KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND SELF–EFFICACY OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION AMONG TEACHERS IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ABEOKUTA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OGUN STATE

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ABSTRACT: *Sexual violence against children is a gross violation of children's rights and as well an undeniable global reality across all countries. This social ill occurs in various forms including rape, sexual assault, child sexual abuse etc. The objective of the study is to assess the level of knowledge, attitude and self-efficacy of secondary school teachers on child sexual abuse prevention. A descriptive cross-sectional design was used and a Convenience sampling technique was adopted for the study. A structured self-administered questionnaire was used. A sample of 164 teachers was administered questionnaires. The frequency table was used to find the percentages and descriptive statistics of the data, and also Chi-Square cross-tabulation was used to analyse the hypotheses with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) version 21.0 The findings revealed that 159 (97%) of the teachers have a good knowledge of child sexual abuse and 5 (3.0%) have poor knowledge of child sexual abuse prevention, 98 (59.8%) have positive attitude towards preventing child sexual abuse while 66 (40.2%) have negative attitude. 94 (57.3%) of the respondents have a high self-efficacy in child abuse prevention while 70 (42.7%) have low self-efficacy in child sexual abuse prevention. The results of this study showed that teacher's attitudes about child sexual abuse prevention are significantly related to self-efficacy in preventing sexual abuse but knowledge showed an insignificant relation to self-efficacy. It is recommended that teachers with poor knowledge of child sexual abuse should be trained on how to prevent the children from sexual abuse in the society which will enhance their knowledge.*

KEYWORDS: Sexual violence, Knowledge, Attitude, Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Child abuse encompasses emotional, sexual, or physical mistreatment or neglect by adults towards individuals under 18 years old, occurring in various settings and perpetrated by family members, caregivers, or authority figures like teachers and coaches (Nkiruka *et al*.,2018). It is a significant societal concern, leading to fatalities and long-term psychological trauma. However, identifying abuse can be challenging due to fear, power dynamics, and societal norms (Yvette, 2018). Yet, speaking up about signs of abuse is crucial for both the child's and caregiver's well-being (Rimamnunra *et al*.,2022).

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is a particularly egregious form of abuse, involving any act that coerces or involves a child in sexual activities. It can manifest in various ways, including assault, non-penetrative sexual activities, exposure to sexual material, and grooming (Delpine *et al*.,2015). Perpetrators can be adults or other children, with devastating effects on victims' physical and psychological health, including increased risk of STIs and emotional trauma

In Nigeria, as in many parts of the world, CSA is alarmingly prevalent, with estimates ranging from 5% to 38%. However, due to cultural barriers, fear of reprisal, and shame, many cases go unreported (Eman et al.,2018). The consequences of CSA extend beyond the individual, impacting families and society as a whole. Despite legal frameworks like the Child Rights Act, enforcement and prevention efforts remain challenging (Akin-Odanye, 2018).

Teachers, as key figures in children's lives, play a crucial role in preventing CSA. They are often the first to notice signs of abuse and can provide support and intervention. Yet, they need adequate knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy to effectively address and prevent CSA (Kenny et al., 2017). Understanding the prevalence and impact of CSA on adolescents, who are particularly vulnerable, is essential for targeted prevention strategies.

This study aims to assess the knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy of secondary school teachers in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State, towards CSA prevention. By identifying gaps and challenges, the findings will inform interventions and policies aimed at reducing the incidence of CSA and promoting child welfare. Ultimately, empowering teachers with the tools and resources to address CSA is critical in safeguarding children and creating safer learning environments.

METHODS

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive cross-sectional design to explore the knowledge, attitude, and self-efficacy of secondary school teachers regarding the prevention of child sexual abuse. Cross-sectional data collection was chosen to capture information existing at a particular point in time, facilitating an understanding of teachers' perspectives on this critical issue.

Study Setting

The study was conducted in four selected secondary schools:

1. Asero High School, Abeokuta

2. Macjob Grammar School, Abeokuta

3. Peterson Memorial Baptist Grammar School, Abeokuta

4. Omolaja Sodipo Memorial Anglican School, Abeokuta

These schools were chosen for their representation across different areas of Abeokuta, ensuring diversity in the sample.

