

**Psychological effects of physical and emotional abuse of
teachers to intermediate students in Kuwait**

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Abstract

Teachers' abusive behavior toward students can be based on various reasons that can be different in each premise. This is due to personality factors, internal issues, and the environment leading teachers towards abuse and violence. The aim of the current study was to find out the effects of teacher abuse on the mental health of intermediate students. The study has adopted a mixed methodology to reach outcomes. For both qualitative and quantitative approaches, the primary data is collected. The qualitative data is collected through interviews with teachers as a sample size of 103 teachers was selected to collect responses. The quantitative data collection was followed by the survey questionnaire, and a sample size of 167 participants (students) was selected. The simple random sampling strategy was applied for both types of primary data collection that is due to the flexibility, least discrimination, and unbiased nature of the sampling strategy. The results indicated that teacher abuse has a negative impact on mental health and that students face health issues, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. These can turn into long-term impacts on students' life and career. The teachers are aware of their misconduct in most of the institutions, but they are using this methodology due to lacking resources, inadequate funds, lacking training, awareness about the future aspects of abuse, underpaid teachers, and student behavior in the classroom. The teacher conduct can be managed by the management and policy development in the education institution.

Keywords: psychological effects, physical and emotional abuse, personal factors, internal problems.

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الآثار النفسية للإيذاء الجسدي والعاطفي للمعلمين على طلاب المرحلة المتوسطة
في دولة الكويت

ملخص:

يمكن أن يستند سلوك المعلمين المسيء تجاه الطلاب إلى أسباب مختلفة. ويرجع ذلك إلى عوامل الشخصية، والقضايا الداخلية، والبيئة التي تقود المعلمين للإساءة والعنف. هدفت الدراسة الى معرفة آثار سوء معاملة المدرسين على الصحة النفسية لطلاب المرحلة المتوسطة. اعتمدت الدراسة منهجية مختلطة للوصول إلى النتائج. المنهج النوعي والكمي، تم جمع البيانات الأولية، والبيانات النوعية من خلال مقابلات مع المعلمين حيث تم اختيار عينة من ١٠٣ معلم. أعقب جمع البيانات الكمية استبيان المسح، وتم اختيار حجم عينة من ١٦٧ طالبا. تم تطبيق إستراتيجية أخذ العينات العشوائية البسيطة لكلا النوعين من جمع البيانات الأولية التي تتصف المرونة، والطبيعة غير المنحازة لاستراتيجية أخذ العينات. أشارت النتائج إلى أن إساءة معاملة المعلمين لها تأثير سلبي على الصحة النفسية وأن الطلاب قد يواجهون مشكلات صحية، ونفسية مثل القلق والاكتئاب واضطراب ما بعد الصدمة والتي لها تأثير طويل المدى على حياة الطلاب وحياتهم المهنية. يدرك المعلمون سوء سلوكهم، لكنهم يستخدمون هذه المنهجية لأسباب عدة مثل نقص الموارد، ونقص التدريب، وقلة الوعي بالجوانب المستقبلية لسوء المعاملة، والرواتب المنخفضة. لذلك يمكن إدارة سلوك المعلم من قبل الإدارة وتطوير السياسات في المؤسسة التعليمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الآثار النفسية، الإيذاء الجسدي، الإيذاء العاطفي، عوامل الشخصية، المشاكل الداخلية.

INTRODUCTION

Education institutions are the fundamental sources of learning and seeking for students at any level. The learning environment is linked with effective teaching that is directly linked with the student's mental and relational behavior (Ali, et al., 2019). Mental health, education, and school safety are basic discussions of officials to be involved in the school policy. The violent event with students leads to change, which is a source of analyzing to implement such protocols that can help to reduce abuse at all education levels. The abuse by teachers toward students can be in the form of physical abuse and psychological abuse, followed by emotional abuse, sexual abuse, bullying, neglect, discrimination, and cyberbullying due to online interaction between students and teachers (Alomosh, et al., 2019).

The psychological abuse is further narrated by López García et al. (2022) as a form of abuse that is characterized by an individual exposing and subjecting other individuals that lead to psychological trauma like chronic depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Physical abuse is defined as the type of abuse that is based on the physical force that leads someone towards risk and injury. Physical abuse includes biting, punching, choking, beating, and shaking (Yang, et al., 2022). However, Parkes et al. (2022) asserted that physical abuse could happen in any relationship resulting in painful, severe, and sometimes visible consequences. The physiological effects of physical abuse can be anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other mental health problems. However, the mental abuse results in additional issues of hopelessness, helplessness, and worthlessness.

Toumi (2016) narrated the zero-tolerance policy by the minister for abuse and corporal punishment in education institutes. All forms of abuse and assaults were prohibited by the Kuwaiti ministers. The teachers, including Arab expatriates, were strongly discouraged from using abuse as an option to maintain discipline at schools (Toumi, 2016). Increasing use of smartphones and social media is empowering students to report abuse, and it further triggers the ministries to take legal action against abuse. The current research is going to assess the physiological effect of both mental and physical abuse among intermediate students.

Research Questions

The research questions for the current study are:

What forms of physical and emotional abuse take place in the school involving intermediate-level students?

What are the effects of physical and emotional abuse by the teacher on the psychological status of intermediate-level students?

What is the level of teachers' awareness of the abusive nature of their maltreatment towards the students?

Aim and Objectives

Aim

The current study aimed to find out the effects of teacher abuse on the mental health of intermediate students.

