

Journal of Education

ISSN Online: 2616-8383

 **Stratford**
Peer Reviewed Journals & books

Effect of child abuse on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rwanda

Niyonagize Jean Pierre & Dr. Mukamazimpaka Marie Claire, PhD

ISSN: 2616-8383

Effect of child abuse on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rwanda

¹*Niyonagize Jean Pierre & ²Dr. Mukamazimpaka Marie Claire, PhD

¹*Post graduate student, Mount Kenya University, Rwanda

²Lecturer, Adventist University of Central Africa, Rwanda

Email of the corresponding author: niyo.jpeter58@gmail.com

How to cite this article: Pierre, N., J., & Claire, M., M. (2021). Effect of child abuse on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Rwanda. *Journal of Education*, Vol 4(2) pp. 45-58.

Abstract

The improvement of students' academic performance can be affected by various factors including factors including getting abused. The child abuse has taken as a high-risk factor that can significantly affect the level of students' academic performance. The purpose of this paper therefore, was to identify the effect of child abuse on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kicukiro district in Rwanda. The target population included 418 respondents that provided the sample size of 204 got using Yamane formula. Interview guide and questionnaire were used as data collection instruments. Correlation research design was employed. The findings revealed that sexual harassment, getting heavy work and heavy punishment to a child are considered to be one of the factors associated to abusing children. It was established that these factors associated with children reduce the level of students' academic performance in public secondary schools of Kicukiro district in Rwanda like students' grade and promotion rates. This study also established that child abuse can affect the level of students' academic performance at 7.9% and the remaining 92.1% could be explained by other factors. The paper revealed there is a statistically significant negative relationship between child abuse and students' academic performance where the Karl Pearson coefficient of Correlation ($r = -0.137$) was obtained. This implied that abusing children in secondary schools affect their academic performance negatively. This paper recommended that Ministry of Education should make policy that strengthens the children right at school and outside in order fight against child abuse. Educational planners should make effective set up that should enhance students' academic performance so as to reduce the level of child abuse in public secondary schools in Rwanda. The study also recommended that school head teachers should follow up the implementation of rules and regulations so that students' academic performance can be improved and make sure that students are treated well at home and at school without being more stressed. The parents need to encourage their children to perform effectively so as to improve their academic performance.

Keywords: *Child abuse, academic performance, abuse, heavy punishment and secondary schools*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Children who are aged between 12 and 15, once they are treated badly, like being beaten every day and getting heavy punishment, affect their academic performance (Falaye, 2013). The students who are going to school because they work hard at home have no willing of paying attention while teacher is teaching this means that they take time for breaking at school (Umoren *et al.*, 2010). Axmaher (2010) defined child abuse as taking a child in bad conditions which lead to be injured like physical injury (being beaten) and emotional injury. Obekpa (2011) defined as any way harm to physical or emotional health of children.

Globally, The Positive Care of Children (ASPC, 2016) established that in America, the majority of children corresponding to 4.1 million were treated negatively. However, some of them got some opportunities of being prevented though their rights were not enough maintained and enhanced. ASPCC also presented the report indicating that 74.9 percent, 18.3 percent and 8.6 p percent were abused in terms of being neglected as well as physical and sexual perspective respectively. According to Axmaher (2010), indicated that children can also be abused when they are still under age as were experienced to be at the rate of 25.3 percent. According to Obekpa (2011), multiple factors linked to a child's inadequate care were elevated to the highest level of child abuse in the United States, with 49.6% of cases resulting in death. Even though the majority was for boys rather than girls, the rate of 41.6 percent may be physically abused, resulting in poor growth and development. Despite this, the exploitation of children has resulted in the country's low socioeconomic progress as well as a high population growth rate due to early pregnancies of some girls who have been sexually abused.

In South Africa, the poor treatment of children is experienced by children who are in middle age as was indicated by the government of South Africa (2016) that 40 percent of children who are in middle age, get sexual abuse as well as getting other abusing factors in terms of their emotion, physical characteristics and being neglected in the community. This also may reduce the social welfare of the youths as well as their economic status. According to Dale (2003), the children' violence and abuse across a whole country of South Africa, were noted to be at the high level however, in some African countries but not many, children may be treated equally. In Nigeria, the exploitation of children was indicated to be at the lower level as able to sustain the lives of children and protecting them various violence (UNICEF, 2015). Therefore, the children' sustainability could be enhanced so as to support their living conditions and being accommodated in a conducive environment effectively as was established in children' rights (Motte, 2016).

