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**RESPONSE OF PASTORAL CARE TO CHILD**

**ABUSE: A CASE STUDY OF HALLELUYAH BAPTIST ASSOCIATION IN NIGER  
STATE**

I hereby declare that this work is the product of my own research efforts, undertaken under the supervision of Dr. Oluwole D.S. Ogunrombi and Dr. E.A. Banigboye and has not been presented elsewhere for the award of a degree or certificate. All sources have been duly distinguished and appropriately acknowledged.

**IDOWU, JOEL FOLASAYO**

**MATRIC NO: 08/011**

**A THESIS IN THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES, SUBMITTED TO THE  
SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, OGBOMOSO, OYO STATE AND THE UNIVERSITY  
OF JOS, PLATEAU STATE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENT FOR  
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**ABSTRACT**

This research was carried out to indentify the various causes and effects of Child Abuse in our society, with a reflection on the ways in which church trough pastor can help in preventing it and educate the societies through the church. Child Abuse is a social challenge that requires attention of the society to check the multidimensional problems it posses, even though the evil has been an age-long experience among us. Child abuse has been subjecting the innocent children to unnecessary maltreatment, denials, torture, depression and other forms of wicked acts. The researcher through review of literature made effort to give a biblical judgment against child abuse, offered discussion on the child's vulnerability to abuse, as well as some factors identified to be responsible for the different forms of child abuse.

Effort was made to examine the various causes and effect of child abuse on our society, on the child itself, on the church, and family. The different roles that the church through pastor should play in preventing child abuse in our society are also identified. The research is carried out through the questionnaire and interview which were distributed and carried out among the church members and Pastors of Halleluyah Baptist Association in Niger/Kebbi Baptist Conference of Nigerian Baptist Convention. Also interview were conducted on workers of both Niger state Welfare Home in Minna and state Rehabilitation Center in Kontagora respectively.

Observation made it clear that, a reasonable percentage of respondent became aware of abusive practices on children through the media, church programmes, newspaper/magazines, Lectures/Seminars, as well as through church programmes. Most respondent claimed not to have direct involvement in child abuse, but cited some instances of it. The areas of physical, sexual, emotional and verbal forms of child abuse, were indentified, as well as its effects on the children.

All the respondent affirmed the need to discourage the evil in the society, they suggested certain preventive roles in which the church through the pastor should play, considering the devastating effect, the wicked practice impress on the society . The respondents expressed their displeasure towards the act of child abuse and with one voice condemns it as barbaric and ungodly.

## **CONCLUSION**

Child abuse is an age-long menace but people are not well educated about it. We often treat little ones as our personal properties and as if we have no account to give to our creator, what an ignorance about the mind of God, a contradiction, a misrepresentation of the truth, we shall all give account of how we handle these helpless groups in our society. Jesus Christ said “ And if any one causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown in the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck ” (Mark 9:42 NIV).

Our society must respect the rights of children and stop teaching them as domesticated animals, but as human beings we should engage in a frantic campaign and enlightenment to educate and encourage and discourage the misfit. Quoting from Haruna Asabe of Niger State Welfare Centre, Minna on the interview conducted on him, says that,” Our people are both wicked and ignorant, that tells why one should gave birth to a child (a precious one indeed) and would not take good care of him, leaving him to the mercy of the societies”.

The church through the pastor should therefore, fight all the available battle to bring to normalcy the child abuse syndrome that has been wrecking tremendous havoc on the society, and which will continue to, unless the challenge is appropriately and spontaneously addressed.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The writer therefore offers these recommendations in the light of al research, investigation and interviews carried out on the topic:

- 1 Parent and guardians should offer useful information to children on child abuse early enough in life and give room for regular parent – child communication.
- 2 Parents should expose children to lessons on child abuse, especially sex abuse as early as age 5 years and keep on the lesson until they are mature to make personal judgment and decision for themselves.
- 3 Parents should work hard and make available the basic and other needs of their children.
- 4 Parent and guardians should be very sensitive to groups that their children belongs to (peer groups) what they watch, and read in order to be able to guide them through safely, instead of transferring their obligation on their children elsewhere.
- 5 Parent and guardians ought to be models to their children in the way they handle their children at home.
- 6 The church through the pastors should teach and preach on issue relating to child abuse with moral guideline to children with all sincerity and commitment with the aim of winning them for Christ.
- 7 Government should liaise or make provision with the curriculum planners in order to include child abuse as a subject to be taught at all levels of our educational levels.
- 8 They should put into consideration the training of teachers who would teach and counsel children on child abuse.
- 9 Church through the pastors should make available every necessary information about child abuse that will help the children recognize God's purpose for their age group in order to develop healthy attitudes towards fulfilling life.
- 10 Children themselves should avoid keeping bad companies, reading of materials that are not morally acceptable, watching of immoral movies and all the likes (1 Cor 15:33), if this is done, they will be able to defend their integrity against abuse.

- 11 Children should live by what they are being taught regarding abuse so that they can make a good decision in life and have a fulfill mission on earth (Prov 3:1-2).
- 12 Children should be made to know the Lord early in life and read the Bible daily, so that they will be able to resist all temptations of abuse.
- 13 The entire society should be involved: the rich. the poor , the Muslim and the Christian through government NGO's.