

**TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF CHILD
MALTREATMENT A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED
SCHOOLS IN LIMURU DIVISION
KIAMBU WEST DISTRICT,
KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF LONG AND
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DECLARATION

I, **GITHAIGA IRENE WANJIRU** hereby declare that this research report is my original work and has never been presented to any other university for academic assessment whereby works of other researchers has been used. Acknowledgements have been fully made and some cases quotations made.

Signature.....

GITHAIGA IRENE WANJIRU

Date.....10- 8- 09.....

APPROVAL

This is a report on maltreatment in selected schools in Limuru division of Kiambu west district central province and it was submitted for examination purpose for the award of bachelor degree in early childhood and primary education in Kampala International University.

SIGNATURE.....

SUPERVISOR: NABUSETA TALIGoola

DATE.....22/09/09

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my dear husband Kimani, son Patrick, daughter Patricia and Lispah.

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 showing the prevalence of child abuse and neglect according to teacher.....	15
Table 4.2 showing the rating of the teacher's knowledge about child maltreatment	17
Table 4.3 showing teacher's ability to help children cope	18
Table 4.4 showing whether teaches teach children skills of preventing them from becoming victims of abuse such as sexual molestation and physical	19
Table 4.5 showing specific skills taught to children to avoid being abused	19

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1 showing how serious the problem of maltreatment is	16
Figure 4.2 showing the teacher's ability to use bibliotherapy.....	20
Figure 4.3 showing the responses of teachers on whether they give play and art therapy to victims of abuse	21

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	I
APPROVAL.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	III
DEDICATION.....	IV
LIST OF TABLES.....	V
LIST OF FIGURES.....	VI
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VII

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND.....	1
1.2 STATEMENT.....	3
1.3 PURPOSE.....	4
1.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES.....	4
1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	5
1.6 SCOPE.....	5
1.7 SIGNIFICANCE.....	5

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE TWO.....	7
2.1 THE FAMILY.....	8
2.2 COMMUNITY AND MALTREATMENT.....	10
2.3 EFFECTS OF CHILD.....	11
2.4 INTERVENTION.....	16

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	19
3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	19
3.2 RESEARCH POPULATION.....	19
3.3 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES.....	19
3.4 TYPES OF DATA COLLECTED.....	19
3.5 INSTRUMENTATION.....	20
3.6 RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT.....	20
3.7 PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION.....	21
3.8 DATA ANALYSIS.....	21
3.9 LIMITATION TO THE STUDY.....	21

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.

INTRODUCTION.....	23
4.1 PREVALENCE OF CHILD MALTREATMENT.....	23
4.2 TEACHER'S KNOWLEDGE.....	26
4.3 INTERVENTION MEASURES.....	30

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	39
5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.....	39
5.3 CONCLUSION OF FINDING.....	43
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	44

REFERENCE

APPENDIX

MAP

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

Researchers are of view that children's security is anchored in their families. Ideally this security is said to be created by caring families.

Introduction

Researchers have established it that children's security is anchored in their families and it is created when parents a warm and caring and the children's environment is consistent, predictable and protected. As result children are encouraged to develop into competent and caring adults. The capacity and ability of parents to be warm however mainly depends on some controls within or outside the family such as social-economic status, stability in marriage, health among others. (Berk 2000) but when those controls breakdown children have been reported to suffer in a number of ways and one of them being child abuse and neglect.

1.1 Background to the Study

Child abuse and neglected have been in existence since time_immemorial, but it was not until recently when it received a great deal of publicity in America children maltreatment first become a topic of research in 1969'S and the researchers hypothesis that it was rooted in adult psychological disturbance (Berk 2000). The researchers turned to the social perspective of the functioning of the family and later on established that child maltreatment is brought about by some interacting variables that is family community and cultural levels. Specific findings by some child development specialist disclosed that adults who abused or neglected their children usually had a history of they themselves under going maltreatment is their own childhoods. (Cobb 2001 De Hartis 2000).

Maltreatment of children has been reported to have grave consequences to children which range from disruption in their normal development process with long term negative effects social, emotional and psychological in nature. Child maltreatment is therefore an issue that should not be ignored such children together with their peers. Teachers must be

equipped with specialized knowledge to help such children cope with their situation and also have the specialized skills of identifying such children.

Tens of thousands of case of physical battering, sexual abuse, and gross neglect of children are reported in Kenya each year. In neighboring Uganda it is worse where children are even sacrificed due to witchcraft. The victims of child maltreatment range from young children who have been reported to be challenging with their frequent efforts to assert their independence often in ways that inconvenience or frustrate adults.

Reports indicate that some parents have totally failed to provide children's basic needs for food, warmth, education cleanliness and medical attention (neglect). Others have deliberately caused physical injury. Whereas, some parents have neglected their children and have not been emotionally responsive to their children due to cultural influences. It is common for parents to criticize and tell at children their by subjecting their children to demanding comments. There are also some reports of sexual abuse.

We do not want to have the future generation of our country being aggressive, children who repeat grades in school and behavior problems at school. This study is therefore intended to investigate the problem of child maltreatment in Kenya.

