

Does Child Maltreatment Connote Wicked in Adulthood? A Study among Delinquents in Ahwaz Penitentiaries

Abdolrahim Asadollahi^{1*}, Mahmud Baratvand² and Ali-Hosein Hoseinzadeh³

¹*Faculty of Human Ecology, University of Putra Malaysia, 43400, UPM St., Serdang City, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia*

Telephone: 006017 300 4435 - Email: assadollahi.ashkan@gmail.com

²*Faculty of Education, University of Putra Malaysia, 43400, UPM St., Serdang City, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia*

Telephone: 006017 288 4916; Email: m.baratvand1965@gmail.com

³*Sociology Department, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences, Shahid Chamran University of Ahwaz, Golistan Ave., Ahwaz City, Khuzistan Province, Iran*
Telephone: 0098 916 111 2722 – E-mail: alihos81@scu.ac.ir

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ABSTRACTS Child abuse refers to any kind of trauma, trafficking, physical, psychic, and sexual abuse. This study takes into account the relationship between child abuse by parents and the wicked of those children in adulthood. Wicked behaviour is reported to be the second criminal pattern among juvenile delinquents in Khuzistan (18%), following theft. Studies have alluded to multi-faceted variables relating to child abuse. However, child mistreatment is a major factor resulting in delinquency in adulthood among the abused children. The sample of the study is 86 inmates of wicked behaviour in Ahwaz penitentiaries, arrested in 2009. The instrument of child abuse could be categorised into four, as formulated in the literature, that is beating and physical abuse, psychic abuse, sexual harassment, and neglect with internal validity as $\alpha=0.82$. Findings indicate a significant relationship with age, literacy, family members and crime intensity. Majority of the prisoners were abused by parents, especially by the father and male family members. The child abuse ranges from emotional, social, psychic, sexual and physical abuse as well as neglect. The study recommends the formation of a social network system with powerful judiciary authority for prevention of child abuse, and creating awareness of child abuse among students.

INTRODUCTION

Crimes in society spread rapidly, hence the need for prevention measures. The aim of this paper is to determine the structure of wicked behaviour and its relationship with patterns of child abuse during childhood of delinquents. This would assist in preventing child abuse, which disrupt community security, and social activities. Child abuse could lead to psychopathological issues in children in the later ages (Harper et al. 2007; Draper et al. 2008).

According to Child-Help, a non-profit organization “14 percent of all men in prison in the USA were abused as children, 36 per cent of all women in prison were abused as children, also children who experience child abuse and neglect are 59 per cent more likely to be arrested as a juvenile, 28 per cent more likely to be arrested as an adult, and 30 per cent more likely to commit violent crime” (Child-Help 2011).

The Child-Help Report (2011) endorses the

findings of the national report of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 2008 on child maltreatment in family (US-SHHS 2008).

Further, Janet Currie and Erdal Teki (2006) emphasize the correlation between maltreatment and criminal behaviour of children as they state that: “... the apparent negative effects of maltreatment on children’s propensity to engage in crime are real and not simply artefacts of other features of dysfunctional families. [Also] ... maltreated approximately doubles the probability of engaging in many types of crime and that the effects are worst for children from low SES backgrounds, [also] boys are at a greater risk for increases in criminal propensities than girls” (Currie and Teki 2006).

The research tries to detect the correlation between child abuse of child offenders and the people’s aggression and wicked behaviour. The latter may be the result of attention seeking education managers and family on one side and judiciary-penal institutions on the other side. Child abuse in families and aggression in society have two criminal structures in Khuzistan province in

^{*}Corresponding author:
Abdolrahim Asadollahi

the southwest of Iran. The community of this study is completely wicked offenders of *Ahwaz* County Penitentiaries, arrested in 2009. Security issues deprive researchers of nominal statistics and, they are able only to use (limit their studies to) percentile statistics.

The Objective

In comparison with other crimes in *Khuzistan* /Iran, aggressive crimes and their growth are considered a social problem. *Khuzistan* prisoners account for 27% of those who commit this crime. Wicked behaviour is the second criminal pattern among juvenile delinquents in *Khuzistan* (18%) following theft. (Statistical Reports of *Khuzistan* Prisons 2005)

The main hypothesis of this survey is to determine if there is a significant relationship between parental child abuse and children's wicked, parents' profession, literacy structure of the family, age, and gender of the delinquents.

