

## MORAL ABUSE OF THE CHILDREN: PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT

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### CHILD AND PARENT VIEWS

Child abuse is determined to be morally the emotional, psychological or physical mistreatment of the children. It is the moral duty of the parent to take necessary care of the child. The Disease Control and Prevention Centre defines Child abuse as the act of omission done towards the child which has resulted in harm to the child's emotional, mental and physical level. The mental health journal states that child abuse to be defined as the act or omission of acts by the parents or care takers which results in imminent risks of death, serious physical harm, sexual exploitations. The maturation of the child in the growth continues till the age of sixteen. Poly victimization of the adults who underwent abuse during childhood, experience high levels of trauma and worst outcomes in future.

### PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CHILD IN CONTEXT TO ABUSE

The Psychology of the child links with its mental growth, emotional growth, psychological growth including behavioural

methods of the consciousness of the child which is considered to be most significant until the adolescence period, the transitional phase is reached, when the child takes a small step towards the adult society. Even though mental growth is inseparable from the physical growth, it plays a major role in the personality and behaviour of every child.

### PARENT CHILD RELATIONSHIP WITH MORAL ABUSE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT

The Parents causing moral abuse knowingly or unknowingly leads to mental pressure in the child to lose confidence. It usually occurs in 80% families. Example- The Parent says the kid 'God will punish you if you do not obey your Parents'. This shows the manipulative action of the Parent. The superior parents believe that what they say is deeply rooted in ideals, which they assume to be good, so it's hard for them to disagree with their opinion. They set up justice, rights and entitlements to their principles.

The early age of the child's mind is very pure, not that of adult's so it penetrates into the sub

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conscious minds of the children and change their personalities, and takes time in future to accept challenges. Psychological effect interprets with the minds of the children.

### **MORAL ABUSE – CHILD - AS A VICTIM**

In Moral Abuse the child suffers emotionally, mentally losing their self-confidence, determination to perceive, lacking the quality of Courage and ends up as slaves to dominant personalities. Parents play a major role in causing moral abuse to the children, knowingly or unknowingly.

Moral abuse is- According to Morality, the people act as controlling authority who are seemed to be positioned as Moral bastions, following the major principals, thinks to be virtuous, to manipulate other people and protect themselves from immoral behaviour and backlashes. It can be done by group or by individuals to psychologically degrade the child.

### **BEHAVIOURS OF MORAL ABUSERS IN PSYCHOLOGICAL PATTERN**

Ignoring the best actions of credits of the child and criticizing for the least wrongs with punishments, verbal actions of hurting the child for actions beyond control of its own power(ex- taking sick leave for exam), calling the child a bad person or pointing out

excessively to his incapacities constantly ordering the child do this, not this, etc, finding moral fault in the child when he tries to assert himself, or framing the child's emotions as moral fallings, having self-centred view of right and wrong, doesn't turn up from the child's view, forcing the child to do something which is difficult for him, claiming worst motivations behind everything the child does, seeing differences and showing comparison with other children, treating the child's silence as implicit behaviour.<sup>2</sup> The theories found to prohibit wrongful aggression, analysing regular basic duties and ideas in categories of rights, justice, entitlements to a system of principal practices. Misleading justification cannot be overwhelming mask of morality. The behaviour is deeply interpreted with the minds of the children trying to develop and face the society with great courage.

### **EFFECTS OF NEGLECT HARMS THE CHILD EMOTIONALLY<sup>3</sup>**

The child abuse occurs more at homes when compared to organisations or institutions the child interacts with. Neglect is the first aspect in the psychological view which deeply harms the child. Neglect is the factor in which the parent/guardian fails to take complete care of the child in cases of Physical, emotional, educational, financial, which includes proper

<sup>1</sup> Valarine Juntunen. (2013) '*Child Abuse*', 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, India: Omnigraphics.

<sup>2</sup> William, J. '*Behavioural consequences of child abuse*' [online] Available at: [https:// www. ncbi. nlm. nih. gov/ pmc/ articles/ PMC](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC)

<sup>3</sup> Donna Nieri. (2016) '*And the child grew up*', 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, India: Indian publishing.

parenting, nurturing, spending time with the children, sharing love among families, food, clothing, shelter, schooling, etc. Neglect usually occurs more in single parent families when compared to the child being with both the parents, as the report stated by UNICEF, on child well-being. The abuse can also result in choking and shaking of the child. The distinction between child abuse and child discipline is poorly defined, also a great view between the sight of professionals and normal people, do not believe that behaviours constitute abuse. Applying physical force on a child is never a conclusion, yet a disaster. "If physical beatings add up, why doesn't detentions, imprisonments, fines, and a multiplicity of other punishments convey equally unpleasant messages?" says professor David Benatar.

