

## A CRITICAL STUDY CHILD ABUSE

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*Devender Kumar Chhabra, Research Scholar, Dept of Nursing, Sikkim Professional University, Gangtok*

*Dr Neeraj Kumar Bansal, Associate Professor, Dept of Nursing, Sikkim Professional University, Gangtok*

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### ABSTRACT

Child abuse is a topic of significant concern that requires in-depth study and attention. This research aims to critically explore the various aspects of child abuse, including its prevalence, underlying causes, and the severe impact it has on the lives of affected children. The study examines different forms of child abuse, such as physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect, while also investigating the factors that contribute to its occurrence.

Through a thorough analysis of existing literature and data, the study seeks to identify patterns and trends in child abuse cases, aiming to gain a deeper understanding of this distressing phenomenon. Furthermore, the research looks into the long-term consequences of child abuse, both on the individuals who experience it and on society as a whole.

Apart from exploring the challenges faced by child abuse survivors, the study also examines the roles of various stakeholders, including families, communities, and institutions, in preventing and responding to child abuse effectively. It emphasizes the necessity of comprehensive and robust interventions to protect vulnerable children and provide them with the necessary support and care. The aim of this study is to analyse the situation qualitatively and quantitatively.

**KEY WORDS:** *Child abuse, Qualitative study, Quantitative Analysis*

### INTRODUCTION

Child abuse is a deeply concerning and distressing issue that has far-reaching consequences for the lives of countless children worldwide. It is a topic that demands our attention, understanding, and action to protect the most vulnerable members of our society.

Child abuse encompasses a range of harmful behaviors and mistreatment inflicted upon children, which can take various forms, including physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect. These acts not only cause immediate harm but also leave lasting scars on the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of the victims.

The impact of child abuse extends beyond the individuals involved, affecting families, communities, and society as a whole. The cycle of abuse can perpetuate from one generation to the next if left unchecked, perpetuating a cycle of suffering and trauma.

In 2016, the World Health Organisation (WHO) outlined "Child Abuse" as an offence against a child's fundamental rights. A child's health, life, growth, or dignity may be harmed in the course of a relationship, responsibility, trust, or authority. This encompasses all forms of physical, emotional, sexual, neglectful, or negligent treatment as well as financial or other types of exploitation. Child neglect is the act of a parent or guardian failing to provide provisions for a child's development. When the lack of resources available to the family or caretaker as a result of poverty prevents a parent or guardian who is in charge of a child's development from being able to do so. The term "child maltreatment" refers to abuse and neglect of children under the age of 18, including physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, and other forms of exploitation that may or may not actually harm the child's health, dignity, survival, or development (World Health Organisation, 2016). 2020 World Health Organisation.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Child abuse can eventually inhibit a country's progress since it has long-term detrimental consequences on a child's physical and mental health as well as their social and occupational chances. The prevalence of maltreatment can be decreased and its effects mitigated by effective prevention and management measures, such as teaching parents effective parenting methods, maintaining care for children and families, and punishing offenders fairly (World Health Organisation, 2020).

The bulk of maltreatment patterns have dramatically decreased since 2000, however neglect rates have fallen the least. Young children are more frequently maltreated. Neglect increased from 49% in 1990 to almost 75% in 2017, while physical abuse declined from 27% to 9% and sexual abuse from 17% to 9%. 2019 Child Trends.

According to a study done in Suriname, child abuse affected 1,391 young adults and adolescents between the ages of 12 and 22 who belonged to different ethnic groups on average 57.1% of the time each year. Moreover, 68.8% of young people and 58.2% of adolescents reported experiencing some form of maltreatment. In addition, 36.8% of the adolescents reported having experienced abuse in the 12 months prior (Van der Kooij et al., 2015).

A study was conducted to assess the prevalence of physical abuse in China in comparison to estimates from other regions of Asia. A meta-analysis was performed on 47 peer-reviewed journals published in both Chinese and English. Most of the attendees were locals and students under the age of 18. China had a greater lifetime prevalence of physical abuse than the rest of Asia and the world, at 36.6% (95% CI: 30.4-42.7), according to a 2013 study by Stoltenborgh et al. (Ji&Finkelhor, 2015).

