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Emotional Violence

The Hidden Scars and Self Efficacy among School Going Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Studies proved that emotional violence have long lasting and devastating effect on the physical, social, psychological, cognitive and emotional development. Though the visible signs of emotional abuse is difficult to detect, the hidden scars of this type of abuse manifest in numerous crisis. There is a greater probability that emotional violence gets interfere with the positive states of mind like self efficacy, having confidence to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks. The study is conducted among 180 higher secondary school students through successive levels of Multistage sampling. Descriptive research design is adopted, where in quantitative measures were used with an effort to provide description on the phenomenon and the variables considered in the research. Child Emotional Abuse increases stress reactivity and decreases levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy (Yates 2007).The research also affirms negative significant relationship between academic, social and emotional self efficacy and emotional violence. Strengthening or enhancing self efficacy among adolescents through appropriate intervention may help the effected to act as an antidote to the traumatic situation rather debilitating the threats.

Key Words: academic self-efficacy social self-efficacy, emotional self-efficacy, emotional violence, adolescents

EMOTIONAL VIOLENCE: THE HIDDEN SCAR AND ADOLESCENT SELF EFFICACY

'Lekshmi became too dejected, uneven in class, passive on homework's, she was the brightest and class top in 10th standard. The news of her suicide was shocking for all. One of her neighbor reported child line coordinator that two days

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before, she told her friend that somehow she need to run off from home, father being an alcoholic tear off the record and her books and the home environment is not at all conducive for her studies and she really wish if someone could help her.' This case is a sensitive outcome of heightened part of emotional violence, and the imbursement- a life. On further side there are grumbles - parents at all times compare with other children, teachers humiliates by criticizing in front of all, friends avoid of no reason, parents did not acknowledge the achievements, etc. these seems petite but are invisible wounds that hurts forever.

While in western countries where the responsibility of care and protection is vested with the government and related organizations, the 21st century there, is looking forward to shift those responsibilities to family and communities by strengthening them through various approaches. In India, traditionally, the responsibility of care and protection of children has been vested with families and communities. We do have a sound family system and relationships as our ethnic identity and here in 21st century there is a paradigm shift in its approaches of child protection, being in a transformation to hand over those responsibility to government or related organization. Even while the Constitution of India guarantees many fundamental rights to the children, the approach of ensuring fulfillment of these rights are needs based rather than rights based.

'THE HIDDEN ABUSE'

Emotional/Psychological abuse against children is an overt form of maltreatment that has received less attention globally than physical and sexual abuse. As per the study conducted by Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India on Child Abuse: INDIA 2007, every second child reported facing emotional abuse and equal percentage of both girls and boys reported facing emotional abuse. Emotional and psychological maltreatment of children is the most complex type of abuse - invisible and difficult to define.

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The World Health Organisation (WHO), 1999, has defined as "Emotional abuse includes the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with her or his personal potentials and in the context of the society in which the child dwells. There may also be acts towards the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. These acts must be reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Acts include restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, denigrating, scapegoating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment".(As cited in Krug E. G et al. (2002).

Probing in to the child maltreatment literature, Emotional abuse has been the most recent abuse subtype to emerge. "Emotional abuse, also known as psychological maltreatment, was not formally 'discovered' until the 1970s" (Adam. M. Thomison 2001). Emotional violence is not a new concept, still an emerging concept in India. The concept was not known in a single name but branded by emotional abuse, psychological abuse, psychological maltreatment, emotional maltreatment. The use of these terms synonymously has been subjected to various debates and discussions and in this study those terminology are used interchangeably since the emotional effect remains the same. There are similarities as well as disparities in the forms of emotional abuse across region. Cultural factors influence how a child is being disciplined which may be regarded as psychologically harmful by the people from other cultural backgrounds. The consequences of emotional abuse are likely to differ greatly depending on the context and the age of the child.

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According to National Clearinghouse on Family Violence 1996, in comparison to other forms of abuse the effects of emotional abuse is recently been recognized, which is hard to define on the consistent definition, difficult to detect, assess and substantiate and thus many cases of emotional abuse go unreported. Since it is unrecognized when compared to other forms, it is tougher to professionally intervene into the situation. The victims may admit that emotional abuse occurs in their intimate relationship but the inner wound, its depth and worn-out self, remains hidden and in many cases it may be expressed as cases somatic problems, like headaches and stomach ulcers, breathing problem. “Emotional abuse accompanies other forms of abuse, but also may occur on its own. No abuse – neglect, physical, sexual or financial – can occur without psychological consequences. Therefore all abuse contains elements of emotional abuse (Hart, Germain & Brassard, 1987). If left unchecked, abuse does not get better over time. It only gets worse. Like other forms of violence in relationships, those who hold the least power and resources in society, for example, women and children, are most often emotionally abused.”

