CHILD ABUSE: THE PROFILE OF THE ABUSED AND THE ABUSER

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ABSTRACT

Discipline in the Filipino culture is often carried out as a corporal punishment, if carried to the extreme would constitute as an abusive situation. The study sought to make an accurate picture of the abusive situation. Utilizing documentary research, data were gathered and profiling was done by computing the percentages. Results of the study revealed that the greater incidence of child abuse occurs most commonly in female children between the ages 12 – 18 years old, in low socio-economic families and to parents whose highest educational attainment were high school level. These abuses lasted for 1 – 5 years before it was reported to the proper authorities for intervention. Furthermore, the most common perpetrators of the abuses were the male neighbors followed by the female neighbors and the cohabiting husband; adults whom the parent/s entrust the care of their children. The study further revealed that the most common form of abuse was physical abuse in the form of hitting, followed by child-rape, spousal abuse in the presence of the child and verbal assault, respectively. It was concluded that child abuse damages the child not only physically but also psychologically. Furthermore, the parents' low socio-economic status contributes to the stress and trauma of the child and finally, part of the problem in abuse is the witnesses' unwillingness to get involved in the earliest possible time. The researcher recommends public education, creation of a crisis intervention program, and undertaking of a parallel study to identify the type of abuse at specific age group, examination of a ten-year data and establishment of the dynamics of abuse.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Children are little reflections of their parents. They learn how to live in this world through imitation without discrimination. Most Filipino adults, if not all, commonly hold the belief that children know nothing and can do nothing *(Carandang, 2004)*, therefore discipline is important to let the child know the difference between right and wrong.

Discipline through physical inflictions or through other means, as viewed in Filipino culture, is part of childrearing. Discipline, if carried to the extreme can constitute an abusive action/reaction to the child's sense of curiosity and quest for discovery and occasional naughtiness.

Everyday, children find themselves in situations where discipline practices are carried to the extreme, yet only few cases get reported to proper authorities.

According to the 2007 – 2009 Statistical Data of Child Abuse cases served by Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Philippine National Police (PNP) and Child Protection Unit – Philippine General Hospital (CPU – PGH), there are 2,955 cases of abandoned children, 6,631 neglected, 6,506 were sexually abused taking various forms as rape (3,838 cases), incest (2.096) and acts of lasciviousness (572) while sexual exploitation numbered 474 cases (victims of prostitution–296, pedophilia-89, pornography-14, cyber pornography-75) as recorded by the DSWD. The Philippine National Police on the other hand recorded a total 29 neglected and abandoned cases; 11, 701 sexually abused (rape-8,522, incest-683 and acts of lasciviousness-2,496) and victims of prostitution numbered 40 cases. The Child Protection Unit – Philippine General Hospital recorded 272 cases of neglected children and 10,372 cases of sexually abused children.

The situation reflects the belief that in majority of Filipino household, adults view children as chattels, items of property with which they can do as they please (Sviluppo, n.d). It is the purpose of this study to increase awareness among us that children endure and live in fear in an abusive situation because of their ignorance to alternatives and their dependence on their perpetrators. Thus, the profile of the abused and the abuser will be identified.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study utilized victimology, social learning and sociological theories. The victimology theory explains the universal rejection of the victim. Individuals when exposed to an abusive situation appear to resist in believing the innocence of the victim and felt helpless and vulnerable. These individuals need to find a rational explanation for the incident, thereby blame the victim for the occurrence of the incident. There is also an irrational fear of being contaminated by the victim therefore; rejection becomes a defense mechanism *(Haber, 1992)*.

Social learning theory suggests that children raised in an abusive family are at risk of mimicking abuse or violent behavior. This theory postulated that role modeling, identification and social interactions simulate aggression, thereby making it a learned behavior *(Bandura, 1973)*. When kids get hit, they learn something in that process. They learn that when frustrated or angry, it is okay to take out that frustration and anger on someone else. They learn that violence is okay. Violence then becomes a learned behavior *(Dougherty, 1996)*.

