SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INDICES OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN IN EDO SOUTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF EDO STATE

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Abstract
This study investigated socio-demographic indices of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South senatorial district of Edo state. Four research questions were raised to guide the research. Four hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Literatures related to the studies were reviewed. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and the population of the study comprised 107,271 secondary school students in public and private registered senior secondary school children in Edo South senatorial district of Edo state. The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 384 respondents for the study. A Self-structured questionnaire was used for the collection of data. The research instrument was content validated and a reliability coefficient of 0.73 was obtained using the test-retest reliability method. Data obtained were analysed using inferential statistics of chi-square. Some of the findings revealed that gender and age are socio-demographic determinants of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South senatorial district of Edo state. With reference to the findings, the researcher recommended among others that a gender-sensitive awareness programmes should be developed and implemented in schools and communities to educate students, parents, teachers, and community members about the risks of child sexual abuse.
Keywords: Socio-demographic, sexual abuse, school type, gender, school location.

Introduction

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a serious global public health problem with long-lasting negative consequences on the mental, physical and social wellbeing of victims. Child sexual abuse is a broad term that describes any act aimed at engaging a child directly or indirectly in non-age-appropriate sexual behaviours either through intimidation, coercion or inducement. This act is particularly worrisome because at this age, adolescents not fully understand the nature of the sexual act taking place and therefore lacks the cognitive, emotional and physical power to

decline such sexual behaviour. Specifically, the World Health Organization defined child sexual abuse as the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared or which violates the laws and social taboos of society (WHO, 2010).

CSA occurs worldwide and its occurrence is not restricted to any culture, location, age, or gender. According to WHO (2020), 1 in every 13 male and 1 in every 5 females suffered various forms of sexual violence during childhood. Specifically, an estimated 7.9% of males and 19.7% of females universally faced sexual abuse before the age of 18 years; the highest prevalence rate of child sexual abuse was seen in Africa (34.4%); Europe, America, and Asia had prevalence rate of 9.2%, 10.1%, and 23.9%, respectively; with regards to females, seven countries reported prevalence rates as being more than one fifth that is, 37.8% in Australia, 32.2% in Costa Rica, 31% in Tanzania, 30.7% in Israel, 28.1% in Sweden, 25.3% in the US, and 24.2% in Switzerland (WHO, 2020). Despite the high burden of sexual abuse and its adverse effects, child sexual abuse is one of the most underreported crimes (Mathews, Bromeld, Walsh, Cheng & Norman, 2017).

Similarly, several researchers have established a link between CSA and certain factors they believe are determinants of CSA. In investigating the prevalence of child sexual abuse among secondary school adolescents in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria Gabriel –Job, Alikor and Akani (2019) reported that gender significantly predicts CSA with girls more (2.7times) likely to be victims of CSA compared to their male counterparts. On the contrary, Modelli, Galvão, and Pratesi (2012) reported that boys are at greater risk for sexual abuse when they are below the age of 6.5. In addition, Ranney, Rennert-May, Spitzer, Chitai, Mamlin, and Mabeya (2011) hypothesized that boys might be more reluctant to report sexual abuse due to fears related to their identities as males or the possibility of being labeled as

homosexual. In other studies done in Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania and Turkey, a higher prevalence of CSA among female as against their male counterpart was yet again reported (Chime, Orji, Aneke & Nwoke, 2021; Agu, Brown, Adamu-Isaah & Duncan, 2018). In contrast, CSA studies done in India, Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries showed that sexual abuse occurred more in boys than girls (Choudhry, Dayal, Pillai, Kalokhe, Beier, & Patel, 2018; Aleissa, Saleheen, Al-Wallan, AlKashan, AlSubaie & Almuneef, 2018; Beier). However, study done in Lebanon among secondary school students showed no gender difference (Usta & Farver, 2010).

In explaining the variance in CSA across gender, Agu, Brown, Adamu-Isaah and Duncan (2018) stated that the variance could be due to the fact that females are usually being used as domestic servants and victims of child labour. Again, females exhibit early sexual maturation compared to males and these physical features make them appear attractive, more vulnerable to unwanted advances, seduction by older and more experienced males (Akinsulire, 2017). The low prevalence of CSA among girls in Arab countries when compared to boys was attributed to their religion, cultural norms and values where girls are not allowed to go outside unattended making it difficult for them to be exposed to extra-familial perpetration though this does not affect the familial perpetration which is responsible for the majority of the CSA recorded in the Arab countries (Beier, 2017). However, the lower CSA prevalence among males in other countries particularly in Africa could be because the perception of sexuality in the conventional African society is enshrined in secrecy and boys may not report sexual abuse because of possible male ego grip (Gabriel –Job, Alikor & Akani, 2019). Hence, sexual abuse of the boy child may not be uncommon but perhaps under reported.

