But upon her arrest, Onyinye denied locking the boy in a cage with a dog; she said she only locked him in an empty dog kennel and not with a dog in the kennel because he took a hot drink from their refrigerator and started misbehaving. However, her act was obviously a child abuse,

and was widely condemned by numerous Nigerians after the video of the incidence went viral on Facebook and other social media (Sahara Reporters, 2019).

According to Finkelhor (2018) a child cannot consent to any form of sexual activity. When a perpetrator engages with a child this way, they are committing a crime that can have lasting effects on the victim for years. Child sexual abuse does not need to include physical contact between a perpetrator and a child. Some forms of child sexual abuse include: Obscene phone calls, text messages, or digital interaction, fondling, exhibitionism, or exposing oneself to a minor, masturbation in the presence of a minor or forcing the minor to masturbate, intercourse, sex of any kind with a minor, including vaginal, oral, or anal, producing, owning, or sharing pornographic images or movies of children, sex trafficking or any other sexual conduct that is harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare (Finkelhor, 2018).

In Nigeria, children are sexually abused by both adults and other children (who are by virtue of their age or stage of development) in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the child victim. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that about 200 million female children experienced sexual violence with physical contact in 2012. Most perpetrators of child defilement are males and are often known to their victims. While it is generally acknowledged that child defilement is pervasive in all countries and at all levels of society, available statistics concerning the prevalence of child defilement around the world in general

and in Nigeria, in particular are very limited (Terry & Lalor, 2007). Tallon (2010) revealed that about 36% of girls in the world have suffered child sexual defilement. And In Nigeria, as much as 50% of reported cases of sexual abuse occurred in children. According to Langan, and Wolf (2013), in Eastern Nigeria, a systematic survey of reported cases of child defilement in three major towns including the city of Enugu indicated that 60% involved girls below the age of 12 years, with abuse including acts of genital exposure and stimulation, seduction, and witnessing adults performing the act of sex. In the North Western Nigerian city of Kano, in a retrospective study of victims of sexual abuse admitted to a teaching hospital, found a much lower incidence over a 3-year period, with a total of 16 cases, all but one of which were children below the age of 17 years (Langan & Wolf, 2013).

There is a tendency for under-reporting of child defilement in Nigeria. The reasons for non-reporting are complex and multi-faceted. These reasons may include a number of factors such as the age of the defiled child at the time of the event, the relationship between the perpetrator and the abused, the gender of the abused, the severity of the abuse, developmental and cognitive variables related to the abused, and the likely consequences of the disclosure. Girls are more likely to report sexual abuse than boys and more importantly when the perpetrator is a relative, there are fewer tendencies to report abuse. Others may choose not to report due to fear of negative consequence of the disclosure, which may range from more abuse and injury to fear of retribution or ridicule, stigmatization and a lack of confidence in

investigators, police and health workers. Kechebelu et al. (2008) opined that there is no stereotype perpetrator as sexual abuse offenders may come from all backgrounds including the rich and poor, educated and uneducated, religious and non-religious and may be persons in positions of authority who are respected and trusted.

Also, a hospital-based review in Abuja, Nigeria found one hundred and thirty-one (131) cases of child defilement over a three year period suggesting child defilement constitutes a sizeable and possibly underreported problem in Nigeria (Folake, 2014).

In North Central Nigeria, however, a one-year hospital-based review in Minna found forty-one (41) cases of child defilement (Akpoghome & Nwano 2016). Furthermore, a pilot report on the review of child sexual defilement incidence from police records in Ibadan, Nigeria revealed that all the incidents of child defilement were perpetrated by males including acquaintances (32.5%), strangers (21.6%) and neighbours (16.1%) of the victims. Adetayo (2006) reported that about 513 people were in police custody in connection with 423 cases of child sexual defilement reported in Lagos State in the first quarter of the year 2005. Also, of the number of suspects, 134 were women and the rest were men. Investigations also showed that 423 cases represent a 72% increase on 305 cases reported during the same period in the year 2004. About 304 cases, representing 71.95% of the 423 cases reported were taken before different courts of competent jurisdiction.

Another study in Ibadan, Nigeria, showed that 15% of young females reported forced penetrative sexual experience, while 13.8% prevalence rate was found in female Maiduguri students.<sup>35</sup> True incidences are inaccurate and often underestimated since most cases of sexual assault are under-reported by the victims because of the associated stigma (Akpoghome & Nwano 2016). In 2011, the Lagos state government with a population of almost 20 million reported 283 cases of child defilement out of which only 10 were prosecuted and convicted. Studies suggest more than half and sometimes as much as 84% of the female population have experienced sexual assault, or defilement in childhood. That is less than a 10% conviction (Akpoghome & Nwano 2016).

