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Effect of Physical Abuse on the Academic Performance of Grade 3 Learners in Public Primary Schools in Soy Sub-County, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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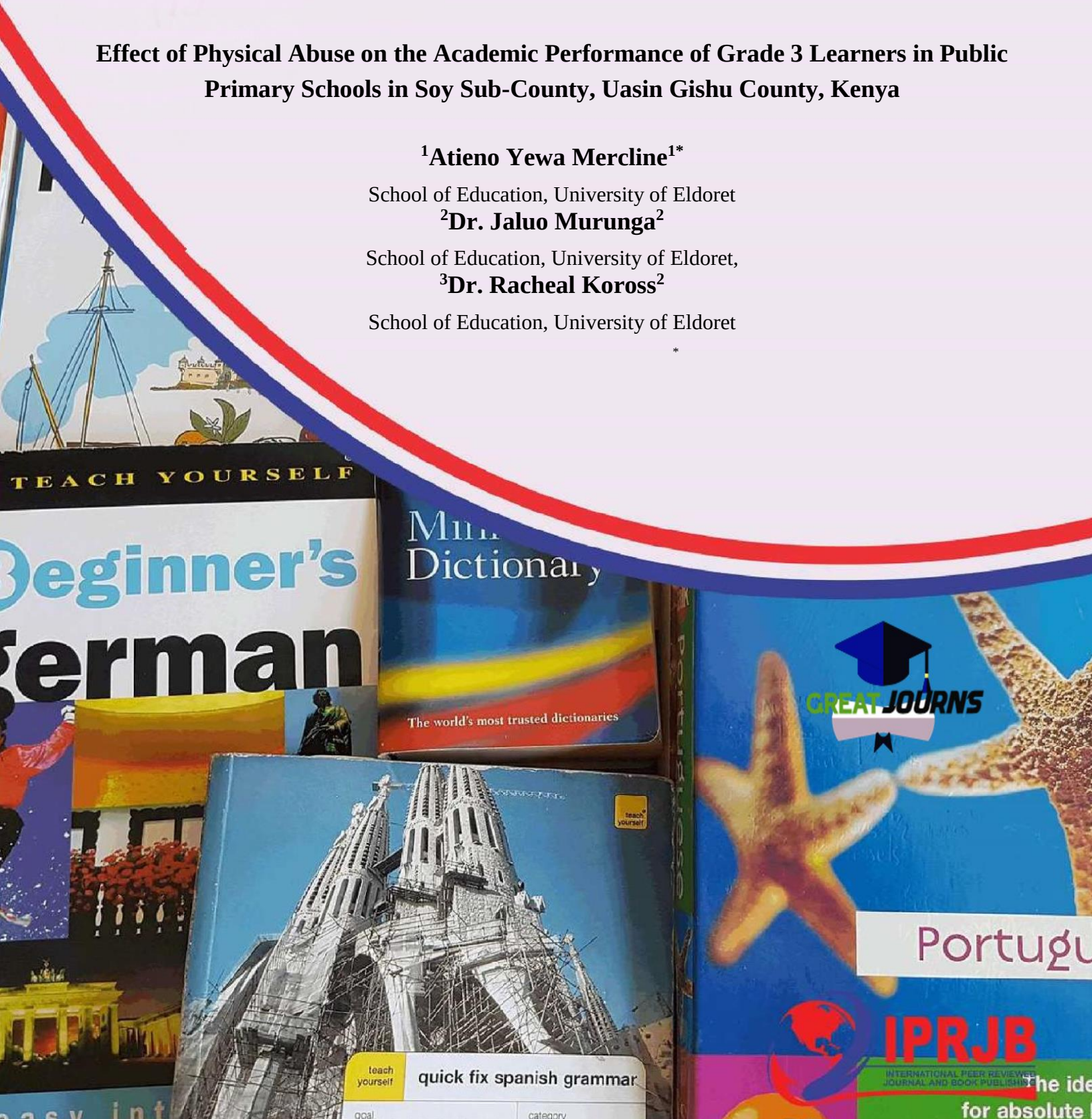
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ABSTRACT

