

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

A study investigating the causes of the low academic performance among secondary school students in Ekosodin Community, found that both educational and social neglect significantly predicted poorer academic outcomes. Notably, educational neglect had a more pronounced individual effect on academic performance.

Child abuse is a pervasive and deeply troubling issue that affects children across the world, transcending boundaries of culture, socio-economic status, and geography (Flynn, 2019). In Nigeria, and specifically within the Ekosodin Community of Edo State, the prevalence of child abuse presents a significant barrier to the holistic development of children. It is a phenomenon that manifests in various forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect. Each of these forms has profound implications for the well-being of children, who are among the most vulnerable members of society (Abbasi et al., 2015).

In the context of developing nations like Nigeria, where socio-economic challenges are prevalent, the issue of child abuse is particularly concerning. This study focuses on understanding the consequences of child abuse on the academic success of students in designated secondary schools within the Ekosodin Community, Edo State, Nigeria. As an

educational hub, it is home to several secondary schools that cater to a diverse population of students from various socio-economic backgrounds (Holt et al., 2019). The importance of education in this region, as in many parts of the world, cannot be overstated. Education is a key determinant of socio-economic mobility, and academic success is often seen as a gateway to a better future. However, the prevalence of child abuse in this community poses significant challenges to achieving academic excellence among students.

In Nigeria, child abuse has been recognized as a significant social issue, with numerous cases reported annually (Olatunya et al., 2013). Despite the establishment of laws and regulations aimed at protecting children, such as the Child Rights Act of 2003, the implementation and enforcement of these laws remain inadequate. The impact of child abuse on children's psychological, emotional, and physical well-being is well-documented. Child abuse has far-reaching consequences that extend beyond the immediate physical or emotional harm inflicted on the victim (Murphy & Luthar, 2022). For students, the experience of abuse can lead to severe psychological distress, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These psychological issues can, in turn, affect a child's ability to concentrate, participate in class, and perform academically (Fasciano et al., 2020). Studies have shown that children who experience abuse are more likely to exhibit behavioral problems, such as aggression, withdrawal, or hyperactivity, which can further impede their academic progress.

In addition to the psychological effects, the physical consequences of child abuse can also hinder academic success. Physical abuse often results in injuries that may require medical attention, leading to absenteeism from school (Olatunya et al., 2023). Chronic absenteeism disrupts the learning process, causing students to fall behind in their studies. Furthermore, children who are subjected to neglect, a form of abuse characterized by the failure of caregivers to provide for a child's basic needs, may suffer from malnutrition, poor hygiene, and inadequate clothing. These factors can negatively impact a child's self-confidence and ability to engage fully in the educational process (Mercer & Karim, 2023). The economic disparities within the community create an environment where some children are more vulnerable to abuse than others. Children from low-income families are often at higher risk of experiencing abuse due to factors such as parental stress, unemployment, and substance abuse. Moreover, the lack of social support systems and resources for addressing child abuse in the community exacerbates the problem (Yang & Maguire-Jack, 2018). Schools, which should ideally serve as safe havens for children, may also be environments where abuse occurs, either through corporal punishment by teachers or bullying by peers.

The role of educators in the academic success of students is crucial. Teachers are not only responsible for imparting knowledge but also for fostering a supportive and nurturing environment that encourages learning. However, when students experience abuse, either at home or within the school setting, it undermines the educational process. Teachers may not always be equipped to recognize the signs of abuse or provide the necessary support

to affected students (Owen, 2016). Additionally, the stigma associated with abuse may prevent students from seeking help, further isolating them and hindering their academic progress. This study aims to shed light on the complex relationship between child abuse and academic success in the Ekosodin Community. By focusing on secondary school students, the research seeks to explore how different forms of abuse such as; physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect—impact students’ academic performance. It also aims to identify the factors that contribute to the prevalence of child abuse in this community and to assess the effectiveness of existing interventions aimed at mitigating its effects on students’ academic success. Understanding the consequences of child abuse on academic performance is essential for developing targeted interventions that can help abused children overcome the challenges they face (Fortson et al., 2016). By addressing the issue of child abuse from both preventive and remedial perspective, educators, policymakers, and community leaders can work together to create a safer and more supportive environment for students in Ekosodin Community (Fortson et al., 2016).

By examining the specific challenges faced by students in this community, the research will provide valuable insights into the ways in which child abuse affects academic performance and offer practical recommendations for improving the educational experiences of affected students.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Child abuse is a pervasive and deeply troubling issue that affects children across the world, transcending boundaries of culture, socio-economic status, and geography (Flynn, 2019). In Nigeria, and specifically within the Ekosodin Community of Edo State, the prevalence of child abuse presents a significant barrier to the holistic development of children. This study seeks to address a critical aspect of this issue by exploring the consequences of child abuse on the academic success of secondary school students in this community. Despite the implementation of various legal frameworks and protective measures, child abuse remains a persistent problem that adversely impacts not only the physical and psychological well-being of children but also their educational outcomes. The implications of these adverse effects are far-reaching, affecting the broader society by perpetuating cycles of poverty, inequality, and social dysfunction (Flynn, 2019).

The core problem this study aims to address is the relationship between child abuse and academic performance among secondary school students in Ekosodin Community. While there is a substantial body of research on the effects of child abuse on psychological and physical health, there is a relative paucity of studies that specifically focus on its impact on educational outcomes in the Nigerian context (Conn, 2017). This gap in the literature is particularly pronounced in localized settings like Ekosodin, where socio-cultural and economic factors may exacerbate the problem. As a result, there is a critical need to investigate how various forms of child abuse—whether physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect—affect students' ability to perform academically and succeed in school. One of the fundamental issues that this study seeks to explore is the extent to which child abuse

disrupts the academic trajectory of students in Ekosodin Community. Academic success is often measured by a student's ability to achieve high grades, complete assignments, participate in class, and progress through the educational system without significant setbacks (York et al., 2019).

The problem of child abuse and its impact on academic success is a critical issue that requires urgent attention. The consequences of child abuse extend far beyond the immediate harm inflicted on the victim, affecting their educational outcomes and future prospects (Romano et al., 2015). By addressing this problem through a detailed and evidence-based study, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of the complex relationship between child abuse and academic performance and to provide practical recommendations for improving the educational experiences and outcomes of students in Ekosodin Community. The findings of this study will not only be relevant to the local context but will also have broader implications for efforts to combat child abuse and promote education in Nigeria and other similar settings.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to explore the consequences of child abuse on the academic success of students in designated secondary schools within the Ekosodin Community, Edo State, Nigeria. The objectives are to:

1. assess the Impact of Physical Abuse on the Academic Performance of Students.

2. ascertain the emotional Effects of Child Abuse on Students' Learning Abilities.
3. identify the sexual factors Contributing to Child Abuse in Ekosodin Community.
4. to evaluate the issue of neglect as a contributing factor to child abuse in Ekosodin community.

1.4 Research Question

The following research questions have been formulated to guide the study into the consequences of child abuse on the academic success of students in designated secondary schools within the Ekosodin Community, Edo State, Nigeria:

1. What are the most prevalent forms of child abuse among secondary school students in Ekosodin Community?
2. How does child abuse affect the academic performance of secondary school students in Ekosodin Community?
3. What are the psychological and behavioral effects of child abuse on students' learning abilities and academic performance?
4. What socio-economic and cultural factors contribute to the prevalence of child abuse in Ekosodin Community?
5. How effective are the existing interventions and support systems in addressing child abuse and supporting the academic success of affected students?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to offer a deeper understanding of the complex and pervasive issue of child abuse and its direct impact on the academic success of secondary school students within Ekosodin Community, Edo State, Nigeria. As a localized examination of a global issue, this research aims to fill a critical gap in existing literature by providing insights that are not only pertinent to the community under study but also have broader implications for similar contexts within Nigeria and other developing countries. The findings of this study are poised to inform educational policies, child protection initiatives, and community-based interventions, making it an essential resource for educators, policymakers, social workers, and community leaders.

One of the key contributions of this study is its addition to the academic literature on child abuse and education. While there is substantial research on the psychological and physical effects of child abuse, the direct impact of such abuse on academic performance, particularly in Nigeria, remains underexplored. By addressing this gap, the study enhances the global discourse on child abuse, providing data and analysis that can be used to inform future research in both local and international contexts. This research, therefore, stands to be a valuable reference point for scholars interested in understanding

the intersection of child abuse and educational outcomes. The implications of this study extend into the realm of educational policy and practice.