Also, childhood is a phase of rapid development with its biological maturity preceding its psychosocial maturity. Since children are still undergoing physical, neurodevelopmental and

psychosocial changes, their inquisitiveness and eagerness to explore their environment makes it easy for them to be preyed upon by CSA perpetrators. However, the prevalence of CSA seems to vary across some specific childhood age. While Chime, Orji, Aneke and Nwoke (2021) stated that there is a significant association between age and prevalence of CSA, Chinawa, Manyike, Aniwada, Odutola, & Chinawa (2015) stated that children younger than 10 years were the most frequently sexually abused. Some researchers are of the opinion that, as a risk factor, age operates differentially for girls and boys with males facing a greater risk of sexual abuse when they are young and the risk for females increase in adolescence (Hassan, Gary, Killion, Lewin & Totten, 2015). Aboul- Hagag and Hamed (2012) revealed that the average age of CSA for males was 9.20 years, compared to 10.03 years for female victims and also reported in higher rates in age group 10–15 years in comparison to other age groups.

Furthermore, a slightly higher rate of pre-pubertal CSA were observed among studies in Africa with some studies reporting to up to 60% of children being sexually abused before they had reached their teenage (Birdthistle, Floyd, Mwanasa, Nyagadza, Gwiza & Glynn, 2011). Similarly, in Nigeria, over 16% of children experienced their first incidence of CSA between the ages of 5 and 8 years and about 45% between 9 and 12 years of age (David, Ezechi, Wapmuk, Gbajabiamila, Ohihoin, Herbertson & Odeyemi, 2018), while 14% of male victims in Kenya reported to have experienced their first episode of CSA when they were 10 years and below (Sumner, Mercy, Buluma, Mwangi, Marcelin, Kheam, Lea, Brookmeyer, Kress & Hillis, 2016).

In addition, studies in Asia have also reported significant rates of CSA among children below 12 years of age. A study in Cambodia (Sumner *et al*., 2016) showed that 59.1% of male victims reported to have experienced their first episode of CSA when they were 10 years or

below. Another study in India reported 40% of victim's experienced first incidence of CSA between the ages of 5 and 12 years (Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, 2007). However, the predominance of CSA among young children could be due to their lack of physical strength and psychological maturity which makes them defenseless and vulnerable.

Another determinant linked to CSA is the geographical location of the victim. There is a perception that learners living in rural areas face higher risk for sexual abuse than those living in urban areas, indicating there might be indeed a disproportionate risk burden of CSA in the rural areas (Maranga, Onyango & Omondi, 2020). Some reasons cited were: rural schools are in bushy areas and people in the rural areas were ignorant on child sexual abuse and the vastness of rural schools created more space under which child sexual abuse predators would commit the vice (Maranga, Onyango & Omondi, 2020). Similarly, Shumba, Shumba, Gwirayi, Shumba, Maphosa, Gudyanga, & Makura (2015) documented that rural school students are more vulnerable to child sexual abuse. Aboul-Hagaga and Hamed (2012) also reported higher prevalence of CSA among rural learners compared to urban learners thereby establishing a significant correlation between CSA and the geographical location of children. In contrast, Hagras, Moustafa, Barakat, Azza and El-Elemi (2011) reported a higher prevalence of CSA among urban children as against children living in rural areas.

