



Spoiling Children in the Name of Discipline

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to analyze the impact of disciplinary measures at home in relation to development of children at the secondary level at Karachi. The study specifically focused on the relation between disciplinary practices implemented in households and the development of secondary-level students. It analyzed the influence of environment and disciplinary measures enforced at home affected the development of secondary-level students. Based on objectives two research questions were raised and one hypothesis was formulated. In depth analysis of literature was done. Mixed-method research design was adopted. Population of the study was comprised of all private secondary school teachers and students of Karachi, Pakistan. Samples of teachers (133) and students (18) were drawn through stratified random sampling design and purposive sampling design respectively. Data was collected through questionnaire and interview protocol. Less experienced and more experienced secondary school teachers had different opinions regarding the impact of stern disciplinary dealings at home on child' development. Experienced teachers believed that strict actions needed to deal the children and raised them disciplined, while less experienced believed to use polite measures and would give more rooms. It was found that the maltreated children were in-attentive during class and were easily distracted, attention deficient during class room activities which in turn affected the school routines of the children.

Key Words: Harming Children, Discipline

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Introduction

Child manipulation, also known as the mistreatment or persecution of young individuals, is a grave issue affecting contemporary society worldwide, including Pakistan. Child's contentment and wellbeing are greatly influenced by the treatment he or she receives; they look for support, love, care and understanding from their parents, teachers and elders; when they do not receive this they become depressed, withdrawn and lost self-belief.

One need to be careful regarding the wellbeing of young ones, at all levels, educators, counsellors, care-givers, parents have to go an extra mile. In particular, in Pakistan where joint family system is a common feature of culture, the chance of ill-treatment has increased in many folds. Emotional abuse is care giver's short coming to yield a compassionate environment through the means of frightening or other psychologically exhausting activities. It is being unsuccessful in providing the necessities which proves to be essential to kid's comfort (Domhardt, et al., 2015). A child who does not get any loving consideration from its parent may believe that this is normal and never look for it from others. Children, who are abused emotionally or physically can easily be exploited, can become angry, mad at everyone, putting themselves on a path of destruction. They tend to give up easily, and show little joy or happiness. With the passage of time, the effect of abuses becomes worse. They don't excel in the class due to lack of attention, which results in poor academic performance. The declined performances in academics leave little chance for them to be successful in later life. They often trap in vicious circle of poverty which later on deleteriously imprinted their personal life. They face difficulties in making friends; their anger intensifies and they fight a lot. The child's actions and attitude make it difficult for others accept him wholeheartedly and give positive messages, so the problems continue and worsen. Barbaric attitude towards children and their physical as well as social wellbeing are proven to be a prime hitch from corner to corner of the world.

There are several ways where maltreatment impacts individuals, it affects child in many folds. Maltreatment triggers anxiety, isolation together with cynicism, converting to enduring psychical costs marking. It includes learning problems such as poor concentration and retrieving back information, lost or curtailed self-assurance, unhappiness. It also contributed in weakening into building and conserving relations in both short term and long term.

In developing country like Pakistan, verbal abuse is very common and no one pay heed to its consequences, it happens everywhere not bounded to any particular class, children are tortured verbally and physically both. However, emotional rejection is the cruelest of all abuse. It happens when care givers or parents fall short of preparing healthy and adoring environments for their young ones or accept them with their weaknesses or and short comings.

Research studies revealed that ill-treatment in the name of discipline is harmful. It had an effect on the present and future learning or performance as well as emotional and psychosomatic comfort and happiness of children. Herrenkohl (2005) stated that psychological abuse is precisely barbaric and vicious. It was originated that therapists who are appointed at institutional level are not equipped to assist youngsters and personals beneficially, ill-treatment, in its all form affects students' academic performances both current and future unconstructively together with physical and psychological well-being

The objective of the study was to investigate the impact of strict disciplinary measures at home in relation to development of children at the secondary level at Karachi. The study specifically focused on the relation between disciplinary practices implemented in households and the development of secondary-level students in Karachi. It analyzed the influence of environment and disciplinary measures enforced at home affected the development of secondary-level students.

