

**CHILD NEGLECT AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES ON
CHILDREN: A CASE STUDY OF ANPPCAN KAMPALA. UGANDA.**

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DECLARATION

I KEINEMBABAZI MIANAH hereby declare that this dissertation titled — Child neglect and its psychological consequences on children in African Network for The African Network for prevention Against Child Abuse and Neglect Uganda is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree or any other academic award in any university or institution of learning.

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APPROVAL

This research work has been submitted under my supervision and approval as a university supervisor

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Signature:.....

Date:.....13th MAY 2025

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

There has been a growing concern regarding the issue of child neglect . Committees, seminars, and conferences have been established by many groups and organizations worldwide to look into and recommend measures to end these horrible crimes and uphold the dignity and protection of children. Nonetheless, there is a steady rise in the number of abused children, especially in third-world nations, as well as a rise in the number of children who abandon their families to become homeless.

The global community under the United Nations has put into place the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which seeks to protect the rights of children all over the world on 20th of November, 1989. The UNCRC provides for four fundamental areas of children rights namely; survival, development, protection and participation. On a continental level, the African Union has put into effect the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) in July 1990. Kenya’ s ratification of UNCRC and ACRWC in the year 2000 signified that the nation was willing to observe and execute the provisions of these treaties. This was made possible through the Children’ s Act No. 8 of 2001, which incorporated the UNCRC, ACRWC into domestic law.

According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway (2022), A child, as defined by the Child Welfare Information Gateway (2022), is a person who has not yet attained adulthood. This period ranges from Infancy to Adolescence (1-18 years). At this period age, the child has no matured sense of reasoning, is totally dependent and is incapable of taking care of himself/herself. Ordinary children are the most critical and sensitive of family and national issues. children The next generation gets educated from the previous generation in the family or society, that is why they are. 1Generally speaking, every human and even animal society relies on the existence of children.

Oftentimes, neglect is considered to one of the most common types of abuse, specifically child abuse, and it is frequently linked with other types of abuse. In contrast to other types of abuses, child neglect stands out because it indicates an omission or a failure to provide for a child’ s basic needs. These omissions are systematic over time, and can result in considerable harm, including the death of a child. The estimates of child neglect tend to range from around 16.3% of children suffering from physical

neglect and 18.4% from emotional neglect (Stoltenborg et al. 2013) to 20.6% and 29.4%, respectively, depending on age (Clement et al. 2016). In the epidemiol

Its goal is to provide comprehensive information on the scope, processes and results obtained in the study of the problem of child abuse and neglect in the Balkans. The below given 'Balkan Study' reflects the findings of the academic work done in 9 Balkan countries.

As per the findings of Child Welfare Information Gateway (2022), Mac & Lehner have put forth alarming statistics on the issue of child neglect. The range of children who are unfortunately at some point in their life is somewhere between and neglect in the Balkan region is worryingly high as in BECAN study the rates of child school-aged neglect ranges from 22.6% to 42.6%.class. This BECAN study has also claimed that around 39.6% claim that they have been neglected ever since they remember being school-going children while 33.2% of these children reporting neglectful experiences in the preceding year.

There is no agreement about the issue of child neglect (Barron & Jenny 2011). In legal aspects, it bears only the flaws of care given by parents or guardians which objectively result or may result in some form of damage. A parent is said to commit neglect, according to the World Health Organization (1999), when a parent is able to ensure the development of a child in one or more of these areas: health, education, emotional growth, nutrition, shelter, and safe living conditions. Thus, neglect can only take place where the family or guardian has some reasonable means to resources. In other words, Dubowitz and colleagues (1993) argue that neglect occurs whenever a child's fundamental needs are sufficiently unmet and basic needs are prioritized instead of parental intent or actions. Responsibility shifts from the singular parent to a collective notion that includes family units, communities, and society at large. Expecting inadequate attention, supervision, or care is just one dmanship that adds to poor hygiene, inadequate grooming, lack of cleanliness, exposure to a drug-infected environment, pedagogical neglect, and abstanding result along with various other forms of neglect.

