

**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF CHILD ABUSE ON THE YOUTH IN
EGOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

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BENIN CITY.**

DECEMBER, 2022

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
WORK, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
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OF BENIN CITY.**

DECEMBER, 2022

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this project was carried out by Vanessa Abieyuwa Edokpayi in the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, under my supervision.

Prof. E. O. Ugiagbe
Project Supervisor

Dr. (Mrs.) T.B. Omorogiuwa
Head of Department

DATE

DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty for His mercies and love to me and to my wonderful family and friends for their fervent prayers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to the almighty God for his unending love that has kept me throughout my programme and for the success of this work. My undiluted thanks go to my lovely parents Mr. and Mrs. Lucky Edokpayi for their financial and moral support, continuous prayers throughout my programme. To my siblings Princess Edokpayi, Daisy Edokpayi, Malcom Edokpayi and David Edokpayi for their encouragement, care and support.

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Above all glory and honour and majesty be unto the Lord God Almighty the author and finisher of our faith, for His Faithfulness and strength when it felt like I couldn't go on, for the ability to read and retain knowledge and for His grace that sustained me through the period of my stay in the great University of Benin.

Vanessa Abieyuwa Edokpayi

University of Benin

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on assessment of the psychological effect of child abuse in Benin City, Edo State. This study adopted the survey design through which data were collected from a sample of 100 respondents. The data was analyse using simple percentage technique. The result shows that there is relationship between child abuse and psychological development problem in children and it also revealed that child abuse influences children psychological health related problems during adolescent and adulthood. The study recommended that parents and all relevant stakeholders as well as care givers should be careful about their interactions with children. They need to use empirically-driven behavioural modification techniques that are proven to positively shape behaviour. Physical abuse (e.g. spanking) and psychological “torture” for example ridicule of children should avoided, shaping and other effective methods of changing behavior should be adopted. Child and Social Protection in Edo State should take proactive measures to control the incidence of physical and psychological child abuse in Edo. The Government should establish functional legal policies that can be used to reduce or prevent physical child abuse; educate the people, affective training, as well as attitudinal change may be effective control measures against psychological child abuse.

CHAPTER ONE

Background to the Study

1.1 Introduction

Child abuse can be seen as child physical maltreatment, sexual, and psychological trauma faced by a child, it can also be seen as neglect of a child or children, especially by a parent or a caregiver, and abuse in childhood can affect personality growth and later adult behaviour (Fahrudin, 2016). Child abuse may include any act or failure as exhibited by parents or caregivers that results in actual or potential harm to a child, and can occur in a child's home or in the organizations such as schools and communities where the child interacts with others (Mike, 2018; Obiwuru, 2020). The terms child abuse and child maltreatment is sometimes used interchangeably, although some scholars makes distinction between the two, treating child maltreatment as an umbrella term to cover child neglect, exploitation, and trafficking (David, Ezechi, Wapmuk, Gbajabiamila, Ohihoin, Herbertson & Odeyemi, 2018).

Many Nigerian children are victims of one form of child abuse or another. Beyond the rampant cases of sexual and physical abuse, a lot of children are also exposed to psychological and emotional abuse. “Another major form of abuse that is common, but not often acknowledged is neglect, which is a case of the absence of a caring adult in a child’s life” (Muanya & Onyedika-Ugoeze, 2019). The abuse of children is a horrific

phenomenon in which young infants and children do not receive the protection, care, nurturance and interactions that are typical of how humans (and many other species) care for their young. It has been well documented that children who experience one form of abuse or the other are at very high risk for the emergence of psychological, behavioural, emotional and social problems later in life (Ebuenyi, Chikezie, & Dariah, 2018; Olaitan & Amos, 2016).

However, the precise mechanisms linking the experience of child abuse with the development of these problems are largely unknown. A critical developmental question remains (David, Ezechi, Wapmuk, Gbajabiamila, Ohihoin, Herbertson & Odeyemi, 2018): How is it that adversity or trauma early in life can lead to a range of problems, including depression, aggression, substance abuse, health problems and general unhappiness, years after abuse has ended? Asking this question in mechanistic terms, rather than just describing the kinds of problems observed in abused children is likely to help uncover the most effective interventions for these children (ILO, 2016; Oyebanji, 2019).

Children who have a history of neglect or physical abuse are at risk of developing psychological trauma leading to psychiatric problems, or a disorganized attachment style. In addition, children who experience child abuse or neglect are 59% more likely to be arrested as juveniles, 28% more likely to be arrested as adults, and 30% more likely to

commit violent crime (Toth & Manly, 2019). Disorganized attachment is associated with a number of developmental problems, including dissociative symptoms as well as anxiety, depressive, and acting out symptoms. A study by Cicchetti and Handley (2019) found that 80% of abused and abused infants exhibited symptoms of disorganized attachment. When some of these children become parents, especially if they suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), dissociative symptoms, and other sequelae of child abuse may arise, they may encounter difficulty when faced with their infant and young children's needs and normative distress, which may in turn lead to adverse consequences for their children's social, emotional and psychological development (Christian, 2015; Jeremy, 2015).

Additionally, children may find it difficult to feel empathy towards themselves or others, which may cause them to feel alone and unable to make friends (Onyido, & Vareba, 2019). Despite these potential difficulties, psychosocial intervention can be effective, at least in some cases, in changing the ways maltreated parents think about their young children. Child abuse is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes. No single factor can be identified as to why some adults behave abusively or neglectfully toward children (Njoku, 2019; Okooboh, 2016). The World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) identify

multiple factors at the level of the individual their relationships, their local community, and their society at large are combine influence on the occurrence of child maltreatment.

At the individual level, such factors include age, sex, and personal history, while at the level of society, factors contributing to child abuses include cultural norms encouraging harsh physical punishment of children, economic inequality, and the lack of social safety nets. WHO and ISPCAN state that understanding the complex interplay of various risk factors of child abuses are vital for dealing with the problem that emanate from the incidence. According to WHO (2020) nearly 3 in 4 children - or 300 million children - aged 2–4 years regularly suffer physical punishment and/or psychological violence at the hands of parents and caregivers. One out of every 5 women and one out of every 13 men report having been sexually abused as a child, between 0-17 years of age. About 120 million girls and young women under 20 years of age have suffered some form of forced sexual contact. Consequences of child abuse may include impaired lifelong physical and mental health, and the social and occupational outcomes can ultimately slow a country's economic and social development (Olaitan & Amos, 2016).

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Child abuse in Nigeria negatively affects the future of children and it could lead to sociological problems such as psychological problems, metal problem, emotional disorder, societal problems, to mention but a few (Ebuenyi, Chikezie & Dariah, 2018).

Children suffer from various forms of abuse such as child marriages, molestation, child labour, kidnapping, and neglect, among other forms. Many laws and policies were put into place with the purpose of protecting children from abuse. However, they have not been effective for many reasons including poor enforcement mechanisms, poverty, corruption, lack of rehabilitation of sexual offenders, negative attitude of parents, and inefficient judicial processes.