Specific Objectives

The current research objectives are:

- I. To identify the forms of physical and emotional abuse that take place in the school involving intermediate-level students
- II. To find out the effects of physical and emotional abuse by the teacher on the psychological status of the intermediate-level students
- III. To inquire if the teachers are aware of the abusive nature of their maltreatment of the students

Framework and Hypothesis

Hypothesis

- H1:** Both physical and emotional abuse from teachers can have negative consequences on the physical and mental health, academic performance, and social development of intermediate students
- H2:** The psychological and behavioral effects of abuse can manifest in various ways, such as changes in behavior, emotions, and physical appearance, as well as reluctance to attend a school or interact with certain adults.
- H3:** Teachers who engage in abusive behavior towards students may deny their actions and justify their behavior through various means, including drawing on past experiences of abuse and victim-blaming.

Conceptual Framework

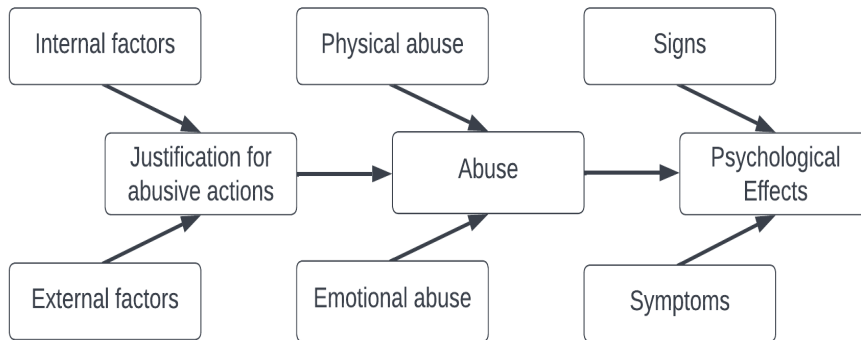


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is a theoretical framework that identifies the key concepts, variables, relationships, and assumptions in a study. The main purpose of the conceptual framework is to organize the structure of the research question, research hypotheses, and methodology. For the current study, interviews and questionnaires investigate the rationale of teachers in conducting abusive actions towards their students, which is suspected to either be internal (history of physical and emotional abuse by parents or teachers) or external (delinquent activities by the students). These reasons are hypothesized to be the reason for the conduct of abuse, which will be further probed into their specific actions of physical or emotional abuse. The psychological effects of these different forms of abuse will be further qualified as signs as observed by their teachers or classmates (catatonia, changes in behavior, and signs of aggression) or symptoms (reluctance to go to school, fear of teachers or other adults, and unusual nervousness). Physical and emotional abuse from the teacher is the dependent variable that has a further relationship with physical injuries, trauma, depression, anxiety, PTSD in children, academic performance, catatonia, aggression, melancholy, fear of authority figures, missing education, and avoiding results.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study conducted by Gün et al. (2022) described that abuse is defined as the harmful behavior and mistreatment of a person towards another individual or group of people. The abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, financial, neglect, discrimination, and physical (any type of hand and feet contact). Psychological abuse is linked to various situations, including power imbalance, bullying, abusive relationship, abuse at the workplace, a culture, or abuse by teachers in schools (Pur, et al., 2016). Moreover, phy

siological abuse is also defined as any type of abuse that is not physical but emotional. Such abuse can be verbal abuse, subtle tactics, criticism, manipulation, intimidation, and refusal from over please as it can have various forms of actions in physiological abuse.

Five different types of abuse and violence are elaborated by Sezer (2021) that are emerging because of psychological, socioeconomic, and cultural reasons. First and foremost is the physical violence that is an outcome of the behavior like hitting with a stick, push-inlaying, shaking, slapping, tugging, burning with water, kicking, and wounding through a knife (Sezer, 2021). The second type of abuse is psychological-emotional abuse which is based on all types of behaviors that are felt in the form of oppression, hurting, threatening, upsetting, shaking, and negatively affecting (Ureña, et al., 2015). Another verbal violence determined by Ali et al. (2019) is behavior and attitude like an insult, constant criticism, nicknaming, mockery, embarrassment, and humiliation of an individual in front of others. However, it can be sexual violence that can be forced marriage, rape, forcing, blackmailing and verbal abuse (Ba-Saddik & Hattab, 2012). Last but not least is the economic abuse or violence that is the behavior of hindering the work of an individual, restrictions, forced labor, prevent to advance in education or job, ranking away freedom, and giving fewer grades (students) or money (employees) (Yang, et al., 2022). These forms can happen at the same time or maybe one type or two in an institute.

The study conducted by Miller et al. (2020) elaborated that abusive behavior may include denying, aggressing, and minimizing. However,

blaming, name-calling, and shaming are also a few primary identifiers of verbal abuse that can lead to leaving a negative impact on the victim physiologically (Farmer, 2020). The self-worth of students and well-being is affected due to verbal abuse as it can be a traumatic part of students' life leading to induce negative thoughts. Teacher abuse of students is a cruel form of abuse as well as destructive, which not only spoil education but also impacts future career (Berber Çelik & Odacı, 2020). A higher level of emotional child abuse was found in the United States, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and Cyprus (Ba-Saddik & Hattab, 2012).

The internal factors that can contribute to abusive teacher actions are personality traits like anger management issues, narcissism, lacking empathy, and requirement for control, which can increase the abusive behavior of a teacher toward students (Burn, 2019). Emotional burnout is another reason why teachers become frustrated, prone to abusive behavior, and irritable. Moreover, another internal factor that induces abusive behavior among teachers is lacking adequate training in classroom management, and dealing with the student having difficult behavior can have a negative impact on their control (Turanovic & Siennick, 2022). Personal stressors are also internal factors like teachers dealing with personal stressors like relationship issues and health issues that usually lash out on students. Furthermore, prior abuse is another primary internal factor indicating victims of abuse turn towards such abusers (Sezer, 2021).

