

Child Neglected in the United States and the Social Welfare Policies

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Abstract : In this literature review paper, the researcher illustrates the history child neglected in the United States and its history since 1974 till present. Even though there are several programs and policies have been developed and presented to prevent children form neglected, the number of child neglected has been increased from one year to another. In this paper, the history of those programs and policies is presented and their critiques. Also, the researcher illustratessome alternative proposals that have been presented by some expertise in the field of social work.



Brief Introduction of the Social Problem

The definition of the problem

Childneglected has been defined as a social problem since 1974;from that point forward, the federal government has made interventions and regulations as well as laws and requirements for reporting any issue that is associatedwith childneglected. In order to understand any social problem,it is important to understand the definition of the problem. After reading articles thatdiscuss childneglected,it has become clear that there are many definitions of the problem.

The differing definitions occur based on the person or group that has defined the problem. For example, psychologists defined the problem from the perspective of the impact of child neglected on the child who is experiencing it, which could be damage in the brain or the emotional and physical impact on a child's well-being (Tyler, Allison, & Winsler, 2006). Another example of a definition focuses on the parents' actions and behaviors toward their children. Indeed, the definition that I think is generally accepted is the definition by the "American Psychological Association Committee on Professional Practice and Standards (1999), which defines neglected as the failure of the primary caretaker to provide an adequate level of care and be responsible for the child's basic needs" (Tyler et al., 2006, p. 3).

Why the problem is serious and should be solved

Researchers divided child neglected into five types, which are physical, emotional, educational, inadequate supervision, and medical. All types of child neglected have a huge impact on children who are experiencing this neglected, and the impact can vary from child to

child depending on the age of the child and the degree of the harm he or she receives. There are many examples of the consequences of child neglected such as cognitive consequences, behavioral consequences, social, physical, or emotional. An example of emotional consequences is the impact of child neglected on the relationship between the neglected child and his or her caregivers. The researchers believe neglected children lack an organized strategy for dealing with stressful separations and reunions with their caregivers (Tyler et al., 2006). Another example is the relationship between the neglected children with their peers and their school. For example, neglected children tend to have no friends as they lack the skills to interact with people. Conversely to their inability to create general friendships, they begin to rely on the teacher for everything, and their relationship with the school shows their anxiety, carelessness, and lack of understanding. Lastly, neglected children can experience mental health problems such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, oppositional-defiant disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, depressive disorder, suicidal, or self-injurious behaviors, and personality disorders.

In their research, Shipman et al (2005) did research to find out what is the difference between neglected children and normally treated children in their emotions' expression especially their sadness and anger. The researchers are also examining the differences of neglected and normally treated children in their skills to manage emotions anger and sadness in specifically. The hypothesis of the research is that neglected children, as compared to their no maltreated peers, would demonstrate fewer adaptive strategies for managing emotional arousal and higher levels of emotional deregulation. Also, neglected children would expect to receive less support and more conflict from their mothers in response to emotional displays and would be less likely to show their emotion to their mothers; Anger and sadness were considered given normative research that suggests that children's emotion management strategies vary as a function of the type of emotion experienced. In their results, they showed that in the Children's Emotion Management Scales neglected children demonstrated less use of effective coping strategies as compared to controls. In the Emotion Regulation Checklist neglected children demonstrated fewer adaptive emotion regulation skills such as situational appropriateness of affective displays, empathy, and emotional self-awareness as compared to their nonmaltreated peers. Also neglected children showed more emotional liability such as mood liability,

deregulated negative affect, and inappropriate affective displays as compared to their nonmaltreated peers. In the Emotion Management Interview neglected children, as compared to their nonmaltreated peers, were less likely to show emotion to their mothers and expected less support and more conflict from mothers in response to their emotional displays. (Shipman, Edwards, Brown, Swisher, & Jennings, 2005)