Study Population

The target population comprises secondary school teachers working in the selected schools during the data collection period. Both junior and senior secondary school teachers were included in the study.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size was calculated using Yamane's formula, considering the total population of teachers in each school. The total sample size required is 164, distributed across the four schools.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+N(e)2)}$$

Where:

n signifies the sample size

N signifies the population under study

e signifies the margin of error

The total population of secondary school teachers included:

- Asero High School: 118

- Macjob Grammar School, Onikolobo: 52

- Peterson Memorial Baptist Grammar School: 57

- Omolaja Sodipo Memorial Anglican School: 52

Excluding teachers below 20 years and those above 45 years, the total population is 279.

Therefore, the sample size n was calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{279}{1 + 279(0.005 \times 2)}$$

Sample size n is 164.

The number of questionnaires distributed in each school is calculated thus;

Number of questionnaires distributed in each school = $\frac{Total\ population\ of\ each\ school \times sample\ size}{Total\ population}$

Table 1: Sample Size Determination

S/N	Association	Sample Size Determination	Sample Size
1	Asero high school	$\frac{118 \times 164}{279} =$	69
2	Macjob Grammar school	$\frac{52 \times 164}{279}$	31
3	Petterson Memorial Baptist Grammer School	$\frac{57 \times 164}{279}$	33
4	Omolaja Sodipo Memorial Anglican School	$\frac{52 \times 164}{279}$	31

The total number of questionnaires distributed was 164.

Sampling Technique

The sample is composed of 164 respondents. Convenience sampling was adopted for this study, a non-probability method sampling involving the use of readily available secondary school teachers.

Reliability and Validity

To ensure the validity of the instrument, an extensive literature review was conducted to develop the questionnaire. Reliability was assessed through a pilot study and internal consistency testing using Cronbach's alpha.

Instrument for Data Collection

A semi-structured interviewer-administered questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from the respondents. The questionnaire comprised four sections: socio-demographic characteristics, knowledge of child sexual abuse, attitude toward prevention, and self-efficacy in preventing child sexual abuse.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were collected using the questionnaire and analysed using tables, pie charts, bar charts, histograms, and percentages. These methods were employed to appropriately answer research questions and represent findings effectively.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ogun State Research Ethics Committee, and approval was sought from relevant school authorities before data collection. Informed consent was obtained from participants, ensuring confidentiality and adherence to ethical guidelines throughout the research process.

RESULTS

Analysis of Demographic Data

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents Based on Their Socio-Demographic Variables. N=164

Socio Demographic	Variable	Freq. (%)	Means $\pm$ SD
Age	20-29 years	13 (7.9%)	3.70$\pm$0.609
	30-39 years	23 (14.0%)	
	40 years and above	128 (78.0%)	
Religion	Christianity	134 (81.7%)	1.18$\pm$0.388
	Islam	30 (18.3%)	
Ethnicity	Igbo	8 (4.9%)	2.96 $\pm$0.245
	Yoruba	154 (93.9%)	
	Others	2 (1.2%)	
Education	Primary	1 (0.6%)	2.95 $\pm$0.243
	Secondary	6 (3.7%)	
	Tertiary	157 (95.7%)	
Marital Status	Married	143 (87.2%)	

	Single	17 (10.4%)	1.15±0.423
	Divorced	4 (2.4%)	

Analysis of Research Questions

Table 3: Showing Knowledge of Child Sexual Abuse N=164

S/N	Variable	Freq. (%)	Means ± SD
1.	Have you read/heard of child sexual abuse before?		
	Yes	157 (95.7%)	0.96 ± 0.203
	No	07 (4.3%)	
2.	If yes, where did you read/hear about it?		
	Online	58 (35.4%)	2.41± 1.248
	Books	29 (17.7%)	
	School	28 (17.1%)	
	Others	49 (29.9%)	
3.	What is child sexual abuse?		
	the act of an adult having a discussion with children below the age of 18	8 (4.9%)	2.06± 0.425
	the act of emotionally, physically or sexually mistreating a child	140 (85.4%)	
	the act of monitoring the sexual activities of children below 18 years old	14 (8.5%)	
	the act of punishing any child involved in sexual activities	2 (1.2%)	
4.	Which one is or are types of child sexual abuse?		
	Rape	20 (12.2%)	3.49± 1.042
	Sexual Harassment	8 (4.9%)	
	Sexual Assault	8 (4.9%)	
	All of the above	128 (78.0%)	

