

Child Abuse- The Dreadful Disease of Society

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Abstract

Stopping child-abuse is one of the biggest challenges before the Indian government. Child abuse is not only India's Problem, but its worldwide problem. Most cases of child abuse go unreported, children suffer this trauma alone without any help and assistance they need. The objective of this research paper is to discuss and enlighten the traumatic and harmful effect on a child's mental, physical health due to child abuse. This Paper also makes an analysis of the different types of child abuse and laws related to child abuse in India to stop this evil crime.

Keywords:-Child, Child-Abuse, Law, Health, Trauma, Problem, Harmful, Effect.

Saving Children Child Abuse is the biggest challenge before any country. Indian Government passed many Acts to protect the children from child abuse but the problem still exists. In 2018, according to the National Crime Record Bureau ,every day 109 children were sexually abused and 39,827 cases were reported in 2018.

Child Abuse: Here child abuse means any kind of action or negligence of any person which cause harm to the child, this harm could be physically, mentally, emotionally or neglect. Definition of child abuse as per Dictionary.com is "Mistreatment of a child by a parent or guardian, including neglect, beating, and sexual molestation."

Child abuse can be classified into four categories such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

Physically Abuse means when a child purposely harmed or put at risk of harm by another person.

Sexual Abuse means any sexual activity with children by any other person.

Emotional Abuse means injuring children's emotions and self-esteem.

Neglect means neglecting children and failure to provide child food, education, shelter, or other necessary care.

Effects of Child Abuse;

Child abuse can lead to a wide range of adverse effects on children. Every child exposed to the similar experience of abuse is not affected in some way. For some children, who have experienced child abuse, the effect can be long-lasting and severe. For some children, it can be minor. Childhood abuse have adverse physical, psychological, and behavioural consequences. Children's reaction to abuse may have lifelong and intergenerational impacts, for example, it may lead to

psychological problems, such as feeling sad, depressed, low self-esteem, which could later lead to anger, drug and substance use etc.

Relationship problems due to insecurity ; Babies and young child, who faced to abuse and neglect, are more likely to experience insecure attachment problem with their caretaker(Reference : Baer & Martinez, 2006),

For the healthy, overall development of Child, healthy attachment of child with his parent/caretaker is a key point, in the absence of healthy attachment, Children do not feel safe, protective and comfortable with their parent or caretaker, they feel insecure. (Reference: Cyr et al., 2010)

Without the security and support from the parents or caretaker, children find it difficult to trust others, this leads to anxiety and anger.

Developing and learning Problems: Child abuse in the early years of life impact seriously on the overall development of the child. It affects the development capacities of the child. Many Studies show that abused children have lower educational achievement than normal child.

Mental health Problems: Recent research suggests that it is strong relationship between child abuse and mental health problems. Due to child abuse, infant or young child face many traumatic problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety disorder, Eating disorder.

Child abuse also leads to suicidal ideation.

Consumption of alcohol and other drugs: Child-Abuse can also leads to consumption of alcohol and drug. In a research in the United States, it was found that 28 % of physically abused child used drugs in there adolescent, compared to 14% of the non-abused Child (Reference:- Perkins & Jones, 2004)

Problems related to behaviour: During a research in the U.S, it was found that children, who were abused in their childhood, displayed more problems behaviour than others. Researcher have often associated internalising behaviour (such as being sad, isolated and depressed) and externalising behaviour (such as being aggressive) with the Child-Abuse.

In other research it was found that children who are a victim of child abuse are at increased risk of inflicting pain on others and developing aggressive and violent behaviours in the adolescent. Research suggests that family abuse and physical abuse lead to violent behaviour in youth (Reference;- Gilbert et al.,2009)

Physical Problems: Children, who are victims of child abuse, face many physical problems. In the United States, data from Longitudinal Studies of Child Abuse and Neglect suggests that there is a strong relationship between child abuse and health problems in children (Reference: Flaherty et al. 2006,2009).

A common example of abuse, affecting the health of babies is ‘Shaken Baby Syndrome’. Due to Shaken Baby Syndrome, brain of child can be damage permanently. It also can cause spinal cord injury, hearing loss in child, difficulties in speech. It can also be the reason of death.

There are number of other problems associated with child abuse such as teenage pregnancy, homelessness, fatal abuse etc.

Indian Government’s steps to stop Child-Abuse

There are many provisions to protect children from the ‘Child-Abuse’ in India. Government has enacted many acts and rule for the protection of children.

Legal provisions to save children in India from Child-Abuse

- 1. Protection of Children from sexual offence Act, 2012:-** Indian government passed this act in Parliament in 2012 to protect the children from the offences of sexual assault, harassment, and pornography while safeguarding the interests of the child. Definition of a child as per this act is any person below eighteen years of age. (Reference:- Model Guidelines under section 39 of The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 by Ministry of Women and Child Development online available at <https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/POCSO-ModelGuidelines.pdf>)
- 2. The Juvenile Justice(Care and Protection) Act 2015:-** Juvenile Justice(Care and Protection of Children) has established a framework for children in need of care and protection
- 3. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006:-** This act prohibits the solemnization of child marriage. The minimum legal age for marriage is 18 for a girl and 21 for men.
- 4. Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986:-** In This Act, there is provision which prohibits the engagement of children in certain employment types and this act regulates condition of work of children in certain other work and employments.
- 5. National Commission for Protection of Child Rights:-** Central Government of India has established National Commission For Protection of Child in 2007. Similarly, other commissions were established at the state level for the protection of child and child rights. Child helpline at 1098 has also been established, where reports of child abuse can be made.

Child abuse is the dreadful disease of Indian society. It leads to a wide range of adverse consequence for children. Indian Government has taken many steps to stop this evil crime but this crime still exists. Many More steps are required to stop this crime from the root.

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