

An Empirical Study on Maltreatment of Children by Parents and its Effect on their Academics

Samritha. KR¹ and Mr. Kumaravel. K²

Final Year, BA, LL.B(Hon's)¹ and BA, LLB(Hons).²

Saveetha School of Law, Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences (SIMATS), Chennai, India
samrithakr@gmail.com and ybsk1949263@gmail.com

Abstract: *Child maltreatment continues to be a major health and social welfare problem across the globe. In the Indias, millions of children from all socioeconomic backgrounds, across all ages, religions, and cultures are victims of child maltreatment every day and millions more are at risk. Research has consistently shown that exposure to child maltreatment in all its forms negatively affects the current and future educational performance and emotional and psychological well-being of children. The purpose of this paper is to provide a literature synthesis of the impact of child maltreatment on the educational and psychological well-being of students. Recommendations for educators working in school settings are provided. This paper discusses the maltreatment by parents among students. It discusses the pressure which students face during their academic years which leads them to problem. It discusses pressure due to peers, due to academics, financial pressures, parental expectations and other reasons for maltreatment. The aim of this research is to explore the primary reasons for maltreatment among parents and to analyze the awareness among the common people. The Empirical method was used to conduct this Non-Doctrinal research, using primary sources like questionnaires and surveys; and secondary sources like books and journals. The paper gives a deep understanding of the problems which students face which leads them to mental problems like depression and anxiety.*

Keywords: child maltreatment, education, students with disabilities

I. INTRODUCTION

A child generally is a boy or a girl of any age between infancy and adolescence. This agrees with the Indian law that a child is anyone who has not attained the age of 18 years. Child abuse is therefore a practice whereby children are maltreated, battered or deprived of some basic needs in the home, street, religious houses or at school by the elderly. They further opined that Child abuse could harm children physically, emotionally, sexually or could even lead to their death. It is caused by poverty, lack of parental care, unemployment, marital conflicts and polygamous homes. Child abuse causes pain to both male and female victims. Harmful behaviours of children's teachers, parents, peers, guardians, siblings, so-called mentors and the society in various forms could also lead to child abuse. Child abuse is therefore not a strange phenomenon in our country. There is no safe place for children anymore because it is everywhere. Similarly, Chalk, Gibbons & Scarupa observed that child abuse negatively affects the child physically, psychologically and behaviorally. However, it is not possible to discuss them individually in real world situation. Physical problems (for example destruction of a child's developing brain) can lead to psychological manifestations (for example delay in cognitive development). Psychological effects mostly appear as high-risk behaviours which could affect the abused child academically and ultimately the economy. Shonk and Cicchetti corroborated this view by disclosing that children who are maltreated usually get low grades in school and do not excel in the society, which slows down the economy. Alok and Olatunji in a study on how child abuse influences primary and secondary school children in classroom and their academic performance in India using a sample of 200 teachers, found out that child abuse and children's concentration in class is positively related. This implies that abused children do not concentrate in class with negative implications on the Indian economy. Furthermore, Umobong asserted that child abuse is now prevalent in schools with negative consequences on the educational development of children and the economy in the areas of joblessness. Gaudin also submitted that abused children's intelligence is low as a result of neglect and abuse.

As a result of this, the economy suffers because the abused children are unable to contribute meaningfully to the economy. This is when a child is aggressively abused by an older person. Most countries with laws on child abuse consider it as when injuries are deliberately inflicted on children or when the activities of adults put children at glaring risk of injury or loss of life. Such

activities by adults which could make the child have burns, lacerations, illegal bruises, scratches, broken bones, rough treatment and repeated mishaps that could cause physical injury can be regarded as physical abuse. Both boys and girls are abused, it differs from one culture to another and from one stage of child's development to another. What is seen as

child abuse in Developed countries could be seen as normal or a way of discipline in India

The ways of dealing with a youth may be a form of abuse when done to a young child. Similarly, Isangedighi pointed out that physical child abuse, which is a global phenomenon, is when physical injury is being inflicted on a child or when a physical force is used on a child which causes the child harm. It includes acts like beating, biting, throwing, hitting, shaking, pinching, punching, kicking, poisoning, burning, slapping or strangling which may or may not leave physical marks. Physical abuse could be accidental or not and might result from punishment. In the same vein, Sullivan asserted that physically abused children were exposed to domestic violence with attendant implication on their academic performance. The main aim of this paper is to know more about the maltreatment of parents to their children for benefits