Table 4: Showing Knowledge of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention N=164

S/N	Variables	YES (%)	NO (%)
1	Is child sexual abuse preventable?	153 (93.3%)	11 (6.7%)
2	Do you know any method of preventing child sexual abuse?	148 (90.2%)	16 (9.8%)
3	Does your school have any policies against child sexual abuse?	153 (93.3%)	11 (6.7%)
4	Are you aware of the signs and symptoms of child sexual abuse?	146 (89.0%)	18 (11.0%)
5	Do you understand the importance of teaching students about personal boundaries?	162 (98.8%)	02 (1.2%)

6	Do you know how to create a safe and open environment for students to report abuse?	153 (93.3%)	11 (6.7%)
7	Are you familiar with the legal obligations and reporting procedures related to child sexual abuse?	130 (79.3%)	34 (20.7%)
8	Have you ever received training on child sexual abuse prevention within the past year?	104 (63.4%)	60 (36.6%)
9	Do you feel confident in your ability to discuss child sexual abuse prevention with students?	157 (95.7%)	07 (4.3%)
10	Do you believe that addressing child sexual abuse prevention should be a part of the school curriculum?	157 (95.7%)	07 (4.3%)
11	Do you actively seek out resources and information to enhance your knowledge of child sexual abuse prevention?	126 (76.8%)	38 (23.2%)

Mean Score = $\frac{Over\ Rating}{N} = \frac{11}{2} = 5.5 \frac{Over\ Rating}{N} = \frac{11}{2} = 5.5$

This means that the rating responses with a mean score of 5.5 and above are categorised as Good Knowledge about Child Sexual Abuse Prevention while responses below the mean score were categorised as Poor Knowledge.

Table 5: Overall Score on Knowledge of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

Mean Score on Knowledge of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention		Mean $\pm$ SD
Good Knowledge (%)	159 (97.0%)	0.97 $\pm$ 0.172
Poor Knowledge (%)	5 (3.0%)	

Table 5 shows the overall score on knowledge of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention. The overall table shows that 159 (97.0%) of the respondents have good knowledge of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention while 5 (3.0%) have poor knowledge about it. This means that the majority of the respondents have enough knowledge of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention.
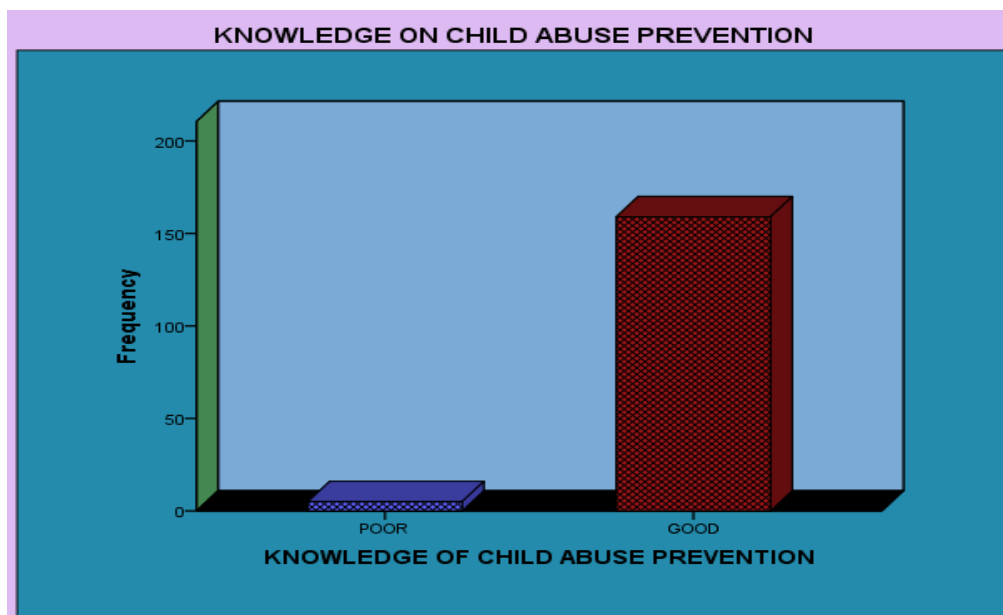
Figure 1: Graph showing knowledge level on Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

Table 6: Showing Attitude of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among Teachers N=164