In Lagos in the month of May, 2015, a 38-year-old man, Cyprian Edundu, who allegedly defiled a nine-year-old daughter of his co-tenant, was on Monday 18th May, 2015 charged before an Apapa Magistrates' Court, Lagos. The accused, a resident of Ojo area of Lagos, was faced with a charge of defilement. The prosecutor, ASP Soji Ojaokomo, told the court that the accused committed the offence on October 10th, 2014 at his residence. Ojaokomo said the accused, who lives in the same house with the mother of the minor, lured her into his room and forcefully had a carnal knowledge of her. The prosecutor said the offence contravenes Section 137 of the Criminal Law of Lagos State. The accused pleaded not guilty. Also, in July, 2016 it was reported that a police inspector in Mkpato Enin in Akwa Ibom State of Nigeria kidnapped and raped a 15 year old secondary student at gunpoint while she

was returning from church (Akpoghome & Nwano 2016). This is a heinous crime from a law enforcement officer who is charged with the responsibility of protecting lives and property. Not only did he rape the victim, he kept her for three days and demanded a ransom of N10, 000.00 as bail. In the same report an Ex-Councillor, aged 54 defiled a seven year old girl in Delta State. The Ex-Councillor of Sapele Local Government Council, Mr. John Onose has already been arrested by the Police. The report alleged that the ex-Council lawmaker lured the kid to a nearby bush around Fovie Street before forcefully defiling her. The mother of the victim was alarmed to discover that her daughter was bleeding from her private part and her womb was pulling out. Upon further investigation, it was discovered that the girl had been defiled. Fortunately, the seven-year-old was able to identify the suspect as the person that defiled her. For all the above reasons, even though the incidences occur, defilement cases involving male (child) victims are less reported than their female counterparts. Furthermore, in Nigeria, child sexual defilement has been found, to have lasting and profound effects on the defiled child, even throughout the child's life. Victims of sexual defilement are made to suffer unquantifiable anguish, some become diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, dissociation from reality, depersonalization, they endure physical violence, avoid social life, get infected with sexually transmitted infections, encounter serious difficulty in remembering events, relives moments of sexual assault and unwanted pregnancy amongst other ills (Akpoghome & Nwano 2016). Depending on a variety of factors, the effects of the

abuse vary from one victim to the other. Such factors include the age of the child when the abuse happened; the younger a child at the onset of the abuse, the worse the long-lasting effects on the child. Another factor is the personality of the abuser. The effects of the abuse are worse if the abuser is a close relative. Another factor to be considered is the reaction of those whom a defiled child decides to share his experiences with. Generally, a defiled child is reluctant to tell anyone about his experiences; the response of the confidant, in the event that the child decides to open up, is thus very important. If the confidant is impatient or judgmental, it may make the abuse have more profound negative effects on the child, making the child have feelings of guilt as if it were his fault the defilement happened (Akpoghome & Nwano, 2016).

## **2.7 Theoretical Framework**

Theories relevant to child defilement of minors that will be used for this study include psychoanalytic theory and integration theory.

### **Attachment theory**

Attachment theory posits that “humans have a propensity to establish strong emotional bonds with others (Omodan & Tsotetsi, 2019), and when individuals have some loss and emotional distress, they act out as a result of their loneliness and isolation” (Terry & Tallon, 2004). It established a relationship between poor quality attachments to sexual offending, noting that men who sexually abuse underage fail to

develop social skills and self-confidence necessary for effective intimacy with their peers (Terry & Tallon, 2004). The desire to satisfy sexual desire has been identified as one of the factors for the rape and defilement of minors in Nigeria. Psychoanalytic theory attributed to Freud, on the other hand, viewed sexual deviant as a result of the conflict in the stages of child development. According to the theorists, the failure to fix the unresolved conflict in the oral, anal, phallic and genital stage results in distortion of the sexual object (Terry & Tallon, 2004). The theory posited that oedipal conflict, in which boys no longer compete with their fathers for their mother, may shift their affections to females in their adults if their appearance brings back the fear of castration (Terry and Tallon, 2004). Undue closeness to females may also be one of the major factors for rape and defilement of minors.

### **Integration theory**

Integration theory presented integration psychoanalytic and attachment theories to explain various factors responsible for deviant sexual behaviour. Finkelhor proposed a four-factor model of precondition for child sexual abuse, which includes motivation, internal inhibitions, external inhibitors and overcoming children's likely resistance (SECASA, 2018). He integrated various theories on why individuals begin to participate in deviant sexual behaviour. He identified four underlying factors why perpetrators abuse and continue to abuse. These are emotional congruence, sexual arousal, blockage and disinhibition (Terry & Tallon, 2004).

- (i) **Emotional congruence:** He described emotional congruence “as the relationship between the adult abuser’s emotional needs and child’s characteristics. Such an adult, for instance, may suffer from low-esteem and a low sense of efficacy in social relationship and maybe more comfortable relating with children due to sense of power and control” (Terry & Tallon, 2004 p. 18; Ward & Hudson, 2008).
- (ii) **Sexual arousal:** He opined that “the child abuser has been molested as a child and through conditioning and imprinting grew to find children arousing” (Terry and Tallon, 2004 p. 18; War and Hudson, 2008).
- (iii) **Blockage:** Blockage refers to the abuser inability to have his emotional need met in the adult relationship (Males, 2004 p. 168).
- (iv) **Disinhibition:** Refers to “factors that allow the molester to overcome his inhibitions so that he allows himself to molest a child. Finkelhor employed cognitive-behaviour theory to explain this factor. He noted that substance abuse and stress could contribute to the lowering of inhibitions” (Terry & Tallon, 2004; Ward & Hudson, 2008).