Was chosen because in this area there exists a population with diverse socio-cultural, economic and educational background. It was therefore the best environment where must of the variables of maltreatment could be found.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem of child abuse and neglect in Kenya can not be ignored, because there is way it is contributing to the children's ability to remain in school, perform well and interact favorably with other children of their age group. Statistics show that some parents have physically emotionally, verbally and sexually abused or neglected their children. Child battering has been after reported in different parts of Kenya knowing very weil that these children will grow up to battle their own children after what has happened

to them ,therefore need to act now as teachers. Teachers may not change the source of their fate but they can help them to go through this pain and suffering and gradually overcome it and live normal lives. This research is therefore intended to investigate child maltreatment in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose

The main object of this study was to investigate the problem of child maltreatment in Limuru Division, Kiambu West District Kenya

1.4 Specific Objectives

The following objectives guided the study;

- (i) To establish the prevalence of child neglect and abuse in
- (ii) To assess the teachers knowledge and awareness of the occurrence of child abuse and neglect in their environment

- (iii) To find out how child victims of abuse and neglect have been helped to cope

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study how serious the problem of child maltreatment

- (i) How informed are the teachers about case of child maltreatment?
- (ii) How have the victims of child maltreatment helped?

1.6 Scope

The research was carried out with purpose of investigating the problem of child maltreatment with the focus on; the prevalence of the problem, The common cases of maltreatment and awareness of the problem Maltreatment and whether victims have identified and helped accordingly.

1.7 Significances

After these study findings are disseminated the following categories of people could benefit from them;

Teachers who teach victims of maltreatment will have clear guidelines of identifying them and offer them the appropriate counseling to help the cope.

The policy makers especially in education could use this study to enrich the curriculum to cater for such needs.

The teacher training colleges could also enrich their teaching content so as to equip teachers with specialized knowledge and skills to handle such problems of maltreatment of children

The researcher has already benefited most because after reading the content about maltreatment life has remained the same. And after applying this knowledge to the problem by going out here to compare what has been said and what is rather than everyone's.

CHAPTER TWO

According to Garbarino also contributes those stresses stemming from social and economic factors often lead to parental feelings of inadequacy and frustration which can explode in abuse against children.

Similarly Cobb (2000) also explains that after survey conduct over 3000 families about how they resolve conflict in their homes, they reported that they act such as hitting a child with an object, kicking, biting, burning or using a knife

Comparing with the above cited causes of maltreatment in Kenya children are battered because our culture supports domestic violence by permitting adults to discipline their children in harsh way Garborino talks of family privacy, indeed that is what has always happened. Punishing a child by spanking is seen as private normal because that is what every adult should do to correct the child. Little has been done by government to punish parents who batter their children although corporal punishment has been abolished in schools. Also most Kenyans are living under extreme poverty and this could lead to parents to feel that they are inadequate and consequently neglect their children or abuse them.

The family as the source of maltreatment

According to Berk (2002) within the family, certain children whose characteristics make them more of challenge to rear and more likely to become targets to abuse. Berk also mentioned sick children. Children who are temperamentally difficult, over active children and those with developmental problems. But whether such children are abused depends on the characteristics of parents. Berk further explains that when some parents believe they can do little to control the child's behavior and therefore move quickly towards physical force whenever children misbehave. Once child abuse gets started it quickly becomes part a self sustaining family relationship. The harshness of parents increases. That parent's seldom interact with their children and when they do they do not express any pleasure and affection, the communication is almost always negative

What Berk highlighted about how maltreatment occurs commonly happen in Kenya. The gap between parents and children is wide especially with fathers who are regarded as superior all family members.

Berk however makes it clear that most parents have enough self-control not to respond to their children misbehavior with abuse and that all children with developmental problems are mistreated. Unmanageable parental stress is strongly associated with all forms of maltreatment.

Abusive parents respond to stressful situations with high emotional arousal. At the same time such factors as low income unemployment. Marital conflict, overcrowded living conditions, frequent moves, substance abuse, and household disorganization are common in abusive homes. (Garbarino 2002)) Such parents are more likely to live in poverty stricken neighborhood with resident mobility

Papilla and olds (1996) also describe the abusing parents as those who are ignorant of normal child development expecting children not to cry, or to stay clean and neat at an early age. That they are less effective in resolving problems, they recognize and feel bad about their inadequacy and incompletely as parents.

They do not only bring fewer personal resources to bear when facing stressful events but also have fewer interpersonal resources on which they can rely. Perhaps the most important of these is their relationship with their spouses. They are most likely to have marital problems and their relationship are less satisfying and found to be less supportive and warm than those of comparison parents as well as more aggressive (Berk 2000, Cicchetti and lynch 1995)

Maltreatment parents differ from well average parents in the type of discipline that they are likely to use being less likely to use effective parenting styles. They are more likely instead to punish, threaten, and otherwise use coercive measures with their children and they are less likely to use reasoning. They are less consistent in their discipline and less warm and affectionate in general in their relationships (Ciccheti and lynch 1995)

Community and maltreatment

Child abuse and neglect in the context of the community is that the level of violence our culture tolerates. It has been observed that there is a cultural acceptance of violence as a solution to problems and this is the likely contributor of child abuse. (Natural research council 1993)

Research shows that a high degree of social support and a close network of kin support can prevent child abuse (Cicchetti and Lynch). However abusive parents are usually isolated from the formal and informal social supports in their communities. Reasons given for these parents include : them not having the necessary skills for establishing and maintaining positive relationship with friends and relatives and second is that such parents are more likely to live in poverty sticker neighborhood with residence mobility that provide a few links between family and community . For this reason the caregivers lack life live to others and have no one to turn to for help during stressful times. On this note Cicchetti and Lynch concluded that this explains why social support for care giver is extremely important and that mother who treat their children with abuse and neglect get inadequate social support.