The variation in the prevalence of CSA across geographical location may also be due to the difference in culture, education and social levels between rural and urban areas. On the type of school (public or privately owned school) predicting CSA, Maranga, Onyango and Omondi, (2020) reported no significant correlation between school type and the prevalence of CSA. On the contrary, Abera, Aliye, Tadesse and Guta (2021) stated that the odds of experiencing sexual

abuse among students of rural residence were 3.2 times higher than their urban counterpart. In justifying the variation in the prevalence of CSA across geographical location of victims, Warkov (2017) opined that cases of sexual abuse that take place in elite schools are infrequently reported as parents of these pupils pay high tuition fees and exposing such a vice in their schools taints the name of the school. Another reason for the variation could be because private school learners were in an environment that had good security and strict rules that may contribute to lower occurrences of child sexual abuse. On the other hand, public school pupils might be more predisposed to child sexual abuse for reasons such as: teachers did not care a lot about what happens to learners as theirs is only to teach; public schools are big geographically hence more spaces and opportunities for hiding, which together expose learners to sexual abuse as cited by learners (Maranga, Onyango & Omondi, 2020)

Despite efforts to combat this heinous crime, child sexual abuse remains a distressing concern. CSA comes with grave life-long outcomes irrespective of the victim's gender, age and location. CSA is associated with high-risk behaviour such as multiple sexual partners, prostitution, delinquency in later life, substance abuse and psychological problems like feeling of vulnerability, fear, shame, guilt, poor self-esteem and depression (Rimamnunra *et al*., 2021; Gabriel–Job & Alikor, 2019). Other consequences of CSA are academic problems that can arise due to child sexual abuse, including: high absenteeism and change in attitude towards school and lower performance on tests measuring cognitive ability, academic achievement, and memory assessment (Darkness to Light, 2020). These grave consequences that come with CSA could jeopardise the future self-actualization of victims if the society remains aloof to it. Also, while existing research has shed light on the prevalence of child sexual abuse on a global scale, there is a paucity of localized studies that specifically delve into the socio-demographic factors

underlying this issue in the context of Edo State. The absence of a comprehensive understanding of these determinants limits the effectiveness of prevention and intervention strategies tailored to this region. This study seek to uncover the intricate web of factors that may contribute to its perpetuation in order to bridge the gap in knowledge by exploring the socio-demographic dimensions associated with the occurrence of child sexual abuse in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo state.

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Does gender influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State?
2. Does age influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State?
3. Is there a relationship between school location (urban/rural) and the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State?
4. Is there a relationship between school type (private/public) and the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. Gender does not significantly influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State based on gender.
2. Age does not significantly influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.

3. There is no significant relationship between school location (urban/rural) and the occurrence of child sexual abuse school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.
4. There is no significant relationship between school type (private/public) and the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.

Methods

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive research design accurately and systematically describes, observes or validates aspects of groups collected through quantifiable information without manipulation of the variables (Siedlecki, 2020). Based on Siedlecki (2020) description of the descriptive survey research design, the researcher was able to use this design to effectively provide an in-depth investigation of the socio-demographic determinants of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South senatorial district of Edo state. Furthermore, the population of the study is one hundred and seven thousand, two hundred and seventy-one (107,271) senior secondary school students in both public and registered private schools in the seven (7) Local Government Area that makes up the Edo South senatorial district of Edo state. The total population of senior secondary school students in public schools in the seven (7) Local Government Area that makes up the Edo South senatorial district of Edo state is thirty-one thousand, seven hundred and twenty-five (31,725) while that of registered private school is seventy-five thousand, five hundred and forty-seven (75,547) (Edo state Ministry of Education, 2022).

A sample size of 384 respondents was selected using the Cochran's formulae. The sample was selected using multi-stage sampling technique. In the first stage, three (3) Local Government

Areas was selected from the seven (7) Local Government Areas in Edo South senatorial district of Edo using simple random sampling technique of balloting by replacement. In the second stage, stratified random sampling technique was used to group the schools into rural school and urban school based on their location. In the third stage, two (2) schools (one public urban school and one public rural school) were selected from each of the three Local Government Areas using simple random sampling technique of balloting by replacement. Lastly, to reflect the gender distribution in the selected schools, simple random sampling technique of balloting by replacement was used to select 18 female respondents and 14 male respondents from each of the six selected schools. Same procedure was repeated to select respondents from the registered private schools.

Ethical approval was obtained and a formal permission to allow the selected schools to participate in the research was requested and granted through the Commissioner of Education and Principals of each of the selected schools. To maintain confidentiality of the respondents, respondents were asked not to indicate their names on the questionnaires.

