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TYPES OF DEFILEMENT SUFFERED BY BOYS AND GIRLS IN THIKA SUB-COUNTY

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Abstract

Purpose: The study aimed at identifying the types of defilement suffered by boys and girls in Thika Sub-county.

Methods: This study adopted a descriptive design to identify the types of defilement suffered 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 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 result also identified that identified that some subjects have been defiled, sodomized, touching of sexual organs (obscene), and others had been compelled to prostitution and incest. The age that was most vulnerable was between 6-10 years and the perpetrators are family members at 23.4%, peers 22.2%, neighbors 16.8% and house helps 6.5%.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: The study recommended Children's courts should be encouraged and set up at the lowest County levels. Courts of law should pronounce and give strong punishments to child defilers than giving simple punishments, and all courts should be able to handle defilement cases. Further the result recommended that Members of parliament should enhance Sexual offences laws that are strong and which are applicable to children as well that is should be amended for example defilement law, children's rights

Keywords: *Defilement, suffered, boys and girls, Thika sub county*

1.0 INTRODUCTION 1.1 Background of the Study

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 pedophiles. 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 r 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.

It is estimated that globally, 150 million girls and 73 million boys under the age of 18 years 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).

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).

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% (Frinkelhor *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 Bedouins 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 bracket 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).

These cases of child sexual abuse are very rampant. For instance, in April 2006 there were forty six reported cases of child sexual abuse. Thika District Hospital is the only Hospital, which has rape counselling centre in the whole of Thika District. It was reported that twenty two of the sexually abused children, were under eighteen 18 years and twenty four (24) were under twelve (12) years. According to KCLAW (2006) report, at least one case of child sexual abuse was reported every other day at the Thika Police Station. Due to the rampant increase of child sexual abuse, KCLAW carried out series of workshops tackling the topic of "child sexual abuse" in Thika town for three days. The stakeholders were school teachers, social workers, staff from NGOs,

Thika District hospital staff, the police, the District children officer and the Municipal council of Thika officials.

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 identify the types of defilement suffered 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 necessarily 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 neighbour, 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 Types of defilement

A study conducted in Malawi reflected that child defilement includes incest, that is sex exploitation between blood relatives or surrogate relatives before victims reach the age of 18 years. (Make, 1998; Ratter, 1998). Commercial sex exploitation of children (CSEC) is another type of child defilement and exists in many forms. The most common is child prostitution for example using a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other considerations (ECPAT, 2001). A study on sexual behaviour of adolescent along the Trans-Africa Highway in Kenya found out that 78% of girls exchange sex for gifts, or money and 59% of boys reported usually giving gifts or money for sex (Nzyuko *et al.*, 1997).

Besides these types of child defilement, there is a feeling that the following can be as well be classified as types of sexual assaults but they are hardly considered. Examples include: behavior involving penetration in the vaginal, oral sex, prolonged kissing, cuddling, French kissing, excessive touching, looking at children either with or without cloths with the intent to be sexually aroused, touching, folding or kissing a child's genital, making a child fold an adult's genitals, forcing a child to undress, spying on a child in the bathroom or bedroom, expressing the children to adult sexuality, performing sexual acts in front of a child exposing genitals, exposing one's nudity for the sexual gratification of the adult. Others include telling „dirty“ stories, videotaping, or filming of children with the intent to create sexual stimulation, exploitation, exposing a child for sexual purposes on the internet; selling a child's services as a prostitute; having a child perform in pornography, exchanging or purchasing child pornography (Angelis,1997).

Child marriage is another form of child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Kenya. This is most common among the pastoral communities. HIV/AIDs pandemic has as well contributed to early marriages due to orphaned children (Cohen, 1987). The infected HIV victims are as well contributed by an assumption that if they defile the young children they will be cured (UNICEFESARO AND ANPPCAN, 2001).

Drug abuse is another cause that leads to child defilement and especially in slam areas where drug abuse is rampant, and centers of the supply. Drugs influence the abuser to forget reality and thus commit these acts. (Study conducted by African cinema and culture COLTD). This study however was intended to assist overcoming some of these beliefs associated to slum areas by creating awareness, and expressing that child defilement can happen anywhere else.

2.3 Intergrated theory of sexual offending

Theoretical is over-arching theory that guides the researcher's study. A theory is an established and coherent explanation of specific phenomenon and includes the major concepts and the universal laws and relationships that inter-relate these concepts together.

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 behavior) 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 dis-inhibition can be seen as reflecting faulty planning or self-regulation and can be viewed as parts of the action and control system. The pre-conditions 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

2.4 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

2.5 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.

