

Psychological Factors and Countermeasures of Child Abuse caused by Teachers

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Abstract: Child abuse by teachers has had a devastating impact on society, families, and pupils, and has become a major topic of discussion. Physical health issues or impairments induced by severe abuse might leave victims feeling insecure and distrustful. This paper reviews past research, identifies the many types of teacher abuse, and examines the subjective and objective reasons for child abuse on a personality and cognitive level, as well as the resulting reactions to these causes.

Keywords: Child maltreatment; Abuse; Psychological factors; Countermeasures; Mental health

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1. Introduction

Child and adolescent abuse and neglect are still a major public health concern around the world. It's been related to depression, suicidal ideation, substance misuse, and a variety of mental diseases, including post-traumatic stress disorder. There have been countless allegations of teachers assaulting kids around the world in the past. Abuse of students by professors is still happening in the twenty-first century all across the world. Numerous research-based and conceptual studies have created criteria for recognizing moral panic, which are met by many societies across continents' practical and conceptual responses to their concerns about child abuse ^[1].

Statistics show that 552 cases of child abuse were reported in South Korea from 2008 to 2013. 87.4% of those cases involve teachers as the perpetrators. Multiple Israeli epidemiological surveys reveal that more than 30% of high school students have been emotionally abused by their teachers. In addition, 59.9% of the Iranian middle school students experienced physical, while 43.3% of the students suffered emotional abuse, and 34.8% of the students suffered from the negligence of the teachers ^[2]. Even in July 2019, there were reports of abuse at a daycare center in Arkansas, where female teachers roughed up children and tossed them around like toys. It is also important to mention that this was not an infrequent event. An Australian study showed that the rates for sexual abuse before the age of 15 for females and males were 18% and 4.7% ^[3].

In reality, the function of child protective service agencies is limited because, according to the Fourth National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS-4), there are three times more children who are abused and neglected than the ones who are being reported ^[4]. The statistical rate for child maltreatment turns out to be upsetting: 38% of the young people in their late adolescence reported that they had encountered child maltreatment at some point throughout their lives ^[5].

Teachers' emotional abuse of children is common throughout the country. As a result, the government must put in place effective initiatives for school administrators and teachers, including better teacher

training. Any sort of emotional, physical, or sexual mistreatment of a kid by an adult in a position of responsibility is considered child abuse ^[6].

Child maltreatment (CM) is a severe societal problem that has a high prevalence and serious consequences. CM affects a large number of youngsters around the world. According to government reports, around three million children in the United States of America are affected with CM each year. Nonetheless, the true number of CM sufferers is likely to be higher ^[7]. Failure to notify CM is the cause of the gap between official and estimated CM numbers.

Teachers are supposed to be a sacred profession, who should teach and educate students. However, such dangerous behaviors in teaching cause not only physical harm to students, make them experience physical pain, but also bring significant threat to students' mental health, mainly manifested in the following three points:

To begin with, the abused will be extremely stressed at the time of the abuse, which can lead to feelings of anxiety and even terror, which can lead to cognitive distortion. Children may label themselves as "bad kids" and believe that their teachers dislike them. They may even believe they are unfit for anything, which can have a detrimental impact on mental health. Second, extreme abuse causes physical health problems or defects, which makes the abused feel uneasy and distrustful. Last but not least, teachers are role models for students' learning processes, which will have a big impact on students' worldview, outlook on life, and sense of values creation. Teachers teach students about abusive behavior, and they remember to use violence to solve issues. They may even grow up to be abusive. In short, the maltreatment of teachers has caused a terrible impact on society, family, and students and has become a hot issue of social concern.

What are the causes of teacher-child maltreatment? Localized research on the psychological causes of classroom child abuse is sorted out and refined in this study, resulting in a complete systematic and logical approach for people to utilize directly. Meanwhile, this research adds to and enhances the theory of criminal psychology, making it more complete. The goal of this literature review is to fully comprehend the psychological factors that contribute to teacher-child abuse and the corresponding countermeasures, as well as to comprehend different scholars' research perspectives and directions, analyze and summarize research findings, and form a systematic and comprehensive discussion.

The overview of this paper's organization is as follows: comprehensive discussion about the psychological causes and countermeasures of teacher-child abuse behavior, mainly from the perspective of psychology, sorting out and analyzing the relevant literature to explore its development prospects. At the same time, this paper aims to from some unique opinions to provide some reference for other scholars' further research.

Based on the above background investigation and research purposes, the author searched keywords such as "child abuse," "teacher-child abuse," "corporal punishment," "physiological factors," and "countermeasure" in the literature. This research focuses only on the literature on teacher-child abuse and corporal punishment and psychological recommendations for protecting children from abuse. The database PsycINFO was used by the author during the research. The researcher searched for literature published from 2001 to the present and used ten relevant articles as references.