In this manner, Allnock (2016), Blumenthal (2015), Dubowitz (2013), and Naughton et al. (2013) refer to different forms of neglect of children as physical, emotional, educational, health-related, environmental

neglect, as well as neglect in providing adequate supervision to children. 1 It is within the rights of every parents/caregiver to provide for a child by supplying all necessary material provisions and amenities to ensure that the child lives, grows and copes within their environment, and failing to do so, is referred to as abuse & neglect with regards to the child's rights to those needs. Child abuse and neglect as defined in Child Welfare Information Gateway [1] incorporates any recent act or failure to act by a parent of a caregiver to a child which results to the death, serious physical or emotional harm, or sexual abuse and exploitation, or an imminent act of serious harm in the near future. The forms for child abuse is in divers form which according to the World Health Organization includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence, and commercial or otherwise exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or in a dignified setting in a context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

A child who is a victim of child neglect is usually referred to as a neglected child. Sometimes, children who experience neglect from their parents or caregivers usually feel inferior to their nonneglected counterparts, consequently increasing the propensity of neglected children for developing mental health symptoms/ psychological issues.

8 Child neglect can cause a variety of psychological problems. It causes victims to feel isolation, fear, and distrust, which can translate into lifelong psychological consequences that can manifest as educational difficulties, low self-esteem, depression, and trouble forming and maintaining relationships. (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2022)

1.2 Problem statement.

In contrast to physical or sexual abuse, child neglect is a pervasive and subtle kind of maltreatment that is sometimes overlooked because of its less obvious character. Neglect, no matter how slight, can have serious and long-lasting psychological effects on kids. Neglect is distinguished from abuse by the absence of damaging behaviors; that is, when caregivers fail to offer necessary care, emotional support, and protection. A child's emotional and psychological development may be hampered by this lack of care, which could have a variety of negative effects. Studies have consistently demonstrated that children who are neglected are more likely to experience mental health problems such sadness, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Tingberg & Nilsson, 2020). Attachment difficulties, trouble establishing

connections, and behavioral issues like violence or social disengagement may also be present. Moreover, the consequences of neglect may persist into adulthood, impacting an individual's capacity to uphold sound relationships, excel in their profession, and attain a general sense of contentment with life.

Even though neglect has a significant negative effect on a child's mental health, it is still one of the areas of child abuse that receives the least amount of research. A substantial knowledge vacuum exists on the entire range of psychological damage resulting from neglect, as the majority of research on child abuse concentrates on more obvious types of maltreatment (Tingberg & Nilsson, 2020). The fact that neglect is one of the most prevalent types of child abuse that are reported

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20 worldwide makes this lack of care very alarming. Given the prevalence of child neglect and its

potentially disastrous consequences, a thorough investigation into the psychological effects of neglect, taking into account various forms of neglect, and examining moderating factors that may influence these outcomes is desperately needed. In addition to addressing a major vacuum in the literature, this research is crucial for informing the creation of focused treatments and support networks that will assist neglected children and lessen the long-term effects of their mistreatment.

1.3 Research objectives

The primary objective of this study is to explore and analyze psychological effects child neglect affects children. Specifically, the study aims to:

- To identify the specific psychological disorders most commonly associated with child neglect.
- To examine the relationship between different types of neglect and various psychological outcomes.
- To investigate the role of factors such as the duration and timing of neglect in determining the severity of psychological effects.

1.4 Research questions

- What are the specific psychological effects of child neglect on children?
- How do different forms of neglect (e.g., physical, emotional, educational) impact children's psychological well-being?

- What factors (e.g., severity of neglect, duration, age at onset) influence the psychological outcomes of neglected children?

1.5 Scope of the study;

The importance of this research is to look into how child neglect affects children psychologically. The following defines the study's scope:

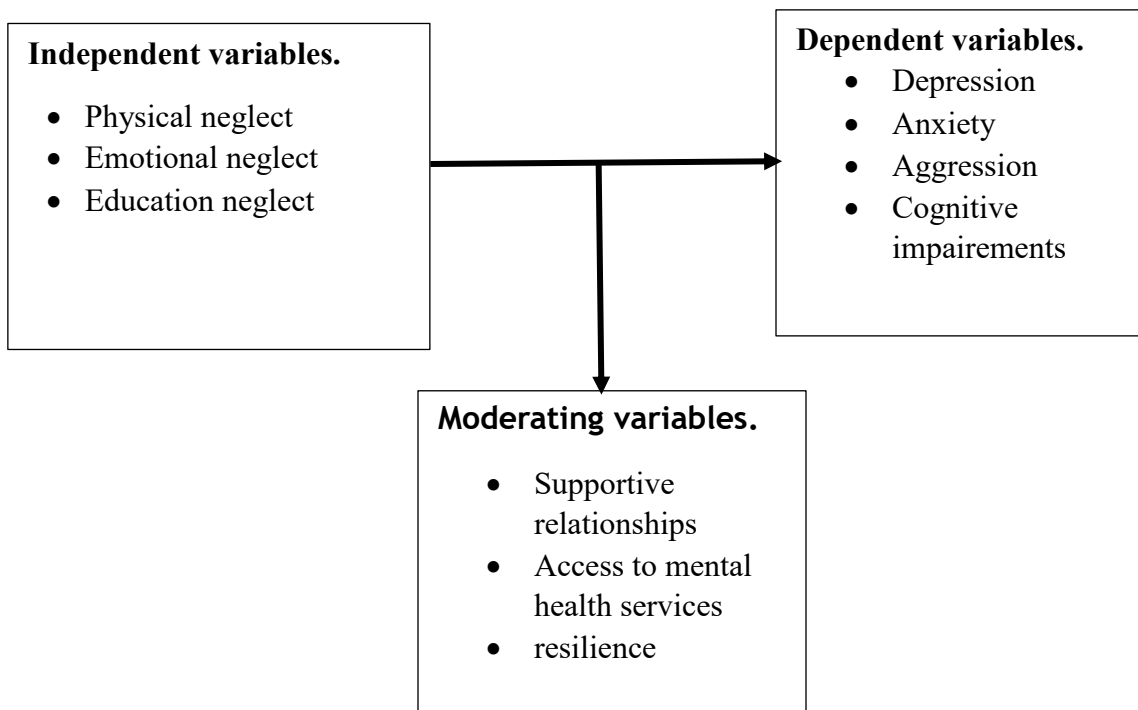
1.5.1 Geographical Scope:

This research will be practised from APPCAN Ntinda so as to guarantee a targeted examination. The geographic site will be selected in accordance with the frequency of documented occurrences of child neglect and the availability of relevant participants.

1.6 Justification of the study

The study on the psychological effects of child neglect is crucial due to its potential to fill significant research gaps and inform practical interventions. This study looks at the psychological effects of child neglect in an effort to pinpoint important factors that may mitigate the negative impacts of neglect. Furthermore, a better knowledge of the socioeconomic and cultural variances in the effects of neglect would facilitate the creation of culturally relevant therapies. By addressing these factors, policies and programs to prevent and address child neglect can be created more effectively, improving the psychological consequences for neglected children in the process.

1.7 Conceptual framework



CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A child is an individual who is not matured sufficiently to take some significant life decisions and he/she is still largely dependent on others for survival. Literarily, the term neglect suggests the lack of care for something, the state of being uncared for (Oxford Dictionary). With regard to the well-being of a child, neglect may be described as the state of a child being uncared for or the state of a child not being properly cared for. (Tingberg & Nilsson, 2020) conceptualize child neglect as things missing, the lack of care owing by a child. Child neglect is child's supervision failure, parents or caregiver failure to recognize that a child is not receiving adequate food, living room, clothing, education, or minimum health care, failure to provide emotional support and affection to the child (Tingberg & Nilsson, 2020). Child neglect by Olayode may take the form of unkempt look, improper dressing, hostility, unbalanced diet and immunization failure for children. Child neglect is a common form of child abuse by parents or guardians where they deny a child basic needs, fail to give appropriate supervision, nourishment, medical treatment, clothing, or shelter which causes physical, emotional, and psychological damage to the child.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Many theories in psychology and development can be used to understand the psychological impacts of child neglect. One such paradigm is attachment theory, which contends that a child's social, emotional, and cognitive development are significantly influenced by the ties they form with their caregivers throughout their early years. The CASA (2015) asserted that children who are neglected may grow up with insecure attachment styles, which might make it harder for them

to create healthy connections in the future. This idea is especially pertinent to comprehending the long-term effects of emotional neglect, as it highlights how the establishment of trust and security in interpersonal relationships can be hampered by a lack of compassion and emotional support.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943), which holds that before a person can reach greater levels of psychological well-being and self-actualization, basic wants like safety, belongingness, and love must be satisfied, is another pertinent theory. These basic requirements are frequently unmet in neglected children, which results in impairments in their psychological development The CASA (2015). In order to avoid long-term psychological injury, this theoretical paradigm emphasizes how critical it is to address neglect as soon as it occurs.