Sociological theory suggests that when children grow up in a family context of violence and aggression, they learn that it is a form of legitimate communication. This concept often results in an intergenerational transmission of violent behaviors *(Fonagy, Target & Gergely, 2000)*. Children who grow up witnessing violence in the home and on television are sensitized to believe that it is "right" behavior and will very likely continue into adulthood retreating these childhood memories and resorting to abuse when they are stressed *(Neeb, 1997)*.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study sought to make an accurate picture of the abusive situation. Furthermore, this study seeks to answer the following specific questions:

1. What is the profile of the abused child as to:
   1.1. age
   1.2. gender
2. What is the profile of the child's parent/s as to:
   2.1. marital status
   2.2. socio – economic status
   2.3. educational attainment
3. What is the profile of abusive situation as to:
   3.1. abuser
   3.2. form of abuse
   3.3. length of occurrence
4. What the reason for reporting the abuse?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

About half of the Filipino population is children and that they are most often forgotten and neglected as significant individuals. Child abuse is a problem in Filipino society as reflected in everyday news but only a few of these abuses get reported to proper authorities. Thus, this study is significant to the following:

Children in Situations of Abuse. This study aspired to convey a sense of hope and worthiness to the existence of the abused child and lessen if not, prevent the likelihood of developing dysfunctional life patterns in their adulthood and the development of an intergenerational cycle of abuse by perpetrating their pain and becoming abusers themselves. This study will empower them because most situations of abuse often involve power relations between the child and the abuser.

Nurturing adult who intervened in the abuse. This will encourage them to continue the activity to protect the child and to convey that they are not alone in their quest of protecting children from any form of violence.

Witnesses to the abuse. This study hoped to open their eyes that abuse to children in any form is a reportable case and that victims to these abuses are helpless, are at the mercy of their adult perpetrator for their survival and are often unequipped to protect themselves.

Community in general. Protection of children from any form of abuse is mandated by law and that occurrence of abuse is a reportable case.

Future researchers. This may serve as a guide or basis in conducting further studies into the cause and effect relationships of abuse and violence to the development of the child experiencing abuse.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

To better understand the study the following terms are operationally defined:

Abused child. This individual often referred to as the victim of an abusive situation and the subject of this study aging 0-17 years old.

Abuser. The individual who is responsible of abusing the child, the perpetuator.

Abusive situation. The condition or circumstances in which the abuse is taking place or had taken place and the form of abuse inflicted in the child.

Abuse. The maltreatment of an individual which violates his/her rights and presents threat. The abuse

may come as physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or psychological (emotional) abuse.

Physical abuse often presents as severe corporal punishment, unjustifiable punishment, intentional deliberate assaults and the victim often has evidence of old injuries *(Videbeck, 2004)*.

Sexual abuse involves sexual acts performed by adults on a child younger than 18 years old which may involve single incident or repeated contact over a protracted period of time. Another form of sexual abuse is the exploitation of a minor *(Videbeck, 2004)*.

Neglect is the malicious or ignorant withholding of physical, emotional or educational necessities for the child's well-being. Child abuse by neglect is the most prevalent type of maltreatment and includes refusal to seek health care or doing so; abandonment; inadequate supervision; reckless disregard for the child's safety, punitive; exploitive or abusive emotional treatment; spousal abuse in the child's presence; giving the child permission to be truant; or failing to enroll child in school *(Videbeck, 2004)*.

Psychological (emotional) abuse includes verbal assaults, such as blaming, screaming, name-calling and using sarcasm; constant family discord characterized by fighting, yelling and chaos; emotional deprivation or withholding affection, nurturing and normal experiences that engender acceptance, love, security, and self-worth. Emotional abuse often accompanies other types of abuse (physical or sexual). Exposure to parental alcoholism, drug use or prostitution and the neglect that result from these situations are included in this category *(Videbeck, 2004)*.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Document analysis was implemented. This method involves the assessment of document for quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of data gathered from the document review *(Balihar, 2007)*.

ENVIRONMENT

Cebu City is a highly urbanized community in the center of the island of Cebu. It has a land area of 291.2 km2, with 80 barangays and boosts of a population of 798,809 people as of 2007 *(Wikipedia, 2010)*. Most inhabitants of Cebu City are oriented towards non – agricultural lines such as trade and services, because Cebu is home to some national and international companies and businesses *(Cebu City 2010)*.

To protect the residents of Cebu City from ill – fated individuals, the Cebu City Government set –up 12 police stations located at major barangays within the city. These police stations have a Women and Children Protection Desk. The Women and Children Protection Desks are managed by a policewoman, who cater to victims of abuse, records these incidences and teach the victims of their rights and how they can protect themselves from further abuse.

SUBJECTS

This is a document of all the incidences of child abuse that are recorded in the logs of various police stations in Cebu. The logs of these police stations reflected a record of incidences of child abuse from 2008 until October 2010. The data reflected in the log were considered for this study.