1.1 OBJECTIVE:

- To study about the maltreatment by parents
- To determine about the laws for protecting the children
- To analyze whether the laws for protecting these types of treatment by parents is good.
- To give the reason on the maltreatment by parents and how it affects the children.
- To know the awareness level among people about these kind of treatment by parents.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The problems of child maltreatment have been extensively documented in the literature over the past two decades. According to the Children's Defense Fund (CDF; 2014) and the Indian Department of Health and Human Services ([HHS], 2012, 2017), millions of children worldwide from all socioeconomic backgrounds, across all ages, religions and cultures are exposed to child maltreatment every day and millions more are at risk. Child-maltreatment is an umbrella term that includes abuse and neglect of children (McCoy & Keen, 2013; Gilbert et al., 2009).

Broadly defined, child abuse is when a parent, a primary caregiver, or any other person who has responsibility for the child through an action (e.g., beating, stabbing) causes injury, death, emotional harm, or risk of serious harm to a child. Child abuse can take many forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation, and emotional abuse (Altafim & Linhares, 2016). Existing research indicates that emotional abuse is the most common form of abuse (Foster, Olson-Dorff, Reiland, & Budzak-Garza, 2017) with physical abuse being the most reported (Tillman et al., 2015) and sexual abuse being the least reported (Foster et al., 2017). Conversely, child neglect is defined as the failure of a parent, guardian, or other caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs (e.g., physical, medical, educational, and emotional needs). According to Foster et al. (2017), child neglect is often underreported but has devastating effects on children.

Child maltreatment consists of child abuse and child neglect. Usakli (2012) noted that child maltreatment "occurs across socio-economic, religious, cultural, racial, and ethnic groups". It is estimated that approximately 80% of child maltreatment is perpetrated by parents or primary caregivers, except for sexual abuse which in most cases is perpetrated by acquaintances or other relatives (Crosson-Tower, 2003; Gilbert et al., 2009).

In India, child maltreatment is regarded as one of the country's most serious problems as it is responsible for substantial morbidity and mortality of young children (Fang, Brown, & Florence, 2012; HHS, 2017). In 2015, national, state, and local child protective services (CPS) offices received four million referrals involving approximately 7.2 million children who were subjects of abuse or neglect (HHS, 2017). Of that number, it is estimated that 683,000 children died. However, it is important to note that some researchers argue that the CPS data

underestimates the actual number of children who are victims of child maltreatment (Fang et al., 2012). This suggests that the number of children who are victims of child maltreatment might be more than reported.

Existing research indicates that young children are the most vulnerable to maltreatment because they may be heavily dependent on caretakers (Fang et al., 2012). Data from the HHS (2017) revealed that more than one quarter of victims of child maltreatment were below the age of three. In addition, it has been found that girls are more likely to be victims of certain forms of maltreatment (i.e., sexual abuse) than boys whereas boys are more likely to be victims of physical abuse (HHS, 2008; Andrews, Corry, Slade, Issakidis, & Swanston, 2004). Finally, research also indicates that children with disabilities (especially those with severe disabilities) may also be more vulnerable to maltreatment than children without disabilities. It is possible that some children with disabilities may have limited communication skills and this makes it difficult for them to understand and verbalize episodes of abuse.

Research on the prevalence of child maltreatment is especially problematic when school personnel are underprepared to address reports and suspected cases. Teachers are usually the first school personnel to suspect cases of child maltreatment, and school counselors are usually the school personnel who most often make the reports. In 2012, Usakli conducted a survey with teachers and school counselors and found that both reported feeling unprepared to address child maltreatment issues at school. Teachers reported being aware of the effects of maltreatment but felt unprepared in how to identify, report, and intervene. Moreover, found that school counselors did not feel adequately prepared to help support the child and family. School counselors reported that they “need information on the basic facts related to the subject matter, identification criteria, how they should act when they are intervening, how they should approach the student, how they should save the student, and information on the legal aspects of the program”

Factors that contribute to child maltreatment are extensively documented in the literature with some studies citing parental stress and parental health as the main predictors of child maltreatment. Other studies have shown that beliefs related to parenting (e.g., belief in the value of corporal punishment) are also related to risk of child maltreatment. Altafim and Linhares (2016) found that parents who experience high levels or chronic-levels of stress or experience sudden shifts in attitudes about discipline are also risk factors associated with child maltreatment. It has also been found that most child maltreatment cases involve parents or guardians who abuse drugs. A survey by the National Center on Child Abuse Prevention Research found that 85% of the states in the India reported drug and substance abuse as one of the common problems in households where child maltreatment is suspected.

