

**Child Abuse and Academic Performance in Selected Public Primary Schools in Ngai Sub
County, Oyam District, Uganda**

Opio, Geoffrey Ronaldo

Assoc. Prof. Ejang, Mary

2025

Abstract

This study examined the relationship between child abuse and academic performance in the selected Public Primary schools in Ngai sub county, Oyam District. The study sought to examine the relationship between child abuse (physical, emotional abuse, and child neglect) and pupils' academic performance. A case study design involving both quantitative and qualitative methods was applied on a sample size of 190 drawn from a target study population of 290 respondents comprising pupils in upper primary, class teachers, head teachers and members of school management committee. A five point Likert scale questionnaire and interview guide were used as instruments for data collection. Quantitative data were analysed using Pearson correlational matrix and simple linear regression while qualitative data was analysed using content analysis. The study found that only 3% of observed variation in academic performance is explained by all the three aspects of child abuse (adjusted $r^2=0.030$, $p=0.053$). The disaggregated findings indicated that two variables physical abuse and emotional abuse showed insignificant results. Physical abuse showed ($B= 0.069$, $p=0.391>0.05$) while emotional Abuse yielded ($B=0.040$, $p= 0.608> 0.05$), thus both were not good predictors of poor performance, Child neglect was found to have a positive and statistically significant result hence a good predictor of performance ($B=0.217$, $p= 0.007< 0.05$). The researcher concludes that child abuse explains only 3% of academic performance in the selected primary schools, however, 97% of variation in performance in the surveyed schools could be explained by other factors not included in the scope of this study. The study recommends that parents, care givers and guardians should provide for the basic needs of their children and school requirements. Local leaders should ensure that public sensitization programs is initiated and strengthened to raise public awareness on the educational rights of children. Lastly alternative corrective measures such as guidance and counselling be used by teachers/caregivers to avoid the use of heavy physical punishment.