Research Questions

1. What is the impact of home environment and strict disciplinary measures on child's development at the secondary school level?
2. What are the impact of disciplinary measures implied at home and school on child's development?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated:

- i. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of less experienced and more experienced secondary school teachers' understandings concerning the impact of strict disciplinary measures at home on child' development.

Investigator identified there is a need to make more inquiries in an area of violence and the way it impacted the child's physical and emotional wellbeing. Strom et al., 2013, noted that there is a need for more research that integrates other categories of abuse and the impact on academic accomplishment. In order to understand possible lanes resulted due to abuse and neglect, we should consider many factors. We should investigate the residence surroundings where children bring up, area, locations, surrounding along with hygienic conditions besides facilities available in the surrounding. It would assist the concerned authorities to take useful decision regarding mistreatment, take parents on the board, educate them about the seriousness of matter through parent's education and sessions and provide them all the support which they needed.

The study was limited to all private secondary schools of Karachi due limitation of time and resources.

Key Terms: Wrecking: to destroy or badly damage something

Discipline: the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour, using punishment to correct disobedience.

Wrecking: to destroy or badly damage something

Literature review

Child mistreatment or exploitation is a significant problem that demands immediate attention. According to the World Health Organization, such mistreatment can take various forms, including neglect, physical harm, emotional abuse, or sexual exploitation. All these treatments can lead to serious harm to a child's health, growth, or self-esteem, categorizing them as forms of maltreatment. Defining child maltreatment can be complex, especially when the abuse is difficult to detect or when damages are not readily apparent. The lack of clear evidence often leads to these issues going unnoticed, with grave consequences for the affected children.

Slodevlawrence and Wistow (2007) clearly reflected that maltreatment results in emotional and behavioral problems and had a severe impact on academic performance and lack of attention on learning.

Bennett et al. (2023) and Alayna et al. (2021) discovered in their studies that emotional abuse is often difficult to detect, leading it to go unnoticed due to the challenges in observing the harm it causes. Jackson et al. (2019), identified discrepancies in the estimation of such issues among both teenagers and professionals in their respective research. It was often found that maltreated children were having knowingly inferior expertise in starting communications with friends, were found to be hesitant, less expressive in term of emotions with colleagues. They had fear that they could not shoulder responsibilities with flying colors. Students are unable to uphold self-discipline, in adopting conducts, always feel pressured and became captive of hyperactivity.

Family factors proved to be one of the most influential aspects in relation to mistreatment and child's progress happening chiefly inside families as home is the place where youngster spends most of their time. If a child felt insecure at home, were dejected, and put down by immediate family members every now and then, effect personality, social progress and educational attainment.

Leiter and Johnsen (February 1994) stated that maltreatment children perform poorly on outcomes, test scores, and absences. Poor earning, pitiable living conditions, scanty resources, inadequate facilities as well as shattered mental status of care giver should be taken into account when study overall development of youngsters as a whole. Furthermore, use of drugs as well as violence either by spouse or immediate family members played its part. If we want to aid them then must probed the root cause of abuses and take timely action. Several studies probed that parental self-reported exploitation or oppression was strongly associated with foodstuff uncertainty which led to increased use of corporal punishment by mother in addition to psychological hostility.

Multiple studies consistently demonstrate a connection between parental psychological distress, substance abuse, and domestic violence, leading to the mistreatment of children by their parents or partners. Particularly mother pour all their anger, anxiety and frustration on small kids and teen age boys and girls alike as they have no way out. Sometimes it even

resulted in physical injury too. It was found that mental status of parents, particularly mother is strongly linked with child's physical, mental and social condition.

Mental health of the child is badly affected by yelling and threatening. Although the cost of verbal abuse was not noticed apparently but the payoff was an irreparable. Psychological devastation which the child went through was extremely thorny to live through. Moreover, in accord with Leiter and Johnsen (1994) child's maltreatment negatively impacts the development of youngsters collectively, present and forthcoming scholastic attainment, and spiritual and intellectual wellbeing of children. Emotional distress hampered student's educational attainments. A frightening number of youngsters who are victimized and subjected to emotional anguish are at jeopardy for educational dropout in addition to failure (Mason, et al., 2005).