The occurrence of childhood abuse and neglect is a widespread problem in our nation. These childhood experiences cause detrimental, long-lasting effects during cognitive, behavioral, and emotional development and often well into adulthood. Evidence has shown that childhood maltreatment is associated with negative health outcomes and adolescent violent behaviors. Many individuals who experience maltreatment such as neglect or abuse are greatly affected beyond childhood and adolescence; there is a significant relationship between child abuse and psychological disorders in adulthood (Hussey, Chang, & Kotch, 2006). Child abuses are persistent and pervasive social problem with devastating effects on child social, emotional, psychological and cognitive development. Children who have been exposed to maltreatment are at high risk for the development of behavioural problems and cognitive deficits in childhood (Salzinger, Feldman, Hammer & Rosario, 1993).

In light of the different developmental problems encountered by children exposed to maltreatment, it is not surprising that they are overrepresented in different social service and intervention settings such as child welfare and protective services, community-based services, most forms of child and adolescent medical care, special education services, and correctional facilities (Elder, 2005). It is against this backdrop that this research seeks to examine the effect of child abuse on psychological development: using Benin City as a case study.

1.3 Research Questions

From the foregoing the following research questions are raised to guide the course of this research objective.

- 1) What is the relationship between child abuse and psychological developmental problem in children?
- 2) Does child abuse influences children psychological health related problems during adolescent and adulthood?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to empirically examine the effect of child abuse on psychological development. The specific objectives of the study are gives as:

- 1) To determine the relationship between child abuse and psychological development problem in children,

- 2) To examine whether child abuse influences children psychological health related problems during adolescent and adulthood.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Based on the specific objectives above the research hypotheses were stated. These hypotheses are stated in the null form as follows:

- 1) There is no relationship between child abuse and psychological development problem in children,
- 2) Child abuse does not influence children psychological health related problems during adolescent and adulthood.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the effect of child abuse on psychological development. This study will be carried out in Edo State, Nigeria. More specifically, the study will be carried out in Benin City. The survey shall cover Ring Road, Third Junction, Santana Market and New Benin, all in Benin City. This study will be researched within one academic year, under which the study is expected to be completed.

1.7 Significance of the Study

At the end of this study, the systematic review of literature and findings will be of sole relevance to social work practice on the intervention process that should be put in place to checkmate persistent of child abuse in Benin City, Edo State. The research will serve

as secondary source document to both existing and potential researchers in related field of study. The study will be relevant to ministry of education as recommendations will suggest removal of street children through concrete government policy. The study will be theoretical relevant to the society as enlightenment on the psychological development of child abuse could bare them from attempting any form of abuse. The study will be relevant to parents and caregivers as it admonishes them to given due attachment to their wards and avoid incidences of child abuse.

1.8 Definition of Terms/Concept

The following terms will be given reseasonable explanations with respect to this study. However, majority of the definition will be done conceptually.

Child: Biologically, a child (plural children) is said to be a young human being between 1 and 17 years of age, the child developmental period could be between infancy and puberty. The legal definition of child generally refers to a minor, otherwise known as a younger person.

Abuse: Abuse is described as the mismanagement of a child often done in unfairly or improper manner. Abuse can come in many forms, such as: physical or verbal maltreatment, injury, assault, violation, rape, unjust practices, crimes, or other types of aggression.

Child Abuse: Child abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver, whether through action or failing to act, causes injury, death, emotional harm or risk of serious harm to a child. There are many forms of child maltreatment, including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation and emotional abuse.

Emotional Development: This refers to the ability of a child to recognize, express, and manage feelings at different stages of life and to have empathy for the feelings of others. The development of these emotions, which include both positive and negative emotions, is largely affected by relationships with parents, siblings, and peers.

Psychological Health Problem: This refers to mental health illness, which is the level of psychological health problem or presence of mental illness. It is the state of someone who is not "functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional and behavioural adjustment". From the perspectives of positive psychology or of holism, mental health may include an individual's ability to enjoy life and to create a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Review of Theoretical Literature

The consequences of child abuse can be devastating for several years after the experience of the abuse. For over 30 years, clinicians have described the effects of child abuse and neglect on the physical, psychological, cognitive, and behavioral development of children. Physical consequences range from minor injuries to severe brain damage and even death. Psychological consequences range from chronic low self-esteem to severe dissociative states. The cognitive effects of abuse range from attentional problems and learning disorders to severe organic brain syndromes. Behaviourally, the consequences of abuse range from poor peer relations all the way to extraordinarily violent behaviours (Njoku, 2019). Thus, the consequences of child abuse and neglect affect the victims themselves and the result effect affect the society in which they live.

Many complexities challenge our understanding of factors and relationships that exacerbate or mitigate the consequences of abusive experiences. The majority of children who are abused do not show signs of extreme disturbance. Research has suggested a relationship between child abuse and a variety of short- and long-term consequences, but considerable uncertainty and debate remain about the effects of child victimization on children, adolescents, and adults (Onyido & Vareba, 2019). The relationship between the causes and consequences of child abuse is particularly problematic, since some factors

(such as low intelligence in the child) may help stimulate abusive behaviour by the parent or caretaker, but low intelligence can also be a consequence of abusive experiences in early childhood (Chukwu, 2020).

Nor do we yet know the importance of the particular timing, intensity, and context of abuse on the outcome. Factors such as the age and developmental status of the child may influence the outcomes of maltreatment experiences. The effects child abuse seen to cause that appear at only one life stage, whether immediately following the abuse, are often different from those that persist throughout life (Olatosi, Ogordi, Oredugba & Sote, 2018). What may appear to be adaptive or functional at one point in development (avoiding an abusive parent or desensitizing oneself against feelings) may later compromise the person's ability to draw on and respond to personal relationships in an adaptive and flexible way. Given the wide variations in reports, certain intrinsic strengths and vulnerabilities within a child and the child's environment may affect the extent to which abuse will have adverse consequences. Disordered patterns of adaptation may lie dormant, only to appear during times of stress or in conjunction with particular circumstances (Sroufe & Rutter, 1984).

2.1.1 Meaning of Child Abuse

Regardless of strong debate over the years, little progress has been made in constructing a clear, reliable, valid and agreed definition of child abuse. Nyarko, Amissah, Addai and

Dedzo (2014) defined as physical and psychological abuses against children whilst psychological health was defined in relation to children's self-esteem, depression, and anxiety. There is no standardized definition that has been developed by researchers and accepted and used by practitioners. Definitions of child abuse vary amongst professionals, over time, across cultures and between social and cultural groups. What is viewed as abusive in one society is not necessarily seen as such in another.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) states that 'Child Abuse' or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm in the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.' The WHO states that their definition of child abuse should be adapted to the situations of individual countries. They also point out that one definition of child abuse cannot serve all purposes, for example, a definition that would serve to increase awareness differs from that of service provision and a definition for legal purposes differs from that for research (Cicchetti, 2017).