S/N	Variable	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1	Child sexual abuse prevention education is a crucial component of a secondary school curriculum.	100 (61.0%)	59 (36.0%)	5 (3.0%)	----
2	It is important to be adequately trained to recognize and respond to signs of child sexual abuse among my students.	101 (61.6%)	58 (35.4%)	05 (3.0%)	----
3	Child sexual abuse prevention should be a priority in teacher professional development programs.	104 (63.4%)	57 (34.8%)	03 (1.8%)	----
4	It is good for teachers to be comfortable discussing the topic of child sexual abuse prevention with my students.	96 (58.5%)	70 (39.6%)	03 (1.8%)	----
5	School should provide adequate resources and support for child sexual abuse prevention initiatives.	115 (70.1%)	48 (29.3%)	1 (0.6%)	----
6	Parents and guardians should be involved in child sexual abuse prevention programs.	129 (78.7%)	29 (17.7%)	06 (3.7%)	----
7	Teachers should receive regular training and updates on child sexual abuse prevention strategies.	105 (64.0%)	55 (33.5%)	04 (2.4%)	----
8	Child sexual abuse prevention programs should be integrated into	86 (52.4%)	70 (42.7%)	08 (4.9%)	----

	various subjects throughout the school curriculum.				

Mean Score = $\dfrac{Total\ Over\ Rating}{N} = \dfrac{4737}{164} = 28.9$ $\dfrac{Total\ Over\ Rating}{N} = \dfrac{4737}{164} = 28.9$

This means that the rating responses with a mean score of 28.9 and above are categorised as teacher with Positive Attitudes toward Child Sexual Abuse Prevention while responses below the mean score were categorised as having Negative Attitudes.

Table 7: Overall Score on Attitude of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among Teacher

Mean Score on Attitude of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among Teacher		Mean$\pm$ SD
Positive Attitude (%)	98 (59.8%)	0.60$\pm$ 0.492
Negative Attitude (%)	66 (40.2%)	

Table 7 shows the overall score on attitude of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among teachers. The overall table shows that 98 (59.8%) of the respondents have a positive attitude toward Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among teachers while 66 (40.2%) have a negative attitude about it. This means that the majority of the respondents showed a positive attitude toward Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among teachers
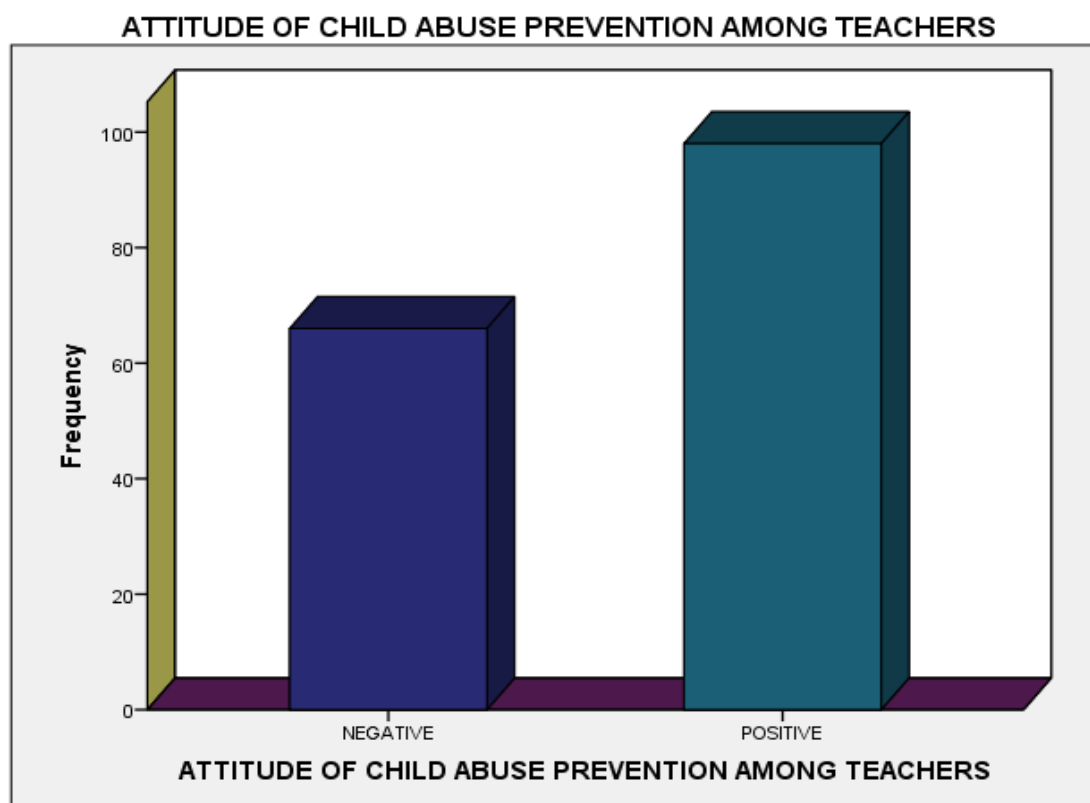