Background

Child abuse by family members could be categorised into psychological, familial, personal, and environmental factors (Maas et al. 2008).

Psychological Factors of Child Abuse: The psychological factors range from irritability and high negative reaction of parents (Kemp 1998), depression with paedophilic representation (Purafkari 1997: 365) to child abuse records of parents and the abuser (Kauffman 1987 cited by Madani 2008). As Walfe (1999) stated, 30 per cent of child abuse cases are triggered by psychological factors. Low self-esteem and weak interpersonal-sexual relationship with the spouse and peer groups (Sanagu-Moharrer 2000) are the main reasons leading to mothers' abusing their children. According to Mellon Inventory (MCM-II), there is a high correlation between child abuse and personality scales. The usual symptoms of mothers' personality disorders are escapism from home and society, dependency, antisocial disorder, persecution, aggressive and compulsive disorder, masochistic and schizoid, and paranoid personality (Sanagu-Moharrer 2000).

Main Familial Factors of Child Abuse: Most child abuse cases occur in families where the parents are young and unskilful and have highly stressful jobs (Berenson and Anderson 2006). As

Asadollahi (2005) stated, the age factor has a significant correlation with child abuse. Parental child abuse greatly varies depending on the parents' age (Asadollahi 1995, 2005; Qasemzadeh 2005).

Low level of literacy in parents also has a highly significant relationship with the increase in child abuse (Asadollahi 1995; Safavid 1995; Rahimi-Movaqqar 1996; Rashidifar 1997 and Bakhshallian 1998). Further, the type of job has also a positive and significant relationship with child abuse, especially manual jobs such as agriculture, peasantry, and labourers (Mohammedkhani 1999; Hosseini-Sadeh 2001; Razzaqi 2001; Maddani 2004:123; Qasemzadeh 2005). The other members of the family also show similar co- relationship (Chalk et al. 2010; Safavid 1995; Dolatmand 1996; Rahimi-Movaqqar 1996; Bakhshallian 1998; Namdari 1998). Structural issues in a family, such as divorce and a history of psychic disorders are the other causal factors of child abuse (Anonymous 1999; English et al. 2010).

The criminal records of parents, especially addiction, are among the main familial factors of child abuse as confirmed in the surveys by Asadollahi (1995), Leonard (1998), Namdari (1998), and cited by Mohammed-Khani (1999), Baqeri-Yazdi (2000), Baratvand (2001), Madani (2008), Wang and Holton (2010). According to Janqoli (2004: 136), 14 per cent of the children escape from home due to torture by their parents and other members of the family. Of these children, 33 per cent would later grow into aggressive and wicked people (Saleh 2009: 156). Dismorphic families, such as those with single parenthood structure, who isolate themselves and are anti-social and have frequent internal conflicts also account for severe child abuse cases (Madani 2008: 147).

The sexuality of a new born baby is known to affect the attitude of the family towards the older children. In any case, a new child in the family could imply declining attention of the parents to the older ones (Maas et al. 2008; Mussen et al. 2008).

Personality and Environmental Factors: Personality and environmental factors range from death of any members of the family, poverty and economic problems, parents' personality, tolerance in terms of moral values, passive acceptance of child beating to environmental stressors and psychic strain from a new place or crowded and

criminal dwellings in the peripheral and marginal areas around the cities (Rashidifar 1997; Fakhraie 1998; Kazemipur 1998; Baratvand 2001; Asadollahi 2005; Harper et al. 2007; Draper et al. 2008; Madani 2008; Maas et al. 2008).

Impressions of Child Abuse: Not all reports of child abuse could culminate in criminal behaviour. Tabatabaie (2001) expressed that 55 percent of child abuse records (spatially by male members of family) in his community culminated in anti-social and abnormal personality and ADHD (Tabatabaie 2001 cited by Madani 2008).