2.3 Forms of Child neglect

Physical neglect: Physical neglect is a condition in which parents/caregiver's failure to protect the child from conditions or objects that have the potential to inflict physical injury on the child. It included parents' failure to or not providing the child's basic needs properly; like food, clothing that is appropriate for the weather shelter, adequate rest or sleep or helping the child in doing oral or personal hygiene activities (Akanbi, Godwin, Anyio, Muhammad, & Ajiboye, 2015). Features of physical neglect include letting the children go hungry, dirty, unsecured, and untended.

Educational neglect: Education in the modern world is the right of both the child and the adult citizen. Thus willfully or ignorantly denying any individual the right to education is termed as contravention of the individual's human right. When a parent or guardian willfully or ignorantly neglects his or her child's educational welfare such a parent is child educational negligence Knutson, J. F., & Hage, M. L. (2018). Educational negligence involves parents' failure to take school-going children to school or financially assist them or equip them with study materials to enable the child to excel in school (Akanbi, Godwin, Anyio, Muhammad, & Ajiboye, 2015). Such failure will in part deny the child the opportunity to sit for that test as his/her peers are sitting for it.

Emotional neglect: Damasio has described emotion as mental condition caused by changes in neurophysiology, most commonly associated with thoughts, feeling, behavioral responses, and a certain level of pleasure or displeasure [4]. Emotional neglect is seen as the failure on the part of parents or mentors to show concern or care towards the mental status of the child. It is the failure of parents to provide emotional support, love and affection, depriving the child of belongingness. Examples of

emotional neglect include not providing the child with human contact, maybe by locking them up alone, subjecting the child to violence or severe abuse between adults or parents, ignoring, insulting, or threatening the child (Akanbi, Godwin, Anyio, Muhammad, & Ajiboye, 2015).

2.4 Psychological Effects of Child Neglect

The similarity between child maltreatment and the emergence of mental health conditions, especially anxiety and depression, has been shown in numerous research. For instance, Johnson et al. (2002) discovered through a longitudinal research that children who were neglected had a markedly higher likelihood of developing depressive symptoms as adolescents and adults. According to the study, emotional neglect in particular was a highly significant predictor of sadness in the future, indicating that depressive illnesses are largely caused by a lack of emotional support and validation.

Furthermore, (Muela, Elena, Alexander, Larrea, & José, 2012) investigated the long-term consequences of child neglect and discovered that those who had been neglected as children were at a higher risk of developing anxiety disorders as adults. This study supports previous research by Knutson, J. F., & Hage, M. L. (2018), who found that neglected children—especially those who experienced emotional neglect—also had greater rates of anxiety. All of these research point to the importance of neglect in the development of internalizing diseases, with emotional neglect having the most negative effect.

According to attachment theory, there is a correlation between the emergence of attachment disorders and child neglect. According to Crittenden (1992), children who are neglected frequently grow up with insecure or chaotic attachment styles, which can make it difficult for them to build and maintain relationships later in life. These attachment problems are more noticeable in emotional neglect situations, where the kid experiences instability and uncertainty due to the lack of a dependable caregiver.

Neglected children are more prone to exhibit avoidant or ambivalent attachment patterns (Muela, Elena, Alexander, Larrea, & José, 2012). These kids could have trouble with closeness and trust; they might emotionally distance themselves from people or act needy and clinging. Long-term consequences from this disturbed attachment process may include a lasting impact on relationships and social interactions well into adulthood.

Child neglect has been connected to a number of externalizing behavioural issues, such as violence, criminality, and substance misuse, in addition to internalizing disorders. According to a study by (Olaajo & Oyediran, 2020), adolescents who were neglected as children were more likely to participate in delinquent activities as adults. The researchers hypothesized that these behaviors arise as a result of the absence of parental monitoring and guidance, which is frequently observed in cases of neglect.

According to Erickson and Egeland's (2002) findings, children who experience neglect are more likely to acquire conduct disorders, which are marked by violent and antisocial behaviors. This result is in line with previous studies by (Olaajo & Oyediran, 2020), who found that neglected children had higher rates of behavioral issues than their classmates who were not neglected. According to these studies, behavioral problems are often the result of neglect, especially physical and supervisory neglect.

Academic difficulties and cognitive deficits are also linked to it. According to a 2009 study by De Bellis et al., children who have been ignored frequently perform worse academically and have lower IQs than children who have not been mistreated. These cognitive deficiencies were linked by the researchers to the lack of educational support and stimulation that neglected children typically receive (Olaajo & Oyediran, 2020).