Child maltreatment in all its forms has significant negative impacts on the development, current and future educational performance, and emotional and psychological well-being of children

(Crozier & Barth, 2005; Foster, et al., 2017; Usakli, 2012). In addition, experiences of childhood maltreatment can have detrimental implications in adulthood (e.g., emotional distress and risky sexual behavior, which increases vulnerability to sexually transmitted diseases

As previously discussed, child maltreatment is a universal problem and one that can have negative long-lasting effects on the psychological well-being of children

Altafim & Linhares, 2016; Usakli, 2012). Since child maltreatment is usually perpetrated by parents/primary caregivers or other close family members, children are often left with no one to turn to and they can experience traumatization as they might lack social and emotional support to cope with such situations.

It has also been reported that maltreatment is associated with eating disorders (i.e., bulimia and anorexia) and self-injurious behaviors (e.g., hair pulling, breaking bones, head banging) and some of these behaviors can be life threatening (Ericsson et al., 2010; Tillman et al., 2015). However, it is important to note that the psychological effects of maltreatment on a child’s well-being may manifest differently for each child depending on the form of abuse. Research has found that depression and other stress related disorders are more likely to be associated with neglect and physical abuse (Gilbert et al., 2009), whereas eating disorders and self-injurious behavior are more likely to be associated with sexual abuse

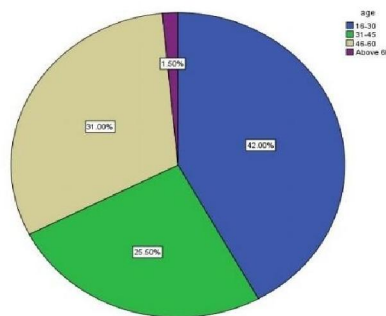
III. METHODOLOGY

The present study is Non- Doctrinal and Empirical in nature. The research method followed here is Descriptive research. A total of 200 samples have been collected out of which all samples have been collected through a convenient sampling method. The sample frame was collected with family, friends, relatives, neighborhood, Public places and

centers. Statistical tools used are graphical representations like Clustered bar graphs and Chi-Square. The independent variables are Age, gender, educational qualification, occupation and marital status. 1. Are you aware about the child abuse by parents? 2. Do you agree that child who is neglected by his/her parents is more vulnerable to mental imbalance of child? 3. On a scale of 1-5, what would be the reason? What is the important factor for protecting a child who suffers from abuse by parents? 4. Do you agree that emotional abuse by parents may result in the future of the children? 5. Are you aware which violence behaviour of parents affects the child most- (mental abuse)?

IV. ANALYSIS:

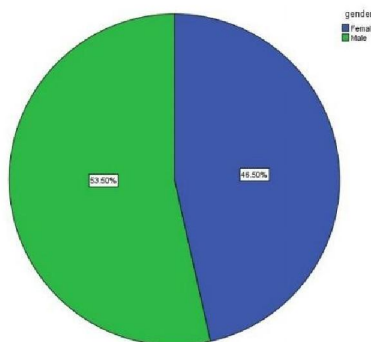
Figure-1



LEGEND

Shows the age distribution of the sample population and their opinion on maltreatment of children by parents and its effect on their academic performance.

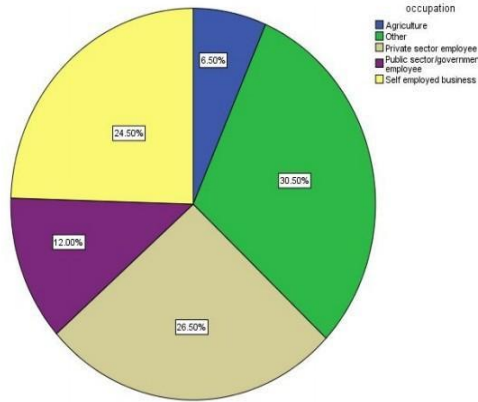
Figure-2



LEGEND :

Shows the gender of the sample population and their opinion on maltreatment of children by parents.