Bick & Nelson (2015) illustrated that continuous impact of maltreatment impact verbal communication and language as a whole was substantially affected by cruelty, mistreatment and neglect in the early years of life. Parents or caregiver often target the child and put all blames on young ones for issues they are facing either in school or at home, particularly in Pakistan, they often denies the existence of the problems, advice the use of tough physical discipline if the youngster disobeys constantly without probing into the root cause of the problem. The pressure of society becomes unbearable damaging the lives of all family members. In many cases it was a common observation parents or elders of the family pushed brood to be mingled up or sit with close acquaintances or relatives even if the child is reluctant in the name or respect.

Moreover, they often considered the child as completely dreadful, useless, or troublesome. Parents demanded a level of physical or academic attainment which are not realistic or beyond the capabilities of the child, thus leave the child frustrated and showed little concern for the child. It devastated child's life on the whole. Youngsters who don't have healthy relationship with their parents are subjected to have more internal as well as apparent harms; lower levels of self-worth, happiness, comfort, and adaptation to school plus their chance of using drugs in many folds.

Rejection from parents significantly predicted low self-esteem in adolescents. They often seemed unaware of the emotional toll their actions took, showing little concern for their choice of words, tone, or location when criticizing their child. It was as if they regarded their child as an object rather than a sentient being. This strained parent-child relationship was identified as a major contributing factor to the development of symptoms associated with Universal Anxiety Syndrome

Methodology

Research Design

Mix-method research design was adopted. The researcher had used a "mixed method" approach in the current research which comprises of both quantifiable as well as qualitative approaches. The study encompassed of

two main phases as a multi-method research i.e. opinion poll surveys and structured interview.

Population and Sampling

The population of the study was comprised of learners, parents along with teachers from secondary schools of Karachi. Two samples were drawn. Purposive sampling design, which belongs to the category of non-probability sampling techniques, was used to draw a sample of 18 students. Sample of 133 teachers was drawn through stratified random sampling design. Principle of stratification was experience.

Research Instruments

Questionnaire and structured interview were major tools used to collect data in contemporary inquiry. The researcher developed a questionnaire to analyze the impact of emotional abuses on the social as well as physical development of the child which is carefully designed after reviewing the related literature. Questionnaire was tested for validity by asking the experts in the field to assess relevance and necessary modifications were done in light of their advices. Pilot study was conducted to ensure reliability of the questionnaire.

A small sample ($n = 20$) was drawn from the actual sample. Draft questionnaire was administered and data was analyzed through Pearson's "r" ($r = 0.84$), which was substantially satisfactory.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected through personal visits. The researcher took approval of the principal and informed her about the prime objective of the study. The researcher handed out the questionnaire to the teachers who were willing to participate after asking them to sign the informed consent. To reduce the possibility of bias the researcher ensured that the respondents received standardized instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. Face - to - face interviews was also conducted from the students aged 13 to 17 ,who showed poor performances and behavioral issues like bullying, lack of confidence, being lost in the class , have difficulties in making and maintaining relationship to find issues whose children experiences maltreatment comprises of open ended questions. The pilot testing was conducted to check the validity and consistency of the scale.

Rationality and legitimacy was safeguarded by taking the views of specialists and professionals.

Table given below illustrates the details of reliability test.

Table 1

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.840	25

25 items were probed in the opinion poll, all these items were clustered

around mistreatment and exploitation of children in the name of discipline .The result of reliability is substantially significant, in consistency index it was 0.84.The questionnaires were distributed among the teachers after seeking their as well as their principals’ consent. Around 89% of scholars returned the questionnaires handed over to them. Afterward collected data was compiled, and then it was analyzed using SPSS. The data were cleaned before applying different tests for analysis.

Content analysis was done for qualitative data. Moreover, t-test was employed to test the hypotheses. The data was also examined and evaluated through descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation.