Physical abuse remains one of the most common forms of violence against children in Kenya, yet little is known about how it affects learning in the early grades of the Competency-Based Education (CBE) system. This study determined the effect of physical abuse on the academic performance of Grade 3 learners in public primary schools in Soy Sub-County, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. It was anchored on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory as presented by Schunk, which links adverse experiences to weakened self-efficacy, self-regulation and observational learning. A mixed-methods design combining descriptive and correlational approaches was used. Participants were drawn from 89 sampled public primary schools and included Heads of Department of Guidance and Counselling (n = 76), Grade 3 class teachers (n = 89), parents or guardians (n = 168) and a medical officer. Data were collected using questionnaires built on adapted ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tools (ICAST), interviews, a classroom observation checklist and analysis of school and health records. Quantitative data were analysed with descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple regression in SPSS version 29, while qualitative data were analysed thematically. Physical abuse indicators were observed fairly often (overall mean = 2.53 on a 4-point scale), with signs of being hit or slapped the most common (M = 2.87). Guidance and counselling heads agreed that physical abuse lowers academic performance (overall mean = 3.72 on a 5-point scale), especially through declining assessment results and greater risk of dropout. Physical abuse had a significant negative correlation with academic performance ($r = -0.287$, $p < 0.001$) and remained a significant predictor after controlling for psychological and sexual abuse ($\beta = -0.234$, $t = -4.061$, $p < 0.001$). The study concludes that physical abuse undermines concentration, participation, attendance and achievement among Grade 3 learners. It recommends teacher training on identifying abuse, strict enforcement of the ban on corporal punishment, and stronger school–health referral systems.

Keywords: *Physical abuse; academic performance; Grade 3 learners; Competency-Based Education; corporal punishment; Soy Sub-County; Kenya*

1. Introduction

Child abuse is a global problem with serious and often lasting consequences. The World Health Organization defines it as any physical or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to a child's health, survival, development or dignity (Hemanth et al., 2024). Abuse can occur at home, at school or in the community, and perpetrators include parents, guardians and teachers. Globally, close to three in four children aged two to four years' experience at least one form of maltreatment (World Health Organization, 2021). Physical abuse is linked to behaviour problems, aggression and later antisocial conduct (Afifi et al., 2019; Strathearn et al., 2020).

In Africa, child abuse slows progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals because its effects reach into health, education and economic participation (Badoe, 2017). Studies in Nigeria and Uganda show that abuse harms children physically, mentally and behaviourally, and that corporal punishment and other maltreatment predict lower interest in school, absenteeism and dropout (Chalk et al., 2019; Maani, 2020). In Kenya, the 2019 Violence Against Children Survey found physical violence to be the most common form of childhood violence, affecting nearly half

of girls and more than half of boys, with parents and caregivers the most frequent perpetrators (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 2019).

Kenya's Competency-Based Education system assesses learners continuously against four levels: Exceeding Expectation, Meeting Expectation, Approaching Expectation and Below Expectation (Mokoro, 2020). School-based assessment carries most of the weight, so a learner's day-to-day concentration, participation, task completion and attendance directly shape the recorded result. Grade 3 is a critical point because it closes the lower primary phase, in which foundational literacy and numeracy are consolidated. Disruptions to learning at this stage can carry forward into later grades.

Soy Sub-County in Uasin Gishu County has recorded rising cases of domestic violence and child neglect (Ministry of Labour and Social Services & Directorate of Children's Services, 2023). The sub-county combines rural and peri-urban schools and diverse socio-economic backgrounds, making it a useful setting for studying how abuse shows up in classrooms. Existing Kenyan studies report the prevalence of abuse and general links with schooling, but most combine several grades, focus on secondary school, or do not use CBE-aligned performance indicators. No recent study has quantified the effect of physical abuse on the performance of Grade 3 learners in Soy Sub-County using multiple CBE-based indicators.

