Research Paper

Emotional abuse in relation with self-concept of boys and girls

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ABSTRACT

Emotional abuse is a scar that is not typically observed clearly but rather is deep established inside our mind that may interrupt the daily life of an individual. The most well-known type of abuse but then least talked about not just hinders adolescents improvement additionally hinders with his/her self-concept. An effort has been made to find out how emotional abuse affects self-concept among boys and girls. The present study was directed on 300 adolescents (boys n =150, & girls n =150) using purposive sampling method. Emotional abuse was assessed by using emotional abuse scale developed by Alam & Nesheen (2015) and self-concept was assessed by using Mohsin self-concept inventory. After analyzing data by simple independent sample t-test and simple correlation it was found that there is a significant difference among boys and girls in terms of emotional abuse and self-concept. Results also show that boys are highly emotionally abused than girls and also there is a negative correlation between variables.

It has been found that the vast majority of maltreated infants form insecure attachment relationships with their caregivers which, through development, tend to become anxious avoidant patterns of attachment. The style of attachment has been linked to later adaptation and development. Likewise, the development of an autonomous self-esteem to be low or unresolved, and children in abusive environments are more "aggressive, frustrated, and noncompliant" than normal. They are also slow in developing external awareness and differentiation of inanimate and animate objects, and their social skills are immature or dysfunctional. This indicates that beyond the immediate abuse, there are short and long term effects of the abuse that affect the general development and emotional health of the abused child.

Childhood maltreatment refers to acts of commission or omission by an adult,which endanger the physical or psychological well-being of a child and violate social sanctions regarding proper parenting (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2011;Christoffel et al., 1992). Theorists and many state statutes categorized childhood maltreatment into four basic types: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2011; National Research Council [NRC], 1993; Trickett, Kim, &Prindle, 2011).

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The three types of abuse (i.e., physical, sexual, and emotional abuse) are generally understood to include acts of commission, or active forms of maltreatment, which endanger the well-being of a child, while neglect includes acts of omission, or passive forms of maltreatment, which endanger the well-being of a child (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2011; Crosson-Tower, 1999; NRC, 1993). Childhood emotional abuse is arguably the most challenging form of abuse to classify and define (Wekerle, 2011; Wright, 2007). Unlike physical abuse and sexual abuse, which include various forms of physical contact between a child and older person, emotional abuse is essentially a non-contact form of maltreatment (Bernstein, Ahluvalia, Pogge, & Handelsman, 1997; Glaser, 2002; Keashly & Harvey, 2005; McGee & Wolfe, 1991). That is, emotional abuse does not involve physical contact between the abuser and child. Hence, markers of emotional abuse are less tangible, compared to other types of abuse (McKenzie, 2009; Romeo, 2000).Emotional abuse, also referred to as psychological abuse, is a type of maltreatment in which the caregiver repeatedly makes a child feel used, unloved, and worthless (Iwaniec, Larkin, & McSherry, 2007). These acts of commission differ from emotional neglect, which involves acts of omission (i.e., withdrawal of attention; Iwaniec et al., 2007.

James Garbarino and associates (Garbarino 1978; Garbarino, Guttman & Seeley 1986) have provided the basis for more recent attempts at defining what Garbarino terms 'psychological maltreatment' - 'a concerted attack by an adult on a child's development of self and social competence, a pattern of psychically destructive behavior' (Garbarino, Guttman & Seeley 1986, p.8).

Under this definition, 'psychological maltreatment' is classified into five behavioral forms:
1. rejecting*:* behaviors which communicate or constitute abandonment of the child, such as a refusal to show affection;
2. isolating*:* preventing the child from participating in normal opportunities for social interaction;
3. terrorizing*:* threatening the child with severe or sinister punishment, or deliberately developing a climate of fear or threat;
4. ignoring*:* where the caregiver is psychologically unavailable to the child and fails to respond to the child's behavior;
5. Corrupting*:* caregiver behavior which encourages the child to develop false social values that reinforce antisocial or deviant behavioral patterns, such as aggression, criminal acts or substance abuse.

Garbarino has also argued that each of these forms of psychological maltreatment has a differential effect on children depending on their passage through the four major developmental stages of infancy, early childhood, school age and adolescence (Garbarino, Guttman & Seeley 1986). For example, rejection in infancy will result from a parent's refusal to accept and respond to a child's need for human contact and attachment. In early childhood, rejection is associated with a parent who actively excludes the child from family activities. At school age, rejection takes the form of a parent who consistently communicates a negative sense of identity to the child, and in adolescence, rejection is identified by a parent's refusal to acknowledge the young person's need for greater autonomy and self-determination (Garbarino, Guttman & Seeley 1986).