Data analysis

This section unveils outcomes of investigation of the information collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews. The conclusions drawn will be presented in relation to the inquiry objectives specified in the study. The scheme of investigation used to examine and scrutinize the data is already conferred in the methodology part.

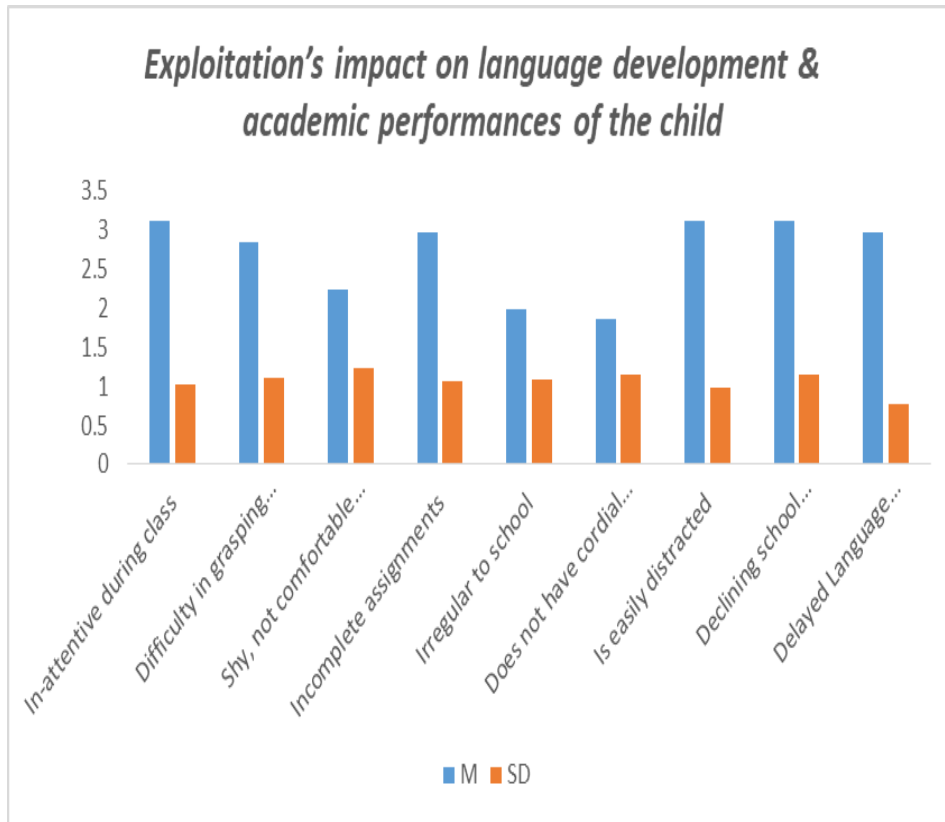
The conclusions were assembled as per theme and sub-theme derivate from the objectives and research questions.

In order to conclude whether or not the fallouts were statistically substantial, a t-test was steered.

Table 2

Maltreatment’s effect on language advancement & academic performances of the child.

Item Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
In-attentive during class	3.13	1.026	133
Difficulty in grasping concept	2.85	1.111	133
Shy, not comfortable around people	2.24	1.226	133
Incomplete assignments	2.97	1.058	133
Irregular to school	1.99	1.077	133
Does not have cordial relationship with classmates	1.86	1.149	133
Is easily distracted	3.13	.980	133
Declining school performance	3.11	1.152	133
Delayed Language development	2.98	.763	133

