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IMPACT OF CHILD ABUSE ON PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS AMONG MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

V. Nalini¹ and Dr. S. Devasahayam Selvakumar^{2, 2}

Abstract

In the present study, the investigator has attempted to study the impact of child abuse on personality characteristics among Middle school students. The sample consists of 1032 students from different school in Chennai District. The present study has been designed as a descriptive study- survey method has been adopted. For analyzing the collected data, the investigator used the statistical techniques such as Percentile analysis and Correlation analysis. From the study it revealed that a significant number of physical and psychological problems are associated with child abuse.

INTRODUCTION

Education today has become a powerful tool for the development of the society. The Indian Education Commission (1986) has declared Education has ways been important but perhaps never more so and in man's history than today". Fifty years of independence should be a sufficiently long-time for our ancient country to understand the problems that confront us and to commence earnest action to sort them out.

Universally, Children, 'the would be citizens of tomorrow' are disadvantaged in one significant respect, that they are defenceless, both mentally and physically. Child abuse, in one form or another, has existed in almost all societies throughout history, FACSE (2010). However, the recognition of child abuse as a social problem is of recent origin. Personality includes everything about a person. It is all that a person has about him. It includes all the behaviour patterns i.e., conative, cognitive and effective and covers not only the conscious activities but goes deeper to semi conscious and unconscious also. The importance of early experiences to personality development was first stressed by Freud (1952) who found that many of his adult patients had unhappy childhood experiences. Although many researchers have concluded that Child abuse and maltreatment has a negative effect on Children's personality.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

"No violence against children is justifiable; all violence against children is preventable".

- Enakshi Ganguly Thukral – Centre for Child Rights

Yet such violence exists in every country of the world, cutting across culture, class, education, income and ethnic origin.(Shekar Sheshadri, 2002). Personality is nothing but the aggregate accumulation of memories and incidents in an individual's entire life span. Environmental factors, family background, financial conditions, genetic factors, situations and circumstances also contribute to an individual's personality. Studies indicate that a significant number of physical and psychological problems are associated with child abuse, neglect and maltreatment. Abused children compared with non-abused children may have difficulty with academic performance, self control, self-image and social relationships (Howing, Wodarski, Kurtz, Gaudin, 1990). The insights gained from this study could be used to develop the healthy, protected, educated and well developed child population that will grow up to be productive citizens of the country.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find the levels of child abuse along with its dimensions as perceived by middle school students.

¹ Research Scholar, Meston College of Education, Chennai.

² Principal, Meston College of Education, Chennai.



2. To find the levels of Personality Characteristics (along with its dimensions) as perceived by Middle school students.
3. To find the relationship between Child abuse along with its dimensions and Personality characteristics among middle school students.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. The Levels of Child abuse in toto and its dimensions as perceived by Middle School Students are not positive.
2. The Levels of Personality characteristics of Middle School Students are not high.
3. There is no significant relationship between Child abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Personality Characteristics – Extroversion, Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism.

DE-LIMITING OF THE STUDY

1. The study was restricted to a few schools in and around Chennai District.
2. The sample size was restricted to 1032 Middle school Students (VII th Standard) only.

METHODOLOGY

The present study has been designed as a descriptive study- survey method has been adopted.

Tools Used:

1. ‘Child Abuse Assessment Questionnaire – CAAQ’ (2014) prepared and validated by the investigator and the Research Supervisor Dr. S. Devasahayam Selvakumar.
2. Personality Type Assessment Questionnaire –PTAQ (2010) prepared and validated by Dr. M. Suresh Kumar and P. Madhavan.

Selection of Sample:

Population /sample for the present study consist of the middle school students (VII th standard) of Chennai District. The investigator has used simple random technique for selecting sample of different categories from the population. The sample consists of 1032 students from different school in Chennai District.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

For analyzing the collected data, the investigator used the statistical techniques such as Percentile analysis and Correlation analysis.

Null Hypothesis 1:

The Levels of child abuse in toto and its dimensions as perceived by Middle School Students are not positive.

Table 1. Levels of Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions as perceived by Middle School Students

Child Abuse and its Dimensions	Negative		Neutral		Positive	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Physical Issues	119	11.53	697	67.54	216	20.93



Sexual Issues	169	16.38	755	73.16	108	10.47
Emotional Issues	148	14.34	679	65.79	205	19.86
Issues of Isolation	144	13.95	667	64.63	221	21.41
Drug Addict Issues	190	18.41	686	66.47	156	15.12
Total	146	14.15	752	72.87	134	12.98

It is inferred from the above table that 72.87% of Middle School Students have neutral perception on Child Abuse in total. With regard to its dimensions, 67.54% of them have neutral perception on Physical issues, 73.16% of them have neutral perception on Sexual issues, 65.79% of them have neutral perception on Emotional issues, 64.63% of them have neutral perception on Issues of isolation, and 66.47% of them neutral perception on Drug addict issues.