Table 1: Sample distribution

School Type selected	**No. of schools selected**	**No. of school children**	
		Male	**Female**
Public Urban Schools	3	46	50
Public Rural Schools	3	46	50
Private Urban Schools	3	46	50
Private Rural Schools	3	46	50
Total	**12**	**184**	**200**
Grand total		**384**	

A self-structured questionnaire titled Child Sexual Abuse among Secondary School Students: Prevalence, Pattern and Predictors (CSAPPP)" was used for data collection. The instrument was content validated and a reliability index of 0.73 was obtained using the test-retest reliability method and thereafter subjecting the scores obtained from both administrations of instruments to Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The collected data was coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages and inferential statistics of chi-square.

Results

Research question 1: Does gender influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State?

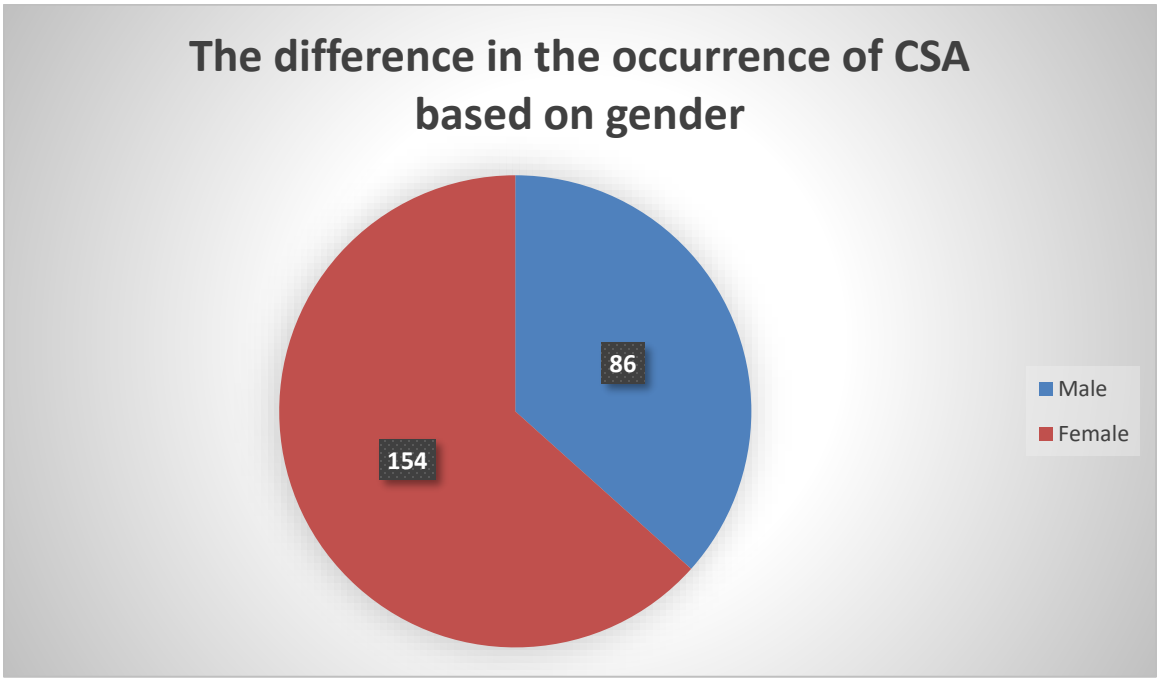

Figure 1: The occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State

Figure 1 shows the difference in the occurrence of CSA based on gender. Findings indicate reveals that 86 (22.40%) and 154 (40.10%) male and female respondents have been child sexual abuse respectively. To determine if gender influence the occurrence of child sexual

abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State, hypothesis 1 was tested.

Research question 2: Does age influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State?

Figure 2 presents the occurrence of CSA among school children in the Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State across different age groups. Among children aged 9-11 years, 60 children reported experiencing CSA, while 26 did not. In the 12-14 years age group, 70 children experienced CSA, with 92 reporting no such experience. The highest incidence of CSA was observed in the 15-17 years age group, where 110 children reported CSA. These findings indicate a varying prevalence of CSA across age groups, with the 15-17 years group showing the most significant number of reported CSA cases. Hypothesis 2 was tested to determine if age influenced the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.

