

# Research paper on impact of child abuse on the quality of life

[Society](#), [Child Abuse](#)



The World Health Organization (HRCP, 2011) defines child abuse as harming the health of a child, his development, and survival as well as adversely affecting his dignity with respect to his relationships, trust, and responsibility. It constitutes the different forms of physical abuse which results in actual or potential harm caused by interaction as well as emotional abuse which is the failure in providing a supportive rearing environment along. Behaviors such as threatening, discriminating and shouting used by parents or the caregiver that affects a child's mental, physical, spiritual, social or moral development is seen to come under emotional abuse.

Furthermore, neglect is also categorized as a form of child abuse where the primary caretaker fails to provide the child with resources such as proper education, health, and other facilities that are vital for the growth. Sexual abuse is another widely known form of child abuse which revolves around the idea of involving child in such a sexual activity about which, he or she is not completely aware of, agrees for, or for which he is not developmentally prepared for. Child sexual abuse is any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between one child and another. It also occurs when a child is forced to get involved in an unlawful sexual activity, when he exploited to carry out such practices (prostitution and pornography). In addition, the commercial use and exploitation of a child, is also another form of child abuse that is widely prevalent throughout the world (HRCP, 2011).

Child abuse is well researched by several scholars whose works incorporate the cause, consequences, and treatment of the social reality. Despite the existing elaborate research, the specific impact of emotional abuse and neglect is not studied in a greater depth as compared to the commonly

studied consequences of other forms of abuse. Research reveals that childhood emotional abuse and neglect results in poor quality of life. Not only this, emotional abuse is a strong predictor of the onset of other co-morbid disorders such as the Social Anxiety Disorder and Post traumatic Stress Disorder. This is more prevalent amongst adolescents where other determinants such as parenting style, over possessiveness, rejection, and neglect are also some of the major consequences of emotional abuse (Nelson et al., 2002). Therefore, this paper focuses on emphasizing the specific impact of child emotional abuse and neglect on the quality of life. Approximately 1500 children died in 2010 in USA as a result of child abuse and neglect (U. S Department of Health and Human Services, 2011). The amount of deaths caused by this type of child abuse must be reviewed in order to know the extent to which it causes damage to an individual as well as the society. Child abuse and neglect is more than the noticeable body scars and cracked bones. It is the rude gestures, mistreatment, ignorance and the feeling of worthlessness that is experienced by children because of their parents. Although, the various types of child abuse leaves an everlasting damaging impact on a child that disrupts his quality of life. Since there are a number of studies that have focused on analyzing the different aspects of child development, this paper would specifically assess the way in which child emotional abuse and neglect affects his self esteem and interpersonal relations thereby increasing his chances to develop high risk behaviors such as alcohol, smoking and drugs. Constant humiliation along with a threatening and an ignoring behavior, results in a child which grows to possess a damaged self-esteem. Upon

transitioning to adulthood, such individuals continue to struggle with their relationships, education and career. Children who become a victim of abuse and neglect later suffer from deep social consequences. The unworthy and un-trusted relationship which they earlier experienced with their primary caregiver, results in exposing them to develop an anti-social behavior when they grow up. As a result, they do not only become subject to social isolation and loneliness, but are often seen to develop detrimental disorders such as the borderline personality disorder (Schore, 2003). Moreover, the abuse and neglect by the parents affects the interpersonal relationships of the child. Since his emotional needs were not met earlier, he grows to have major problems in developing and maintaining relationships because of the dwelling fear and threat of control and abuse that can be traced back to their childhood.

Furthermore, child emotional abuse and neglect damages the self worth and esteem of the child. The experience of being abused and mistreated makes the child feel inferior and worthless that makes him deserve such as maltreatment. Such children indulge in the behavior of self blame and rarely struggle academically or professionally. Such children show unexpected series of behaviors when they grow up. In other words, while some have difficulties developing friendships, other struggle with coping stress. Many of the abused children become subject to severe anxiety and depression. Not only this, often they are unable to express their emotions and are seen to be socially isolated. All such shortcomings often expose them to develop risky behaviors such as drinking alcohol or turning to drugs. This is because of the fact that such habits often give them temporary relief and help them get

away with the misery. However, if they had known the further consequences attached with these things, they would never opt for it in order to broaden the already existing difficult state.

Apart from the social, behavioral and psychological impact of child emotional abuse and neglect, it is also true to state that child abuse adversely affects the victim, the family and the society. For this reason, regardless of the factors that cause child abuse, child maltreatment in turn acts as a social indicator for examining the quality of life of the children as well as their families because one of the major determinant of neglect and abuse is the scarcity of resources. For this reason, since this study examines the dire consequences of child emotional abuse and neglect, the findings would not only help the parents scrutinize their rearing style, but would also enable the country authorities and intervention groups to arrange programs and thereby work to provide the necessary resources (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). For this purpose, this research focuses on analyzing the impact of child abuse and neglect on the self esteem, maintenance of interpersonal relationships and the risk of developing or intensity of indulging in high risk behaviors. To find this, the present research also takes in account demographics such as the socio economic status, working/non-working parents and the number of siblings in a family. These demographics would help analyze the responses in order to classify data according to parent education and job, the number of children in a family and the socio economic status of the families.

Considering the adverse affect which child emotional abuse and neglect causes, treating such victims is highly important in order to improve their

quality of life along with the impact it has on their family and the society. For this reason, as compared to the widely used group therapy by several therapists which is considered to be the best therapeutic method as stated by several researchers, it is important to analyze the situation completely (Kristenson & Lau, 2007). In order to treat the child who has been abused, it is highly important to examine his case in detail by looking at the behaviors he is involved in, the disorders he has been diagnosed with along with the type and history of abuse. Due to this, client centered therapy is more suitable for children being emotionally abused (Murphy, 2009). Also, a treatment environment which also stresses on parent child interaction in order to resolve issues of emotional abuse and neglect is amongst the most useful s method to help children improve their quality of life which in turn will positively improve their interpersonal relationships and overall functioning. Hence, the research on examining the impact of child emotional abuse and neglect which affects self esteem, inter-personal relationship exposing the child to threatening behaviors is an important area to study which has not been extensively studied with regard to the number of siblings in a family, along with the profession, education and the social status of the families (Zuravin, 1991). In this way, studying these variables would not only help the parents to review their child rearing strategies but will also enable the authorities to take a step in providing a safe environment for the children by providing them with the necessary resources. Not only this, this study will help the therapists with treating such individuals where the society would play an important role in reporting any such violent activities taking place in the neighborhood. Thus it is expected larger families with uneducated as

well as working parents (mother and father both) would report higher level of child abuse and neglect cases as compared to smaller families having educated or single working parent. Also, gender would not moderate the impact of child abuse and neglect which would be highly responsible for predicting the development of risky behaviors.

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