**Children’s rights and the cultural nexus in the African context: Abuses and policy implications.**

**ABSTRACT**

*Despite improvements in awareness and observance of children’s rights as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, most parts of Africa have lagged far behind. There continues to be disproportionate maltreatment and lack of protection of children’s rights compared to other regions in the world. This study explored childhood perceptions and experiences of their rights from different case studies in different countries, particularly Western and Southern Africa. The study noted several types of maltreatment encountered by children and the associated risk factors. Findings from reviews indicate notable recurrences of maltreatment among children and youth at a greater rate compared to other regions. These types of maltreatment included excessive child labour and exploitation; discrimination by family members; sexual and physical abuse and voicelessness. The main associated risk factors were traditional paternalistic perceptions of childhood, poverty, living with non-biological caregivers, alcoholism, and substance abuse. The findings indicate a great need for awareness, prevention and intervention initiatives aimed at curbing child abuse and neglect of children within communities.*

**Keywords:** Maltreatment, Protection, Children's Rights, Africa, Abuse, Ubuntu