

Effect of Emotional Abuse on Self Confidence

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ABSTRACT

Emotional maltreatment is one of the biggest social evil and has been happening in all societies. It is more dangerous than physical abuse. It has been found out that every second, a child is emotionally abused in India. Therefore there has been relatively little research addressing the full range of emotional abusive experiences and none considering their long term impact on self-confidence. The paper include an overview of current research investigation aspects of emotional abuse and also contains a detailed discussion of emotional abuse, which is described as the most hidden and underestimated form of child maltreatment. It can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development including self-concept, self-esteem, adjustment etc. Mental health of young people get affected ny emotional abuse as mental health includes a person ability to attain a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. Self-concept is our personal information of who we are, comprise all of our thoughts and feelings regarding ourselves physically, personally, and socially. Emotional Abuse is done by parents, relatives and caregivers. The paper discuss the impact of emotional maltreatment on self-confidence, while antagonizing emotional abuse the paper raises questions about the forms of emotional abuse and also conclude various research studies on emotional abuse.

Keywords: Emotional Abuse, Self Esteem, Child Abuse and self confidence

Introduction

Emotional abuse includes non-physical behaviors that are meant to control, isolate, or frighten you. This may present in romantic relationships as threats, insults, constant monitoring, excessive jealousy, manipulation, humiliation, intimidation, and dismissiveness, among others. An isolated occurrence doesn't necessarily qualify as emotional abuse, but a pattern of behavior that creates fear and control does. Such mistreatment can occur in a range of interpersonal contexts, including a parental relationship, a romantic relationship, or a professional relationship.

People who suffer emotional abuse can experience short-term difficulties such as confusion, fear, difficulty concentrating, and low confidence, as well as nightmares, aches, and a racing heart. Long-term repercussions may include anxiety, insomnia, and social withdrawal. Emotional abuse has severe and lasting negative impacts on individuals' mental and physical health, often leading to depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and even substance abuse. It can also disrupt brain development, particularly in areas related to emotional regulation and social understanding. Additionally, emotional abuse can increase the risk of suicidal thoughts, eating disorders, and difficulties forming healthy relationships.

Emotional Abuse sometimes defined as chronic verbal aggression by researchers and still it is remain a somewhat stigmatized topic. There aren't even any laws against emotional abuse. However, a new study suggests that victims of emotional abuse or neglect can develop similar and often worse mental health problems than victims of sexual or physical abuse. Emotional abuse is

the least studied of all the forms of child maltreatment and its etiology is less developed (National Research Council 1993). Researches argued into the impact and prevalence of emotional abuse has been plagued with disagreements about how to define it, measure it testit. (Nesbit & Karagansis 1987; Giorannoni 1989; Claussen & Cr ittden 1991 & Mc Gee & Wolfe 1991 D'Hagan 1993)

Long-Term and short term Effects of Emotional Abuse:

- **Mental Health:** Emotional abuse can significantly increase the risk of developing mental health conditions like depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- **Self-Esteem:** Victims may experience low self-worth, feelings of shame, and a distorted sense of reality, making it difficult to leave abusive relationships.
- **Brain Development:** Emotional abuse, especially in childhood, can negatively impact brain development, particularly in areas related to emotional regulation, social understanding, and executive function.

Anxiety Anxiety is a common emotion, and it can cause physical symptoms, such as shaking and sweating. When anxiety becomes persistent or excessive, a person may have an anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders are a category of mental health diagnoses that involve excessive nervousness, fear, apprehension, and worry. These symptoms can interfere with a person's quality of life but are very treatable.

Depression Depression is a mental health condition that causes a chronic feeling of emptiness, sadness, or inability to feel pleasure that may appear to happen for no clear reason. According to the CDC, about 11% Trusted Source of doctor visits note depression on the medical record. The figure is similar for emergency department visits. The CDC also note that 4.7% of American adults have regular feelings of depression. Depression can undermine a person's relationships, make working and maintaining good health very difficult, and in severe cases, lead to suicide. Depression can affect adults, adolescents, and children. This article examines what depression is and what causes it, as well as types of depression, treatment, and more.

Substance Misuse Addiction is an inability to stop using a substance or engaging in a behavior even though it may cause psychological or physical harm. The term addiction Trusted Source does not only refer to dependence on substances such as heroin or cocaine. Some addictions also involve an inability to stop partaking in activities such as gambling, eating, or working. The American Society of Addiction Medicine defines addiction as "a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual's life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences.

Physical Health: Chronic stress and anxiety associated with emotional abuse can lead to physical health problems like chronic pain, high blood pressure, and heart problems.

Relationship Difficulties: Emotional abuse can make it difficult to trust others, form healthy relationships, and navigate social situations. .

Suicidal Thoughts and Self-Harm: In severe cases, emotional abuse can lead to suicidal ideation and self-harm behaviors.

Social Isolation: Victims may withdraw from social interactions, making it harder to seek help and support.

Current data on emotional abuse in India, emotional abuse is a significant issue, impacting both children and adults. Studies indicate that a considerable percentage of children and adults experience emotional abuse, with rates varying across different populations and contexts. For instance, some surveys show that up to 72% of Indian children report experiencing emotional abuse, while in other studies, this figure is around 49%. Similarly, in intimate partner violence contexts, emotional abuse is a prevalent form, with some studies reporting it in about 39% of cases. The ACMS applied a chronicity threshold, only counting a person's experience as emotional abuse if it occurred over a period of at least weeks and excluding those that occurred over only days. On this basis, the ACMS found population-wide prevalence of emotional abuse of 30.9% (Mathews et al., 2023). Sub-domains of emotional abuse were reported at varying rates: hostile interaction (23.8%), rejection (8.8%), and emotional unavailability (21.6%). A recent population-wide study of adults' self-report data in the US using the Behavioural Risk Factor Surveillance System more clearly indicates an increase in emotional abuse, comparing those in younger age groups (18–24: 43.1%; and 25–34: 42.5%) with those in older age groups (35–44: 36.3%; 45–54: 35.7%; 55–64: 31.8%) (Swedo et al., 2023).

Prevention and intervention:

Developing and implementing interventions to prevent and address emotional abuse is essential.

- Child protection laws and policies:
Ensuring that child protection laws and policies adequately address emotional abuse and neglect is vital.
- Support services:
Providing access to support services for victims of emotional abuse, such as helplines and counseling, is important

Major prevention efforts – whether through public policy, public awareness campaigns, parenting programs, or dedicated interventions such as home visiting – also have tended to be focused on other types of child maltreatment. Interventions such as home visiting programs to prevent and interrupt maltreatment, and parenting programs more generally, have mostly been focused on physical abuse, and on neglect (Britto et al., 2017; MacMillan et al., 2009). The framing and evaluation of even some of the most comprehensively-administered postpartum home visiting programs, for example, intrinsically excludes emotional abuse (Goodman, Dodge, Bai, Murphy, & O'Donnell, 2021). Very few studies rigorously evaluate interventions aimed at reducing emotional or psychological abuse, or even harsh parenting more generally, and this has been identified as a priority for future research (World Health Organization, 2022).

Discussion

The emotional abuse of children may be the most damaging form of maltreatment, affecting their emotional and physical health as well as their social and cognitive development. There is no single cause of emotional abuse. Instead, there are usually multiple and interacting contributors –at the levels of the child, parent, family, community and society. The consequences of child emotional abuse can be devastating and long-lasting, and include: increased risk for a lifelong pattern of depression, estrangement, anxiety, low self-esteem, inappropriate or troubled relationships, or a lack of empathy. As a society, we have a collective responsibility to prevent emotional abuse.

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