



## **Single Parenting and Prevalence of Child Sexual Abuse in Ijebu Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State**

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### **Abstract**

Due to lack of supporting spouse in the upbringing of children, it is believed that single parents may have challenges in playing their parental roles on children, and this will no doubt have negative impact on the children. Studies revealed that children from single parent homes usually experience abuse especially sexual abuse often. This study therefore investigates the contribution of single parent homes on the prevalence of child sexual abuse among Junior Secondary School students in Ijebu Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State in Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive research design, and purposive sampling technique was used to select six schools in Ijebu Ode Local Government Area, while volunteering sampling technique was used to select 115 students who were from single parent homes as participants from the selected six schools. Structured questionnaire tagged ‘Single Parenting and Prevalence of Child Sexual Abuse Scale’ (SPPCSA) was used to collect data. Three research questions were raised for the study. The results show among others that leaving children to caregivers and neighbours, illiteracy, children going on errands alone, exposure to pornography, visiting people for assistance in times of needs, e.t.c. contribute to increase in child sexual abuse in single parents’ homes. It was recommended that more job opportunities should be created in addition to wage increase, such that single parent can also benefit and be able to cope with their financial challenges.

Keywords: Single-Parent, Child, Sexual-Abuse, Students, Ijebu-Ode

### **Introduction**

A child can be described as a young person between infancy and puberty. A child is a young person of either sex that is below the age of puberty or the legal age of majority (Webster, 2021). Child is built up with some characteristics, such as curiosity, resilience, integrity, resourcefulness, creativity, empathy, assertiveness, dependency, vulnerability, and resilience. Of all these traits, dependability of children on adults around them is more pronounced, since they expect to be protected and defended by them. Unfortunately, adults

(e.g. parents, other family members, caregiver, sports coaches, teachers etc) who are supposed to serve as strength and pillar to these vulnerable children are guilty of abusing them.

Abuse means using something or someone badly, or to use something or someone for a bad purpose, or to misuse someone or something, or improper use of something/someone; and it can be cruel and violent treatment of a person/animal/something. Therefore, child abuse is the improper treatment of a child. It can mean cruel or violent treatment given to a child. Child abuse is any emotional, sexual, or physical mistreatment or neglect by an adult in a role of responsibility toward someone who is under 18 years of age (Brazier, 2018). In support to Brazier (2018), Holland (2019) states that child abuse is any mistreatment or neglect that causes harm to a child 18 years old or younger, and that it is caused by an adult, often one with a role of responsibility in the child's life. Child Sexual Abuse can be in form of inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; the exploitative use of children in pornographic performance and materials (Zukauskienė, Bakaitylė, Kaniusonytė, Segal, Ustinaviciute-Wenauske & Santtila 2023).

There have been several cases of child sexual abuse in Nigeria; cases of adult males defiling young under-aged girls being widely reported daily in both the print and electronic media. Child sexual abuse in Nigeria is an offence under several sections of chapter 21 of the country's criminal code (Ezeamalu, 2015). UNICEF (2015) reports that one in four girls and one in ten boys in Nigeria had experienced sexual violence before the age of 18. According to a survey by Positive Action for Treatment Access, over 31.4 percent of girls in the study said that their first sexual encounter had been rape or forced sex of some kind (Kawu, 2013). The Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development reported that 1,200 girls had been raped in 2012 in Rivers, a coastal state in south-western Nigeria (Kawu, 2015). According to UNICEF (2015), six out of ten children in Nigeria experience emotional, physical or sexual abuse before the age of 18, with half experiencing physical violence (Stein, 2015)

It has been observed that child sexual abuse is perpetrated by known and trusted caregivers; no wonder Aruna (2018) observes that most times, child sexual abuse is an act of betrayal of trust which is perpetrated mostly by close neighbours, uncles, pastors, imams, teachers, fathers etc. World Health Organisation, WHO (2022) identifies number of factors make children vulnerable to sexual abuse, but the key determinants are believed to be female sex (though in some developing countries male children constitute a large proportion of child victims); unaccompanied children; children in foster care, adopted children, stepchildren; physically or mentally handicapped children; history of past abuse; poverty; war/armed conflict; psychological or cognitive vulnerability; social isolation (e.g. lacking an emotional support network); parent(s) with mental illness, or alcohol or drug

dependency; single parent homes; and broken homes among others.