Quite evident from the foregoing citations is that there is no single factor that can predict the occurrence of maltreatment. These factors indeed interact in order for care givers to abuse and neglect their children.

Effects of child maltreatment

Just as no one single fact can cause maltreatment no single one factor can predict its effects on the child, all we can state is that it bears grave consequences to some children.

According to some researchers abused children show delays to some in speech, linking emotional and cognitive development (Papallia and olds 1996) Essa 2003.

When in school children who are maltreated often have difficulty in paying attention and concentrating (Cobb2002). Aggression, social withdrawal and other problems with peers have also been reported.

Problems of low self esteem, difficulty maintaining a coherent sense of self, and problems descriptly ones feelings and actions have also been found (Ciccheti and lynch1995) such children find difficulty in experiencing pleasure or controlling anger and in addition the victims experience apathy in the desire to explore with the need to feel secure, problems which would persist into later childhood or even into adulthood. The most widely reported adult outcome from child maltreatment are aggression a parenting problem

(National research council 1993)

Dehart (2000) also observed that physical neglect in form of care giver falling to meet the child's basic needs such as food, warmth and cleanness as well as medical attention could produce devastating health consequences, lack of competence in dealing with the world of objects and major achievement problems in school.

According to the America national research council physical abuse is responsible for promoting behavioral problems including avoidant or disorganized attachment relationships and blunted emotions and later aggressiveness researchers have therefore concluded that abuse leads to aggression by influencing both children's perception of other people, whom they tend to see as potentially hostile and threatening and their social competency which leads to failure in strategies for problem solving.

When care givers are unavailable to children for emotional support the result has been depression, apathetic, devoid of joy and pleasure and easily frustrated and upset.
(National research council 1993)

Verbal abuse on the other hand been associated problems of self esteem and school adjustment (Dehart and Sroufe 2000)

Cobb (2000) also contributed that these effects may also take form of visible injuries.

Lissa (2003) quoted Ray. Hefer one of the world's leading authorities on the subject viewing child abuse and neglect as disruption in the normal developmental process of children with long-term repercussion that when the normal process of each of these levels. many approaches have been suggested including to teach high risk parents effective child rearing and disciplines strategies, high school child development course that include direct experiences with children and broad social programs that have as their goals full employment and better economic conditions for low SES families

Berk (2000) advised providing social supports to families can help to ease parental stress. This will help to reduce child maltreatment research indicates that a frustrating relationship with another person is the most important factor in preventing mothers with childhood histories of abuse from repeating the cycle with their own youngsters. (Caliso and Milner 1992; Egeland Jacobric and Sroufe 1988) in Berk.

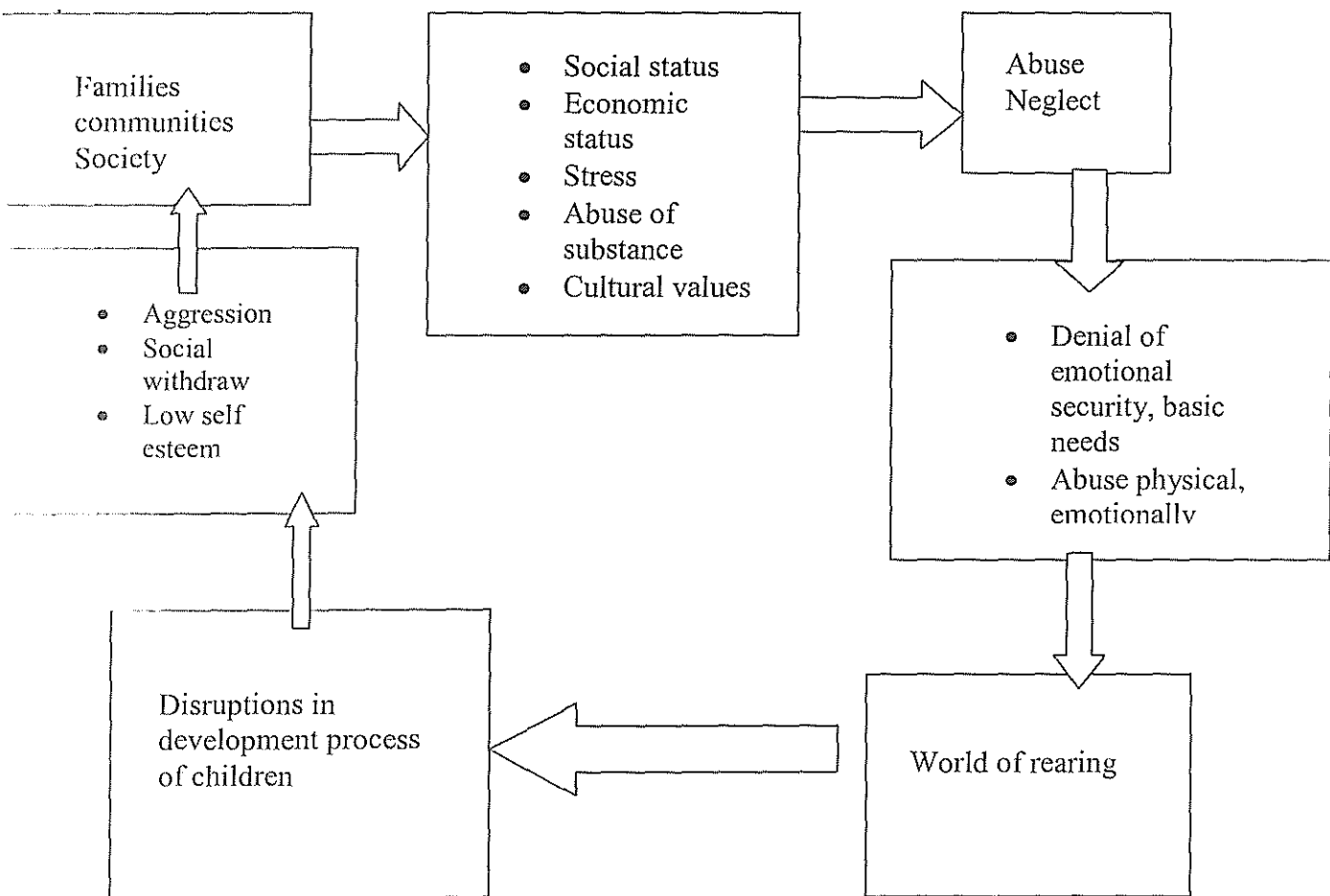
Other measures include sensitization through the media in order to educate people about the child maltreatment and where to seek help. Besides that changes are needed in our cultural value that disadvantages the girl children. As a fact many experts believe maltreatment of children may not be ruled out as long as violence is widespread and corporal punishment is regarded as an acceptable child rearing practice alternative. In addition combating poverty and its diverse correlates family stressed and disorganizations, inadequate food and medical care, parental hopelessness must be controlled