2015 saw the completion of a study on the frequency of child sexual abuse in Shimoga, Karnataka. The study used a self-report questionnaire with 1336 students in grades 8 through 12. 12.35% of the children there had experienced sexual abuse of some kind, with 97 (7.2%) boys and (5.08%) girls. Additionally, 23% of these crimes were committed by friends, while 38.8% were committed by unrelated parties. While 17.2% of the children told their parents or caretakers, 51.7% of them did not report the abuse. It was determined that 12.5% of people living in the Shimoga District had been sexually abused as children. The majority of abuse reports were from boys; few came from girls (Delanthabettu, Pandiyan, Kaveri, Gunari, & Vijayakumar, 2017).

At the Yorkshire Regional Burns Centre, a retrospective study (1994–2004) was carried out to evaluate treatment adjustments and clinical outcomes among patients with hot liquid burns. Children under the age of three made up 77.5% of hot beverage burns, per the poll. Changes in referral patterns led to a decline in the mean TBSA of burn. The research states that burns from hot beverages, frequent hospitalisations, and the lengthening gap between injuries and admission to the burns unit are all still causes for worry (Hankins, Tang, & Phipps, 2006).

A retrospective analysis was performed on 440 paediatric burn victims who were hospitalised in the UK between 2000 and 2002. Experts from several fields investigated shady cases. Neglect was to blame for 9.3% of burns, while 89.8% were accidental. Parent drug use, single-parent families, a lack of first aid, and a delay in presentation were all identified as risk factors in the neglect group. 48.8% of the neglected children had been placed in foster care, and 82.9% of them had previously been recorded in the child protection register. The study (Chester, Jose, Aldlyami, King, & Moiemmen, 2006) revealed that paediatric burn neglect was more common than child abuse.

Hot liquids frequently burned young children under the age of four. It was mostly brought about by exploration behaviour without consideration for potential environmental risks. The management of these children can be guided by identifying risk factors for deliberate injury through the history, physical examination, and specific patterns of presentation (Toon, et al., 2011).

QUADAS requirements. 13 research were chosen from the 2280 papers that were discovered. In 11 reviews, the tools employed to spot abuse were the clinical indicators. The ability to later identify the injured children and limited sensitivity of the identified tools were both discovered. It was decided that a trustworthy method for spotting child abuse was required (Bailhache, Valériane, Pillet, & Louis-Rachid, 2013).

Due to their intrinsic proclivity and interest in exploring their surroundings, children are more likely to be in danger. Poisoning has a negative impact on children's overall morbidity and mortality, and abuse-related

poisoning has been responsible for thousands of fatalities. Giving the environment's improvement specific consideration would lower the danger of abuse (Dinis-Oliveira &Magalhes, 2013).

In Izmir, Turkey, a survey on the awareness of child abuse indicators and experiences of 197 preschool teachers was carried out. The inquiry used a Likert-type scale with 34 items. When it comes to spotting child abuse, violence against children, and neglect (2.03%), few instructors (10.65%) have received prior training. The percentage of teachers with prior experience working with abused children was only 35%. Additionally, having a child of their own, dealing with abused children before, and having training all aided instructors in dealing with traumatised children (Karadag, Sönmez, &Dereobal, 2015).

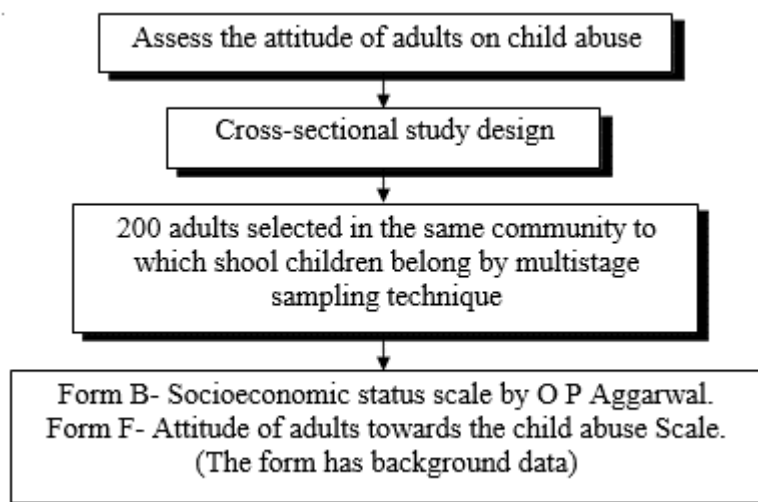
## **METHODOLOGY**

For this study on child abuse, a mixed-methods approach will be adopted, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to provide a comprehensive analysis of the issue. The study will be conducted in several phases, each contributing to the overall understanding of child abuse.