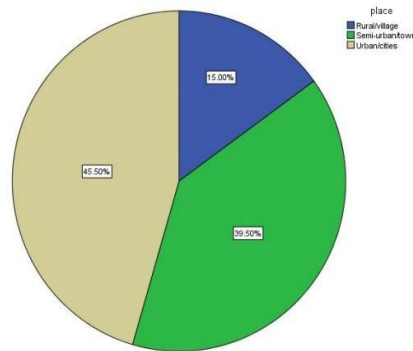
Figure-3



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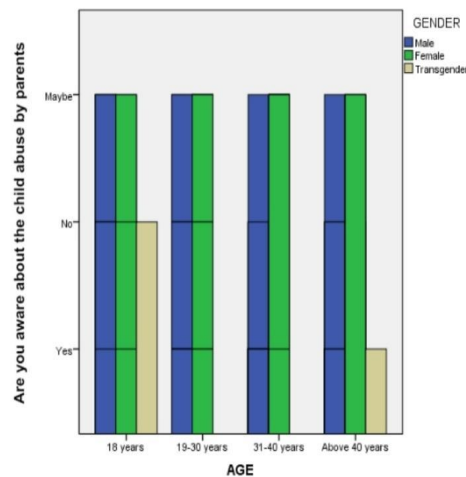
Figure-4



LEGEND

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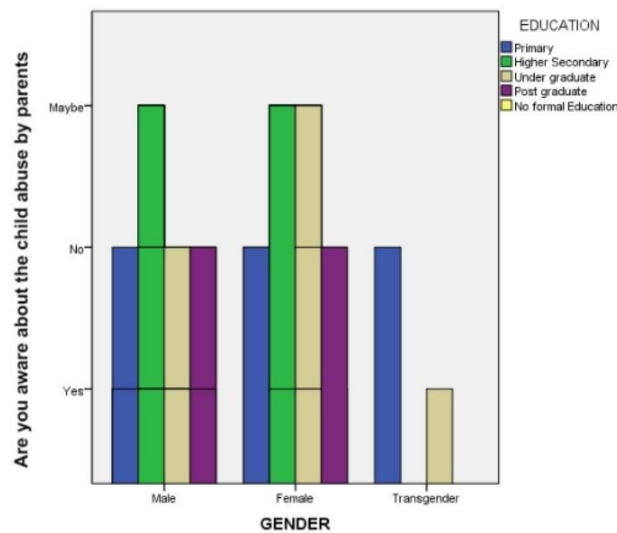
Figure-5



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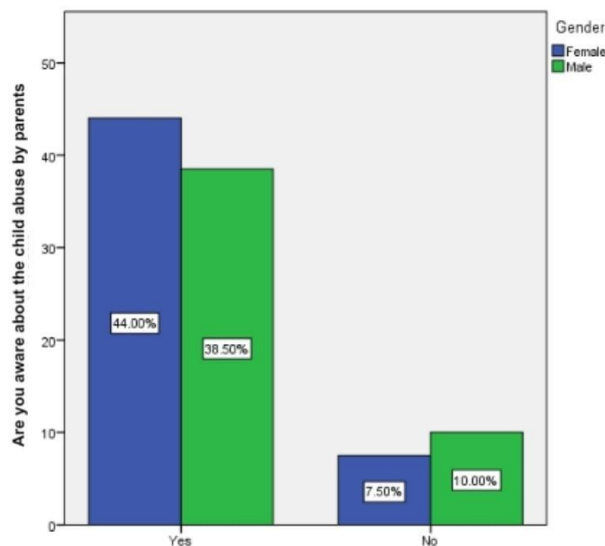
Figure-6



Legend:

It represents the educational qualification and gender distribution of a sample population and awareness about the maltreatment by parents towards children

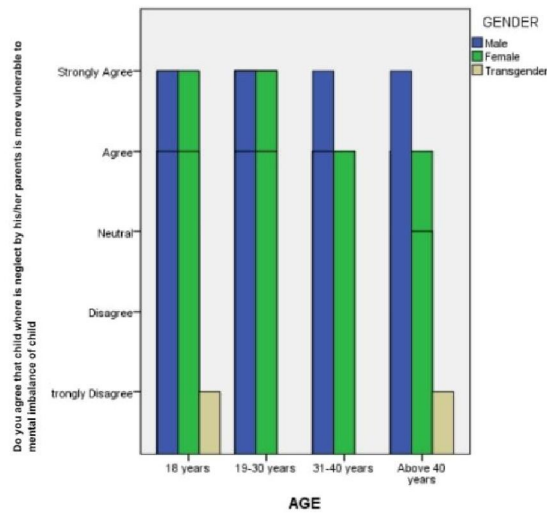
Figure-7



Legend:

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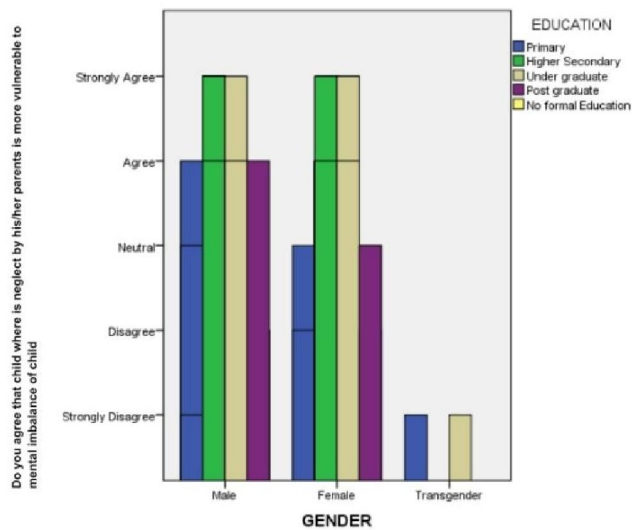
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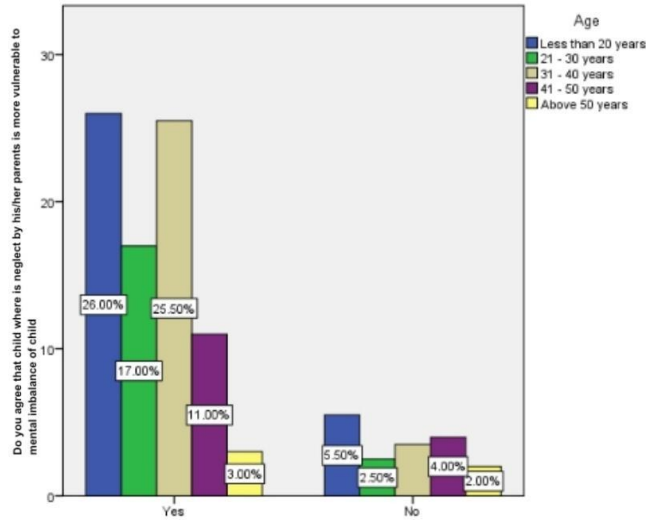
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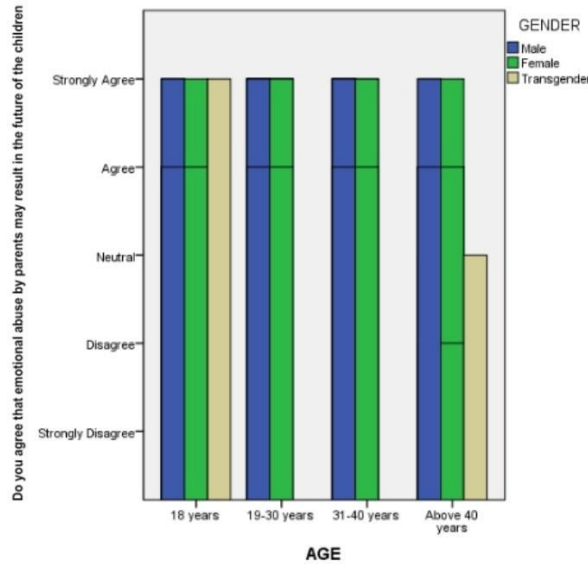
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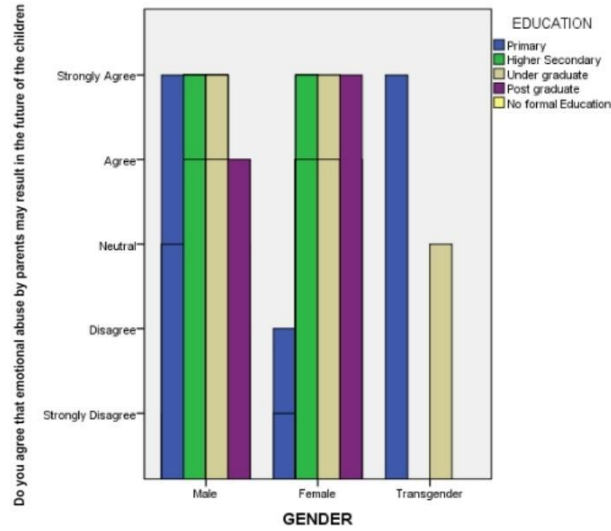
Figure-11



