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**PREVALENCE OF FATHER-DAUGHTER INCESTUOUS
RELATIONSHIP AS PERCEIVED BY LITERATE ADULTS IN GOMBE
STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Incest is one of the salient sexual abuses that society pays less attention to because of the secrecy involved, most especially, those occurring between biological father and daughter. Gombe State is one of the leading states in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria where father-daughter incestuous relationship is high. Thus, this study investigated the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State, Nigeria. Variables of gender, age and family type were introduced to the study in order to examine their influences on respondents' perceptions. This study is descriptive in nature and a multi-stage sampling technique procedure was adopted to draw a total sample of 783 literate adults from the three senatorial districts of Gombe State. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researchers entitled "Father-Daughter Incestuous Relationship Questionnaire (FIRQ)". Percentage was used to present the demographic data of the respondents while the null hypotheses were tested using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there is high prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship in Gombe State. The hypotheses tested revealed no significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults based on gender, age and family type. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that strict law and enforcement should be made on sexual abuse, counsellors should organize seminars regularly to sensitize mothers and their children about incestuous occurrences in the family and disorientate the perpetrators of incest (fathers) against the practice, couples should show more commitment to their marriage in order to reduce to the barest minimum identified causes of father-daughter incestuous relationships.

Key Words: Prevalence, Father-Daughter Incestuous Relationship, Literate Adults.

Introduction

Incest refers to sexual intimacy with close relatives or acquaintances. It is a sexual activity between family members and close relatives (National Network, 2009). This typically includes sexual activity between people in a consanguineous relationship (blood relations) and sometimes those related by affinity, such as members of the same household, step relatives, those related by adoption or marriage or members of the same clan or lineage (Holland, 2012). From literature, it appears that there are difficulties in defining precisely what incest should encompass. The sources of confusion in the definition are the varieties of sexual activities and the numerous types of kinship between victims and perpetrators. In this work, the term 'incest' is consistent with the more distinctive definition of incest used by Cole (1992) that includes any sexual contact or behaviour for the purpose of sexual stimulation between an adult and a child; or another child in a position of power over the victim who is related within a family structure. The victim (child) can be related biologically, can be an adopted or a step-child or can be a child under the guardianship of the incest perpetrator.

Father-daughter incestuous relationship is therefore described as any sexual contact as well as any sexual activity occurring between a father and his biological daughter. Most acts of incest perpetrated by fathers involved coercion without physical force. De Young (1982) described various aspects of such relationships; which include: 'evolved incest' in which the father pays special attention to his daughter, making increasingly intimate sexual advances as time passes, and 'devious behaviour' incest in which fathers molest their daughters while they are asleep. Fathers also patronize, use 'courting behaviour' and bribe their daughters to participate in incestuous acts.

According to Hari (2002), father-daughter incest has not been widely reported in the past, but recent evidence has indicated that this behaviour does take place, possibly more often than many people realize. Among Africans especially, as a result of secrecy orientation, incest between fathers and daughters is hardly reported because nobody wants such a story to be heard outside the family. According to the National Center for Victims of Crime (2000), a large proportion of rape committed in the U.S is perpetrated by family members: 11% of rape victims were raped by their fathers or step fathers and another 16% were raped by other relatives.

Makinde (2015) from Child Advocacy Group reported a list of 95 child rape and incestuous cases in five Northern States, with Gombe at the top of the chart (with 50 cases), Kano (with 22 cases), Bauchi, Plateau and Nassarawa (with 11 cases respectively). Mijinyawa, (2015) of Premium Times reported a case of 45 years old man in Liman Katagum Local Government Area of Bauchi State who raped his 11 years old daughter and when paraded at Bauchi police headquarters said he did that because his wife left him. To support this, Orude (2015) from Daily Sun reported Jagamin, a close family, who allegedly took advantage of his victim, a 12-year-old

mentally retarded girl by raping her in Cham, Gombe State.

Based on this, the study investigated the perception of literate adults on prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship in Gombe State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide conduct of this study:

1. How prevalent is father-daughter incestuous relationship in Gombe State?
2. Is there any difference in the perceived prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship by literate adults in Gombe State based on gender?
3. Is there any difference in the perceived prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship by literate adults in Gombe State based on age?
4. Is there any difference in the perceived prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship by literate adults in Gombe State based on family type?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to assist the researcher in the conduct of the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the perceived prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship by literate adults in Gombe State based on gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the perceived prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship by literate adults in Gombe State based on age
3. There is no significant difference in the perceived prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship by literate adults in Gombe State based on family type.