## 2.8 Empirical Review

Mutavi, Mathai, Kumar, Nganga and Obondo (2018) examined psychosocial outcomes in defiled children and their caregivers’ perceptions of the children’s trauma after defilement. The study was carried out between June 2015 and July 2016

at Kenyatta National Hospital and Nairobi Women's Hospital. It adopted a qualitative descriptive design using interviews to obtain information from six purposely selected caregivers comprising of four mothers, one father and one grandmother. All the perpetrators were adult males and two of the defiled children were male and 5 were female. Two of the children were siblings; a brother and his sister. Five of the perpetrators were known to the children and one of these was the child's biological father. The defiled children had negative outcomes in terms of poor academic performance, low self-esteem, depression and poor social relationships. In addition one of the children contracted HIV/AIDS, two became pregnant, one was used to traffic drugs, and another had mental retardation. The caregivers felt significant psychosocial distress. There is therefore, need to routinely screen for psychological, social and physical outcomes of children exposed to defilement trauma and to always consider caregiver distress when treating these children.

Akpoghome and Nwano (2016) assessed sexual defilement of children in Nigeria. They expressed that children all over the world are the future of every nation and to this extent, they need to be protected from vices that are capable of ruining their lives and future. Sexual defilement of children in Nigeria has been on the increase recently and this calls for the attention of well-meaning citizens and the government to arise and protect this vulnerable group. The paper looks at the definitions of sexual defilement and who a child is. The paper shows that a child is

any person that is below the age of eighteen years and sexual defilement will occur where an adult or another child has sexual intercourse with a child with or without the child's consent. The paper notes that girls and boys are defiled although the cases involving boys are under reported. The paper discovers that there are several circumstances that would expose a child to defilement. It notes that perpetrators of this heinous act are most times acquaintances. The paper also notes that the Courts have not been imposing sentences that will deter perpetrators, although the Supreme Court of Nigeria has severally condemned these sentences. The paper, therefore, recommends that the courts should live up to their responsibilities and further calls on all to arise and fight this scourge that is threatening the future of our children and nation.

Olusegun and Idowu (2016) examined the concepts and various forms of child abuse which exist in Nigeria. It appraises the different factors responsible for child abuse in Nigeria, identifies the laws and institutions that protect children from abuse, evaluates the effectiveness of these various laws and institutions, and facilitates further information on workable steps to curb all forms of child abuse in Nigeria. This paper concludes with the realization that the menace of child abuse and its resultant effects on children in Nigeria can only be resolved through a combination of efforts by the government and other relevant stakeholders in order to revamp.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter explains the methodology relevant to this research. It contains the research design, the population and sampling techniques, the operationalization and measurement of variables, the research instrument, validity of research instrument, sources of data and method of data analyses.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

According to Selltiz, Wrighttsman and Cook (1976), research design is the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. The cross sectional research design will basically be adopted for this study. This design is adopted and considered appropriate because it facilitates the collection of original data from the respondent.

#### **3.2 Population of the Study**

The population is the totality of the objects or elements being studied and to which the conclusions or generalization of our results will apply. Sampling is the choosing of part of the population in such a way that the part is a representative of the whole, so that judgment about the whole are deduced from the part (Sellitz, 1997). The study was conducted across Egor L.G.A, Edo State, Nigeria. The study

area is with a total population of 445,800 people (National Bureau of Statistics (web)). The study targeted the population of the victims of defilement who were girls below the age of 18 year, caregivers, and parents or guardians of victims.

### **3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

For the purpose of this study, non-probability sampling method (convenience sampling) will be adopted. The convenience sampling is one in which the researcher selects whatever unit he or she has easy access to and are conveniently located. Because it was not possible to deal with the entire target population, the research will focus on a precise sample. A sample of 400 questionnaires will be distributed randomly to 400 respondents in Egor Local Government Area, Edo State.

### **3.4 Research Instrument**

Questionnaires will serve as the main data collection instrument that will be used in the study. The prepared questionnaire accompanied with letter of introduction was sent to the assigned respondents to be completed and returned to the researcher. The respondents were asked not to give their names in order to increase the chance of obtaining correct information.

### **3.5 Validity of Instrument**

The questionnaire used for this study was thoroughly scrutinized by the supervisor for clarity, precision and comprehension. Both the preliminary test and

the main research results will be similar especially in the pattern of response from respondents to fundamental questions relating to the research study under consideration.

### **3.6 Method of Data Collection**

The questionnaire will be distributed personally to the respondents. The respondents should be able to answer the questions honestly after administering the questionnaires to them. The researcher will also guide the respondents with regards to filling questionnaires. The respondents were informed that their responses would be treated with utmost confidentiality

### **3.7 Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected or generated from the questionnaire will be analyzed using the simple percentages, mean via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 24.0.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the presentation and analyses of data collected as well as the interpretation and the discussion of results of the study. The first section is based on the demographic presentations and analyses via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The major task of the objective of the exercise is to answer the research questions stated in chapter one of the study. The relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable were analyzed and then the discussions of findings were made.

### **4.2 Descriptive Statistics**

The retrieved questionnaires containing the information gotten from the respondents was analyzed and interpreted using percentages

**Table 4.1: Response Rate**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Returned	387	96.75
Unreturned	13	3.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Work, 2022.