This paper reports the first objective of a larger study. It sought to determine the effect of physical abuse on the academic performance of Grade 3 learners in public primary schools in Soy Sub-County. The study tested the null hypothesis (H_{01}) that there is no significant relationship between physical abuse and academic performance among Grade 3 learners in Soy Sub-County.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical framework

The study was guided by Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory as presented by Schunk (2012). The theory explains learning through the interaction of personal, behavioural and environmental factors. Three of its ideas link physical abuse to school performance. First, through *modelling*, children learn from the adults around them; a child who is beaten learns fear and violence rather than constructive behaviour. Second, *self-efficacy* is a person's belief in their ability to succeed at a task (Bandura, 1997); abused children often lose confidence and motivation, which reduces effort and persistence. Third, *self-regulation* involves setting goals, monitoring behaviour and adjusting it to meet learning targets (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011); fear and stress caused by abuse weaken attention and emotional control. The theory therefore predicts that physically abused learners will show poorer concentration, participation, attendance and task completion, and in turn lower achievement.

2.2 Physical abuse and academic performance

Bolen and Lamb (2020) define physical abuse as the infliction of physical harm or injury on a child, including the failure to protect a child from such harm. Neurobiological evidence shows that maltreatment can overload a child's stress-response system, producing hyperactivity in the

amygdala, heightened fear and hypervigilance (Friedman & Putnam, 2019). These responses compete with the attention and working memory needed for learning. Noble et al. (2020) linked abuse and neglect to reduced cognitive development and school readiness, while Fisher and Widom (2021) found that maltreatment was associated with poorer cognitive and academic functioning, partly explained by family characteristics.

Studies of school outcomes point in the same direction. Frederick and Goddard (2020) reported that children who experience or witness abuse show low self-worth, guilt and anxiety, which reduce open participation in class. Mendez and Kendall (2020) noted that physical symptoms of maltreatment affect attendance, while anxiety and depression limit risk-taking on new tasks. Gershoff (2016) found that harsh physical punishment was associated with weaker social skills, more aggression and poorer academic performance. In a longitudinal study, Renner et al. (2023) showed that children exposed to physical abuse had steeper declines in attendance and in reading and mathematics proficiency than matched peers. Kiesel et al. (2018) similarly reported that poor attendance and declining performance coincide with the timing of maltreatment, and a recent meta-analysis of 59 studies with 211,568 participants confirmed a consistent negative association between maltreatment and school performance (Zhang et al., 2025).

Kenyan evidence is growing but remains limited for the early grades. Njoroge et al. (2023) found a significant negative relationship between exposure to domestic violence and academic performance among primary school pupils in Nairobi's informal settlements. Okello and Chepkwony (2024) reported that corporal punishment and bullying were among the most common rights violations in Ugunja Sub-County secondary schools and were associated with lower performance. Masibo et al. (2025) found a weak but significant negative correlation between physical violence and internal test scores among 1,104 secondary school students in Bungoma County ($r = -0.074$, $p = 0.043$), with qualitative data pointing to problems with focus, attendance and participation. These studies, however, concern older learners or urban settings and do not use CBE indicators for Grade 3. The present study addresses this gap.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design and study area

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach with descriptive and correlational designs (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The quantitative strand used an analytical cross-sectional design to test the association between physical abuse and academic performance, while an embedded qualitative strand explained how abuse affected attendance, engagement and achievement. The study was conducted in Soy Sub-County, the largest of the six sub-counties of Uasin Gishu County, covering 643 km^2 and comprising seven wards. The sub-county has 115 public primary schools with 4,684 Grade 3 learners (2,410 boys and 2,274 girls) (Ministry of Education, 2024).

3.2 Sample and sampling procedures

Yamane's formula, $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$ with $e = 0.05$, was used to determine the sample size. This gave 89 schools, from which 89 Heads of Department of Guidance and Counselling (HOD-G/C) and 89 Grade 3 class teachers were drawn; 184 parents or guardians and their Grade 3 children were also sampled. Schools were selected by simple random sampling, and one stream was

randomly selected in schools with more than one Grade 3 stream. Learners were selected through proportionate stratified random sampling, while HOD-G/C, class teachers and parents were selected purposively as key informants. One medical officer from a local health facility also took part. Learners were included if they had been enrolled in the sampled school for at least one full term and had parental consent and their own assent.