These recommendations could lead to the implementation of more effective teacher training programs, the establishment of school-based counseling services, and the creation of protocols for identifying and responding to abuse within schools. In this way, the study has the potential to influence how educational institutions in Ekosodin and similar communities address the needs of students who have experienced abuse.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is carefully defined to ensure a focused and in-depth exploration of the consequences of child abuse on the academic success of secondary school students within the Ekosodin Community, Edo State, Nigeria.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Preamble

The literature review serves as a foundational component of this research, offering a comprehensive examination of existing scholarly work related to the consequences of child abuse on the academic success of secondary school students, particularly within the context of Ekosodin Community, Edo State, Nigeria. The review synthesizes theoretical perspectives, empirical studies, and methodological approaches to create a nuanced understanding of the issue at hand.

2.1.1 Child Abuse

The phenomenon of child abuse is a deeply entrenched social issue with far-reaching implications for the development and well-being of children (Font & Maguire-Jack, 2020). It is universally acknowledged that children who experience abuse, whether physical, emotional, sexual, or through neglect, are at a heightened risk for a range of negative outcomes (Meinck et al., 2014). These outcomes are not limited to immediate physical harm or psychological distress but extend to various domains of a child's life, including their educational achievements. The relationship between child abuse and

academic success has been a subject of considerable academic inquiry, particularly in contexts where socio-economic challenges exacerbate the prevalence and impact of abuse (Fisher et al., 2017). In Nigeria, as in many developing countries, the issue of child abuse is compounded by socio-economic and cultural factors that both perpetuate and conceal abusive behaviors. Traditional practices, economic hardship, and a lack of awareness often contribute to the normalization of abusive practices, which in turn have devastating effects on the educational prospects of the affected children (Bradley et al., 2021). For instance, abused children may suffer from anxiety, depression, or behavioral disorders, all of which can significantly hinder their ability to succeed in school (Bradley et al., 2021). By examining these connections, the review aims to establish a clear understanding of how child abuse undermines educational attainment.

2.1.2 Forms of Child Abuse

Child abuse is a multifaceted issue that manifests in various forms, each with distinct and often overlapping consequences for the well-being and development of children (Liming & Grube, 2018). Understanding these forms is crucial for assessing their impact on academic success, as different types of abuse can affect students in unique ways. This section provides a detailed examination of the four primary forms of child abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. By exploring these categories, the section aims to elucidate the complex dynamics of abuse and its far-reaching effects on children, particularly in the context of their educational experiences.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is perhaps the most visible and widely recognized form of child abuse. It involves the intentional use of physical force against a child that results in, or has the potential to result in, physical injury (Henry & Powell, 2018). Common examples of physical abuse include hitting, beating, shaking, burning, and choking. Physical abuse can range from minor bruises and cuts to severe injuries such as fractures, internal organ damage, or even death. In many cases, physical abuse is inflicted as a form of punishment, often under the guise of discipline, which can complicate the recognition and reporting of such abuse. The impact of physical abuse on children is profound, extending beyond immediate physical harm (Fisher et al., 2017).

Research has shown that physically abused children are at a higher risk of developing long-term health problems, including chronic pain, gastrointestinal disorders, and neurological impairments. These physical consequences can directly affect a child's ability to attend and perform well in school. For instance, children who suffer from chronic pain or other health issues as a result of physical abuse may have frequent absences from school, leading to gaps in their learning and lower academic achievement (Duke, 2020). Moreover, the psychological effects of physical abuse are equally significant. Children who experience physical abuse often suffer from anxiety, depression,

and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These mental health issues can severely disrupt a child's ability to concentrate, participate in class, and engage with their peers, all of which are critical components of academic success. For example, a child suffering from anxiety or PTSD may find it difficult to focus on schoolwork or may be too fearful to participate in classroom activities, leading to poor academic performance.

In addition to its direct effects, physical abuse also influences a child's behavior, often leading to aggressive or disruptive behavior in school. Studies have found that physically abused children are more likely to exhibit behavioral problems, such as aggression, defiance, and difficulties in adhering to school rules (Thompson et al., 2017). These behaviors can result in disciplinary actions, such as suspension or expulsion, further exacerbating the child's academic struggles. Moreover, such children may be stigmatized by their peers and teachers, leading to social isolation and a further decline in academic motivation and performance (Duke, 2020).

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse, also known as psychological abuse, is a form of maltreatment that involves behaviors that harm a child's emotional well-being and sense of self-worth. Unlike physical abuse, emotional abuse does not leave visible scars, making it more challenging to identify and address (Olusegun & Idowu, 2016). Emotional abuse can take many forms, including verbal abuse (such as yelling, insults, and threats), emotional neglect (such as ignoring or rejecting the child), and manipulation (such as isolating the

child from peers or forcing the child to engage in humiliating activities). The effects of emotional abuse on children are profound and often long-lasting. Emotional abuse can erode a child's self-esteem, leading to feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, and hopelessness. These emotional wounds can manifest in various ways, including anxiety, depression, and self-harming behaviors. In the context of academic success, children who have experienced emotional abuse may struggle with low motivation, a lack of confidence, and an overwhelming fear of failure. These psychological barriers can make it difficult for them to engage fully in their education and to achieve their academic potential (Thompson et al., 2017).

Furthermore, emotional abuse can have a detrimental effect on a child's social development, which is closely linked to academic success. Children who are emotionally abused may have difficulties forming and maintaining healthy relationships with their peers and teachers (Romano et al., 2015). They may withdraw from social interactions, become isolated, and struggle to participate in group activities or collaborative learning environments. This social isolation can further undermine their academic performance, as they miss out on the benefits of peer support and collaborative learning opportunities.

In addition to these direct effects, emotional abuse can also lead to behavioral problems that disrupt a child's education. Children who experience emotional abuse may exhibit behaviors such as aggression, defiance, or hyperactivity as a means of coping with their emotional pain (Holt et al., 2019). These behaviors can lead to conflicts with teachers and

peers, resulting in disciplinary actions and further academic difficulties. Moreover, emotionally abused children may develop maladaptive coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse or truancy, which can have severe consequences for their educational outcomes.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is a particularly insidious form of child abuse that involves engaging children in sexual activities that are inappropriate for their age, developmentally unsuitable, or illegal (Mathews & Collin-Vézina, 2019). Sexual abuse can include a wide range of behaviors, from inappropriate touching and exposure to sexual content to rape and exploitation. The trauma associated with sexual abuse is profound and can have devastating effects on a child's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being (Meinck et al., 2014). The impact of sexual abuse on academic success is multifaceted and complex. On a psychological level, children who have experienced sexual abuse often suffer from severe emotional distress, including anxiety, depression, and PTSD. These mental health issues can significantly impair a child's ability to concentrate, retain information, and engage in classroom activities. For instance, a child suffering from PTSD may experience flashbacks, nightmares, or intense fear that disrupts their ability to focus on schoolwork. Additionally, the shame and guilt often associated with sexual abuse can lead to a lack of self-worth and a feeling of hopelessness, further diminishing the child's motivation to succeed academically (Mathews & Collin-Vézina, 2019).

Sexual abuse also has a significant impact on a child's social development, which in turn affects their academic success. Children who have been sexually abused may struggle to trust others, leading to difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships with peers and teachers (Lefevre et al., 2017). They may become socially withdrawn, avoiding interactions and participation in group activities. This social isolation can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and depression, further hindering their academic performance. Moreover, sexual abuse can lead to behavioral problems that disrupt a child's education. Children who have been sexually abused may exhibit a range of behavioral issues, including aggression, defiance, and self-destructive behaviors. These behaviors can result in conflicts with teachers and peers, leading to disciplinary actions and further academic challenges (Meinck et al., 2014). In some cases, sexually abused children may engage in risky behaviors, such as substance abuse or running away from home, which can have severe consequences for their educational outcomes.

Neglect

Neglect is a form of child abuse that involves the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, including food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and education (Kobulsky et al., 2019). Unlike other forms of abuse, neglect is characterized by an omission of care, rather than an overt act of harm. However, the impact of neglect on a child's well-being and development can be just as severe, if not more so, than other forms of abuse. Neglect can have a profound impact on a child's physical health, leading to malnutrition, poor

hygiene, and untreated medical conditions (Zeanah & Humphreys, 2018). The impact of neglect on a child's emotional and psychological well-being is equally significant. Children who are neglected often suffer from feelings of worthlessness, abandonment, and insecurity (Meinck et al., 2014).