Null Hypothesis 2:

The Levels of Personality Characteristics of Middle School Students are not high.

Table 2: Levels of Personality Characteristics of Middle School Students

Personality Characteristics	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Extroversion	204	19.77	653	63.28	175	16.96
Openness	244	23.64	605	58.62	183	17.73
Agreeableness	81	7.85	724	70.16	227	22.00
Conscientiousness	96	9.30	725	70.25	211	20.45
Neuroticism	157	15.21	697	67.54	178	17.25

It is inferred from the above table that 63.28% of Middle School Students have moderate level of Extroversion, 58.62% of them have moderate level of Openness, 70.16% of them have moderate level of Agreeableness, 70.25% of them have moderate level of Conscientiousness, and 67.54% of them moderate level of Neuroticism.

Null Hypothesis 3.1:

There is no significant relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Extroversion.

Table 3. Relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions as, perceived by Middle School Students and their Extroversion

Child Abuse and its Dimensions	N	Calculated 'r' Value	Table Value	Remark
Physical Issues	1032	-0.071	0.062	S
Sexual Issues	1032	-0.070	0.062	S
Emotional Issues	1032	-0.151	0.062	S



Issues of Isolation	1032	-0.088	0.062	S
Drug Addict Issues	1032	-0.074	0.062	S
Total	1032	-0.106	0.062	S

From the above table it is found that the calculated 'r' values are greater than the table value for 1030 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance. Hence, "There is significant negative relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Extroversion".

Null Hypothesis 3.2:

There is no significant relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Openness.

Table 4. Relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions as, perceived by Middle School Students and their Openness

Child Abuse and its Dimensions	N	Calculated 'r' Value	Table Value	Remark
Physical Issues	1032	-0.105	0.062	S
Sexual Issues	1032	-0.081	0.062	S
Emotional Issues	1032	-0.064	0.062	S
Issues of Isolation	1032	-0.140	0.062	S
Drug Addict Issues	1032	-0.122	0.062	S
Total	1032	-0.119	0.062	S

From the above table it is found that the calculated 'r' values are greater than the table value for 1030 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance. Hence, "There is significant negative relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Openness".

Null Hypothesis 3.3:

There is no significant relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Agreeableness.

Table 5. Relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions as, perceived by Middle School Students and their Agreeableness

Child Abuse and its Dimensions	N	Calculated 'r' Value	Table Value	Remark
Physical Issues	1032	-0.097	0.062	S
Sexual Issues	1032	-0.144	0.062	S
Emotional Issues	1032	-0.076	0.062	S



Issues of Isolation	1032	-0.148	0.062	S
Drug Addict Issues	1032	-0.134	0.062	S
Total	1032	-0.149	0.062	S

From the above table it is found that the calculated 'r' values are greater than the table value for 1030 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance. Hence, "There is significant negative relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Agreeableness".

Null Hypothesis 3.4:

There is no significant relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Conscientiousness.

Table 6. Relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions as, perceived by Middle School Students and their Conscientiousness

Child Abuse and its Dimensions	N	Calculated 'r' Value	Table Value	Remark
Physical Issues	1032	-0.109	0.062	S
Sexual Issues	1032	-0.068	0.062	S
Emotional Issues	1032	-0.070	0.062	S
Issues of Isolation	1032	-0.072	0.062	S
Drug Addict Issues	1032	-0.119	0.062	S
Total	1032	-0.092	0.062	S

From the above table it is found that the calculated 'r' values are greater than the table value for 1030 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance. Hence, "There is significant negative relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Conscientiousness".

Null Hypothesis 3.5:

There is no significant relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Neuroticism.

Table 7. Relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions as, perceived by Middle School Students and their Neuroticism

Child Abuse and its Dimensions	N	Calculated 'r' Value	Table Value	Remark
Physical Issues	1032	-0.073	0.062	S
Sexual Issues	1032	-0.160	0.062	S
Emotional Issues	1032	-0.139	0.062	S
Issues of Isolation	1032	-0.165	0.062	S



Drug Addict Issues	1032	-0.160	0.062	S
Total	1032	-0.197	0.062	S

From the above table it is found that the calculated ‘r’ values are greater than the table value for 1030 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance. Hence, “There is significant negative relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their Neuroticism”.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Middle School Students have neutral perception on Child Abuse in total.
- The Levels of personality characteristics of Middle school students are moderate.
- There is exists negative relationship between Child Abuse in toto and its dimensions, as perceived by Middle School Students and their personality characteristics - Extroversion, Openness, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and their Neuroticism.