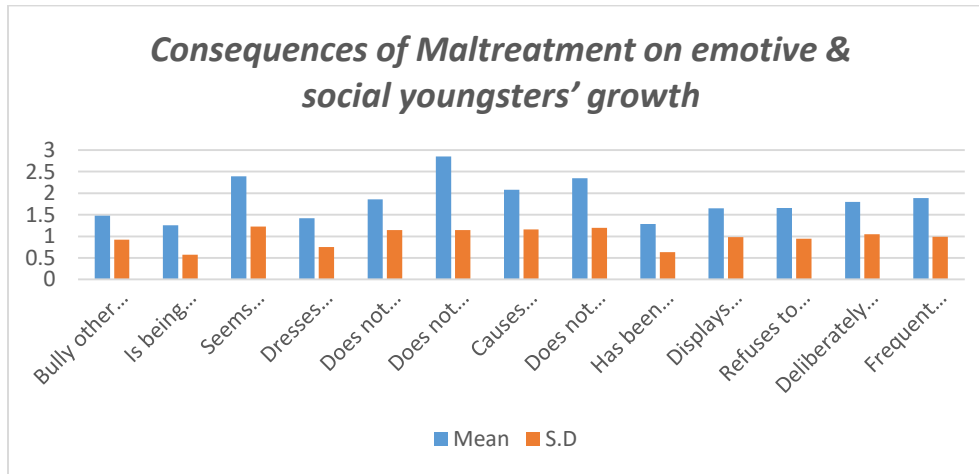


	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Bully other student	1.48	.926	133
Is being bullied	1.26	.576	133
Seems disturbed	2.39	1.230	133
Dresses inappropriately	1.42	.751	133
Does not have cordial relationship with classmates	1.86	1.149	133
Does not participate in class	2.85	1.145	133
Causes disturbance during lessons	2.08	1.162	133
Does not listen to and follow instructions	2.35	1.200	133
Has been penalized for any action	1.29	.635	133
Displays aggressive behaviour	1.65	.986	133
Refuses to follow rules	1.66	.945	133
Deliberately annoy others	1.80	1.048	133
Frequent lying	1.89	.987	133

It was concluded from the findings that students who were in-attentive during class and was easily distracted had the maximum average count (M=3.13, SD= 0.98). It clearly indicated that maltreated children got easily distracted and were trapped in their own thoughts, their minds swayed here and there, had difficulties in concentration or had short span of interest. The second highest mean score M=3.11, SD= 0.15, is declining in school performances which was followed by Delayed Language development having an average score of M=2.98 and, SD= 0.76. In fact all the indicators were closely inter-related and had a trigger on effect on each other. In the nut shell, it was established that maltreatment in any of its form negatively impacts child's performances in the school ranges from poor attention or concentration which lead to diminished scholastic attainments and deferred language enlargement.

Table 3

Consequences of Maltreatment on emotive & social youngsters' growth



Descriptive Statistics Mean and Standard Deviations of the impact of Maltreatment on social advancement of a child.

Maltreatment also hampers child's social development as well as emotional development it is clearly shown in the graph that lack of participation in class by children who were ill-treated touched the highest point in graph, its mean score is $M=2.85$ whereas $SD=1.145$. youngsters who seems disturbed had the mean score of $M=2.39$ and $SD=1.230$ which outlined striking effect of maltreatment in the form of exploitation or neglects effects on the emotional growth of the youngster, in the secondary school setting.

The research also explored that the child being bullied had lowest mean score, ($M=1.26$, $SD=0.576$) along with dress inappropriately whereas the child had been penalized for any action has the mean score ($M=1.29$, $SD=0.63$). It showed bullying was not widespread which was quite surprising for the researcher and so were the attitude of the caregiver, teachers and parents both. It noticeably indicated from the exploration that bullying might not be the part of school culture where investigation was carried on.

Hypothesis

- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of less experienced and more experienced secondary school teachers' understandings concerning the impact of strict disciplinary measures at home on child' development.

Table 4 Group Statistics

	Teachers_experience	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Strict measures at home	less experienced	75	1.4978	.48203	.05566
	more experienced	58	1.7069	.60239	.07910

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Strict measures at home	Equal variances assumed	3.592	.060	2.224	131	.028	-.20912	.09402	-.39512	.02312
	Equal variances not assumed			2.162	107.183	.033	-.20912	.09672	-.40085	.01739

The table 4 shows that the significance value of 2 tailed tests is less than .05, so the null hypothesis rejected. The result clearly indicated that a substantial variation in the mean score of less experienced as well as more experienced secondary school teachers was established regarding the impact of stern disciplinary dealings at home on child' development

Research Question 1: What is the impact of home environment and strict disciplinary measures on child's development at the secondary school level?

