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THE PREVALENCE OF CHILD DEFILEMENT AND SUFFERING BY BOYS AND GIRLS IN THIKA SUB-COUNTY

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Abstract

Purpose: The study aimed at establishing the prevalence of child defilement and suffering by boys and girls in Thika Sub-county.

Methods: This study adopted a descriptive design to establish the prevalence of child defilement and suffering by boys and girls in Thika Sub-county. The target population of this study was school going children below 18 years old in selected public primary school of Thika Sub-county. Purposive sampling was used to get a sample of 190, being 30% of the target population of 630 pupils in Thika Sub-county. Two research instruments were considered in collecting the data. These were questionnaire and interviews schedule.. Quantitative data was obtained from pre-coded questions while qualitative data was obtained from open-ended questions and interview schedule responses. Both descriptive statistics and narrative reports were used to produce the analysis report presented in form of tables, graphs, and charts

Results: The study findings showed that 18% boys and 23.6% girls were victims of sexual abuse. This high prevalence suggests that child abuse is rampant in Thika sub County. The prevalence corresponds with the UNICEF report, (2000) that, there is wide spread of sexual abuse of children in central Province. There were 2-3 cases reported in a month at the police station meaning very few cases are reported compared to police report from the findings, who said that they receive at least one case in a week. On the other hand the Doctors in the hospitals reported that they receive eight cases in every week and the most affected gender was girls. In addition the researcher found that both gender are not spared when it comes to child sexual abuse, because the number was almost equal.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: The study recommended that, the Kenya police force should be facilitated and motivated as they do their work. This should be in-form of logistical support so that they can easily follow up defilement cases since they would have got transport to go on the ground where the offence would have been committed, hence getting first-hand information and evidence to back up the cases.

Keywords: *Prevalence, suffering, child defilement, Thika sub county*

1.0 INTRODUCTION 1.1 Background of the Study

Child sexual abuse is a universal social phenomenon. It is estimated that globally, 150 million girls and 73 million boys under the age of 18 years of experience forced sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual violence annually (WHO, 2002). According to a study conducted by Clinical Psychology (2009), the global prevalence of child sexual abuse has been estimated at 19.7% for females and 7.9% for males. America and Asia had prevalence rates of between 10.1% and 23%. In North America 15% to 25% of women and 5% to 15% of men were sexually abused when they were young children (study carried out in US by WHO, 2000). Most sexual abuse offenders are acquainted with their victims. Approximately 30% are relatives of the child, most often brothers, fathers, uncles or cousins. Around 60% are other acquaintances such as friends, of the family, baby sitters or neighbours. Strangers are the offenders in approximately 10% of child abuse (Wihbey, 2011).

Mostly, child abuse is committed by men. Studies show that women commit 14 to 40% of offences against boys and 6% offences reported against girls (Finkeller, 1994). Most offenders who sexually abuse prepubescent children are paedophiles. A study carried out in US reflected that 1,400 adult females, childhood sexual abusers perpetrators were associated with increased likelihood of drug dependence, alcohol dependence and psychiatric disorders. Depending with the age and size of the child, and the degree of force used, child sexual abuse may cause internal lacerations and bleeding. In severe cases, damage to internal organs may occur, which in some cases may cause death (Giddnes *et al.*, 1995). The victims ranging between 2 months and 10 years old may experience death trauma to the genital or rectum and sexual mutilation. Child sexual abuse includes actions from voyeurism to rape. It usually happens over an extended period of time by some close people to the child. It is occurring in pandemic proportions (60-80) million survivors in US. It often causes both physical and psychological trauma.

US Department of Justice has found that 11% of high school girls and 4% of high school boys report having been forced to have sex at same point. Other researchers have found that 1 in 15 US adults report being forced to have sex during their life time. An estimate global report reflects that 7.9% of men and 19.7% women globally experience sexual abuse prior to the age of 18 years. US rates were 7.5% for males and 25.3% for females. The highest prevalence rate of child sexual assault geographically is found in Africa (34.4%) (WHO, 2000).