According to the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse, in 1997, neglect represented that 54% of confirmed cases of child abuse- physical abuse 22%, sexual abuse 8%, emotional maltreatment 4%, and other forms of maltreatment 12%, which also includes moral forms of abusing the child in psychological patterns. Over 18% meet the result of depression and 25% to dysthymia. In research, abused and neglected children 20 years ago underwent official examination of criminal records whereas another group with no official record. When the delinquents (more aggressive) were compared with

nondelinquents, were considered to be (less aggressive), the differences showed in neuropsychiatric vulnerabilities. According to Psychological author Abraham, abused children with more supporters and lesser conflicting relationships are less stress and depressed than the other maltreated children who live in isolation.

## RESULTS

Some children are just being unaware that they are abused mentally, psychologically, emotionally, even physically. Child abuse can occur in any cultural, ethnic, income or even moral group. The effects of psychologically abused child effects in - sudden changes in self - confidence, stomach aches, headaches, increased nightmares or even attempts to run away or suicide, frequent memories of traumatic events, bad dreams, excessive fear, loss of self-confidence and interest, high rise of emotions violently, increase of vigilance are such effects as results produced by the American Academy of Child and Psychiatry.

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Substance Abuse plays a major role with the abuser and the care taker of the child. It is a major factor which adds up to child abuse. Includes, Alcohol, cocaine, heroin which not only affects the abuser also the abused. In Addition, Parents take an active part when excessive substances are been inbuilt into<sup>4</sup>them. Another report showed that two third

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<sup>4</sup>Hectate Jones. (2018) 'The Psychology of Abuse', *Why Victims Stay* 61(5), p22

of the cases of child abuse come up with parents responsible of substance abuse. In 2009 CBS News reported that child abuse come with parents responsible of substantive abuse. It has given the example of a father, who had never been the primary care-taker of the children. Now the father was in that role, the children began to come in with injuries. There are few tendencies to which people are not on their right minds hurt the children intentionally or unintentionally harm the child's personality and growth. There should be awareness prescribed to the children towards the outlet of emotions. Child abuse has got its own excessive causes, to harm the child mentally and emotionally, rather than not only exceeding to physical methods. Psychologically, the most prominent reason stands up with Mental illness and emotional stability.

The abusers even have a faded past considered to be inconsistent, awarded with a reward or punishment associated with that particular type of behaviour. In addition, takes time to realize. The abusers may alternately use love bombing after reaching adolescence, trying to forget the dark past, trying to overcome the inner struggles of violence, outburst anger and severe fights to hope, faith and happiness. Community support is also mandatory for the child.

### **HELPLESSNESS**

In Psychological Research, the experiments demonstrated that, when dogs are persistently

exposed to electric shocks, over a fixed duration, they feel it completely unable to avoid, even if the chance of escapism is been provided, they do not choose to escape, where aversive struggle is faced and finally give up. The remedy the researchers followed was that they moved the dog's legs forcefully to make them escape. The same cause where helplessness of the children as victim to abuse is that they become unaware and lose the control of themselves. The abuser will grab the total self esteem of the child and despite of several recovery measures, the child undergoes inconsistent thoughts, beliefs, especially in behaviour and attitude changes, inconsistent trauma. Physical wounds of the child easily heal and disappear, yet psychological wounds leave behind the trauma and emotional struggles of the child takes time for recovery. In contrast the psychology of the abuser is also controlling and isolating, to reach the final stage of depression and finding nowhere to seek help. All they need is loving and understanding parents or guardians to rebuild their lives.