Literature Review: The research will begin with literature review to gather existing information, studies, and reports related to child abuse. This step will help identify gaps in knowledge and establish a foundation for the study.

Qualitative Research: We have used the secondary data for the study to analyse the cases using statistical tools and discuss the situation. This study discusses the techniques used to assess the prevalence of child abuse and adult attitudes towards it. For ease of description, the methodology section will cover the research approach, research design, description of the setting, population, sample, and sample size, sampling technique, sampling criteria, ethical considerations, description of the data collection tool, methods of data collection, pilot study, and plan for data analysis.

### Study design



The cross-sectional study took place in Udipi district, Karnataka, known for its excellent education facilities. The study covered various locations, including a leading tertiary referral hospital called Kasturba Hospital (KH) Manipal. KH is associated with Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) and provides services to residents of neighboring states. The hospital has a bed capacity of 2032 and is equipped with necessary staff and facilities. Accredited by NABH and ISO certified, KH handles paediatric cases, burns, and plastic surgery in different specialized units. The study was conducted from August 2012 to July 2016.

The cross-sectional survey's baseline abuse data were taken into account while determining the sample size for school-aged children.

$$n = \frac{Z\alpha^2 P(1 - P)}{(dp)^2}$$

where n = Sample size ,

Z = 1.96, which is the critical value at a 5% level of significance. P stands for expected proposition

1-P=Q, where Q is a rough proportion. Relevant Accuracy = 10% of Prevalence CI=95%

D=1% P=6%

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.6 (0.4)}{(0.1 \times 0.6)^2} = 256$$

DE, with design effect, =2, RP, relative precision = 10%, DE = 256 X 2=512.

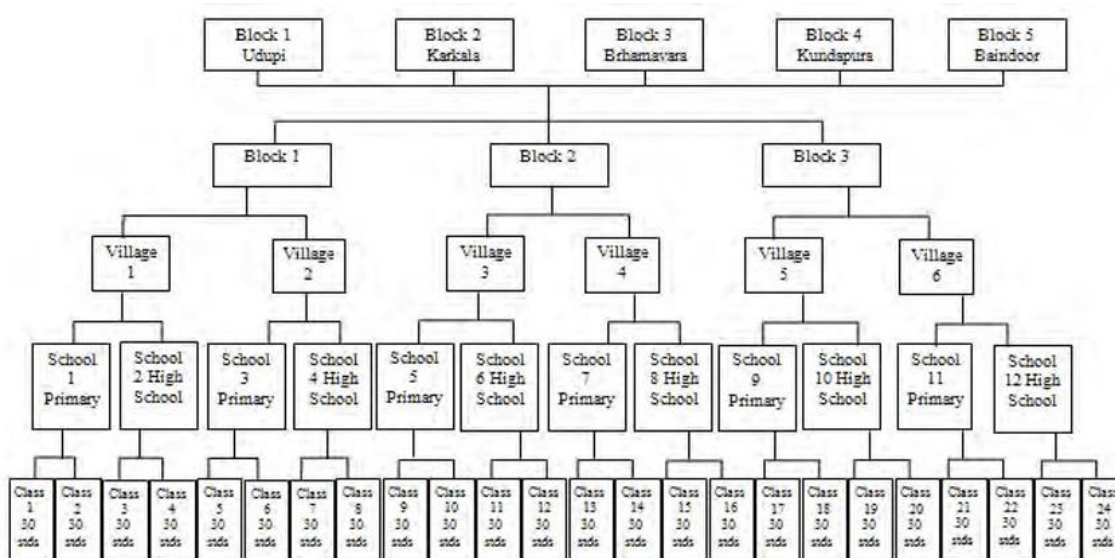
Totaled, 520.

a 25% dropout rate.