The impact of home environment on child's development

No supervision

10/18(55%) of participants complained that there is no supervision at home, either they have to rely on elder sister or tutors. Nobody is there to look after them, they often feel frustrated, wanted to flee from home.

No outing or recreation/frustration

Out of 18 participants only 6 (33%) participants have some recreations in their lives, they often go for outing, the rest of the participants reported they don't have any recreations in their life. One of the participant shared that they don't meet the relatives. The other participant reported that she lacks freshness, feels over-burdened and frustrated as no rooms for recreation and he is living a routine life.

Neglect

12/18(66%) are neglected children, no one is at home to supervise them, as mother is either too busy in doing home chores or have their own activity. 4/18(22%)participant's mothers are single parents so shouldering the financial responsibilities as well. It was established in the inquiry that most of the participants faced negligence at home, nobody was available for the guidance and to help them in studies. It was also discovered that parents wanted to shower gifts and provide luxuries to their kids therefore they were working day in and day out, had no time left to spend quality time with kids

Academic performances of those children were not up to the mark due to which their frustrations were at height.

Taunting /scolding and hitting

14/18 (77%) participants are subjected to emotional abuse i.e. taunting and scolding. Parents are over demanding, even in some cases the extended family members also taunt.

One of the participants shared that there are fights in the family, people blame each other on petti issues. The environment of home is not pleasant; at times he wishes to flee from this environment.

Research Question 2

2. What is the impact of disciplinary measures implied at home and school on child's development?

The impact of disciplinary measures on child's development

Confused

16/18 (88%) participants are confused and lack confidence. One of participant shared, I forget things, are not clear what I want at times.

One of the participants said, "I shivered when asked about anything, I just feel frightened"

The other participants reported that she did not want to come to school as teacher punished her in front of the whole school. On digging the case, it was found that teacher thought the child misbehaved and she just wanted to discipline her. Harsh punishment negatively affected child's personality. In the recent study, it was explored while doing an interview that one of the kids had serious health issues due to fretfulness and anxiety on the account of stern punitive actions employed at home and she stammers. She was discovered to be shy with her classmates, hardly participated in group work or class discussion as the result her academic performances declined. Although her mother was showing concern and realized the problems associated but at early stage she used to hit her and compared her with other siblings. She was sent to her grandparents' home

every now and then particularly near term exams. She was irregular to school too which resulted in difficulties in grasping concepts taught at school and out of anxiety she exhibited behavioral issues too, poured all her frustrations on her sisters and brothers. It was also originated that the children lied too to save her face from the back lash which was scared to receive both at home and school alike.

Afraid to do things wrong

8/18(44%) participants are scared of doing things wrong ,feel pressurized , one of the participant complained, “ No one is happy ,no matter how hard I try.”

The lack of appreciation from care giver impacted child’s personality negatively and the loss is irreparable. However, parents hardly pay heed and live in the illusion that they are controlling for the betterment. One of the participants exhibited lack of confidence on the account that she was pained in black by everyone, every time. She struggled in giving exams often failed to retrieve what she learned or understood, she was subjected to exam fear.

Summary, Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

The objective of the study was to investigate the impact of disciplinary measures on the development of child at the secondary level at Karachi.

Following parameters were investigated in the study

- i. The impact of home environment on child’s development at secondary level in the schools of Karachi.
- ii. The impact of disciplinary measures implied at home and school on child’s development.

Following hypothesis were formulated in this study

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of less experienced and more experienced secondary school teachers’ understandings concerning the impact of strict disciplinary measures at home on child’ development

The questions which were probed in this study were as follows

1. What is the impact of home environment and strict disciplinary measures on child’s development at the secondary school level?
2. What is the impact of disciplinary measures implied at home and school on child’s development?