Europe shows the lowest prevalence rate (9.2%). America and Asia has prevalence rates between 10.1% and 23%. South Africa has the highest prevalence rates for both men 60.9% and women 43.7%. Jordan presents the second highest prevalence rate for men (27%) followed by Tanzania (25%). Rates between 10% and 20% are reported for male in Israel (15.7%), Spain (13.4%), Australia (13%), and Cost Rica (12.8%) while the remaining countries all have prevalence rates below 10%. According to Wihbey (2011), for women, seven countries have prevalence rates above 20%. Australia (37.8%) Cost Rica (32.2%), Tanzania (31.0%) Israel (30.7%) Sweden (28.1%) the United States (25.3%) and Switzerland (24.2%). Statistics shows that 6% of all adults have an attraction to children. It is known that those people will migrate or volunteer for employment to be close to their prey, and 90% of abusers are people the child knows,

loves, and trusts. Moreover, those people do not have criminal records.(WHO,2000). In Europe, studies published in international journals reflect that 6 to 36% of girls under the age of 16 and 15% in boys under the age of 16 have incidences of sexual abuse experiences (Wihbey, 2011). In UK one in 4 young adults (25.3%) had been severely maltreated during childhood, either by a parent or a guardian. 13.4% of children between 11 to 17 years have experienced sexual abuse and one in ten children aged 11 to 17 (9.4%) have experienced sexual abuse in the past years (Giddnes *et al*,1995).

The highest prevalence rate of child sexual abuse geographically was found in Africa (Ito *et al.*, 1998). 34% child sexual abuse often occurs alongside other possibly confounding variables, such as poor family environment and physical abuse (Kindler *et al.*, 2000). Various studies have suggested that severe sexual abuse may have a deleterious effect on development (Ito *et al.*, 1998). A 2006 to 2007 Idaho study, cases found that 82% of juvenile offenders are males and 36% females. The percentage incidents of sexual abuse by female perpetrators that come to the attention of the legal system are usually reported to be between 1% and 4%. Researchers in 1970s and 1990 classified offenders on their motivations and traits. Groth and Bimbaum (1978) categorized child sexual offenders into two groups: fixated and regressed. Fixated are described as having a primary attraction to children while regressed had largely maintained with other adults and were married.

In North Africa, girls are the majority of victims of child sexual assault (CSA). Males are the majority of perpetrators who sexually abuse boys at 80%; and girls 95% (Finkelhor *et al.*, 1986). Males who abuse boys are likely to have been sexually abused as a child by a male, and that these men were not 'homosexuals' as their attraction was to older boys not men. (Finkelhor *et al.*,1986). The category of CSA (all contact items combined), rates for females in the US range from 6% to 9% in contrast to 25% to 27% in Jordan. Corresponding rates for females in the US are 23% to 30% compared to 17% to 22% among Arabs Bedousins in Israel and Palestine. In Nigeria, a study conducted in 1998 in Zaria from patients records, found that 16% of female patients seeking treatment for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) were children under the age of 5 years and another 6% were children between the age of six and 15 years (UNFPA, 2005). In Ghana 70% of mothers were interviewed in some villages and stated that they had counselled girls in premarital sexual relationship. Many of the older women interviewed felt that receiving gifts in exchange for sex was not regarded as child abuse or prostitution, but as evidence of a man's love.

In Kenya, the Nairobi Women's Hospital reported 43.5% of child abuse in 2009. The boys age was 10.0 years and about 20% of children were 5 years or below. 71.5% of the child sexual abuse (CSA) is perpetrated by people known to the victims. Intra-family child sexual abuse (incest) was highest among one of assaults committed against boys reduced with age of the child, and majority of children are abused by people they had trusted. A unique feature of a child prostitution, which has been noted in Kenya, is the communal living of child prostitution. Such communal premises are used for sexual purpose; otherwise the perpetrators usually take the children to their secluded places such as boarding and lodging houses, while sexual exploitation of children continue unabated. Its consequences on the affected children cannot be gainsaid. Besides suffering physical injuries, the psychological trauma inflicted on the children can affect them for a long time. It also

leads to poor performance in school and eventually dropping out of home to seek solace in the streets. The report by children's foundation institutionalized in 1999 states that, sexual abuse of children continues to rise even after 2 years of the enactment of the Sexual Offences Act. The report indicates that abuse of the children accounts for 73% of all reported cases. According to the report, 79% of girls between 13 and 15 and 21% of boys between 13 and 15 years in the same age blanket have been sexually abused. According to CRADLE programme manager Brian Wekesa, the most common forms of abuse include defilement, sodomy, incest, sexually assault, child phonograph, defilement of mentally impaired children and child sexual exploitation (Wekesa, 1999).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The fight against child defilement is a real challenge to everyone in the world. Defilement today undermines a child's right to health, since many children are exposed to life-threatening risks such as HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. This is so in light of the fact that most of the children exposed to child sexual assault (CSA) are from poor families. Children who live in extreme poverty are often those who experience violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination, and are frequently denied such essential services as health care and education.