As stated above, there are so many factors that contribute to the prevalence of child sexual abuse, among these factors is single parenting, which is the focus of this study. Single parenting is an act of taking care of a child (biological or adopted) by a single parent (father or mother, adopted father or adopted mother) alone. Single parenting is a situation in which one of the two individuals involved in the conception of the child is being responsible for upbringing of the child (Wajim, 2020). A single parent family is a family with children and is headed by a single parent. A single parent is a person who lives with a child or children and who does not have a spouse or live with a partner. Gongala (2022) defines single parenting as a parent bringing up a child or children alone without a partner. The reasons for single parenting can vary. Reasons for becoming a single parent include divorce, break-up, abandonment, domestic violence, rape, death of the other parent, childbirth by a single person or single-person adoption, unintended pregnancy, separation, death, or birth to unmarried couples (Ekpenyong & Udisi, 2016). Gongala (2022) adds that single parents may have been in a relationship which they left, or their partners might have passed away, or been summoned to an active job. Some women choose to be single parents via surrogacy.

All over the world, collapse of the family structure has given rise to more single parent families. Death of spouse resulted in most of the single parent families recorded in twentieth century unlike in recent time. It has been noted that divorce and separation contributed to single parent families after the second world war. It was also found out that 80% of 12.9 million single parent families in US were headed by female. There was rapid growing trend of single parents. It was reported that out of every ten parents, there are four single parents. That shows the high prevalence and trend of single parenting in the society. (Wajim, 2020).

Single parenthood is now a very common pattern of family in Nigeria lately unlike before when they were not many, hence, ignored and considered as exceptional cases. (Ekpenyong & Udisi, (2016). Increase in the number of single parent's families enhances its gaining of global dimension. In Nigeria, single parenthood is now seen as a norm instead of otherwise. It has been observed that despite the popularity and acceptance of marriage in Nigeria, there are still significant proportion of adults who are not married and these constitute 35% of the population (Wajim, 2020). More so, single parenthood prevails because of the prevalence of divorce, death of a partner and separation from partner.

It has been observed that some children raised in single-parent families succeed, while some are faced with significant challenges in their transition to adulthood. Children that are raised in single-parent families experience financial constraints, dropping out of school and becoming teen parents (Ekpenyong & Udisi, 2016). Children in lower-income, single parent families face the most significant barriers to success in school and the work force. Some researchers have noted that increase in child poverty in Nigeria was caused by

the rise in single-parent families, especially mother-child families (Ekpenyong & Udisi, 2016).

The study carried out by Wajim (2020) unveiled that finance was the major problems encountered by many single parents. This resulted in many single parents finding it difficult to meet the basic needs of their children such as food, clothing, school fees, and other personal needs, and this accounts for the difficulty in maintaining discipline among their children. In addition to financial challenge faced by single parents, social and emotional challenges which may cause the children greater risk of embarking on dangerous social vices such as drug and substance abuse, taking of alcohol and engaging in criminal activities. The challenges faced by single parents expose their children to dangers such as accidents, abuse and so on. It is assumed that the challenges faced by single parents may affect their roles in bringing up their children, hence exposing the children to harassment and abuse. Therefore, this study aims at examining the contributions of single parenthood to the prevalence of child sexual abuse among junior secondary school students in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State

### **Research Purposes**

The study aims to:

1. to find out factors that contribute to the prevalence of child sexual abuse in single parenting home.
2. to investigate common forms of sexual abuse among children from single parent families
3. to determine the rate at which children from single parenting home experience sexual abuse

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the factors that contribute to the prevalence of child sexual abuse in single parenting homes?
2. What are the common forms of sexual abuse children from single parenting homes experience?
3. What is the rate at which children from single parenting homes experience sexual abuse?