This hidden form of violence occurs both in verbal and non verbal form, when someone who is most related or intimate ones says or does something to make feel stupid, worthless or humiliating. Emotional violence includes, but is not limited to, exposing a child to family violence, giving constant criticism, blaming for all family problems on a child, humiliating or denigrating a child in front of others, using silent treatment, confinement to the home, not allowing to have social contacts, destroying belongings, giving verbal or non verbal threats, jealousy, threatening to commit suicide.

Researchers have emphasized emotional violence as a pattern of behaviour, occurring over a period of time, which is repetitive in nature,

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sustained/persistent and rarely episodic. And therefore, the core components of emotionally abusive behaviour are that it is a process and not a single event. And since it is a pattern of behaviour, very often the abuser and the abused are rarely aware that it is problematic. Since child rearing practices differ from culture to culture and from time to time within cultures, a good understanding of these practices within the given cultural context is vital for an appropriate diagnosis on emotional violence against children.

TYPES OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

In one of the practice guidelines, the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC, 2001) describe six forms of psychological maltreatment: “Spurning (verbal and nonverbal hostile rejecting/degrading); Terrorizing (behavior that threatens or is likely to harm physically the child or place the child or the child’s loved objects in danger); Exploiting/corrupting (encouraging the child to develop inappropriate behaviors); Denying emotional responsiveness (ignoring child’s needs to interact, failing to express positive affect to the child, showing no emotion in interactions with the child); Isolating (denying child opportunities for interacting/communicating with peers or adults); and Mental, health, medical, and educational neglect (ignoring or failing to ensure provision for the child’s needs).”

According to Laurie MacKinnon (2008) emotional violence includes acts of Omission and Commission. These behaviors include acts of emotional and physical unavailability, unresponsiveness, withdrawal of attention, comfort, reassurance, encouragement and acceptance; and hostility, denigration, and rejection of a child. The author categorized and summarized those acts on the light of the literature as given below:

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“*Acts of commission include-* ongoing verbal abuse including explosive outbursts of anger, discrediting the other person's reputation – spreading negative rumors, threats of abandonment (or actual periods of abandonment), threats to harm the target person or their family members or pets, inducing terror or fear by threatening to place the target person in a dangerous environment or forcing them to watch violence towards another person or animal (Loring 1994), inducing terror or fear in a child by harming or threatening to harm the child's parent (domestic violence), corrupting or exploiting the target person by inducing them (often as a result of threatening to harm their children or pets) to commit a crime or, in the case of a children, permitting them to use alcohol, drugs or see pornography (Loring & Beaudoin 2000; Loring & Bolden-Hines 2004) and, restricting the target person from normal contact with other people (Sable 1999). *Acts of omission include-* refusing to acknowledge the other person's presence, withholding of necessary information, ‘the silent treatment’ – refusing to communicate for extended periods, ignoring the other person's attempts to interact, failure to confirm the other person's needs or feelings, failure to show appropriate affection or love.”

COMMON INDICATORS

The signs symptoms or indicators of emotional violence are diverse and the effect may vary in its extent with the victim's age, gender, positive psychological state, emotional regulation and coping. The common indicators of emotional violence are summed up in Table No.1:

Table No.1: Common indicators Of Emotional Violence

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC),(2007),(2010)	O'Hagan, as cited by National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (1996)	Oyaziwo Aluede, (2004)
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• exhibits extremes in behavior;• delayed in physical or emotional development;• often complains of headaches, nausea, or stomach aches for no obvious reason;• exhibits frustration when performing tasks and often criticizes their performance;• attempted suicide;• discloses emotional violence.• neurotic behavior• being unable to play• fear of making mistakes• sudden speech disorders• self-harm• fear of parent being approached regarding their behavior• developmental delay in terms of emotional progress• learning difficulties• problems with relationships and socialising• rebellious behavior• aggressive and violent behavior• anti-social behavior and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• depression• withdrawal• low self-esteem• severe anxiety• fearfulness• failure to thrive in infancy• aggression• emotional instability• sleep disturbances• physical complaints with no medical basis• inappropriate behavior for age or development• overly passive/compliant• suicide attempts or discussion• extreme dependence• underachievement• inability to trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• excessive worry about school performance;• change from positive to negative self-perception;• verbalized fear that teacher would hurt them; excessive crying about school;• headaches;• stomach aches;• decreased functioning in social situation outside class;• nightmares or sleep disturbances;• school avoidance;• withdrawal behavior or depression
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• criminality• self-isolating behavior• negative impulsive behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• stealing• other forms of abuse present or suspected	
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CONSEQUENCES