Also, another research Wark, Kruczek & Boley, to investigate the relationship of emotional neglected and family structure on college students' functioning and their current psychological distress? There are four hypotheses the researchers examined in the study which are: 1. People who experienced emotional neglected by primary female or male caregiver will display high level of current psychological distress than those without neglected experiences, 2. People who experienced emotional neglected will describe their families with lower consistency than those without neglected experiences, 3. People who experienced emotional neglected will describe their families with lower adaptability than those without neglected experiences, 4. Women who experienced emotional neglected from female caregiver will display higher level of current psychological distress and describe their families with lower consistency than those without neglected experiences or no

neglected from their female caregiver. The researchers found that Of the 91 participants included in the final analysis, 77 (82.8%) were Caucasian, 9 (9.7%) African American, 3 (3.2%) Hispanic, 1 (1.1%) Other, and 1 (1.1%) did not indicate ethnicity. Subjects' ages ranged from 18 to 48 with an average age of 21.90. The results of the multivariate analysis of covariance supported a significant overall effect as there were significant differences were found for all three dependent measures: GSI, FACES II-Cohesion, and FACES II-Adaptability. The amount of time spent in other's care was significantly related to psychological distress as measured by GSI. Amount of time spent in other's care was not related to the adaptability and cohesion measures of the FACES II. There were no gender differences for any of the dependent variables. (Wark, Kruczek, & Boley, 2003). All the findings of those researches indicate the impact of the children who were neglected and why we need to prevent children from being neglected physically, emotionally, educationally, inadequate supervision, and medically.

Statistics of the social problem

The statistics about how many children have been victimized as the result of child neglected show that the problem is serious, has been increasing, and has not been adequately addressed. According to the American Humane Association, in 1999 there were 829,000 children who were abused and neglected; in 2000 the number was 881,000; in 2001 the number was 903,000; in 2002 it was 896,000; in 2003 was 906,000; in 2004 the number was 872,000; and in 2005 it was 899,000 ("Child Abuse and Neglected Statistics," 2012). During 2006, 64.1% of maltreated children experienced neglected ("Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality," 2013). For 2007, the National Child Abuse and Neglected Data System (NCANDS) reported an estimated 1,760 child fatalities. In 2008 there was a 71% of reported cases were child neglected, while in 2009, child protective services agencies received an estimated 3.3 million referrals of alleged maltreatment of approximately 6.6 million children ("National Child Abuse and Neglected Data System (NCANDS) ", 2013) .Also, the NCANDS data for 2010 demonstrated that children younger than 1 year accounted for 47.7 %of fatalities; children younger than 4 years accounted for

nearly four-fifths (79.4 %) of fatalities. In 2011, more than 500,000 were victims of neglected, and that was broken down into 50% of child neglected victims at five years old or younger, while 30% were age two or younger. According to data from NCANDS, 49 states reported a total of 1,593 fatalities. Based on this data, a nationally estimated 1,640 children died from abuse and neglected in 2012.

History of the Social Welfare Policies

The programs

Many programs and policies have been created to decrease the number of children who are neglected and help them to recover from the problems that occurred as the result of being neglected.

Four highlighted programs and policies have served neglected children. Those programs and policies are the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act of 1974 (CAPTA), The Adoption and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (AACWA), The Family Preservation and Support

Program of 1993 (FPSP), and The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA). The purpose of each program and policy follows (Erickson, 2000).

CAPTA provides states with grant money to investigate and prevent child maltreatment.

AACWA was passed in order to solve this problem. In fact, the public awareness of the plight of children adrift in foster care sparked a reform movement aimed at remedying the perceived problems in the child welfare system. The purpose for AACWA was to prevent unnecessary foster care placements, to reunify families when foster care placement had occurred whenever possible, and to limit time spent in foster care whenever possible (Tyler et al., 2006, p. 80).

FPSP consists of an intensive, in-home model that focuses on the family and encourages change among all family members. Many family preservation programs focus on self-management and behavioral skills training for parents. Other targeted efforts concentrate on the family's desire to initiate change, parent education, and coordination of mental health or

substance abuse treatment among family members. Family preservation is meant to be a short-term intervention that relies heavily on direct family participation (Tyler et al., 2006).

ASFA was passed to correct AACWA in that it requires the states to file a petition to terminate parental rights in child abuse and neglected cases that are based on a child's length of time in foster care, and it limits the use of reasonable efforts to reunite abused and neglected children with their parents (Tyler et al., 2006).