### **Research Methods**

The research design adopted for the study was descriptive research design. The population of the study consisted of all junior secondary school students who were from single parent homes in Ijebu Ode local government area of Ogun State. Purposive sampling

technique was used to select six public junior secondary schools within Ijebu Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State, and volunteering sampling technique was used to select one hundred and fifteen participants among the students. Public junior secondary schools were considered for the study because public schools were affordable to many parents, hence, the belief that many children from single parent homes could be got there. Moreso, Junior Secondary school students were selected for the study because many of them were not mature and not up to 18 years of age, therefore, they were categorized as children; they were also literate enough to attend to the questionnaires without any guide. It is believed that junior secondary school students would attend to the questionnaires without assistant and guide, and this made them feel free and very sincere while providing responses to the questionnaires.

### Data Analysis and Discussion

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	33	28.7	28.7	28.7
	Female	82	71.3	71.3	100.0
	Total	115	100.0	100.0	

From Table 1 above, it is revealed that the percentage of female students (82%) exceeds male students (33%). This shows that number of female children from single parenting homes are more than male children. This may be reason for the increase in child sexual abuse, because it believed that girls are abused more than boys. In support of this, it was analysed that one in nine girls and one in fifty-three boys under the age of 18 experience sexual abuse or assault from adult RAINN (2022). The result showing that 82% of all victims under 18 are female; and that females ages 16-19 are four times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault (RAINN, 2022).

Table 2: Age of participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	2	1.7	1.8	1.8
	10.00	1	.9	.9	2.8
	11.00	2	1.7	1.8	4.6
	12.00	10	8.7	9.2	13.8
	13.00	18	15.7	16.5	30.3
	14.00	17	14.8	15.6	45.9
	15.00	6	5.2	5.5	51.4
	16.00	12	10.4	11.0	62.4
	17.00	17	14.8	15.6	78.0
	18.00	2	1.7	1.8	79.8
	20.00	4	3.5	3.7	83.5
	21.00	3	2.6	2.8	86.2
	22.00	4	3.5	3.7	89.9
	23.00	4	3.5	3.7	93.6
	25.00	2	1.7	1.8	95.4
	26.00	3	2.6	2.8	98.2
	35.00	2	1.7	1.8	100.0
	Total	109	94.8	100.0	
Missing	System	6	5.2		
Total		115	100.0		

Table 2 shows the ages of the respondents. Looking at the table, some of the students did not give their actual age for the reason best known to them, but it is revealed that many of the children are 13-year-old (15%), followed by 14 and 17 year olds (14.8%), followed by 12 year olds (8.7%). The ages of these children imply that many of them are still adolescents, they are not mature, hence, they are vulnerable, the reason for using junior secondary school students.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	JS1	31	27.0	30.4	30.4
	JS2	47	40.9	46.1	76.5
	JS3	24	20.9	23.5	100.0
	Total	102	88.7	100.0	
Missing	System	13	11.3		
Total		115	100.0		

Table 3 shows that 40.9% of the respondents are in J.S 2, 27% in J.S 2 and 20.9% in J.S 3. This just tells us about the classes of the children.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No edu	22	19.1	19.1	19.1
	Primary	27	23.5	23.5	42.6
	Ssce	19	16.5	16.5	59.1
	nce/ond	17	14.8	14.8	73.9
	Degree	23	20.0	20.0	93.9
	Masters	6	5.2	5.2	99.1
	Phd	1	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	115	100.5	100.5	

From Table 4, highest number of the single parents of the children in the study have only primary school certificate (23.5%), 19.1% have no education at all, that is, they did not attend school at all, 16.5% of the parents have S.S.C.E. This shows that 59% of the single parents of the children are illiterates, while 40% of them are literates (14% =OND, 20%=Degree and 5.2%=Masters). This result implies that many single parents are illiterates. Many might have found themselves in the situation of single parenthood because of inexperience and lack of exposure. Lack of exposure in the sense of using contraceptives to avoid unwanted pregnancies, or lack of finance due to lack of good employment caused by lack of employable certificates, which means, economically they are poor; and poverty has been associated with the increase in child sexual abuse.