Neglect also has a significant impact on a child's cognitive development, which is closely linked to academic success. Research has shown that children who experience neglect are at a higher risk of cognitive impairments, such as delays in language development, difficulties with attention and memory, and problems with executive functioning (Zeanah & Humphreys, 2018). These cognitive challenges can make it difficult for a child to keep up with their peers academically, leading to lower grades, poor test performance, and difficulties in mastering new concepts.

2.1.3 Impact of Child Abuse on Academic Success

Child abuse is a profound violation of a child's rights and well-being, with consequences that permeate every aspect of their lives, including their academic success. The impact of child abuse on academic performance is a critical area of study, as education is a fundamental determinant of future opportunities and societal participation (Fasciano et al., 2020). This section delves into the complex relationship between various forms of child abuse and academic success, examining how the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social development of abused children are compromised in ways that affect their educational outcomes.

Abused children often face significant barriers to learning, stemming from the trauma they endure. These barriers manifest in various forms, including cognitive impairments, emotional and behavioral issues, and disruptions in the learning environment (Henry & Powell, 2018). Understanding these dynamics is crucial for educators, policymakers, and child welfare professionals who are tasked with supporting the academic development of children who have experienced abuse.

Abuse, particularly when it occurs during critical periods of brain development, can lead to long-term cognitive deficits (Lefevre et al., 2017). For instance, physical abuse can cause traumatic brain injuries, which directly impair cognitive functions such as memory, attention, and executive functioning. Emotional abuse, while less physically apparent, can be equally damaging to cognitive development. The chronic stress associated with emotional abuse can lead to changes in brain structure and function, particularly in areas related to learning and memory. These cognitive impairments translate into academic difficulties, as children who struggle with memory and attention are less able to retain information, complete assignments, and perform well on tests (Yang & Maguire-Jack, 2018).

In addition to cognitive impairments, child abuse significantly affects a child's emotional well-being, which in turn impacts their academic success. Abused children often experience a range of emotional issues, including anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. These emotional struggles can make it difficult for children to engage fully in the

learning process. For example, a child suffering from anxiety may find it challenging to concentrate during lessons, participate in classroom activities, or take exams. Similarly, a child with low self-esteem may lack the confidence to ask questions, seek help, or take on challenging tasks, all of which are crucial for academic success (Lefevre et al., 2017). Furthermore, the lack of positive social interactions can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and depression, further hindering academic performance (Yang & Maguire-Jack, 2018).

Even when they are able to attend school regularly, the stress and uncertainty in their home lives can make it difficult for them to focus on their studies and maintain consistent academic progress (Mathews & Collin-Vézina, 2019). Addressing the impact of child abuse on academic success requires a comprehensive approach that includes early intervention, supportive school environments, and access to mental health services, all of which are essential for helping abused children achieve their full academic potential and build better futures (Yang & Maguire-Jack, 2018).

2.1.4 Socio-Economic and Cultural Factors

Socio-economic and cultural factors play a critical role in shaping the occurrence and impact of child abuse, influencing not only the likelihood of abuse but also its consequences on a child's academic success (Loan et al., 2018). These factors are deeply intertwined with the broader social, economic, and cultural context in which children live, affecting how abuse is perceived, reported, and addressed. Understanding the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of child abuse is essential for developing effective

interventions and support systems that can mitigate the adverse effects of abuse on children's educational outcomes. This section explores how various socio-economic and cultural factors contribute to child abuse and its impact on academic success, with a focus on the context of Ekosodin Community in Edo State, Nigeria.

2.1.5 Socio-Economic Factors

Poverty is one of the most significant socio-economic factors contributing to child abuse (Featherstone et al., 2019). In many cases, families living in poverty face immense stress and challenges, which can increase the risk of abusive behaviors. Parents or caregivers who are struggling to meet basic needs, such as food, shelter, and healthcare, may experience frustration, anger, and hopelessness, leading to a higher likelihood of taking out these emotions on their children. Children who are working or who are preoccupied with the struggles of poverty may have less time and energy to devote to their studies, leading to poor academic performance and a higher likelihood of dropping out of school (Featherstone et al., 2019).

Unemployment is another critical socio-economic factor that can contribute to child abuse. The lack of stable employment can lead to financial instability, stress, and feelings of inadequacy among parents or caregivers, which may result in abusive behaviors (Conrad-Hiebner & Byram, 2018). Unemployment can also limit a family's ability to provide for a child's basic needs, further increasing the risk of neglect and abuse.

Education levels of parents or caregivers are another significant socio-economic factor that influences the occurrence of child abuse and its impact on academic success (Conrad-Hiebner & Byram, 2018). Parents with lower levels of education may lack knowledge about child development and appropriate disciplinary practices, increasing the likelihood of abusive behaviors.

2.1.6 Cultural Factors

Cultural beliefs and practices also play a crucial role in shaping the occurrence and impact of child abuse. In many cultures, certain forms of discipline, such as corporal punishment, are normalized and accepted as appropriate methods of child-rearing (Crombach & Bambonyé, 2015). These cultural norms can perpetuate abusive behaviors, as parents and caregivers may believe that harsh punishment is necessary to instill discipline and respect in their children. In some cases, cultural beliefs about gender roles and power dynamics within the family can also contribute to abuse, particularly in societies where patriarchal values are dominant.

2.1.7 Interventions and Support Systems

Interventions and support systems are crucial in addressing the complex and pervasive issue of child abuse, particularly when considering its detrimental impact on academic success (Fortson et al., 2016). Effective interventions and support systems can not only help mitigate the immediate harm caused by abuse but also provide long-term support that empowers children to overcome their traumatic experiences and succeed

academically. This section explores various interventions and support systems that have been implemented globally and within the Nigerian context, with a focus on their relevance to the Ekosodin Community in Edo State, Nigeria.

Legal and Policy Frameworks

One of the foundational interventions in combating child abuse is the establishment of robust legal and policy frameworks (Flynn, 2019). These frameworks provide the necessary legal backing for the protection of children's rights and ensure that perpetrators of abuse are held accountable. In Nigeria, several laws and policies have been enacted to address child abuse and protect the rights of children. The Child Rights Act (CRA) of 2003 is a significant piece of legislation that aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The CRA provides a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of children in Nigeria, outlining their rights to survival, development, protection, and participation. It also criminalizes various forms of child abuse, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, as well as neglect and exploitation. However, while the CRA represents a significant step forward, its implementation has been uneven across different states in Nigeria. In Edo State, the CRA has been domesticated, which means that the provisions of the Act are enforceable within the state (Iyabode Ogunniran, 2021). Therefore, raising awareness about the CRA and encouraging the use of legal channels to report and address abuse is a critical intervention (Iyabode Ogunniran, 2021).

Child Protection Services

Child protection services are essential in providing immediate and ongoing support to children who have experienced abuse (Conn, 2017). These services typically involve a multidisciplinary approach, bringing together social workers, healthcare professionals, educators, and law enforcement to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. In many countries, child protection agencies or departments are responsible for responding to reports of abuse, conducting investigations, and providing support to the child and their family (York et al., 2019). These services may include removing the child from an abusive environment, providing counseling and therapy, and coordinating with other agencies to ensure that the child's educational, health, and social needs are met.

In Nigeria, the establishment of child protection services has been a critical component of efforts to address child abuse. However, the availability and quality of these services vary widely across the country, with significant disparities between urban and rural areas (Romano et al., 2015).

Educational Interventions

Schools play a critical role in identifying and responding to child abuse, as they are often the first point of contact for children outside the home. Educational interventions can take various forms, including the development of school policies on child protection, training for teachers and school staff on recognizing and responding to signs of abuse, and the provision of counseling and support services for students (Darling-Hammond & Cook-

Harvey, 2018). In many cases, schools can serve as safe spaces where children feel comfortable disclosing abuse and seeking help. Therefore, integrating child protection into the educational system is a key intervention in addressing the impact of abuse on academic success.

Health and Mental Health Interventions

The health and mental health needs of children who have experienced abuse are critical areas of intervention. Abuse can have severe and lasting effects on a child's physical and mental health, which in turn can impact their ability to succeed academically (Conn, 2017). Health and mental health interventions involve providing medical care, psychological support, and therapeutic services to help children heal from the physical and emotional wounds of abuse. In Nigeria, access to health and mental health services can be limited, particularly in rural areas or communities with fewer resources (York et al., 2019).