The scope of the study was limited to all the private secondary schools of Karachi, Pakistan. In depth analysis of literature was done. Mixed method research design was adopted in this study as it fit its nature. Population of the study was comprised of all private school teachers and students of Karachi, Pakistan. Samples of teachers and students were drawn through stratified random sampling design and purposive sampling design respectively. The sample size of the teachers was 133 whereas, for students the sample size was 18. Data was collected through questionnaire and interview protocol personally by the researcher.

Finding from Hypothesis

The result indicated that there is a considerable difference in the mean score of less experienced and more experienced secondary school teachers regarding the impact of stern disciplinary dealings at home on child's development.

Finding from Interviews

Research Question 1:

The impact of home environment on child's development

No supervision

10/18 (55%) of participants complained that there is no supervision at home, either they have to rely on elder sister or tutors. Nobody is there to look after them, they often feel frustrated, wanted to flee from home.

No outing or recreation/frustration

Out of 18 participants only 6 (33%) participants have some recreations in their lives, they often go for outing, the rest of the participants reported they don't have any recreations in their life. One of the participant shared that they don't meet the relatives. The other participant reported that she lacks freshness, feels over-burdened and frustrated as no rooms for recreation and he is living a routine life.

Neglect

12/18 (66%) are neglected children, no one is at home to supervise them, as mother is either too busy in doing home chores or have their own activity. 4/18(22%)participant's mothers are single parents so shouldering the financial responsibilities as well. It was established in the inquiry that most of the participants faced negligence at home, nobody was available for the guidance and to help them in studies. It was also discovered that parents wanted to shower gifts and provide luxuries to their kids therefore they were working day in and day out, had no time left to spend quality time with kids

Academic performances of those children were not up to the mark due to which their frustrations were at height.

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One of the participants shared that there are fights in the family, people blame each other on petti issues. The environment of home is not pleasant; at times he wishes to flee from this environment.

Research Question 2:

The impact of disciplinary measures on child's development

It was found that children faced

- a. Memory issue
- b. Poor Academic Achievement
- c. Incomplete work

Furthermore, it was recognized that all these aspects, pitiable memory, inadequate academic progress and fragmentary assignments all have

associations and foot prints in children's educational advancement. It also impacted their self-reliance.

16/18 (88%) participants are confused and lack confidence. One of participant shared, I forget things, are not clear what I want at times. One of the participants said, "I shivered when asked about anything, I just feel frightened" The other participants reported that she did not want to come to school as teacher punished her in front of the whole school. On digging the case, it was found that teacher thought the child misbehaved and she just wanted to discipline her. 8/18(44%) participants are scared of doing things wrong ,feel pressurized , one of the participant complained, " No one is happy ,no matter how hard I try. "The lack of appreciation from care giver impacted child's personality negatively and the loss is irreparable. However, parents hardly pay heeds and live in the illusion that they are controlling for the betterment

Conclusion and Discussion

Less experienced and more experienced secondary school teachers held differing views on the impact of strict disciplinary practices at home on a child's development. Experienced teachers believed in the need for firm actions to instill discipline, while less experienced teachers favored a gentler approach, allowing for more flexibility.

The study revealed that maltreated children exhibited signs of inattentiveness and easy distractibility during class, affecting their classroom engagement and overall school routines. These findings align with previous research conducted by Carlson & Kashani (1988), which suggests that children experiencing emotional and behavioral challenges may face cognitive impairments, heightened attention difficulties, lower motivation, and weakened immediate memory.

Recommendations

1. Caregivers, whether parents or teachers, should prioritize being available for children, actively listening to them, and making time in their busy schedules. Engaging in healthy recreational activities like visits to parks, museums, or relatives' homes where children can feel comfortable and joyful is highly encouraged. Avoiding negative labels and focusing on positive reinforcement is crucial for a child's well-being.
2. To support maltreated children in overcoming learning difficulties, it is recommended to implement an Individualized Education Program (IEP). These personalized plans should be conducted in a natural setting, twice a week, for 30 minutes each session. This approach can significantly benefit children facing educational challenges due to maltreatment.

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