As per Plummer & Cossins (2018), factors contributing to the abusive behavior of teachers towards students are not justifiable. This makes any form of abuse from teachers towards students unacceptable and is to be reported shortly. The external factors that can trigger teachers to perform abusive acts are widespread, like culture (Nearchou, 2018). The school or university culture based on such an environment where aggressive behavior is encouraged and tolerated has more chances of abuse toward students (Yang, et al., 2022). It develops a continuous behavior among teachers to perform aggressive actions to control the students or to overwhelm them easily. Inadequate funds, underpaid teachers, and lacking necessary classroom resources increase frustration in the classroom (Sezer, 2021). This led to an increase in the frustration

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of the support staff, and their behavior toward students also changed. Lacking administrative support and concerns not being understood seriously by the senior staff increases frustration in teacher behavior. This happens due to dissatisfaction from the institution (Ali, et al., 2019). One of the fundamental sources of abusive teacher behavior is triggered by the student behavior in the classroom, or the teacher might lack the skills to handle the class and manage student behavior effectively. As per Plummer & Cossins (2018), personal biases are an external factor in educational institutes that is a reason for abusive teacher behavior, and it includes race, gender, or sexuality leading to the abusive behavior of teachers.

The findings by Legg (2023) revealed the long-term and short-term impacts of emotional abuse on students. Both physical and mental health issues can be triggered by emotional abuse. The signs of emotional abuse among students are yelling, isolation from family and friends, trying to control life activities, invading privacy, punishing others, and making subtle threats in thoughts (Berber Çelik & Odacı, 2020). The abuse can come in the form of denial at first instance. The feelings for the short term can be confusion, hopelessness, shame, and fear. The emotional toll can lead to moodiness, racing heartbeats, muscle tension, various aches and pains, and nightmares (Ba-Saddik & Hattab, 2012). These issues can prevail for a short time. However, the issues can also be prolonged for the long term, including chronic pain, anxiety, insomnia, guilt, loneliness, and social withdrawal (Turanovic & Siennick, 2022). However, emotional abuse also leads to fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome.

Teacher behavior can be associated with previous incidents or events of teacher disrespect by the students. As the American Psychology Association (2022) has mentioned, of 3,237 teachers, almost 33% have faced threats and violence (harassment, abuse, and cyberbullying) from students, guardians, parents, administration, and even students once, and 14% of the teachers have faced physical violence by teachers. This can be related to the violent behavior of teachers with students in the future. The violent behavior of the teachers can be in

response to lacking discipline, and they yell only due to the misbehavior of the students that they cannot control easily. This indicates that the abuse from teachers in the form of general screaming and yelling is linked with the classroom management and presence of such students that are difficult to manage without screaming.

The emotional changes of students are found after bearing the abuse in the classroom. It tends toward a disturbed mind that is not able to focus effectively. However, a gap is assessed in the current literature that s the specific age groups of the students, like the teens, might have a different effect of the abuse by teachers that is due to the age and the responsibility they have in the class. The current study is aligned to fulfill the gap related to age. The teens are selected as the main population to collect data for reaching the outcomes of the psychological impact of physical and mental abuse by teachers toward intermediate students.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design introduces the entire research plan to conduct a study as it guides the data collection and data analysis based on the components selected (Sileyew, 2019). The current research design is based on the identification of the problem, developing research questions and hypotheses, choosing suitable methods of data collection, and finding the sampling techniques and sample size (Grønmo, 2019).

Research Approach

The research approach is an overall plan or strategy guiding the researcher to conduct a study, as it can be qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methodology (Grønmo, 2019). A mixed method is followed in the current study mixed methodology which is based on qualitative and quantitative data. The main reason for selecting the mixed methodology is to increase flexibility and to manage the generalizability of the study (Reyad, et al., 2020).

Quantitative Research

The quantitative approach is based on collecting and analyzing statistical analysis-based data (Lê & Schmid, 2022). Such research is used for testing hypotheses and generalizing research findings. The

survey was used as the main method to collect data, and it was followed by a questionnaire tool to collect data from the target market. A student survey was collected from intermediate students in the targeted population to find the three main objectives [Appendix II].

- First of all, the physical and emotional abuse towards intermediate students in the targeted population.
- Secondly, the mental effects of emotional and physical abuse manifested by the individual participating in the survey were accessed to observe psychological symptoms of abuse.
- Lastly, the mental effects of physical and emotional abuse were assessed by the schoolmates of the individuals (victims of abuse) to find the psychological abuse signs.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research involves non-numerical data collection and analysis in the form of words and observations (Lê & Schmid, 2022). For example, exploring complex phenomena becomes easier by using a qualitative approach. Interviews were sought to collect non-numerical data and to reduce generalization during analysis. The interview participants were teachers from the intermediate schools of Kuwait. The interview questionnaire was a structured interview developed to find out the responses about three main objectives that were part of the study [Appendix II].

- First of all, the teacher's awareness regarding their own abusive actions assessed in the form of maltreatment towards students was observed to assess whether they were aware of their own actions and the nature of activities.
- Secondly, the concrete actions implemented by the teachers to manage discipline and their abusive nature were observed. For example, verbal cues, non-accidental physical injuries afflicted to them, shaming, rejection, isolation, and humiliation for managing discipline were assessed.
- Lastly, the mental effect of the emotional and physical abuse by teachers was observed by schoolmates of the abuse victims. The main intention was to find psychological signs of abuse.

In the mixed methodology approach, based, false, and indirect responses were avoided from teacher respondents by carefully using "abusive" and "abuse" words. However, the teachers may not want to admit such activities to students.

Population

A population is an entire group that is going to be studied to draw a conclusion about research work. The population for the current study was Kuwait institutions where intermediate students are studying. The reason for selecting the population is to assess the psychological effects of physical and emotional abuse of teachers to intermediate students.