Self -Concept
Self-concept is the third predictor variable in the present research work. A discussion about self-concept has been of great attention to early philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and

Aristotle. Socrates argued that self is the soul, whereas Plato focused on the intellectual and the rational part of the soul, where he tied the idea of self to cognitive principles. Aristotle however, rejected Plato's rationalism and claimed that the mind is higher than the soul, and the mind is an independent substance implicated within the soul. (Hattie, 1992).

Adolescents frequently display a decline in self-concept during elementary school and the transition to middle level. This decrease represents an adaptive reaction to the overly positive self-perceptions that are characteristic of childhood. Adolescents tend to overestimate their competence because they lack the cognitive maturity to critically evaluate their abilities and to integrate information from multiple sources. As adolescents develop, they better understand how others view their skills and better distinguish between their efforts and abilities. As a result, their self-perceptions become increasingly accurate (Harter, 1999). As adolescents transition from middle level to high school, their self-concept gradually grows. Increasing freedom allows adolescents greater opportunities to participate in activities in which they are competent, and increased perspective-taking abilities enable them to garner more support from others by behaving in more socially acceptable ways (Harter, 1999). A milestone in human reflection about the non-physical inner self came in 1644, when Rene Descartes wrote Principles of Philosophy. Descartes proposed that doubt was a principal tool of disciplined inquiry, yet he could not doubt that he doubted. He reasoned that if he doubted, he was thinking, and therefore he must exist. Thus existence depended upon perception. In the development of self-concept theory, Sigmund Freud (1900) gave us new understanding of the importance of internal mental processes. While Freud and many of his followers hesitated to make self-concept a primary psychological unit in their theories, Freud's daughter Anna (1946) gave central importance to ego development and self-interpretation. Self-concept theory has always had a strong influence on the emerging profession of counseling. Prescott Lecky (1945) contributed the notion that self-consistency is a primary motivating force in human behavior. Raimy (1948) introduced measures of self-concept in counseling interviews and argued that psychotherapy is basically a process of altering the ways that individuals see themselves.

Objectives
1. To assess the difference between boys and girls in relation to their Emotional abuse.
2. To assess the difference between boys and girls in relation to their self –concept.
3. To determine the relationship between Emotional Abuse & Self-Concept among boys and girls.

METHODOLOGY
Tools used
Emotional Abuse Scale: Emotional abuse scale developed by Alam, and Nesheen (2015) was used to measure emotional abuse among the Indian adolescents (boys & girls) between age group 13-19 yrs. This tool consists of 42 items ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". It has five different dimensions including; rejection, terrorizing, isolation, ignoring and corruption. There are some percentile norms also; those who have below 101 scores have very low level of emotional abuse, those whose scores are between102-104 have low level of emotional abuse, individual with scores between 105-109 are moderately emotionally abused, individuals with scores between 110- 123 are highly emotionally abused and individuals with scores above 123 are extremely emotionally abused. The items in the scale provide the adequate content validity. Reliability co-efficient of correlation between forms is1.000, equal-length Spearman-Brown is 1.000, Guttman Split-Half is .995 and the unequal-length Spearman-Brown is 1.000.

Mohsin Self-Concept Inventory (MSCI)*:* Mohsin self-concept inventory (MSCI) developed by Mohsin (1979) measures variation in self- regard. The MSCI contains 48 items consisting of positively and negatively phrased statements about abilities and strengths pertaining to the cognitive affective & co native areas. The positively and negatively phrased statements are equally balanced in number; all positively phrased statements affirm a positive quality and all negatively phrased statements deny a negative quality. The acceptance of a statement as characterizing oneself signifies in either case, positive evaluation of the self. The validity aspect of MSCI is very much clear from the author's original statement that; the MSCI was hypothesized to correlate negatively with a short version of Maslow's SI test, adopted by author, and positively with MPCRI, The Mohsin Parent Child Inventory, an adaptation of parental behaviour questionnaire developed by Ojha (1973). The correlation with Maslow SI test was -0.351 & with MPCRI it was 0.396 for a sample of 150 undergraduate students (Mohsin 1976). Both the values are significant at less than one percent level of confidence. The obtained correlation may be taken as indices of construct validity of MSCI. Stated two-halvesreliability of the MSCI was found to be 0.57 for half, & 0.73 for the full inventory, using the SB formula. Scoring procedure of MSCI is very simple. Only those statements to be counted which has been tick marked or check marked by the respondent.