Baseline of the History of Policies and Programs that Serve Neglected Children

In the past

In 1935, the Social Security Act authorized the first federal grants for child welfare services and allowed the states to develop local agencies and programs. In 1961, the Foster Care program (AFDC) was established to provide out-of-home care to poor children. In 1967, Child Welfare Services was included under Title V of the Social Security Act, which expanded and became Title IV-B. Between 1963 and 1967, every state passed child abuse reporting legislation. In 1975, Title XX was added to the Social Security Act. In 1978, the Indian Child

Welfare Act (ICWA) was created to serve Native American children. In 1993, Title IV-B was amended to create a new Family Preservation and Family Support program, which was renamed in 1997 Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) (DiNitto; DiNitto & Dye, 2000).

In the present

In 2006, Congress passed The Child and Family Services Improvement Act, thus authorizing the PSSF program for five years, from 2007 to 2011. CAPTA was reauthorized through 2008 under the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003. In 2008, Fostering Connection to Success and Increasing Adoption Act was passed, which was lauded as the most important piece of child welfare legislation in more than a decade (DiNitto & Dye, 2000).

Congress reauthorized CAPTA in December 2010. The primary changes in the new authorization were that data collection was improved in order to allow program operations to provide advanced training and supporting systems for individuals who identify; the

reauthorization also added measure to prevent issues by responding to reports regarding maltreatment of children; and finally, it sought to strengthen organizations so that service workers could address challenges associated with child maltreatment, such as domestic violence ("CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010 ", 2011).

In 2012, the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council (IOM) had updated the state of science on child maltreatment with a workshop. After 20 years with in-depth reports on child maltreatment, the state of science on child maltreatment was published as Understanding Child Abuse Neglected (Boyce & Maholmes, 2013).

Alternative Proposals and Modifications to Current Policy

Several proposals could help reduce the number of neglected children so that the program could be more effective in preventing child neglected with the families and societies. For example, students could be educated through a curriculum that includes lessons for both girls and boys to help them understand the meanings of parenting children in a healthy and respectful ways. Also, medical and service students need to be trained to recognize the

symptoms of child neglected. Social scientists could participate in order to show the impact of child neglected, which requires the lawmakers' attention in order for them to formalize the laws that effectively change the problem. Lawmakers need to develop a strong relationship with parents and community researchers in order to become more familiar with the best possible solutions. Another helpful measure could require new mothers to attend training programs that teach them how to provide good care for their newborns.

In addition, the media could be an effective source for people to learn about the problem, how serious it is, and how to report those issues when they are seen:

Media can also help advocate for a particular policy and encourage attitude change among many community members at once. Simple ideas include hanging posters in local stores and community centers displaying the prevalence of child neglected and what exactly can be done locally to help, or dispersing flyers about child neglected at community events. (Tyler et al., 2006, p. 16)

To improve programs, modifications could be done that would lead them to be more effective. For example, instead of removing children to foster care, another strategy to decrease the number of children who go to foster care could be to send professional people to live with the child and the caregiver in order to treat and help both of them in the same environment that they live in. Adoptive programs could be addressed so that there is a decrease in the number of children who simply age out in the foster care system, as this has numerous negative impacts on many aspects of children's life. Solving the problem requires taking care of both children and their caregiver in order to prevent future child neglected in the same family. Guidelines are needed regarding how states can make reasonable efforts before moving to permanent placement for abused and neglected children (Erickson, 2000).

Summary and Conclusion

To summarize, the definition of child neglected varies depending on the department and the job of the person who is defining it. Child neglected is a serious problem in the United States; it has been increasing over several years and has not been solved. The consequences of

child neglected are very serious and include physical, cognitive, mental, emotional, and social problems. Although the history of the policies and programs that serve neglected children shows that the problem has the attention of the federal government as well as policy makers, there has been an ongoing need to change and modify the laws and requirements that at times created more problems instead of solving issues. It is natural that those programs and policies need to be changed and modified in order for them to be more effective and accurate.

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