INSTRUMENT

For purposes of the study, the researcher made a statistical data collection guide which was furnished to the women's desk supervisor to be filled out by the police office statistician. This instrument was initially made as the researcher's guide in data collection and document review which contains the demographic data of the abused child and parents, the reported abuser, the type of abuse inflicted and the triggering factors for reporting of the abuse. This instrument was presented to the supervisor at the police office but due to the sensitivity of the case of child abuse, the initial data gathering instrument was not accepted by them. Thus a new statistical data collection guide was made which would allow the police office statistician to fill out the needed data for this study without the researcher needing to meet the subjects face to face and reviewing the police officer's log of incidences. This new guide was patterned after the objectives and the specific questions of this study. The new instrument was then presented back to the police supervisor and was approved for use.

DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES

A letter was sent to the police director asking for his permission to collect statistical data on child abuse from the various police stations. A copy of the proposal was attached to the cover letter. As per agreement with the women's desk supervisor, a statistical data

collection guide patterned according to the objectives of the study was given to them to be filled by the police office statistician. The filled up statistical guide was retrieved two weeks after it was furnished to the police officer. Documentary analysis was utilized.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data reflected in the instrument was quantitatively analyzed. The profiles of the victims, parents, and the abusive situation were obtained with the use of percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After profiling using percentages the following were inferred from the data gathered.

Table 1 suggests that the reported incidences of abuse occurred as early as the 0 – 1 year old age group, that is the child suffered abuse as early as the early years of life or infancy period. From 2008 to 2010, it can be noticed that the greater percentage of reported incidences of abuse occurred during the adolescent period. The increase in number of reported abuse incidences during the adolescent period is due to the fact that adolescents are better able to explore their options concerning the abusive situation. Adolescence is accompanied by an increasing ability to think abstractly, consider the hypothetical as well as the real, engage in more sophisticated and elaborate information processing strategies, consider multiple dimensions of a problem at once, and reflect on one's self and on complicated problems. There is also a steady increase in learning strategies, in knowledge of a variety of different topics and subject areas, in the ability to apply knowledge to new learning situations, and in the awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses as a learner (Eccles, 2010).

Table 2 reflected the incidences of abuse according to gender for each age group. Abuse do occur at the infancy stage regardless of the child's gender, however it can be noted that more incidences of abuse occur among the female gender as the age group advances. In 2008, there were more reported cases of abuse among females belonging to the 12 to 18 years age group in comparison to the succeeding years in the same age group. This is attributed to the fact the PNP launched their campaign on Police visibility and the setting up of Women's and children's desk on each police station, according to Chief

superintendent Yolanda Tanigue of the Philippine National Police (Kwok, 2009). With this campaign victims are better equipped at protecting themselves by reporting the incidences of abuse to policewomen that they can see in the streets. The police visibility campaign had empowered female victims to fight their abusers and assert for their rights through allaying fear and betrayal and the knowledge that there is a policewoman who is in a better position to understand their experience.

Moreover, the table also suggests that more abuses are inflicted among the female gender because society views the female gender as the weaker sex, according to Hope Abella, Chairperson of Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse (Kwok, 2009). This society's perception of the weaker sex had left the female gender vulnerable to abuses committed by the opposite sex who are espousing the machismo image of an ideal man.

Table 3 reflects an almost equal occurrence of incidences of child abuse between those whose parents are married and those whose parents are cohabiting. In other words, the parents' marital status has no direct influence on the incidences of abuse occurring among children. It is consistent however, that as the child's age advances reports of abuse also increases.

Child abuse occurs regardless of the socio-economic status of the parents. It knows no socio-economic boundaries, however it can be noted on Table 4, that the early occurrence of abuse, that is occurring during the infancy period happens among the low income socio-economic status (SES) parents. Moreover, it can also be noted that there is a higher incidence of abuse among the low SES family than any other SES. Review of related literature revealed abuse potential among this economic group. According to the study conducted by Briggs and Hawkins (1994), parents coming from the low socio-economic status are least likely to reinforce safety concepts at home and children from low socio-economic status are least likely to trust their parents to provide protection.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Gelles (1992), and Trickett, Abbey, Carlson and Cichetti (1991), they found out that violence towards children, especially severe violence, is more likely to occur in households with annual income below poverty line. Members of this socio-economic strata experience more stress brought about by poverty. The experience of distress diminishes the parents ability to respond to the needs in a supportive way (Drucker, 2000)

Table 1. Age Distribution of the Abused Children (N = 455)