Four hundred (400) copies of questionnaire were distributed to respondents. With Three hundred and eighty seven (387) copies completed and returned, representing 96.75% of the total administered questionnaires.

### **Section A: Bio-Data**

This section shows the variables of respondents in respect of demography such as gender, age, marital status and highest education obtained.

**Table 4.2: Social Demographic Information on Respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	261	67.4
Female	126	32.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Age</b>		
Below 18	76	19.6
18-25 years	188	48.6
26-30 years	102	26.35
Above 30 years	21	5.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	222	57.4

Married	158	40.8
Divorced	7	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
Primary	3	.8
Secondary	18	4.7
OND/NCE/Diploma	178	46.0
HND/B.Sc./B. A	174	45.0
Postgraduate	14	3.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork Survey, 2022.

Table 4.2 shows that out of a total of 387 respondents, 261 are male while 126 are female. In terms of age, out of a total of 387 respondents, 76 of the respondents are below 18 years, 188 of the total respondents are within the age bracket of 18-25 years, 102 of the total respondents are within the age bracket of 26-30 years, while 21 of the total respondents are above 30 years. In terms of marital status, out of a total of 387 respondents, 222 of the total respondents are single, 158 of the total respondents are married, and 7 of the respondents are divorced. In terms of educational qualification, out of a total of 387 respondents, 3 are Primary school certificate holder, 18 are SSCE holders, 178 are OND/NCE/Diploma holders, 174 are HND/B.Sc./B.A holders, while 14 of the total respondents are postgraduates.

**Figure 4.1: Gender of Respondents**

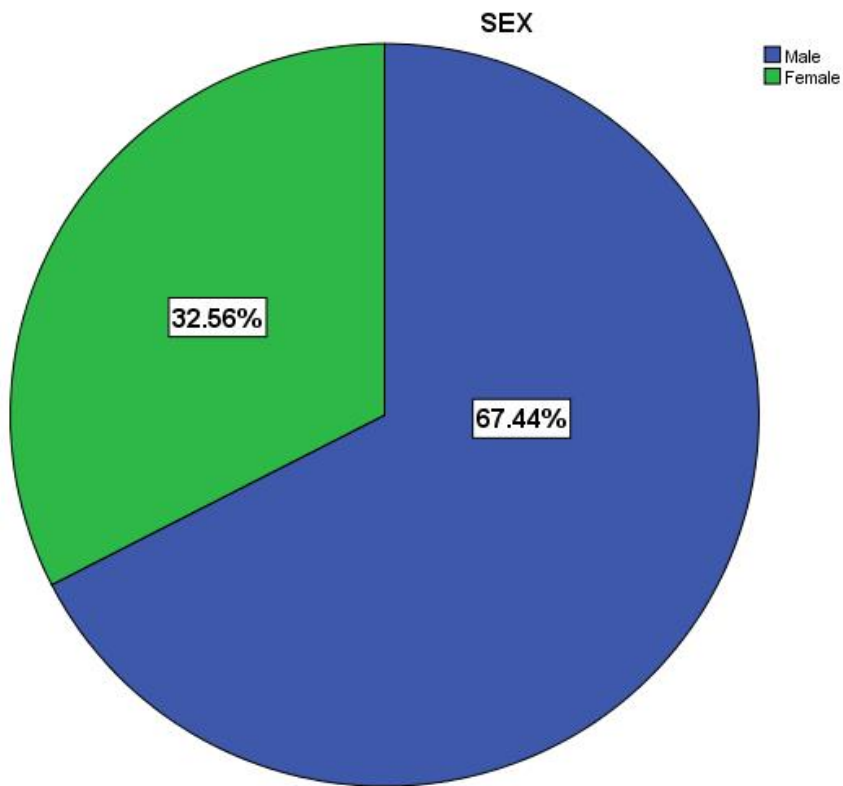


Figure 4.1 shows that out of the total respondents, 67.44% are male while 32.56% are female.