Sherman and Berk (1983) had advised that sometimes the victim should be separated from abusive parents, but if all possible it is better to keep the child in the family and stop the abuse. One of the effective way is to treat the abuse as criminal offenders. People arrested for family violence are less likely to repeat on the issue of sexual abuse Papallia and olds (1996) advised that the first step is to recognize the signs. These include extreme change of behaviours such as loss of appetite, sleep disturbances or night mares, regression to bed wetting, thumb sucking or frequent crying, torn or stained underclothes, vaginal bleeding or discharge, vaginal or throat infection, painful itching or swollen

genitals unusual interest in or knowledge of sexual matters and fear or dislike of being left in a certain place or with a certain person.

Papallia and olds further advised that incase of trauma or any injuries appropriate medical help must be sought.

Conceptual Framework of the Causes and Effects of Child Maltreatment



Of development is disrupted through what heifer terms as “the world of abnormal rearing” WAR truly have “missed out a childhood”, that is missed learning many of those basic skills necessary to interact with others (1987)

Intervention measures for victims of maltreatment

As teachers we have power to help children cope with some these atrocities committed to them although we may not have the ability to change the source of their suffering. We cannot turn back the days and remove abuse and neglect. But teachers may help these children to develop some skills that will enable them to handle themselves socially and emotionally. The kind of atmosphere that teachers establish and his /her skills as a good communicator are part of stress reducing approach

One of most important ways is that teachers can help to mitigate stress of children who victims of child abuse are how and what you should communicate the process and content of communication. Are important this it is important that your share the child's concern, acknowledge how the child feels and provider reassurance. On this note suggests that such response are particularly important for very young children and for older children who are extremely digressed listening carefully to what children say and encouraging them to ask questions ,express feelings and discuss their perceptions are important helping children deal with their atrocities

Sawyer (2000) advised the use of books that deal with emotionally sensitive topics to help children gain accurate information and learn coping strategies. Bibliotherapy has been observed to help children cope with varying fears, anxieties and concerns that are associated with everyday life.

According to sawyer (2000) through appropriate books, children can identify with a character who experiences a similar problem as there, here they could release some emotions that are part of confronting the problem and gain sights by understanding the character and their own motives and emotions better

Sawyer further gave some advantages of using bibliotherapy as follows:

That the use of the books helps children gain accurate and reliable information about the topic of concern to them. Books can convey information in a non threatening indirect manner and can help children to gain perspective and destroy misconceptions.

Secondarily that experience of sharing a problem helps them not feel alone in facing their difficulties. Sometimes children may feel frightened by the sense of isolation. They feel sharing through books can dispel some of this feeling of isolation.

Thirdly, books can help children to understand and appreciate children who may be different from them by allowing them to share their thoughts and feelings.

More so books can help children see a different way of solving problems they face; away they may not have thoughts of their own.

Lastly difficult situations could make the world seem frightening and cold. Good books can help children to affirm positive aspects the world.

These are however intervention measures in school, which means we are leaving out the sources of this problem and thus families, communities and society at large.

The whole effort of preventing and controlling maltreatment must be directed

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Research Methodology

In chapter three, the methods, techniques and procedures employed in this study were described as well as the study area.

3.1 Research Design

This research took form of a qualitative survey and at the end qualitative techniques had to be employed to analyze the data.

3.2 Research Population

The target population in this research included all teachers in the fifteen schools.

The researchers choose this population because these teachers were dealing directly with children whom they knew very well had history of abuse and neglect.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

One hundred and fifty teachers were randomly selected from the ten schools of Limuri Mission, Umoja Primary, Tigoni Primary, Rongai Primary, Limuri Town School, Kamandura Primary, St Paul, Kabuku, Rwaka, and Kamirithu to help Provide information about the incidence of child maltreatment.

3.4 Types of Data Collected

Primary data were gathered from the field in form of response of teachers.

Secondary data were gathered the researcher reviewed experts' literature concerning child maltreatment.

3.5 Instrumentation

Questionnaire was identified as the best means to collect reliable data from literate teachers within the shortest time possible.