Age group	2008	%	2009	%	2010	%	Total	%
0 – 1 yr old			2	0.44	3	0.66	5	1.1
1 – 3 yrs old	5	1.1	7	1.54	2	0.44	14	3.08
3 – 6 yrs old	9	1.98	12	2.64	11	2.42	32	7.03
7 – 11 yrs old	39	8.57	33	7.25	30	6.59	102	22.42
12 – 18 yrs old	121	26.59	109	23.96	72	15.82	302	66.37
Total	174	38.24	163	35.83	118	25.93	455	100

Table 2. Gender Distribution of the Abused Children (N = 455)

Age group	2008				2009				2010				Total			
	M	%	F	%	M	%	F	%	M	%	F	%	M	%	F	%
0–1 yr old					1	0.22	1	0.22	3	0.66			4	0.88	1	0.22
1–3 yrs old			5	1.1	1	0.22	6	1.32	1	0.22	1	0.22	2	0.44	12	2.64
3–6 yrs old	5	1.1	4	0.88	6	1.32	6	1.32	8	1.76	3	0.66	19	4.18	13	2.88
7–11 yrs old	19	4.18	20	4.4	21	4.62	12	2.64	18	3.96	12	2.64	58	12.75	44	9.67
12–18 yrs old	39	8.57	82	18.02	42	9.23	67	14.73	27	5.93	45	9.89	108	23.74	194	42.64
Total	63	13.85	111	24.4	71	15.61	92	20.2	57	12.53	61	13.41	191	42	264	58

Table 3. Marital Status of the Abused Child's Parents (N = 449)

Age group	2008				2009				2010				Total			
	M	%	C	%	M	%	C	%	M	%	C	%	M	%	C	%
0-1 yr old					1	0.22	1	0.22	2	0.45	1	0.22	3	0.67	2	0.45
1–3 yrs old	3	0.67	2	0.45	4	0.89	3	0.67			2	0.45	7	1.56	7	1.56
3–6 yrs old	6	1.34	3	0.67	6	1.34	6	1.34	7	1.56	4	0.89	19	4.23	13	2.9
7-11 yrs old	20	4.45	15	3.34	14	3.12	19	4.23	12	2.67	18	4.0	46	10.24	52	11.58
12-18 yrs old	60	13.36	60	13.36	61	13.59	48	10.69	29	6.46	42	9.35	150	33.41	150	33.41
Total	89	19.82	80	17.82	86	19.16	77	17.15	50	11.14	67	14.92	225	50.11	224	49.89

Legend: M – Married C – Cohabiting

Table 4. Socio – economic status of the Abused Child's Parents (N=454)

Age Group (yrs.old)	0 – 1		1 – 3		3 – 6		7 – 11		12 – 18		Total	
SE Status	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
2008												
Low income			5	1.1	4	0.88	12	2.64	50	11	71	15.6
Middle Income					5	1.1	20	4.41	55	12.11	80	17.62
High Income							6	1.32	24	5.29	30	6.61
2009												
Low income	2	0.44	7	1.54	9	1.98	21	4.63	56	12.33	95	20.93
Middle Income					3	0.66	12	2.64	34	7.49	49	10.8
High Income									19	4.19	19	4.19
2010												
Low income	2	0.44	1	0.1	8	1.76	15	3.3	42	9.25	68	15
Middle Income	1	0.1	1	0.1	1	0.1	8	1.76	24	5.29	35	7.71
High Income					2	0.44			5	1.1	7	1.54
Total	5	1.1	14	3.08	32	7.05	94	20.7	309	68.1	454	100