Methodology

Descriptive research survey design was adopted for this study to establish the perceived prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship. Survey research employs questionnaire and interviews in order to determine the opinion, attitudes, preference and perception of person of interest to the researcher (Ibrahim & Kolo, 2004). The population for this study comprised all literate adults (1,693,606) in Gombe State (National Population Commission, 2006). The target population is made up of all the literate adults in the three selected Local Government Areas of Gombe State representing the three Senatorial Districts of the State. In selecting sample for the study, multi-stage sampling method was used. At stage one, purposive sampling was used to select one Local Government Area each from the three senatorial districts of Gombe State where father-daughter incestuous relationships were mostly reported.

At stage two, random sampling method was used to select 261 respondents from Funakaye Local Government Area, 261 respondents from Billiri Local Government Area and 261 respondents from Akko Local Government Area thus, making a total of

783 respondents that participated in this study as suggested by the Research Advisor (2006). Finally, the respondents were stratified based on their gender, age and family type. Mean scores, standard deviation, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to analyse the data collected and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender, Age and Family type

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
1.	Gender		
	Male	466	59.5
	Female	317	40.5
	Total	783	100.0
2.	Age		
	25-34 years	131	16.7
	35-44 years	269	34.4
	45 years & above	383	48.9
	Total	783	100.0
3.	Family Type		
	Monogamy	402	51.3
	Polygamy	381	48.7
	Total	783	100.0

Table 1 presents the demographic data of respondents. The table shows that out of 783 respondents who participated in the study, 466 (59.5%) were male while 317 (40.5%) were female. 131 (16.7%) were within the age bracket of 25-34 years old, 269 (34.4%) within 35-44 years while 383 (48.9%) were in the range of 45 years and above. 402 (51.3%) were from monogamous family while 381 (48.7%) were from polygamous family background.

Research Question: How prevalent is father-daughter incestuous relationship in Gombe State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents' responses on the Prevalence of Father-Daughter incestuous relationship

Item No	Father-daughter incestuous relationship is prevalent because it:	Agree %	Disagree %
8	takes place at early stage of the girl's life	581 (74.2)	202 (25.8)
1	is the most common form of incest	576 (73.6)	207 (26.4)
2	occurs in many families	568 (72.5)	215 (27.5)
6	is not usually with the consent of the girl child	564 (72.0)	119 (28.0)

9	occurs in both monogamous and polygamous Families	553 (70.6)	230 (29.4)
7	represents large proportion of reported sexual abuses in the court of law	545 (69.6)	238 (30.4)
13	mostly occur where fathers disguisedly touch their daughters' bodies	529 (67.6)	254 (32.4)
15	happen where fathers often touch their daughters' genital organs	528 (67.5)	255 (32.5)
5	is rampant among illiterates	504 (64.3)	279 (35.7)
3	is the most reported case by the media	501 (63.9)	282 (36.1)
14	is rampant in every cultural settings	493 (63.0)	290 (37.0)
12	occurs among hostile family	492 (62.8)	291 (37.2)
10	is usually perpetrated by 2 in every 10 fathers in the family	447 (57.1)	336 (42.9)
4	is often supported by some mothers	445 (56.8)	338 (43.2)
11	occurs among literates	435 (55.6)	348 (44.4)

Table 2 presented the level of agreement and disagreement of respondents to the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship in Gombe State. The table showed that more than 50% of the respondents agreed to all the items on the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship. This was indicated in Table 2 where 581 (74.2%) of respondents support that father-daughter incestuous relationship takes place at early stage of girl's life; 576 (73.8%) confirmed that it is the most common form of incest; is not usually with the consent of the girl child; 568 (72.5%) stated that it occurs in both monogamous and polygamous family; while 564 (72.0%) agreed that it occurs in many families. It can be concluded therefore, that father-daughter incestuous relationship is highly prevalent in Gombe State.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One: *There is no significant difference in the prevalence of father daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State based on gender.*

Table 3: Mean Standard Deviation and t-test Value Comparing Respondents' Perception on Prevalence of Father-Daughter Incestuous Relationship Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Male	466	42.37	6.97	781	1.19	1.96	0.24
Female	317	41.76	7.18				

Table 3 presented respondents' perception on prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship based on gender. The table showed that the calculated t-value of 1.19 was less than the critical t-value of 1.96 while the calculated p-value of 0.24 was greater at 0.05 significant level. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State based on gender.

Hypothesis Two: *There is no significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State based on age.*

Table 4: ANOVA Results Comparing Respondents' Views on Prevalence of Father-daughter Incestuous Relationship Based on Age

Source	Sum of Squares	df	MS	Cal. F-value	Crit. F-value	p-value
Between Groups	35.747	2	17.874	0.36	3.00	0.69
Within Groups	38930.735	780	49.911			
Total	38966.483	781				

Table 4 presented respondents' perception on prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship based on age. The table showed that the calculated F-value of 0.36 was less than the critical F-value of 3.00 while the calculated p-value of 0.69 was greater at 0.05 significant level. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State based on age.

