

A Two Year Follow Up of Sexually Abused Children

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Abstract : Early research on child sexual abuse (CSA) attempted to assess its possible effects. Researchers found that victims of CSA are prone to a host of emotional disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, dissociative disorders, anxiety disorders and suicidality later in life. The study examined the development of symptoms over a two-year period at base line and after six months. Factors including the age at the onset of abuse, the gender of the abused child and academic achievements were also examined. Other variables examined include the complex association among self-disclosure, self-esteem, the child's attachment and coping styles, and psychological adjustment. The abused child's domestic environment has been found to have a relevant impact on the psychological outcomes of CSA. The study examined inter-parental conflicts, cohesion in the child's home, parental attachment styles and psychopathology. To the best of our knowledge, no investigation of this nature has yet been performed. Hence, the study makes a major contribution to research in this field. In addition, a combined examination of abuse characteristics, child characteristics, domestic environment and therapeutic history will facilitate enhanced understanding of the interactions among CSA, mediating factors and psychological outcomes.

Keywords : sexual abuse, follow up, victimization, children

Conference Title : ICPPCP 2024 : International Conference on Pediatric Psychiatry and Child Psychiatry

Conference Location : Tokyo, Japan

Conference Dates : March 18-19, 2024