In East African Countries (EAC) like in Kenya, got sexual violence before the age adult which affect them to be early pregnant which may lead to both poor school performance and school dropout and also 18 percent of boys under 18years old, also experience gender based violence (UN, 2010). Nevertheless, there were 20 percent of girls more than boys that indicated the problem of being abused in EAC due to fact that boys' abuse may vary from 5-10 percent (UNICEF, 2010).

In Rwanda the prevalence of violence against children was equally confirmed by EICV 4 whereby 24.4% and 28.2% girls and boys respectively age 14 to 16 have ever experienced physical violence. The situation is echoed by the recent Democratic Healthy Survey (DHS) which shows that 32.6 % and 29.2% girls and boys respectively age 14 to 16 have ever experienced physical or sexual violence (UNICEF, 2010). Household poverty increases the risk of children being exposed to abuse, neglect and exploitation.

1.1 Problem Statement

The article 26 in paragraph 2 of universal declaration of human rights states that education should be directed to the full development of human personality to improve the respect towards human rights (Johan, 2014). The researchers also stated that education is a bridge which leads people to their better future as well as the development of the country where its development in based on level of students' outcomes (Johan, 2014). The school outcomes like academic performance in secondary schools may be affected by various factors including abusing children (UNICEF, 2010). Though, the government of Rwanda put much emphasis on the management of children rights based on their educational development (Human right watch report, 2015). However, in Rwandan society, the right of some children are not respected effectively where some are being given heavy works and punishment as well as getting sexual harassment and considered as one of child abuse which may affect educational background including academic performance (World Health Organization, 2010). Nowadays the numbers of children who are abused increased day to day and many of these young victims are subjected to heavy punishment, getting heavy works as well as getting sexual harassment (Dale, 2013). All these factors of child abuse may lead to low student grade, low class attendance and lower level of student promotion rate. Despite, WHO (2010) also added that some schooling children experience a high rate of abusive activities where in Kicukiro district, 21.01% of schooling were found to be abused. On the other hand, teachers, school leaders and non-government organizations reported that child abuse is influencing lower academic performance of students in public schools in Rwanda (Save the children, 2013). Therefore, this paper sought to establish the effect of child abuse on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kicukiro district, Rwanda.

1.2 Objective of the paper

The objective of this paper was to identify the effect of child abuse on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kicukiro District in Rwanda.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Student Academic Performance

The gender of student, age group as well as students' socio-economic status and also teachers' capacity may come as one of the factors that reduce or increase performance of students academically and socially. However, schooling system indicated by students and better services indicated by learning institution can also be affected by the participation of children' households or guardians. Some scholars established that, the performance of presented by students could be affected various factors including the ways that children are treated. According to Graetz (2009), indicated that the households or caregivers of children' education, are very important society as they improve children to get success related to education and reduce illiteracy level in the country. Despite Considine and Zappala (2010), also added that the family income and school capacity, play a significance role of being scored at a high level especially in national examination where both school and children' families work together to increase both students and school performance.

On the other hand, the performance of schools also depends on the population size registered in school setting where school whose standard class size, students could perform better while over population class, students do not get aware of understanding the content taught thought children are treated effectively (Minnesota, 2009). Nevertheless, Durden *et al.* (2008), also indicated that the previous children' educational background can be determined by the students' past school

outcomes which could indicate the future academic achievement of that child. Therefore, the past experience of students, well conducive children treatment could be considered to be the basic measurement of educational children' outcomes.