Dropout rate  $n = n/1$ . That is,  $N = 520/0.75 = 693$  and  $n/1 - 0.25$ . 700 has been round.

720 people were included in the sample in order to provide an approximate estimate of 30 pupils per class.

SAMPLING IN SCHOOL:UDUPIDISTRICT



Sampling Criteria:

Inclusion Criteria:

Children between the ages of 6 and 18 who were hospitalized for abuse, burns, poisoning, or any other questionable cases.

Children aged 6 to 18 who are institutionalized.

Young adults between 18 to 24 years old.

Parents or guardians of specific youngsters.

All patient records available during the data collection period were used.

Participants who could communicate in Kannada or English.

Children, parents, and caregivers who willingly agreed to take part in the study.

Exclusion Criteria:

Children with severe health issues, including hearing impairment, dumbness, mental retardation, and severe communication issues.

Parents or guardians who did not provide consent for their child's participation in the study.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE**

The literature on child abuse emphasises the serious effects of this problem on children's lives and society at large. There are many different types of child abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect, all of which have serious negative effects on the victims. If not properly addressed, it feeds a cycle of trauma and suffering that can last for generations.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines child abuse as any type of maltreatment that violates a child's fundamental rights. It is crucial to take preventative steps and make the right interventions to lessen the prevalence and consequences of child abuse. Since 2000, studies have showed a decline in some types of abuse, although neglect rates have not significantly decreased.

The incidence of various types of child abuse has been the subject of numerous research studies carried out in different geographical areas. For example, a study in Suriname found high rates of young adults and adolescents experiencing child abuse, and a study in China found a greater lifetime incidence of physical abuse compared to other Asian locations.

Children's burn injuries have increasingly become a source of worry. Studies have highlighted the danger signs and probable negligence that might result in such accidents. Furthermore, studies have shown that



young infants are frequently vulnerable to burns from hot liquids, underscoring the significance of identifying risk factors and putting preventative measures in place.

Overall, the assessment of the literature highlights the critical requirement for child abuse prevention and intervention programmes. These results highlight the significance of providing children with a safe and nurturing environment as well as educating and supporting parents, teachers, and communities to effectively prevent child abuse. We can fight to protect the welfare and future of our children by addressing the root causes of child abuse and putting evidence-based solutions into practise.

**QUANTITATIVE RESULTS**

**Table-1** shows sample characteristics of the school children in frequency and percentage

**SCHOOL CHILDREN IN FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE**

**N=1440**

Description of Sample Characteristics	Frequency(f)n=1440	Percentage(%)
<b>I. Child characteristics</b>		
<b>Age in years</b>		
6-9	298	20.7
10-13	404	28.1
14-18	738	51.2
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	754	52.4
Female	686	47.6
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	1192	82.8
Muslim	130	9.0
Christian	118	8.2
<b>Class</b>		
1st-3 <sup>rd</sup>	256	17.8
4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>	302	21.0
7-9 <sup>th</sup>	452	31.4
10-12 <sup>th</sup>	430	29.9



<b>Healthproblems</b>		
Physicaldisability	4	0.3
Mental/Behaviouralproblems	6	0.4
Learningdifficulties	116	8.1
Otherhealthproblems	18	1.2
Nohealthproblems	1296	90.0
<b>Typeofschool</b>		
Government	814	56.5
Private	626	43.5
<b>Livingwith/placeofstay</b>		
Bothparents	1230	85.4
Mother	124	8.6
Father	4	0.3
Fatherandstepmother	4	0.3
Motherandstepfather	8	0.6
Relatives forstudypurpose	14	1.0
Others -forstudypurpose	50	3.5
Relatives -parents died	6	.4
<b>Consumptionsofintoxicants</b>		
Alcohol	4	0.3
Alcoholandsmoking	2	0.1
Nothing	1434	99.6
<b>Socio-economicstatus</b>		
Uppermiddle	102	7.1
Lowermiddle	920	63.9
Poor	374	26.0
Verypoor	44	3.1

The table presents the sample characteristics of 1440 school children included in the study. The participants' age distribution shows that 20.7% were between 6 to 9 years old, 28.1% were between 10 to 13 years old, and the majority, 51.2%, were aged between 14 to 18 years. In terms of gender, 52.4% were male, while 47.6% were female.