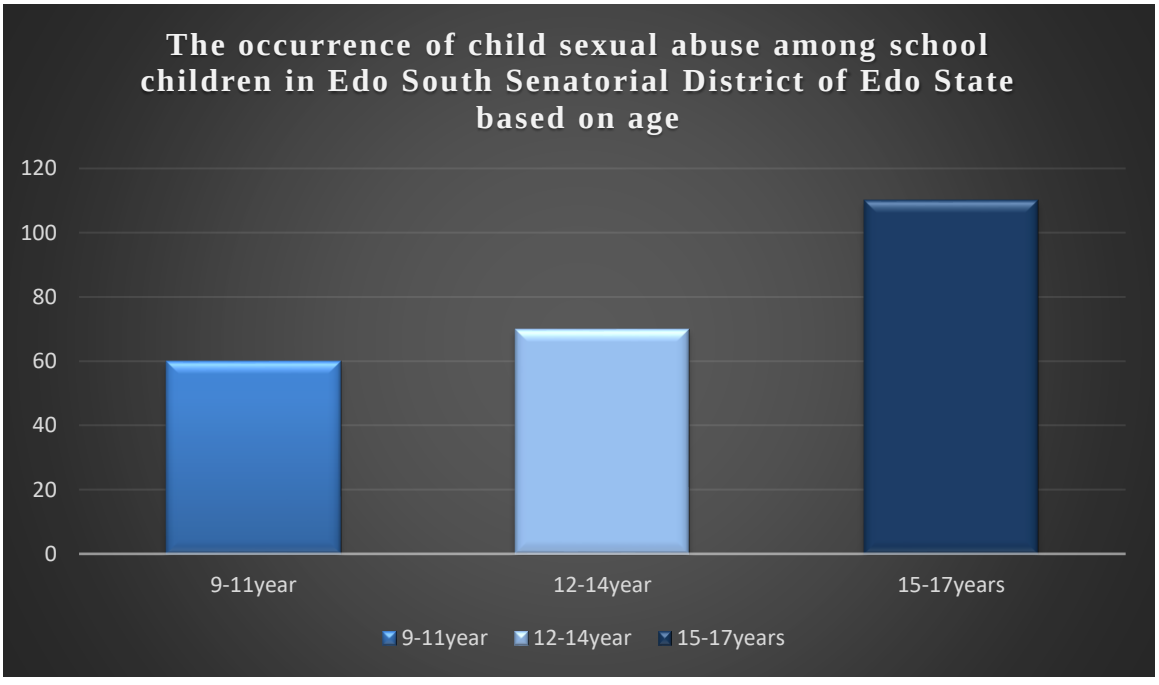

Figure 2: The occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State based on age

Research question 3: Is there a relationship between school location (urban/rural) and the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State?

Figure 3 shows the occurrence of child sexual abuse among secondary school students in Edo State, categorized by school location. The analysis indicates that in urban schools, 140 students reported experiencing CSA, while in rural schools, 100 students reported CSA. These results suggest a higher prevalence of CSA in urban schools compared to rural schools, with the relationship between school location and CSA being tested in hypothesis three to determine statistically significant.

