

# Physical and Psychological Child Abuse in Ethiopia: Implications for Intervention

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate on prevalence of physical and psychological forms of child abuse in some selected elementary schools (Meskele-Kiristos Elementary School, Ediget-Felg Elementary School, Gimbrit Elementary School and Kilili Rufael Elementary School) in North Gondar. Three hundred twenty one children whose age ranges from seven to seventeen years were randomly drawn from these schools through simple random sampling technique using lottery method. Data were gathered by questionnaire. Most children faced physical abuse in the form kicked with an object (73.8%), Pinching (78.5%) and slapping on head (70.73%). There was statistically significant difference between male and female children being victim of form kicked with an object ( $\chi^2=72.9$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), Pinching ( $\chi^2=28.1$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and slapping on head ( $\chi^2=55.1$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Male children were more victims of these types of physical abuse as compared to female children. Moreover, substantial proportions of children were suffering from psychological abuse through terrorising in the form of threatening with severe punishment (64.8%) and threatening to leave home (57%). Furthermore, sizeable proportion of children faced psychological abuse in the form of being seen as worthless/ useless/ by parent/caregiver (53.9%) and negative comments by comparing with others (62.1%). There was statistically significant difference between male and female children in psychological abuse in the form of being threatened with severe punishment ( $\chi^2=28.15$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and in name calling ( $\chi^2=7.48$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). More proportion of boys experienced threatening with severe punishment and name calling as compared girls. Therefore, prevention efforts and policies should address physical and psychological abuse.

**Keywords:** Physical abuse; Emotional abuse; Children

## Introduction

Basically, children need predictability, structure, clear boundaries and the knowledge that their parents are looking after for their safety. However, abused children cannot predict how their parents will act. Their world is unpredictable and a frightening place.

According to Yoseph [1] child abuse has become a serious problem. However the issue of child abuse is largely ignored in many parts of the world, particularly in Africa. There would not be exception in the case of Ethiopia for it is one of the countries in Africa continent. In Ethiopia, children face humiliating physical punishment and psychological abuse at home, in school and in the community-at-large. Thus this study focuses on prevalence of physical and psychological forms of child abuse in some selected elementary school in North Gondar.

Child abuse or maltreatment has a negative effect on health of children. Abused children often suffer injuries including cuts, bruises, burns, and broken bones. In addition, maltreatment causes stress that can disrupt early brain development. Again, extreme stress due to can harm the development of the nervous and immune systems. As a result, children who are abused or neglected are at higher risk for health problems. These problems include alcoholism, depression, drug abuse, eating disorders, obesity, high-risk sexual behaviors, smoking, suicide and certain chronic diseases. The repercussion becomes worse for children whose age is under 4 years and when their family has history of violence, drug or alcohol abuse, poverty and chronic health problems [2-4].

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010) [2], child maltreatment includes all types of abuse and neglecting a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another person in a custodial role. Child maltreatment or abuse can occur in a child's home, or in organizations, schools or communities the child interacts [5]. Any act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation

child abuse is any behavior or act towards a child which is outside the norms of conduct, and entails a substantial risk of causing physical and psychological or emotional harm [4,5]. Overall, child abuse actions may be intentional or unintentional. Not all abusers are intentionally harming their children. Some have been victims of abuse themselves, and don't know any other way to parent or rear children [6,7].

Abusive actions can be intentional or unintentional. According to National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information report (2005) [3], many abusive parents and caregivers consider their actions as forms of discipline or ways to make children learn to behave. But, there is a big difference between using physical punishment to ensure discipline and physical abuse. The point of disciplining children is to teach them right from wrong, not to make them live in fear. Therefore, child maltreatment is not well understood although common in poor and extremely poor families. Instead, it has been considered as normal disciplinary measure. Bearing this in mind, this study assesses physical and psychological forms of child maltreatment and implications for intervention in some selected elementary school children in North Gondar.