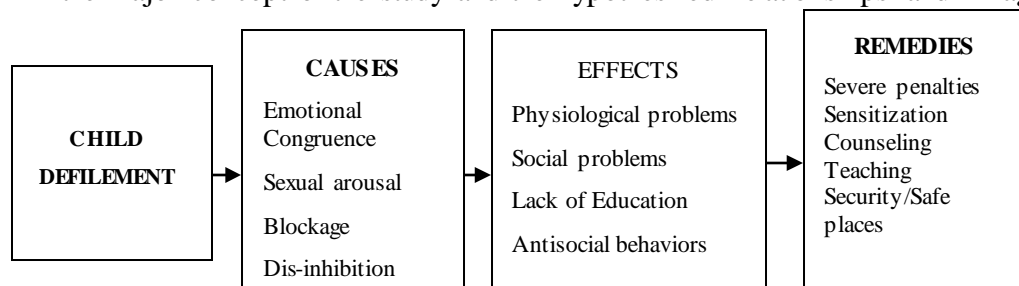


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework *Source:*
(Researcher, 2013)

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 questionnaire 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 objectives which sought to establish the types of child defilement children experience and gave suggestions/recommendations to be taken to minimize chances of child defilement based on research objectives.

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 & Mugenda (2012) highlights 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.

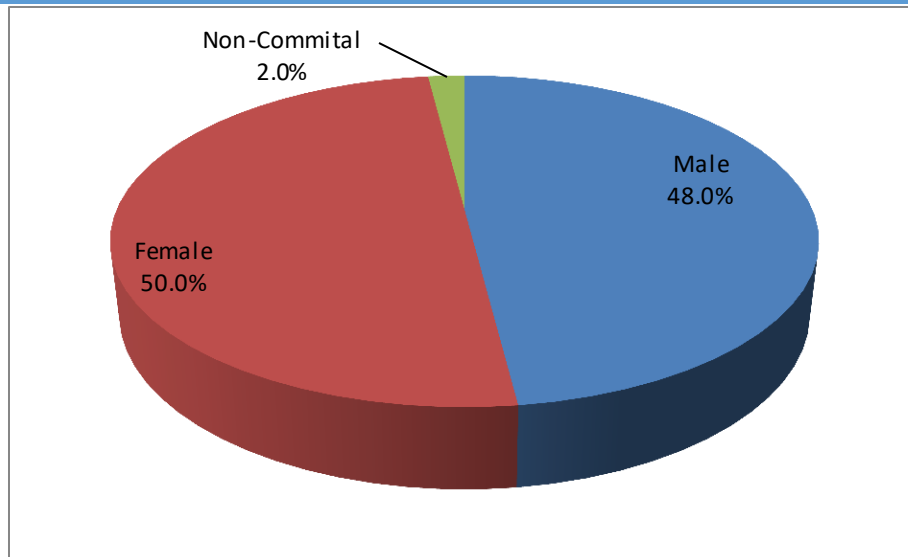


Figure 2: Distribution of Pupils by Sex.

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.

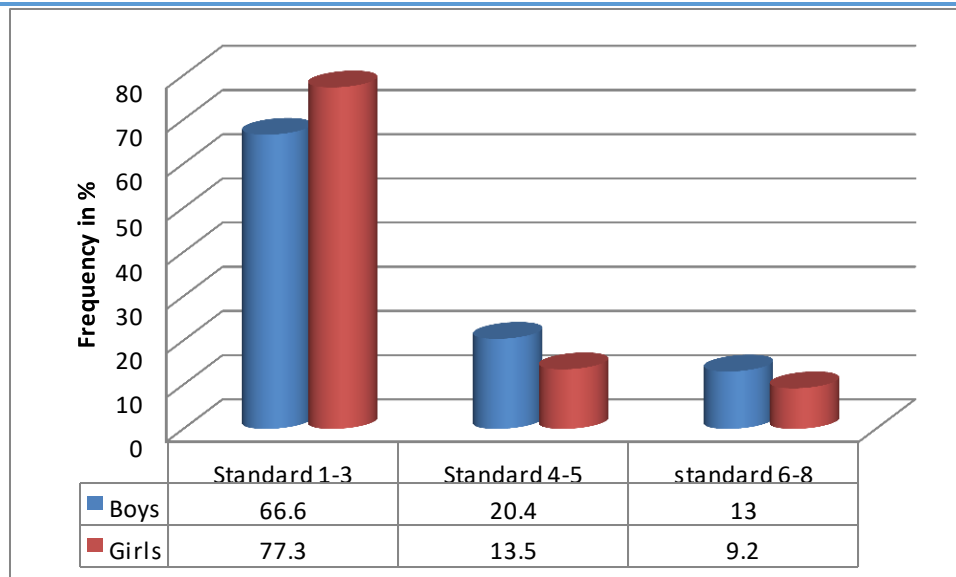


Figure 3: Respondents' Level of Education

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 Types of Defilement Table 3: Types of Sexual Abuse