Sample
The sample for the study was taken from schools of different states of kashmir. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants. The total no. of participants consisted of 300 adolescents, with equal number of Boys (n=150) and Girls (n=150).

Procedure
Two questionnaires namely emotional abuse Scale and Mohsin Self-Concept inventory were administered on boys and girls between age group 13-19years from different schools of Kashmir valley. The students were requested to fill the questionnaires by themselves after carefully reading statements one by one according to the instructions written on each of the questionnaires. Respondents were requested not to leave any item unanswered and were asked to give each and every response honestly. Each respondent took almost 30-40 minutes in answering all the questionnaires. They were assured that their responses will be kept confidential and would be used fully for research purpose. After the data collection scoring was done by the investigator for the purpose of analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.1 Showing overall differences between boys and girls in terms of emotional abuse.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	*p-value*
Girls	150	115.07	12.351	3.542**	.000
Boys	150	119.59	9.581		

**p< .01

Table 1.1, shows the comparison between boys and girls in terms of their emotional abuse. The "t" was found to be 3.542, which is significant at 0.01 level. It indicates that there is a significant difference between boys and girls in terms of their emotional abuse. By examining their group means, it is concluded that boys with Mean value 119.59, are highly emotionally abused than girls with Mean value 115.07, rejecting our first hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference among boys and girls in relation to emotional abuse. The reason behind this difference may be due to the fact that boys have more clashing and aggressive behavior with parents, teacher's, elders and peer groups that might prompt them to

be abusive towards them. Since parents sometimes humiliate them in front of others, didn't show extra care to them, comparing them with others, threatening them continuously, snubbing them for their little mistakes, and their irresponsible behaviour, all these things lead to grow a kind of conflict within them, parents don't realize how vulgarly they treat their male children and even are unaware about the destruction they are accountable for.

Table 1.2: Showing overall differences between Boys and Girls with regard to their Self-Concept.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	*p-value*
Girls	150	33.99	5.754	3.462**	.001
Boys	150	31.82	5.062		

* p< .05

Table 1.2, represents the difference between boys and girls in terms of their self-concept. With "t" value 3.462, significant at .001 level, boys with Mean value 31.82 are showing low self-concept than girls with Mean value 33.99, rejecting our hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference among boys and girls in relation to self-concept.

In today's modern era boys pass through an intense period of insecurity, because they were generally compared with others, either in their classroom or at their home. The comparison of either being compared with their younger or elder ones, being compared on basis of academic scores, any kind of comparison gravely hurt their ego and their true self. Girls are found to be high on self-concept than boys; it means that girls are more encouraged, they get moral and social support from parents, teachers and peer groups.

Table 1.3: Showing Correlation matrix relationship of boys and girls in terms of emotional abuse and self- concept

	EMOTIONAL ABUSE GIRLS	SELF-CONCEPT GIRLS	EMOTIONAL ABUSE BOYS	SELF-CONCEPT BOYS
EMOTIONAL ABUSE GIRLS	1	-.178[*]	.023	-.183[*]
SELF-CONCEPT GIRLS		1	.007	-.053
EMOTIONAL ABUSE BOYS			1	-.168[*]
SELF-CONCEPT BOYS				1

**p <0.01 level,*p <.0.05 level

The above table shows that there is a negative correlation between emotional abuse and self-concept (r=-.178,p<0.05) among girls, and also shows that there is a negative correlation between emotional and self-concept (r=-.168,p<0.05) among boys.

From the above result it is concluded that if emotional abuse increases among both boys and girls, their self-concept will be low.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present work was to study emotional abuse in relation to self-concept of boys and girls. The findings of the study reveal that boys and girls are found to be significantly different in terms of emotional abuse and self-concept. Boys are found to be more emotionally abused than girls. It also reveals that there is negative correlation between emotional abuse and self-concept among both boys and girls. Emotional abuse is quite common in every society and adolescents are weaker towards this offensive issue. Right from their childhood this appalling crisis keeps lingering within them and it not only hinders adolescents mental and physical improvement additionally hinders with his/her self-concept. It is important to take into consideration this all time issue. Development of self-concept depends upon teacher- student relationship. Teachers should provide positive feedbacks to the students about their abilities and talents in order to develop strong self- concept among them. Parents should encourage their children and guide them to develop healthy self-concept & confidence in them.

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