Kenya's existing legal framework (Sexual Offence Act 2006) criminalizes child defilement and the same is further reinforced by local and international child right groups and the churches. In spite of the existing legal framework and the pressure groups, child defilement continues unabated in many areas in Kenya. Before the study was conducted, unreliable data had suggested that there was an increase in child sexual abuse in the Thika Sub-county. However, systematic information on the actual magnitude, cause, effects and ways to curb child defilement in the Subcounty was not clearly documented and shared by any actor. This study therefore sought to establish the prevalence of child defilement and suffering by boys and girls in Thika Sub-county.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW 2.1 Sexual Exploitation

The problem of sexual exploitation of children has increasingly become a major concern globally. In 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development was held in Cairo and focused on adolescents' sexual and reproductive health as part of public health. The HIV/AIDS pandemic was central to its agenda as young people in particular suffer from the ongoing spread epidemic. It is reported that majority of adults who are infected may have contracted the virus at between age 12 and 18 years. It is also clear that HIV/AIDS pandemic is both a cause and consequence of sexual abuse of children (UNICEF – ERESARO AND ANNPCAN, 2001). The CRC which has been ratified by every country, except Somalia, provides the right of the child against sexual abuse. Article 34 emphasizes that the child should be protected from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation (UNICEF, 2001). Therefore, this study was intended to look for measures, or ways of preventing children from these cruel acts, by creating awareness to the relevant people.

This effort has been a challenge to many countries and especially how to translate this commitment into action. The constraint experienced includes cultural practices that condone sexual abuse of children. In some communities, the definition of a child does not necessary agree with the legal provisions, due to the fact that sex is a taboo, many cases of sexual abuse of children go unreported for fear of stigmatization (UNICEF, 2001). Child sexual abuse can take place in various places like within the school by peers, at home by a parent, outside home by a neighbor, by a caregiver, teacher or a stranger. Children who experience sexual abuse encounter distress feelings, thoughts, low self-esteem and some victims become child abusers or prostitutes among other repercussions (La Fontain, 1992)

2.2 Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending

This study was informed by the Integrated Theory of Sexual Offending (ITSO) or Precondition theory by Finkelhor (1984) on child sexual abuse. Finkelhor (1984), proposed a four-factor model of the preconditions to child sexual abuse. This organizational framework addresses the full complexity of child sexual abusers, from the motivation to offend (etiology of offending behaviour) to the rationalization of this behaviour (maintenance of behaviour. The primary focus of Finkelhor's model is on the internal barriers, or "self-talk," comments and observations of sex offenders about the world around them. This self-talk allows offenders to break through barriers which had prevented them from acting out their feelings about perceptions of injustice, loneliness and other such stressors. Once these barriers are diminished, this mistaken thinking can lead to actions, which are the result of normal internal barriers being absent.

Finkelhor (1984) suggests that four underlying factors have typically been used to explain the occurrence of child sexual abuse. These theories are based on the following claims: emotional congruence which means that sex with children is emotionally satisfying to the offender; sexual arousal posits that men who offend are sexually aroused by a child; blockage explains that men have sex with children because they are unable to meet their sexual needs in socially appropriate ways; and finally, dis-inhibition claims that these men become disinherited and behave in ways contrary to their normal behaviour. He suggests that the first three factors explain why some individuals develop sexual interest in children and the fourth why this interest manifests as sexual deviance.

In Finkelhor's theory, these four factors are grouped into four preconditions that must be satisfied before the sexual abuse of a child occurs. The first precondition suggests that the offender must be motivated to sexually abuse a child, and encompasses three of the four factors (i.e., emotional congruence, sexual arousal, and blockage). The second precondition involves overcoming internal inhibitions (e.g., alcohol, impulse disorder, senility, psychosis, severe stress, socially entrenched patriarchal attitudes, or social tolerance of sexual interest in children), and is related to the dis-inhibition factor. The third precondition involves overcoming external inhibitions, or conditions that increase the possibility of offending (e.g., maternal absence or illness, lack of maternal closeness, social isolation of family, lack of parental supervision, unusual sleeping conditions, or paternal domination or abuse towards mother).