According to Obekpa (2011), the efforts presented by students in the past period related to schooling, also indicate the participation of households that were engaged to the provision of children motivation related to school. However, this type of motivation can also be affected by parents with low educational background which can affected their children' education and may get low academic development. Therefore, the students' performance done academically, can be improved correctly with specific measured of both households and learning institution. According to Talcott (2010), the present and future children' school performance could depend on the level of past attitudes and performance of the child which may be high or low where the high level of performance and attitude lead to high future school productivity and vice versa. Despite, Talcott (2010) also added that scientifically, each individual or citizen could make the possible way which can support youths as well as children to develop their literacy level and also protect them from harm or anything can abuse them.

Johnson (2011) revealed that, the development of children' education should focus on various variables which should be rooted from children' families and school as responsible to determine and improve the welfare of children. On the other hand, Talcott and Reddy (2009) perceived by disagreeing the statement indicating that, the performance of a child in educational system, should be based on the past recovery and performance as well as the participation of households. The current or future of children' educational development, should be based on the effectiveness of the current and future situation. Johnson (2014) also added that, the children' school performance indicates various association of variable that could be developed at all levels of education.

2.2 The importance of academic performance

According to Junelle (2011), the performance developed by students in terms of academic, could be determined by accomplishing various activities prepared by teachers during teaching and learning activities. However, Junelle (2011) also added that the ability indicated by children can be determined as knowledge and skills resulted from school. Robert (2011) revealed that the academic successfulness of adolescent present high-capacity level of social skills hold be children, help them to be adapted in society and achieving their own goals and experiencing the spirit of positive values and norms that also help a child get personal confidence that can enhance the success related to school activities. Despite, Niharika and Supriya (2014) also revealed that the participation of households to education development of their children provide a rate school success and teachers performance. This also reduces the issues related to illiteracy and promote well conducive environment. Janelle (2011) indicated that children who perform the class activities effectively, master basic reading, writing and mathematics that also lead to having insufficient school capacity as societal adaptation caused by poor development of knowledge and skills. Irfan and shabana (2012) added that being confidence in daily individual life, support personal advancements to society.

2.3 Factors affecting academic performance

The performance of children can be developed by both internal and external of the school system where both sides should unify their capacity that can enhance education development of students. Therefore, the current society could work hand in hand so as to improve the lives of people in the

society and also children' educational background especially emphasizing the households or caregivers' responsibilities. On the other hand, various factors that can support the academic performance of students were identified to be the most strengthened rather than others as they help the country and her citizens to be developed in general (Ukpepi, 2010). Therefore, attitudes and behavior indicated by children, can affect the affect the development of their societies once they are not maintained effectively.

2.4 Student-Related Factors

The poor performance indicated by some students in their learning process, can be affected by many factors including both family factors and school factors and rules and regulations. The lack of effective channel of communication between parents and school may reduce the school performance however, poor adaptation of students to new technology, can also broke the effective enhancement school activities can also create a conducive learning environment. Nevertheless, lower level of student' learning motivation can make a student to being bored in class setting and loose an opportunity of passing school exams though, some students may experience some disability that can also lead to low school performance. According to Ukpepi (2010), any student who is aware of improving his or her school grade, should be motivated healthily and academically by schools and parents. Though, the majority of students and teachers are nowadays not motivated in the school setting and lead to the reduction of both students and teaches performance.

2.5 Teacher-Related Factors

According to Umoren (2013), the high level of qualification indicated by teachers in their teaching activities, improves their working status as well as employment opportunities in their social lives. Umoren (2012) also added that, teacher's capacity and working experience have a high rate in the promotion of student educational background and thought in the absence of those, students may indicate a lower level of class performance. The comprehensiveness of students to academic activities might depend on teacher' teaching and experience and working environment that are supported by educational policies. Similarly, Ukpepi (2012) revealed that poor collaboration and discussions in classroom setting may be affected by poor leadership presented by school leadership which can affect teachers to making class management that can also destroy the effective teaching and learning environment. This also discourages the students' abilities to be developed effectively as they can also adapt their cognitive development.

2.6 School-Related Factors

According to Apebende (2010), the sub-Saharan African countries, experienced a big number of children attending primary schools though school infrastructures and other physical plants were not accordingly enough. Therefore, this brings a challenge of overpopulation of the school setting and insufficient teachers who are qualified and who are ready to teach such big number of class with the minimum qualified teachers. Apebende (2010) revealed that the effective management of such school population which may lead poor academic performance of students once it is not controlled, is subdivide such students into groups so as to reduce the number of students in each classroom setting.