2. Types and characteristics of child abuse by teachers

Teachers can abuse children in a variety of ways. When compared to physical harm, the process of abuse is frequently quite subtle, making it difficult to detect. Nonetheless, it has the potential to harm children's minds severely. Spatial distribution and time lag describe the unfavorable effect, which has a long-lasting and fatal effect. Children who have been abused are more likely to be fragile, insecure, and self-conscious. The association with problematic behavior, experiencing re-occurring trauma, and low educational achievement happens frequently ^[6].

3. Types of child abuse by teachers

In schools, there are three sorts of abuse that can occur. Physical abuse is defined as the infliction of harm on a child by deliberate, violent behaviors. Signs of physical abuse include wounds, bruises, burns, and stiff muscles. Psychological abuse includes any behavior against children that causes mental anguish or deficits. It's also known as 'emotional abuse,' because the harm to one's mental condition always leads to emotional trauma. Teachers can be abusive to children in a variety of ways, including yelling repeatedly, withholding compassion or affection, prolonged periods of silence, and telling cruel jokes, to mention a few. Finally, sexual abuse occurs when a teacher sexually touches a child or engages in a sexual act with them. Sexual abuse refers to any behavior directed at a youngster with the goal of sexual stimulation for the offender. Some examples include fondling forced sexual actions or improper physical exposure. Abuse includes one isolated event as well as incidences that go on for years.

4. Characteristics of child abuse by teachers

Child abuse generally has the following influential characteristics like strong concealment and difficulty obtaining evidence. It is challenging for children to resist and easy to repeat. The forms or types of abuse are varied and deceptive, and abusing teachers are more likely to violate the rights of younger children.

5. Factors under psychological causes of teacher child abuse

Child abuse generally has the following influential characteristics, strong concealment and difficulty obtaining evidence. It is challenging for children to resist and easy to repeat. The forms or types of abuse are varied and deceptive, and abusing teachers are more likely to violate the rights of younger children.

6. Discussion on the psychological Causes and subjective factors of teacher child abuse behavior

6.1. Cognitive aspects

It includes an individual's entire cognitive process as well as the broad word for all cognitive activity and their characteristics. In its most basic form, cognition refers to the acquisition and application of knowledge, which is the most basic mental activity of humans, and includes sensory perception, reasoning, memory, imagination, and language. Most people's behaviors are influenced by their existing cognition to some level. According to numerous researchers' analyses, teacher abuse is mostly caused by teachers' failure to understand professional duties and ethics. Because of some cognitive biases, teachers produce authority psychology, control psychology, impatience psychology, and reinforcement psychology when instructing students, which can lead to abusive behavior.

Teachers overstate their duties, privileges, and obligations, which contributes to child abuse. Teachers frequently use the justification that pupils do not respect them to justify their bullying, insulting, and even assaulting students, greatly increasing the likelihood of such behavior. At the same time, teachers' reliance on and complete trust from parents leads them to believe that they have the responsibility of supervision and have taken on the role of "second guardian" for their students, which leads to some teachers overstating their responsibilities and reinforcing misconceptions about teachers' rights.

The second factor is an irrational understanding of children's development. The majority of teachers who engage in abusive behavior hold incorrect viewpoints, which refers to a set of thoughts and attitudes about and toward children. The attitude, technique, and content of instructors' instructional actions are all influenced by children's incorrect viewpoints. Most schools still require students to be judged purely on their academic performance, leading to teachers having a one-sided perspective of achievement based on entry scores and a partial appraisal of students. Teachers with an irrational mindset are more likely to be biased when judging students in the classroom. They will rate the students as a whole based on their blunders, utterly disregarding their benefits. Alternatively, only pay attention to students' grades after the

evaluation but do not fully comprehend the students.

The third issue is the teachers' wrong understanding of discipline. On one hand, teachers believe that disciplining kids with aggression or even abuse saves time and effort. This strategy is both the simplest and the cruelest at the same time, and the terrible effect is both immediate and long-lasting. Due to the obvious benefit, teachers are prone to overlooking the significant negative consequences of such practice.

6.2. Personality aspects

Teachers' anger is the fundamental cause to their child abuse behavior in terms of personality. Abusive teachers are irritable, impatient, and competitive by nature, making it simple for them to put themselves in a stressful and nervous environment. In the long run, their mental health will deteriorate, and child abuse will develop.

The primary motivation to release pressure and bad feelings is an essential source of teacher-child abusive conduct due to employment, according to motivation theory. Teachers continue to be in a bad emotional condition as a result of various life demands, and their negative feelings are unable to find a proper outlet. Teachers will unconsciously construct a technique to release their pressure during communication with students, which will lead to abusive behavior.

In terms of ability, the teachers' poor self-regulation and coping ability are also one of the primary reasons for the occurrence of child abuse. Such teachers are unable to effectively deal with or change psychological or emotional difficulties, and they use incorrect cognitive and behavioral strategies.