The final precondition suggests that the offender must overcome a child's resistance to the abuse (e.g., giving gifts, desensitizing a child to sex, establishing emotional dependence, using threats or violence). These two remaining preconditions are associated with the how of the offense process and do not relate to the four causal factors. Finkelhor hypothesizes that these preconditions occur in a temporal sequence with each being necessary for the next to occur.

The four factors or motives in Finkelhor's theory can be subsumed within the three psychological systems outlined earlier: the motivation/emotional, perception and memory, and action selection and control systems. Emotional congruence and sexual arousal are motivational constructs and have affective aspects to them. In the ITSO they would both be incorporated within the motivation/emotional system. The constructs of blockage and disinhibition can be seen as reflecting faulty planning or self-regulation and can be viewed as parts of the action and control system. The preconditions of overcoming both external and a child's resistance can also be viewed as reflecting control strategies, and would also involve the retrieval of information from strategies from the perception and memory systems. This theory was considered because it expounds the factors that drive to child defilement, and thus acts as an opener to care givers, institutions, teachers and the society at large.

2.3 Strategies to Minimize Child Defilement

This depends on our ability to maintain co-ordinate comprehensive efforts especially the social knowledge in shaping attitudes, particularly towards child defilement (Portwood, 1998). Randolph and Gold (1994) in an evaluation of a specific teaching education program which sought to improve the knowledge and attitude towards child sexual abuse, found that it leads to positive attitudinal and belief change among teachers Rosien and Helmes (1993) posits that social context, responses, attitude and beliefs may hinder reporting of these acts. However, the study sought to come up with the strategies that may cover social context and the entire society, at large; regardless of culture or background of an individual. According to Fantuzzo and Stevenson (1997), teachers have regular contact with children over a prolonged period of time and play key role in children's lives as they are in a position to recognize and respond to suspected or disclosed cases of child defilement

2.4 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual frame work is a concise description accompanied by a graphic or visual depiction of the major concept of the study and the hypothesized relationships and linkages among them.

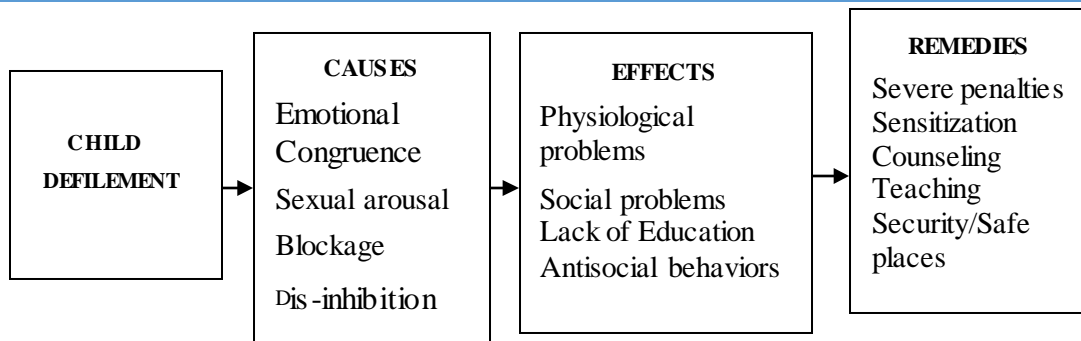


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Source: (Researcher, 2013)

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive design to establish the prevalence of child defilement and suffering by boys and girls in Thika Sub-county. The target population of this study was school going children below 18 years old in selected public primary school of Thika Sub-county. Purposive sampling was used to get a sample of 190, being 30% of the target population of 630 pupils in Thika Sub-county this was in line with Babbie (1990) who suggested purposive sampling as a type of non-probability sampling in which units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher's own expert judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative. Two research instruments were considered in collecting the data. These were questionnaire and interviews schedule. The questionnaire was developed based on the objectives of the study to the children, Principals of schools, Police officers children's desk, and Medical Doctors. The pilot study was carried out in the study sites, that is the six purposively selected public primary schools in Thika sub County of Kiambu County: Kenyatta Primary, Garissa Road, Mugumoini, Joytown, Kimuchu, and Athena. The research instruments were validated through application of content validity procedures. The researcher questionnaires were administered to the key informants who were: the six (6) principals, two (2) Medical doctors, two (2) law enforcers and 190 pupils. The key informants were also interviewed individually in in-depth interviews. Quantitative data was obtained from pre-coded questions while qualitative data was obtained from open-ended questions and interview schedule responses. Using the codes, data from pre-coded responses was directly keyed into the computer using the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) Both descriptive statistics and narrative reports were used to produce the analysis report presented in form of tables, graphs, and charts

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussions generated from respondents according to the study objective which sought to establish the prevalence of child defilement and suffering by boys

and girls in Thika. The chapter therefore established the prevalence of child defilement and suffering by boys and girls in Thika Sub County.