2.2 Review of Empirical Studies

Afolabi, (2020) examines child sexual abuse, survivors and perpetrators of sexual abuse, girl child and sexual abuse, consequences of child sexual abuse and the way forward to curbing child sexual abuse in the society. The way forward to curbing it include prompt reporting of incidents of sexual abuse to appropriate authorities for adequate intervention, policy instruments and laws forbidding the evil act and indicating sanctions against perpetrators, medical and psychological treatment/counseling for survivors, public

enlightenment against acts of child sexual abuse among others. The study utilized secondary data drawn from existing literature, journals, books and libraries.

Tumwesigye (2021) the study sought to explore the tragic challenges and experiences social workers working with children encounter. The study provides an analysis of the social worker's challenges and dilemmas in working with abused and neglected children. Furthermore, the findings reveal mechanisms on how social workers cope with the challenges. In the future, more research on the same topic is needed to be able to support better social worker's practices when working with children exposed to abuse and neglect

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, and 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.

Diraditsile, (2018) explored sexual abuse of school children by teachers in senior secondary schools in Botswana. It adopts a cross sectional quantitative approach. Data was collected from 3 senior secondary schools in the capital city of Gaborone, where the study was conducted. A survey questionnaire was self-administered to 330 randomly

selected participants of whom 300 were students and 30 teachers. Each school comprised 100 students and 10 teachers. The study utilized social exchange theory to explain human interactions related to sexual abuse of students by teachers.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of any academic research serves as the backbone that underpins the study, providing a structured lens through which the research problem is examined and analyzed. For this study on the consequences of child abuse on academic success in secondary schools within Ekosodin Community, Edo State, Nigeria, two pertinent theories provide the foundational support: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Bandura's Social Learning Theory. These theories offer comprehensive insights into the complex interplay of factors that influence the academic outcomes of children who have experienced abuse, highlighting the significance of the environment and learned behaviors in shaping these outcomes.

2.3.1 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory is one of the most influential theories in understanding human development, particularly in relation to the various environmental contexts that affect an individual's growth and behavior. According to

Bronfenbrenner, human development occurs within a nested structure of interconnected systems that range from immediate, face-to-face interactions to broader societal influences. These systems are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. In the context of this study, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory is particularly relevant because it emphasizes the multi-layered environment in which a child develops and how each layer influences their experiences, including exposure to abuse and its impact on academic performance. The microsystem, which involves the immediate environment of the child such as family, school, and peer groups, plays a crucial role in this regard. A child who experiences abuse within the family, for instance, is likely to carry the trauma into other areas of their microsystem, such as school, where it can manifest in various ways, including academic difficulties, behavioral problems, and social isolation.(Olayinka, 2010)

The mesosystem represents the interconnections between the various microsystems. In the case of an abused child, the interaction between the home and school environments is of particular importance. For instance, the communication (or lack thereof) between parents and teachers can either exacerbate or mitigate the negative impact of abuse on the child's academic success. A supportive teacher who is aware of the child's home situation might provide additional resources or emotional support, potentially buffering the negative effects of abuse. Conversely, a lack of communication or understanding between the home and school can lead to a failure in addressing the child's needs, thereby worsening the academic outcomes.(Ugiagbe, 2005)

The exosystem involves external environments that indirectly influence the child's development. For example, the parents' workplace stress, community violence, or socio-economic hardships can contribute to the likelihood of abuse occurring at home. These external stressors can create a tense home environment, increasing the risk of abuse, which subsequently impacts the child's academic performance. In Ekosodin Community, where socio-economic challenges may be prevalent, understanding the exosystem's role is crucial in addressing the broader environmental factors that contribute to child abuse.

The macrosystem refers to the broader cultural, societal, and economic contexts that shape the other systems. Cultural attitudes towards discipline, societal norms regarding child-rearing, and economic policies can all influence the prevalence and acceptance of child abuse. In many communities, including Ekosodin, certain cultural norms may inadvertently perpetuate abusive behaviors under the guise of discipline or tradition. These norms can have a profound impact on how abuse is perceived and addressed, both within the family and the educational system, ultimately affecting the child's academic trajectory. Finally, the chronosystem encompasses the dimension of time, reflecting changes and transitions over the life course. For an abused child, significant life transitions, such as moving from primary to secondary school or experiencing a change in family structure, can either alleviate or intensify the impact of abuse. Longitudinally, the effects of abuse on academic success may vary, with some children showing resilience and recovery over time, while others may continue to struggle due to unresolved trauma. (Olayinka, 2010)

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted environmental influences on an abused child's academic success. It highlights the need for a holistic approach to intervention that considers not just the immediate effects of abuse but also the broader environmental factors that contribute to or mitigate these effects.

2.3.2 Bandura's Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory offers another crucial perspective for understanding the impact of child abuse on academic success. This theory posits that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling, emphasizing the role of social interactions in the development of behavior. According to Bandura, individuals, especially children, learn by observing the behaviors of others and the outcomes of those behaviors, which are then internalized and replicated in their own actions. In the context of child abuse, Social Learning Theory is particularly relevant in explaining how abusive behaviors can be learned and perpetuated across generations. Children who grow up in abusive environments often witness aggressive or violent behaviors, which they may internalize and replicate in their own interactions. This learned behavior can manifest in the school environment as aggression towards peers, defiance towards authority figures, or general behavioral problems, all of which can significantly hinder academic success. (Lefebvre, et. al. 2017). Furthermore, Bandura introduces the concept of self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations. For

abused children, their experiences of abuse can severely undermine their self-efficacy, leading to feelings of helplessness, low self-esteem, and a lack of confidence in their academic abilities. This diminished sense of self-efficacy can create a self-fulfilling prophecy, where the child's belief in their inability to succeed academically results in poor performance, further reinforcing their negative self-perception.

Social Learning Theory also highlights the importance of positive role models in counteracting the negative effects of abuse. In the school environment, teachers, counselors, and peers can serve as positive role models, demonstrating healthy behaviors and providing support that can help abused children develop more positive self-efficacy and coping strategies. By observing and interacting with these positive influences, abused children can learn alternative ways of behaving and responding to challenges, which can improve their academic outcomes. Additionally, Bandura's concept of reciprocal determinism, which suggests that behavior, personal factors, and the environment all interact and influence each other, is critical in understanding the cyclical nature of the impact of child abuse on academic success. An abused child's behavior in school (e.g., aggression or withdrawal) can elicit certain responses from teachers and peers (e.g., punishment, exclusion), which can then reinforce the child's negative self-perception and further hinder their academic performance. This cycle can be difficult to break without targeted interventions that address both the learned behaviors and the environmental factors contributing to the child's academic struggles. (Bradley, 2021).

Bandura's Social Learning Theory provides valuable insights into how the behaviors and attitudes learned through abusive experiences can directly impact a child's academic success. It underscores the importance of positive social interactions and the role of self-efficacy in overcoming the negative effects of abuse. In the context of Ekosodin Community, where social and cultural influences play a significant role in shaping behavior, Social Learning Theory offers a framework for understanding how these influences can be harnessed to support abused children in their academic endeavors.

The integration of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory and Bandura's Social Learning Theory provides a robust theoretical framework for this study on the consequences of child abuse on academic success in Ekosodin Community. Bronfenbrenner's theory emphasizes the importance of understanding the multi-layered environmental factors that influence a child's development, while Bandura's theory highlights the role of learned behaviors and self-efficacy in shaping academic outcomes. Together, these theories offer a comprehensive lens through which the complex interplay of factors contributing to the academic success of abused children can be examined, guiding both the analysis of the problem and the development of effective interventions. (Corbet, 2010).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a survey research method. This approach involves collecting and analyzing data from a smaller, representative sample of the larger population. Instruments like tests, questionnaires, or observations are commonly used in surveys. Due to the vast size of the target population, a survey design is the most practical choice for gathering information.

3.2 Area of the Study

This study was carried out in Ekosodin located in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. The study area has a tropical climate and has two distinct seasons, i.e. the wet season and the dry season. Ovia North East Local Government Area (LGA) is situated within Edo State, Nigeria. As of 2020, the estimated population of Egor LGA is over 339,899 inhabitants. The region is known for its rich cultural heritage, with

diverse ethnic groups and traditions deeply embedded in community life. This research delved into the experiences of childless couples residing in Egor LGA, aiming to understand their specific challenges and coping mechanisms within the unique cultural context of the area.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of the study was gotten from three (3) selected schools in Ekosodin and its environs, the schools are: Ekosodin Primary School, Oluku Primary School and Iduowina Primary School, Adolor College. However, the study used the 2022 projected population figure of 5220. The study population was chosen because it was expected to be a true representation of primary school Students between the ages of 7 to 12 years living in Ekosodin community in Ovia North East, LGA .