Figure 2: Graph showing attitude to child sexual abuse prevention among teachers

Table 8: Showing Self-Efficacy of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among Teachers N=164

S/N	Variable	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1	I feel confident in my ability to recognize signs of child sexual abuse in my students.	59 (36.0%)	87 (53.0%)	18 (11.0%)	----
2	I believe that I can effectively communicate with students about the importance of personal boundaries and safe touches.	80 (48.8%)	79 (48.2%)	5 (3.0%)	-----
3	I am comfortable discussing child sexual abuse prevention with my colleagues and seeking their support when needed.	84 (51.2%)	76 (46.3%)	4 (2.4%)	----
4	I have the necessary knowledge and skills to implement a child sexual abuse prevention curriculum in my classroom.	58 (35.4%)	83 (50.6%)	23 (14.0%)	----
5	I am confident in my ability to identify and report suspected cases of child sexual abuse to the appropriate authorities.	74 (45.1%)	84 (51.2%)	6 (3.7%)	----
6	I feel adequately trained to address questions or concerns about child sexual abuse prevention from parents or guardians.	60 (36.6%)	80 (48.8%)	24 (14.6%)	----
7	I believe that I can create a safe and supportive classroom environment that fosters open communication and trust among my students.	77 (47.0%)	81 (49.4%)	6 (3.7%)	----
8	I am confident in my ability to stay updated on best practices and resources related to child sexual abuse prevention in the education field.	80 (48.8%)	79 (48.2%)	5 (3.0%)	----

Sources: *Field Survey, 2023*

Mean Score $= \dfrac{Total\ Over\ Rating}{N} = \dfrac{4717}{164} = 26.9$

This means that the rating responses with a mean score of 26.9 and above are categorised as teachers with high self-efficacy in Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among teacher while responses below the mean score were categorised as low self-efficacy.

Table 9: Overall Score on Self-Efficacy of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among Teacher

Mean Score on Self-Efficacy of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among Teacher		Mean $\pm$ SD
High Self-Efficacy (%)	94 (57.3%)	0.57 ± 0.496
Low Self-Efficacy (%)	70 (42.7%)	

The overall table shows that 94 (57.3%) of the respondents have a high self-efficacy in Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among teachers while 70 (42.7%) have low self-efficacy about it.

This means that the majority of the respondents have strong self-efficacy in Child Sexual Abuse Prevention among teachers.
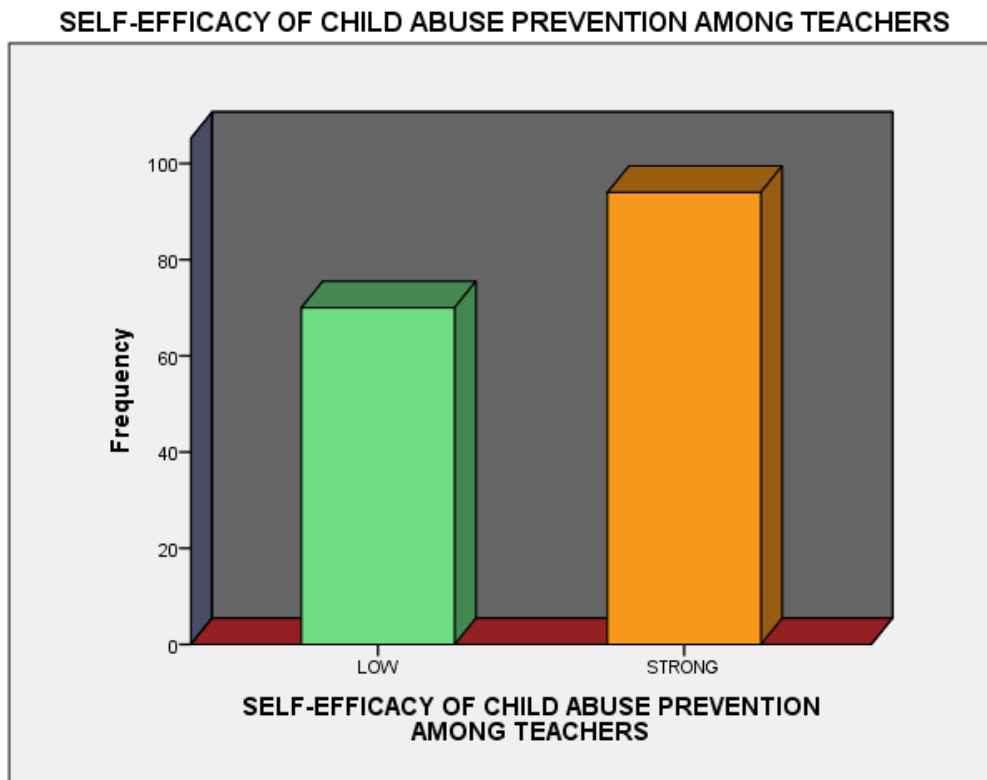