Impressions of child abuse were studied from the psychic and physical aspects (Madani 2008). Disorders, body dimorphic, handicapped and malnourished, mental retardation, grey body, and bone fractures are the physical manifestations of child abuse (Nowruzi 1995; Rahimie-Mowaqqar 1996; Bolhari 1998; Cicchetti and Rogosch 2001). The severe physical aspect of child abuse is persecution resulting in a child's death. Unfortunately, 70 percent of Iranian child deaths reported to Iranian Forensic Medicine Bureau in 1995 are intentional and erroneous killings (Hushdar 1995).

Psychic states include a vast range of personality disorders such as aggression, compulsive-obsession, high anorexia-bulimia, pseudo suicide, and histrionic behaviours (Mohamed-Forud 2001). Other research have shown most distinguished reports of psychic states such as male phobia, depression, isolationism, sexual abuse, compulsive disorders, decrease of self-esteem, suicide and sleep disorders (Ibrahimie-Qawam 1995; Nowruzi 1995; Kaplan et al. 1998 cited by Puraftari 1998; Baratvand 2000; Mohammedkhani 2001; Tabatabaie 2001; Madani 2008).

Description of Concepts

Definition of Aggression: Aggression and wicked are structured in a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which implies the possibility of malfunction. Generally speaking, aggression is the quality of being quarrelsome and rude. Thus, an aggressive person is someone who is ready to attack. Aggression connotes any action involving rude behaviour. However it is reflected not just through rudeness (Sheikhavandi 2000: 104). Aaronson (2010) pointed out that aggression is an action with the intent of injuring and colliding (Aaronson 2010: 162 cited by Mohsenie-

Tabrizi 2009: 130). Aggression in society is generally embodied in riotous actions within a criminal structure.

Child Abuse: Child abuse covers any kind of trauma, trafficking, physical, psychic, or sexual abuse. It mainly involves the neglect of the children's basic needs by family members or anyone who has committed child abuse (Madani 2008: 20). This phenomenon has long existed in human history. Child abuse could be traced back to the offering of young females to *Babylonian* temples or the ancient Arabic culture of burying their daughters alive in the pre-Islamic period (*Ignorance Epoch*) (Bastanie-Parizi 2005). In Iran, some period of Iranian Islamic history seems to be marked with the establishment of brothels peculiar to young male prostitutes and little boys, which are known to have existed particularly during the Safavi Empire (Ravandi 1992: 360). In those days, structured scheme of child abuse was not based on sexual model. It was associated with neglect and beating. In this study, the construction of the child abuse questionnaire (CAQ) took into account these early records of child abuse.

Vehemence Degree of Wicked and Child Abuse

- a) *Imprisonment Time and Kind of Punishment:* Violators are sentenced by courts according to the severity of wicked. Based on the operational definition, there is a linear relationship between the period of imprisonment and vehemence of wicked.
- b) In CAQ (Child Abuse Questionnaire), the vehemence degree of child abuse increased with the growth of scale scores. The span of scores is within 20-100 degrees. Increasing scores of CAQ means the inmates have experienced severe maltreatment by their parent/s.

Theoretical Frame

Learned Wicked and Aggression- Leonard Berkowitz: Leonard Berkowitz deals with observational learning of aggressive behaviour in humans. In terms of aggressive behaviour, the learning aspect is more important than the instinct. There is a structured interaction between natural motivations and learned responses (Shokrkon 1990: 167). He concluded that aggression could

be controlled by reforming the learning structure. Children learn by observing the aggressive and rough behaviour of parents. Through such observations, children learn to react to their own frustrations and wishes with wicked and aggression. However, this does not totally explain wicked behaviour and aggression.

Social-observational Learning- Albert Bandura: Albert Bandura (1975) stated that learning will be enhanced by observing the behaviour of others. However, observational learning does not need to be immediately reinforced. This means that learning through observation does not occur if there is no reinforcement factor. The probability of learning will be more if behaviour and reinforcement receive the most acceptances (Seif 1994: 275). The parent's influence on their children during childhood is a powerful factor and, this will be constantly taking place as the child grows up and then treats its own child in a similar way, not devoid of certain degrees of neglect.