When we come to Ethiopia, one survey study shows that 71.9%, 76.7% and 65.5% children were psychologically abused through

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shouting, insulting and frightening/threatening by their parents respectively [1]. Yoseph [1] added that 74.1 percent of children were physically abused in the form of hitting with a stick. Besides, this study shows that 73.3 percent, 69.1 percent and 53.1 percent children were physically punished through hitting on the head, pinching, and kneeling down. The same study also reported that more than 60 percent of adults in the study admitted punishing their children with rope or electrical wire and 57 percent admitted punching of their children. Besides, more than 70 percent of the children had been heated with a stick or other instrument and 62.6 percent of adults admitted forcing a child to inhale the smoke of burning chill peppers.

Furthermore, seventy-three percent of the South Asian and Middle Eastern sample, 65% of the East Asian sample, and 78% of the Latina sample reported experiencing at least one type of physical abuse. Experiencing physical abuse was the only predictor for acceptance of physical discipline and as a parental privilege or right across groups [8].

The other feature of psychological child abuse is isolating children from normal contact with others and limiting their freedoms. Here, children are not allowed to participate in different activities like play and extracurricular activities. In addition, children are supposed to stay in home from the time schools let out until the next morning. Finally, corrupting which is one feature of psychological abuse occurs when parents permit their children in engage in undesirable activities like drug abuse, alcohol abuse, watching pornography, and criminal activities such as stealing and gambling.

## Methods and Materials

### Research design

Quantitative surveys design was employed in order to assess of physical and psychological abuse of children. It is descriptive survey research type for its purpose is describing prevalence of physical and psychological forms child maltreatment.

### Participants and sampling

Three hundred twenty one elementary school children participated in the study. Participants were randomly drawn from four elementary schools through simple random sampling technique (lottery method). The rationale to use simple random sampling technique is that it is best suited give equal chance for all children to participate.

### Instrument

After thorough reading and revision of materials on child abuse, the questionnaire was prepared in the form of check list. The questionnaire consists of two open ended and twenty five close ended items.

To check the reliability, pilot study was conducted by taking 15 children in Kebele 16 Elementary School in Gondar Town. The reliability of the instrument was checked by cronach alpha. The reliability index of physical abuse measure was found to be 0.87. One item was discarded from 16 questions to measure psychological abuse and the reliability was found to be 0.64. One item was discarded for it was poor question. The content validity of the items was assessed by two Psychology experts from Department of Psychology, University of Gondar.

### Administration

First orientation was given to assistant data collectors and co-investigators on how to handle and administer questionnaires. In addition, participants were informed about the anonymity of their

responses. After assuring this, data were distributed to participants in free classrooms.

### Data analysis

In order to analyze data, different statistical techniques will be computed using SPSS version 16. Percentages were used to analyze demographic variables on prevalence of physical and psychological abuse among participants. In addition, chi-square test was employed to analyze child abuse across sex. Alpha value of 0.05 was determined for all significant tests.

## Results

This section presents demographic characteristics, prevalence and types of child physical and psychological forms of abuse faced by respondents selected from Meskele-Kiristos Elementary School, Ediget- Felg Elementary School, Gimbrit Elementary School and Kilili Rufael Elementary School.

### Background of participants

As shown in Table 1, three hundred twenty one elementary school children participated in this study. Of these 152(47.4%) were boys and 169(52.6%) were girls.

As depicted above in Table 2, the age of 145(48%) participants ranges from 7 to 12 years. The age of the rest 167(52%) participants ranges from 13 to 17 years.

### Prevalence of physical and psychological abuse

This section discusses the prevalence of physical and psychological abuse of children in the four study areas (Meskele-Kiristos Elementary School, Ediget felg Elementary School, Gimbrit Elementary School and Kilili Rufael Elementary School). First we shall see prevalence of physical abuse and then we discuss prevalence of psychological abuse of children.

### Prevalence of physical abuse

As shown in Table 3, 73.8% of participants have been kicked with an object. Large proportion of (70.73 percent) of participants also reported that they experienced hitting on their head or face. In addition, the majority (78.5 percent) of participants were victim of physical punishment in the form of pinching.

Moreover, Table 3 demonstrates the prevalence of severe type of child physical abuse of participants like burning and beating with a knife or any sharp object. Surprisingly, 20.9% participants faced punishment in the form of burning which is seriously damages ones wellbeing. And 7.8 percent of the participants disclosed that they were ever beaten with a knife or any sharp object. Here, 44.6% and 36.2% percent of participants were victim of physical punishment in the

sex	N	%
Male	152	47.4
Female	169	52.6
Total	321	100

Table 1: Sex of Participants (N=321).