**Figure 4.2: Age of respondents**

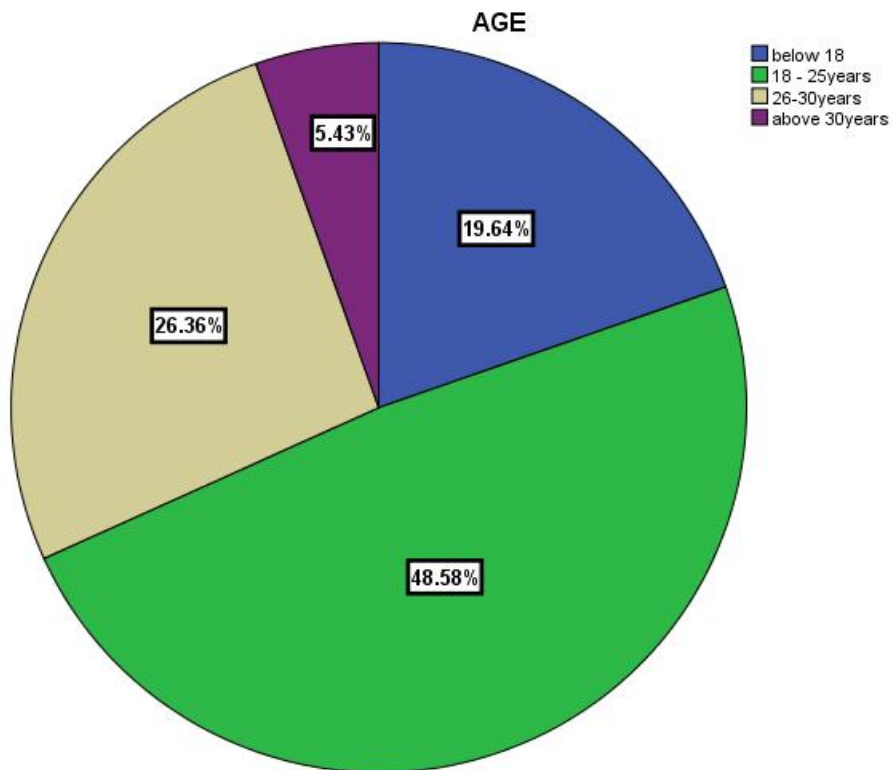


Figure 4.2 shows that 19.64% of the respondents are below 18 years, 48.58% of the total respondents are within the age bracket of 18 – 25 years, 26.36% of the total respondents are within the age bracket of 26 – 30 years, while 5.43% of the total respondents are above 30 years.

**Figure 4.3: Marital status of respondents**

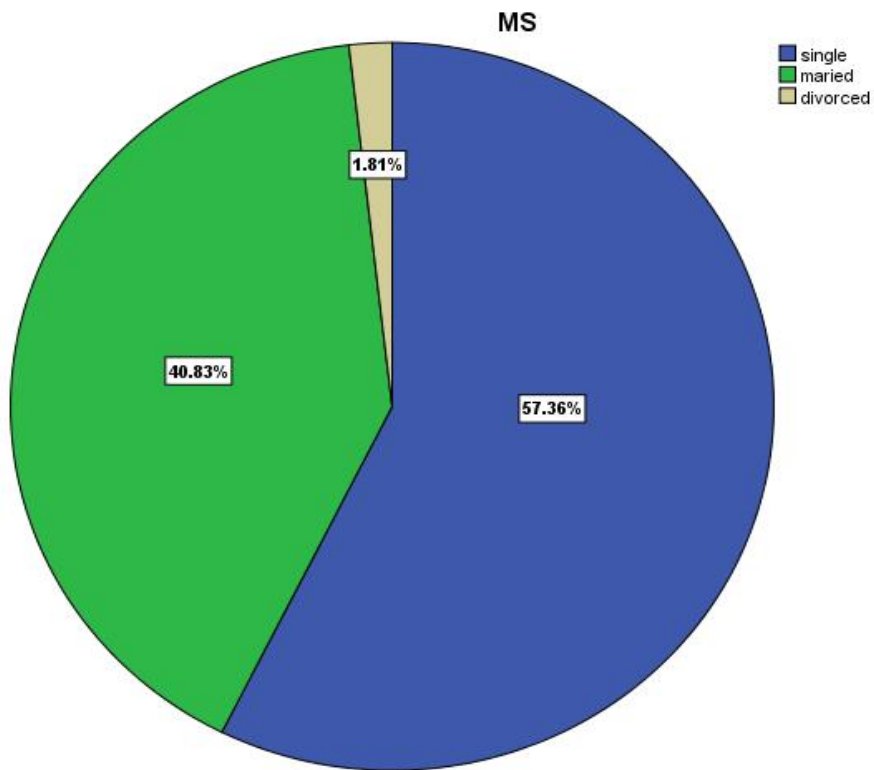


Figure 4.3 shows that 57.36% of the total respondents are single, 40.83% of the total respondents are married, and 1.81% of the respondents are divorced.