Education has a direct impact on a person's prospects in life, financial security, and general well-being. Neglect as a child can create trauma that has major repercussions on the growing brain, raising the likelihood of psychological issues. In the long run, this delayed or stunted brain development combined with other psychological issues may make it difficult for the youngster to focus in class. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services states that both immediate and long-term effects of abuse and neglect might include depression, violent behavior, learning disabilities, developmental delays, brain damage, and difficulties building relationships (Olaajo & Oyediran, 2020). Those who have experienced abuse and neglect as children may be more vulnerable to issues in the future, such as poor scholastic performance, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, and criminal activity that impacts not only the kid and family but also the larger community.

2.5 Research gap.

The existing body of research on child neglect points to a number of important gaps that require filling in order to improve knowledge and methods of intervention. A noticeable dearth of longitudinal studies that monitor long-term psychological outcomes throughout adulthood is present, despite the fact that the majority of the research now in publication concentrates on the acute impacts of neglect during infancy and adolescence. Research is also needed on new problems like neglect connected to digital and online settings, as well as the efficacy of preventive and intervention techniques to address neglect. Developing focused, culturally aware, and successful interventions to support neglected children and lessen the long-term psychological impacts of neglect requires addressing these gaps.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3Introduction

The research design, field site, information sources, population, sampling procedures, variables and indicators, level of measurement, data collection procedure, and instruments for data collection are outlined in this chapter.

3.1 Research Design

The research will use a descriptive study design. Descriptive survey research design refers to the process of examining the characteristics of the variables and describing the patterns of association between the variables as they naturally occur without intervening with them. The research will give significance to qualitative methods since the researcher will be interested in hearing what people think, feel, their opinions on difficulties encountered while studying in technical schools.

3.2 Area of Study

Research will be conducted within African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), Ntinda. The facility was selected due to the fact that it encounters a lot of children who fall victim to Child Neglect. It is on this basis therefore that it was selected as an area of research.

3.3 Sources of Information

According to (Creswell, 2018) information source refers to the accessible known literature published or unpublished provided it has been accepted by an academic institution or organization. Secondary and primary sources of data will be used in the study. Secondary sources of data will include policy documents, institution reports and primary sources will include the students, instructors and school administration

3.4 Population

Target population means all the elements of an actual or presumed collection of people, events or items to which a researcher wishes to extend the result of the research study (Amin, 2005).

3.5 Sample Size

| Category of Respondents | Sample size |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Regional Coordinator | 01 |
| Social workers | 7 |
| Children | 33 |
| Parents | 11 |
| Total | 51 |

3.5.1 Sampling Techniques

According to (Amin, 2005) sampling means selecting components from the population in a way such that the selected sample elements represent the population. It means that as much as possible, the majority of the characteristics of the population should be represented in the sample selected

The study will utilize random sampling techniques especially simple random sampling techniques where individuals or sample sizes will be determined, identified and individuals will be selected randomly to offer their views.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire

The major data collection tool to use will be open ended questionnaires that will be used on students and parents because facts are documented and proven; they also eliminate the element of shyness when it comes to interviewing and also give the respondent ample time to give accurate information. The questionnaire will be both open ended and closed ended questions for the purpose of having all questions to be answered.

Interviews

The researcher will use a face-to-face interview schedule for gathering detailed, objective and credible information on the school administrator leadership styles and their impact on tutor performance in an effort to gather data from tutors. Interviews will help the researcher measure knowledge and attitude towards the topic.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data Analysis includes the organization of the information obtained from field studies (Amin, 2005).

Qualitative responses will be content and thematically analyzed. Following (Mugenda O,M & Mugenda A.G, 2003's) recommendation, data will be coded into sub-themes at first and bundled into themes and used to legitimate qualitative findings. Following the step suggested by (Creswell, 2018), data will be processed and classified based on themes corresponding to the study objectives. Similar meaning groups of text will be grouped together and analyzed in relation to the study. Rationale and implication of the ideas will be developed. This will lead to the comprehension of what the respondents believed and perceived regarding the research questions. Concept frequencies will show the level of direction or bias in data interpretation.

3.8 Ethical Issues

Ethics refer to obediences to set standards of morality and lawfulness (Mugenda O,M & Mugenda A.G, 2003). Ethics involve protecting the respondents from abuse, coercion or any other infringement of their right to voluntary participation and other options. The respondents will be assured confidentiality of the information they will provide in the study and their names are anonymous in the study. Respondents will be officially notified that the information gathered will be used for academic purposes alone. Secondly, the researcher will ask the institution to provide her with an introduction letter so that she can introduce herself to the respondents in the study.