3.3 Research instruments

Because learners were not asked to report abuse directly, physical abuse was identified through observable indicators using contextually adapted versions of the ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tools (ICAST), which are validated for school settings in sub-Saharan Africa (Zolotor et al., 2009). The teacher questionnaire (ICAST-T) had an eight-item physical abuse subscale covering signs such as unexplained injuries, flinching when adults approach, fear of going home and clothing that conceals marks. The parent instrument (ICAST-C) had a six-item physical abuse subscale. Teacher and parent subscale scores were standardised and averaged to form a physical abuse index. HOD-G/C rated how often they observed indicators on a 4-point scale (1 = Never to 4 = Often) and their agreement with statements on academic effects on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Other instruments were an interview guide for parents and HOD-G/C, a classroom observation checklist and a document analysis guide covering health facility records, learner portfolios, score sheets and guidance and counselling records.

Academic performance was measured as a standardised composite of three indicators: CBE continuous assessment rubric levels (recoded 1–4), classroom task completion rates and term attendance percentage verified against class registers.

3.4 Validity and reliability

Two experts from the University of Eldoret reviewed the instruments for content and face validity. Construct validity was assessed using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The instruments were piloted in two public primary schools in neighbouring Turbo Sub-County, and cognitive interviews with six to eight respondents per tool were used to refine wording. Internal consistency was assessed with Cronbach's alpha; all scales exceeded the 0.70 threshold, and items with item-total correlations below 0.30 were reviewed.

3.5 Data analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 29. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) summarised the indicators and perceived effects of physical abuse. Pearson correlation measured the strength and direction of the relationship between physical abuse and academic performance. Multiple linear regression estimated the unique effect of physical abuse while controlling for psychological and sexual abuse, using the model below. Hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. Regression assumptions were checked using the Shapiro-Wilk test, variance inflation factors, the Durbin-Watson statistic and residual plots. Qualitative data were analysed thematically and used to triangulate the quantitative results.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

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Here Y is academic performance, X_1 is physical abuse (the focus of this paper), X_2 is psychological abuse, X_3 is sexual abuse and ε is the error term.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Approval was obtained from the University of Eldoret and the Mount Kenya University Ethics Review Board, and a research permit was issued by the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Authorisation was also granted by the Ministry of Education, the County Government of Uasin Gishu and school heads. Parents gave written informed consent and learners gave age-appropriate assent. Learners were never asked directly about abuse. Participants were assigned codes, and data were stored on password-protected devices. Any abuse concern raised during the study was referred to the school HOD-G/C and, where necessary, to the Sub-County Children's Officer.

4. Results

4.1 Response rate

Table 1 shows the response rate. Of the 89 questionnaires issued to HOD-G/C, 76 were returned (85.4%). All 89 class teacher questionnaires were returned (100%), and 168 of the 184 targeted parents or guardians took part (91.3%). The medical officer also responded. These rates exceed the 70% considered adequate for social science research (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012).

Table 1. *Response rate by respondent category*

Respondent category	Distributed	Returned	Response rate (%)
Heads of Department, Guidance and Counselling	89	76	85.4
Grade 3 class teachers	89	89	100.0
Parents/guardians	184	168	91.3
Medical personnel	1	1	100.0

Source: Field data (2026).

4.2 Prevalence of physical abuse indicators

HOD-G/C reported how often they observed physical abuse indicators among Grade 3 learners (Table 2). The overall mean was 2.53 (*SD* = 1.00), meaning the indicators were observed "sometimes". Signs of being hit or slapped were the most common (*M* = 2.87, *SD* = 0.95); 68.4% of respondents saw them often or sometimes and only 10.5% never did. Unexplained bruises or marks followed (*M* = 2.71), then flinching when adults approach (*M* = 2.66) and fear of going home (*M* = 2.58). Burns or welts were least reported (*M* = 2.05), seen often or sometimes by 31.6% of respondents. This pattern suggests that hitting and slapping, often in the form of punishment, is the main form of physical abuse, while severe injuries are less visible in school.