**Figure 4.4: Educational level of respondents**

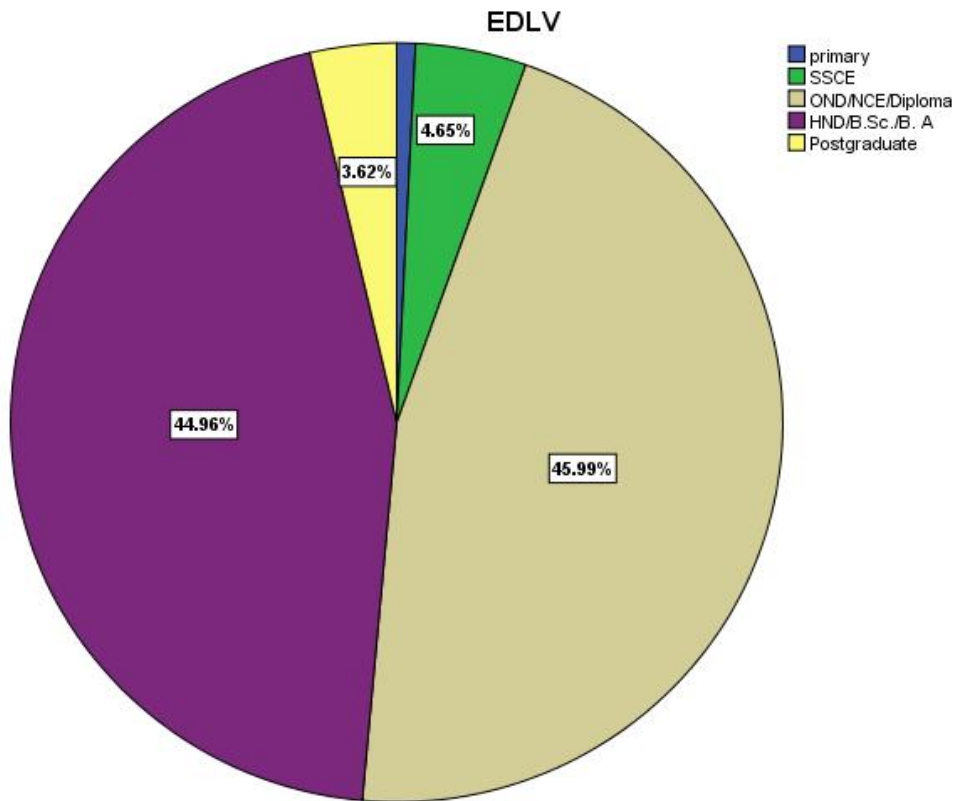


Figure 4.4 shows that .8% are primary school certificate holders, 4.65% are SSCE holders, 45.99% are OND/NCE/Diploma holders, 44.96% are HND/B.Sc./B.A. holders, while 3.62% of the total respondents are postgraduates.

### **4.3 Data Presentation and Analyses According to the Research Objectives**

**Research Question 1:** What is the psychosocial impact of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area?

**Table 4.3: Shows the Frequency Distribution of Respondents with the Above Statement**

S/N	Descriptive Statistics				
	Questions	N	Total Score	Mean	Decision
1.	child defilement often leads to Poor childhood experiences	387	1613.79	4.17	Positive
2.	Child defilement often leads low self-esteem	387	1575.09	4.07	Positive
3.	Difficulty in forming relationships with other adults is often the psychosocial impact of child defilement	387	1578.96	4.08	Positive
4	Child defilement often leads increased fear, guilt and self-blame	387	1629.27	4.21	Positive
	<b>Grand Mean</b>			<b>4.1325</b>	<b>Positive</b>

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork Survey, 2022.

The result in table 4.3 above shows that most of the respondents gave positive response to the itemized items in table 4.3. Majority of the respondents agreed that child defilement often leads to Poor childhood experiences; that child defilement often leads low self-esteem; that difficulty in forming relationships with

other adults is often the psychosocial impact of child defilement and that child defilement often leads increased fear, guilt and self-blame.

**Research Question 2:** What are the causes of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area?

**Table 4.4: Shows the Frequency Distribution of Respondents with the Above Statement**

S/N	Descriptive Statistics				
	Questions	N	Total Score	Mean	Decision
1.	Persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/or psychological needs makes children vulnerable to defilement.	387	1799.55	4.65	Positive
2.	Child discipline as an integral part of child rearing in all cultures and especially in Africa is no longer taking seriously.	387	1876.95	4.85	Positive
3.	A majority of sexual abuse perpetrators are retarded or mentally ill.	387	1567.35	4.05	Positive
4	Only young children are victims of sexual abuse.	387	1586.7	4.1	Positive
	<b>Grand Mean</b>			<b>4.4125</b>	<b>Positive</b>

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork Survey, 2022.

The result in table 4.4 above shows that most of the respondents gave positive response to the itemized items in table 4.4. Majority of the respondents agreed that persistent failure to meet a child’s physical and/or psychological needs makes children vulnerable to defilement; that child discipline as an integral part of child; rearing in all cultures and especially in Africa is no longer taking seriously; that a majority of sexual abuse perpetrators are retarded or mentally ill and that mostly young children are victims of sexual abuse

**Research Question 3:** What are the societal responses to child defilement in Egor Local Government Area?

**Table 4.5: Shows the Frequency Distribution of Respondents with the Above Statement**

S/N	Descriptive Statistics				
	Questions	N	Total Score	Mean	Decision
1.	Child defilement is not something that people like to talk.	387	1691.19	4.37	Positive
2.	In sexual abuse cases, the child him/herself is never responsible.	387	1853.73	4.79	Positive
3.	Child defilement is due to lack of access to their partner.	387	1745.37	4.51	Positive

4	Using a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other Considerations is common in the society.	387	1598.31	4.13	Positive
	<b>Grand Mean</b>			<b>4.45</b>	<b>Positive</b>

Source: Researcher’s Fieldwork Survey, 2022.

The result shows that most of the respondents gave positive response to all items in table 4.5. Therefore, majority of the respondents agreed that Child defilement is not something that people like to talk; in sexual abuse cases, the child him/herself is never responsible; that child defilement is due to lack of access to their partner; and that using a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other Considerations is common in the society.