A study of child protection registers undertaken in 1987 revealed that more than 20 categories of child abuse were being used by Scottish local authorities. A joint steering group was set up to recommend standard criteria for admission to, and removal from, local registers. The steering group document stated that: Children may be in need of

protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their stage of development, and they will be at risk through available acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s), or other relative(s), or a carer (i.e. the person(s) while not a parent who has actual custody of a child (Oshri, Rogosch, Burnette & Cicchetti, 2011).

2.1.2 Types of Abuse

i. Physical abuse is defined as actual or attempted physical injury to a child under the age of 16 where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion, that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented and may include a serious incident or a series of minor incidents involving bruising, fractures, scratches, burns or scalds; deliberate poisoning, attempted drowning or smothering, or actual injuries resulting from parental lifestyle prior to birth, for instance substance abuse; physical chastisement deemed to be unreasonable (Miller, Esposito-Smythers, Weismore & Renshaw, 2013).

ii. Emotional abuse occurs when there is failure to provide for the child's basic emotional needs such as to have a severe effect on the behavior and development of the child. This may include situations where, as a result of persistent behavior by the parent(s) or care givers, children are rejected, denigrated or scapegoat; inappropriately punished; denied opportunities for exploration, play and socialization appropriate to their stage of development or encouraged to engage in anti-social behavior; put in a state of terror or

extreme anxiety by the use of threats or practices designed to intimidate them; isolated from normal social experiences, preventing the child from forming friendships. Children, who are left alone for long periods, are under stimulated or suffer sensory deprivation, especially in infancy; who do not experience adequate nurturing or who are subject to a large number of caregivers may also come into this category. Sustained or repeated abuse of this type is likely in the longer term to result in failures or disruptions of development of personality, inability to form secure relationships and may additionally have an effect on intellectual development and educational attainment.

iii. Sexual abuse may include such activities as incest, rape, sodomy or intercourse with children; lewd or libidinous practices or behavior towards children; homosexual practices towards children; indecent assault of children; taking indecent photographs of children or encouraging them to become prostitutes or witness intercourse or pornographic materials. Activities involving sexual exploitation, particularly between young people, may be indicated by the presence of one or more of the following characteristics – lack of consent; inequalities in terms of chronological age, developmental stage or size, actual or threatened coercion (Evans, Hawton & Rodham, 2005).

iv. Neglect is the failure to provide for the development of the child in all spheres: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and causes or has a

high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as it is feasible.

2.1.3 Child Abuse and Neglect and Developmental Problems

Strong associations have been made between child maltreatment and learning difficulties and/or poor academic achievement (Gilbert, Widom, Browne, Fergusson, Webb & Janson, 2019; Veltman & Browne, 2001). Abuse and neglect in the early years of life can seriously affect the developmental capacities of infants, especially in the critical areas of speech and language (Wolfe, 1999).

The absence of responsive relationships poses a serious threat to a child's development and well-being. Sensing threat activates biological stress response systems, and excessive activation of those systems can have a toxic effect on developing brain circuitry. When the lack of responsiveness persists, the adverse effects of toxic stress can compound the lost opportunities for development associated with limited or ineffective interaction. This complex impact of neglect on the developing brain underscores why it is so harmful in the earliest years of life. It also demonstrates why effective early interventions are likely to pay significant dividends in better long-term outcomes in educational achievement, lifelong health, and successful parenting of the next generation. Disrupted brain development as a result of maltreatment can cause impairments to the brain's executive

functions: working memory, self-control, and cognitive flexibility that is., the ability to look at things and situations from different perspectives (Kavanaugh, Dupont-Frechette, Jerskey, & Holler, 2016). Children exposed to violence or abuse, if left unaddressed or ignored, are at an increased risk for emotional and behavioral problems in the future. Children who are abused may not be able to express their feelings safely and as a result, may develop difficulties regulating their emotions. As adults, they may continue to struggle with their feelings, which can lead to depression or anxiety.

Trauma caused by experiences of child abuse and neglect can have serious effects on the developing brain, increasing the risk of psychological problems (Streeck-Fischer & van der Kolk, 2000). Extensive research has identified a strong relationship between abuse/neglect and post-traumatic stress disorder (Gilbert et al., 2009; Streeck-Fischer & van der Kolk, 2000). Recent research suggests that diagnosing children with post-traumatic stress disorder does not capture the full developmental effects of chronic child abuse and neglect and many researchers now prefer the term “complex trauma”. Exposure to complex and chronic trauma can result in persistent psychological problems. Complex trauma affects the developing brain and may interfere with a child’s capacity to integrate sensory, emotional and cognitive information, which may lead to over-reactive responses to subsequent stress (Streeck- Fischer & van der Kolk, 2000). However, the authors acknowledged that studies associating child abuse and neglect with learning

problems are problematic in that most studies do not know the intellectual status of children before maltreatment.

2.1.4 Abuse and Psychological Development in Children

Childhood life experiences are known to have a strong link with people's psychological wellbeing (Cox, Kotch & Everson, 2003; Go-Un & Mi-Young, 2020). Negative childhood experiences usually predict poor psychosocial and physical functioning even in adulthood (MacMillan, Fleming, Streiner, Lin, Boyle, Jamieson, Duku, Walsh, Wong, & Beardslee, 2001). Child abuse is the ill treatment of children by parents, guardians, or significant others who usually share some kind of relationship with the child. Child abuse may be physical, psychological, or sexual. Physical child abuse involves the direct infliction of pains and injuries unto a child. Psychological abuse, on the other hand, is the coercive or aversive acts intended to produce emotional harm or threat of harm.

In contrast to physical abuse, these coercive behaviors are not directed toward the target's bodily integrity, but are instead directed at the recipient's sense of self (Greenwood, 2020; Murphy & Cascardi, 1999). Psychological abuse is often intended to diminish another person's self-esteem and mental well-being whereas physical abuse leads the victim with some form of physical pain or injury. Sexual child abuse refers to any unwanted or coerced or tricked sexual interaction with a child. Such unwanted sexual interaction may

include kissing, fondling, oral sex, anal sex, sodomy and intercourse (Peters, Wyatt, & Finkelhor, 1986).

Psychological child abuse refers to acts such as ridiculing a child, threatening to harm a child, and other emotional abuses (McGuigan & Pratt, 2001; Pollak, 2015). Psychological child abuse may not cause immediate physical harm to the child but may have long-term mental health consequences that are just as damaging as physical abuse or neglect (MacMillan et al., 2001; Widom, 2000). Child neglect is an important type of child maltreatment that has received little attention in the child maltreatment research. Child neglect includes lack of supervision, medical neglect, failure to provide food or clothing, inadequate shelter, desertion, abandonment, and other physical neglect (McGuigan & Pratt, 2001).