Age	N	%
7 -12 years	154	48
13-17years	167	52
Total	321	100

Table 2: Age of Participants.

form of twisting their ear (which could result in hard of hearing) and kneeling down respectively. Relatively small proportion of participants (14.6%) experienced physical punishment by pulling hair. In the following section we shall see the magnitude of physical abuse that was reported by respondents. The least frequent form of physical abuse was being beaten with a knife.

As shown in Table 4, there was statistically significant association between sex and experience of being kicked with an object ( $\chi^2=72.9$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Much more than girls, boys were kicked with an object. That is, 76.3% boys reported being kicked with an object and 71.6% girls reported being kicked with an object. In addition, sex was significantly associated with being slapped on head or face ( $\chi^2=55.1$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Here also, as compared to girls (63.9%), more proportion of boys (78.3%) reported that they were slapped on their head or face. Moreover, sex was significantly related to pinching ( $\chi^2=28.1$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Boys were more suffering from pinching than girls. The proportion of male children who experienced pinching (84.2%) is greater than the proportion of female children who experienced such form of physical abuse (73.4%). However, sex of children was not significantly associated to kneeling down form of physical abuse.

### Magnitude of physical abuse

Respondents were asked about how often they have been physically abused by their parents or caregivers. Their responses are displayed in the following Table.

Type of physical abuse	Ever experience		Never experience	
	N	%	N	%
Kicked with an object	237	73.8	84	26.2
Hitting on the head or face	227	70.73	94	29.3
Pinching	252	78.5	69	21.5
Pulling hair	47	14.6	274	85.4
Twisting ear	140	44.6	181	56.4
Kneeling down	113	36.2	208	64.8
Burned with a fire	67	20.9	254	79.1
Beating with a knife	25	7.8	296	92.2

Table 3: Percentage of Children Who Experienced Physical Abuse (N=321).

As shown in Table 5, out of 237 participants who were kicked by object like “dula” or “cheniger”, the majority (85.07%) reported that their parents sometimes beat them with an object. In addition, 4.23% of respondents indicated their parents usually punish them by kicking with a stick. Similarly, of the 252 participants who were victim of pinching, large proportion (85.71%) of them were sometimes pinched by their parents. Here, 6.74 percent participants witnessed that their parents usually pinch them. Moreover, 92.51 percent of respondents reported that their parents sometimes slapped on their head and/ or face.

Out of the total 140 participants whose ears were twisted, 87.14 percent of them reported that their parents sometimes twisted their ears. But, pulling hair was relatively applied to punish children. When we come to kneeling down, 87 percent were sometimes forced to stand on their kneel. 5% reported prevalence of pulling hair as a means of punishment. About 35.2 percent of participants were forced to kneel down. Regarding the worst form of physical maltreatment such as burning and beating with a sharp object, out of the total 67 participants, 87.5% reported their sometimes punished them by burning. Only very few proportion (10%) of participants reported consistent use of such kind of punishment. Generally the data clearly shows that participants faced at least one type of physical maltreatment.

### Prevalence and magnitude of psychological abuse

As Table 6 shows, out of the total 321 participants, substantial proportion of respondents (64.8%) reported that they were threatened with severe punishment by their parents. In addition, more than half (57%) participants were terrorized to leave home. Put in other words, only 43 percent of the respondents were confident to live in their home. Moreover, 33.2% of participants psychologically abused through treating with death.

As shown in the above Table, most (80.77%) participants were sometimes terrorized with severe punishment by their parents. Besides, 11 percent were usually terrorized by severe punishment. Of the total 131 participants who experienced threatening to leave home, 81 percent were sometimes terrorized to leave home by their parents. The rest 12% and 10.1% were usually and always threatened to leave home respectively. Finally, as shown in Table 7, of the total

Type of physical abuse	Male				Female				df	X2
	Ever experience		Never experience		Ever experience		Ever experience			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Kicked with an object	116	76.3	36	23.7	121	71.6	48	28.4	1	72.9*
Slapping on the head or face	119	78.3	33	21.7	108	63.9	61	36.1	1	55.1*
Pinching	128	84.2	24	15.8	124	73.4	45	26.6	1	28.1*
Kneeling down	63	41.5	89	58.5	50	29.58	119	70.04	1	1.04

Table 4: Association between Various Forms of Physical Abuse and Sex.