The questionnaire constructed included both open ended and close ended questions and items. These items covered the three objectives,

3.5.1 Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument had to be tested to establish if it could yield valid, reliable and accurate information about the topic. The researcher used the teachers in the school where she taught to fill in the questionnaire with a purpose of identifying those items that had been repeated, those items that had been repeated, those that were sensitive and could not be answered and were later rephrased or eliminated.

3.5.2 Procedure of Data Collection

The letter for carrying out research was granted by the institute of open and distance learning of Kampala International University. The researcher then went on to seek permission from the administrators back in Kenya to carry out research in schools.

Once granted, the questionnaires were distributed the respondents who on filling them were collected on that very day

3.6 Data analysis

The questionnaires were later examined for errors in the responses. They were corrected where possible and the information from the questionnaires was tabulated and treated statistically. The results were interpreted and a conclusion made

3.7 Limitation to the Study

The time used was not adequate to carry out detailed investigation in order to make the research more meaningful. Time limited the researcher to go and seek more information from relevant authorities especially those concerned with child welfare in the country to explore their policies and how they have handled the cases. The children who were victims of maltreatment had to be studied for some time but this was not possible because of time.

The respondents were not very co-operative to give all the needed information as the topic was a bit sensitive and not common in schools

The distance away from my Supervisor also slowed the progress of this research as could only see supervisor after three to four months

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate the problem of child maltreatment.

- Three objectives were adapted to help guide this study and were formulated as follows; to establish the prevalence of child maltreatment in Limuru Division.
- To assess teachers' knowledge and awareness of the occurrence of child maltreatment
- To find out how child victims of maltreatment have been helped to cope.
- In chapter four data that about child maltreatment which was collected was collected was presented for analysis and the findings were interpreted discussed.

4.1 Prevalence of Child Maltreatment

Until recently child maltreatment was viewed as a rare occurrence in Africa where culture has influenced people. Violence towards children is normal. It was therefore necessary for the researchers to find out if indeed the problem of child abuse and neglect exists

Table 4.1 showing the prevalence of child abuse and neglect according to teachers

Does child abuse and neglect really exist?	Frequency	%
Yes	61	41
No	35	23
Do not know	54	36
total	150	100%

Sources: Field Data 2009

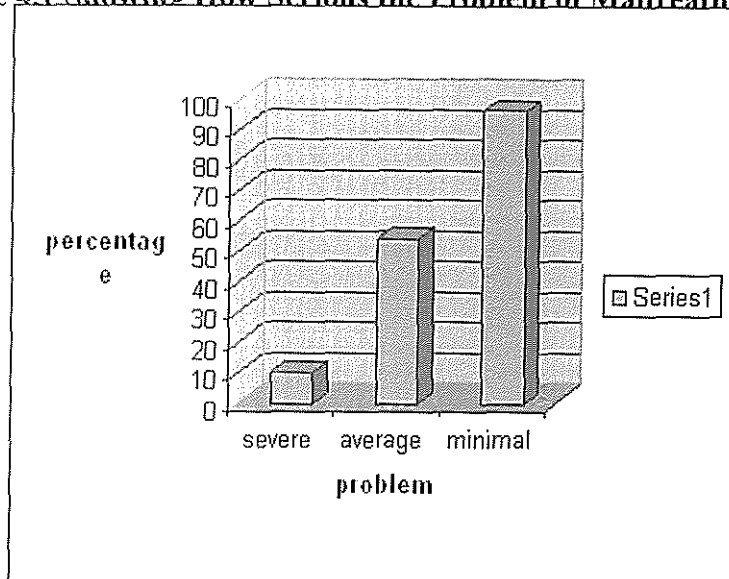
In table 4.1 shows that 61 teachers that child abuse and neglect was presented the society. 34 teachers however said no and 54 did not know whether this existed or not.

The findings show that this problem really existed although some teachers did not know whether this was a problem characteristic to our society. Two issues were recognized here

,one the teachers understanding maltreatment was low or second some children might be out there who have been abused but the incident never been reported.

4.1.1The magnitude of the problem of maltreatment Papallio and olds (1996) had observed

Figure 4.1 Showing How Serious the Problem of Maltreatment Is



Sources: Field Data 2009

According to graph 4.1 only ten teachers rated the problem as being severe, fifty four teachers however rated it as average and the remaining ninety six teachers believed that child maltreatment almost minimal.

The interpretation here is that it may be true that cases of child maltreatment are minimal. These findings are not all that dependable because its incidence according to papilla and olds (1996) is hard to determine because methods for collecting data are flawed and interpretation is difficult.

Secondary, taking into consideration the two cultural factors associated with child abuse namely societal violence and physical punishment of children. It is impossible to rule out that children are not being punished severely but because people believe its normal and nobody minds about it.

4.2 Teachers' knowledge and understanding of maltreatment and its causes

By a teacher having knowledge and understanding of child maltreatment, will she/he be able to identify children who are victims of abuse, diagnose the form of abuse or neglect and offer help accordingly. It was therefore essential for the researcher to assess teachers' knowledge of maltreatment by asking them a series of question.

Table 4.2 showing the rating of the teacher's of knowledge about child maltreatment

Teachers understanding of child maltreatment	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	TOTAL 150
Teachers knowledge of the meaning of maltreatment	30/150	74/150	46/150	150
Teachers awareness of the forms of child abuse and neglect	29/150	83/150	28/150	150
Teachers knowledge of causes of child abuse	67/150	75/150	8/150	150
Teachers knowledge of identification of victims of abuse	29/150	57/150	64/150	150
TOTAL	155/600	289/600	146/600	600
PERCENTAGE	26%	48%	24%	98

Source: Field Data 2009

Table 4.2 shows that 26% of the teachers were good in their understanding of maltreatment, the meaning, causes, and effects 46% of teachers were average and 24% of them were rated poor.