According to Lamphear (1985) there is broad consensus that child victims abuses are at risk for future social and psychological maladjustment, conspicuously few controlled empirical studies which examine this problem exist. The relative inattention to the psychological sequelae of child maltreatment is unfortunate since observations suggest that exposure to physical abuse and/or neglect has serious consequences for the child's present and long-term adjustment. Child abuse during infancy and early childhood has been shown to negatively affect child development, including brain and cognitive development, and can have lasting effects (Becker-Blease, 2017). Abuse and neglect also

affect children and youth's social and emotional development, causing a host of problems with lifelong consequences. Children who suffer trauma from abuse or violence early in life show biological signs of aging faster than children who have never experienced adversity, according to new research (American Psychological Association, 2020).

Pollak (2015) in a study on the impact of child abuse on the psychosocial development of young Children, points that child abuse disrupts the normal course of children's emotional development. Abused children are at risk for a wide range of mental health-related problems, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, criminality and other forms of poorly regulated emotional behaviour. Promising new studies are suggesting insights into how maltreatment affects emotional development by focusing on attention and stress systems in the brain. In the meantime, more work is needed to develop effective interventions for these children.

Legg (2018) studied child emotional and psychological abuse. Although child abuse occurs across socioeconomic strata, poverty and environmental stress increase the likelihood that maltreatment will occur. Adults living in poverty often experience high levels of stress and social instability, emotional problems and high levels of substance abuse and/or depression all of which undermine the ability to parent effectively. Poverty cannot explain all of child maltreatment, however. Maltreating families often lack social connections, including friends, extended family and neighbourhood communities. While

such a lack of social connections may reflect the parents' interpersonal difficulties, the net result for children is a limited range of adults who can model pro-social behaviours and fewer opportunities to establish connections with stable adults. Cicchetti Olsen (1990) studied the developmental psychopathology of child maltreatment. This is critical because abusive parents have often had little exposure to good parent role models and lack knowledge about child development, child-rearing strategies, social problem-solving and methods to cope with anger and stress.

2.1.5 Abused Children Emotional and Psychological Trauma

Emotional and psychological trauma is the result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter one's sense of security, making you feel helpless in a dangerous world. Psychological trauma can leave you struggling with upsetting emotions, memories, and anxiety that won't go away. It can also leave you feeling numb (Legg, 2020), disconnected, and unable to trust other people. Traumatic experiences often involve a threat to life or safety, but any situation that leaves you feeling overwhelmed and isolated can result in trauma, even if it doesn't involve physical harm. It's not the objective circumstances that determine whether an event is traumatic, but your subjective emotional experience of the event. The more frightened and helpless you feel, the more likely you are to be traumatized.

In order to heal from psychological and emotional trauma, you'll need to resolve the unpleasant feelings and memories you've long avoided, discharge pent-up "fight-or-flight" energy, learn to regulate strong emotions, and rebuild your ability to trust other people. A trauma specialist may use a variety of different therapy approaches in your treatment (Greenwood, 2020).

Experiencing childhood abuse is a risk factor for depression, anxiety, and other psychiatric disorders throughout adulthood. Studies have found that adults with a history of ACEs had a higher prevalence of suicide attempts than those who did not (Choi, DiNitto, Marti, & Segal, 2017; Fuller-Thomson, Baird, Dhrodia, & Brennenstuhl, 2016). Further, adults with major depression who experienced abuse as children had poorer response outcomes to antidepressant treatment, especially if the maltreatment occurred when they were aged 7 or younger (Williams, Debattista, Duchemin, Schatzberg, & Nemeroff, 2016).

2.2 Review of Empirical Literature

Vasileva and Petermann (2016) did an assessment on attachment, development, and mental health in abused and neglected preschool children in foster care: A meta-analysis. The study adopted the survey research design through which data were sourced from targeted respondents. Hence, a basic knowledge about the main psychosocial and developmental problems associated with abuse and neglect and their prevalence in foster

children is needed. A total of 25 studies reporting data on development (n = 4,033), mental health (n = 726), and attachment (n = 255) of foster children in preschool age met the inclusion criteria. The meta-analyses indicated prevalence rates of approximately 40% for developmental, mental health problems, and insecure attachment. Rates of disorganized attachment were estimated to 22%. These findings outline the necessity of an initial trauma-oriented diagnostics and trainings for foster parents that address foster children's development, mental health, and disorganized attachment.

Nyarko, Amissah, Addai and Dedzo (2014) examine the effect of child abuse on children's psychological health. The study employed a survey research design, 109 children were purposively sampled to partake in the study. The sample consisted of both males (n = 68) and females (n = 41) from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, whose ages were from 9 to 18 years.

The research design used was a survey, and the independent samples t-test was used to analyze the data. Some of the participants have histories of abusive treatment (n=57) whilst others were without any such history (n=68). Among those who had suffered abusive treatment, 36 suffered physical abuse and 21 suffered psychological abuse. Standardized measures were used to rate each participant's level of depression and anxiety. The analyses of the data show that both physical and psychological abuses lead to a significant increase in children's depression and anxiety.

A study on child abuse and its consequences on the Nigerian economy using 500 respondents by Bassey, Baghebo and Otu (2012) examine child labour in Nigeria and its economic implications using a case study of Calabar municipality. The study adopted the survey research design on the basis of which data was collected. The result revealed that 52 percent of children are abused in Calabar city. In addition, the study revealed that child abuse and poverty, unemployment & school dropout is related and it negatively affects the growth of the Nigerian economy. The study did not however link the impact of child abuse on the academic performance of the children who are abused. Alokun and Olatunji (2014) assess the influence of child abuse on classroom behaviour and academic performance among primary and secondary school students. The study adopted a sample of 200 teachers, found out that child abuse and children's concentration in class is positively related. This implies that abused children do not concentrate in class with negative implication on the Nigerian economy.

Olatosi, Ogordi, Oredugba and Sote (2018) investigate experience and knowledge of child abuse and neglect using a survey among a group of resident doctors in Nigeria. The study adopted a cross-sectional study carried out among dentists attending a postgraduate update course. Data were collected to assess the knowledge of respondents on the forms of child abuse and neglect, indicators and risk factors. Respondents' professional experiences were also assessed as well as actions taken and possible barriers to reporting

suspected cases. The results of the data collected from 179 respondents, with a mean age of 33.1 ± 5.2 years. The respondents demonstrated good knowledge of the forms of child abuse, with an average score of 95.2%. The risk factors for child abuse and neglect were correctly identified by 153 (85.5%) respondents as children with physical/mental disabilities, 151 (84.4%) as products of unwanted pregnancies, 128 (71.5%) as children from polygamous families and 122 (68.2%) as children from low socioeconomic families. Physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect were majorly identified as bruises behind the ears, 162 (90.5%); oral warts, 114 (63.7%); poor self-esteem, 158 (88.3%) and untreated rampant caries, 137 (76.5%), respectively. Seventy-four (46.5%) of the respondents did not evaluate children for CAN and only 12 (14.1%) of those who observed suspected cases of CAN reported to the social service. Lack of knowledge of referral procedures and concerns about confidentiality were the major barriers to reporting cases of CAN. [Olatosi, et al., \(2018\)](#) found that dentists had good theoretical knowledge of the indicators, risk factors and signs of child abuse and neglect but lagged in clinical detection and reporting of such suspected cases. There is a need for continuing education and advancement of the postgraduate dental curriculum to improve the educational experiences with regard to child abuse and neglect.