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The simple random sampling technique was used for the study as it provides an equal opportunity for all individuals within the study population to be selected, minimizing biases and increasing the generalizability of the findings. Simple random was used to select the quantitative sample of 301 respondents. This was calculated using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size estimation. A 95% confidence level and level of

maximum variability ($P = 0.05$) were assumed. Hence, the formula for the sample size estimation is given as: Where: $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$

n = the sample size

N = the population size

e = the level of precision (allowable error) that is 5% or 0.05.

Therefore the sample size is calculated as:

$$n = 5220 / (1 + 5220 (0.05)^2)$$

$$n = 5220 / (1 + 5220 (0.0025))$$

$$n = 5220 / (1 + 13.05)$$

$$n = 5220 / 13.05$$

$$n = 400$$

3.5 Research Instrument

The researcher developed a structured questionnaire on the impact of empowerment programs on women community development participation which was taken into consideration as the instrument of data collection. The survey will be formatted in a Likert-style fashion with two-point scales for "agree" and "disagree" (A and D). To indicate how much they agree or disagree with the statements in the instrument, respondents will be given instructions. The questionnaire contains two sections. The

section A of the questionnaire contains demographic data of the respondent. The section B of the questionnaire focus on the objective of study.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire in this research, content validity was assessed. This involved consulting with experts and individuals with relevant knowledge in the field. Specifically, the research supervisor and other professionals were consulted to judge the questionnaire's comprehensiveness and relevance to the research topic.

Furthermore, the questionnaire's reliability was evaluated using the Spearman-Brown split-half technique. This method assesses the consistency of the instrument by dividing it into two halves and comparing the results.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

To ensure honest responses, the questionnaires was distributed directly to participants. The researcher was available to answer any questions and provide guidance during the completion process. Additionally, participants were explicitly informed that their responses would be kept strictly confidential.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software application.

3.9 Ethical considerations

This research adhered to strict ethical guidelines, prioritizing participant well-being. Participation was entirely voluntary, with informed consent obtained beforehand. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed throughout the study.

It's crucial to emphasize that the research posed no safety concerns. The design ensured no potential for harm, and participants were explicitly informed of their right to withdraw at any point. Additionally, they could freely ask for clarification on any aspect of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter contains the data presentation, analysis and interpretations of the various data collected for this study. Consequently, it entails the application of both mathematics and statistical techniques to provide the basis for analyzing the research objectives listed in chapter one. Hence, it is a vital part of this study since it forms the basis for conclusion and policy recommendations.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analytical Techniques

Tables and percentages were used in this chapter in this research work; the use of table was the most appropriate means of interpreting information for easy understanding. In

analyzing the data, judgment was based on the number of favorable or unfavorable responses received on each statement in the questionnaire. Generally, the favorable responses are, “strongly agree” and “agree” while the unfavorable responses are “disagree” and ‘strongly disagree’. The results of the data collected were analyzed below based on each research questions.

Section A: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent

Table.1 Demographic of Respondent

1	Gender	Frequency	Percent
	Males	97	32.2%
	Females	204	67.8%
	Total	301	100%
2	Age		

	18 - 21 years	65	21.6%
	22 – 25 years	169	56.2%
	26 – 29 years	45	14.9%
	30 years and above	22	7.3%
4	Religion		
	Christians	188	62.5%
	Muslims	75	24.9%
	Traditional Worshippers	38	12.6%
	Total	301	100%