### **AWARENESS IS THE SAFETY KEY**

In one of the popular Tv shows in US, one of the episodes of that reality show, Dr. Phil featured a women beating her adopted son as disciplinarian tactics, for the reason forcing her son to drink the hot sauce immediately and when he lied to his mother as he had drank the hot drink, he was punished to take an ice cold shower. This resulted in arrest and prosecution of child abuse. The audience and

the host of the show were terrified, but she casually explained to couldn't find better ways to control her child. This shows how unaware the parent is, treating the child with overwhelming emotions and doesn't worry about the behavioural and emotional changes of the child. Excessive care and attachment towards the child results in exploitation, detachment by the parent to let the child grow independently. Its not termed pain only in cases of sexual or physical abuses, its also abuse when it is done psychologically to harm the child. If <sup>5</sup>abuse is a crime done by the parent, includes neglect also to be a crime. This particular example is dictated by officials having government intervention with families for awareness of abuses. This makes the parents again think, how are we controlling our children?

### **CHILDHOOD VICTIMIZATION**

According the book of Childhood victimization by David Finkelhor, he defined the term as harm caused to the individual because the other person has behaved in ways of violating social norms. Also considered to be an abuse from other trauma causing victimizations like illness, accidents, natural disasters. The child suffers through the abuse and gets affected more than the adult, losing one's self confidence and hope in future life. It results as post Traumatic Stress Disorder in

future, due to the amount of personal threat undergone. A child need not have to move up with the abuse, as the child is not mentally prepared and 'psychologically equipped to process it. The adults should act as role models in regulating emotions and providing a safe background.

### **IF THE CHILD DISCLOSES THE ABUSE FACED**

Being an elderd adult, then mannerism should be kind towards the child with soft words as being supportive and believing them, reassuring as being a parent that the child has done nothing wrong, yet you would stand for the child, listen to the child carefully and not keep on questioning, as it would make the child feel uncomfortable with excess fear. The parent should never panic hearing to it as the child needs calming and supportive presence. The exact words are to be documented for report, can also contact supporting agencies for help to children. The parents should be mentally and psychologically strong to handle the situation and help the child. The parents should mainly provide emotional support for its development.

### **SUGGESSTION TOWARDS IDENTIFICATION**

Such child abuses are driven by conflict and proves to be unstable for intervention with

<sup>5</sup> Andrea Mathews,(2016)Psychology Today[online]. Available at:[https:// www. google. com/ amp/s/www. psychologytoday. Com](https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.psychologytoday.Com) (Accessed: 8 November 2019)

<sup>6</sup> Shannon Thomas, (2016). *Healing from hidden abuse*. E-book library[online]. Available at [https://\\_issuu. com/ iigmail1043/ docs/\\_kindle \\_healing-from-hidden-abuse-](https://_issuu.com/iigmail1043/docs/_kindle_healing-from-hidden-abuse-) (Accessed: 8 November 2019)

families. J. Robert Shull, scholar questions the advocates, immobilized in cases of child abuse excluding the physical and sexual abuse, how would they identify other kinds of mental and psychological abuses which are deeply hidden and rare cases are shown out to general public, he answers by showing awareness on child protection works. He answers to find out the hidden circumstances that produce incoherence of psychological abuse through their dominants and identifies their condition in a historical perspective. He concludes the answer of suggestion by finding out the superiority and knowledge that produces in coherence of the emotional abuse which affects the personality and future of the child. Do not isolate the child instead heal the child with affection.

### **EFFECTS**

Mobbing is one of the versions of emotional degradation and emotional terrorism towards the diverging minds of children, characterized by series of isolation and rare sequences to physical harm, but exceeds to the cause of poor self- esteem, due to constant actions. The victim being the child is incapable to recognize and identify the root cause and handle the issue as he is casted by continuous

behavioural and verbal acts towards him. The effect of mobbing reduces the spirit to strive and also loses the potential competitiveness within fellow students when he is been isolated. Generally, as an effect the abused victim become more aggressive, unable to concentrate, think od discernment, get confused and end up behaving in a pathological way.

### **SOLUTIONS**

As parents, spend time with children and listen to what they are trying to share, do not take this for granted. The child develops a feeling of feeling of inner security when the parent trusts and listens to the child. Educate the children to say no, as a limit for boundaries, not only physically, even emotionally others manipulating the child's self - confidence. Child's behaviour is the manifestation of inner stability and emotional power and mental development and behavioural problems. Moral Abuse plays a major role in physical, emotional, sexual, psychological also domestic. Finally, it isn't a crime, it's normal. It is a small step to help the people who are unknowingly manipulating the children. Determining the Mental health of the children to superiority.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Rorty, A.J. (2011) 'The Use and Abuse of Morality', *Journal of Ethics*,16(1), p11.