Sampling

A sample is a subset selected from the population to collect data using various sampling strategies (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2017). The current research is based on a mixed approach, and these two types of sampling are managed for interviews and questionnaires. A simple random sampling strategy was applied to conduct data from clients. The reason to select simple random sampling is its least bias and equal chances for everyone to be a participant in the study. It is a source to control discrimination. A sample size of 103 participants was selected to collect data for interviews, and a sample of 167 participants was selected to collect the survey questionnaire-based data. The participants for both types of data were victims, students (classmates of victims), and teachers.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was followed on the basis of the type of data collected for each category. For the quantitative data collection, analysis was based on statistical analysis using Excel, as the overall responses gained were 167 participants. For the qualitative data, thematic analysis was followed for the data analysis, and these themes were generated on the basis of research objectives.

Ethical Considerations

The study was based on primary data collection, and there was a need to accomplish the data collection from a huge number of participants directly in the form of survey questionnaires and interviews. The first and foremost consideration was consent from the participants

about their willingness to participate in the study. The data collection premises were managed to reduce the harm to participants while responding to the interview. Furthermore, the participants were clarified about the data collection and its purpose for academics only. Privacy, confidentiality, anonymity, and respect were the main considerations followed in the study.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Results

The results conducted for the current study are based on both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The results are divided into two main parts based on the survey questionnaire and interviews.

4.1.1 Quantitative Results

4.1.1.1 Demographic Information

Age: The data collected from 167 participants indicated the highest percentage among teens in the intermediate school level in Kuwait schools, and they were falling 11 to 18 years mostly.

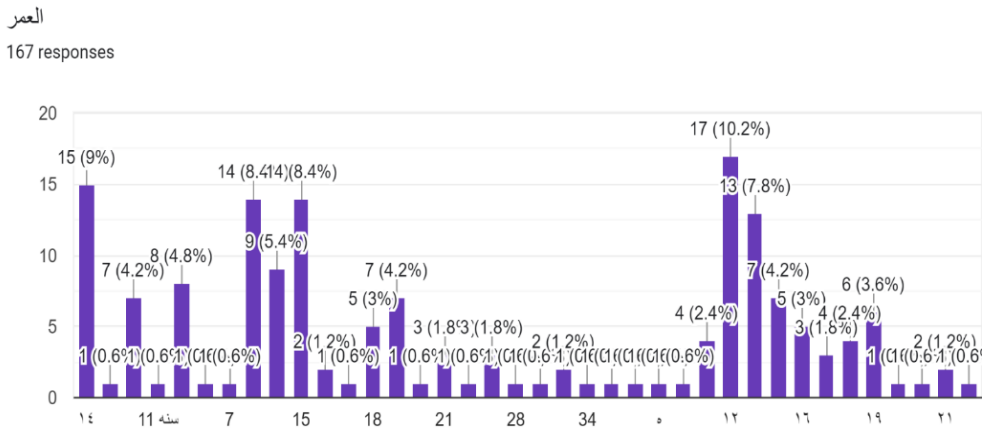


Figure 1: The age demographics of the participants

Education Level

The education level presented 29.3% of the participants as were in the 9th standard, 15.6% were from the 8th standard, and 18% were from

the 7th standard. Moreover, 19.2% were from the 6th standard. Other participants were from the 11th class, and a small number were from different standards.

المرحلة الدراسية
167 responses

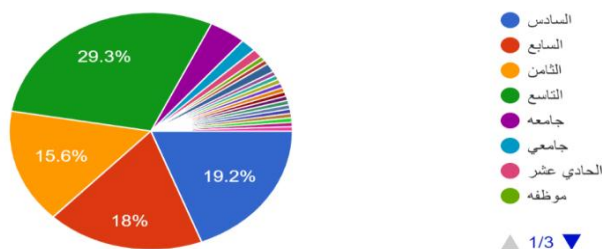


Figure 2: Education level of participants

4.1.1.2 Questions Results

i. Have you been subjected to any form of physical abuse by your teachers?

The question was responded to by 15% of the students by saying they had been subjected to physical abuse by teachers, but 85% refused about any kind of physical abuse by teachers. This indicates that incidences of abuse are happening but not to a greater extent in intermediate-level schools in Kuwait.

هل تعرضت لأي شكل من أشكال الإيذاء الجسدي من قبل المعلمين لك؟
167 responses

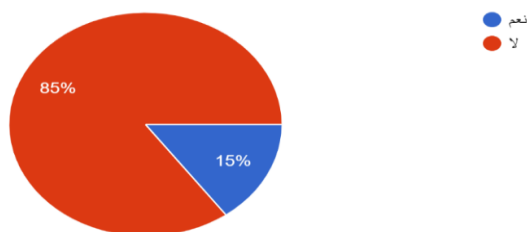


Figure 3: Have you been subjected to any form of physical abuse by your teachers?

ii. Have you noticed any form of physical abuse by teachers to their students at school?

The question asked about any kind of abuse noticed by the participants showed 18.6% responded yes and 81.4% responded "no," which shows they have not observed any kind of physical abuse.

هل لاحظت أي شكل من أشكال الإيذاء الجسدي من قبل المعلمين لطلابهم في المدرسة؟
167 responses

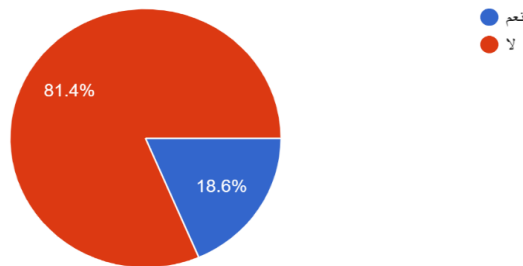


Figure 4: Have you noticed any form of physical abuse by teachers to their students at school?

iii. If yes (to either of the two questions above), what forms of physical abuse have you experienced or witnessed before?