Type of physical abuse	Degree of Incidence					
	Always		Usually		Sometimes	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Burned with a fire	7	10.44	3	4.47	57	85.07
Beaten with a knife	3	12	3	12	19	76
Kicked with a stick	8	3.37	10	4.23	219	92.4
Hitting on the head or face	8	3.52	9	3.96	210	92.51
Pinching	19	7.54	17	6.74	216	85.71
Pulling hair	6	12.76	2	4.25	39	82.98
Twisting ear	2	1.43	16	11.42	122	87.14
Kneeling down	8	8	18	15	87	77

Table 5: Degree of Physical Abuse Among Children Who Experienced the Problem (N=321).

Type of terrorising	Ever experience		Never experience	
	N	%	N	%
Threatening with death	100	31.2	221	68.8
Threatening with severe punishment	208	64.8	113	35.2
Threatened to leave home	151	57	170	53

Table 6: Prevalence of Psychological Abuse in the form of Terrorising.

Type of terrorising	Degree of Incidence					
	Always		Usually		Sometimes	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Threatening with death	10	10	11	11	79	79
Threatening with severe punishment	21	10.1	19	9.13	168	80.77
Threatened to leave home	17	11	12	79	122	81

Table 7: Percentage of Children Who Experienced Terrorising.

100 participants who experienced threatening with death, 79 percent of respondents sometimes faced terrorization with death from their parents or caregivers.

The majority (81%) of respondents report that their parents never allowed them to engage in gambling. Only few 9.3 percent were sometimes allowed to play gambling. Similarly, nearly all, 95.6 percent, participants were not allowed to engage in stealing activity. Only negligible proportion, 4.4 percent of respondents witnessed that their parents sometimes let them to stealing (Table 8). In addition, most participants, 81.9 percent were not allowed to watch pornographic film. Moreover, some (19%) participants were allowed to take alcohol like “areki” and “tela” (Table 9).

More than half (53.9%) participants reported that their parents see them as worthless. In addition, almost half (49.6%) reported that they face criticism or blame from their parents. Moreover, 62.1 percent of participants were suffering negative comments by comparing with others by their parents. On the other hand, less than half (43.4%) participants reported that they were psychologically abused by name calling (Table 10).

Table 11 shows that 42.2% of respondents indicated that they were see as worthless or useless by their parents. Besides, 22.6 percent of participants were always been seen as worthless in the eyes of their parents. Moreover, most (68.6%) participants reported that they were sometimes suffering criticism or blame by their parents. Finally, 80.1% participants were sometimes abused by name calling.

Only few (8.1%) participants and 12.8% indicated that their parents never supported and concerned for their welfare respectively. Finally, 16.8 percent participants reported that were made to stay out of home (Table 12).

Of the total 86 participants who experienced abuse by locking out of home, 82.55 percent witnessed that they were sometimes locked out of home. Paradoxically, more than half (61%) participants reported that they always get support and guidance from their parents. Similarly, 60% participants reported that their parents always think for the welfare of children (Table 13).

### Association between psychological abuse and sex

In order to assess whether difference in psychological abuse exist

between male and female children, chi-square test was computed. The results as displayed in the following Table.

As depicted in Table 14, the chi-square test confirms statistically significant difference in being threatened with severe punishment between male and female participants ( $\chi^2=28.15$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). When

Type of corrupting	Ever experience		Never experience	
	N	%	N	%
Allowed to take alcohol	61	19	260	81
Allowed to watch pornography	58	18.1	263	81.9
Let to engage in stealing	14	4.4	307	95.6
Allowed for gambling	30	9.3	291	90.7

Table 8: Percentage of Children Who Experienced Psychological Abuse through Corrupting.