Table 5. *Educational Attainment of the Abused Child's Parents (N=414)*

Age Group (yrs.old)	0 – 1		1 – 3		3 – 6		7 – 11		12 – 18		Total	
Educational Attainment (EA)	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
2008											151	
Professional									4	0.97	4	0.97
College Graduate							5	1.2	11	2.66	16	3.87
College Level							7	1.69	13	3.14	20	4.83
High School Graduate					4	0.97	12	2.9	6	1.45	22	5.31
High School Level			2	0.48	5	1.2	7	1.69	22	5.31	36	8.7
Elementary Graduate							4	0.97	6	1.45	10	2.42
Elementary Level			3	0.72			3	0.72	22	5.31	28	6.76
Not been to school at all							1	0.24	14	3.38	15	3.62
2009											157	
Professional									13	3.14	13	3.14
College Graduate							5	1.2	24	5.8	29	7.0
College Level			2	0.48			10	2.42	15	3.62	27	6.52
High School Graduate			2	0.48	9	2.17	7	1.69	5	1.2	23	5.56
High School Level	2	0.48	1	0.24			3	0.72	23	5.56	29	7.0
Elementary Graduate			2	0.48	1	0.24	1	0.24	1	0.24	5	1.2
Elementary Level							2	0.48	12	2.9	14	3.38
Not been to school at all					2		5	1.2	10	2.42	17	4.1
2010											106	
Professional									2	0.48	2	0.48
College Graduate							1	0.24	13	3.14	14	3.38
College Level	3	0.72	2	0.48	4	0.97	5	1.2	6	1.45	20	4.83
High School Graduate					5	1.2	3	0.72	13	3.14	21	5.1
High School Level					2	0.48	9	2.17	4	0.97	15	3.62
Elementary Graduate							3	0.72	15	3.62	18	4.35
Elementary Level							6	1.45	8	1.93	14	3.38
Not been to school at all							1	0.24	1	0.24	2	0.48
Summary by EA												
Professional									19	4.6	19	4.6
College Graduate							11	2.66	48	11.59	59	14.25
College Level	3	0.72	4	0.97	4	0.97	22	5.31	34	8.21	67	16.18
High School Graduate	2	0.48	2	0.48	18	4.35	22	5.31	24	5.8	68	16.42
High School Level			3	0.72	7	1.69	19	4.6	49	11.84	78	18.84
Elementary Graduate			2	0.48	1	0.24	8	1.93	22	5.31	33	7.97
Elementary Level			3	0.72			11	2.66	42	10.14	56	13.53
Not been to school at all					2	0.48	7	1.69	25	6.0	34	8.21
Total	5	1.2	14	3.38	32	7.73	100	24.15	263	63.53	414	100

The above table reflects the educational attainment of the abused child's parents. Parents belonging to the professional group are those who had finished a bachelor's degree, are working in their fields of specialization and pursuing postgraduate degree courses. Parents belonging to the College graduate group are the ones that had either finished a bachelor's degree and associate degree courses but are not pursuing post graduate degrees and may or may not be working in their fields of specialization. College level educational attainment would mean those that had some college education but were unable to

pursue their college degree for various reasons. High school graduate are those individuals who had finished secondary education and had decided to work after graduation instead of pursuing higher education. High school level educational attainment would mean that the individual had been and had enrolled in high school studies but stopped schooling due to various reasons. Elementary graduate are individuals who were able to finish elementary education and had decided not to pursue a high school diploma. Elementary level attainment would mean that the individual had started going to school in their elementary years but had stopped schooling. Not been to school at all, would mean individuals who had not gone to school; they may or may not be able to read and write.

In table 5, it can be noted that most of the parents whose child had experienced abuse belong to the high school level. High school years in the Philippine setting are experienced between the ages 12 to 17 years old. During this time the individual is experiencing turmoil not only physically but also emotionally and psychologically. If a parent stopped educational formation and development during this time, this would leave one to be vulnerable, emotionally insecure, fearful of rejection and mood swings. Thus with the aforementioned characteristics of a parent or parents, this would leave the child unsupported both emotionally and developmentally and this would also set the stage for an abusive environment.

Moreover, table 5 also suggests parents who are professional are not totally spared from having their children experience abuse, especially during the adolescent years in comparison to the other age group. This finding suggests that as the child grows older the professional parents does not anymore play a major role in the child's life. Typically, the adolescent's parents play a secondary role and influence in contrast to the adolescent's peer group. Children in the adolescent stage would start to make their own decisions *(Child Development Institute, 2010)*, prefer to be with their peers in social events rather than with their parents and spend more time with them away from their parents. With these developmental attributes, these leaves the adolescent unprotected and is more vulnerable to child abuse especially sexual in nature (i.e. date rape) or molestation, sexually or physically.

TABLE 6. PROFILE OF THE ABUSER (N= 494)

Table 6.1. Profile of the Abuser, year 2008

Age group	0 – 1 y.o.		1 – 3 y.o.		3 – 6 y.o.		7 – 11 y.o.		12 – 18 y.o.		Total	
VICTIMIZER	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
BM									5	1.01	5	1.01
BF									3	0.61	3	0.61
CH					3	0.61	2	0.40	17	3.44	22	4.45
CW							2	0.40	5	1.01	7	1.42
A									2	0.40	2	0.40
U			1	0.20							1	0.20
GF												0
GM												0
MS									5	1.01	5	1.01
FS					1	0.20					1	0.20
MN			2	0.40	5	1.01	23	4.66	59	11.94	89	18.01
FN							6	1.21	21	4.25	27	5.47
O												0