Legend:

It represents the gender and age distribution of a sample population and awareness about the emotional abuse by parents may result in the future of the child

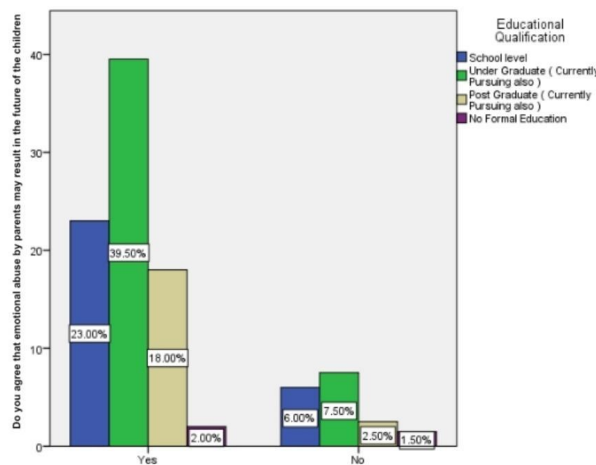
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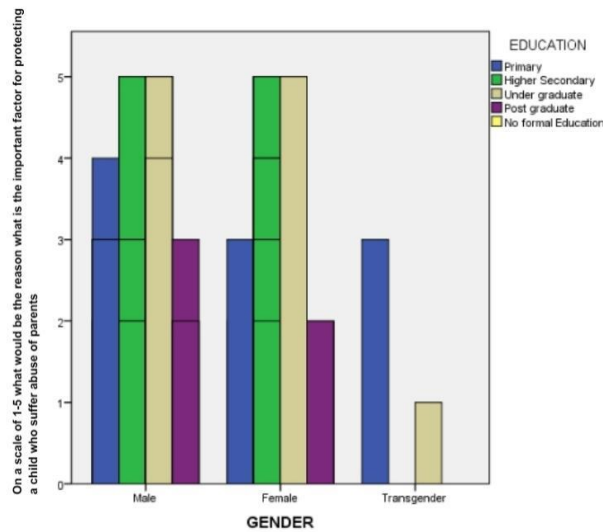
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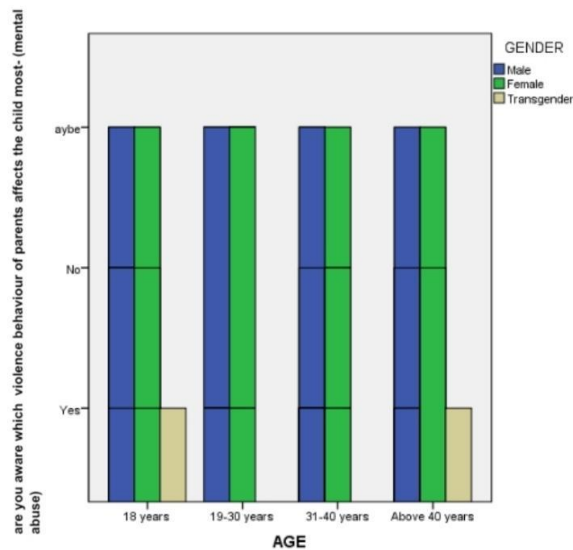
Figure-14



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It represents the gender and educational qualification distribution of a sample population and awareness about what is the main factor of o save the child abuse by parents

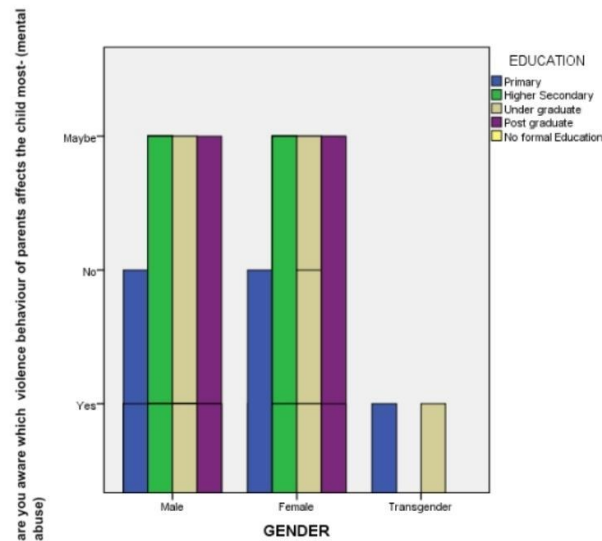
Figure-15



Legend:

It represents the gender and age distribution of a sample population and awareness about mental abuse behaviour of the parents affects the child in most possible way

Figure-16



Legend:

It represents the gender and age distribution of a sample population and awareness about mental abuse behaviour of the parents affects the child in most possible way

V. RESULT

Shows the gender of the sample population and their opinion on maltreatment of children by parents Shows the age distribution of the sample population and their opinion on maltreatment of children by parents and it effect on their academic performance Shows the occupation distribution of sample population and their opinion on maltreatment of children by parents and it effect on their academic performance Shows the place of the sample population and their opinion on maltreatment of children by parents Shows the place of the sample population and their opinion on maltreatment of children by parents It represents the gender and age distribution of a sample population and awareness about mental abuse behaviour of the parents affects the child in most possible way It represents the gender distribution of a sample population and awareness about the statement child Hawking is mostly held for money in that the most agreeable is given by male It represents the gender and age distribution of a sample population and awareness about mental abuse behaviour of the parents affects the child in most possible way It represents the gender and educational qualification distribution of a sample population and awareness about what is the main factor of o save the child abuse by parents It represents the gender and educational qualification distribution of a sample population and awareness about the emotional abuse by parents may result in the future of the child

VI. DISCUSSION

Considering the devastating repercussions of child maltreatment, it is of paramount importance for professionals who work with young children to be familiar with some of the recommended strategies that can be undertaken to address the impact of child-maltreatment on young children (Altafim & Linhares, 2016; Ridings, Beasley, & Silovsky, 2017; Usakli, 2012). The recommendations provided here focus on the collaboration between school counselors and teachers by virtue of the school counselors' expertise in addressing mental health concerns and the teachers' significant time spent with children. First, recognizing and reporting cases of maltreatment is important to prevent it from recurring. School counselors and teachers who work directly with the students should be actively involved in working with responsible agencies to prevent maltreatment from ever occurring. There should be clear protocols to enable school counselors and teachers to identify and address cases of maltreatment. The first step is to ensure that they are adequately trained to recognize and identify signs of maltreatment.

VII. LIMITATION

Existing research indicates that school counselors and teachers are underprepared in identifying signs of child maltreatment. For example, Kenny (2004) found teachers to be unaware of the signs and symptoms of maltreatment as well as reporting procedures. Thus, there is a need to provide ongoing training in schools so that educators become equipped with the conceptual knowledge needed in the identification of child maltreatment. We recommend that schools utilize trained experts to facilitate in-service training to school counselors and teachers regarding the signs of child maltreatment. Experts could include professionals from child advocacy centers and other child welfare agencies.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Moreover, it is imperative that the training emphasize the importance of acknowledging personal biases and assumptions so that school counselors and teachers do not make any biased or unwarranted reports. As noted earlier, child maltreatment is not limited to one demographic variable but consists of multiple variables and factors (Usakli, 2012). It is also important for school counselor and teacher training programs to develop and offer courses that prepare future counselors and teachers on the protocols that must be followed when reporting cases of maltreatment. Well prepared educators in the schools can be of great help to maltreated children and their families.

IX. CONCLUSION

It is apparent that child maltreatment in all its forms is associated with a variety of negative consequences to student well-being including, cognitive, educational, and psychological development (Crozier & Barth, 2005; Foster, et al. 2017; Usakli, 2012). Thus, more attention must be given to children who are victims of maltreatment. It is necessary for school counselors and educators to be proactive by adopting strategies to mitigate the impact of child maltreatment. More research related to the differing needs of children who are maltreated would be beneficial. This research may help in developing effective treatment plans for these students. Finally, there is need to research the impact of child maltreatment by type and severity to better understand the long-term impacts. In addition to providing training to school counselors and teachers, it is essential for schools to have clear reporting policies regarding cases of child maltreatment. In some cases, confusion may arise concerning who is supposed to make the reports when there is a possible case of maltreatment. For example, some school administrators may expect school counselors to report suspected cases to them before contacting law enforcement of CPS (Kenny, 2004). Thus, schools should generate clear guidelines regarding the reporting of cases of maltreatment and they should be made available to responsible personnel. We recommend that school counselors and teachers be involved in the development of such guidelines to give them influence regarding this procedure.

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