Type of terrorising	Degree of Incidence					
	Always		Usually		Sometimes	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Allowed to take alcohol	4	6.55	3	49.18	54	88.52
Allowed to watch pornography	11	19	8	14	39	67
Let to engage in stealing	1	8	4	28	9	64
Allowed for gambling	5	16.67	4	13.33	21	70

Table 9: Degree of Psychological Abuse by Corruption.

Type of rejection	Ever experience		Never experience	
	N	%	N	%
seen as worthless/ useless/ by parent/caregiver	173	53.9	148	46.1
Criticized or blamed by parent/caregiver	156	49.6	165	51.4
Negative comments by comparing with others	196	62.1	125	38.9
name calling	136	43.4	185	57.6

Table 10: Percentage of Children Who Experienced Rejection.

Type of rejection	Degree of Incidence					
	Always		Usually		Sometimes	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
seen as worthless/ useless/ by parent/caregiver	39	22.6	26	15	108	42.4
Criticized or blamed by parent/caregiver	28	26.2	21	19.6	107	68.6
Negative comments by comparing with others	49	25	32	16.3	115	58.7
name calling	18	13.2	9	6.6	109	80.1

Table 11: Degree of rejection.

Type of ignoring	Ever experience		Never experience	
	N	%	N	%
supported and guided by parents	295	91.9	26	8.1
Worry for welfare of	280	77.2	41	12.8
Being lock out of home	86	16.8	235	73.2

Table 12: Percentage of Children Who Experienced Abuse through Ignoring.

Type of ignoring	Degree of Incidence					
	Always		Usually		Sometimes	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
supported and guided by parents	180	61	43	14.6	72	24.4
Worry for welfare of	168	60	41	14.6	71	25.35
Being lock out of home	5	5.81	10	11.62	71	82.55

Table 13: Degree of Ignorance.

Type of psychological abuse	Male				Female				df	Chi-square
	Ever experience		Never experience		Ever experience		Ever experience			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Threatening with severe punishment	111	70	41	30	97	57.4	72	42.6	1	28.15*
Threatened to leave home	89	58.5	63	44.5	63	37.3	106	67.7	1	0.9
Allowed to take alcohol	30	19.7	122	80.3	31	18.4	138	81.6	1	1.23
seen as worthless/ useless/ by parent/caregiver	83	54.6	69	45.4	90	53.25	79	46.75	1	1.95
Criticized or blamed by parent/caregiver	80	52.6	72	47.4	76	45	93	55	1	0.25
name calling	70	46	82	54	66	39	103	61	1	7.48*

\*P<0.05

**Table 14:** Association between Psychological Abuse and Sex.

we see the proportions, 70% of boys reported that they have experience of being threatened with severe punishment while relatively low proportion (57.4%) girls reported the same problem. Similarly, there was significant difference in name calling between male and female participants ( $\chi^2=7.48$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Here, more proportion of male participant (46%) were victims of name calling as compared to 39% of female participants who had the same experience.

However, significant difference was not found between the two groups (boys and girls) in forms of psychological abuse like criticism or blame ( $\chi^2=0.25$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), seen as worthless ( $\chi^2=1.95$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), being threaten to leave home ( $\chi^2=0.9$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and letting to take alcohol ( $\chi^2=1.23$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p>0.05$ ).

## Discussion

Most children were suffering physical abuse in different ways. Most (73.8 percent) participants were kicked with an object. Substantial proportion (70.73 percent) of participants experienced slapping or hitting on their head or face. In addition, the majority (78.5 percent) of participants were victim of pinching. Amazingly, 20.9% participants faced punishment in the form of burning which is seriously damages ones wellbeing and 7.8 percent of the participants were beaten with a sharp object. Similarly, in Ethiopia, 21 percent of urban school children and 64 percent of rural school children reported bruises or swellings on their bodies resulting from parental punishment. According to the World SAFE report, corporal punishment of children in the form of hitting, punching, kicking or beating which is socially and legally accepted in most countries. Punishing children is physical abuse has been considered as a discipline.