The education sectors are responsible to manage and make a conducive learning environment able to deliver adequate education to children that can also help them to compete at the labor market and make the skilled people. However, the children' school dropout rate may also be caused by

low financial capacity invested by the government as ready to increase the literacy level of citizens (Apebende, 2010). The learning institutions that cannot get the standard number of qualified teachers, they should need to automatically extend the classroom size so as to accommodate a big number child which can also affect their level of understanding and also making heavy teaching load and complicated ways of managing such big class size and making taught content to be understandable to every one which may also result to poor students and teachers' performance. Apebende (2010) also added that the school location may be one of the causes that can lead to overpopulation to school setting in African countries which may also high experienced in rural areas.

2.7 Family-Related Factors

The capacity building of the households plays a high impact to school effectiveness of their children wants to increase the academic performance however, some children can be affected by getting some diseases. Therefore, the academic performance of students can be affected by the poor implementation of the family responsibilities. Therefore, children coming from families that experience low educational support, may result to school dropout and developing the early marriage. According to Ndifon (2011), the lack of family participation to educational development may reduce their children' welfare which lead to early marriage and pregnancies. The households settled in most areas of urban, are the most indicated to be at the high risk of educational development of their children as they are always occupied by their high daily activities which also affect their school performance and discipline related to need of society (Ndifon, 2011). Despite, poverty increase to some households, also can be one of the causes that can affect the education backgrounds of the children.

2.8 The Concepts of child abuse

According to Axmaher (2010), abusing children or any poor treatment that can be done to a child, can be expressed in terms of emotional or psychological abuse as well as physical circumstances that can lead to violence and which can be done by the family members of the child or corresponding caregivers. However, Axmaher (2010) also added that, children can be abused once, they have not got access to the development of their education that they have to get which result to getting some harmful punishment that can also home out some children and increase school dropout. The children' poor exploitation as well as children neglect can be considered to be the results of children' negative treatment that can also affect their emotional characteristics however, they can also be abused in their families or current society.

2.9 Types of child abuse

Abusing children physically, emotionally as well as any action that can lead to neglecting the children' right or abusing children sexually as the cause of poor treatment the child (Ndifon, 2011). The risks that can be experienced by children who are abused, mostly experience high level of poor school performance and such types of abusing children are indicated as below.

2.9.1 Physical Abuse

Children can be abused physically in case they get physical harmful that can cause an impact to their development. According to Axmaher (2010), the family children and their corresponding class teachers, are the one to be responsible in the protection of children' rights and also being prevented against any harm. Therefore, the close collaboration of teachers and students' parents

and society could be enhanced so that youths become protected to any external circumstance that may lead to physical harmful and reinforcing punishment to those who abuse children.

2.9.2 Mental Abuse

According to Ndifon (2011), anything that can destroy or discourage an individual working brain can be named as mental abuse. Therefore, this kind of abusing children done mentally, may lead to poor development of children's mental capacity as well as social adaptation due to being isolated at most of the time. According to Apebende (2010), the loose of children mental development may affect them poor physical development and lack of social confidence and unconditional attitudes. However, Ndifon (2011) added that any loose of psychological development to a child, can experience some factors related to being isolated and become passive in society.

2.9.3 Sexual Abuse

This is done to a person by another individual's forces for the purpose of being satisfied sexually and emotionally. Therefore, any kind of abusing children or youths could be indicated by any person for the purpose of improving the children's care and welfare and reducing children's loose of lives. Despite, Apebende (2010) revealed that children are attracted to observe pornography as automatically lead them making sex unconditionally when they are still young however, some children may be forced or given some attractive gifts and become abused that can also lead them to getting some genital diseases.

Rapping people or young children could be considered to be the highest factor of abuse to a child as also affect their future development and poor minded. Therefore, this type of abusing children affects them in physical and psychological perspectives. According to Apebende (2010), various forms of being abused especially sexual abuse as experienced by children, may be affected like being harmed to their genital organs and getting some genital diseases or having early pregnancy as well as lack of confidence and being damaged to their brain.