METHODOLOGY

Type of Research: This survey is a descriptive study, based on an explored method. The study uses questionnaire, interviews, evidence-based method, prisoners' dossiers and records of the social worker. All the data were obtained from the Bureau of Statistics in Khuzistan Prisons Organization.

Community of the Study and Sampling: Randomly, 86 prisoners with wicked behaviour were sampled, using Morgan's table for determining the sample size from a given population of Ahwaz penitentiaries (Krejcie and Morgan 1970). The community of these delinquents were 109 inmates, presented by the Bureau of Statistics (N=109).

Instrumentation: Child Abuse Questionnaire (CAQ) comprised 20 items in the Likert Scale. According to the expended scheme of child abuse (Madani 2008: 21), the 20 items in the CAQ were directed at objective evidences and collected under four main sub-items, for example, beating and physical abuse, psychic abuse, sexual harassment, and neglect.

According to Table 1, internal validity upon Cronbach's alpha are well adjusted to four basic items of CAQ. Items of CAQ are reliable ($\alpha = 0.82$).

Overall, the scores indicate that these con-

Table 1: Scores of wicked and CAQ in childhood

Imprisonment time	Wicked intensity	Child abuse records	Child abuse scores
Less one month	11.5	11.6	Less than 60(%46.6)
Between 1-3 month	40.5	13.3	Upper than 60(%53.4)
Between 4-6 month	34.3	21.7	
1 year	27.5	25.7	
2 years and above	1.6	27.7	
Total	****	100	****

cepts were moderately internally consistent. The study introduced a new definition for child abuse in the context of criminals and prisons.

RESULTS

In the Table 2, the CAQ scores and the range of wicked crime have declined.

Table 2: Percentile frequents of CAQ and wicked on the age of samples (percent)

Age (year)	Percentile frequents of CAQ	Percentile frequents of sentences
Less than 18	62*	15**
19-25	71	40
26-32	57	21
33-39	54	10
40-45	56	6
46 and above	61	8
Total	****	100

* This scores is between 20 -100

** Percentage of sentences per month

According to Table 1, only 46.6 % of the community suffered from parental and family child abuse with less than 60 CAQ scores. Of the prisoners, 53.4 per cent showed high intensity wicked, with more than 60 scores. According to the Table 3, the data illustrate percentile frequency of CAQ and the severity of wicked among *Khuzistan* prisoners. It appears that age increase covariates positively with reduction of wicked.

Other results point to gender as a main factor in child abuse. Female samples showed the least wicked (2 per cent) with 64 CAQ scores on average, whereas male samples showed high wicked crimes (98%), and 87 per cent parental molestation. Table 4 demonstrates the effect of

literacy as a moderator variable on the decrease of wicked crimes rents.

Table 3: Frequents of prisoners in conformity with literacy (percent)

Range of literacy	Average of CAQ scores	Severe of wicked frequent
Non or less literacy	74.6	63
guidance school	63.4	26
High school	52.7	9.5
Graduated and above	38.3	1.5
Total	****	100

Table 4: Frequents of CAQ's scores and wicked based on situation (percent)

Marital status for parents	Deceased or divorce		Parent's alive
	Father	mother	
CAQ's scores of parents	82	92	60
Percentile wicked in prisoners (%)	71	80	28

The absence or death of the father mostly affects the economic status of the family while that of the mother mainly affects the family entity (Asadollahi 2005).

In the Table 5, the results of this effect could be seen.

The variable literacy was the equilibrium that the bad affects of parental' child abuse and its prospective severity of wicked crime in delinquents were reduced. The results in table six confirm these statements.

The following hypotheses were briefly tested and the descriptive results are as below (see Table 7):

First Hypothesis: The hypothesis of significant relationship between child abuse in childhood and wicked crimes in adulthood by abused children was accepted with $r_p = 0.73$, $n=86$, $df=85$ and $\alpha=0.05$.

Second Hypothesis: The significance of the relationship between age and the severity of wicked behaviour among prisoners was accepted.

The highest rate of wicked crimes age was under 30 (76%).

Third Hypothesis: There was a positive and highly significant relationship between literacy and the severity of wicked among prisoners.