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Table 2. *HOD-G/C observation of physical abuse indicators among Grade 3 learners (n = 76)*

Indicator	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean	SD
Signs of being hit or slapped	22 (28.9%)	30 (39.5%)	16 (21.1%)	8 (10.5%)	2.87	0.95
Unexplained bruises or marks	18 (23.7%)	28 (36.8%)	20 (26.3%)	10 (13.2%)	2.71	0.98
Flinching when adults approach	20 (26.3%)	24 (31.6%)	18 (23.7%)	14 (18.4%)	2.66	1.06
Fear of going home	16 (21.1%)	26 (34.2%)	20 (26.3%)	14 (18.4%)	2.58	1.02
Injuries inconsistent with explanation	14 (18.4%)	24 (31.6%)	22 (28.9%)	16 (21.1%)	2.47	1.02
Cuts or scratches	12 (15.8%)	22 (28.9%)	26 (34.2%)	16 (21.1%)	2.39	0.99
Burns or welts	8 (10.5%)	16 (21.1%)	24 (31.6%)	28 (36.8%)	2.05	1.01
Overall					2.53	1.00

Note. Scale: 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often. *Source:* Field data (2026).

Class teachers reported a similar picture (overall $M = 2.41$, $SD = 1.03$). Unexplained injuries or marks were the most common indicator ($M = 2.71$; 60.7% often or sometimes), followed by fear of physical contact ($M = 2.53$), fear when other children are disciplined ($M = 2.39$), complaints of pain when sitting or moving ($M = 2.26$) and clothing inappropriate for the weather that may hide marks ($M = 2.17$).

4.3 Perceived effects of physical abuse on academic performance

Table 3 summarises HOD-G/C views on how physical abuse affects learning. The overall mean of 3.72 ($SD = 1.06$) shows general agreement that physical abuse harms academic performance. The highest-rated effects were declining achievement in assessments ($M = 3.95$; 76.3% agreed) and a higher risk of dropping out ($M = 3.95$; 73.7% agreed). Low concentration in class ($M = 3.82$; 71.0%) and demotivation ($M = 3.76$; 68.4%) followed. Difficulty completing tasks received the lowest, though still positive, rating ($M = 3.45$; 52.6%), suggesting that the effect on task completion varies more between children.

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Table 3. *HOD-G/C perceptions of the effects of physical abuse on academic performance (n = 76)*

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. dev.
Declining achievement in assessments	24 (31.6%)	34 (44.7%)	10 (13.2%)	6 (7.9%)	2 (2.6%)	3.95	0.97
Increased risk of school dropout	26 (34.2%)	30 (39.5%)	12 (15.8%)	6 (7.9%)	2 (2.6%)	3.95	1.01
Low concentration in class	22 (28.9%)	32 (42.1%)	12 (15.8%)	6 (7.9%)	4 (5.3%)	3.82	1.04
Demotivated in academics	20 (26.3%)	32 (42.1%)	14 (18.4%)	6 (7.9%)	4 (5.3%)	3.76	1.06
Poor memory retention of content	18 (23.7%)	28 (36.8%)	16 (21.1%)	10 (13.2%)	4 (5.3%)	3.61	1.13
Low classroom participation	16 (21.1%)	30 (39.5%)	18 (23.7%)	8 (10.5%)	4 (5.3%)	3.61	1.07
Frequent absences	18 (23.7%)	28 (36.8%)	16 (21.1%)	10 (13.2%)	4 (5.3%)	3.61	1.13
Difficulty completing tasks	14 (18.4%)	26 (34.2%)	20 (26.3%)	12 (15.8%)	4 (5.3%)	3.45	1.11
Overall						3.72	1.06

Note. SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, N = Neutral, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree. *Source:* Field data (2026).