2.9.4 Child Neglect

This can be defined as poor treatment done to a child by family members or caregivers as well as and family that adopted that child. According to Ukpepi (2012) Such neglecting young children or treating children negatively can be determined by lack some physiological needs like lack of lunch (food), being out of family (shelter) as well as lack of effective cares from siblings and clothes. Apebende (2010) revealed that, the children can be neglected in various ways by both families and out of their families. The lack of providing basic needs to children by their households with their willingness, affect the children's physical development as well as moral development and reduce their confidence of their lives. This can also be caused by households who do not respect the children's rights due to taking alcohol and conflict in family (Apebende, 2010).

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Correlation research design was employed in this paper to indicate the relationship between child abuse and students' academic performance. The total population was 418 respondents and Yamane formula was used to get sample size of 6 school head teachers and 198 students that gave a total of 204 respondents. Questionnaire and guided interview were used as data collection instruments. Stratified sampling was used as sampling technique. The simple random sampling technique was used to the respondents of each stratum.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The aim of the study was to identify the effect of child abuse on students’ academic performance in public secondary schools in Kicukiro district in Rwanda. This paper also established various factors associated with child abuse and academic performance of students.

4.1 Children abuse in public secondary schools

To address various factors associated with child abuse, the questionnaires were distributed students in order to get the findings. The presentation of findings was done in form of Tables as were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 21.

Table 1: Students’ responses on child abuse practiced in public secondary schools

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA		Mean	Std
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
Getting heavy punishment	9	4.9	11	6.0	11	6.0	72	39.6	79	43.4	4.10	1.08
Being given heavy works	5	2.7	10	5.5	8	4.4	75	41.2	84	46.2	4.22	0.96
Lack of parental care	7	3.8	11	6.0	10	5.5	74	40.7	80	44.0	4.15	1.03
Getting harassment at school	9	4.9	10	5.5	11	6.0	69	37.9	83	45.6	4.14	1.08
Having low self-esteem	6	3.3	13	7.1	10	5.5	76	41.8	77	42.3	4.13	1.02
Feeling unwell when harassed	8	4.4	13	7.1	12	6.6	73	40.1	76	41.8	4.07	1.07

The results in Table 1 indicates the responses provided by students learning in public secondary schools related to the extent at which child abuse practiced in public secondary schools in public secondary schools. The majority of students indicated that they get abused in terms of being given heavy works as was agreed by 87.4% with the mean of 4.22 and 0.96. This implies that students of public secondary schools were given heavy works which can affect negatively their learning condition which may also lead to low academic performance. According to Axmaher (2010), the heavy works to students make negative impact to students in their daily lives including schooling life as well as outside.

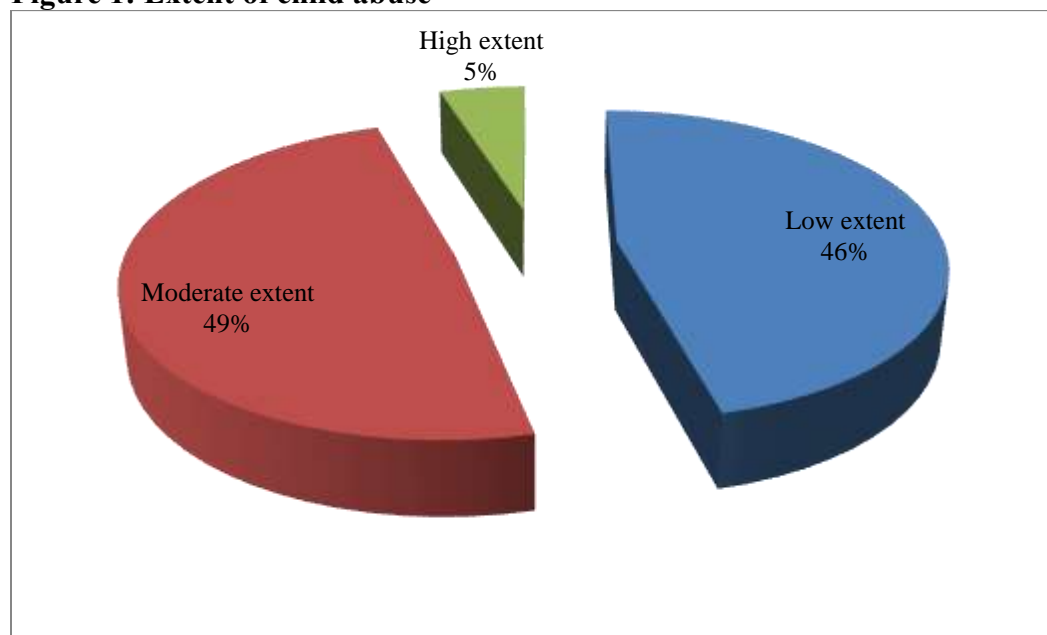
This statement in students’ responses was followed by the lack of parental care towards them as was agreed by 84.7% of students with the mean of 4.15 and 1.03 of standard deviation. This means that parents whose children in public secondary schools may not get improved due to the fact that their parents do not get involved in the school activities of their children. Ndifon (2011) revealed that capacity building of the households plays a high impact to the daily needs and wants and also school effectiveness of their children in order to increase the academic performance however, some children may lose some opportunities related to educational development due lower level of parental care and educational involvement.

