



New Trends
in Psychology

A Survey of the Prevalence of Parentally Abused Children with Visual Impairment in Special Schools, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract: There is an increase at the rate at which children with visual impairment are being abused by their parent. The objective of the study is to examine why children with visual impairment were being abused by their parent and ascertain the level at which children with visual impairment were being abused by their parent. Survey research design was utilised in the study, with the use of 30 respondents including totally blind and low vision and the result was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The result shows that the reasons for abusing children with visual impairment by their parents include; parents seeing their children as useless in the family, being excluded from domestic work, source of embarrassment, shame, etc. The findings also reveal that, there is a high level of child's abuse by parents of children with visual impairment in the study. The study therefore recommends that, parents of children with visual impairment should be advised on how to relate with their child s with visual impairment.

Keywords: Visual Impairment; Children; Parentally Abused Children; Special Schools

Introduction

Child abuse among parents has for a long time been recorded in literature, art and science in many parts of the world. Reports of infanticide, mutilation, abandonment and other forms of violence against children date back to ancient civilizations (Ten Bensele, Rheinberger & Radbill, 1997). It is not a new phenomenon in the family life history. As we have it among parents who are elite so it is among the non elite parents. As we have children who are normal being abused by their parents, so it is among children who are disabled. Child s abuse may arise as a result of transfer

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aggression between both parents to their offspring's. Child s abuse may occur as a result of the fact that, a child exhibit unwanted traits or displaying some attitude that are not pleasant to his or her parent. Children who are disabled can also faced series of abuse from their parent.

Problems in parental involvement may arise if parents deny that a problem exists, or overprotect their children with visual impairment (that is do not allow the child to achieve independence appropriate to their age). Denial closes off parents from positive suggestions, and may interfere with intervention strategies. Over protectiveness insulates children with visual impairment from the very world the child needs to discover on their own. There is no clear method of helping parents to resolve these problems.

It is important to the visually impaired child to feel "accepted" within the family. Being treated "like the other kids" can help build this feeling of security. Nurturing parents, regardless of socioeconomic status, are good for all children, but crucial to visually impaired children. Pride in the child's achievements, no matter how small, and praise for effort, can build a sense of accomplishment: "I did it myself!" thereby enhances their psychological adjustment (Cohen, 2007). Parental involvement is a vital ingredient for the success or failure of children with visual impairment in their optimum development. The attitude of parents can have a profound effect on the psychological and social adjustment of children with visual impairment. It makes a great difference to these children whether the attitude and actions of parents reflect on considerations for their real needs or are merely prompted by pity or monetary limitations. Since the parent's involvement is important, it is essential that the home and school work together, especially for children with disabilities. The Warnock (2005) stresses the importance of parents being partners in the education of their children

It has been discovered that majority of adolescents with visual impairment are confronted with many difficulties due to some losses associated to blindness which include, loss of obscurity, self esteem, total personality organization, financial security, personal independence and social adequacy, when it comes to the process of adjusting to their disabling condition. This occurs as a result of negative attitude of some parent towards their children with visual impairment. The arrival of a new born baby into a family brings joy and happiness but when such a child is having one handicapping condition such feel depressed, frustrated and not knowing what to do to help the child and the parent feel unconcern especially the father, thereby

shifting blames of their disabled child to each other thereby leading to rejection, anxiety, and trying to harbor the child which eventually leads to isolation and place such child into a disadvantage level (Abodunrin, 2016).

According to Hosim (2007), physical abuse involves physical aggression directed at a child by an adult. Most nations with child abuse laws consider the deliberate infliction of serious injury or death, to be illegal (Ross, 2006). On the other hand, Fontana (2004) says that bruises, scratches, burns, broken bones, lacerations, as well as repeated “mishaps,” and rough treatment that could cause physical injury, can be physical abuse. Multiple injuries or fractures at different stages of healing can raise suspicion of abuse (Wolfe, 2011). Physical abuse can come in many forms, although as Hoyano and Keenan (2007) posit, the distinction between child discipline and abuse is often poorly defined. However, the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations has stated that the prohibition of degrading treatment or punishment extends to corporal punishment (Ross, 2006).

Child abuse or child maltreatment is physical, sexual, or psychological maltreatment or neglect of a child or children, especially by a parent or other caregivers. It may include any act or failure to act by a parent or other caregivers that results in actual or potential harm to a child, and can occur in a child`s home, or in the organization ,schools or communities the child interact, the terms child abuse and child maltreatment are often used interchangeably, but some researchers make a distinction between them ,treating child maltreatment as an umbrella term to cover neglect, exploitation and trafficking (Abamara, 2016)

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to:

1. Reasons why children with visual impairment were being abused by their parent
2. Ascertain the level at which children with viwual impairment were being abused by their parent.