7. Psychological causes and objective factors of teacher child abuse

7.1. Social and cultural aspects

In terms of the state and society, the state's control of child abuse is weak, and prevention efforts are ineffective. Aside from that, the social mainstream concept's complicity and indirect support for child abuse is a key objective component in the prevalence of child abuse. In this materialistic age, most people, particularly parents, place a high weight on teaching outcomes while overlooking the teaching process. Some parents believe that using physical punishment to attain a specific aim throughout the education process is reasonable and necessary. For the sake of their children's grades, some parents opt to rationalize teachers' abusive behavior. Some of them adopt a tolerant attitude as long as their children improve their academic performance, or even choose to ignore, all of which contributes to teachers' abusive behavior.

7.2. School management

The disharmonious environment created by schools and the tremendous amount of pressure given to teachers are also objective causes of child abuse. Most scholars discussed in their research that the lack of strict supervision during the recruitment process for teachers, insufficient punishment for problematic teachers, and various loopholes in school management all make room for the terrible behavior of the teachers. Teachers in different grades face non-identical teaching environments. For example, preschool teachers are not valued by society. Their treatment is often unfair, and their legal rights and interests are not protected, which directly reflects the low status of preschool education and the high pressure of survival for the preschool. However, the pressure on primary and secondary school teachers is different from that of preschool teachers. There is strict assessment for primary and secondary school teachers. They need to teach and participate in various educational training, scientific research, and other activities. Some schools even have a performance-based pay system, which has some advantages, but it also creates a utilitarian education atmosphere. This invisible environment gives people the illusion of fairness in education which can also catalyze child abuse. Due to the lack of a disciplinary system for the teachers, the situation may get worse.

7.3. Child object aspects

Firstly, although teachers are the ones who carry out child abuse, the influence of the children cannot be neglected, either. Children's behavior may even catalyze the situation. Although teachers are the ones who carry out child abuse, the influence of the children cannot be neglected, either. Children's behavior may even catalyze the situation. In general, children have less resistance, defense ability, legal awareness, and awareness of safeguarding. Teachers can effortlessly take advantage of those characteristics, allowing them to carry out their abusive behavior outrageously.

Secondly, there is a conflict mode between teachers and students. Due to the characteristics of the time, we live in, teachers and students are equal and democratic in learning, so contradictions and conflicts are likely to occur between the two sides in the daily teaching process. The conflict gradually accumulates and breaks out when it reaches its climax and ends with the violent behavior of the teacher.

Finally, there is also the student catalysis mode. Nowadays, more and more students are the only child and are favored by their families allowing them to develop an overbearing, self-centered, and egotistical personality. This kind of student often deliberately makes noise, provokes the teacher, ignores the advice, contradicts the teacher, and disobeys the discipline. Even the gentle teacher can be violent in the face of frequent irritation.

8. Targeted measures to regulate child abuse by teachers

With the continuous disclosure of teacher abuse incidents, people are paying more and more attention to it. Therefore, various scholars have conducted many studies on the control and prevention of this behavior. According to the causes of teacher-child abuse, the corresponding solutions and preventive countermeasures have been proposed, which can be discussed mainly from three aspects: the state, the school and the teacher.

The burden of protection should not be carried solely by the children themselves. The essential part of comprehensive prevention strategies is giving children self-protection skills. There need more significant and refined efforts to provide parents with the necessary knowledge and communication skills in an interactive and participatory model to become effective protectors and guides to prevent child sexual abuse [8].

The state and the government should improve the preschool education management system, focusing on strengthening the evaluation, inspection, supervision, rewards, and punishments of preschool education institutions and personnel. Effectively implement preschool education institutions and their personnel recruitment mechanisms. It is necessary to strengthen new teacher training, new principal qualification training, special training for private kindergarten principals, on-the-job training for teachers transferred to kindergartens, professional skills training for kindergarten teachers, and full-staff training on ethics and safety awareness.

Schools should establish a mechanism to define and punish child abuse and severely punish them once they occur. At the same time, the establishment of a strict teacher recruitment system to strictly control the appointment of teachers not only requires teachers to have solid professional abilities but also requires moral quality standards, good mental health, and professional abilities. Schools need to hold regular training to ensure steady improvement in all aspects. In addition, the schools need to gradually change traditional teaching concepts into newer educational ideas, create a good and relaxed teaching environment to let teachers do their job without any worries.

All schools should pay close attention to teachers' mental health, especially establishing mental health classes for teachers, the psychological examination system, and the psychological consultation rooms and hotlines for teachers and students. School should strengthen children's legal awareness education, spread the knowledge of the signs and manifestations of child abuse, coping and prevention mechanisms, and

improve children's self-protection awareness. At the same time, schools should in close contact with parents to popularize the knowledge of coping with and preventing child abuse and establish awareness of safeguarding children's rights and interests.

