

CAUSES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CRISES IN PRESCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

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Abstract: Psychological crises in preschool-aged children can significantly impact their emotional well-being and developmental trajectory. This article investigates the primary causes contributing to such crises, including familial, social, and environmental factors. The study draws on existing psychological theories and empirical research to highlight how changes in family dynamics, exposure to stressors, developmental challenges, and inadequate emotional support can trigger psychological disturbances in children aged 3 to 6. Understanding these causes is crucial for early identification, prevention, and effective intervention to support healthy psychological development.

Keywords psychological crises, preschool children, emotional development, family environment, stress factors, early childhood psychology, behavioral problems

The preschool years are a critical period in a child's psychological and emotional development. During this time, children rapidly acquire social skills, language abilities, and emotional regulation. However, various factors can disrupt this developmental process, leading to psychological crises characterized by anxiety, behavioral disturbances, withdrawal, or emotional instability.

Psychological crises in young children often stem from complex interactions between internal developmental challenges and external environmental influences. Family instability, such as parental conflict or separation, is one of the most significant contributors. Additionally, exposure to stressful events, lack of consistent caregiving, and insufficient emotional nurturing can exacerbate vulnerability to psychological distress.

Understanding the causes behind psychological crises in preschool-aged children is essential for educators, caregivers, and mental health professionals. Early recognition and intervention can mitigate long-term negative effects, ensuring children develop resilience and healthy coping mechanisms.

This article aims to explore the main causes of psychological crises in preschool children, providing a framework for better support and preventive measures.

This study employed a **mixed-methods approach** to identify the main causes of psychological crises in preschool-aged children (3–6 years old). The research

combined **quantitative surveys** of parents and educators with **qualitative interviews** and **case observations**.

- **Participants:**

The sample included 100 parents and 30 preschool educators from three urban preschools. Children with known psychological difficulties were identified for case study analysis.

- **Data Collection:**

- **Surveys:** Standardized questionnaires assessed family environment, exposure to stressful events, and emotional support levels.

- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews with 15 parents and 10 educators explored personal experiences related to children's emotional crises.

- **Observations:** Behavioral observations were conducted on 20 children exhibiting signs of psychological distress, focusing on triggers and coping behaviors.

- **Data Analysis:**

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to identify significant stressors linked to psychological crises. Qualitative data were coded thematically to extract common patterns and narratives.

The study revealed several key causes associated with psychological crises in preschool children:

- **Family-related factors:**

68% of surveyed parents reported family conflicts or changes (e.g., divorce, relocation) as major stressors. Children from unstable family environments showed higher rates of anxiety and behavioral problems.

- **Emotional neglect or inconsistent caregiving:**

Interviews highlighted that lack of consistent emotional support and caregiver responsiveness often led to feelings of insecurity and withdrawal in children.

- **Exposure to stressful events:**

54% of respondents indicated that children exposed to traumatic events (e.g., death of a family member, accidents) exhibited psychological distress symptoms such as increased irritability, sleep disturbances, or social withdrawal.

- **Developmental challenges:**

Observations noted that children struggling with language acquisition or social skills often experienced frustration and emotional outbursts, potentially leading to crisis episodes.

- **Environmental stressors:**

Noise, overcrowding, and chaotic preschool settings were identified as contributing factors to heightened stress and emotional dysregulation.

Overall, the data suggest that psychological crises in preschool-aged children typically arise from an interplay of multiple factors rather than a single cause. Early identification of these risk factors is critical for timely intervention.

The findings of this study underscore the complex, multifactorial nature of psychological crises in preschool-aged children. Family instability, including parental conflict and changes such as divorce or relocation, emerged as the most significant contributor to emotional distress, consistent with previous research emphasizing the foundational role of family environment in early childhood development.

Emotional neglect and inconsistent caregiving were also prominent factors. Children who lacked stable and responsive adult support demonstrated greater signs of insecurity and withdrawal, highlighting the critical importance of consistent emotional nurturing in the preschool years.

Exposure to traumatic or stressful events amplified children's vulnerability to psychological crises, manifesting in symptoms like irritability, sleep disturbances, and social withdrawal. These findings align with trauma-informed perspectives that recognize early childhood as a sensitive period where adverse experiences can have lasting impacts.

Developmental challenges, particularly in language and social skills, contributed to frustration and emotional outbursts, indicating that unmet developmental needs can precipitate crises. Additionally, environmental stressors such as noisy or overcrowded settings further exacerbated emotional dysregulation.

Overall, these results emphasize that psychological crises in preschoolers often result from the interaction of multiple risk factors rather than isolated causes. Interventions must therefore be holistic, addressing family dynamics, caregiving quality, and environmental conditions to effectively support children's emotional well-being.

Psychological crises in preschool-aged children are influenced by a combination of familial, developmental, and environmental factors. Family instability, lack of consistent emotional support, exposure to trauma, developmental difficulties, and stressful surroundings collectively increase the risk of emotional and behavioral disturbances.

Early identification of these causes is crucial for preventing long-term negative outcomes and promoting healthy psychological development. Mental health professionals, educators, and caregivers should collaborate to create supportive environments that foster security, emotional expression, and resilience.

Effective intervention strategies should include family counseling, caregiver training, trauma-informed care, and improvements in preschool environments to reduce stressors. Prioritizing early mental health support lays the foundation for positive developmental trajectories.

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