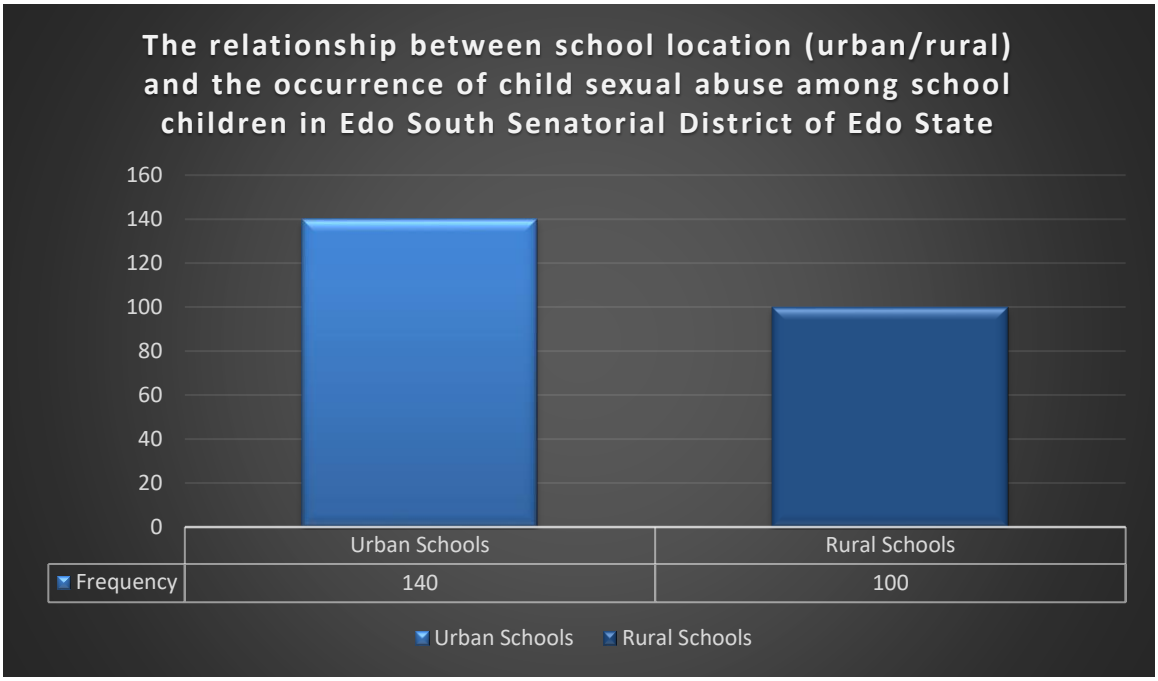

Figure 3: The relationship between school location (urban/rural) and the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State

Research question 4: Is there a relationship between school type (private/public) and the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State?

Figure 4 illustrates the occurrence of CSA among school children in the Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State, categorized by school type. The analysis shows that the in private schools, 145 students reported experiencing CSA, while in public schools, 95 students reported CSA. These results suggest that CSA is more prevalent in private schools than in public schools. The statistically significance of this relationship is tested in hypothesis four.

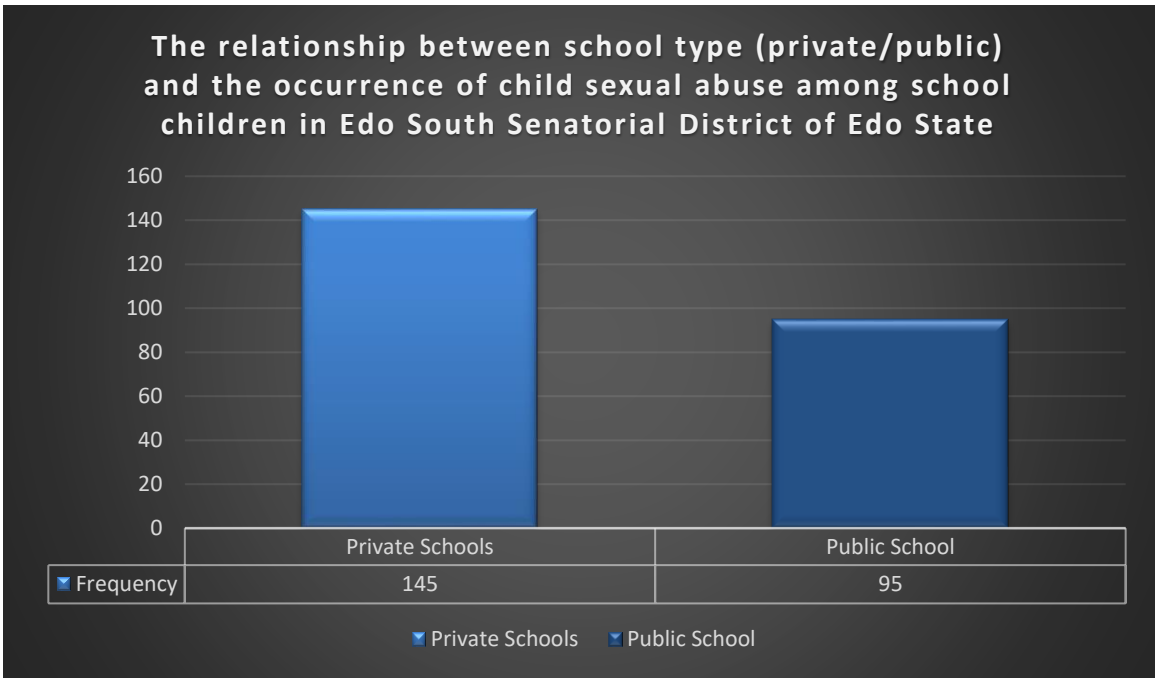

Figure 4: The relationship between school type (private/public) and the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State?

Hypothesis 1: Gender does not significantly influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State based on gender.

Table 2: Chi-square analysis on the influence of gender on the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State (n=384).