Legend:

BM – Biological mother   A – Auntie   MS – male sibling   BF – Biological Father   U – Uncle

FS – Female sibling   CH – Cohabiting Husband   GF – Grandfather   MN – male neighbor

CW – Cohabiting Wife   GM – grandmother   FN – female neighbor   O – others

Table 6.2. Profile of the Abuser, year 2009

Age group VICTIMIZER	0 – 1 y.o. F	0 – 1 y.o. %	1 – 3 y.o. F	1 – 3 y.o. %	3 – 6 y.o. F	3 – 6 y.o. %	7 – 11 y.o. F	7 – 11 y.o. %	12 – 18 y.o. F	12 – 18 y.o. %	Total F	Total %
BM					1	0.20	1	0.20	4	0.81	6	1.21
BF									4	0.81	4	0.81
CH	1	0.20	3	0.61			7	1.42	8	1.62	19	3.85
CW					1	0.20			10	2.02	11	2.23
A	1	0.20							2	0.40	3	0.61
U									5	1.01	5	1.01
GF									2	0.40	2	0.40
GM												0
MS									1	0.20	1	0.20
FS					6	1.21					6	1.21
MN			3	0.61	2	0.40	14	2.83	58		77	15.59
FN			1	0.20			6	1.21	15		22	4.45
O												0

Legend:
BM – Biological mother   A – Auntie   MS – male sibling   BF – Biological Father   U – Uncle
FS – Female sibling   CH – Cohabiting Husband   GF – Grandfather   MN – male neighbor
CW – Cohabiting Wife   GM – grandmother   FN–female neighbor   O – Others

Table 6.3. Profile of the Abuser, year 2010

Age group VICTIMIZER	0 – 1 y.o. F	0 – 1 y.o. %	1 – 3 y.o. F	1 – 3 y.o. %	3 – 6 y.o. F	3 – 6 y.o. %	7 – 11 y.o. F	7 – 11 y.o. %	12 – 18 y.o. F	12 – 18 y.o. %	Total F	Total %
BM	1	0.20			1	0.20	2	0.40	3	0.61	7	1.42
BF									9	1.82	9	1.82
CH	1	0.20			1	0.20	4	0.81	9	1.82	15	3.04
CW							1	0.20	1	0.20	2	0.40
A					1	0.20					1	0.20
U					1	0.20	1	0.20	1	0.20	3	0.61
GF												0
GM							1	0.20			1	0.20
MS												0
FS					5	1.01	4	0.81	2	0.40	11	2.23
MN			1	0.20	2	0.40	11	2.23	36	7.29	50	10.12
FN	1	0.20	1	0.20	1	0.20	7	1.42	7	1.42	17	3.44
O												0

Tables 6.1 through 6.3, reflects that the most common abusers are the male neighbors followed by the female neighbors and the cohabiting husband, respectively. Why the incidence of these abusers? This is a question to which literature can adequately answer. These are the people whom the parent/s trusts to spend time with their children. In modern times, it can be noted that because of the higher cost of living in urbanized areas, parents with children usually entrust the care of their children to an adult whom they think had their children's best interest in their heart *(Bland, 2006)*. Thus, the abuser is left to inflict his/her authority in the helpless child who is entrusted to his/her care.

TABLE 7. FORMS OF ABUSE (N= 181)

Table 7.1. Forms of abuse 2008

Age group	0 – 1 y.o.		1 – 3 y.o.		3 – 6 y.o.		7 – 11 y.o.		12 – 18 y.o.		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
PHYSICAL ABUSE												
Hitting			3	1.66	9	4.97	23	12.71	68	37.6	103	59.67
Scalding with hot water									1	0.55	1	0.55
SEXUAL ASSAULT												
Child - rape							8	4.42	39	21.55	47	25.97
Attempted rape							1	0.55	2	1.10	3	1.66
Incestuous rape									1	0.55	1	0.55
Acts of lasciviousness									9	4.97	9	4.97
NEGLECT												
Reckless disregard for the child's safety					1	0.55					1	0.55
Spousal abuse in the child's presence			1	0.55	2	1.10			3	1.66	6	3.31
Failing to enroll child in school									1	0.55	1	0.55
PSYCHOLOGOCAL ABUSE												
Verbal assault					2	1.10			7	3.87	9	4.97