Research Questions

The following research questions serves as guide for this study:

1. What is the reason for abusing children with visual impairment by their parent?
2. What is the level of child`s abuse by parents of children with visual impairment?

Methodology

Survey research design was utilised in the study. The population for the study contains all children with visual impairment in Osun state with the sample size of 30 respondents who were purposively selected from target population in special schools in Osun state. The data were collected with the use of self made questionnaire which enables the researcher to have comprehensive information on parentally abuse children with visual impairment in the state under coverage. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the reason for abusing children with visual impairment by their

Parent?

Table 1. Reasons for Abusing Children with Visual Impairment by their Parents

S/N	STATEMENT	SD	D	U	A	SA	\bar{x}	S.D
1	I was abused because my parent sees me as a useless child in the family	1 3.3%	2 6.7%	2 6.7%	15 50.0%	10 33.3%	4.03	0.999
2	My parent excluded me from domestic work	2 6.7%	3 10.0%	-	15 50.0%	10 33.3%	3.93	1.172
3	My parent abused me because they felt that I did not have anything to be proud of	1 3.3%	4 13.3%	2 6.7%	13 43.3%	10 33.3%	3.90	1.125
4	My parent are ashamed of letting people know about my condition	3 10.0%	5 16.7%	-	12 40.0%	10 33.3%	3.70	1.368
5	I have little access to things at home due to my parent s directive	6 20.0%	4 13.3%	1 3.3%	10 33.3%	9 30.0%	3.40	1.545

6	I enjoyed equal right with my sighted siblings.	7 23.3%	5 16.7%	1 3.3%	9 30.0%	8 26.7%	3.20	1.584
7	I was allowed to partake in domestic work like my sighted counterpart at home.	5 16.7%	10 33.3%	3 10.0%	7 23.3%	5 16.7%	2.90	1.398
8	My siblings avoid me in everything they are doing.	11 36.7%	9 30.0%	4 13.3%	4 13.3%	2 6.7%	2.23	1.278
9	I was being denied of right to life at home.	12 40.0%	10 33.3%	1 3.3%	4 13.3%	3 10.0%	2.20	1.375
10	My parent pushed me at one corner of the house due to my disability	11 36.7%	13 43.3%	-	3 10.0%	3 10.0%	2.13	1.306
Weighted Mean = 3.16								

Table 1 shows the perception of the respondents on the reason for abusing children with visual impairment by their parents". I was abused because my parent sees me as a useless child in the family" (\bar{x} =4.03), was ranked highest by the mean score rating as the main reason for abusing children with visual impairment by their parents, and was followed by "My parent excluded me from domestic work" (\bar{x} =3.93), "My parent abused me because they felt that I did not have anything to be proud of" (\bar{x} =3.90), "My parent are ashamed of letting people know about my condition" (\bar{x} =3.70), "I have little access to things at home due to my parent s directive" (\bar{x} =3.40), "I enjoyed equal right with my sighted siblings" (\bar{x} =3.20), "I was allowed to partake in domestic work like my sighted counterpart at home" (\bar{x} =2.90), "My siblings avoid me in everything they are doing" (\bar{x} =2.23), "I was being denied of right to life at home" (\bar{x} =2.20), and lastly by "My parent pushed me at one corner of the house due to my disability" (\bar{x} =2.13) respectively.

Inference to be deduced from the above expression is that reasons for abusing children with visual impairment by their parents include; parents seeing their children as useless in the family, being excluded from domestic work, source of embarrassment, shame, etc.

Research question two: What is the level of child's abuse by parents of children with visual impairment?

Table 2. Level of Child's Abuse by Parents of Children with Visual Impairment

S/N	STATEMENT	SD	D	U	A	SA	\bar{x}	S.D
1	I was left alone most of the time at home	1 3.3%	1 3.3%	2 6.7%	14 46.7%	12 40.0%	4.17	0.950
2	My parent does not allow me to stay with them when my opinions are different from theirs.	2 6.7%	2 6.7%	1 3.3%	11 36.7%	14 46.7%	4.10	1.185
3	My parents do not talk with me when I asked them many questions regarding anything.	-	4 13.3%	3 10.0%	11 36.7%	12 40.0%	4.03	1.033
4	My parents are too strict when it comes to taking any disciplinary action against me.	4 13.3%	2 6.7%	-	10 33.3%	14 46.7%	3.93	1.413
5	My parent often criticizes my ideas.	2 6.7%	3 10.0%	3 10.0%	12 40.0%	10 33.3%	3.83	1.206
6	My parents do not allow me to use my initiative on any issue.	5 16.7%	1 3.3%	-	15 50.0%	9 30.0%	3.73	1.388
7	I feel that my parents are not supportive enough concerning my education.	5 16.7%	5 16.7%	2 6.7%	9 30.0%	9 30.0%	3.40	1.499
8	My parent are not happy when I failed to do my assignment	8 26.7%	5 16.7%	10 33.3%	4 13.3%	3 10.0%	2.63	1.299