Regarding religion, the majority of the participants were Hindu, accounting for 82.8%, followed by 9.0% Muslims and 8.2% Christians. Class distribution showed that 17.8% were in 1st to 3rd grade, 21.0% in 4th to 6th grade, 31.4% in 7th to 9th grade, and 29.9% in 10th to 12th grade.

Regarding health problems, a small percentage had specific issues, with 0.3% having physical disabilities, 0.4% experiencing mental/behavioral problems, and 8.1% having learning difficulties. Only 1.2% had other health problems, while the majority, 90.0%, reported having no health problems.

The type of school attended by the participants was also noted, with 56.5% in government schools and 43.5% in private schools. In terms of living arrangements, 85.4% lived with both parents, while small percentages lived with single parents or relatives for study purposes.

The consumption of intoxicants was generally low, with 0.3% consuming alcohol, 0.1% consuming alcohol and smoking, and 99.6% reporting no intoxicant consumption.

Regarding socio-economic status, 7.1% were classified as upper middle class, 63.9% as lower middle class, 26.0% as poor, and 3.1% as very poor. These sample characteristics provide valuable insights into the diverse composition of the study participants, helping to understand the context of child well-being and potential factors influencing their experiences and behaviours.

Table-2 representing the Description of physical abuse, according to the frequency and percentage reported by school children.

**Table-2**

**N=1440**

Statement	Neverf(%)	Oncef(%)	Rarelyf(%)	Oftenf(%)
Duringthelast sixmonths,thechildwashurtphysicallyby:				
Neighbors	1358(94.3)	38(2.6)	34(2.4)	10(0.7)

Strangers	1426(99)	14(1.0)	0	0
Friends	1328(92.2)	44(3.1)	60(4.2)	8(0.6)
Father	1330(92.4)	28(1.9)	58(4.0 )	24(1.7)
Mother	1402(97.4)	8(0.6)	26(1.8 )	4 (0.3 )
Uncle/aunty/relative	1424 (98.9)	6 (0.4)	10 (0.7 )	0
Brother/sister	1434(99.6)	2(0.1)	4 (0.3 )	0
Teacher	1414 (98.2)	10 (0.7)	14(1.0)	2(0.1)
<b>Themethodused:</b>				
Slap	1334(92.6)	48(3.3)	30(2.1)	28(1.9)
Pushing	1290(89.6)	70(4.9)	64(4.4)	16 (1.1)
Shaking	1370(95.1)	34(2.4)	28(1.9)	8 (0.6)
Touchingwithahotobject	1438(99.9)	2(0.1)	0	0
<b>Biting</b>	1436(99.7)	4 (0.3)	0	0
Anyother(beatingwithstick)	1282 (89.0)	94(6.5)	54(3.8)	10(0.7)

The research demonstrates that children reported physical abuse in a variety of situations and ways.

Most children (94.3%), strangers (99%), friends (92.2%), fathers (92.4%), mothers (97.4%), uncles/aunties/relatives (98.9%), and brothers/sisters (99.6%) reported never physically hurting them. However, a tiny minority of kids said they had been physically abused by different people, with teachers being the most common perpetrators (1.0%).

Slapping was the most frequently reported form of physical abuse, with 92.6% of respondents claiming it never happened, 3.3% indicating it happened only once, 2.1% seldom, and 1.9% frequently. Another common kind was pushing, with 89.6% of respondents indicating it never happened, 4.9% once, 4.4% occasionally, and 1.1% frequently. 95.1% of respondents said they had never experienced shaking, 2.4% had, 1.9% had only once, and 0.6% had done so frequently. Less frequently used techniques were biting and touching with hot objects, and the majority of people claimed they never occurred.

## CONCLUSION

This report highlights the seriousness of child abuse as a pressing social issue that necessitates immediate attention and action. Together, we can safeguard children's fundamental rights and secure a safer and more promising future for the most vulnerable members of our society by raising awareness, putting evidence-based solutions into practise, and creating a supportive atmosphere. By increasing awareness, implementing evidence-based solutions, and cultivating a supportive environment, we can protect children's fundamental rights and provide a safer and more promising future for the most vulnerable members of our society.

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