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Experience of violence among children in Poland

Abstract:

Background: Violence against children is a complex and multidimensional problem that negatively affects their physical, psychological, and social development. Exposure to violence is a significant source of stress and is associated with increased risks of mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety, personality disorders, and substance abuse. Understanding the prevalence, forms, and risk factors of violence is essential for effective prevention strategies.

Objective: To assess the frequency and forms of violence experienced by children and adolescents and to analyze risk factors associated with experiencing abuse.

Methods: A qualitative survey was conducted among 200 children and adolescents aged 10–18 years using random sampling. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, with informed consent obtained from school principals, participants, and their parents. Statistical analysis was performed using Statistica 13.3, and relationships between variables were assessed using the Pearson chi-square test with significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: Physical violence from parents was reported by 28% of respondents, with spanking being the most common form (38%), followed by pushing (9%) and being hit with a belt or object (7%). Psychological violence included verbal abuse (15%) and blackmail (14%). No cases of sexual violence by parents were reported. Violence was more prevalent in families with average or poor financial situations and among children lacking parental support. Additionally, 14% of respondents experienced violence at school at least once per year.

Conclusion: Violence against children remains a significant public health and social issue. The most frequent forms are physical punishment and psychological abuse, particularly in economically disadvantaged families. These findings highlight the need for targeted preventive interventions, improved family support systems, and educational programs addressing non-violent parenting practices.

Biography

Anna Lewandowska is a healthcare academic at the Faculty of Healthcare, State Academy of Applied Sciences in Jarosław, Poland. Her research focuses on child welfare and the psychosocial impact of violence on children and adolescents, including the study "Experience of violence among children in Poland," which analyzes risk factors and forms of abuse in young populations.