According to Allyson Turnbull (2010), Emotional abuse is the one of the most harmful forms of child abuse. The child who experiences emotionally abusive behavior is more likely to have maladaptive representations about themselves and the world and experience difficulties in developmental transitions throughout their lifespan. When children who have been emotionally abused grow up, they continue to experience problems in terms of their physical health, mental health and adult relationships (Prevent Child Abuse America, 2010). The consequences of child emotional abuse can be devastating and long-lasting, and include: increased risk for a lifelong pattern of depression, estrangement, anxiety, low self-esteem, inappropriate or troubled relationships, or a lack of empathy (Kairys et al 2002). During their childhood, victims may experience a delay in their developmental progress. Research also indicates that emotional abuse may be a stronger predictor of psychological, emotional, and behavioral impairments and trauma than accompanying physical abuse (Glaser, D, 2002).

As cited by National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (1996), Emotional abuse can severely damage a person's sense of self-worth and perception (Hart, Germain & Brassard, 1987). According to O'Hagan (1995) in children, emotional abuse can impair psychological development, including: intelligence, memory, recognition, perception, attention, imagination and moral development. Emotional abuse can also effect a child's social development and

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may result in an impaired ability to perceive, feel, understand and express emotions.

According to Oyaziwo Aluede (2004), Psychological maltreatment can also affect a child's social development, which may result in an impaired ability to perceive, feel, understand and express emotions. Exposure to experiences of emotional abuse in childhood is likely to threaten the security of attachment relationships, and may result in maladaptive models of self or other and they may interfere with the child's ability to form secure and satisfying relationships with others later in life.

The destruction of self that is the hallmark of emotional abuse has led some victims and researchers to describe emotional abuse as more painful and damaging to the victim than physical abuse (Loring, 1994). When finally able to break out of an emotionally abusive relationship, victims find they have no sense of what is important to them or how they feel about anything. Victims of emotional abuse often are forced to discard personal morals, ethics, and opinions in order to avoid fights within the relationship, and the victims' sense of self may be consumed by their controlling partner (Carey & Mongeau, 1996; Chung, 2007; Loring, 1994; Rosen, 1996).

Emotional violence can put a child at greater risk of developing any of the behavioral problems, such as, learning difficulties, problems with relationships and socializing, rebellious behavior, aggressive and violent behavior, anti-social behavior and criminality, self-isolating behavior (making people dislike you), negative impulsive behavior (not caring what happens to yourself)(NSPCC). “Social support plays an important role in ameliorating the effects of emotional abuse. Emotionally abused children may fail to develop the capacity to empathise

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with others - a precursor to difficulties with peers, intimate relationships, and inadequate parenting skills (Briggs & Hawkins 1996). Severe emotional abuse may lead the child to engage in antisocial, sometimes violent, behaviour, where the child offender exhibits a sociopathic response to the violence that has been perpetrated” (as cited by Tomison, 1997).

SELF-EFFICACY

Studies proved that emotional violence have long lasting and devastating effect on the physical, social, psychological, cognitive and emotional development. The visible signs of emotional abuse in children are difficult to detect, still the hidden scars of this type of abuse manifest in numerous behavioral crisis. The invisible bruise caused by emotional violence degrades self efficacy and in succession, hammer on the personality and development, de-motivate and dispirit their educational achievements, impede attachment or emotional bond to a parent or guardian, lower down the cognitive ability and put in poor social skills.

Thus there is a greater probability that emotional violence gets interfere with the positive states of mind or a person’s positive psychology. Such a positive psychological state of an individual which might distracted with the effect of emotional violence is having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks . Self-efficacy is concerned with an individual’s belief (i.e., confidence) of accomplishing a task (Bandura, 1998). Self-efficacy is the most popular positive psychology variable used in the educational setting, and has strong research and theory supporting its effect on academic achievement (Bandura, 1998). The loss of identity and sense of self is one of the most traumatic aspects of emotionally abusive relationships. Adolescence being the age of identity construction and confusions, it is more likely to effect the positive psychological aspects mainly self efficacy. Child

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emotional abuse increases stress reactivity and decreases levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy (Yates, 2007).