Table 7.2. Forms of abuse 2009

Age group	0 – 1 y.o.		1 – 3 y.o.		3 – 6 y.o.		7 – 11 y.o.		12 – 18 y.o.		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
PHYSICAL ABUSE												
Hitting	2	1.10	4	2.21	11	6.1	26	14.37	64	35.36	107	59.12
SEXUAL ASSAULT												
Child - rape							5	2.76	26	14.36	31	17.13
Attempted rape									4	2.21	4	2.21
Incestuous rape									2	1.10	2	1.10
Acts of lasciviousness			1	0.55			5	2.76	13	7.18	19	10.5
NEGLECT												
Reckless disregard for the child's safety			1	0.55	1	0.55					2	1.10
Spousal abuse in the child's presence	2	1.10			2	1.10			3	1.66	7	3.87
Failing to enroll child in school			2	1.10					2	1.10	4	2.21
PSYCHOLOGOCAL ABUSE												
Verbal assault			2	1.10	2	1.10			9	4.97	13	7.18

Table 7.3. Forms of abuse 2010

Age group	0 – 1 y.o.		1 – 3 y.o.		3 – 6 y.o.		7 – 11 y.o.		12 – 18 y.o.		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
PHYSICAL ABUSE												
Hitting	3	1.66	2	1.10	10	5.52	20	11.0	36	19.89	71	39.23
SEXUAL ASSAULT												
Child - rape					1	0.55	5	2.76	15	10.99	21	11.6
Attempted rape							4	2.21			4	2.21
Acts of lasciviousness							2	1.10	12	6.63	14	7.73
NEGLECT												
Reckless disregard for the child's safety					1	0.55					1	0.55
Spousal abuse in the child's presence	1	0.55			1	0.55			3	1.66	5	2.76
Failing to enroll child in school									1	0.55	1	0.55
PSYCHOLOGOCAL ABUSE												
Verbal assault			2	1.10	7	3.87			9	4.97	18	9.94

Tables 7.1 through 7.3., reflected that the most prevalent form of abuse is physical abuse in the form of hitting the victim. In Filipino culture, hitting as a form of corporal punishment is an accepted way of disciplining a child. But when does hitting become excessive as to become a child abuse? Review of literatures suggest that hitting a child, especially when angry with the child is unacceptable, because a child who experienced hitting will interpret it as a legitimate way of conveying to the other person that you are angry with him/her. Thus hinders the expression of anger in an assertive and socially acceptable manner.

Another form of child abuse with utmost importance is child – rape a form of sexual assault inflicted on the child. Child – rape degrades the integrity of the child who is the victim to this type of assault. A child experiencing this type of abuse views herself/himself dirty and betrayed by a trusted adult. In the heart and mind of the child predominates the feeling of shame, humiliation and anger often joined by guilt and conflict. The child may feel confused because she may have enjoyed the 'sex', against her will, and that since the abuse might have been repeated many times, and because she had no choice but to submit, the child might also feel that she colluded in what happened. This confusion, along with the threat of physical violence, leads to feelings of guilt, self-hatred and the likelihood that the victim won't tell

anyone. Apart from the obvious physical damage done, the emotional, sexual and psychological scars last a lifetime *(Barclay, 1987)*.

Spousal abuse in the child's presence ranked 64% among the forms of neglect. These children who bear witness to the power struggle reflected in domestic violence may be physically, emotionally or sexually abused by the abuser. The risk associated with these power struggles that the child bears witness may bring in the child maladjustment problems. These maladjustment problems may be reflected in higher levels of aggression, anger, hostility, oppositional behavior, and disobedience; fear, anxiety, withdrawal, and depression; poor peer, sibling, and social relationships; low self-esteem. Cognitively, the child may also suffer from lower cognitive functioning, poor school performance, lack of conflict resolution skills, limited problem-solving skills, acceptance of violent behaviors and attitudes, belief in rigid gender stereotypes and male privilege. In adulthood, the child witness may have higher levels of adult depression and trauma symptoms, increased tolerance for and use of violence in adult relationships *(Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2010)*.

Verbal assault as a form of emotional (psychological) abuse in the child is a form of control that is systematically applied on the other person. This form of control undermines the other person's confidence, worthiness, growth or trust in oneself. Its effect is more

harmful than physical abuse because it devastates the individual and often leads the abused party to blame the self *(Stosny, 2008)*. In addition children who are constantly experiencing emotional abuse may exhibit a range of serious disorders, including chronic depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, dissociation and anger. Additionally, the impact of emotional abuse "did not differ significantly" from that of physical abuse *(English, Graham, Newton, et. al, 2008)*, in female patients who suffered emotional abuse, there is a higher rate of gynecological problems *(Johnson, Humera, Krukreja, et.al, 2007)*. Hines and Malley-Morrison *(August2001)* in their study of men, who experienced emotional abuse in the hands of their wife, partner or parent, report that victims exhibit high rates of post traumatic stress disorder, drug addiction and alcoholism.