On the other hand, the findings in the Table1 shows that 83.5% of students in public secondary schools located in Kicukiro district with the mean of 4.14 and 1.08 of standard deviation agreed that getting harassment in their lives. This indicates that students sometimes do not study in conducive mood due to being harassed based on their sex and get frustrated which can also affect their school performance. The findings in Table1 also show that 84.1% of students agreed that get low self-esteem due to being abused by their relatives with the mean of 4.13 and 1.02 of standard deviation. This means that once students present a lower level of confidentiality, could not also perform their academic activities effectively. The findings also show that 83% of students in public secondary schools located in Kicukiro district with the mean of 4.10 and 1.08 agreed that getting heavy punishment in their different activities. Finally, the finding in the Table shows that 81.9% of students agreed that they feel unwell when harassed with the mean of 4.07 and 1.07 of standard deviation.

4.1.1 Extent of children abuse

The students of public secondary schools in Kicukiro district were also requested to indicate the extent to which they get abused and their responses are presented in the Figure 1.

Figure 1: Extent of child abuse



From the findings presented in the Figure 1 which indicates extent to which students get abused in public secondary schools located in Kicukiro district, it was clear that the majority as 49% of students indicated they get abused at moderate extent. This means that the moderate extent of being abused can affect a given percentage of their academic performance while 46% of students indicated that they get abused at low extent. The findings in the figure1 show that the remaining 5% of students get high extent of being abused in their daily lives which can also affect their academic performance to some extent.

The school head teachers of public secondary schools in Kicukiro district responded that students may get abused in various circumstances like having heavy working loads and punishments which do not correspond to their age level or being harassed sexually by people in their local environment which mostly affect students in their learning conditions which sometime affect their self-esteem based on shaping their future lives. According to Apebende (2010), various forms of being abused

especially sexual abuse as experienced by children, may be affected like being harmed to their genital organs and getting some genital diseases or having early pregnancy as well as lack of confidence and being damaged to their brain.

4.2 The level of students’ academic performance in public secondary schools

The questionnaire as data collection was distributed to students to get the findings associated with academic performance of students. The presentation of findings focused on the level of students’ academic performance in selected public secondary schools and

Table 2: Students’ responses on the level of students’ academic performance in public secondary schools

Statement	SD		D		N		A		SA		Mean	Std
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
Getting good grade during test	62	34.1	72	39.6	19	10.4	15	8.2	14	7.7	2.16	1.20
Getting good result in Examination	60	33.0	80	44.0	17	9.3	16	8.8	9	4.9	2.09	1.10
Attending school regularly	60	33.0	82	45.1	14	7.7	20	11.0	6	3.3	2.07	1.07
Being Promoted with good grade	57	31.3	86	47.3	17	9.3	13	7.1	9	4.9	2.07	1.06
Having discipline at school	64	35.2	77	42.3	21	11.5	15	8.2	5	2.7	2.01	1.02
Having discipline at home	50	27.5	92	50.5	15	8.2	19	10.4	6	3.3	2.11	1.03