Prospective research studies have consistently shown that maltreated children have lower educational achievement than other groups of children ([Gilbert et al., 2009](#)). In a meta-

analysis by Veltman and Browne (2001), 31 of 34 studies (91%) indicated that abuse and neglect was related to poor school achievement and 36 of 42 (86%) indicated delays in language development. However, the authors acknowledged that studies associating child abuse and neglect with learning problems are problematic in that most studies do not know the intellectual status of children before maltreatment. A more recent longitudinal study of maltreated children in the United States found that chronicity of maltreatment affected math scores negatively and type of maltreatment affected reading scores negatively but higher intelligence and daily living skills (e.g., ability to dress oneself, ability to perform household tasks) were protective factors against poor math and reading performance (Coohey, Renner, Hua, Zhang, & Whitney, 2011).

Levi (2018) examines perception of students on the effect of child abuse and neglect on the academic performance of secondary school students in Enugu East Local Government Area. The study adopted the survey research method on the basis of which data were sources from a sample of 500 hundred respondents from the selected schools in Enugu East Local Government, Enugu State including both male and female students, from both junior and senior secondary schools. Simple random sampling was used to select the sample basically intending to minimize bias so as to attain the purpose of the study and to save time. The data was analysed using simple percentage and mean statistical instrument. The results of the findings shows that the effects of child abuse and neglect vary depend

on the type of abuse and neglect, duration, perpetrator, and child. Children may be impacted negatively in their academically, behaviourally, emotionally, and/or socially from child abuse and neglect, and the effects of abuse often persist into adulthood. Because of the devastating effects that abuse and neglect can have on children, it is important for educators to recognize that abuse have the courage and motivation to advocate for the child's safety.

2.3 Review of Relevant Theories

Information Processing Theory is anchored on Horton and Turnage (1976) information processing theory. The assumption of the theory is on stimulus and the response of the human being. They identify the basic processes and describe precisely how these processes function and variables that affects the human mind and thought.

They used computer as a model to compare the brain of human being. The computer is divided into two parts the hardware and software-the machine itself and –software the information tool that instructs its operation. The mind too, must selectively attend and perceive, the associate, computes or otherwise operate on the information. Similarly, when the child is abused, the information perception, action reaction, emotion are greatly affected negatively. This may be attributed as a result of alienation of attachment from the parents.

To them information processing theorists see development over the life span as gradual and cumulative that may directly or indirect affect socio-economic development of any nation around the globe. The unguided input and output of abused child may grossly disfigure the environment in terms of development and wellbeing of a common man. To support the above argument, imitation and modeling has it that people learned directly from experiencing the consequences of their own behavior they also learn by watching another person's behavior and its consequences, (Bandura, 1977). Significant percentage of human being not only children learn wide variety of behaviors from observing career appropriate attitudes and values, social-class and ethnic attitudes and cultural values.

The Intergenerational Transmission Theory suggests that various levels of exposure to trauma, specifically pertaining to abuse, can lead to the likelihood of involvement in a violent relationship later in life (Fox, Robson, & Gover, 2005). The Intergenerational Transmission Theory presumes that individuals, who are victims of abuse, or witness family members being victims of abuse, develop an abnormal perspective of violence.

Many women are subject to the Intergenerational Transmission of violence because they tend to become involved in abusive romantic relationships as a result of an unhealthy, abuse relationship with a mother or father. One study of the Intergenerational Transmission Theory found that women who reported experiencing abuse as children were two to three times more likely to experience Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) than

women who did not report being abused as children (Alexander, 2009). Some children and adolescents receive an unhealthy amount of exposure of aggression and violence depending on the physical environment in which they live and grow. Those who experience abusive situations during cognitive development are more likely to develop a maladaptive perspective of aggression.

The Mimetic Theory suggests that exposure to trauma can generate aggression and increases the likelihood of modeled abuse behavior. The Mimetic Theory describes individuals who view a perpetrator of abuse as powerful or admirable and therefore learn to act violently in order to imitate, or mimic, acts of violence (Craig & Sprang, 2007). This theory is, in some ways, the reversal of the Intergenerational Transmission theory of abuse because individuals who are victims of abuse learn to act violently, whereas with Intergenerational Transmission, other victims learn to accept violence. Many individuals in this situation witnessed family members being victims of abuse or were victims themselves. This theory of mimicked actions incorporates a basic longing for power. The victim sees the perpetrator as powerful, and in order to assert his own power or to recapture power that was taken from them, the witness or victim becomes a perpetrator of aggression or abuse himself (Craig & Sprang, 2007). Environment also has a large impact on those who are encompassed in the Mimetic Theory. Individuals who experience or witness more physical aggression can develop an unhealthy idea of aggression exertion.

Some may think the Mimetic Theory only reveals a mimicking pattern of aggression for boys because of the common general assumption is that males are more aggressive than females, but this assumption overlooks relational aggression. Research shows that aggression in boys is shown through physical aggression, or violence, whereas the aggression exhibited in girls is relational. Therefore, it is possible that girls may also learn aggressive behavior and aggressive emotions by witnessing physical abuse (Maestripieri & Carroll, 1998).

Family Systems Theory, a general theory of psychology regarding the interrelatedness of family members explains that actions of a family member cannot be understood in isolation, but must be examined within the context of the family. Many situations that take place within families lead to strong emotional stressors. These stressors are risk factors for the occurrence of abuse and should be resolved as soon as possible.

Families that experience some of these severe life stressors such as severe or enduring illnesses, unemployment, financial problems, and relational problems within the family unit, usually have a higher rate of child abuse than families without such stressors (Crosson-Towner, 2005). Abusive parents have been seen to have less enjoyment of their children and of general parenting experiences. They also typically exert a more authoritarian parenting style, characterized as restrictive, demanding, and unresponsive (Mapp, 2006). Some cultures or families may find authoritarian parenting to work best,

but many problems have been seen when this style is used. Many families entangled in a pattern of abuse experience substance abuse or other psychological issues or can find little support and are extremely isolated from others (Crosson-Towner, 2005). Social isolation is a significant risk factor, whether it is within the community, extended family, or immediate family. A helpful social support network is a fundamental resource for family members – both for parents dealing with many stressors as well as for the children in the stressful and abuse environment.