Gender	Child sexual abuse		χ^2	df	Sig.
	Yes O(E)	No O(E)			
Male	86(120)	106(72)	51.38	1	0.00
Female	154(120)	38(72)			

O-observed count; E-Expected count; χ^2 ***- Chi-square value; df-Degree of freedom; Sig.-Level of significance***

Table 2 shows the chi-square analysis showing the influence of gender in the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo state. The table reveals a calculated chi-square value of 51.38, degree of freedom 1 and level of significance of 0.00 which is lesser than the s*et al*pha level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that gender does not significantly influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State is rejected. In view of this, majority (154) of the female respondents indicated that they have been sexually abused as against 86 male respondents who indicated that they have been sexually abused. Therefore, it can be concluded that gender significantly influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.

Hypothesis 2: Age does not significantly influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.

Table 3: Chi-square analysis on the influence of age on the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State (n=384)

Age	First experience of child sexual abuse		χ^2	df	Sig
	O(E) Yes	O(E) No			
9-11 years	60(53.8)	26(32.3)			
12-14 years	70(101.3)	92(60.8)	47.26	2	0.01
15-17 years	110(85.0)	26(51.0)			

O- Observed count; E-Expected count; χ^2 ***- Chi-square value; df-Degree of freedom; Sig.-Level of significance***

Table 3 shows the Chi-square analysis on the influence of age on the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State. The table shows a calculated chi-square value of 47.26, degree of freedom 2 and level of significance of 0.01 which is lesser than the s*et al*pha level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis which states age does not significantly influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State is rejected. In line with this, the table shows a significant variation in the number of respondents who experienced child sexual abuse across the different age groups, with majority (110) of the respondents experiencing their first child sexual abuses in their late childhood. Therefore, it can be concluded that age significantly influence the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between school location and child sexual abuse among secondary school students in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.

Table 4: Chi-square analysis on the relationship between school location and child sexual abuse among secondary school students in Edo State (n=384)

School location	Child sexual abuse		χ^2	df	Sig.
	Yes O(E)	No O(E)			
Urban schools	140(120)	52(72)	27.22	1	0.00
Rural schools	100(120)	92(72)			

O- Observed count; E-Expected count; χ^2 ***- Chi-square value; df-Degree of freedom; Sig.-Level of significance***

Table 4 shows the Chi-square analysis on the relationship between school location and child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State. The table indicates a calculated chi-square value of 27.22, degree of freedom 1 and level of significance of 0.00 which is lesser than the s*et al*pha level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between school location and child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State is rejected. In line with this, majority (140) of the respondents in urban schools indicated that they have been sexually abused as against 100 respondents in rural school who indicated that they have been sexually abused. The conclusion here therefore, is that there is a significant relationship between school location and child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between school type and child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State.

Table 5: Chi-square analysis on the relationship between school type and child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State (n=384)

School type	Child sexual abuse		χ^2	df	Sig.
	Yes O(E)	No O(E)			
Private schools	145(120)	47(72)	17.77	1	0.00
Public Schools	95(120)	97(72)			

O- Observed count; E-Expected count; χ^2 ***-Chi-square value; df-Degree of freedom; Sig.-Level of significance***

Table 5 shows the Chi-square analysis on the relationship between school type and child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State. The table indicates a calculated chi-square value of 17.77, degree of freedom 1 and level of significance of 0.00 which is lesser than the s*et al*pha level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between school type and child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State is rejected. The table clearly indicates that majority (145) of the respondents in public schools indicated that they have been sexually abused as against 95 respondents in private school who indicated that they have been sexually abused. The conclusion here therefore, is that there is a significant relationship between school type and child sexual abuse school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo state.

Discussion of findings

The findings show a higher prevalence of child sexual abuse (CSA) among female students (40.1%) compared to male students (22.4%), supporting previous studies that highlight the greater vulnerability of girls to CSA (Finkelhor *et al*., 2014). The highest incidence of CSA

was found in the 15-17 years age group, which aligns with research indicating greater risk during adolescence (Radford *et al*., 2011). Respondents in urban schools reported more cases of CSA (140) compared to rural schools (100), which may be attributed to factors such as overcrowding and less supervision in urban areas (Briere & Elliott, 2019). Private schools had a higher number of CSA reports (145) than public schools (95), suggesting that private schools might face more challenges in monitoring and protecting students (McAlister *et al*., 2016).