3.9 Limitations of the study.

The researcher will face difficulties like high transport costs to and in the field during data collection. The researcher will get support from the institution and the guardians for financial support to cover transport costs

The researcher will also be faced with the challenge of respondents who will not be prepared to provide information because they will be meeting the researcher for the first time or due to their experience with the earlier research projects.

Therefore, in an attempt to overcome this, the researcher will get an introduction letter from the Chairperson LC. I to introduce the researcher to the respondents. If the respondents are persistent, the researcher will substitute the respondent with another willing participant.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter provides quantitative as well as qualitative findings based on the data obtained. Results are provided following the order of research objectives. Response rate, characteristics of context regarding respondents, introduction, explanation and understanding of study are described in this chapter. Responses developed from questionnaires and interview guides have been utilized to provide you, evaluate and offer an explanation for findings. Data collected from questionnaires are triangulated with the interview answers. Then the ultimate outcome were provided to spell out the context of the answers.

4.0 Response rate

This sub section presents the total amount of questionnaires distributed and interviews planned targeted number and the actual number of respondents that took part inside the analysis. Moreover, it presents the percentage response rate through the two data collection instruments.

Table 4. 1 showing Response Rate

| Research instrument | Sampled population /Targeted number | Actually conducted |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Questionnaires | 40 | 33 |
| Interviews | 8 | 5 |
| Total | 48 | 38 |

Source: Field Data (2024)

Above table shows that 40 questionnaires were distributed, 33 completed and returned, thereby giving a percentage response rate of 79%. In addition, out of 8 interviews planned, 5 were conducted giving a share response rate of 63%. Overall response rate was 64%. This

demonstrates that the researcher indeed managed to collect adequate data for a detailed report.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic attributes of respondents were also essential simply because they gave insights that may have already been missed by only considering aggregate data. Demographic variables considered in this research included gender, age bracket, education level and designation of respondents. A directory of demographic features sample is presented to the following tables.

Table 4. 2: Showing Gender of Respondents (n=38)

| Attribute | Category | (f) | % age |
|-----------|----------|-----|-------|
| Gender | Male | 17 | 45% |
| | Female | 21 | 55% |
| Total | | 38 | 100% |

Source: Field Data (2024)

Results in Table 4.2 show that majority (45%, n=17) associated with respondents were males while 55% (n=21) were females. The aforementioned information was needed to make sure data was obtained from gender balanced respondents to cease bias, thus gender representation among respondents was considered fair enough.

Table 4. 3 Showing Age of Respondents (n=38)

| Attribute | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Age group | 10-20 | 19 | 50% |
| | 21-30 | 11 | 29% |
| | 31-40 | 6 | 16% |

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| | 41 and above | 2 | 5% |
| Total | | 38 | 100% |

Source: Field Data (2024)

Results in Table 4.3 show that majority 50% (n=19) concerning the respondents were aged between 10-20 years. Those between 21 and three decades were 29%. The respondents aged 31-40 were 16%, while those above 41 years old were 5%. Therefore, the majority of the respondents aged 10-20 were pupils and those aged 41 and above was the minority implies that all respondents were mature and, in a position, to provide reliable data.

Table 4. 4 Showing education level of Respondents (n=38)

| Attribute | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Highest education level | Primary | 19 | 50% |
| | Certificate | 4 | 5% |
| | Diploma | 12 | 32% |
| | Degree | 3 | 8% |
| Total | | 38 | 100% |

Source: Field Data (2020)

In accordance with Table 4.4, 50 %(n=19) through the respondents were still pursuing primary standard of education, 32% held diplomas, 5% held certificates while 8% held degrees. The aforementioned statistics gave a reasonable assurance that the items in the research instruments were understood by the respondents who were able to give their opinions.

4.3.1 Objective One: The psychological effects of child neglect on children

Objective one of the study is to find out the psychological effects of child neglect on children a study at APPCN Ntinda. Responses obtained are presented in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4. 5 Showing the psychological effects of child neglect

| Statement | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| How often do you experience feelings of low-self esteem | 30% | 55% | 11% | 3% | 1% |
| How often do you feel anxious or worried without a specific reason. | 51% | 39% | 10% | 0% | 0% |
| How often do u feel sad or depressed. | 61% | 22% | 15% | 2% | 0% |
| Do you have difficulty in trusting others | 36% | 47% | 10 | 10% | 7% |
| Have you ever sought professional help for psychological issues related to your upbringing. | 5% | 6% | 8% | 53% | 28% |

Source: Field Data (2024)

Results in Table 4.5 above shows that 85% of the respondents Always face the psychological effects of child neglect. Only 15% rarely or never experienced the effects of child neglect. This revealed that 28% of the respondents never sought professional help, 53% rarely sought

professional help and 19 % of the respondents sometimes and always tried to seek professional support for the psychological issues.