When the question was asked about the type of physical abuse experienced or witnessed by participants, then, 167 responses were conducted with different types of responses. A few respondents were not able to tell the type of abuse they observed, but other responded the physical abuse they experienced and observed were pushing, hurtful words, threats, hitting the head with fingers, ruler multiplication, violent beating, slap, shoulder patting bullying, contempt, beating with a ruler made of iron or wood, shouting, threatening, and strike. Further responses were about swearing, ear pulling, beating, slapping on the face, ejaculation utterance, hitting the shoulder, and high volume.

iv. Have you been subjected to psychological abuse by your teachers?

The response was showing a huge number of respondents (39.5%) faced psychological abuse by teachers. However, almost 60.5% were not subjected to any psychological abuse by teachers. This indicates more

population in the intermediate is learning in a safe environment, but still, a huge number of students are subjected to abuse by teachers.

1. هل تعرضت لأي شكل من أشكال الإساءة النفسية من قبل المعلمين لك؟

167 responses

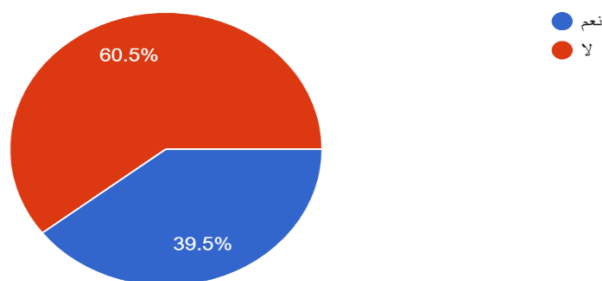


Figure 5: Have you been subjected to psychological abuse by your teachers?

v. **Have you noticed any form of psychological abuse by teachers to their students at school?**

The response shows showing more students are being observed in Kuwait with psychological abuse rather than physical abuse. As per Figure 6, 41.3% of participants have noticed physical abuse by teachers towards students, and 58.7% denied any kind of psychological abuse noticed in schools.

2. هل لاحظت أي شكل من أشكال الإساءة النفسية من قبل المعلمين لطلابهم في المدرسة؟

167 responses

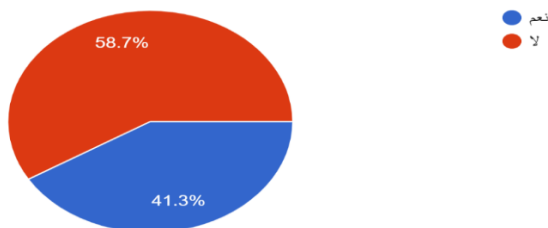


Figure 6: Have you noticed any form of psychological abuse by teachers to their students at school?

vi. If the answer is yes to any of the two questions above, what forms of psychological abuse have you been exposed to or witnessed before?

The responses indicated 27.5% of the respondents were exposed to and witnessed threats by teachers, and 18.6 were facing humiliation by teachers. Abdication was observed by 4.8% of respondents, isolation by 5.4%, pointing a student by 10.2%, forceful actions by 10.2%, coldness or rejection by 11.4%, aggression and hostility by 10.8%, insulting and degrading by 15%, ignoring 0.6%, and mockery 0.6%. Further responses were bullying, inclination towards a few students, etc., and these were 0.6% among 167 responses (Figure 7). However, respondents also denied the experience they faced or that they were not going to share. The results are supported by Miller et al. (2020) and (Farmer, 2020) by indicating the primary identifiers of the psychological abuse, including name-calling, blaming, aggression, and shaming that lead to leaving a negative impact victim's overall presentation.

3. إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم (لأي من السؤالين أعلاه) ، فما أشكال الإساءة النفسية التي تعرضت لها أو شاهدتها من قبل؟
167 responses

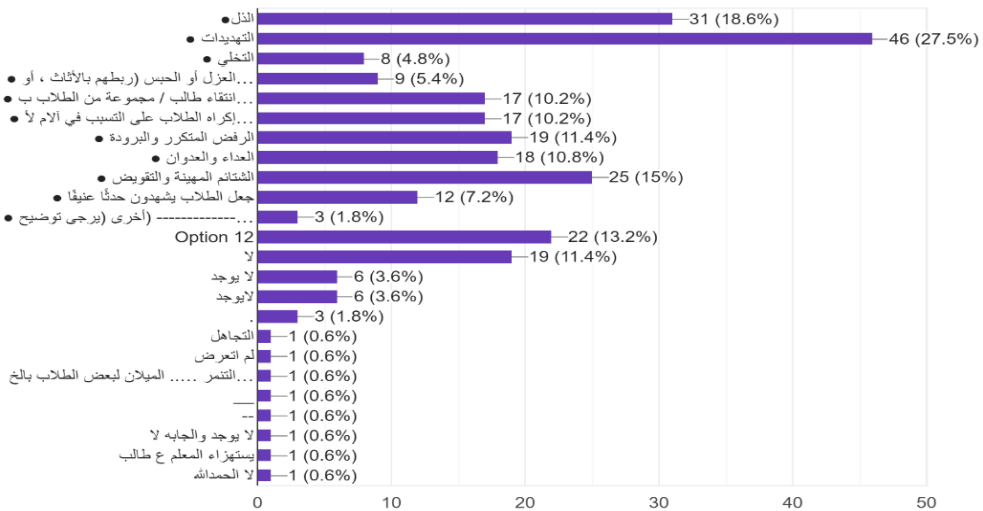


Figure 7: What forms of psychological abuse have you been exposed to or witnessed before?

vii. If you noticed that your classmates were abused by the teachers, what are the following psychological effects that you noticed from them after the incident?

In the case of classmates who were abused by teachers, the psychological effects responded to by participants changed in the influence through behavior 38.3%, self-destructive and reckless actions 13.2%, out-of-focus 13.3%, vicious behavior 0.7%, and 0.7% expecting for praiseworthy. The study is supported by Berber Çelik & Odacı (2020) and Ba-Saddik & Hattab (2012) as they investigated the self-worth and well-being of the students. It results in negative thoughts among students.