The results illustrated in Table 2 indicates the responses provided by students studying in public secondary schools related to the level of students' academic performance in public secondary schools such that 15.9 percent of students agreed that they get good grades during test at 2.16 of mean and 1.20 of standard deviation. This shows that students in public secondary schools were guided effectively in order to get improved grade. 13.7 percent of students agreed that they have discipline at home at 2.11 of mean. 13.7 percent of students agreed that they get good results in examination at 2.09 of mean, 14.3 percent of students agreed that they attend school regularly at 1.07 of mean, 12.0 percent of students agreed that they promoted with a good grade at 1.06 of mean, while 10.9 percent of students agreed that they are disciplined when they are at school at 2.01 of mean.

By on views from different respondents related to students' academic performance, it was shown that student’s performance is low in public secondary schools due to poor measures of overcoming child abuse and indicate that once to overcome the child abuse will be improved effectively students' academic performance. According to Janelle (2011), the academic performance is important due to the fact that the academic performance is strongly linked to student outcomes and student value. The adults who were academically improved their academic performance and with

high level of education, are more likely to get opportunity of being employed (Ali *et al.*, 2009). However, Poropt and Arthur (2011) indicated that students should perform well if they are properly guided by their parents and also their teachers. This also implies that if students should know well about abilities and their competences, then perform well.

The school head teachers of public secondary schools didn't contrast the data from quantitative data briefly child abuse affects the students' academic performance, the students get low results in Examination, their school attendance is not regular and they meet with a challenge of promotion and all factors can affect their academic performance and also emphasized that there is low students' performance. They also said: "the level of students' academic performance in public secondary schools is low because some of the students were get good results in examination even in test given by teachers this can cause low their performance of the students".

4.3 The effect of child abuse on students' academic performance

There was a need to establish the effect of child abuse on students' abuse and also the relationship between variables. Therefore, correlation analysis was done to examine the relationship between child abuse and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Kicukiro district, Rwanda and the obtained findings were presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between child abuse and students' academic performance

Correlations		Child abuse	Student' academic performance
Child abuse	Pearson Correlation	1	-.137**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
	N	182	182
Student' academic performance	Pearson Correlation	-.137**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	
	N	182	182

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 3 show that there is a statistically significant high degree of negative correlation between child abuse and academic performance where Pearson coefficient of correlation states the correlation (r) of -0.137 with the p-value=0.005<0.05. As stated in interview, it was shown that the more children abused the more affects the students' academic performance which goes to be very low.

The paper also established regression analysis to identify the effect of child abuse on student academic performance in public secondary schools in Kicukiro district. The findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: The R square results of child abuse and students' academic performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.281 ^a	.079	.058	1.45291

a. Predictors: (Constant), Lack of parental care, giving heavy punishment, getting sexual harassment at school, being given heavy works

The findings in Table 4 indicates the effect of child abuse affect students' academic performance. The findings present the R Square of .079. This means that the variable that make child abuse are able to affect the students' academic performance at the level of 7.9 percent and the remaining 92.1percent can affected by other variables. This also shows that there is a low extent of child abuse affecting the level of students' academic performance.

Tsegba and Timothy (2013) revealed that the academic performance can be influenced by various factors including teachers' experiences, learning environment and ways of treating students. Tsegba and Timothy (2013) also added that the negative treatment of students like abuse affect negatively their learning conditions thus reduces their academic' performance and future living condition. However, Axmaher (2010) supported that various forms of mental abuse, including humiliating the child in front of others; comparing him to his friends or others; shouting or threatening the child, or not talking to him at all, and exposing him to the abuse of some other person or animal, might adversely affect negatively the school performance. Obekpa (2011) Identified that students' effort, previous schooling, parent's educational background, family income, self -motivation of students, age of student, learning preferences and entry qualification of students as important factors that have effect on student's academic performance in different setting. The utility of these studies lies in the need to undertake corrective measures that improve the academic performance of graduate students.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this paper was based on the established findings that are associated with child abuse and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Kicukiro district. This study concluded that the more children get abused, the more their academic performance gets reduced. On the other hand, reducing the children' abuse may lead to the chance of increasing the level of students' academic performance.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Basing on the presented findings and drawn conclusion, this paper recommendations were addressed to the Ministry of Education, educational planners and head teachers as well as parents.