Hypothesis Three: *There is no significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State based on family type.*

Table 5: Mean Standard Deviation and t-test Value Comparing Respondents' Perception on Prevalence of Father-daughter Incestuous Relationship Based on Family Type

Family type	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Monogamy	402	42.05	6.54	781	0.31	1.96	0.76
Polygamy	381	42.21	7.58				

Table 5 presented respondents' perception on prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship based on family type. The table showed that the calculated t-value of 0.31 was less than the critical t-value of 1.96 while the calculated p-value of

0.76 was greater at 0.05 significant level. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State based on family type.

Discussion

The findings of the study reveals that father-daughter incestuous relationship is highly prevalent in Gombe state because it is the most common form of incest which usually takes place at early stage in a girl's life without her consent. Father daughter incestuous relationship do occurs in many families regardless of its type (whether monogamous and polygamous) Hari (2002) noted that father-daughter incest has not been widely reported in the past, but recent evidence has indicated that this behaviour does occur, possible more often than many people realize. Incestuous father usually take advantage of close relationship that exists between him and the daughter knowing full well that the daughter would not object. Sadock and Sadock (2003) noted that in many cases of father-daughter incest, the daughter may appear to be pleased when her father approaches her sexually as she has had a close relationship with him throughout her childhood.

Many of these cases go unreported as a result of secrecy among African society and the possibility that unveiling such act could affect the life of the victim in terms of problem of having a spouse without considering the traumatic effect it may have on the child and her later generation. Shittu (2011) has discovered the same finding that there is high prevalence of father-daughter incest in Nigeria. This findings also supports the report of Makinde (2015) from child Advocacy Group where a list of 95 child rape and incestuous cases in five Northern states were found, with Gombe at the top of the chart (with 50 cases), Kano (with 22 cases), Bauchi, Plateau and Nassarawa (with 11 cases respectively). In addition, Orude (2015) from Daily Sun reported Jagamin, a close family, who allegedly took advantage of his victim, a 12-year-old mentally retarded girl by raping her in Cham, Gombe State.

Hypothesis one revealed no significant difference in the prevalence on father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State based on gender. This implies that respondents' (male and female) perception is not different on the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship. This finding negates the finding of Shittu (2011) who found significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship based on gender.

Hypothesis two revealed no significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State based on age. This indicates that the age of respondents has no influence on their perception of the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship. This suggests that all respondents regardless of age could suffer painful experience of incest and some of

these could occur in childhood. This supports the view of Briere, Evans, Runtz and Wall (1998) that age at which the sexual abuse of a girl-child could begin earlier or later and its impact is also felt by the parents regardless of their age in marriage.

Hypothesis three showed that there is no significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship as perceived by literate adults in Gombe State based on family type. This implies that regardless of family background of the respondents, their perceptions did not differ on the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship. This findings contradict that of Shittu (2011) whose findings revealed significant difference in the prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship based on family type.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed a high prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship in Gombe State in which more than 50% of the respondents agreed that in truth father-daughter incestuous relationship is highly prevalent in Gombe state. The study also found that there was no significant difference in the perceived prevalence of father-daughter incestuous relationship based on gender, age and family type. On this note, it is important that couples, Government, mothers, community members, religious organizations, marriage and family counsellors, social workers and school authorities are sensitized about the reality of father-daughter incestuous relationship in Gombe state and danger inherent in the practice for the marriage institution, the victim of the abuse and the society as whole. This is imperative if the marriage counsellors are to play their role as certified protectors of the marriage and the married people.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

1. Government should urgently enact and strictly enforce sexual abuse law (sending perpetrators to long term jail), thereby serving as deterrents to those fathers who are perpetrating such ugly act and thus protecting the lives of young girls being abused.
2. Mothers should create meaningful rapport with their daughter and secure their confidence this will enable mothers to early information on the perpetration of sexual abuse of their girl-child thereby being able to curb the menace from gaining root in the family.
3. Couples should learn to communicate their sexual needs and concern to their partners thereby reducing or eliminating incidences of sexual dissatisfaction in marriage and its resultant problems like father-daughter incestuous relationship.
4. Human rights and religious organizations should be pro-active on means of curbing the incidence of father-daughter incestuous relationship; they should

sensitize mothers and parents on danger of girl-child sexual abuse and be bold enough to report such cases and stand up for the right of these children by prosecuting the offender.

5. Counsellors should orientate mothers and their children on where, when, who and how incest could be perpetrated and its devastating effects on the victims and the entire family. This could be done through organization of seminars, public lectures, distribution of hand bills and workshops.
6. The media should help in sensitizing people on the occurrence of father-daughter incestuous relation, the need to reports such cases, prosecution of any offenders and how it can be prevented.

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