Table 5: Types of single parenthood

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SBF	43	37.4	41.0	41.0
	SBM	44	38.3	41.9	82.9
	ASF	7	6.1	6.7	89.5
	ASM	11	9.6	10.5	100.0
	Total	105	91.3	100.0	
Missing	System	10	8.7		
Total		115	100.0		

From Table 5, it is revealed that, those children staying with their biological single parents (Single Biological Father SBF and Single Biological Mother SBM), many of them are from Single Biological Mother (SBM) (38%), and those staying with adopted single parents, many of them come from Adopted Single Mother (ASM) (9.6%). This implies that, we have many female single parents than male single parents. This might have contributed to the increase in child sexual abuse since many mothers are illiterates, this means that they don't have office jobs, they may be traders very busy with business, hence they don't really have the time to care and monitor the children.

### Results

In this section, decision to accept is based on the addition of the first two rows (SA + A = Agreed) while that of the last two rows (D + SD = Disagreed) is rejection. Similarly, the row with higher frequency and percentage determines whether the remark is taken to be 'Yes' or 'No'.

**Research Question 1:** What are the factors that contribute to the prevalence of child sexual abuse in single parenting homes?



Table 6: Factors contributing to the prevalence of child sexual abuse in single parent homes

S/N	Item	SA	(%)	A	(%)	D	(%)	SD	(%)	Remarks
1	Parents care less about them.	22	(19.1)	42	(36.5)	32	(27.8)	19	(16.5)	Agreed
2	Parents are busy at work.	19	(16.5)	59	(51.3)	24	(20.9)	13	(11.3)	Agreed
3	Parents are busy with their businesses.	27	(23.5)	48	(41.7)	27	(23.5)	13	(11.3)	Agreed
4	Parents don't believe in them.	16	(13.9)	31	(27.0)	44	(38.3)	23	(20.0)	Disagreed
5	They are easily exposed to abuser in time of need.	27	(23.5)	50	(43.5)	23	(20.0)	16	(14.0)	Agreed
6	Care givers abuse children from single parent homes.	16	(13.9)	59	(51.3)	23	(20.0)	16	(13.9)	Agreed
7	They are sexually abused by neighbours taking care of them when parents are not around.	27	(47.8)	55	(47.8)	18	(15.7)	15	(13.0)	Agreed
8	Children from single parent are sexually abuse by neighbours while playing with them.	20	(17.4)	55	(47.8)	22	(19.1)	16	(13.9)	Agreed
9	They hawk to get income to meet the needs of the home	31	(27.0)	39	(33.9)	26	(22.6)	17	(14.8)	Agreed
10	They sleep at home alone when their parents are not at home.	38	(33.0)	31	(27.0)	28	(24.3)	17	(14.8)	Agreed
11	Sleeping with neighbours and friends when parent is not around expose them to it.	41	(35.7)	44	(38.3)	18	(15.7)	11	(9.6)	Agreed
12	They go on errands alone.	34	(29.6)	46	(40.0)	20	(17.4)	14	(12.2)	Agreed
13	The parent lives a wayward life.	27	(23.5)	34	(29.6)	29	(25.2)	23	(20.0)	Agreed
14	They go to school in company of friends and neighbours.	18	(15.7)	65	(56.5)	14	(12.2)	17	(14.8)	Agreed
15	They are exposed to intimate partners/friends of parent.	13	(11.3)	68	(59.1)	14	(12.2)	16	(13.9)	Agreed
16	Parent's illiteracy.	15	(13.0)	66	(57.4)	18	(15.7)	14	(12.2)	Agreed
17	Nonchalant attitude of parents to important issues of children and how they feel.	24	(20.9)	52	(45.2)	22	(19.1)	16	(13.9)	Agreed
18	There is no closeness between the parents and the children.	25	(21.7)	43	(37.4)	25	(21.7)	20	(17.4)	Agreed
19	The inability of the parent to create time to discuss and share experience of life with the children.	3	(2.6)	18	(15.7)	58	(50.4)	36	(31.3)	Disagreed