During face-to-face interviews, the researcher further asked the social workers on the psychological effects of child neglect on children. One of the social workers confirmed as quoted;

“.....Of course, neglected children often experience depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Emotional neglect is strongly linked to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), with chronic neglect causing more severe mental health outcomes.”

(Participant1)

The above revelations imply that the psychological effects of child neglect on children are actually evident.

In relation to the above, another social worker revealed that

“..... Neglected children frequently exhibit social withdrawal, difficulty forming relationships, and aggressive behavior. Disorganized attachments with caregivers can make it difficult for children to trust others, affecting their ability to form healthy relationships later in life” (participant 2)

The above revelation implies that such children tend to isolate themselves and develop a negative attitude towards society.

Objective Two: How do different forms of neglect (e.g., physical, emotional, educational) impact children's psychological well-being?

The second study objective was to examine How do different forms of neglect (e.g., physical, emotional, educational) impact children's psychological well-being. The data for objective two was analyzed qualitatively. Qualitative techniques were used to analyze the data collected from the interview guide.

In one of the face to face interviews, a social worker quoted

“..... Emotional neglect has profound psychological effects. It leads to low self-esteem, social withdrawal, and emotional detachment. Emotional neglect increases the risk of self-blame, shame, and internalized stigma, exacerbating mental health challenges.....”

(Participant 3)

“.....I know and understand there is child neglect. This is not only at school but also at home. At this school, we do encourage our pupils to make friends with whom they can socialize because when children are left abandoned this could negatively affect their literacy.....” (Participant 4)

Social neglect has an impact on child’s creativity. This was confirmed by majority 78% of the respondents although, 7% disagreed and 15% were not sure. This shows that social neglect has an impact on child’s creativity. Similarly, a reasonable majority of the respondents interviewed revealed that:

“..... Child neglect is common here. It has not only affected children’s’ behavior but also their education. Most of our children are socially neglected by their caregivers and this is still a big challenge.....” (Participant5)

4.3.3 Objective Three: The factors (e.g., severity of neglect, duration, age at onset) influence the psychological outcomes of neglected children?

Objective three of the study was to find out the factors (e.g., severity of neglect, duration, age at onset) influence the psychological outcomes of neglected children During the study, The tools used to collect data on this objective and how it was analyzed; was qualitatively and so, qualitative techniques were used. Responses obtained are discussed below.

In a face-to-face interview held with the social worker, one was quoted saying that.

“Young children (0–5 years) are particularly vulnerable to neglect due to the critical period of brain development during early childhood. Early neglect has lasting effects on cognitive, emotional, and social development.....” (Participant 6)

“..... Poverty and cultural norms significantly influence neglect patterns especially in the rural areas. Where poverty and gender biases raise educational neglect. The lack of a caregiver and socio-economic disadvantages such as poverty become contributing factors to neglect.....” (Participant 8thDecember, 2020)

From the above findings, it is evident that psychological neglect greatly contributes to low

self-esteem levels among children, discrimination and other forms of psychological barriers being the major cause for this.

The revelations imply that for a child to perform well there is need for them not to be exposed to any form of anxiety and distress which are aligned to neglect. A stable mind is vital for one to succeed in the society. It should, therefore, be noted that emotionally neglected school children tend to change from positive to negative self-perception and from positive perception of the society to negative perception. All these come up as a result of psychological effects of neglect.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH.

5.0 Introduction

This paper analysed the psychological aspects of child neglect. The effects of different types of neglect and some of the determinants of the psychological fates of neglected children. The collection of data was accomplished by means of questionnaires and interviews with social workers, teachers, and the children involved. It compared quantitative and qualitative data, draw conclusions from the data, and suggested recommendations for action.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

5.1.1 Psychological Impact of Child Neglect on Children.

Results showed that there was a significant amount of psychological consequences from child neglect. Specifically:

Low Self Esteem & Depression: Table 4.5, 61% of the respondents felt sad or depressed often and 55% of the respondents often had low self-esteem. This is consistent with data gathered from interviews in which subjects highlighted the connection between neglect and psychological effect. For example, one social worker mentioned "Neglected children are generally depressed, anxious, and have low self-esteem," intensified by the emotional neglect. There was an evident linkage with neglect to mental problems like PTSD.