Source Field work 2024

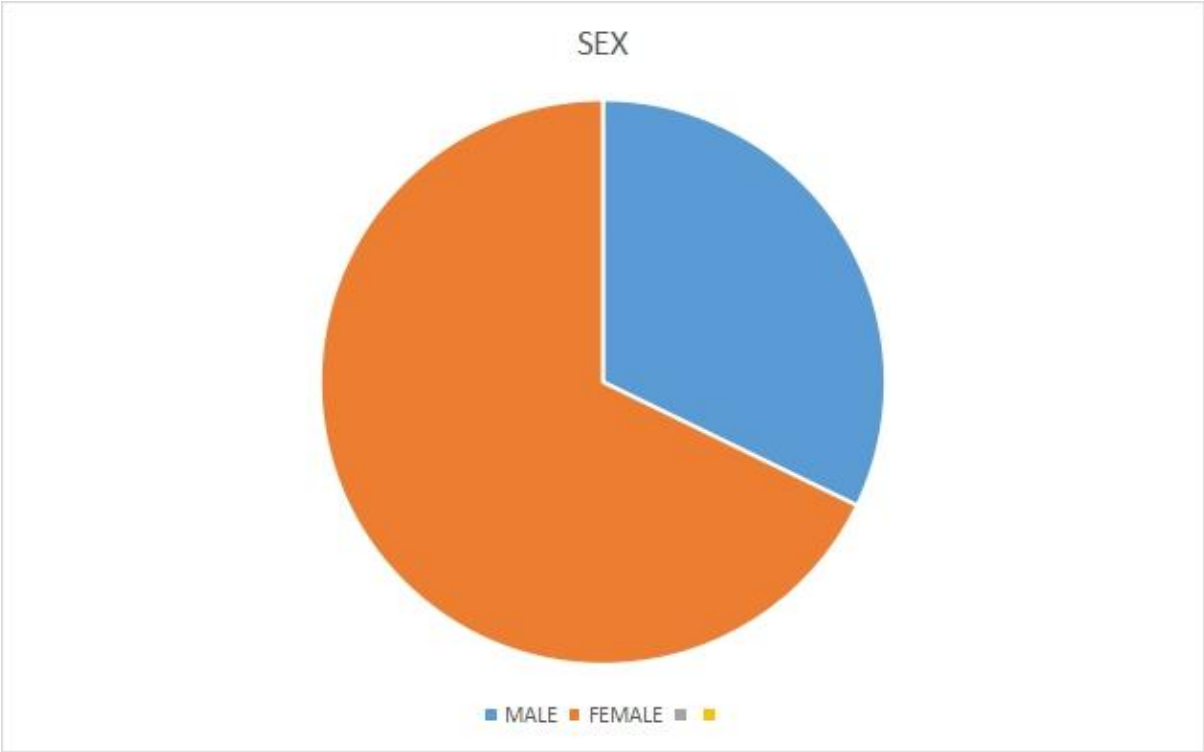


FIG 1: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY SEX

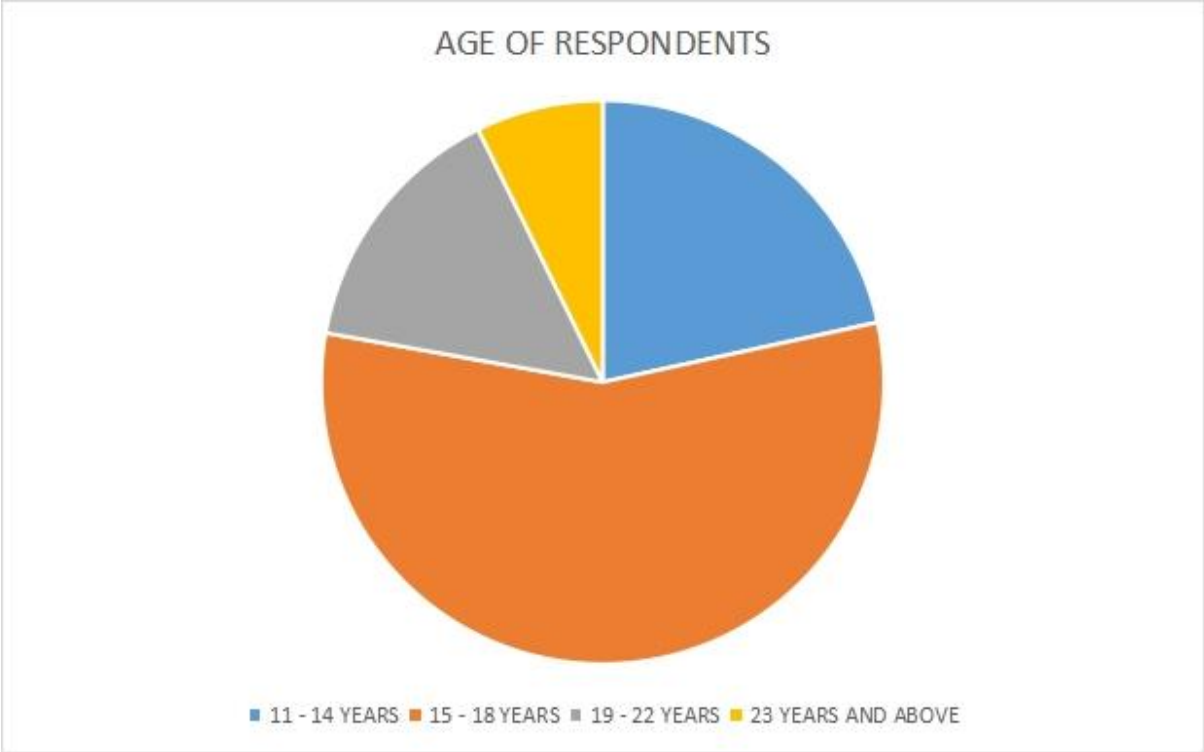


FIG 2: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

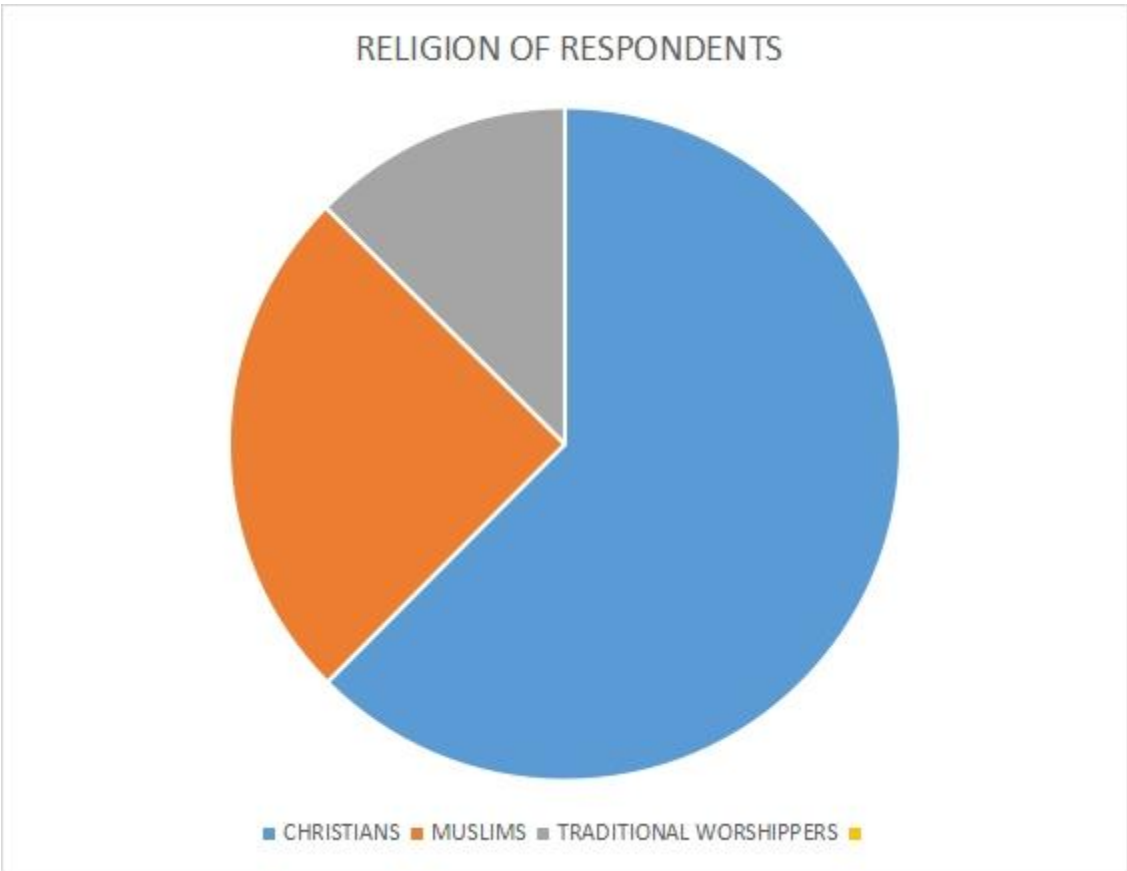


FIG 3: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY RELIGION

Table 1 and the accompanying graph provides a comprehensive demographic breakdown of the respondents who participated in this study, encompassing variables such as gender, age, class, and religion. The analysis of this demographic data is crucial in understanding the composition of the study sample, as it offers insight into the characteristics of the respondents and helps contextualize the findings of the research on the consequences of

child abuse on academic success among students in designated secondary schools in Ugbowo Community, Edo State, Nigeria.

Gender Distribution

The first demographic variable presented in Table 1 is the gender of the respondents. Out of the 301 participants, 97 (32.2%) are males, while 204 (67.8%) are females. This significant disparity in gender distribution indicates that a majority of the respondents are female students. The higher number of female respondents might reflect the gender composition within the schools studied or could suggest a greater willingness among female students to participate in the research. This gender imbalance is important to consider, as it may influence the generalizability of the findings. For instance, if certain forms of abuse or their impacts are more prevalent or perceived differently among males and females, this could affect the overall interpretation of the results.

Age Distribution

The data reveals that the majority of the students fall within the age range of 15 to 18 years, comprising 169 respondents, which accounts for 56.2% of the total sample. This is followed by the 11 to 14 years age group, with 65 respondents (21.6%), and the 19 to 22 years age group, with 45 respondents (14.9%). The smallest group consists of students aged 23 years and above, with 22 respondents (7.3%). The age distribution suggests that the sample is predominantly composed of students in their mid to late adolescence, which is typical for secondary school students in Nigeria. This age range is particularly relevant

for this study, as it is a critical period in a student's academic and emotional development. Understanding how child abuse affects students within this age bracket is essential, as it may have lasting implications on their academic success and overall well-being.

Religious Affiliation

The data shows that a majority of the interviewers identify as Christians, with 188 respondents, making up 62.5% of the sample. Muslims constitute 24.9% of the respondents with 75 students, while Traditional Worshippers make up 12.6% of the sample with 38 respondents.

4.2 Research Question one: What are the most prevalent forms of child labour in Ugbowo Community?

Table 4.5: Physical abuse, such as hitting or beating, is a common experience among students in my school.

	Frequency	Percent
Agreed	82	27.2%
Disagreed	7	2.3%
Strongly Agreed	188	62.5%
Strongly Disagreed	18	6.0%

Undecided	6	2.0%
Total	301	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.5 presents the responses of the participants to the statement, "Physical abuse, such as hitting or beating, is a common experience among students in my school." The data reveals a significant acknowledgment of the prevalence of physical abuse among the student population, as indicated by the high percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Specifically, 188 respondents, representing 62.5% of the total sample, strongly agreed that physical abuse, such as hitting or beating, is a common experience among students in their school. This strong agreement suggests that a substantial majority of the students perceive physical abuse as a frequent occurrence in their educational environment. Additionally, 82 respondents (27.2%) agreed with the statement, further reinforcing the notion that physical abuse is widely recognized as a common issue among students. When combined, the percentages of those who agreed and strongly agreed constitute 89.7% of the total sample, indicating an overwhelming consensus among the students that physical abuse is a prevalent issue in their school. In contrast, a small minority of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Specifically, 7 respondents (2.3%) disagreed, and 18 respondents (6.0%) strongly disagreed that physical abuse is common in their school. This minority perspective may reflect individual differences in experiences or perceptions of what

constitutes physical abuse. It could also indicate a reluctance to acknowledge the prevalence of such behavior, possibly due to fear, normalization of abuse, or differing cultural understandings of discipline.

Furthermore, 6 respondents (2.0%) were undecided about the statement. The undecided responses might suggest uncertainty or a lack of direct experience with physical abuse, or it could indicate ambiguity in how the term "physical abuse" is understood by the respondents. This group, although small, highlights the need for further education and clarification regarding what constitutes physical abuse and the seriousness of its implications.

Table 4.6: How does Government Policies reduced Child Labour in Ekosodin Community?