Looking at Table 6, the results show that almost all the children from single parent homes agreed and strongly agreed on the proposed factors that contribute to the increase of child sexual abuse in single parents' homes. It is revealed from the results of tables 6 that many single parents care less about their children (55.6%), they are very busy at work (67.8%) and busy with their businesses (65.2%), hence their children are vulnerable to abuse. Parents are busy with their work and businesses so as to meet the needs of the children. Income comes from one parent, hence the need for the single parent to stay at work more for her to earn more income; and this will definitely have negative impacts on the children. The children may be exposed to abuse while the parents are at work. This submission is in line with Melinda Ratini (2021) who affirms that single parents spend less quality time with their children as they need to juggle work and children, busy trying to fulfill the roles of both parents.

The results also show that children from single parents' homes are easily exposed to abuser in time of need (67%). This may occur when children visit people for financial assistance or for other assistance. The studies of Udisi and Ekpoenyong (2016) and Melinda-Ratini (2021) are in support of this. The studies affirm that being a single parent and struggling to earn more money often coincides, and that, lack of money makes single parents not being supportive to their children financially, hence children from single parent homes are subject to problems to their socio-economic groups.

Moreover, the result shows that care givers (65.2%) and neighbours (71.3% and 65.2%) usually abuse single parents' children while taking care of them or while playing with them. In support of these results Gross-Manos, Haas, Richter, Korbin, Crampton and Spilsbury (2019) in their study, discovered that lack of religion, drugs, alcohol, psychological or emotional problems, divorce, and being single parents are factors that contribute to maltreatment of children of single parents by care givers. Gross-Manos et.al (2019) agree that caregivers do abuse children from single parent homes, but to them it may be because of some factors such as psychological or emotional problems, drugs, e.t.c.

The result also shows that hawking by single parents' children to get income to meet the needs of their homes (60.9%) contributes to child sexual abuse in single parent homes. Ikechebelu, Udigwe, Ndinechi, and Joe-Ikechebelu (2008) support this fact by stating that young girls that engage in street hawking are exposed to all forms of hazards, including sexual abuse. In their study on sexual abuse among juvenile female street hawkers in Anambra Oyo State, Nigeria, Ikechebelu et.al (2008) found out that out of 186 respondents, 130 (69.9%) had been sexually abused with 32 (17.2%) having had penetrative sexual intercourse, while 28.1% were forced and 56.3% submitted willingly while hawking. They also found out other types of sexual abuse experienced by the female hawkers to include inappropriate touches.

The results also revealed that (60%), 16 (74%) and 17 (69.6%), show that many single parents don't sleep at home, hence, their children sleep alone at home or sleep with

their neighbours and friends. The result also revealed that (69.6%) agreed that children from single parent homes are exposed to sexual abuse when they go on errands alone without company of trusted elders. These imply that sleeping alone or sleeping with their neighbours or friends, and running errands alone without company of trusted adult expose the children from single parents homes to sexual abuse as there is no trusted relative to guide them while parents are absence. These results confirm the findings of Ige and Fawole (2011), which state that over a quarter (27.1%) of parents in their study often left their children alone and unsupervised, hence, exposed them to dangers such as sexual abuse. In line with this, ScienceDaily (2007) states that there is possibility of absence of parent in single parents' homes because parents have to work for more than required hours in order to make provision for all the basic needs of the family. Unfortunately, the absence of the single parents at home will make the children seek for adults to bond and share experiences with, hence, exposing themselves to predators.

