
NEWSLETTER

Intergenerational Transmission of Violence – The Influence of Parental Abuse on Child Bullying Perpetration: An Analysis Based on the Latent Growth Model

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SCHOOL bullying has been a concerning issue in many countries around the world. Bullying victimization can pose severe damage to the physical and mental health of primary and secondary school students or may even cause them psychological disorders and anti-social behaviors in adulthood. The examination of the regularities and factors related to bullying behavior of primary school students is conducive to the prevention and mitigation of the incidence of their bullying perpetration after they grow into adolescents. This study seeks to investigate the longitudinal effects of parental physical and psychological abuse on child bullying perpetration in the Chinese context as well as the heterogeneity of these effects.

Research Findings:

- Parental physical and psychological abuse has the potential to increase the child's bullying behaviors, including physical, verbal, and relational bullying. The negative effect of parental psychological abuse can be delayed and become increasingly pronounced over time. Meanwhile, there is no significant gender difference in the effect of parental physical and psychological abuse on child bullying perpetration, indicating the universality of its harm among children of both sexes.
- The incidence of physical, verbal, and relational bullying shows a declining tendency in primary school students as their grades advance, as the child gradually realizes the immorality and harm of bullying behavior, and in the meantime, moral education and anti-bullying education contribute to reducing child bullying perpetration and victimization. Prior research suggests that physical bullying behavior progressively diminishes to zero as the child gets older, and that relational bullying behavior tends to increase in children in early adolescence, whereas this study finds that both physical and relational bullying perpetration decline with the growth of the child's age.

- The initial level of bullying perpetration is significantly higher among boys than girls, albeit there is no gender difference in the growth rate between the three types of bullying behaviors. Parental physical and psychological maltreatment compromise the school's effort to reduce the incidents of the three types of bullying among pupils. The study emphasizes that parents should actively engage in training on home education to improve their relationships with children and provide a healthy growth environment for them.

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