Studies of abused children and their families indicate that a significant number of physical and psychological problems are associated with child abuse. A study carried out by(Howing, Wodarski, Kurtz, Gaudin, 1993)comparing abused and non-abused children provided considerable evidence of the negative and lasting consequences of abuse. The abused children in the study experienced far greater problems at home, at school, amongst peers and in the community.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Child abuse and violence against children have emerged as one of the most crucial and alarming problems in this country. Abuse so far has always been defined as active acts of violence and exploitation. However denial of basic services leading to children falling out of the protective security net making them vulnerable to violence, is also abuse. This indeed is a paradigm shift in thinking.

The Chair of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has spoken about how an atmosphere of tolerance of violence against children is pervading in the Indian society today. People even have difficulty in acknowledging and recognizing that violence against children exists in multiple forms.

The study was envisaged to have some educational indicatives of the significance of awareness on child abuse. Proper and adequate utilization of educational outcomes could be made with the help of the studies.

India is making rapid progress in the field of education. Education is a complex process as it aims at the all round development of an individual. The teachers’ role in moulding a student’s personality is vital. Parents, teachers, peer groups and the commercial world influence the student.

CONCLUSION

By equipping children with life skills, and making them aware of themselves and their needs, contributing to their personal development.

Preventative programmes must therefore emphasise the positive aspect of child development including personal growth and awareness, self-esteem, personality development and respect for others and themselves (Killian and Willows, 1988). A psychologist is required to work with the child, to conduct a full

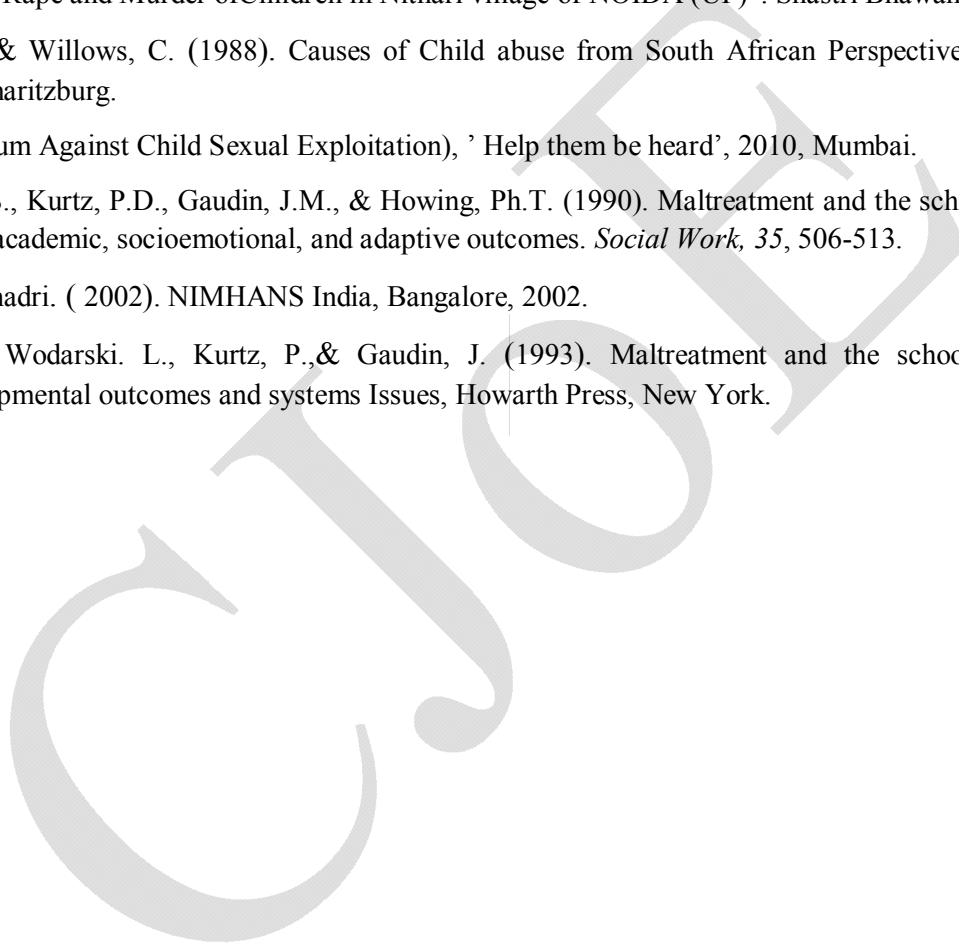


psychometric assessment to ascertain the effects of the abuse in that particular child, and then to treat the child and/or family in psychotherapy.

Teachers, since they are the only professionals who are likely to have known the child before the abuse. Teachers are often enormously important figures in the children's lives and so may be the only adults with whom the abused child has any positive relationship.

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