Generally speaking, establishing a strong, supportive connection with the teacher can prevent students from aggressive or other problematic behaviors. When the teacher-student relationship includes high levels of support and low levels of conflict, students show lower levels of aggression^[9,10].

Teachers can control and prevent child abuse from two aspects. One is to adjust concepts, mentality and remind oneself to abide by the law. The second is to understand the development of students and master the method of flexible teaching. In order to prevent inappropriate behavior, teachers need to learn to adjust their mentality in an appropriate way to improve their mental health.

9. Discussion

Many pieces of research on teacher abuse by scholars have provided relevant knowledge for people to understand teacher abuse and contributed a lot to the society to take conscious measures to prevent and regulate it.

In order to apply the principles of risk and needs in child welfare, risk and needs assessment tools are needed. The risk assessment tool evaluates static and dynamic risk factors, generates risk reports of child abuse and victimization, and informs clinical professionals about treatment intensity. Needs assessment tools only assess dynamic risk factors (i.e., the potential demand for care) and inform clinical professionals of the treatment goals, thereby reducing the risk of victimization^[11].

Most of the existing literature is on the general direction of child abuse, but there is little research on it in a more profound or targeted way. For example, during the literature review phase, the researcher of this study was more interested in teacher-child abuse instead of child abuse in the broader sense. In addition, there was also relatively little literature on child abuse by parents. It is necessary to distinguish them clearly. After all, the psychology and consequences of different kinds of child abuse are not the same.

10. Conclusion

The research on child abuse by teachers has made many achievements and has the advantages of being comprehensive and specific.

11. Contributions and strengths

11.1. The existing theoretical research is rich and the research results are diversified

Studies on child abuse's psychological causes and countermeasures mainly include five perspectives: jurisprudence, pedagogy, ethics, sociology and psychology. Although the researches from the psychological perspective are not as rich and in-depth as those from other perspectives, they are on the rise in recent years.

11.2. The study is comprehensive and specific

Studies on child abuse's psychological causes and countermeasures mainly include five perspectives: jurisprudence, pedagogy, ethics, sociology and psychology. Although the researches from the psychological perspective are not as rich and in-depth as those from other perspectives, they are on the rise in recent years.

12. Weaknesses and gaps

12.1. Theories are likely not stable and perfect, lack of empirical research test

The existing empirical studies are only based on an isolated point of view or factor and only adopt a single

survey method such as questionnaire or interview. In the end, they can only find relevant factors but not causal influence variables.

12.2. The relevant research from the psychological perspective is insufficient

Scholars in the United States have studied child abuse from a variety of perspectives. Nonetheless, the psychological evaluations are insufficient, the study is not in-depth enough, and the sample size is small. Furthermore, the employment of psychological treatment technology in the repair of teacher-child abuse behavior is a study gap that has yet to be addressed. It is critical to fix the poor psychology that underpins the behavior, as well as the conduct itself. It is critical to rectify the psychology that underpins the behavior, as well as the behavior itself. According to the most recent study, psychological and behavioral therapy treatments for abuse, such as basic psychological counselling and assistance, as well as the necessary pharmaceuticals adjuvant therapy, are effective (anxiety of antidepressant medications). Moreover, it can also use biofeedback therapy, sand play therapy, family therapy, and other psychotherapy to eliminate the harm done by the abuse. However, the author found that only a limited number of scholars have studied psychological therapy for correcting teacher-child abuse behavior.

12.3. The research on countermeasures at the student level is not sufficient

Individual behavior is frequently influenced by a combination of subject and object influences. As a result, discussing its prevention and control strategies must begin with the subject and purpose, both of which are essential.

Some experts have suggested that teacher-child abuse has a negative impact on students' mental health in extant domestic research. However, they have barely highlighted students' solutions and strategies to deal with them in their countermeasures study. They also failed to mention what could be done to assist teachers in controlling and preventing abusive actions; all they suggest is that pupils should improve their legal awareness of self-defense. Most academics focus on the state, society, schools, and teachers, ignoring the fact that students should concurrently enhance their self-awareness and legal awareness. Simultaneously, work to eliminate undesirable conduct and conflict. Furthermore, students should work with instructors to identify and prevent teacher abuse of children.

12.4. The intervention strategies of various aspects have not formed effective joint force

The occurrence of behavior is rarely caused by an independent factor from a psychological point of view. It has often evolved through time as a result of the combined effects of various circumstances, and teacher-child abuse is no exception. As a result, in order to maximize the effect, the teacher-child abuse intervention approach must also match to numerous psychological causes, suggest diverse solutions from many viewpoints, and combine them. However, current domestic research focuses solely on countermeasures from various perspectives, ignoring the reality that all intervention tactics must be used in concert to achieve the best results.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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