Without intervention and treatment, children that experience abuse within the family system can likely develop some of the same social and psychological risk factors of abuse that carry on to adulthood (Crosson-Towner, 2005).

A Social Support Theory of abuse and neglect and the lack of support given to caregivers closely relate to stressors in the Family Systems Theory, as mentioned above, but it also suggests why mothers are statistically shown to be the most common perpetrators of abuse on children. Many researchers assume it is because although general household duties may have become more balanced between couples in recent decades, mothers are still the primary caregivers and are given very little direct childrearing support.

Since mothers are likely to spend the most amount of time with their children, it provides them with the most opportunity to exert abusive behavior toward children (Chang,

Theodore, Martin, & Runyan, 2008). As well as abuse, mothers also are most likely to neglect their children because they are largely responsible for the daily necessary care and protection children should receive and have the control to deny appropriate guardianship. Mothers have the ability to promote a positive, constructive environment, but in order to do so they need social support. Women who are in a psychologically or physically abuse relationship with an intimate partner, possibly because of reasons explained through the Intergenerational Transmission Theory, are at least twice as likely to exhibit abuse towards their children than those women who have a healthy, supportive relationship with their partner (Ditzen & Heinrichs. 2014; Mapp, 2006). Women who are depressed have a diminished ability to parent effectively; these mothers have difficulty communicating with their children and have more naturally negative interactions with them. The family environment of a depressed mother is often hostile, aggressive, and rejecting (Mapp, 2006). These factors are an example of how unstable family systems can lead to a higher risk of physical abuse on children.

Attachment Theory has also been conducted from a perspective involving abuse as well as neglect. Attachment Theory states that either secure or insecure bonds may form between infant and mother in the first several months of the infant's life for the purposes of safety and security. The bond formed between infant and mother influences the quality of the relationships a child has throughout his or her life. One major assumption of the

Attachment Theory is that the parents are a sanctuary of safety throughout all of early childhood. Secure attachments cause children to develop an internal model of self-competence and a model of dependability for others. Insecure attachments, however, promote feelings of threat, rejection, and personal unworthiness (Tarabulsky, Pascuzzo, Moss, St-Laurent, Bernier, Cyr & Dubois-Comtois, 2008). Research shows that maltreatment during infancy can often lead to insecure attachment relationships in the child's developmental future.

Typically, attachment styles are known to be secure, insecure-avoidant, and insecure-ambivalent, but a fourth style has recently been recognized. The newly recognized style of attachment is labeled as "disorganized attachment" (Tarabulsky et al., 2008). In the disorganized attachment style, parents act frightened or frightening in the presence of their child, causing distress for the child. Parents might appear to be frightened at how to properly manage their child if they do not feel capable or supported in their responsibilities. A parent frightening their child might occur if the parent is extremely harsh or authoritarian in their parenting style or if the parent has a strong or unusual reaction to the child. While insecure-avoidant and insecure-ambivalent are associated with high levels of risk of future problems, the disorganized attachment style is actually associated with a highest probability of future problems of all the different attachment styles (Tarabulsky, et al., 2008). Unhealthy attachments not only lead to poor child-

caregiver relationships, but can also cause a maladaptive self-development, deficient peer relationships, substance abuse problems, and educational difficulties (Toth & Cicchetti, 2004).

The Parental Investment Theory which similar to the Attachment theory suggests that parents sometimes decreases or completely ceases investment in their young when the opportunity costs outweigh parental benefits (Maestripieri & Carroll, 1998). Children who have abnormal physical features or a physical or mental disability are at risk for experiencing neglect because of the Parental Investment Theory. This could be because the parent may not feel the child is what they expected him or her to be or because the child has failed to fulfill the expectations of the parents, whether realistic or unrealistic (WHO, 2010). A lack of parental investment can also occur because of an unhealthy attachment between parent and child; if a significant amount of bonding did not occur between the parent and the child, parental investment is likely to be lower (WHO, 2010). Another opportunity cost of parenting that could affect parental investment is the financial burden of childrearing. If parents see a greater benefit in a different use of their finances than investment in their children, they are likely to take advantage of the option that appears to have more personal gain.

Abuse occurs across a wide spectrum of situational, individual, and relational differences, yet it is clear that some factors contribute more to the likelihood of abuse than others.

Many abusers are parents who do not feel adequately supported or equipped in their roles as parents. Many other individuals are merely modeling the abusive behavior they either witnessed or experienced and they carry this behavior into new relationships or new generations of parenting. Regardless of the causes, victims of child abuse experience serious consequences because of their devastatingly unfortunate circumstances.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Child abuse in Edo State has been prevalence for several years, successive government has tried to make policies as to prevent or eradicate it and its consequences. The physical, social, behavioural and economic costs to the individual, and the social and economic costs to communities, are vast. Children are not generally able to protect themselves from serious abuse and neglect. This enlivens both the State's responsibility to protect the child, and the debate about how that responsibility can and should be discharged. A core question arises for all societies, given that most serious child maltreatment occurs in the family sphere, is unlikely to be disclosed, causes substantial harm to both individual and community, and infringes fundamental individual rights and freedoms.

The question is: how can society identify these situations so that the maltreatment can be interrupted, the child's needs for security and safety, and health and other rehabilitation can be met, and the family's needs can be addressed to reduce the likelihood of recurrence? A theoretical framework applicable for any society that is considering

justifiable and effective policy approach in identifying and respond to cases of serious child abuse and neglect. The analysis will draw upon perspectives and concepts that have been developed in the sociology of deviance and social problems. It is perhaps ironic that an area of sociology that has been subject to so much rapid development, theoretical argument and heated discussion should have made such little impact on our thinking and analysis of child abuse. Even more ironic when it is often argued that sociology in general and the sociology of deviance in particular has played such a central role in the radicalisation and increasing disillusionment of social workers.

Theoretically, child abuse results from social and environmental stress. Stressful life events and conditions, such as poverty, unemployment, inadequate housing, and a violent social milieu are prominent factors considered within this theoretical orientation. The perspective emphasizes factors in the environmental context of a family, which, by being felt as overwhelmingly stressful, interfere with a parent's ability to care for its children. Child abuse can be viewed as a symptom of distress in a family that compromises its ability to protect and nurture its children.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research method under the following sub-headings: Research design, Area of the study, Population of the study, Sample and sampling techniques, Instrument of data collection, Validity of instrument, method of data collection, Method of data analysis and Decision rule.

3.1 Research Design

The design adopted for this research is the survey research design. It is the type of research in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people, group, or items considered to be representative of the entire population.

3.2 Area of the Study

This research covers Benin City, Edo State. However, sample for the study will be chosen on the bases of convenience to the study.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of children from 10 years and above in Benin City, Nigeria. The study population was chosen because it was expected to be reasonable enough to give a fair presentation of Orphanage children on the effect of child abuse and neglect.