إذا لاحظت تعرض زملائك في الفصل للإيذاء من قبل معلمك ، فما هي الآثار النفسية التالية التي لاحظتها منهم بعد الحادث؟ 2.

167 responses

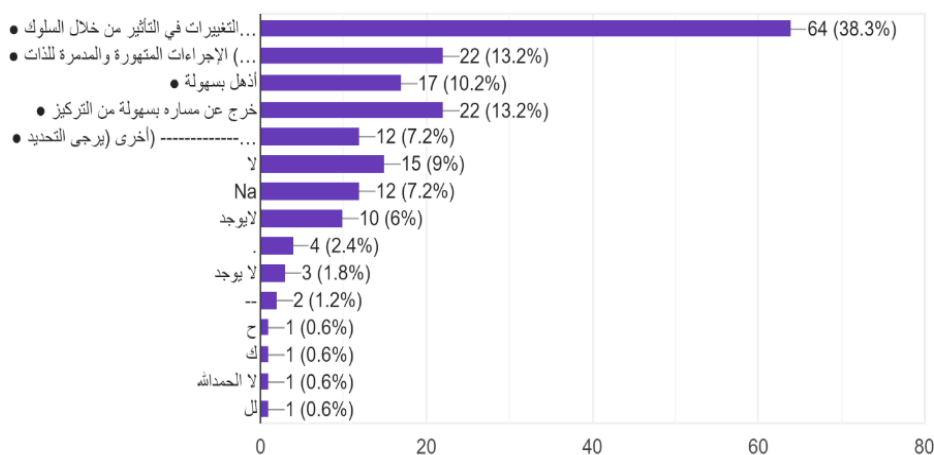


Figure 8: Psychological effects that you noticed from them after the incident

viii. If you were abused by a teacher, what are the following psychological effects that you experienced after the incident?

The response was showed 28.7% were keeping it a sorrowful memory, 20% were saying it a bad memory, 12.6% were going to report the event, 0.6% were facing psychological effects, 0.6 indicated insult, 16% responded that pressure from the teacher and 0.6% said is jealousy. The

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results are supported by Ali et al. (2019) that behavior and attitude like an insult, constant criticism, nick-making, mockery, embarrassment, and humiliation of an individual in front of others lead to an impact on psychological aspects like they were not going to share it, and they were also keeping it as a sorrowful memory.

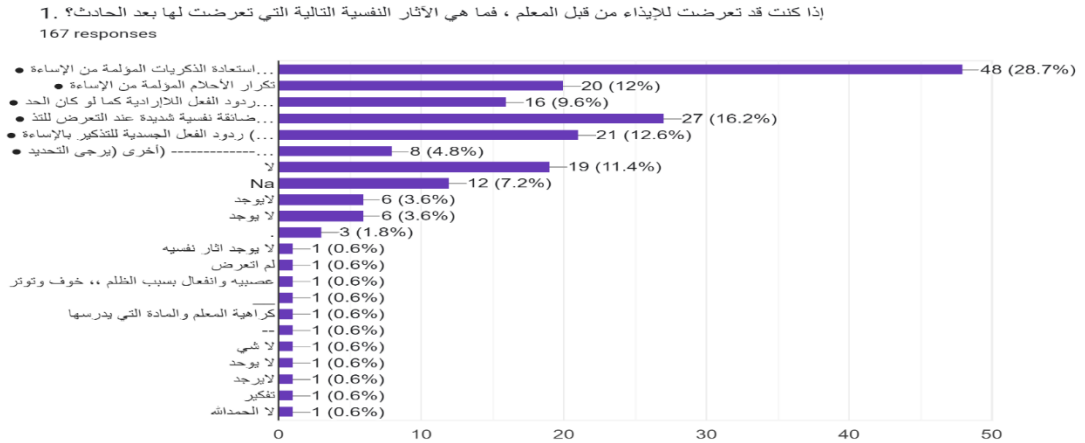


Figure 9: what are the following psychological effects that you experienced after the incident of being abused by a teacher?

4.1.2 Qualitative Results

The qualitative data was collected through interviews [Appendix III]. The thematic analysis is performed for the responses collected through interviews. Three main themes were selected for finding the outcomes through research objectives. The explanation of the themes is elaborated below.

4.2 Analysis

4.2.1 Theme 1: The forms of physical and emotional abuse that take place in the school involving intermediate-level students

The physical and emotional abuse towards intermediate students was assessed in the primary data from teachers. Teachers responded to the question, "When you, as the teacher, are faced with deviant acts of students, what disciplinary action will you take with them?" most of the

teachers said they used to call the guardians and management after the deviant behavior of students. Furthermore, they also responded that they usually scream, punish, dismiss from class, scold, and beat the students to manage their behavior. They also expel students from class and research for the solution to manage students' behavior, and they refer them to an advisor. This indicates the response of the class teachers toward the behavioral issues of students. The responses highlighted the abuse and violence that teachers were using to correct the behavior, as well as various other methods. Punishment was among the top abusive actions that teachers were following to manage student behavior. Toumi (2016) highlighted how Kuwait ministers are implementing a zero-tolerance policy for corporal punishment in schools.

Another question was asked about the disciplinary action taken against students by physical means by 103 teachers indicated most of the teachers were not using physical means as they were saying it was not a method to treat students. However, a few were using a stick to take disciplinary action against students, and a few were saying yes, they are using physical actions to manage discipline among students.