**Research Question 4:** What are the roles of social workers in the issues of Child defilement?

**Table 4.6: Shows the Frequency Distribution of Respondents with the Above Statement**

S/N	Descriptive Statistics				
	Questions	N	Total Score	Mean	Decision
1.	Social workers play active roles in the issues of Child defilement.	387	1621.53	4.19	Positive
2.	Social workers are able to manage, supervise, organize, and compile information as well as work well within teams and one-on-one with individuals in the society.	387	1110.69	2.87	Positive
3.	Social workers' primary responsibility is to protect children in situations of defilement or maltreatment.	387	1215.18	3.14	Positive
4	Welfare social workers should specifically focus on protecting the most vulnerable in our society and supporting children and families in need of assistance.	387	1331.28	3.44	Positive
	<b>Grand Mean</b>			<b>3.41</b>	<b>Positive</b>

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork Survey, 2022.

The result shows that most of the respondents gave positive response all the items in table 4.6. Therefore, majority of the respondents agreed that social workers play active roles in the issues of child defilement; that social workers are able to manage, supervise, organize, and compile information as well as work well within teams and one-on-one with individuals in the society; that social worker's primary responsibility is to protect children in situations of defilement or maltreatment; and that welfare social workers should specifically focus on protecting the most vulnerable in our society and supporting children and families in need of assistance.

**Research Question 5:** In what ways can child defilement be curbed?

**Table 4.7: Shows the Frequency Distribution of Respondents with the Above Statement**

S/N	Descriptive Statistics				
	Questions	N	Total Score	Mean	Decision
1.	Culture of silence about defilement should be addressed, and people should be encouraged to speak out.	387	1416.42	3.66	Positive
2.	Stricter measures should be taken to punish perpetrators for serving as a deterrent to others.	387	1536.39	3.97	Positive

3.	To put an end to child defilement, vulnerable people should be careful of where they go	387	1544.13	3.99	Positive
4	Even if one lets a year go by before talking about a sexual abuse situation, it is still possible to do something about it	387	1505.43	3.89	Positive
	<b>Grand Mean</b>			<b>3.8775</b>	<b>Positive</b>

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork Survey, 2022.

The result shows that most of the respondents gave positive response all the items in table 4.7. Therefore, majority of the respondents agreed that culture of silence about defilement should be addressed, and people should be encouraged to speak out; that stricter measures should be taken to punish perpetrators for serving as a deterrent to others; that to put an end to child defilement, vulnerable people should be careful of where they go and that even if one lets a year go by before talking about a sexual abuse situation, it is still possible to do something about it

#### **4.4 Discussion of Findings**

The study examined the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention. The result showed that the respondents agreed that child defilement often leads to Poor childhood experiences; that child defilement often

leads low self-esteem; that difficulty in forming relationships with other adults is often the psychosocial impact of child defilement and that child defilement often leads increased fear, guilt and self-blame.

The result also showed respondents agreed that persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/or psychological needs makes children vulnerable to defilement; that child discipline as an integral part of child; rearing in all cultures and especially in Africa is no longer taken seriously; that a majority of sexual abuse perpetrators are retarded or mentally ill and that mostly young children are victims of sexual abuse.

The study reported that respondents agreed that child defilement is not something that people like to talk; in sexual abuse cases, the child him/herself is never responsible; that child defilement is due to lack of access to their partner; and that using a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other consideration is common in the society.

The study also revealed that social workers play active roles in the issues of child defilement; that social workers are able to manage, supervise, organize, and compile information as well as work well within teams and one-on-one with individuals in the society; that social worker's primary responsibility is to protect children in situations of defilement or maltreatment; and that welfare social workers

should specifically focus on protecting the most vulnerable in our society and supporting children and families in need of assistance.

The study also revealed that the respondents agreed that culture of silence about defilement should be addressed, and people should be encouraged to speak out; that stricter measures should be taken to punish perpetrators for serving as a deterrent to others; that to put an end to child defilement, vulnerable people should be careful of where they go and that even if one lets a year go by before talking about a sexual abuse situation, it is still possible to do something about it.

This finding agrees with the findings of Akpoghome and Nwano (2016) which assessed sexual defilement of children in Nigeria. The paper shows that a child is any person that is below the age of eighteen years and sexual defilement will occur where an adult or another child has sexual intercourse with a child with or without the child's consent. The paper notes that girls and boys are defiled although the cases involving boys are under reported. The paper discovers that there are several circumstances that would expose a child to defilement. It notes that perpetrators of this heinous act are most times acquaintances. The paper also notes that the Courts have not been imposing sentences that will deter perpetrators, although the Supreme Court of Nigeria has severally condemned these sentences. The paper recommends that the courts should live up to their responsibilities and further calls on all to arise and fight this scourge that is threatening the future of our

children and nation. Olusegun and Idowu (2016) concludes with the realization that the menace of child abuse and its resultant effects on children in Nigeria can only be resolved through a combination of efforts by the government and other relevant stakeholders.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

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

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is to summarize the findings, and present the contribution of the study to knowledge, conclusion, policy recommendation and suggestions for further studies.

#### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

The focus of this chapter is to summarize the findings, draw conclusions reached in the study and make recommendations based on research objectives and the overall perspective of the main findings while making suggestions for further studies. To facilitate the study, questionnaires were administered to the selected school. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 24.0) was employed to examine the feedbacks from the questionnaires. The study examined the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention in Egor Local Government Area. The objective of the study to examine the psychosocial impact of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area; to investigate the causes of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area; to know the societal responses to child defilement in Egor Local Government Area; to assess the roles of social workers in the issues of Child defilement and to find out possible ways child defilement be curbed. The result showed that the respondents agreed that child defilement often

leads to Poor childhood experiences and often leads low self-esteem. The result also showed that the respondents agreed that persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/or psychological needs makes children vulnerable to defilement. The study reported that respondents agreed that social workers play active roles in the issues of child defilement.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This study examined the psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention in Egor local government area of Edo state. A sample of 400 copies of questionnaire was distributed randomly to 400 respondents in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. Based on the findings that child defilement often leads to poor childhood experiences and often leads low self-esteem, the result also showed that the respondents agreed that persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/or psychological needs makes children vulnerable to defilement. The study reported that respondents agreed that social workers play active roles in the issues of child defilement. There is therefore, need to routinely screen for psychological, social and physical outcomes of children exposed to defilement trauma.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

In this regard, the following recommendations are suggested.

1. Strict laws should be enforced to deal with abusers in the society The study recommends that domestic violence awareness campaigns should be put in place to educate the public on the dangers of violence.
2. The Federal Ministry of health in every state should give free access and treatment to victims of child defilement so that disclosure could be more encouraged.
3. Victims should be provided quick medical interventions, including forensic examinations (where necessary) and such opportunity be made possible in every state of the federation.
4. The counselling profession in Nigeria should build the capacity of her members to be able to respond to CSA issues adequately.
5. Parents should train children and adolescents on assertiveness training.
6. Guidance counselors should be posted to all public school, as they are in the best position to help students with such problems also teachers should refer students with such problems to the school counselors for help.
7. Teachers, counsellors, and mental health providers should establish effective partnerships to educate teachers, students and parents on the prevalent types of school violence, the causes and consequences, and possible remedies.
8. The courts should live up to their responsibilities and further calls on all to arise and fight this scourge that is threatening the future of our children and nation.

## **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

1. Similar studied could be conducted on other in parts of state or Nigeria.
2. Also, the study recommends the use of a different methodology and sample size other the one adopted in the work for future research.

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**APPENDIX**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN  
BENIN CITY**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**REQUEST FOR YOUR COOPERATION IN COMPLETING THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

I am an under-graduate student of the above named University. As part of the requirements for award of B.Sc. degree in social work, I am conducting a research titled: *The psychosocial impact of child defilement and social work intervention (Egor Local Government Area, Edo State)*. In this regard, you have been duly selected as a member of the sample. I also wish to assure you that your answers will be treated in strict confidence and used for the stated academic purpose only.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**Omorodion Precious Ehis**  
*Researcher*

**Section A: Demographic Variables**

Instruction: Please tick [] against your chosen response and record your view where necessary in the provided spaces.

1. Gender: Male [] Female []
2. Age: below 18 [] 18-25 [] 26-30 [] Above 30 years []

3. Marital Status: Single [ ] Married [ ] Divorced [ ]
4. Highest Educational Qualification: Primary [ ] Secondary [ ]  
 OND/NCE/Diploma [ ] HND/B.Sc./B. A [ ] Postgraduate [ ]

**Section B**

**Instruction:** Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following, you are to assess the following on a scale of “strongly agree to strongly disagree”.

**Key:** SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = Neutral; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree.

S/N	What is the psychosocial impact of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area?	SA	A	N	D	SD
5.	child defilement often leads to Poor childhood experiences.					
6.	Child defilement often leads low self-esteem.					
7.	Difficulty in forming relationships with other adults is often the psychosocial impact of child defilement.					
8.	Child defilement often leads to increased fear, guilt and self-blame.					

	<b>What are the causes of child defilement in Egor Local Government Area?</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
9.	persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/or psychological needs makes children vulnerable to defilement.					
10.	Child discipline as an integral part of child rearing in all cultures and especially in Africa is no longer taken seriously.					
11.	A majority of sexual abuse perpetrators are retarded or mentally ill					
12.	Only young children are victims of sexual abuse.					
	<b>What are the societal responses to child defilement in Egor Local Government Area?</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
13.	Child defilement is not something that people like to talk.					
14.	In sexual abuse cases, the child him/herself is never responsible.					
15.	Child defilement is due to lack of access to their partner.					

16	Using a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other Considerations is common in the society.					
	<b>What are the roles of social workers in the issues of Child defilement?</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
18	Social workers play active roles in the issues of Child defilement.					
19	Social workers are able to manage, supervise, organize, and compile information as well as work well within teams and one-on-one with individuals in the society.					
20	Social workers' primary responsibility is to protect children in situations of defilement or maltreatment.					
21	welfare social workers should specifically focus on protecting the most vulnerable in our society and supporting children and families in need of assistance.					

	<b>In what ways can child defilement be curbed?</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
22	Culture of silence about defilement should be addressed, and people should be encouraged to speak out.					
23	Stricter measures should be taken to punish perpetrators for serving as a deterrent to others.					
24	To put an end to child defilement, vulnerable people should be careful of where they go.					
25	Even if one lets a year go by before talking about a sexual abuse situation, it is still possible to do something about it.					