Furthermore, the findings show that single parents living wayward lives (53.1%) and exposing their children to their intimate partners/friends (70.4%) consciously or unconsciously contribute to increase in child sexual abuse in single parent homes. This result reveals that respondents agreed with the notion that single parents care less about their children and they sometime demonstrate nonchalant attitude towards issues that concern them.

The result also reveals that going to school in company of friends and neighbours exposes the children from single parent homes to child sexual abuse (72.2%). This implies that the children may not also be safe in the hands of trusted people like friends and neighbours. This is in line with Aruna (2018) who observes that child sexual abuse is perpetrated by known and trusted caregivers and that most times, children are abused sexually due to betrayal of trust mostly by close neighbours, pastors, imams, uncles, fathers and teachers.,

Furthermore, the findings disclose that lack of closeness between single parents and their children (59.1), and the inability of the single parents to make up time to discuss and share life experiences with their children (66.1%) contribute significantly to the prevalence of child sexual abuse in single parent homes. RAINN (2022) states that parents need to be available for their children; they have to share interest in their children's day-to-day lives, know the people in their children's lives, encourage their children to speak up and teach them about the boundaries in their bodies. To RAINN, if parents are actively involved in children's lives, it can make warning signs of child sexual abuse more obvious and help the children feel more comfortable coming to their parents if something isn't right.

Meanwhile, the table shows that illiteracy of many single parents contributes to the prevalence of child sexual abuse among children from such homes (70.4%). People in the society, especially parents should be encouraged to acquaint themselves with all the necessary information, knowledge and skills about child sexual abuse. Mathews (2011)

encourages teachers to get necessary specialized knowledge and sufficient training that will assist them in identifying indicators of child sexual abuse and enable them to have feeling of confidence while fulfilling their roles as reporters of child sexual abuse. If teachers, who are believed to know more about child sexual abuse, have been encouraged to know more about child sexual abuse, parents, especially illiterates among them should also help their children by getting more knowledge about child sexual abuse too.

**Research Question 2:** What are the common forms of sexual abuse children from single parenting homes experience?

Table 7: Common forms of sexual abuse experienced by children from single parenting homes

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Remarks (highest)</i>
1	Rape	76 (66.1)	37 (32.2)	Yes
2	Assaulting the genitals	83 (72.2)	32 (27.8)	Yes
3	Unwanted touch of children from single parent homes	82 (71.3)	33 (28.7)	Yes
4	Touching of breast	91 (79.1)	24 (20.9)	Yes
5	Forceful touch of perpetrator's private organ	93 (80.9)	21 (18.3)	Yes
6	Unwanted exposure to pornography	89 (77.4)	25 (21.7)	Yes
7	Sharing of sexual jokes with children.	91 (79.1)	24 (20.9)	Yes
8	Forceful kiss	94 (81.7)	21 (18.3)	Yes
9	Touching of buttocks.	88 (76.5)	27 (23.5)	Yes
10	Unwanted forceful hugs	73 (63.5)	40 (34.8)	Yes

Table 7 reveals types of sexual abuse children from single parent homes usually experience. Many of the respondents strongly agree that children of single parents homes experience rape (66%), assaulting of genitals (72.2%), unwanted touch (71%), touching of breast (79%), forceful touch of perpetrators private organs (80.9%), unwanted exposure to pornography (77.4%), sharing sexual jokes with the children (79.1), forceful kiss (81.7%), touching of buttocks (76.5%) and unwanted forceful hugs (63.5%). All these forms and more were mentioned by Medine (2008), Williams (2019) and WHO (2022).