The above findings indicate that almost all teachers were average in their knowledge and understanding of child maltreatment. It becomes therefore difficult when it comes to handling children who are products of abnormal rearing as cited in Heifer (1987).

The problem lays most in the teachers' ability to notice the symptoms of child abuse and neglect. Helping such children is therefore not possible and also this could affect the

validity of their maltreatment. If they know little then they cannot estimate the prevalence.

Teachers' ability to help the children cope recovers from maltreatment

Child maltreatment has been observed to have detrimental effects which could be long term. Esau (2003) experts also highlighted that victims of abuse tend to become abuses themselves yet if they are help in time this could be prevented.

Table 4.3 showing teachers ability to help children cope

Rating of teachers ability to help children cope	Frequency	%
Above average	29	23
Average	53	43
Poor	42	34
total	124	100%

Source: Field Data

In above analysis out of the 150 teachers who responded to the questionnaire, 124 of them filled in this section. This has an implication that the 26 who did not fill either lacked knowledge or understanding of child maltreatment or they had negative attitude towards this problem and thought they were being bothered.

However the analysis rated 29 teachers victims of abuse 53 of the teachers were rated average and 42 teachers were poor.

The teachers' ability to help children cope is very important and must therefore be taken into consideration by the government education policy makers. It shows that the teachers are not being trained well to handle emerging problems outside teaching.

Intervention measures adapted in schools to help victims of maltreatment

There is some interpenetration that experts had advised to be established to help abused skills to children. Berk 2000 had suggested teaching life skills to children. Sawyer (2000) advised the use of bibliotherapy, papalia and olds (1996) suggested play and art therapy, honig 1986 advised of propos communication assessed if they existed in schools

The prevention of maltreatment by teaching life skills the researcher assessed the teachers' ability to teach children how to avoid child maltreatment.

Table 4.4 shows whether teachers teach children skills of preventing them from becoming victims of abuse such as sexual molestation and physical

Do teacher teach children life skills in school	Frequency	%
Agree	60	43
Disagree	36	26
Do not know	45	32
total	141	101

Source: Field Data 2009

In the foregoing analysis sixty teachers contributed that they teach their learners to avoid child abuse

Thirty six teachers however were frank enough to say that they did not forty five teachers did not know how to teach life skills.

The interpretation for the above analysis is the majority of teachers do not teach life skills to children to sensitize them how they can avoid abuse when and where to seek help this is challenge to the society. Where physical punishment is ethically right.

Specific information given to children while in school order to empower them to prevent maltreatment

Teachers were asked to name some skills they taught to children. Table 4.5 showing specific skills taught to children to avoid being abused

Life skills taught to children	Frequency	%
Having control over their bodies	80/141	53%
Alerting them and frightening them about dangerous adults	83/141	59%
Teaching children to report such cases	91/141	65%
Social education	45/141	32%
total	299/564	53%

Source: Field Data 2009

Data in table 4.5 shows that 57% of the teachers taught their pupils to have control over their bodies, 59% of them after alerted their children about abusive adults by frightening them about the consequences of being careless. 65% of the teachers taught the children to report any cases of child abuse. And 32% of the teachers taught the children about society values that are dangers and they needed to watch at.

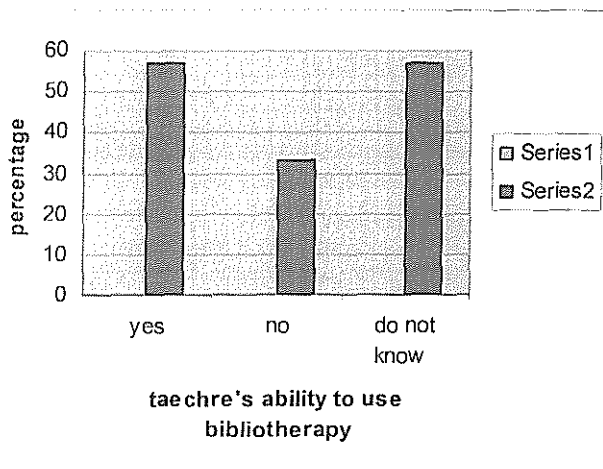
The above findings reflected the teachers' awareness of the problem and the ability of a half of them to sensitize their pupils

The use of bibliotherapy in schools to the help abused children cope

Sawyer (200) advised the public to use books that deal with emotionally sensitive topics the abused children to gain accurate information and to learn coping.

It had to be established whether this had been done in the fifteen schools were studied.

Figure 4.2 showing the teachers ability to use bibliotherapy



Source: field data 2008

Findings in figure 4.2 showed that 57 teachers out of the 147 who responded to this item agreed that they used bibliotherapy. 33 teachers however did not use it and another 57 did not know how to use it.