Fourth Hypothesis: There was a positive and highly significant relationship between literacy level of parents and their tendency of child abuse. More than 90 percent of wicked delinquents had parents with low level of literacy or illiterate with history of child abuse.

Fifth Hypothesis: There was a significant relationship between single parent families and child abuse. Of the prisoners, 80 percent were abused in childhood by their parents or other members of the family, with 92 CAQ scores on average. This could be due to remarriage of fathers in family. In addition, 71percent of the samples had divorced or widowed mothers with 68 CAQ scores.

DISCUSSION

The descriptive results in Table 1 show the coefficient relationship between the severity of wicked behaviour among the prisoners and their experience of parental child abuse. Similar finding was also mentioned in the studies by Chalk et al. (2010), Asadollahi (2005), Namdari (1999), Bahkshalian (1998), Mohammad-Khani (1999), Tabatabaie (2001) and Beqeri-Yazdi (2000). The results of CAQ were compared to wicked data with Pearson correlation until a significant relationship between them was confirmed in $\alpha=0.05$ and $df=85$. Accordingly, the first hypothesis was confirmed as true. In Table 2, the reduction of delinquency between the ages of 35-36 was noted (Sheikhavandy 2000). Certainly, gender differences are evident in wicked behaviour and reactive formation of child abuse in adulthood. Their observational behaviour was studied. Through the clinical interviews with male and female prisoners and reading of their dossiers, this difference was analysed. It was observed that the criminal style of male prisoners was marked with

Table 5: Frequents of CAQ's scores and wicked based on literacy of parents

Literacy of parents	Illiteracy or primary education		Secondary school		High school		Graduated	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
CAQ's scores of parents	85.5	78.5	85.9	71.	57.6	54.6	30	35.9
Percentile wicked in prisoners (%)	83	95	30.5	2	3	1.5	0.5	0.8

Table 6: Frequents of CAQ's scores and wickedness of delinquents upon literacy of parents

Literacy of parents	Illiteracy or primary education		Secondary school		High school		Graduated	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
CAQ's scores of parents	85.5	78.5	85.9	71.3	57.6	54.6	30	35.9
Percentile wickedness in prisoners (%)	83.4	95.3	30.5	2.1	3.6	1.5	0.5	0.8

Table 7: Correlation of main variables of the study by Pearson test; $r_p \geq 0.30$

Variables	CAQ	Single parenthood	Age of parents	Wickedness	Literacy	Parents' literacy	Age of prisoners
CAQ	1	0.68		0.73		0.57	
Single parenthood	0.68	1		0.46			
Age of parents			1				
Wickedness	0.73	0.46		1	0.62		0.71
Literacy	0.57			0.62	1	0.35	
Parents' literacy					0.35	1	
Age of prisoners				0.71			1

$n=86$, $df=85$ & $\alpha=0.05$

aggressive and rude behaviours, such as antisocial disorder while depression and Psychasthenia were the symptoms observed among female prisoners. More than half the prisoners (55%) had streaks of wicked behaviour as youths and generally young people are considered as being aggressive.

In Table 2, it could be seen that the average severity of child abuse is above the mediocre score (range of severity=20-100). This implies that most of the prisoners had experienced some kind of abuse by members of their family in their childhood. Recently, social problems such as persecution and family abuses have been rapidly increasing in Iran, particularly in *Khuzistan* province (Asadollahi 2005; Baratvand et al. 2005).

Many researchers (Palk and Smart 1976 cited by Garret 2003: 177) stated that there are fundamental behavioural differences between males and females manifested in different cultures. They believe that socio-biological factors strongly influence behavioural patterns. Proverbially and historically speaking, men are more apt at fighting and hunting in most cultures. Hence, in a biological sense, men are undoubtedly more equipped for aggression and wicked behaviour (Giddens 2010).

In "The men in the group," Tagir asserted that "all over the world, wars have been fought by men and other kinds of aggressive behaviours have also been masculine and manly" (Reed 1984: 143). Nevertheless, exact differences between male and female behaviours could be drawn by learning feminine and masculine soci-

al identities. From a different perspective, Marxists such as George Locás and Orthodox Marxists like Lenin believed that this arose due to division of social work and specialization of work in the history of human society (Arianpur 2009).