The hypotheses tested revealed a link between respondent's socio-demographic variables and the occurrence of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State. The finding on the influence of gender on the occurrence of CSA revealed that girls were more likely to experience various forms of CSA than boys. This finding is similar to the findings of Gabriel –Job, Alikor and Akani (2019) who reported that gender significantly predicts CSA with girls more (2.7times) likely to be victims of CSA compared to their male counterparts. In contrast, CSA studies done in India, Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries showed that sexual abuse occurred more in boys than girls (Choudhry, Dayal, Pillai, Kalokhe, Beier, & Patel, 2018; Aleissa, Saleheen, Al-Wallan, AlKashan, AlSubaie & Almuneef, 2018; Beier, 2018). The high prevalence of CSA in girls may be due to the gender roles and norms in many cultures, including Nigeria, where traditional gender roles and norms may place girls in a more vulnerable position than boy for child sexual abuse. Also, the gender difference in anatomical features such as the onset of secondary sexual characteristics in girls may also make girls to have physical features that make them appear sexually appealing. Hence, girls become more vulnerable than boys to CSA perpetrators.

This study also revealed that age significantly influenced the occurrence of CSA as majority of the respondents experienced their first CSA during their late childhood. This finding

is similar to the findings of Chime, Orji, Aneke and Nwoke (2021) who reported a significant association between age and prevalence of CSA. However, while findings from this study indicated that majority of respondents experienced their first CSA during their late childhood, Chinawa *et al*. (2013) reported a contrary finding where he stated that children younger than 10 years were the most frequently sexually abused. The experience of first CSA during late childhood may be attributed to the fact that this age group coincides with the phase of rapid human development and biological maturity which can create inquisitiveness and eagerness to experiment with the body in respondents within this age group. This inquisitiveness and eagerness to experiment with the body can make them more vulnerable to CSA perpetrators.

Similarly, this study established that the occurrence of CSA was higher in urban schools as against rural school. Though Maranga, Onyango and Omondi (2020) corroborated the findings of this study on the significant relationship between school location and CSA, they reported a higher CSA in rural learners. However, Hagras, Moustafa, Barakat, Azza and El-Elemi (2011) reported a higher prevalence of CSA among urban children as against children living in rural areas. The variation in the prevalence of CSA across location may be due to the variations in the availability and effectiveness of child protection laws and regulation across different locations. The role of technology in accessing explicit content as well as online grooming and sexual exploitation may also increase the prevalence of CSA in Urban areas while its absence alongside strong societal culture and norms in rural areas may have contributed to the low prevalence of CSA.

In contradicting the findings of this study that there is a significant relationship between school type and CSA, Maranga, Onyango and Omondi, (2020) reported no significant relationship between school type and the prevalence of CSA. However, this study revealed that

CSA is higher among public school learners as against their counterparts in private schools. A possible explanation for this finding could be due to inadequate CSA reporting mechanisms as well as the higher student-to-staff ratios in public schools which make it easier for CSA to occur as against private schools.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concluded that:

1. Gender is a socio-demographic determinant of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo state.
2. Age is a socio-demographic determinant of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo state.
3. School type is a socio-demographic determinant of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo state.
4. School location is a socio-demographic determinant of child sexual abuse among school children in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo state.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Gender-sensitive awareness programs should be developed and implemented in schools and communities to educate students, parents, teachers, and community members about the risks of child sexual abuse. These programs should emphasize the importance of recognizing and reporting abusive behaviours, irrespective of gender, while also addressing specific vulnerabilities that different genders may face.
2. Age-appropriate educational curricula that teach children about their rights, personal boundaries, and safe behaviours should be developed. Additionally, government in

collaboration with schools should provide specialized training for educators to effectively communicate with children of varying age groups about sensitive topics such as sexual abuse prevention, ensuring the content is tailored to the cognitive and emotional development of each age bracket.

3. Security measures should be enhanced in schools, particularly in areas with higher incidence rates of child sexual abuse. This may involve installing security cameras, improving physical infrastructure, and increasing the presence of trained personnel who can monitor and address any suspicious activities, thereby creating safer environments for students.
4. Diversified school models that take into account the influence of school location and type on child sexual abuse should be promoted. Also, school-based counselling services should be developed while forming and improving partnerships with local organizations to provide additional support and resources, particularly in areas where vulnerability to abuse is higher.

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