Sex was significantly associated to physical abuse. In other words, there was significant difference in the prevalence of physical abuse between male and female children. There was significant difference between male and female children in being kicked with an object ( $\chi^2=72.9$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), slapped on head or face ( $\chi^2=55.1$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and pinching ( $\chi^2=28.1$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). In all these types of physical abuse, male children were more victim than female children. For instance, 84.2% male children experienced pinching whereas relatively lower proportion (73.4%) of female children who experienced pinching. regarding being kicked with an object, as compared to the proportion (71.6%) of female children experienced being kicked with an object, more proportion (76.3%) of male children were kicked with an object. When we come to slapping on face or head, girls 63.9%, more proportion of boys (78.3%) reported that they were slapped on their head or face. This shows that boys were more victim of physical punishment in the form of slapping on head or face as compared to girls. In general, one may infer that male children were more victim of physical punishment in the form of kicking with an object, pinching and slapping on face or head than female children. These findings are

similar with world SAFE study. According to world SAFE report, male children appear to be at greater risk of harsh physical punishment in many countries. The reason why boys are more subjected to harsher physical punishment than girls may be related to the role and the values attached to male and female children. Boys are considered to need more physical discipline. Therefore, this could account for the differences in using physical punishment to discipline boys and girls by their parents.

Coming to degree of physical abuse among children who experienced punishment in the form of kicking, pinching, and slapping on kneel, the majority (85.07%) had been sometimes beaten them with an object. In addition, large proportion (85.71%) of children was sometimes pinched by their parents. Moreover, 92.51 percent of respondents reported that their parents sometimes slapped on their head and/ or face. 87 percent were sometimes forced to stand on their kneel. Only, small proportion children reported that they had been always kicked with object (3.37%), pinched (7.54%), slapped on head or faces (3.52%) and forced to kneel down (8%).

Regarding psychology abuse, most children was suffering terrorising through threatening with severe punishment (64.8%) threatening to leave home (57%) and threatening with death (33.2%). Similarly, one survey study shows that 65% of children in Ethiopia faced psychological abuse by frightening/threatening [1].

However, Psychological abuse through corrupting was least reported by participants. The majority of respondents reported that their parents never allowed them to engage in gambling. Only few participants were sometimes allowed to play gambling. And almost all participants were not allowed to engage in stealing activity. The majority were not allowed to take alcohol and to watch pornography. This could be due to the social values of the society that might have restricted parents not to allow their children to engage in socially unacceptable activities like gambling and stealing.

There was statistically significant difference psychological abuse in the form of threatening with severe punishment ( $\chi^2=28.15$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and name calling ( $\chi^2=7.48$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Here male children were more threatened with severe punishment and name calling than female children. However, there was no significant difference in other forms of psychological abuse (threatening to leave home, seen as worthless and blame by parent/caregiver) between male and female children.

## Conclusion

Most children faced physical abuse in the form of being kicked with an object, hitting on their head or face and pinching. There were also some children who were victim of physical abuse in the form of burning, twisting ear, pulling hair. The least frequent form of physical abuse was being beaten with a knife. Sex was significantly associated to some

forms physical abuse. Significant difference between male and female children was observed in being kicked with an object, slapping on head and pinching. In all these types of physical abuse, male children were more victims as compared to female children. The majority of children had been sometimes beaten with an object, pinched by their parents, slapped on their head and/ or face and forced to stand on their kneel. Most children were suffering psychological abuse through terrorising in the form of threatening with severe punishment and threatening to leave home. Negligible number of children was psychologically abused through corrupting in the form of stealing, gambling. Almost all children were not allowed to engage in gambling and stealing activity. The majority of the children were not allowed to drink alcohol. There was statistically significant difference in psychological abuse in the form of threatening with severe punishment and name calling. Male children were more threatened with severe punishment and name calling than female children. There was no significant difference in other forms of psychological abuse (threatening to leave home, being seen as worthless and blame by parent/caregiver) between male and female children.

### Recommendations

Though the Ethiopia's 1994 constitution asserts the right of children to be free of corporal punishment in schools and institutions of care, prevention efforts and policies must directly address children, their

caregivers and the environments in which they live in order to prevent physical and psychological abuse. Beside this, curricula at all levels of education should all the subject of child abuse and the development within organizations of responses to it.

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