	Frequency	Percent
Agreed	181	60.1%
Disagreed	10	3.3%
Strongly Agreed	59	19.6%
Strongly Disagreed	32	10.6%
Undecided	19	6.3%

Total	301	100.0%
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Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.6 provides a detailed overview of the responses to the statement, "How does child abuse affect the academic performance of secondary school students in Ekosodin community?" The data indicates a substantial recognition of child abuse as a common experience among students. Specifically, 181 respondents, representing 60.1% of the total sample, agreed that child abuse is frequently experienced by students in their school. This majority response suggests that child abuse is a significant issue, widely acknowledged by the student body. In addition to those who agreed, 59 respondents (19.6%) strongly agreed with the statement, further emphasizing the prevalence of child abuse. When combined, the percentages of those who agreed and strongly agreed account for 79.7% of the total sample. This overwhelming consensus reflects a pervasive environment of child abuse within the school setting, where verbal insults and threats are likely a common part of students' daily experiences. On the other hand, a minority of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Specifically, 10 respondents (3.3%) disagreed, while 32 respondents (10.6%) strongly disagreed that child abuse is frequently experienced in their school. This minority viewpoint may indicate tghat some students have not personally experienced or witnessed emotional abuse or that they may interpret such behavior differently, perhaps seeing it as part of normal school life or disciplinary measures. Moreover, 19 respondents (6.3%) were undecided about the statement. The

undecided responses might suggest a lack of clarity or certainty among these students about what constitutes emotional abuse or an ambivalence about the frequency and impact of such behavior. This group, though relatively small, highlights the need for more explicit education and awareness around emotional abuse and its effects.

Table 4.7: Emotional Effects of Child Abuse on Students among Secondary School Students in Ekosodin

	Frequency	Percent
Agreed	46	15.3%
Disagreed	13	4.3%
Strongly Agreed	212	70.4%
Strongly Disagreed	6	2.0%
Undecided	24	8.0%
Total	301	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.6 provides a detailed overview of the responses to the statement, "Students in this school frequently experience emotional abuse, including verbal insults and threats." The data indicates a substantial recognition of emotional abuse as a common experience among students. Specifically, 181 respondents, representing 60.1% of the total sample,

agreed that emotional abuse, including verbal insults and threats, is frequently experienced by students in their school. This majority response suggests that emotional abuse is a significant issue, widely acknowledged by the student body. In addition to those who agreed, 59 respondents (19.6%) strongly agreed with the statement, further emphasizing the prevalence of emotional abuse. When combined, the percentages of those who agreed and strongly agreed account for 79.7% of the total sample. This overwhelming consensus reflects a pervasive environment of emotional abuse within the school setting, where verbal insults and threats are likely a common part of students' daily experiences. On the other hand, a minority of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Specifically, 10 respondents (3.3%) disagreed, while 32 respondents (10.6%) strongly disagreed that emotional abuse is frequently experienced in their school. This minority viewpoint may indicate that some students have not personally experienced or witnessed emotional abuse or that they may interpret such behavior differently, perhaps seeing it as part of normal school life or disciplinary measures. Moreover, 19 respondents (6.3%) were undecided about the statement. The undecided responses might suggest a lack of clarity or certainty among these students about what constitutes emotional abuse or an ambivalence about the frequency and impact of such behavior. This group, though relatively small, highlights the need for more explicit education and awareness around emotional abuse and its effects.

4.3 Research Question two: What are the Sexual Factors Contributing to Child Abuse on Students Among Secondary School Students in Ekosodin?

Table 4.8: Students who have experienced sexual abuse often struggle with concentration and focus in class, which affects their academic performance.

	Frequency	Percent
Agreed	55	18.3%
Disagreed	6	2.0%
Strongly Agreed	209	69.4%
Strongly Disagreed	12	4.0%
Undecided	19	6.3%
Total	301	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.8 presents data on the students' responses to the statement, "Students who have experienced sexual abuse often struggle with concentration and focus in class, which affects their academic performance." The data shows a substantial consensus among students regarding the negative impact of sexual abuse on concentration and academic performance. Specifically, 209 respondents, representing 69.4% of the total sample, strongly agreed with the statement, indicating a widespread recognition that students who have experienced abuse struggle with concentration and focus in class, which in turn affects their academic performance. This strong agreement underscores the significant

and pervasive effect that abuse has on students' cognitive and academic abilities. Additionally, 55 respondents (18.3%) agreed with the statement, further reinforcing the perception that sexual abuse is a critical factor influencing students' ability to concentrate in class. When combined, the percentages of those who agreed and strongly agreed account for an overwhelming 87.7% of the total sample. This consensus suggests that a vast majority of the students acknowledge the detrimental impact of sexual abuse on academic performance, particularly through its effect on concentration and focus. In contrast, a small minority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Specifically, 6 respondents (2.0%) disagreed, while 12 respondents (4.0%) strongly disagreed that sexual abuse negatively impacts concentration and academic performance. This minority perspective might reflect differences in individual experiences or perceptions of the relationship between sexual abuse and academic challenges. It could also indicate that some students may not recognize or may underplay the connection between their experiences of abuse and difficulties in academic concentration. Furthermore, 19 respondents (6.3%) were undecided about the statement. The undecided responses could suggest uncertainty or a lack of awareness among these students regarding the link between sexual abuse and academic performance. This group, though small, highlights the need for increased education and awareness about the cognitive and academic effects of sexual abuse, as well as more support for students who may be struggling but are unsure how to connect their academic difficulties to their experiences of abuse.

Table 4.9: Abuse leads to child neglect which in turn affects his/her academic performance

	Frequency	Percent
Agreed	50	16.6%
Disagreed	2	0.7%
Strongly Agreed	219	72.8%
Strongly Disagreed	4	1.3%
Undecided	26	8.6%
Total	301	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.9 presents data on the responses of students to the statement, "Abuse leads to child neglect which in turn affects his/her academic performance." The data from Table 4.9 reveals a significant majority of students who recognize the link between abuse and child neglect, which in turn affects academic outcomes. Specifically, 219 respondents, representing 72.8% of the total sample, strongly agreed with the statement, indicating that they perceive a strong connection between abuse and child neglect, which leads to poor academic results. This overwhelming agreement highlights the widespread awareness among students of the negative impact that abuse can have on school attendance, a

critical factor in academic success. In addition to those who strongly agreed, 50 respondents (16.6%) agreed with the statement, further reinforcing the belief that abuse contributes to absenteeism and poor academic outcomes. When combined, the percentages of those who agreed and strongly agreed account for an overwhelming 89.4% of the total sample. This consensus suggests that nearly nine out of ten students believe that abuse is a significant factor that drives students to miss school frequently, thereby hindering their academic progress. On the other hand, a very small minority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Specifically, 2 respondents (0.7%) disagreed, while 4 respondents (1.3%) strongly disagreed. This minority perspective might reflect personal experiences where the connection between abuse and absenteeism is not as evident, or it could indicate that these students do not view absenteeism as a direct result of abuse. It is also possible that these students have not experienced or observed the same patterns of behavior that their peers have, leading to a different interpretation of the relationship between abuse and academic outcomes. Furthermore, 26 respondents (8.6%) were undecided about the statement.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presented the conclusion and recommendations of the study based on the results of the findings.

5.1 Summary

The study investigated the impact of child abuse on the academic success of secondary school students in the Ugbowo Community, Edo State, Nigeria. It aimed to explore the prevalence of various forms of abuse, understand how these forms affect academic performance, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and support systems in place. The research revealed that physical abuse, such as hitting and beating, were the most commonly reported form among students. Emotional abuse, involving verbal insults and threats, was also significant but less prevalent. Neglect, including deprivation of basic needs like food and clothing, was another concern, affecting a notable proportion of students. These findings highlight a disturbing trend of widespread abuse within the community, impacting the students' overall well-being and academic engagement.

The study found that child abuse significantly hampers academic success. Students who experienced abuse struggled with concentration and focus in class, which adversely affected their performance. Increased absenteeism was common among these students, leading to further academic difficulties. The research also identified a decline in academic

motivation and interest among abused students, coupled with heightened psychological issues such as anxiety and depression. These factors collectively contribute to a detrimental effect on academic achievement.