Figure 3: Graph showing Self-efficacy of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Among Teachers

Analysis of Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1

H_0: Knowledge of Child Abuse Prevention does have a significant effect on the Self-Efficacy of Child Abuse Prevention among Teachers.

H_1: Knowledge of Child Abuse Prevention does have a significant effect on the Self-Efficacy of Child Abuse Prevention among Teachers.

$\alpha = 0.05$

Critical value: 0.301

Decision: if Sig. value ≤ 0.05, reject H_0

KNOWLEDGE ON CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION * SELF-EFFICACY OF CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AMONG TEACHERS Cross tabulation

		SELF-EFFICACY OF CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AMONG TEACHERS		Total
		LOW	HIGH	
KNOWLEDGE ON CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION	POOR	1	4	5
	GOOD	69	90	159
Total		70	94	164

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	Approx. T[b]	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-.081	.066	-1.039	.301[c]
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.081	.066	-1.039	.301[c]
N of Valid Cases		164			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

Hypothesis 2

H_0: Attitude of Child Abuse Prevention does have a significant effect on the Self-Efficacy of Child Abuse Prevention among Teachers.

H_1: Attitude of Child Abuse Prevention does have a significant effect on the Self-Efficacy of Child Abuse Prevention among Teachers.

$\alpha = 0.05$

Critical value: 0.000

Decision: if Sig. value ≤ 0.05, reject H_0

ATTITUDE OF CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AMONG TEACHERS * SELF-EFFICACY OF CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AMONG TEACHERS Crosstabulation

		SELF-EFFICACY OF CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AMONG TEACHERS		Total
		LOW	HIGH	
ATTITUDE OF CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AMONG TEACHERS	NEGATIVE	45	21	66
	POSITIVE	25	73	98
Total		70	94	164

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	Approx. T[b]	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval Pearson's R	.423	.072	5.943	.000[c]
Ordinal by Ordinal Spearman Correlation	.423	.072	5.943	.000[c]
N of Valid Cases	164			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Based on normal approximation.

DISCUSSION

Child sexual abuse is well established as an important societal concern, which has a significant negative impact on the affected children, their families, and society. Teachers play a pivotal role in identifying and addressing potential cases of abuse. First, their knowledge of child sexual abuse prevention is essential for recognizing signs and responding appropriately. Positive attitudes, such as empathy and a commitment to child safety, can create a safe and supportive environment for students. Self-efficacy, or a teacher's belief in their ability to prevent and address abuse, impacts their willingness to intervene and report suspected cases.

This study examined the knowledge, attitude and self-efficacy of child sexual abuse prevention among teachers. The results showed that a significant portion of teachers had prior knowledge of child sexual abuse, mainly obtained from online sources. The majority correctly defined child sexual abuse and recognized rape, sexual harassment, and sexual assault as types of it. Our findings were in line with those of previous studies, for instance Sahebihagh et al (2018) reported that 57% of the respondents had good knowledge about child abuse.