Psychological abuse may erode self-efficacy by acting as a source of negative verbal persuasion, communicating inefficacy rather than efficacy to an abuse survivor (Hosey, 2012). The Reason for low self efficacy in abused as discussed by Rainbow Gryphon (2011), are 1) abusers don't want to believe in the victim efficacy because it might be threatening for their self image, 2) abusers self confidence may be based on the amount of control they exert 3) They can't believe on victims in relation to lack of belief in themselves, 4) common belief that world is being a dangerous place and us being helpless in it 5) feeling of dissociation being distanced from ourselves, our thought, our feelings, and our environment and these factors can have an effect on how we assess our self-efficacy.

Confining the role of self efficacy in the particular study revitalize its significance in assembling the skills to vie the threats which counter the trail. This research intends to find out the prevalence of emotional violence among adolescents undergoing higher secondary education. The researcher predicted 1) significant difference in the prevalence of emotional violence with respect to gender; 2) significant relationship between academic, social and emotional self efficacy and emotional abuse; and 3) significant difference in the self efficacy with abused and the non-abused and also suggests the need for future intervention.

METHOD

The study is conducted among 180 higher secondary school students. Higher secondary schools under Thrissur Education District are the universe of the study. The plus one (+1) students in the Higher secondary schools in Thrissur

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Education district, Kerala are the study population. As per the available list of directorate of Higher secondary Education, Kerala, there are 189 higher secondary schools in Thrissur out of which 71 are aided schools, 49 unaided and 69 are functioning under Government sector. Multistage sampling is used in this study. Thrissur district is divided into 17 blocks and Wadakkancherry block is selected randomly. In the next stage higher secondary schools in the block are divided into strata like unaided, aided and government schools. From each stratum 2 schools are selected randomly. Finally, 30 students from each schools are selected disproportionately using simple random sampling (lottery) method. Mentally challenged, physically challenged and orphaned adolescents are excluded from the study. Children below 12 and above 18 year are not considered as samples. Descriptive research design, wherein quantitative measures were used with an effort to provide description on the variables which are considered in this research, and to describe the relationships that exist between these considered variables.

Informed consent was taken from the students orally and in written, where they were well informed about the purpose of the research and the value of their response and also their freedom to withdraw from the research at any point of time. A checklist was introduced to the adolescents for screening adolescents affected by emotional violence from the total samples. Self-efficacy is measured by Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children (SEQ-C) (Bandura, 1997). The SEQ-C contains 24 items that has three domains of self-efficacy: (1) *social self-efficacy* that has to do with the perceived capability for peer relationships and assertiveness; (2) *academic self-efficacy* that is concerned with the perceived capability to manage one's own learning behavior, to master academic subjects, and to fulfill academic expectations; and (3) *emotional self-efficacy* that pertains to the perceived capability of coping with negative emotions. Each item ranges

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from scoring on 5-point scale with 1 =not at all and 5 = very well. The sources of secondary data are books, journals, science and research news, official websites, research studies and Ph.D. thesis. Appropriate descriptive, relational and inferential statistical analysis will be used to analyze the data.

RESULTS

Prevalence of Emotional Violence

The respondents of the study are higher secondary school students, in the age group 13-18 years. The data were collected from six schools, 30 respondents from each with a sum total of 180 respondents. A checklist was introduced to the respondents to find out the the adolescents effected by emotional violence. Out of 180 respondents 50.56 percent of them are effected by emotional violence and the non effected comprises of 49.44 per cent.

Difference in the Prevalence of Emotional Violence with Respect to Gender:

Hypothesis 1- There is significant difference in the prevalence of emotional violence with respect to gender.

There were 91 respondents affected by emotional violence out of which 51.65 percent of them were females and 48.35 per cent were males.