- i. Ministry of Education should make policy that strengthens the children right at school and outside in order fight against child abuse.
- ii. Educational planners should make effective set up that should enhance students' academic performance so as to reduce the level of child abuse in public secondary schools in Rwanda.
- iii. School head teachers should follow up the implementation of rules and regulations so that students' academic performance can be improved and make sure that students are treated well at home and at school without being more stressed and sensitize parents to encourage their children to perform effectively so as to improve their academic performance.

REFERENCES

- African Network for Prevention and Protecting Child Abuse and Neglect (2012). *Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual violence in disaster and emergency situations*. Retrieved on July 5, 2014, from www.ecpat.net.
- Ali et al. (2009), the factors influencing students' performance. *Journal of technology education* 13, (2)20-32.
- Alocan, F. B, and Olatunji, I.C. (2014). Influence of child abuse on classroom behavior and academic performance among primary and secondary school students. *European Scientific Journal*. 10 (10).
- Apebende, E.U., Umoren, G., Ukpepi, B., & Ndifon, R. A. (2010). The Influence of Child Abuse on the Academic Performance of Primary School Pupils in Primary Science in Cross River State, Nigeria. *An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, 4(1).
- Axmaher, L.W. (2010). *Causes of child abuse*. Texas: Health plus and Vanderbilt family and staff wellness program.
- Bacon, H, and Richardson, S. (2001). *Attachment theory and child abuse :An overview of the literature for practitioners*. *Child Abuse Review*, 10(6).
- Bromfield, L.M. (2015). *Cumulative harm and chronic child maltreatment*. *Developing practice*, 19(34).
- Brown, J, Cohen, P, Jonson, J. and Smailes, E. (2010) Childhood abuse and neglect Specificity of effects on adolescent and young adult depression and suicidality. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 38(12).
- Child Welfare Information Gateway. (2013). *Long term consequences of abuse and neglect*. Retrieved from <http://www.childwelfare.gov> on September 13, 2014.
- Considine, G. & Zappala, G. (2012). Influence of social and economic disadvantage in the academic performance of school students in Australia. *Journal of Sociology*, 38, 129-148.
- Dale, P. 2003. *Adults Abused as Children: Experiences of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. London: SAGE.
- Falaye, F. V. (2013). *Perspective in child abuse and child sexual abuse in Nigeria*. Dissemination round table discussion on child sexual abuse held in Abeokuta on 17-21 February, 2013.
- Graetz, B. (2011), Socio-economic status in education research and policy in John Ainley et al., *Socio-economic Status and School Education DEET/ACER Canberra*.
- Irfan, M & Shabana, N, K. (2012). factor affecting students' academic performance. *Global Journal of management and business research*. 12(9)1-20.
- Janelle, R. (2011). Why is academic success important? *The international Journal of educational management*, pp, 199-207.
- Minnesota Measures (2008). Report on higher education performance. Retrieved on May 24, 2009 from www.opencongress.org/bill/110.s/642/show-139k.
- Niharika & Supriya, M.N. (2014). Student life balance: Myth or reality? *The international Journal of educational management*. 25(3), 237-251.
- Obekpa, I. A. (2011). Child abuse: Consequences and effects on education and society. *International Journal of Continuing Education*, 2(2).
- Pearson, P. D., & Johnson. (2013). *Teaching reading comprehension*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Poropt & Arther, E. (2011). personal factors and their correlation with academic performance. *British Journal of educational psychology*. 81(15)41-58.

- Reddy, P and Talcott, J. (2009). *Predicting university success in psychology: Are subject-specific skills important?* Retrieved on July 4, 2009. From <http://www.aston.ac.uk/downloads/ihs/peelea/huw2008p.pdf>.
- Robert, K. (2011). school board member professional development and effect on student achievement. *International Journal of educational management*, 25(7), 701-713.