Class teachers rated how often they saw specific academic behaviours in learners with physical abuse indicators (Table 4). The overall mean of 2.65 (*SD* = 1.02) indicates that these behaviours occurred sometimes to often. Difficulty concentrating during lessons was most frequent (*M* = 2.91; 69.7% often or sometimes), followed by declining test scores (*M* = 2.82; 65.2%), poor participation (*M* = 2.73) and incomplete assignments (*M* = 2.71). Falling asleep in class was least frequent (*M* = 2.35).

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Table 4. *Class teachers' observation of academic behaviours in learners with physical abuse indicators (n = 89)*

Academic behaviour	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean	SD
Difficulty concentrating during lessons	28 (31.5%)	34 (38.2%)	18 (20.2%)	9 (10.1%)	2.91	0.96
Declining test scores	26 (29.2%)	32 (36.0%)	20 (22.5%)	11 (12.4%)	2.82	0.99
Poor participation in class activities	24 (27.0%)	30 (33.7%)	22 (24.7%)	13 (14.6%)	2.73	1.01
Incomplete homework/assignments	22 (24.7%)	32 (36.0%)	22 (24.7%)	13 (14.6%)	2.71	1.00
Frequent absences	20 (22.5%)	28 (31.5%)	24 (27.0%)	17 (19.1%)	2.57	1.05
Memory problems with learned material	18 (20.2%)	26 (29.2%)	26 (29.2%)	19 (21.3%)	2.48	1.05
Falling asleep in class	16 (18.0%)	22 (24.7%)	28 (31.5%)	23 (25.8%)	2.35	1.06
Overall					2.65	1.02

Note. Scale: 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often. *Source:* Field data (2026).

4.4 Qualitative and documentary evidence

Parent interviews showed how physical punishment changed children's attitude to school. One father explained:

> *"My son was a good student. He loved mathematics and was always in the top five in his class. But after the teacher started caning him for minor mistakes, he lost interest. He started fearing the teacher and making excuses to avoid going to school. Now his performance is poor." (Parent 45, male, extended family)*

Health facility records documented bruises, burns and fractures among children seen for injuries linked to physical abuse. In one case, a child was treated for bruising three times in six months, each time with a different explanation, a recognised warning sign (Sedlak & Broadhurst, 2019). Most cases were managed as outpatient injuries, with few referrals for psychosocial support. School score sheets showed that abused learners scored about 15–20% lower than their peers in mathematics and languages, with drops of up to 25%, and that grades declined gradually over two to three terms after the abuse rather than in a single fall. HOD-G/C rated their schools' capacity to respond as poor to average (overall M = 2.84 on a 5-point scale), with teacher training on child protection rated lowest (M = 2.55).

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4.5 Inferential analysis and hypothesis testing

The data met the assumptions of regression. Academic performance was normally distributed (Shapiro-Wilk = 0.988, $p = 0.184$), variance inflation factors were close to 1 (physical abuse VIF = 1.102), the Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.891, and residual plots showed no pattern. Table 5 presents the correlation and regression results for physical abuse.

Table 5. *Correlation and regression results for physical abuse and academic performance*

Statistic	Value
Pearson correlation with academic performance (r)	−0.287 ($p < 0.001$)
Shared variance (r^2)	0.082 (8.2%)
Unstandardised coefficient, B (SE)	−2.891 (0.712)
Standardised coefficient (β)	−0.234
t-value (p-value)	−4.061 ($p < 0.001$)
Overall model: R / R^2 / adjusted R^2	0.384 / 0.148 / 0.139
Overall model: F (df)	22.041 (3, 330), $p < 0.001$
Decision on H_{01}	Rejected

Note. Regression coefficients are from the multiple regression model with psychological and sexual abuse as control predictors. Dependent variable: academic performance composite. *Source:* Field data (2026).