Social isolation and trust problems: Almost half of the survey respondents (47%) said they had trouble trusting others. One respondent explained how interviewees exhibit signs of disorganized attachment styles because neglected children usually develop a disorganized attachment to

others. For example, one group member said how neglect results in 'difficulty making attachments and violent behaviour, meaning that the children won't be able to fit into the society.

Lack of Professional Support. Although the results were still serious, 53% of the respondents only occasionally sought professional support, and 28% did not seek any support at all. The absence of interruption implies a deficiency in mental health care resources, either because they are viewed as not appropriate or perhaps they don't even exist.

5.1.2 Impact of Different Forms of Neglect

The study identified different effects of different types of neglect:

Emotional Neglect. This was the most significant factor and the one with the greatest psychological effect. In one of the face to face interviews, it was stressed the fact that emotional neglect "causes low self-esteem, isolation, and emotional unattachment." The stigmatized and self-blaming aspect of emotional neglect actually worsens the problem when it comes to mental health.

Education Neglect: There was educational neglect, particularly in low-income areas. In an interview, a social worker stated that, "Social depravity has corrupted many children's behavior as well as their education." Many neglected children could never read, and no one ever took an interest in their learning to push them to succeed in class. So, it is apparent how much neglect plays a role in cognitive development.

Physical neglect: Although not mentioned much, physical neglect caused psychological neglect indirectly because the children lacked sufficient care, proper nutrition, and safe housing. Overall, these lead to increased stress and anxiety for those children affected.

5.1.3 Factors Influencing Psychological Outcomes

Multiple determinants were discovered that contribute to the psychological results of neglected children.

Age at Onset: The results highlighted the susceptibility of younger children (0-5 years) to neglect because of the importance of brain development in early childhood. One interviewee said, 'Neglect in the first years affects cognitive and emotional and social development. Therefore, neglect has long-lasting effects on whatever these age groups should be learning.

The severity and duration of chronic neglect resulted in more psychological effects. The longer a child is exposed, the more they are susceptible to internalized stigma, guilt, and inability to connect.

With socioeconomic factors such as poverty being a big contributor to neglect. Respondents reported that socioeconomic disadvantages, especially in rural communities, compounded patterns of neglect. One respondent commented, "Poverty and cultural norms affect neglect pattern tremendously."

Cultural norms and gender biases: These cultural factors resulted in children being treated differently, with girls usually receiving neglected attention. This interaction enhanced the neglectful characteristics that psychologically resulted.

5.2 Conclusions

Neglect Has Powerful Psychological Consequences. The research concludes that child neglect, in one form or another, has significant psychological consequences, such as depression, anxiety, and poor self-esteem. Emotional neglect specifically is significantly linked to negative mental health consequences.

Neglect manifests itself in various forms, with emotional neglect being found to be the most detrimental, followed by educational neglect and physical neglect. Each one contributing differently to psychological and social issues that neglected children go through.

Determinants are multifactorial: The psychological effects of neglect are determined by several factors, such as age of onset, duration and severity of neglect, socioeconomic status, and cultural influences. Advancements in technology play a crucial role in mitigating the long-term consequences of such factors through early intervention.

Reduced Usage of Professional Support Services: Because so few targeted support services are being utilized, it is imperative to provide more accessible, culturally appropriate mental health interventions.

5.3 Recommendations

Increase Awareness and Education: Carry out community awareness on the effects of child neglect and train caregivers and teachers to identify the symptoms so that aid may be given as soon as possible.

Strengthen Support Services: Improving access to mental health services, especially in rural and underserved communities. Create school-based counselling programs to offer support to children in need.

Policy and legal frameworks: Child protection laws and establishing policies that focus on the root causes of neglect, such as poverty and gender inequality.

5.4 Further Research

This study has raised issues regarding the mental impact that child neglect has on children that need more investigation:

Longitudinal Studies: Research should be conducted on the long-term effects of child neglect and its influence on adult mental health, social function, and occupational function.

Intervention effectiveness: Research on the effectiveness of specific interventions, such as school counselling programs or parenting workshops, would offer a guiding light for policymakers and practitioners alike.

Cultural Differences: Examining how culture affects how neglect is viewed and its effects could help to adapt interventions to better suit various settings.

By examining these issues, they will be able to fully understand the dimensions of child neglect and provide valuable information for enhanced prevention and intervention.

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