However, the findings of this study is refuted by Eman et al., (2018) in a study to assess teacher's knowledge and attitudes regarding child abuse in selected primary school in Minia City. It reported that out of 274 institution teachers, more than two-thirds of teachers had poor awareness about child abuse, which may be attributed to a lack of educational programmers for teachers about child abuse. In another study conducted by Sekinat et al (2020) on knowledge, attitude and practise of public primary school teachers on primary prevention of child sexual abuse in Southwestern Nigeria using 463 public primary school teachers in Agege Local government of Lagos State, showed that few (14.3%) of them had good knowledge on primary prevention of child sexual abuse.

The poor knowledge level shown in these studies could be because of lack of interest due to the stigma that comes with sexual abuse or the lack of proper training/awareness in terms of contents about sexual abuse. In this study however, the high level of knowledge can be attributed to easy access to information regarding child sexual abuse online and targeted awareness programs.

The results of this study also revealed that majority of the teachers strongly agreed that Child sexual abuse prevention education is a crucial component of a secondary school curriculum. This means that majority of the teachers strongly believe that it is important to be adequately trained to recognize and respond to signs of child sexual abuse among students and that child

sexual abuse prevention should be a priority in teacher professional development programs, which should be integrated into various subjects throughout the school curriculum.

As regards to teachers' attitudes about child abuse, this is refuted by Eman et al (2018) whose study results showed that out of 274 teachers, 62% of them have a negative attitude toward child abuse. Another study conducted by Sekinat et al (2020) revealed that about a tenth of the respondents (12.7%) had a positive attitude towards primary prevention of child sexual abuse.

Table 9 shows that overall 57.3% of the respondents had high level of self-efficacy of child sexual abuse prevention while 42.7% have low level. This means that majority of the teachers agreed that they feel confident in their ability to recognize signs of child sexual abuse in their students and that they can effectively communicate with students about the importance of personal boundaries and safe touches. Majority of the teachers strongly believed that they are comfortable discussing child sexual abuse prevention with their colleagues and seeking their support when needed, as well as address questions or concerns about child sexual abuse prevention from parents or guardians. This is supported by a study conducted in Zhejiang province of China by Zhang et al., 2017 to determine preschool teachers' knowledge, attitudes and training education on early prevention of child sexual abuse.

This perhaps is because teachers in this age group (≤49 years) have more access to information, education and communication materials through various modern platforms compared to the older teachers who may find some of the platforms unwieldy and difficult to use.

In the hypothesis 1 testing, the Pearson correlation sig. value is 0.301, which is greater than 0.05 (i.e. the null hypothesis (H_0) is to be accepted). This means that the knowledge of child sexual abuse prevention has no effect on the self-efficacy of child sexual abuse prevention among teacher. This point that teachers may have knowledge of child sexual abuse prevention but that does not have any impact on their self-efficacy of child sexual abuse prevention among teacher.

The results in hypothesis 2 table show that the Pearson correlation sig. value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05(i.e the null hypothesis (H_0) is to be rejected). This means that the attitude of child sexual abuse prevention among teachers has significant effect on the self-efficacy of child sexual abuse prevention among teacher.

This study has ascertained that the attitude teachers shows towards child sexual abuse prevention affect the self-efficacy among them.

IMPLICATIONS TO RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

This study on secondary school teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy towards CSA prevention has significant implications for both research and practice. For research, it provides a methodological framework for assessing teacher readiness in CSA prevention, contributes to theoretical understanding of the interplay between knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy, and identifies specific knowledge gaps to be addressed in future studies. In practice, nursing professionals can draw important implications from this study. They can collaborate with educators to enhance teacher-training programs, ensuring that child sexual abuse prevention is adequately addressed. Nurses can also provide resources and support to teachers to bolster their

self-efficacy and reinforce their role in safeguarding students. Ultimately, a multidisciplinary approach involving both teachers and nurses can create a safer and more protective environment for children, minimizing the risks and consequences of child sexual abuse.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that while teachers demonstrate good knowledge and positive attitudes toward child sexual abuse prevention, there is room for improvement in self-efficacy. Efforts should focus on enhancing teachers' confidence and commitment to proactive prevention through comprehensive training programs and supportive environments. Recommendations include the development of comprehensive training programs for teachers, fostering open communication environments within schools, prioritizing child safety through policies and practices, and collaboration between schools, child protection agencies, and NGOs.

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