Category	Incest	Sodomy	Touching Sexual organ	Compelling To prostitution	Total
Total Frequency	15	19	81	28	143
Girl's percent	4.6	1.6	32.9	13.8	52.9
Boy's Percent	3.4	8.7	10.9	1.3	24.3
Total Percent	8	10.3	43.8	15.1	100

The researcher tried to find out the types of defilement encountered by children and the below information was given by the respondents;

The table 3 above shows that those who experienced incest were 3.4% boys and 4.6% girls. Those who experienced Sodomy were 8.7% boys and 1.6% girls. The other sexual abuse was obscene (touching of sexual organs) at 10.9% for boys and 33.9% for girls. Compelling to prostitution had the least percentage at 1.3 % for boys and 13.8% for girls. From the findings the most common sexual abuse was touching of sexual organs, followed by compelling to prostitution. Angira (2012) quoting from the law of Kenya analyses three categories of sexual offences: Rape as intentional and unlawful sexual intercourse, with another person who has not consented or through force. For defilement it is sexual act committed against a child, and incest is when a male or female person has sex with a person of the same blood relation.

Besides the above said the researcher through oral interview gathered this information from a class six pupil: *O.I from a class six pupil Athena primary. "some boys are very manner less when you are standing and not aware, they put a mirror on the ground so as to see your inner pant hence start laughing at you, but when we report them to the teacher, they are beaten up thoroughly"*. This implies that the children's minds need to be occupied with a lot of activities in order to divert their mind from immoralities more so suppress curiosity in them that does not help them.

Defilement was reported as the most common form of sexual abuse among the selected primary schools with 43.4% having been defiled. This did not correspond with the police report because most of these cases are not reported instead they are settled privately due to stigma associated to the act of defilement by the society, as per the police report children's desk. This concedes with Rosien and Helmes (1993) report, that social context responses, attitudes and beliefs may hinder reporting of these acts.

The victims were none other than peers at 22.2% and individuals with blood relation 23.4% this findings agrees with Mwaka (1995) who found out that individuals known to the children were mostly the perpetrators of sexual abuse. Further the study shows that boys were abused by male or female individuals. This result suggests that boys are in danger because they are vulnerable to both homosexual and heterosexual abuses thus stand a high risk of contracting STDs. Girls reported to have experienced unwanted sexual touches at 36.6%. In addition, through oral interview some girls reported that some boys put mirrors under them in order to see their inner pants, while others grab their breasts when playing in the field. At home, the house helps observe them when they are naked pretending to examine some health problems.

The Principal's, reports coincided with the children's report that children suffer from incest and touching of sexual organs. However, all the genders experienced sexual abuse and it was mainly perpetrated by peers, uncles, brothers, neighbours, house boys and girls. This has been reflected by Make (1998) and Ratter (1998) that child sexual exploitation is done by individuals well known by the children, and those who are close to them (those who can be trusted to care for them).

5.0 SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The objective was to identify the types of defilement suffered by boys and girls in Thika District and it was identified that some subjects have been defiled, sodomized, touching of sexual organs (obscene) and others had been compelled to prostitution and incest. The age that was most vulnerable was between 6-10 years and the perpetrators are family members at 23.4%, peers 22.2%, neighbours 16.8% and house helps 6.5%.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that, Children's courts should be encouraged and set up at the lowest County levels. Courts of law should pronounce and give strong punishments to child defilers than giving simple punishments, and all courts should be able to handle defilement cases. In addition members of parliament should enhance Sexual offences laws that are strong and which are applicable to children as well that is should be amended for example defilement law, children's rights. Even if new laws come up, still implementation of issues remain a challenge and a weakness hence more emphasis should be put on the implementation and enforcement process. In addition the justice and judicial systems in the country should be strengthened in order to ensure that the victims and the perpetrators are dealt with whenever defilement cases arose. This will help to eliminate instances where the perpetrators escape the justice system through corruption or loopholes in the regulations.

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. The effect of sexual abuse on the personal development of the victims is adverse. For girls who may get pregnant, it almost spells an end to their formal education acquisition. However, the perpetrators seem to get off very lightly. The analysis of the causal factors shows that it is rooted in the economic and sociocultural contexts. The study advocates for scrutiny of the causal factors in order to unearth the real problem. For example, while girls can be accused of consenting to sex, it is argued that "consensual" sex needs to be examined against demand from, for example parents who do not caution their girls to trade their bodies in exchange of commodities for family gain. 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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