This table conveyed that most cases of abuse go unreported for 1 – 5 years before it gets to be reported to the proper authorities. This delay however exemplified the victimology theory, which is the universal rejection of the victim. Individuals when exposed to an abusive situation appear to resist in believing the innocence of the victim and felt helpless and vulnerable. These individuals need to find a rational explanation for the incident, thereby blame the victim for the occurrence of the incident. There is also an irrational fear of being contaminated by the victim therefore; rejection becomes a defense mechanism *(Haber, 1992)*. However, as the occurrence of abuse becomes repeated and its frequency increases, individuals exposed to these abuse situations begun

to feel compelled to stop the abusive situation. They tend to entertain a reasonable suspicion that the abusive relationship cannot be stopped by their own intervention and also for fear of repercussion from the abuser *(Myers, 1998)*, thus encouraging them to report the abuse to the proper authorities.

CONCLUSION

After careful analysis of the data gathered, it can be inferred that higher incidences of child abuse occur among the female gender belonging to the 12 – 18 age group and most prevalent form of abuse is through physical infliction as hitting and had usually occurred from 1 – 5 years before it is reported to the proper authorities. Furthermore, the abusers recognized from the study are male adult neighbors followed by the female adult neighbors and finally the cohabiting husbands, individuals whom the parents trust to spend time with their children especially if the parents are under educated and belong to the low socio-economic status.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study represented a picture on the future of the abused child and the possible effects on the child's life in the long run. The following are recommended:
1. Public education on the mandatory reporting of abuse. Public education will allow individuals to become more aware that children in abuse

Table 8. Length of Occurrence of the Abusive Situation before Reporting (N=32)

Age Group	0 – 1 y.o.		1 – 3 y.o.		3 – 6 y.o.		7 – 11 y.o.		12 – 18 y.o.		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
2008												
0 – 12 months							1	3.1	6	18.75	7	21.88
1 – 5 years			3	9.38	7	21.88	2	625	3	9.38	15	46.88
6 – 10 years					2	6.25	4	12.5			6	18.75
2009												
0 – 12 months							7	21.88	7	21.88		
1 – 5 years	2	6.25	7	21.88	7	21.88	2	6.25	3	9.38	21	65.63
6 – 10 years					4	12.5	4	12.5			8	25
2010												
0 – 12 months					1	3.1	6	18.75	7	21.88		
1 – 5 years	3	9.38	2	6.25	9	28.13	2	6.25	3	9.38	19	59.38
6 – 10 years					2	6.25	4	12.5			6	18.75

situations badly needed all the help they can have to prevent long term damage of abuse.

2. Crisis intervention program in support of children and their parents in situation of abuse and the perpetrators as well. This program will assist the children and their parents and the abusers in recognizing the abuse at the earliest possible time, plan on stopping the abuse before damage sets in and implement strategies to stop future abuses in any form. This program would also assist the individual in finding resolution to long – term/ long standing personal and psychological conflicts.

3. For future researchers: Since the data used in this study were obtained from secondary sources, it is hereby recommended that a parallel study be done which would entail interview of the victim, the abuser and the parents in a neutral environment. A related study is recommended to specifically identify the type of abuse at each specific age group. This study can enhance the development of an effective prevention program that is tailor – made to cater to the needs of the victims at specific age group. One limitation of this study is the researchers' inability to examine a ten – year data of reported abuse

situations in Cebu City, since the available data in the police statistics office is only for the last 3 years. Additional study be made in order to examine the data obtained in a ten – year period in order to established the trend of abused victims and the occurrence of abuse. Further study will be done on the dynamics of abuse with the abusers as its focus. According to review of related literature, most abusers are or were abused themselves sometime in their lives. The abusers project the hurt (trauma) and inner conflicts they experienced when they were still children through exerting their authority and abusing their helpless victims. This projection of hurt (trauma) and conflict becomes an integral part of the sufferer's identity.

4. Government agencies like the PNP and the DSWD as well as the CPU – PGH and other non-government organizations, reach out to the community and offer protection to the individuals reporting the abuses so from future retaliation by the abuser. One contributing factor in the late reporting of the abuse is the fear of retaliation from the abuser, which often than not hinders the witness' motivation to help the victim and report the abuse.

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