The views from children were collaborated by the Principals of schools, police officers in charge of children’s desk and medical officers who had handled cases of child defilements. The data was also cross referenced with similar studies done by other scholars globally, regionally, and nationally. The research finding was presented in graphs, tables, and figures as appropriate.

4.2 Respondents’ Profile

This represents the respondents profile in age, education, and sex in essence to know where child defilement lies most in terms of age, education and sex.

4.2.1 Response Rate

In total, 190 questionnaires were administered to the respondents who were pupils in selected primary schools in Thika Sub County. A total of 185 were completed, returned, compiled and analyzed. 5 were never returned. This response represents 97.3 % response rate. The Principals were drawn from six schools of Thika Municipality Primary schools, while two Medical Doctors were drawn from Thika Hospital Level 5 and Kiandutu Health center Level 3, and two Police in charge of children’s desk were drawn from Thika Sub County and Kiandutu slums children’s Desk. Interviews were administered to them and were all responded to.

4.2.2 Age of the Respondents

In a bid to establish the ages of the respondents, Table 1 presents the findings.

Table 1: Age of respondents

Age	Total Frequency	Boy’s Percent	Girl’s Percent	Total Percent
7-9	7	1.7	2.1	3.8
10-12	68	22.4	14.4	36.8
13-15	98	30.0	23.0	53.0
16-18	9	3.5	1.4	4.9
Total	182	-	-	100

As shown in Table 1, out of 185 respondents 1.7% were boys and 2.1% girls were between 7-9 years, 22.4% boys and 14.4% girls were between 10-12 years, 30.0% boys and 23.0 girls were between 13-15 years, and 3.5% boys and 1.4% girls were between 16-18 years, 2% both boys and girls were non participants / non-committal they did not reveal their sex. Mugenda and Mugenda (2012) highlight this.

Table 2: Age of the respondents on first defilement Age

0-5 6-10 11-15 16-18 Missing Total

Total frequency	16	67	48	3	51	185
Girl's percentage	5.2	24.8	16.5	0.7	-	- Boy's
percentage	3.4	11.4	9.4	0.9	-	-
Percent	8.6	36.2	25.9	1.6	27.6	100

The ages of the respondents in this study were children below eighteen years (18) and the finding portray that majority of children were sexually abused when they were between 6-10 years because out of 185, 36.2% were sexually abused at this age. This is supported by UNICEF_ERESARO AND ANNPCAN (2001), and KCLAW (2006) report that children are sexually abuse at an early age.

4.2.3 Sex Analysis

In order to ensure that the responses represented both sex, the questionnaires were issued to both sexes. In response, Figure 2 presents the findings.

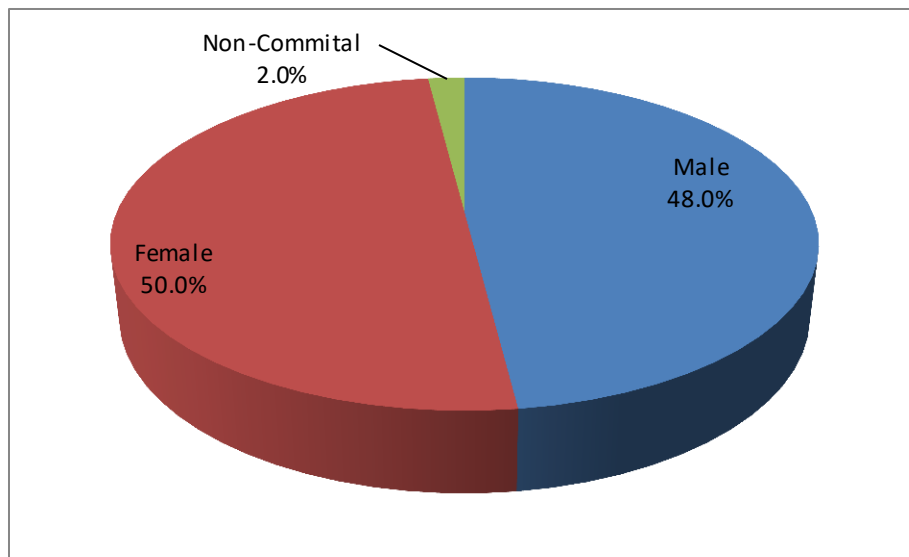


Figure 2: Distribution of Pupils by Sex.