3.4 Sampling and Sampling Technique

The study encompassed a representation of sample of 100 respondents from the selected children in Benin City. Simple random sampling was used to select the sample basically intending to minimize bias so as to attain the purpose of the study and to save time.

3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

The instrument for data collection for this study was a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire has (4) sections, A-D. Section A dealt with bio-data of the respondents while sections B-D comprised of questions raised from the research questions. Section B had to do with the forms of abuse and neglect experienced children Orphanage homes. Section C dealt with how child abuse influences negatively the behaviour of children. While section D dealt with the extent child abuse affects the child's emotion. The questionnaire was structured based on Likert Rating Scale (strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed). Due to time constraint, questionnaires were the ideal tool for collecting reasonable amount of data within a very short period of time.

3.6 Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was validated to ensure that questions are structured in a manner as to enable the researcher obtain information relevant to the purpose of the study. Three experts from Department of Social Work read the draft of the questionnaire and based on

their comments and suggestions, amendments were made before the questionnaire was finally administered.

3.7 Reliability of the Instrument

In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was first administered to some students' from Department of Social Work on the same instrument was administered to the same teachers for test re-test.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The researcher administered the instrument to the respondents assisted by a staff in each of the sample school. The response items were explained to the respondents to ensure they understood it and questions from them were answered. The respondents gave responses to items by ticking (√) upon their choices out of the four point scale. On hundred (100) questionnaires were administered and the same number returned.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The survey data collected during the administration of the questionnaires was analyzed using frequency tables and percentage to facilitate objectivity and clarity.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with presentation of the data sourced from field survey in targeted areas in Benin City. The study was based on foundational problem of the society “the effect of child abuse and psychological development in Nigeria, using Benin City as a case study. During the survey, one hundred and twenty questionnaires were distributed and Ninety was return completed.

The results of the analysis are tabulated below.

4.2 Analysis of Respondents Characteristics

Table 4.1 Age of Respondents

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
8 - 12 years	41	45.65
13 - 17 years	33	36.67
18 and above years	16	17.78
Total	90	100

Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 4.2 above shows that 41 respondents representing 45.65% were 8 - 12 years, 33 respondents representing 36.67% were 13-17 years, 16 respondents representing 187.78% were 18 and above years.

TABLE 4.2 Gender of Respondents

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Male	59	65.56
Female	31	34.44
Total	90	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 4.2 Shows that 65.56%, which translated to 59 respondents', are male, while 34.44%, which translated to 31 respondents were female. This indicates that the male were more represented than females.

Table 4.3: Religion of Respondents

RELIGION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Christian	29	32.22
Muslim	39	43.33
African Traditional Religion	15	16.67
Others	7	7.78
	90	100

Source: Field survey, 2022

From table 4.3 shows that 29 respondents representing 32.22% were Christians, 39 respondents representing 43.33% were Muslim, 15 respondents representing 16.67% were African Traditional Religion, while 7 respondents representing 7.78% were other religion.

Research Question I: There is no Relationship between Child Abuse and Psychological Development Problem in Children.

Table4.4: Question 1: Child abuse increased risk for a number of problematic developmental in children?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	29	32.22
A	33	36.67
SD	20	22.22
D	8	8.89
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From Table 4 above, 32.22% of the respondents were strongly agreed that child abuse increased risk for a number of problematic developmental in children while 36.67% of the respondents agreed, 22.22% were strongly disagreed, and 8.89% disagreed.

Table 4.5: Question 2: Child abuse negatively affect behavioural development of children as they grow?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	46	51.11
A	23	25.56
SD	9	10.00
D	12	13.33
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From Table 5 above, 51.11% strongly agreed, 25.56% agreed, 10% strongly disagreed, 13.33% disagreed that child abuse negatively affect behavioural development of children as they grow.

Table 4.6: Question 3: Choric child abuse leads to low self-esteem as well as severe dissociative states?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	19	21.11
A	54	60.00
SD	12	13.33
D	5	5.56
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 6 above revealed that 21.11% strongly agreed with the statement, 60% agreed, 13.33% strongly disagreed while 5.56% disagreed that choric child abuse leads to low self-esteem as well as severe dissociative states.

Table 4.7: Question 4: The age and developmental status of the child may influence the effect and outcomes of abuse experienced?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	40	44.44
A	40	44.44
SD	6	6.67
D	4	4.44
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 7 above shows that 44.44% strongly agreed, 44.44% agreed, 6.67% strongly disagreed, while 4.44% disagreed that the age and developmental status of the child may influence the effect and outcomes of abuse experienced.

Table 4.8: Question 5: Child abuse can cause negative behavioural tendencies in a child as he/she grows?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	40	44.44
A	35	39.89
SD	9	10.00
D	6	6.67
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 8 above shows that 44.44% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 39.89% agreed, 10% were strongly disagreed, 6.67% disagreed that child abuse can cause negative behavioural tendencies in a child as he/she grows.

Research Question II: There is no Relationship between Child Abuse Influences Children Psychological Health Related Problems during Adolescent and Adulthood?

Table 4.9: Question 6: Child abuse could lead to physical injuries or partial or permanent disability of the child?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	49	54.44
A	26	28.89
SD	9	10.00
D	6	6.67
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From the Table 9 above, 49% of the respondents were strongly agreed, and 28.89% agreed that child abuse could lead to physical injuries or partial or permanent disability of the child, 10% strongly disagreed, while 6.67% was disagreed respectively.

Table 4.10: Question 7: Child abusive behaviour can lead to a number of physical or emotional impairments?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	27	30.00
A	23	25.56
SD	14	15.56
D	26	28.88
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 10, above revealed that 30% of the respondents strongly agreed, 25.56% agreed, 15.56% were strongly disagreed, while 28.88% disagreed, that child abusive behaviour can lead to a number of physical or emotional impairments,

Table 4.11: Question 8: Child abuse has strong patterns of familial violence in adults who have a history of childhood physical abuse?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	40	44.45
A	30	33.33
SD	11	12.22
D	9	10.00
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 11 shows that 44.45% strongly agreed, 33.33% agreed, 12.22% strongly disagreed, while 10% disagreed that child abuse has strong patterns of familial violence in adults who have a history of childhood physical abuse.

Table 4.12: Question 9: Chronic child abuse can lead to brain dysfunction in later part of the victims' life?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	34	37.78
A	43	47.78
SD	10	11.11
D	3	3.33
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 12 shows that 37.78% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 47.78% agreed, 11.11% strongly disagree, while 3.33% of the respondents disagreed respectively.

Table 4.13 Question 10: Child abuse could cause neurological inherent baviour in the victim?