4.2.2 Theme 2: The effects of physical and emotional abuse by the teacher on the psychological status of the intermediate-level students

The analysis of data for finding the physical and emotional abuse psychological impact on students is assessed through the interview question, "What changes have you noticed in students you know have been on the receiving end of disciplinary action, e.g., more frequent absences, changes in behavior and affect, evasive teachers/school staff?" the response was about the calmness in the class, aggressive behavior of students towards teachers, leaving classrooms, absence, hating subjects, fear of learning, aggressive behavior, depressed personality, forgetfulness, and loss of appetite and introvert nature. These signs were found among students, as highlighted by teachers among those who used to be abused by teachers through various means. A decline in the educational level was also found among such students. More discipline and least interaction are also observed by the teachers in the classrooms after a student is verbally or physically abused.

4.2.3 Theme 3: If the teachers are aware of the abusive nature of their maltreatment of the students

Teachers were also witnessing the abuse that they had assessed from the surroundings. The teachers were found to be aware of their abusive nature and maltreatment towards intermediate students in Kuwait schools. This is observed from the interview responses where they have mentioned in response to a question, "*Have you ever taken disciplinary action against students by verbal means or by using offensive words or phrases, stating intent to harm a student, or through swearing, etc.?*" the response was mixed as few were not using such means, and they were aware of the negative consequences but a few were using the means like swearing, cursing, screaming, verbal abusing, and pronunciation. This shows the knowledge of teachers regarding their behavior and abusive nature toward intermediate students in Kuwait.

Another question was asked by teachers "*If you answered yes either by physical means or by verbal means, did you ever experience that when you were a student? If yes, please indicate which forms of disciplinary action you have experienced or witnessed*". They responded about previous abusive incidents in their life as. Most of the respondents agreed about it, and few responded that they had not faced any previous events of abuse. A few responded about beating with sticks, screaming, calling animals, insulting, and hitting they faced when they were students. This is correlated with the current behavior of teachers with the intermediate students in Kuwait. When the teachers were asked, "*Did you know that such acts are inherently offensive?*" They agreed that such actions are offensive and leave a negative impact on the students of both males and females. They also responded that it is necessary due to its impact on discipline, but they were also against such abusive behavior.

FINDINGS

The study findings are based on a qualitative and quantitative methodology. First of all, the quantitative results are explored, and the hypothesis results are assessed. The study's aim was to find out the effects of teacher abuse on the mental health of intermediate students. Three main hypotheses were tested in the current study following a

mixed methodology, for these results from the qualitative and quantitative analysis are explained below.

The hypothesis "***H1: Both physical and emotional abuse from teachers can have negative consequences on the physical and mental health, academic performance, and social development of intermediate students***" is tested, and it is true. This is due to the results conducted that are aligned with the hypothesis. Physical and emotional abuse are related to negative consequences due to their detrimental effects on mental health. There is also indicated the academic performance of such students reduced among intermediate students after the events of physical abuse. These results were declared by the teacher by highlighting how the students feel after abuse.

The physical abuse types that students were facing included trauma, kicking, pinching, shoulder patting, beating, hitting with board markers, rulers, or sticks, and various form of touching like slapping. These findings meet the outcomes of the first objective of the study, "finding forms of physical and emotional abuse take place in the school involving intermediate-level students." Moreover, the emotional abuse type found among intermediate students was screaming, yelling, name-calling, punishment, threatening, calling animals, swearing, pronunciation, and multiplication (Legg, 2023). These emotional abuses played the same role in increasing psychological issues like the problems created by physical abuse. The students dislike the teachers, and they do not want to study the subjects due to the negative wording and insulting behavior of teachers (American Psychology Association , 2022). The signs and symptoms are also the same for emotional abuse as these are for physical abuse.

The end results of such abuse were isolation, threats, humiliation, negative behavior, introversion, not joining classes, and fear of facing others (Berber Çelik & Odacı, 2020). It was also associated with the self-esteem of the children. The witnesses were about the aggressive behavior of students, and they were leading towards isolated behavior. Furthermore, they hated the teacher and the subject at the same time. The social development was at risk as the introverted behavior was established after being exposed to such abuse among intermediate

students in Kuwait. The negative consequences were not only related to the student's academic attainment only, but these are linked with the behavior that turns aggressive, hostile, less interactive, and distracted. They hate knowledge and learning as it affects the psyche behavior of the students. When it comes to the actual results, almost 15% of intermediate students are facing abusive behavior. This is still a huge number of students facing such traumatic teaching time as Toumi (2016) has highlighted a zero-tolerance policy of teacher abuse toward students.

Emotional abuse from teachers is found to have with long-lasting impact on the psychological well-being of intermediate students. For example, stress and traumatic event lead to reduce self-esteem in the students, and they feel difficulty developing a relationship in the future life. The physical symptoms of long-term issues are sleeplessness, headache, and stomach aches (Farmer, 2020). The minimized focus due to the emotional abuse results in decreased academic performance. The teachers have also witnessed the negative impact of the abuse on students, and a good awareness of teachers regarding their abuse and violence information has been found through primary data.

The results have come with the implications of keeping the internal system based on ethical aspects, as the teachers need to remind about the zero-tolerance policy of abuse towards students. They need to be aware of the legal measures and the compliance that they need to apply in educational institutions. The primary limitation was the research questions that were part of the survey, as only a few questions were collected. More in-depth results can be collected using an increased number of questions as they can help to reach a better understanding of the safety measures for students, especially at the intermediate level, which is an important part of the education journey. The actions can help to reduce the student's switching behavior and lack of interest or focus.

The hypothesis "**H2: The psychological and behavioral effects of abuse can manifest in various ways, such as changes in behavior, emotions, and physical appearance, as well as reluctance to attend a school or interact with certain adults.**" is also accepted based on the primary data collected with the help of mixed methodology. The findings

about behavioral change are highlighted by the qualitative and quantitative data. The change in behavior might not be the same among students as it depends on the situation and type of abuse they have faced. First and foremost, behavioral change is absenteeism, as it is directly increased among the students facing abuse from teachers. This is due to the insult they have faced in front of others and their annoying behavior from the teacher. Due to such a dislike, they cannot focus on the subject. The change in the normal behavior of making relationships is also found among students as they do not want to make new relations and feel fear of such realities (Legg, 2023).