As shown in figure, 48.0% were boys and 50.0% were girls, and therefore participants were almost equal in number, 2% were non participant. Mugenda and Mugenda, (2012), highlight this. This ensured that the responses obtained represented the views of both genders proportionately. The findings also showed that gender is not spared because, both boys and girls are equally sexually abused for both gender reported cases of sexual abuse. Out of 185 respondents' boys reported that 10.3% were sodomized besides touching of their sexual organs and compelling them to prostitution.

4.2.4 Level of Education

The study sought to establish the level of education of the respondents in order to establish whether awareness levels among the children can contribute to the reduction of child defilement.

Figure 3 below shows the respondents according to the level of education.

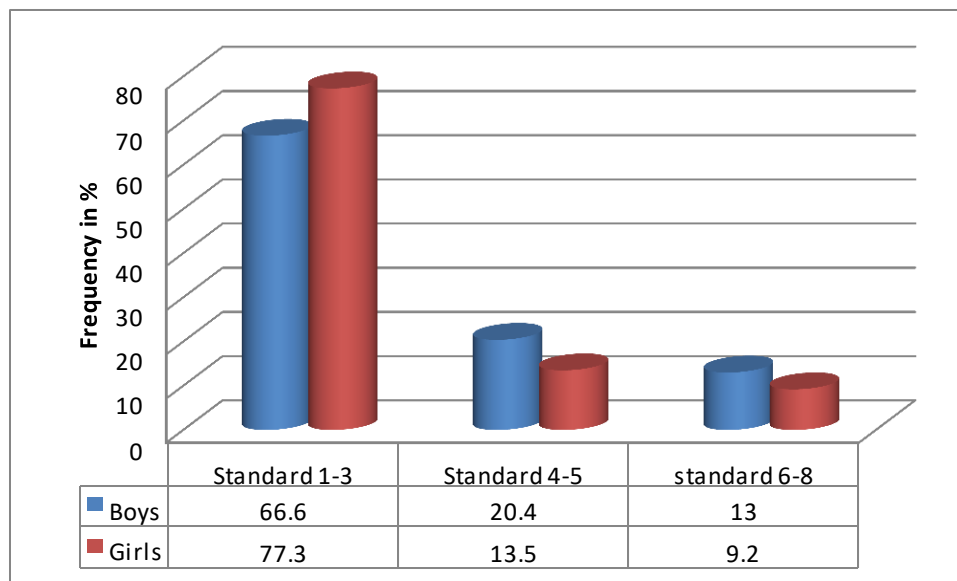


Figure 3: Respondents’ Level of Education

All children in the study were school going children and still at school. Figure 3 shows the respondents according to the level of Education. From this study, 77.3% of the girls were in class 6-8, 13.5% were in class 4-5 and 7.0% were in class 1-3. On the other hand, 66.6% of the boys were in standard one to three, 20.4% in standard 4-5 and 13.0% in standard 6-8. According to Collins (1992) this is the period most teens experiences sexual interactions and they are prone to it if not well handled.

4.3 Prevalence of Child Defilement and Suffering

The study findings showed that 18% boys and 23.6% girls were victims of sexual abuse. This high prevalence suggests that child abuse is rampant in Thika sub County. The prevalence corresponds with the UNICEF report,(2000) that there is wide spread of sexual abuse of children in central Provence. There were 2-3 cases reported in a month at the police station meaning very few cases are reported compared to police report from the findings, who said that they receive at least one case in a week. On the other hand the Doctors in the hospitals reported that they receive eight cases in every week and the most affected gender was girls. It was reported with great concern that only 40% received medical treatment and 38% did not. This suggests that almost half of the cases are neither reported nor treated. Rosien and Helmes, (1993) emphasize this.

4.3.1 Concept of Sex

In a bid to establish the prevalence of child defilement, the study asked the respondent to assess whether they understood the concept of the term sex. In response Table 3 presents the findings.