The most common forms of aggression observed in females are disturbing the order of trial sessions, causing riots and fighting in prison, and showing disrespect to the government employees (Fact Sheet of Khuzistan Prisons 2005). The range of wicked behaviours in males and society's tolerance of them differed in the case of female prisoners. Women were not expected to break themselves out of social problems such as wicked and aggression. As Reed stated (1984: 104), "they have learnt this style after the matriarchal period." Psychic effects of abuse in female childhood are less evident in the later stages of a woman's life, perhaps because:

1. Spatial attention of the family and society are focussed on the psychic and physical situation of girls;
2. Physical punishment is more common in the case of boys;
3. Woman stalking and persecution are concealed due to conservativeness that emanates from the historical cultural context;
4. Girls are trained about abuse position; and
5. Personal structures of a woman's reactions to child abuse are depression, Psychasthenia, and seclusion (Draper et al. 2008; Maas et al. 2008).

In Table 3, it is shown that 63 per cent of the

prisoners' aggression is among adults with little or no literacy. This indicates that literacy and education are the main variables affecting and adjusting behaviour and its dimensions (Rashidifar 1997; Asadollahi 2005; Baratvand 2005; Berenson and Anderson 2006; Harper et al. 2007). Quitting education is a more prevalent phenomenon in families with little or no literacy. In other words, parents in these families have a tendency towards aggressive and wicked behaviour. This aggressive style of familial structure might be reduced with a growth in training and literacy levels among members of such family (Asadollahi 2005; Wang and Holton 2010).

According to this table, it is clear that child abuse records have decreased with the increase in literacy levels. In Table 4, a high record of child abuse and an increase in wicked behaviour was reported in the structure of single parent families where the mother had died. The remarriage of the father, presence of stepmother, latitude and duality in the training of the child could all account for this increase. Such a situation could lead to child abuse or abandonment of the child into society (Baquerie-Yazdi 2000; Tabatabaie 2001; Grogan-Kaylor and Melanie 2003).

Familial climate affects behaviours such as aggression and child abuse. Haphazard and arbitrary families with continuous/constant disputes between parents affect child behaviour. Defective relationship and dysfunctional family neglect or lack of warm supervision, beating and physical aggression would all have a negative impact on the child. All these may culminate in anxiety, negative self-concept, low self-esteem, vengeance on others and society (Madani 2008: 147). Divorce, disconnection of parents, neglect, and non fulfilment of the child moral needs would lead the child to be attracted to and to be involved in the gangs and antisocial groups (Asadollahi 2005).

Table 5 shows that there is a significant relationship between child abuse and the parental level of literacy (Rahimi-Movagar 1996; Bakhshalian 1998; Namdari 1998; Maas et al. 2008; Madani 2008).

CONCLUSION

Overall, this survey studied the significant relationship between wicked crime and the pre-

vious records of child abuse among the prisoners in Khuzistan prisons in Iran. Of the total number of prisoners, 76 per cent were less than 30 years old and 98 per cent were males. Above half of the familial structures (60%) were single parent families and the literacy level of parents was secondary school (70% of prisoners' parents). There is a significant relationship between child abuse and wicked behaviour with the intermediating variables of the literacy level and age of parents as well as single parent structure of family (see Table 6). The maltreatment of children by parents who were poorly educated or illiterate and generally too young, was mostly manifested by physical abuse.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the local government of *Khuzistan* as well as the Republic of Iran give due consideration to the following proposals:

1. Establishment and development of social workers with judiciary authority for the prevention of child abuse and as support system for the children.
2. Development of child protection system for the children of divorced parents.
3. Systematic recording of child abuse reports by the related organizations.
4. Establishment of familial sessions among members of family on incidences of child abuse.
5. Education and training on child abuse situations in all schools with emphasis on self-defence measures.
6. Clear definition of child abuse and the legal judiciary implications and foster parent-child relationship, among especially the newly married couples who are going to be parents.
7. Establishment of spatial groups for the legitimacy system and family.

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