The results collected from the interview and survey both support the hypothesis of psychological and behavioral manifestations of abuse. The inconsistencies in the rationalization are found among the intermediate students, as the results have indicated. The results are also aligned with the research question, "*What are the effects of physical and emotional abuse by the teacher on the psychological status of intermediate-level students?*" For example, the students were found to face trauma leading to PTSD (Pur, et al., 2016). It was one of the long-term effects assessed among students, and it happens due to aggression, continuous thinking, lower self-esteem, and isolated behavior. Both internal and external factors of the abuse come with similar results among intermediate students.

Moreover, the children who experienced teacher abuse display different psychological and behavioral effects that can be assessed and noticed by others. This is assessed from the survey as students were aware of the condition and results of those who have faced teacher abuse and violence. The effects are found in the form of isolation, hesitancy, catatonia, internal aggression, loss of appetite, and blaming themselves (Pur, et al., 2016). This brings negative thoughts for a continuous process, and students turn towards anxiety and depression. They cannot communicate with others effectively and usually hide their feeling due to lower self-esteem as compared to others. These are among almost 16% of Kuwait intermediate levels students that is a risk of increasing such students in the future that are not interested in education and future achievements.

Support for the students can be provided by measuring the signs and symptoms, and they can be asked about their issues in private meetings. The schools and universities can manage a psychologist assessing students' behavior to report the issues and to develop plans for minimizing abuse towards them. This can help to achieve a positive impact on the mental health of students. Such issues can also be highlighted through research and managing more administrative workers as research participants to give them a new agenda where they have to work.

The hypothesis is "***H3: Teachers who engage in abusive behavior towards students may deny their actions and justify their behavior through various means, including drawing on past experiences of abuse and victim-blaming.***" The findings disclose that teachers were pointing out that they are using physical and mental violence as a tool to bring discipline. However, the hypothesis is accepted due to the teachers going to manipulation reasons for violence and saying it is needed to manage discipline, to bring calm behavior, and to increase students' seriousness towards studies. For example, teachers also use victim blaming as the behavior of students that they are not able to handle; they blame others for the resources and training needs (Yang, et al., 2022). Teachers also take it normally due to the internal and external factors at the educational institutes, as other teachers' behavior also triggers them towards violence and abuse.

The delinquent behavior or ill performance of the students is not an excuse to go towards punishments that are not legally allowed. Teachers mask their abuse and violence under the umbrella of such aspects of students. Name-shaming intermediate students and calling them animals or donkeys is a worsening behavior that is not acceptable for criminals or for normal students (Berber Çelik & Odacı, 2020). The teachers can commit such actions due to the previous issues that they might face as a student, and this has built this behavior to commit such behavior. There are some formal procedures that can be used to complain against children, and for this, police or administration can take action against criminal minds or ill behavior in the class. Teachers are not liable to

show such behavior to students. The zero-tolerance policy by Kuwait ministers can be reminded to teachers, or it should be a part of the code of conduct Toumi (2016).

The results of the research objective, "*What is the level of teachers' awareness of the abusive nature of their maltreatment towards the students?*" also found results as the teachers were aware of the conduct they are doing, and they have added about the violence through interviews. Teachers have also strictly denied their misconduct towards students and said it was a cruel thing (Sezer, 2021). However, these teachers responding about their behavior of abuse and violence have also added that they are aware of the policies developed for students, but they have the only way to keep the students disciplined. Moreover, teachers were aware of the sign and symptoms after dealing in an abusive way with the students as they responded in the interview regarding their actions of aggression, lack of interest, disliking the teacher, and minimal focus in the educational activities (Burn, 2019). They have related the violence to their style of teaching and took it as a routine life activity, but they were aware of the after-effects of abuse.

The main thing that needs to explore through more research is to develop a policy as well as a code of conduct that teachers should be provided in the initial training procedures, and they should be reminded about the zero-tolerance policy. A safe learning environment can be built by managing culture in favor of students and building their behavior. The intermediate students are teenagers, and they can change their behavior with a simple request to the administration. However, the witnesses can help the institution, whether they can be teachers or students, and for this, awareness should be created for the intermediate students to control the abusive behavior of teachers in Kuwait.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Students are the most important part of an economy as they are the future builders of economic development. During education, they might face abuse, and this can turn their behavior as well as emotional well-being. The results and findings of the current study have revealed that students at an intermediate level in Kuwait are facing violence, abuse, and bullying, and it has been found among almost 16% of students. The

results reliability is found from the mixed approach, and it has determined how the teachers and students' witnesses are declaring the facts of teacher abuse in Kuwait. The students are not safe at the intermediate level as they are at risk of various types of abuse that cause psychological issues for 16% of the overall students at an intermediate level. The study has also declared the sign and symptoms of the students after facing abusive behavior from the teacher. Their behavior changes are observed in the form of aggression, lacking interest in the study, fear of relationships, depression, anxiety, and emotional instability regarding teacher behavior. The current need is assessed among the teenager in the study to capture the abusive behavior of the teacher and to correct them through training, provision of effective resources, and to assess their capabilities to manage discipline in class.

6.1 Recommendations

The current study has recommended some useful actions that can help to control teachers' abuse towards students in Kuwait schools.

- I. The administration should assess the capability of teachers by testing their discipline management, and they should set boundaries that teachers can use to keep effective discipline in class.
- II. The school administration should manage security cameras in the classroom that should be assessed on a monthly basis to find out teacher behavior with students.
- III. Schools and universities should hire more psychologists that can assess the sign and symptoms of the students to find out the trouble they are facing and to take corrective actions.
- IV. Anonymous feedback should be collected from students about the teacher's behavior, and then this can be validated by collecting witnesses.

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