



## Child Aggressive Behavior: A Mediation Analysis

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### Introduction

In the United States, neglect was found to be the most common form of child abuse (US DHHS, 2022). According to the most recent information from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) for the fiscal year 2020, 76.1 percent of children working with CPS were found to have been neglected, 16.5 percent had been physically abused, and 9.4 percent had been sexually abused. Both internalizing and externalizing behavioral issues have been linked to neglect. Adolescence is a crucial developmental period in a person's life, and behavioral issues during this period have been linked to negative outcomes in the future, such as substance abuse, sexually risky conduct and involvement in criminal activity. Neglect is a reliable predictor of destructive adolescent behaviors.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define school connectedness as students' belief that "adults and peers in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals" (CDC, 2018). The impact of child maltreatment experience on school connectedness Education commitment, supportive relationships with adults, supportive relationships with peers, and a positive school climate are the four components (CDC, 2019). It is well established that students who have experienced child abuse have poor educational outcomes (Martin et al., 2010; Romano and other, 2015; Ryan and co., 2018). Martin and others (2010) questioned 66 preschool through 12th-grade teachers about their perceptions of how child abuse affects students' behavior and academic performance at school. According to Martin et al.'s findings, children who had been the victims of child abuse had more difficulty concentrating and learning in school. (2010). Ryan and others (2018) assessed the impact of abuse on students' academic success using population data from Michigan's public schools. They conclude that children with CPS investigations were more likely to be enrolled in special education programs and had lower math and reading test scores.

Positive peer relationships are difficult for students who have been abused as children. Kim and Cicchetti (2009) looked at longitudinal pathways between child abuse, emotion regulation, peer relationships, and psychopathology in 421 children who went to a camp program for a week and came from families with low incomes. According to Kim & Cicchetti (2009), the findings indicated that children who had experienced child abuse had lower emotional regulation at the beginning of the camp, which was a predictor of problematic peer relationships following the program [1-5].

### Discussion

The relationship between behavioral outcomes and school

connectedness previous research suggests that school connectedness has a significant protective effect against aggression in educational settings. When compared to the percentage of minority students in a school (beta = 0.123, p.001), the size of the school (beta = 0.106, p.001), the performance of the school (beta = 0.047, p =.024), and the climate of the school, school connectedness was found to be the strongest predictor of physical aggression (beta = 0.344, p.001; (2004) Wilson Wilson (2004) also looked at how connectedness and school climate interact. He found that students with high school connectedness were less likely to engage in aggressive behaviour in either positive or negative school climates than students with low connectedness. Peer relationships play a significant role in behavioral outcomes and are an important part of school connectedness. Deviant peer affiliation has been linked to both internalizing and externalizing behaviors in previous studies.

1.4. The mediation effect of school on child abuse and behavioral outcomes School can mitigate the effects of child abuse on a child's development because it plays a crucial role in the development of behaviour in children. Barboza and Siller (2021) used data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health Wave I and Wave III when participants were on average 16 and 22 years old to examine the effects of school bonds on adult violence measured by engagement, connection, and achievement. Barboza & Siller (2002) found that school connectedness acted as a mediator between adult violence and childhood neglect. Bender (2012) used data from the National Survey for Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW) in a separate study to show that school engagement mediated the relationship between youth maltreatment and juvenile delinquency among 1179 participants between the ages of 11 and 15. Students' attitudes toward school, relationships with teachers and peers, and academic commitment were used to measure school engagement in this study. Crooks et al.'s study gathered data from 1897 Grade 9 students from 23 schools. While controlling for individual factors related to maltreatment, this study's findings suggest that a student's perceived safety at school decreased

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the likelihood of engaging in violent delinquency at school.

Between the ages of 15 and 17, adolescents are at a crucial developmental stage where they begin to develop their personalities and opinions as well as become more physically mature. During this time, adolescents also begin to change emotionally and socially. At this stage, adolescents who have experienced child abuse and come from marginalized families with fewer resources are more likely to be vulnerable and less able to cope with changes in their bodies and social environment.

The ecological systems theory that Bronfenbrenner (1977) developed in the field of child development was used in this study to comprehend the mutual impacts of child abuse, school life, and youth behavioral outcomes. The theoretical framework Youth are affected by a variety of ecological systems, including their families, friends, teachers, and others. This additional system has a greater impact on youth who have been through CPS. According to ecological systems theory, a youth's interactions with their external circumstances determine their behavioral outcomes. As a result, the ecological perspective offers methods for comprehending how CPS contact influences youth behaviour and school connectedness, as well as how school connectedness mediate this impact.

This study examines the following four hypotheses in light of the literature review and ecological systems theory: 1) CPS contact is linked to more aggressive behaviour in children, 2) school connectedness is linked to less aggressive behaviour in children, 3) CPS contact is linked to less school connectedness, and 4) school connectedness acts as a mediator between CPS contact and aggressive behaviour in children [6-10].

## Conclusion

It is well established that children who have a history of child abuse are more likely to exhibit unhealthy behaviors. School is an essential resource for helping children and adolescents who have been abused; however, the protective effect of school connectedness on mitigating the effects of child abuse on behavior outcomes has only been the subject of a few studies. Using a large-scale data base, this study aims to

fill this gap by examining the mediating role of school connectedness

in the relationship between child abuse experience and aggressive behavior. This study will build on previous research that examines the impact of school connectedness on child aggressive behavior in adolescents from economically disadvantaged families. The findings of this research will have an impact on the design of school-based interventions and trainings for school social workers with the goal of enhancing children's outcomes in the child welfare system.

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