9	My parent are often anxious when I am not happy	8 26.7%	12 40.0%	1 3.3%	5 16.7%	4 13.3%	2.50	1.408
10	My parents do not allow me to play with my peers.	10 33.3%	15 50.0%	1 3.3%	2 6.7%	2 6.7%	2.03	1.129
Weighted Mean =3.44								

Table 2 shows the perception of the respondents on the level of child's abuse by parents of children with visual impairment. "I was left alone most of the time at home" (\bar{x} =4.17) was ranked highest by the mean score rating and was followed by "My parent does not allow me to stay with them when my opinions are different from theirs" (\bar{x} =4.10), "My parents do not talk with me when I asked them many questions regarding anything" (\bar{x} =4.03), "My parents are too strict when it comes to taking any disciplinary action against me" (\bar{x} =3.93), "My parent often criticizes my ideas" (\bar{x} =3.83), "My parents do not allow me to use my initiative on any issue" (\bar{x} =3.73), "I feel that my parents are not supportive enough concerning my education" (\bar{x} =3.40), "My parents are not happy when I failed to do my assignment" (\bar{x} =2.63), "My parents are often anxious when I am not happy" (\bar{x} =2.50), and lastly by "My parents do not allow me to play with my peers" (\bar{x} =2.03) respectively.

Table 3. Test of Norm Showing the Level of Child's Abuse by Parents of Children with Visual Impairment

Interval	Mean index	Level of child abuse	Frequency	Percentage
1-25		Low	6	20.0
26-50	34.37	High	24	80.0

Table 3 shows the percentage level of child's abuse by parents of children with visual impairment. 20.0% (n=6) parents had low level of child's abuse, and 80.0% (n=24) had high level of child's abuse. Hence, there is a high level of child's abuse by parents of children with visual impairment in the study.

Discussion of Findings

The result shows that the reasons for abusing children with visual impairment by their parents include; parents seeing their children as useless in the family, being excluded from domestic work, source of embarrassment, shame, etc. This was so as a result of problems in parental involvement may arise if parents deny that a problem

exists, or overprotect their children with visual impairment (that is do not allow the child to achieve independence appropriate to their age). Denial closes off parents from positive suggestions, and may interfere with intervention strategies. Over protectiveness insulates children with visual impairment from the very world the child needs to discover on their own. There is no clear method of helping parents to resolve these problems.

The findings also reveal that, there is a high level of child's abuse by parents of children with visual impairment in the study. This was in line with the view of Abodunrin (2016) who was of the view that, it has been discovered that majority of adolescents with visual impairment are confronted with many difficulties due to some losses associated to blindness which include, loss of obscurity, self esteem, total personality organization, financial security, personal independence and social adequacy, when it comes to the process of adjusting to their disabling condition. This occurs as a result of negative attitude of some parent towards their children with visual impairment. The arrival of a new born baby into a family brings joy and happiness but when such a child is having one handicapping condition such feel depressed, frustrated and not knowing what to do to help the child and the parent feel unconcern especially the father, thereby shifting blames of their disabled child to each other thereby leading to rejection, anxiety, and trying to harbor the child which eventually leads to isolation and place such child into a disadvantage level.

Conclusion

The study established the fact that, children with visual impairment are facing a lots of abuse from their parents. This abuse ranges from isolation, overprotection, denial and a host of others. This child s abuse are often prevent children with visual impairment to live a life of satisfaction thereby making their visual challenges more complicating. The way people treat disabled persons with disability differs from family to family, community to community and country to country. It is related with the culture of the society. It is clear that many parents of children with disabilities pass through similar reactions and emotional responses to reach the stage of acceptance. But the time varies from parent to parent. For some parents years may pass, and for some it may take few months or days

Recommendation

The study therefore recommends that:

- Parents of children with visual impairment should be advised on how to relate with their child s with visual impairment. This will help in building up a good and robust parent/children relationship which will in turn help such child to see himself or herself as part of the society.
- It should be noted that, children with visual impairment are endowed with numerous potentialities that can be used to develop their society and if they were accepted by their parent, this trend will be extended to other society thereby helps children with visual impairment to build themselves as an agent of development in their various homes and wherever they finds themselves.

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