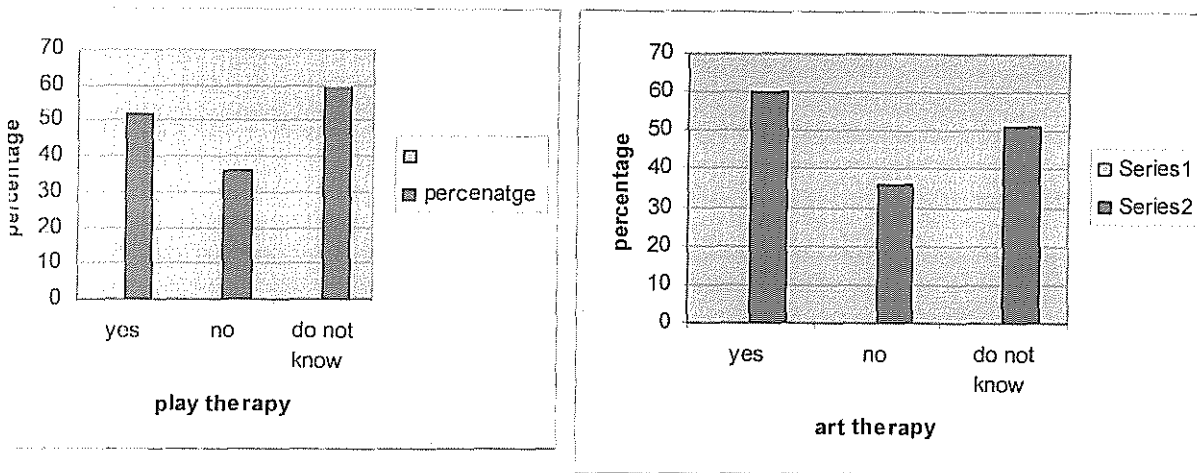
It can be interpreted that the 90 teachers are not aware of the benefits of using bibliotherapy. Could be they lack specialized knowledge about helping victims of maltreatment and neither do they understand the problem itself. Children who have been abused are in need of such therapy may never be able to gain an insight of their own problem by identifying with other characters who have experienced the same problem.

They may never find a solution to their own problem and therefore not being helped by the teachers. The result could be the cycle of child maltreatment repeating itself over and over. There is indeed a problem here.

The use of play and therapy in schools to help abused and neglected children

Papalia and olds (1996) advised that abused children can be helped by teachers or counselors giving them play or art therapy and day care in a therapeutic environment.

Figure 4.3 showing the responses of teachers on whether they give play and art therapy to victims of abuse



Source: field data 2009

Findings show that 52 teachers offered play therapy 36 of the teachers refused and 59 had no ideas. Once again 60 teachers offered art therapy 36 of them did not offer it and 51 did not know. The above analysis once again reflects some form of uniformity in the teachers ability to offer therapy to the victims of child maltreatment. It reflects maltreatment and knowledge and understanding of maltreatment and how to identify such cases and help them accordingly. It also highlights the inability of schools to establish a welcoming environment for maltreated children schools have ignored the victims of maltreatment and as long as this situation remains the way it is in schools the efforts of providing education for all by government are a mere wastage of resources

Teacher’s ability to communicate with maltreatment of children

Honig (1986) advised that one of the techniques teachers ought to adopt was to apply that skill of a good communication as this will reduce and stress of victims of abuse

According to her the schools must provide a consistent and predictable environment which children may have missed at home and that teachers must be nurturing.

Teachers were asked they can do to provide a conducive environment.

Table 4.6 shows what teachers do to create a friendly environment.

Teacher's views on how to create a stress free environment

- I talk to them in friendly way
- I counsel them
- I avoid their problem
- I arrange the classroom well
- I encourage them to participate in class
- I make my lessons interesting
- I make a lot of jokes with them,
- I allow them to talk to me freely.

Source: Field Data 2009

Many views were given by teachers about how to create a stress free learning environment. The above responses were commonly given by a number of teachers. These all shows that many teachers out there try as much as possible to communicate to the children effectively. However some teachers thought avoiding the employ various techniques to be able to communicate to the abused children effectively.

This could help them to control their emotions and feelings.

Teachers views of who the abusers/neglect are:

Experts in the field of child maltreatment have been quoted to implicate adult to be the abusers but mostly parents. Essa (2003). This was not part of the objectives but it was found vital to establish the real source of this problem in order to make appropriate recommendations

The teachers' responses about the potential child abuses

- Potential abusers
- Adults who are not relatives
- Adult who are distant relatives
- Parents

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This research investigated the problem of maltreatment of children. Its consequences and how to help the victims cope. The help in the investigation their questions were asked namely:

- (i) How serious is the problem of child maltreatment
- (ii) How have the victims of child maltreatment been helped?
- (iii) How informed are the teachers about cases of maltreatment?

The above question were answered a conclusion given and recommendations made.

5.2 Summary of Findings

Research question one. How serious is the problem of child maltreatment?

Basing on findings when teachers responses were analyzed. It was discovered that indeed the problem existed. However the number of those who did not know and those said no was almost doubling that of the teachers who was or the teachers could not recognize those cases of maltreatment because of other factors.

Findings also revealed that the problem of child maltreatment was not serious according to the teachers. This findings alone could not be relied on to make inferences since experts like Papalia and olds (1996) had already warned that its incidence was hard to determine due to the methods that were used to collect data were flame interpretation was a bit difficult. Secondly Cobbs (2001) had also highlighted that toll of abuse extended beyond the immediately effect of the violence. Permitting children's lives with quiet dread. Some cases may have never been reported therefore making it difficult to establish how serious this problem was.

Research question two: how informed are the teachers about the problem of child maltreatment?

To be informed the researcher meant the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the problem of maltreatment. The teachers are expected to have specialized knowledge about child maltreatment, diagnosing the forms of abuse, and offering support to the victims.

