

**ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF CHILD ABUSE ON LEARNING IN PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

(A Case Study of Muthesya Location, Ndithini Division, Machakos County)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the effect of child abuse on learning in public schools with reference to Muthesya Location in Machakos County. The study objectives included: to establish the Emotional effects of child abuse on learning in public schools; to ascertain the Social Effects of child abuse on learning in public schools and; to assess the Cognitive effects of child abuse on learning in public schools.

The study findings are expected to be of significant importance to leaders, teachers and parents. The findings and recommendations will assist all stakeholders to address the child abuse problem.

The target population comprised leaders, teachers, parents and primary and secondary school children in Muthesya Location. Using a combination of purposive and stratified random sampling techniques the researcher picked a sample of 126 respondents to take part in the study. The researcher collected data from parents, teachers and leaders using interview schedules and questionnaires. After the data collection, the researcher analyzed the data using qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques.

The findings have shown that 59% of the respondents said social effects result in low grades. While 23% of respondents said it results in class repetition and 18% of them said it causes absenteeism. Majority of the respondents (64%) also agreed that child abuse leads to low cognitive development of the abused child, while 36% of respondents said that an abused child performs poor in academic work. Majority (68%) of the respondents agreed that emotional effects affect learning to a great extent.

Based on the findings and in order to contribute to the curbing of child abuse, the research recommends that: A children's department should be set up in Muthesya location where cases of child abuse can be reported; Leaders in the location should organize community sensitization meetings to discuss and enlighten the community on the problem of child abuse; Excessive consumption of alcohol should be prevented; School teachers should be trained on how to detect abused children; Children should be taught about this vice and their rights; School administrators should check and discourage bullying in schools; Culprits of child abuse should be swiftly arrested and charged in courts and severe punishment meted out against them; and access to drugs and pornography by children should be strictly checked.