Table 3: Concept of the Term Sex

Statement	Total Frequency	Boy's Percent	Girl's Percent	Total Percent
It is sexual intercourse	127	25.2	50.8	76.0
It is female and male	20	4.8	7.1	11.9
It is evil	20	2.3	9.6	11.9
Total	185	32.3	67.5	100.0

As shown in Table 3, majority of respondents 25.2% boys and 50.8% girls considered the term sex to be sexual intercourse whereas others 4.8% boys and 7.1 girls believed it to be female and male, while 2.3 % boys and 9.6 % girls said that it is evil. Through qualitative analysis, it was noted with concern that there was a lot of euphemistic language when dealing with defilement among children. Some of the terms they used to refer to it clearly show that it is shrouded with mystery. Some of the words used were *kawama* a kikuyu word meaning a small magic, *tabia baya* a Kiswahili word which implies bad manners, *kufanya mapenzi*, a Kiswahili word which means to make love. These terminologies reflects that children do not understand the concept of sex and thus the abusers takes advantage to defile the children since they do not comprehend what happens to them.

On the other hand, in an effort to gauge the children's level of understanding of the concept sex, it clearly emerged that most of the children 76% equated the term sex to sexual intercourse. There was a lot of misinformation and myths among children pertaining sex. In the Oxford Dictionary the term sex implies sexual intercourse. With education children have started to recognize some of the salient forms of child abuse that had not been recognized.

4.3.2 Experience in Sexual Abuse

In a bid to establish the experience by the children the study posed questions that elicited the following responses as presented as in Figure 4

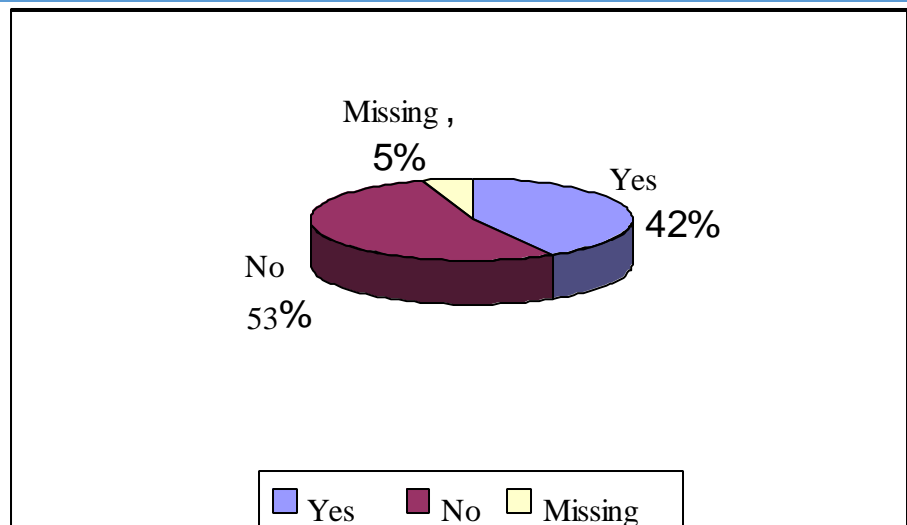


Figure 4: Experience in Sexual Abuse

In the figure 4 the study dealt with those who have ever experienced sexual abuse. The study revealed that 41.6% said yes, that is 18% boys and 23.6% girls, while 53.5% said no that is 33.1% boys and 20.4% girls and 5% both sex were non response bias. Mugenda and Mugenda, (2012) emphasize this. The study shows that majority of those who participated were victims of sexual abuse, and both boys and girls were involved. This finding shows that boys as much as girls are victims of sexual abuse.

The study further revealed that unwanted touching remained the most common form of sexual violence, followed by attempted, pressurized and physical forced sex. According to the study survey prior to age 15, one in three girls 32 % and one in five boys 18 % experienced sexual abuse.

Table 4: Perpetrators of sexual abuse

	Family member	Guardian	Peer	Neighbor	Teacher	Missing	Total
Pupil frequency	35	23	41	31	6	44	185
Girl's Percent	12.6	6.2	15.3	15.5	2.8	52.4	
Boy's Percent	6.3	6.2	6.9	1.3	0.4	21.1	
Total Percentage	18.9	12.4	22.2	16.8	3.2	23.8	100.0

The study further revealed that the perpetrators of sexual abuse against children are people close to them. It was interesting to note that sexual abuse against girls was most commonly committed by their romantic partners, neighbours or friends while strangers accounted for one in five instances of sexual violence against girls aged 12 to 15 years. The study concludes that these experiences were likely to influence the victim's sexual behaviour as adults and their attitudes towards their spouses and children. The prevalence therefore corresponds with the UNICEF report, 2001 that there is widespread of sexual abuse of children in Central Province.