**Research Question 3:** What is the rate at which children from single parenting homes experience sexual abuse?

Table 8: The rate at which children from single parenting homes experience sexual abuse

S/N	Item	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Remarks
1	Many children from single parenting homes have been sexually abused.	21 (18.3)	57 (49.6)	19 (27.8)	19 (16.5)	Agreed
2	Many children from single parenting homes are currently experiencing sexual abuse.	30 (26.1)	58 (50.4)	15 (13.0)	10 (8.7)	Agreed
3	Many children from single parenting homes experience sexual abuse from early years of their lives.	26 (22.6)	41 (35.7)	28 (24.3)	18 (15.7)	Agreed
4	It is rare to see children from single parent homes without been abused sexually.	16 (13.9)	46 (40.0)	19 (16.5)	32 (27.8)	Agreed
5	Children from single parents are first targets of sexual abuse perpetrators	16 (13.9)	45 (39.1)	20 (17.4)	32 (27.8)	Agreed

Table 8 shows the prevalence of child sexual abuse in single parent homes. The results show that many children from single parenting homes have been sexually abused (67.9%), many children from single parenting homes are currently experiencing sexual abuse (76.5%); many children from single parenting homes experience sexual abuse from very early years of their lives (68.3%); it is rare to see children from single parenting homes without been abused sexually (53.9%); children from single parents are first targets of sexual abuse perpetrator (53%). Looking at the results, it can be concluded that children from single parents' homes are vulnerable to high risk of been abuse. This may be because of many single parents do not have time for their children, do not interact with them, as they do not always stay at home or sleep at home, hence making the children vulnerable to exposure to all forms of abuse especially. These findings are in line with the submission of Goldman, Salus, Wolcott, and Kennedy (2003), who found out that children who were from and living with single parents have high risk of experiencing sexual abuse and neglect than children living with two biological parents. Goldman et al. (2003) also

disclosed their findings in an analysis of child abuse cases in a nationally representative sample of 42 counties that children from single parent families are more likely to be abused sexually. ScienceDaily (2007) also supports this by affirming that adult men who grew up in one-parent households are more likely to have been abused as children.

### **Conclusion**

This study looks at single parenthood as important factor that contributes to the prevalence of child sexual abuse among junior secondary school students in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State. The study reveals that increase in child sexual abuse was caused by single parenthood factor was due to less care single parents give their children as a result of not sleeping at home sometimes, of being busy at work and with their businesses. It was also revealed that children from single parent homes experience sexual abuse while hawking to meet the needs of the family, while being with the neighbours and friends when parents are not at home and friends, while going to school among unsafe neighbours, while they are expose to pornography and sometimes wayward life of parents. The study also reveals forceful kissing, forceful hugging, forceful touching of breast, forceful touch of perpetrators' genitals, assaulting of genitals, rape, among others as the forms of sexual abuse children from single parent homes experience.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Single parents are encouraged to involve in financial savings such as local contributions. This may be used in future to meet the required needs of their household, hence, reducing the level of their children's exposure abuse.
2. Parents should always spare time to interact with their children. Interaction with children will make the children open up to their parents on any challenge they are facing. Single parents should always talk with children about child sexual abuse and children's personal and sexual safety.
3. Parents should take some basic safety precautions, such as ensuring that their children could be seen whenever they are alone with adults or young people.
4. It is advisable to get mobile phones that can be used for communication only for the children. This will allow them to quickly call attention of parents to any emergency whenever parents are not around.
5. Single parents can also ask other parents how they check in on their children's safety so as learn about grooming.

6. Parents and teachers are advised to teach children their rights about their bodies. Children should be taught that they are special and have the rights to be safe, and to also report an offender.
7. Teachers are to always give feedback on children to parents. This will help parents to continue grooming where the teacher stops at school and vice versa.
8. Single parents and teachers should always report abuse to necessary authorities.
9. Government should create enabling environment for the creation of job opportunities, and increase salaries and wages of workers. This will benefit single parents and help in solving the difficulties they face.

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