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	64	71.11
A	24	26.67
SD	2	2.22
D	-	-
TOTAL	90	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From result in Table 13, 71.11% strongly agreed, 26.67% agreed, while 2.22% strongly disagree that child abuse could cause neurological inherent baviour in the victim.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The analysis of research question one revealed that 32.22% of the respondents were strongly agreed that child abuse increased risk for a number of problematic

developmental in children while 36.67% of the respondents agreed, 22.22% were strongly disagreed, and 8.89% disagreed. The responses show that 51.11% strongly agreed, 25.56% agreed, 10% strongly disagreed, 13.33% disagreed that child abuse negatively affect behavioural development of children as they grow. The result revealed that 21.11% strongly agreed with the statement, 60% agreed, 13.33% strongly disagreed while 5.56% disagreed that chronic child abuse leads to low self-esteem as well as severe dissociative states. It also shows that 44.44% strongly agreed, 44.44% agreed, 6.67% strongly disagreed, while 4.44% disagreed that the age and developmental status of the child may influence the effect and outcomes of abuse experienced, this finding support the study by Christian (2015) who found that child physical abuse can affect child development.

The responses shows that 44.44% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 39.89% agreed, 10% were strongly disagreed, 6.67% disagreed that child abuse can cause negative behavioural tendencies in a child as he/she grows. The test of research question two revealed that 49% of the respondents were strongly agreed, and 28.89% agreed that child abuse could lead to physical injuries or partial or permanent disability of the child, 10% strongly disagreed, while 6.67% was disagreed respectively. It revealed that 30% of the respondents strongly agreed, 25.56% agreed, 15.56% were strongly disagreed, while 28.88% disagreed, that child abusive behaviour can lead to a number of physical or

emotional impairments, the responses shows that 44.45% strongly agreed, 33.33% agreed, 12.22% strongly disagreed, while 10% disagreed that child abuse has strong patterns of familial violence in adults who have a history of childhood physical abuse. It also shows that 37.78% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 47.78% agreed, 11.11% strongly disagree, while 3.33% of the respondents disagreed respectively. The result shows 71.11% strongly agreed, 26.67% agreed, while 2.22% strongly disagree that child abuse could cause neurological inherent baviour in the victim. This findings corroborates with the findings by Fahrudin (2016) who found child abuse and neglect to negatively impact psychological on the child

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter as the final part of the study tries to integrate the findings in chapter four into summary of finding, conclusion, recommendations and Social Work Implications.

5.2 Summary of Findings

Based on data sourced from the targeted respondents in Egor Local Government Area, Benin City who are basically within childhood age but able to respond to the questionnaire, the following are summarized;

The analysis of research question one revealed that child abuse could increase risk for a number of problematic developmental in children and that child abuse negatively affect behavioural development of children as they grow. The finding reveals that choric child abuse leads to low self-esteem as well as severe dissociative states and that the age and developmental status of the child may influence the effect and outcomes of abuse experienced. The result shows that child abuse can cause negative behavioural tendencies in a child as he/she grows.

The result of test of research question two shows that child abuse could lead to physical injuries or partial or permanent disability of the child and that child abusive behaviour can lead to a number of physical or emotional impairments. The finding indicates that

child abuse has strong patterns of familial violence in adults who have a history of childhood physical abuse and that chronic child abuse can lead to brain dysfunction in later part of the victims' life. The result shows that child abuse could cause neurological inherent baviour in the victim.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the results from the findings of this study the following conclusion will be given in line with the main objective.

There is relationship between child abuse and psychological development problem in children.

Child abuse influences children psychological health related problems during adolescent and adulthood.

5.4 Recommendations

Given that both physical and psychological child abuses have enormous adverse influence on the psychological development problem in terms of their self-esteem, depression, and anxiety. The following recommendations were made;

Parents and all relevant stakeholders as well as care givers should be careful about their interactions with children. They need to use empirically-driven behavioural modification techniques that are proven to positively shape behaviour. Physical abuse (e.g. spanking) and psychological "torture" for example ridicule of children should avoided, shaping and other effective methods of changing behavior should be adopted.

Child and Social Protection in Edo State should take proactive measures to control the incidence of physical and psychological child abuse in Egor Local Government Area, Edo. The Government should establish functional legal policies that can be used to reduce or prevent physical child abuse; educate the people, affective training, as well as attitudinal change may be effective control measures against psychological child abuse.

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APPENDIX
QUESTIONNAIRE

**THE EFFECT OF CHILD ABUSE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT:
USING BENIN CITY AS A CASE STUDY**

**Department of Social Work,
Faculty of Social Sciences,
University of Benin,
Benin City.**

11th August, 2020.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am 400 student of the Department of Social Work, “the effect of child abuse on psychological development: using Benin City as a case study”.

You are kindly requested to respond to this questionnaire as honestly as you can. Your opinion or information supplied will be used purely for the academic purpose intended; and such information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks for your anticipated cooperation’s.

Yours faithfully,

Vanessa Edokpoyi

Researcher

Demographic Characteristic of Respondents

Section A:

1. Age: (a) 8-12 years (), (b), 13-17 years (), (c) 18 and above years ().
2. Gender: (a) Male (), (b) Female ()
3. Religion: (a) Christian (), (b) Muslim (), African Traditional Religion (), Others ().

Section B: Abuse and Psychological Developmental Problem in Children

SECTION I.

ITEM	What is the Relationship between Child Abuse and Psychological Developmental Problem in Children?	OPTION			
		SA	A	SD	D
S/N	QUESTIONS				
1.	Child abuse increased risk for a number of problematic developmental in children				
2.	Child abuse negatively affect behavioural development of children as they grow				
3.	Choric child abuse leads to low self-esteem as well as severe dissociative states				
4.	The age and developmental status of the child may influence the effect and outcomes of abuse experienced				
5.	Child abuse can cause negative behavioural tendencies in a child as he/she grows				

SECTION II

ITEM	Does Child Abuse Influences Children Psychological Health Related Problems During Adolescent and Adulthood?	OPTION			
S/N	QUESTIONS	SA	A	SD	D
1.	Child abuse could lead to physical injuries or partial or permanent disability of the child				
2.	Child abusive behaviour can lead to a number of physical or emotional impairments				
3.	Child abuse has strong patterns of familial violence in adults who have a history of childhood physical abuse				
4.	Chronic child abuse can lead to brain dysfunction in later part of the victims life				
5.	Child abuse could cause neurological inherent baviour in the victim				

SECTION III

ITEM	What is the Relationship between Emotional and Psychological Trauma Experience During Adolescent?	OPTION			
S/N	QUESTIONS	SA	A	SD	D
1.	Childhood abuse is associated with negative health outcomes and adolescent violent behaviours				
2.	Childhood abuse has the tendencies of instilling negative emotional beviour towards other human being				
3.	The trauma experienced during childhood abuse could negative affect affectionate bevioural attributes of the victim				

4.	Child abuse can cause chronic trauma and persistent psychological and behavioural problems				
5.	Child abuse can lead to poor feelings and consideration for siblings because of poor emotional attachment				