Socio-economic and cultural factors were critical in understanding the prevalence of child abuse. Economic hardship and low educational levels among parents emerged as significant contributors to the abuse experienced by students. Cultural beliefs that endorse strict disciplinary practices were found to justify and perpetuate abusive behaviors. These socio-economic and cultural dynamics create an environment where child abuse is more likely to occur and persist, thereby affecting the students' educational outcomes. The study also assessed the current interventions and support systems designed to help students who have experienced abuse. It found a considerable dissatisfaction with these interventions, with many students perceiving them as inadequate. The effectiveness of counseling services and support systems was questioned, indicating a need for substantial improvements. The existing interventions were often seen as insufficient in addressing the specific needs of abused students, highlighting a critical gap in the support provided. In conclusion, this research offers a comprehensive analysis of how child abuse affects academic success in Ugbowo Community. It underscores the prevalence of physical and emotional abuse and its severe impact on students' academic performance. Socio-economic and cultural factors contributing to the abuse are highlighted, along with the inadequacies of current interventions and support systems. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach, including enhanced support mechanisms, more

effective interventions, and addressing underlying socio-economic and cultural factors. These steps are crucial for improving the academic outcomes and overall well-being of students affected by child abuse.

5.2 Conclusion

In concluding this study, it is evident that the consequences of child abuse on the academic success of secondary school students in Ugbowo Community, Edo State, are profound and multifaceted. The research provides a comprehensive understanding of how various forms of abuse—physical, emotional, and neglectful—significantly disrupt students' academic achievements and overall educational experiences. The findings underscore that physical abuse, including hitting and beating, is alarmingly prevalent among students. Emotional abuse, characterized by verbal insults and threats, also significantly impacts students, albeit to a slightly lesser extent. Neglect, involving the deprivation of essential needs, further exacerbates the challenges faced by these students. The widespread nature of these abuses highlights a serious issue within the community that severely impairs students' ability to perform academically and engage fully in their education.

The adverse effects of child abuse on academic performance are stark. Students subjected to abuse often struggle with concentration, focus, and motivation, leading to increased absenteeism and a decline in their academic performance. The psychological ramifications of abuse, including heightened anxiety and depression, compound these

difficulties, making it even harder for affected students to succeed in their studies. These findings reflect a clear link between the experience of abuse and detrimental educational outcomes, underscoring the urgent need for effective interventions. Socio-economic and cultural factors significantly contribute to the prevalence of child abuse in the Ugbowo Community. Economic hardships and low levels of parental education are major contributors, creating an environment where abuse is more likely to occur. Additionally, cultural beliefs that endorse strict disciplinary practices often justify and perpetuate abusive behaviors, further entrenching the problem within the community. These factors reveal a complex interplay of issues that sustain the cycle of abuse and impact students' educational experiences.

The study also critically evaluates the effectiveness of current interventions and support systems designed to assist abused students. The findings reveal considerable dissatisfaction with these mechanisms, indicating that they are often inadequate in addressing the needs of affected students. The lack of sufficient support highlights a significant gap in the existing systems, suggesting that substantial improvements are necessary to better meet the needs of students who have experienced abuse. In summary, this research highlights the severe impact of child abuse on academic success and underscores the need for comprehensive and effective interventions. Addressing the identified socio-economic and cultural factors, along with enhancing support systems, is crucial for improving the educational outcomes and overall well-being of students affected by abuse. By focusing on these areas, stakeholders can work towards breaking

the cycle of abuse and fostering a more supportive educational environment for all students.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to address the consequences of child abuse on academic success and improve the overall educational environment for students in Ugbowo Community, Edo State. These recommendations aim to mitigate the impact of abuse, enhance support systems, and tackle the underlying socio-economic and cultural factors contributing to the prevalence of abuse.

Firstly, there is an urgent need for the implementation of comprehensive intervention programs that are specifically tailored to address the needs of students affected by abuse. Schools should develop and integrate robust support mechanisms, including specialized counseling services and mental health resources, to assist students in coping with the emotional and psychological effects of abuse. Training programs for teachers and school staff should be established to equip them with the skills to identify signs of abuse, provide initial support, and refer students to appropriate services. Additionally, creating a safe and supportive school environment where students feel comfortable disclosing their experiences is crucial for early intervention and effective support.

Secondly, it is essential to enhance community awareness and involvement in combating child abuse. Community-based programs should be developed to educate parents, caregivers, and community members about the detrimental effects of abuse on children

and the importance of positive parenting practices. These programs should also address cultural beliefs that perpetuate abusive behaviors, promoting alternative disciplinary methods that do not harm children. Engaging local leaders and influencers in advocacy efforts can help shift societal attitudes towards child protection and create a collective effort to address and prevent abuse. Socio-economic factors play a significant role in the prevalence of child abuse, and addressing these factors is critical for long-term solutions. Economic support programs should be implemented to alleviate financial hardships that contribute to abusive situations. This can include providing financial assistance to vulnerable families, creating job opportunities, and offering educational support for parents to improve their employability. By addressing the economic pressures faced by families, the likelihood of abuse can be reduced, thereby enhancing the overall well-being of students. Moreover, improving the quality and effectiveness of existing support systems is vital. A thorough review and evaluation of current interventions should be conducted to identify gaps and areas for improvement. Feedback from students, parents, and educators should be used to refine and enhance support services. Developing partnerships with local and national organizations that specialize in child protection and mental health can provide additional resources and expertise to strengthen the support systems available to students.

Finally, ongoing research and monitoring are necessary to assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies and interventions. Regular surveys, evaluations, and feedback mechanisms should be established to track progress, identify emerging issues, and make

data-driven adjustments to policies and practices. This continuous improvement approach will ensure that the strategies remain relevant and effective in addressing the evolving needs of students affected by abuse. In conclusion, addressing the consequences of child abuse on academic success requires a multifaceted approach that includes enhancing school support systems, engaging the community, addressing socio-economic challenges, and improving existing interventions. By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can create a more supportive and protective environment for students, ultimately contributing to their academic success and overall well-being.

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APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY

Dear Respondent,

I am a final year student of the department of Social Work, with degree in view B.SC Social Work. The objective of this questionnaire is to obtain relevant information which will help in providing answers to the research questions of the study. Upon completion of this study, you are invited to read my findings because it will be useful to government agencies; non-government organization- international, national and local; policy makers. You are hereby assured that information gathered with this questionnaire is basically for academic purpose and it will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Socio Demographic Profile

- AGE: 7-9 years() 9-11 years() 11-12 years()
- GENDER: Male: () Female: ()
- RELIGION: Christian: () Muslim: () Traditional Worshipper: ()
- Class: Pry 3 : () Pry 4 : () Pry 5 : ()

Section B; Research questions

Nos	What are the most			Strongly	Strongly	Undecided
I	Prevalent Physical forms of child abuse among secondary	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	

	school students in Ekosodin Community?					
1	Physical abuse, such as hitting or beating, is a common experience among students in my school.					
2	Students in this school frequently experience physical abuse such as threats.					
3	Instances of physical neglect, such as being deprived of basic needs like food or clothing, are prevalent among students in this school.					

Item	How does child			Strongly	Strongly	Undecided
II	abuse affect the	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	
	academic					
	performance of					
	secondary school					
	students in Ekosodin					
	Community?					
4	Students who have					
	experienced abuse					
	often struggle with					
	concentration and					
	focus in class, which					
	affects their academic					
	performance.					
5	Abuse leads to					
	frequent absenteeism					
	among students,					
	resulting in poor					
	academic outcomes.					

6	There is a noticeable decline in academic motivation and interest among students who have been subjected to abuse.					
Item III	What are the emotional effects of child abuse on students among secondary school students in Ekosodin?	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Undecided
7	Students who have experience emotional abuse often struggle with concentration and focus during					

	classes.					
8	Emotional abuse leads to increased anxiety and depression among students, affecting their academic performance.					
9	Behavioral problems, such as aggression or withdrawal, are common among students who have been emotionally abused, impacting their learning abilities.					
Item IV	What are the sexual factors contributing	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Undecided

	<p>to child abuse on students among secondary school students in Ekosodin?</p>					
10	<p>Inappropriate dressing among students contribute to sexual abuse in secondary schools</p>					
11	<p>Some teachers and school staff take advantage of students sexually</p>					
12	<p>Inadequate supervision by parents and guardians make students more vulnerable to sexual</p>					

	abuse					
Item V	Child Neglect as a Contributory Factor to Child Abuse among Students in Ekosodin Community	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Undecided
13	Children who experience neglect from their parents are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviour					
14	Children who experience neglect from their parents are more like to fall victim of child abuse than their					

	counterparts who do not experience parental neglect					
15	Creating awareness about the dangers of child neglect can help reduce the rate of child abuse among students in Ekosodin community.					