Physical abuse had a negative and significant correlation with academic performance ($r = −0.287$, $p < 0.001$); learners with more indicators of physical abuse tended to perform worse. Physical abuse alone shared about 8.2% of the variance in performance. In the multiple regression model, which was significant overall ($F(3, 330) = 22.041$, $p < 0.001$) and explained 14.8% of the variance in academic performance, physical abuse remained a significant negative predictor after controlling for psychological and sexual abuse ($B = −2.891$, $\beta = −0.234$, $t = −4.061$, $p < 0.001$). Holding the other forms of abuse constant, each one-unit increase in the physical abuse index was associated with a 2.89-point decrease in the academic performance score. The null hypothesis H_{01} was therefore rejected.

5. Discussion

The study found that physical abuse is common among Grade 3 learners in Soy Sub-County, with hitting and slapping the most frequently observed indicators. This agrees with the 2019 Kenya Violence Against Children Survey, which identified physical violence as the most prevalent form of childhood violence (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 2019), and with

Frederick and Goddard (2020), who described physical abuse as the most commonly recorded type of maltreatment. The lower reporting of burns and welts supports Sedlak and Broadhurst's (2019) observation that the most severe cases tend to remain hidden. The prominence of slapping and hitting, together with parents' accounts of caning, suggests that harsh discipline at home and at school remains a key source of physical abuse despite the legal ban on corporal punishment.

Respondents across groups agreed that physical abuse lowers academic performance mainly through poor concentration, declining assessment results, reduced participation, demotivation and absenteeism. These findings mirror Renner et al. (2023), who found steeper declines in attendance and in reading and mathematics proficiency among physically abused children, and Kiesel et al. (2018), who linked maltreatment to falling attendance and achievement. The Kenyan findings of Njoroge et al. (2023), Okello and Chepkwony (2024) and Masibo et al. (2025) show the same pattern among older learners; the present study extends this evidence to Grade 3 under the CBE system. The gradual decline in score sheets over two to three terms is consistent with Fisher and Widom's (2021) view that maltreatment affects learning through accumulated cognitive and emotional strain rather than a single shock.

The inferential results confirm these perceptions. The negative correlation ($r = -0.287$) is small to moderate, and the regression coefficient ($\beta = -0.234$) shows that physical abuse has a distinct effect even after accounting for psychological and sexual abuse. The size of the effect is larger than the coefficient reported by Masibo et al. (2025) among secondary students ($r = -0.074$), which may reflect the greater vulnerability of younger children whose foundational skills are still forming. The results fit Social Cognitive Theory: fear of adults and hypervigilance reduce self-regulation and attention, while repeated punishment lowers self-efficacy and motivation, as reflected in teachers' reports of demotivation and poor participation (Schunk, 2012; Bandura, 1997). The neurobiological account of stress overload offered by Friedman and Putnam (2019) also helps explain why concentration and memory were among the most affected areas.

The overall model explained 14.8% of the variance in performance, so other factors such as poverty, neglect, family conflict and school quality also matter. Weak school capacity to respond, especially limited teacher training on child protection and poor referral links with health services, means many affected learners may be noticed but not supported. This agrees with Davenport and Halford (2023), who identified inadequate training and resources as barriers to intervention in Kenya.

The study has limitations. Its cross-sectional design shows association rather than proven causation. Physical abuse was measured through observable indicators reported by teachers and parents, which may be affected by recall and response bias and may miss hidden cases. The findings relate to public schools in one sub-county and may not apply to private schools or other regions.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Physical abuse has a significant negative effect on the academic performance of Grade 3 learners in public primary schools in Soy Sub-County. Abused learners show poorer concentration, participation, task completion and attendance, and their assessment results decline over time.

Physical abuse is therefore not only a welfare and health issue but also an educational one, and teachers are well placed to detect it.

The study recommends that: (i) the Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service Commission provide mandatory in-service training for class teachers and HOD-G/C on identifying physical abuse and on trauma-sensitive classroom practice; (ii) school managers strictly enforce the ban on corporal punishment and set up confidential reporting channels for learners, teachers and parents; (iii) schools strengthen referral links with health facilities so that injured learners receive psychosocial follow-up as well as medical treatment; and (iv) schools engage parents on positive, non-violent discipline. Further research should use longitudinal designs to track learners' recovery, include private schools and other sub-counties, and examine neglect and other factors that explain the remaining variation in performance.

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