Findings however showed only 26% of the teachers were rated good in having the relevant knowledge and skills. 48% of the teachers were just average and 24% were poor in their area. This revealed that 72% of the child could not adequately help the victims of child maltreatment and neither could they identify to them. This explained the reasons for their inability to establish how serious the problem of maltreatment was. It also highlighted a weakness in the teacher training centers for their inadequacy in equipping teachers with relevant skills and knowledge to confront problems like maltreatment when they occur.

The above finding showed that the problem of maltreatment is most likely to occur over attention in schools and have never been followed up because nobody is aware that they exist.

Research questions three. How have the victims of abuse been helped to cope?

Experts like sawyer 2000 had advised that bibliotherapy be to help children cope(2000) advised that children be taught life skills to avoid the dangers of malnutrition and Papalia et al (1996) suggested to use play and art therapy.

Findings show that 43% of the teachers taught children how to have control over their bodies alert them and frighten them of the dangerous people to report cases

Finding also showed that 1/3 of the teachers had put up bibliotherapy to help the maltreated children cope but the rest were not practicing it. From this finding it shows how schools are missing out the most valuable therapy which could help to reverse the cycle of child maltreatment which could also help the children perform well in cases after

all those atrocities. By denying the victims maltreatment a chance to identify with children with the same problem these children will never be able to come to terms with the pains and suffering inflicted on them by the parents or any other adult.

Findings also revealed that 1/3 of the teachers could apply both play and art therapy to children. The rest of the teachers either did not know to use or were just reluctant to use it. This was linked with their lack of understanding of maltreatment and to prevent it.

Also the analysis indicated that teachers tried to make their teaching /learning environment convenient and predictable for children who may have been abused.

Teachers in schools applied good communication skills. When dealing with maltreated in class.

It was also established that in society there are no well established laws protecting the children from child abuse, and majority of people believed I violence as the only means to control children behaviour. This therefore shows that children were being maltreated ignorantly and this offence was taken for granted. This could also explain the difficulty that teachers faced in establishing prevalence of maltreatment, this finding agrees with Berk 2000; Papalia and olds 2001 and Hairis.

About the incident of maltreatment in school it was established that corporal punishment had been abolished from schools by government be applied in families where these children come from and are much exposed to maltreatment in schools. This however must also be applied in families where these children come from and are much exposed to maltreatment.

The teachers proved to be themselves abusers when many responded that they felt bad when corporal punishment had been abolished

5.3 Conclusion

There are many circumstances in which children fall victim of abuse and maltreatment. It is very to realize that even parents are some of the potential child abusers both directly.

And when the parents, who are supposed to give a warm caring environment to children abuse or contribute to their abuse, the school must be the next have for such victims. It has however been established from this finding that most teachers lack the relevant knowledge and skills to offer support to those children who have been maltreatment. Furthermore, the interventions that have been adopted in schools are lacking without the above changing the education sector and the society at large face future challenges.

5.4 Recommendations

The following were recommended to control child maltreatment.

Teachers to be sensitized about the problem of child maltreatment, the causes, the effects and how they can help these children. This will be done by attending workshops organized by experts in the field.

Teacher Training Colleges must enrich their curriculum of child development and specifically in the area of child maltreatment.

Teachers must be keen on recognizing when there is change in children's behaviour such as being aggressive with play mates, withdrawing from the rest of the group.

Teachers must enhance children self esteem wherever and whenever possible by encouraging them, by being caring and focusing attention and by giving them warm personal regard.

Teachers must encourage such children to develop a special interest or skill which can serve as the inner source of pride and self-esteem.

Help children to understand the consequences and implications of negative, acting out behaviours on others and on themselves. Provide daily activities that can improve their skills in consequential thinking.

Teachers must acknowledge children's feelings and encourage verbal mediation. They must also help the children to learn that they are not alone in having uncomfortable feelings. Give them to see how others also feel upset.

Use gentle humor when possible to help children reframe their negative thoughts and feelings. Also help the children to view their situation more positively

Structure classroom activities to enhance co-operative rather than competition since a cooperative climate can help to reduce stress. In case this child is unpopular with peers, arrange for cooperative activities that require children to work together.

Teachers must find individual time to talk with the victims. Teachers must find out how these children perceive their threat or atrocity. Help the victims to think of possible solutions for their problems.

Teachers should adopt bibliotherapy by finding many materials to read aloud with children to help them identify with maltreated characters and how they cope.

Teachers must adopt the therapy since many young children can not verbally express fears and paint clay and other art materials have been identified to allow a child to express upsets and act out private feelings.

Parents must be taught child maltreatment skills while providing therapy to them to help them deal with stress.

Abusers of children must not be left to go free they must be incriminated and brought to books as this could discourage them from abusing their children

Young children must be taught that bodies belongs to them and that they can say no to any one who might try to touch them or them against their will even if it is someone they have and trust.

Depending on how serious maltreatment is the foster care has been adopted to remove the abused child from immediate danger although it is also implicated for influencing abuse and further alienates children from the family.

The society has to be sensitized about child maltreatment and its consequences. This can be done through media such as radios, TVs and newspapers

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6-4-09.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR MS/MRS/MR. GITHAIGA IRENE WANJIRU

REG. # BED/10815/61/DF

The above named is our student in the Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL), pursuing a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

He/she wishes to carry out a research in your Organization on:

Teachers' Knowledge and understanding
of maltreatment. - A case study
of selected schools in zimuru
Division, Kiambu West District, Kenya

The research is a requirement for the Award of a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

Any assistance accorded to him/her regarding research will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,

MUHEZI JOSEPH
HEAD, IN-SERVICE