In addition to that, KCLAW (2006) report states that due to rampant of CSA a series of workshops were carried out in Thika District, as a result of looking forward the strategies of curbing child defilement.

The study further interviewed staff from Thika District Hospital staffs, Police officers, so as to put hands together to cease CSA. Findings from the police station showed that there are at least 2-3 cases reported in a month regarding child sexual abuse, meaning very few cases are reported compared to the Police reports from the findings who said that they receive at least one case in a week. On the other hand the doctors in the hospitals reported to have received eight cases in every week and the most affected gender were girls. It was noted with great concern that only 40.0% of child abuse victims received medical treatment and 38.9% did not. This suggests that almost half of the cases are neither reported nor treated.

The researcher interviewed a class six boy from Athena Primary, the reason why he never reported. The boy was chosen because the researcher wanted to obtain a detailed information using in-depth interview, and the response was; OI class six boy *"because of fear of being labelled homosexual. The assault made me to developed intense fears that, the abuse occurred because the perpetrator probably perceived something homosexual in my bearing or may be considered me as a coward ,less masculinity, which led me to be picked out"*. *The act prompted me to question why the abuse happened to me. I felt that he must have flawed to select me for abuse. Somehow my behaviour or characteristics signalled that I was less masculine, more vulnerable, and in adequate"*. *The force and threats of violence that was initiated to me, made me not to report, and preferred sexual assault perpetrated by a woman who is culturally condoned and one may feel lucky rather than victimized. It's quite inhuman!"* Rosien and Helmes (1993) put across that social context, responses, attitude, and beliefs prompts reporting of these acts.

The above information simply demonstrates that cases of child abuse are plenty in Kenya. This is supported by many cases appearing in local dailies where cases of child sexual assault, appear almost on daily basis.

5.0 SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS 5.1 Summary of Findings

The study findings showed that 18% boys and 23.6% girls were victims of sexual abuse. This high prevalence suggests that child abuse is rampant in Thika sub County. The prevalence corresponds with the UNICEF report, (2000) that, there is wide spread of sexual abuse of children in central Province. There were 2-3 cases reported in a month at the police station meaning very few cases are reported compared to police report from the findings, who said that they receive at least one

case in a week. On the other hand the Doctors in the hospitals reported that they receive eight cases in every week and the most affected gender was girls.

The researcher found that both gender are not spared when it comes to child sexual abuse, because the number was almost equal. The boys and girls who are mostly sexually abused were in the age bracket between 13-15 years. The researcher found that the children who are being left alone at homes, or alone on their way home from school, are mostly culprit of sexual abuse. From the findings, most of the children are sexually abused along the streets. Among the specific objectives one was to identify courses of child defilement in Thika sub County of Kiambu County. It was also noted that, child defilement can be as a result of being enticed with gifts for sex, while others encounter it as a result of being forced as per the result findings

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that, the Kenya police force should be facilitated and motivated as they do their work. This should be in-form of logistical support so that they can easily follow up defilement cases since they would have got transport to go on the ground where the offence would have been committed, hence getting first-hand information and evidence to back up the cases. There is need for more and massive sensitization by police to the public that defilement is a crime, and fight against corruption in police for better results. In addition, since most victims of defilement are girls, then programs geared to girl child defilement should be predominantly on them and they should be engaged in counselling, sensitization, safety and protection of their lives. They should know their rights, should empower them and what they should do in case of a potential abuser. Girls should not accept male gifts and should avoid being with male visitors, friends whether relatives, or strangers. Girls should learn to report the offenders earlier to their parents/guardians, whether defiled or signs of committing the act/ crime so that it can be stopped before it is committed.

5.3 Conclusions

The findings presented in this study confirm that sexual abuse meted against school children exists. The study results were gathered within Thika Municipality. Though the study did not set out to draw any direct correlations, the fact that the sexual safety of both boys and girls is not guaranteed, can be a contributory factor, of reported child defilement. Efforts to address threatened sexual safety of school children must therefore take cognizance of the contextual situations. In this regard prevention efforts against child sexual abuse still need enhancement given that a strategy favors primary preventive methods. School based curriculum approaches therefore need a re-evaluation if they are to offer sexual safety education to school age children

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