Table No. 2: Emotional violence Vs Gender

Sex	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Male	44	47.55	2092.00
Female	47	44.55	2094.00
Total	91		

Table No.3: Test Statistics- Emotional violence

Mann-Whitney U	966.000
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Wilcoxon W	2094.000
Z	-.546
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.585

Grouping Variable: sex of respondents

The Z value obtained is -0.546. The table no.3 shows the p value 0.585 is greater than the alpha value 0.05. Even the mean score shows slight difference in the prevalence of emotional violence as shown in the table no.2, statistically it is proved that there is no significant difference in emotional violence with respect to gender. The study conducted by Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India on Child Abuse: INDIA 2007 found that, every second child reported facing emotional abuse and equal percentage of both girls and boys reported facing emotional abuse which is also been a repeated result of this particular study.

Self-efficacy with Emotional Violence

Hypothesis 2:- Self efficacy has significant relationship with emotional violence

Table No.4: Correlations Emotional Violence and Self Efficacy

		Emotional violence	Self-efficacy	Academic-self-efficacy	Social self-efficacy	Emotional self-efficacy
Emotional violence	Pearson Correlation	1	-.301 **	-.273 **	-.246 **	-.234 **
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000	.000	.001	.002
	N		180	180	180	180
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation		1	.798 **	.860 **	.841 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.000

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	N			180	180	180
Academic self efficacy	Pearson Correlation			1	.547**	.445**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.000
	N				180	180
Social self efficacy	Pearson Correlation				1	.682**
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.000
	N					180
Emotional self efficacy	Pearson Correlation					1
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N					

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The relationship between emotional violence and the components of self-efficacy are significant. There exist significant negative relationship between emotional violence and each components of self-efficacy namely, academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy and emotional self-efficacy. It could be concluded that as emotional violence in adolescents increases the self efficacy decreases. Or emotional violence is lower in adolescents having higher self efficacy. Educational research suggests that the traditional forms of capital (self efficacy which is a component of psychological capital) play a role in academic performance of students, teachers, and schools (Lassen, Steele, & Sailor, 2006; Parcel & Dufur, 2001; Marks, Cressewell, & Ainley, 2006; Stewart, 2008). These lines of research also suggest that these forms of capital have both micro and macro effects on academic performance. As found by Sachs-Ericsson, Natalie & N. Medley, Amanda (2011), in the study Childhood Abuse and Current Health Problems among Older Adults: The Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy, Child abuse

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was related to lower self-efficacy, and self-efficacy explained the relationship between abuse and the number of health problems.

Difference in the Self-Efficacy with respect to the Abused and the Non Abused

Hypothesis 3: There is significant difference in the self-efficacy of the abused and the non-abused

Table No.5: t-test Self Efficacy and Hope with respect to Abused and Non Abused

		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean	Std. deviation
Self efficacy	Equal variances assumed	4.568	178	.000	90.42	10.888
	Equal variances not assumed	4.580	170.194	.000	81.92	13.847
Academic self efficacy	Equal variances assumed	3.828	178	.000	29.72	3.917
	Equal variances not assumed	3.844	157.872	.000	26.88	5.829
Social self efficacy	Equal variances assumed	3.940	178	.000	31.62	4.190
	Equal variances not assumed	3.950	170.735	.000	28.81	5.285
Emotional self efficacy	Equal variances assumed	3.324	178	.001	28.70	5.177
	Equal variances not assumed	3.324	177.999	.001	26.10	5.306

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In the case of Self efficacy and its components, p value obtained is lesser than the alpha value, which reveals there is significant difference with respect to the abused and the non-abused. In a study conducted by Kim J & Cicchetti D, (2003), it is found that younger maltreated children exhibited inflated levels of perceived self-efficacy in their peer interactions compared to younger non-maltreated children. Younger maltreated children with higher levels of social self-efficacy showed significantly less internalizing behaviors compared to younger maltreated children with lower levels of social self-efficacy.

CONCLUSION

The result shows each component of self efficacy namely academic self efficacy, emotional self-efficacy and social self-efficacy has negative relationship with emotional violence. The scars of emotional violence unhealed fabricate long lasting effects. Strengthening or enhancing self efficacy may help the effected to act as an antidote to the traumatic situation rather debilitating the threats. Appropriate intervention in time may help those effected by emotional violence like 1) application of social case work approaches-behavior and environment modification, family and school based intervention, provide life skills based intervention, providing counseling and guidance, and referral services in schools, reinforcing the modified behavior of students in the form of tokens, both material and non material, 2) social group work intervention-identifying and forming homogeneous groups, providing a platform to share and discuss to manage the situation (eg: psychodrama), conducting workshops and camps on stress management, life skills etc. 3)social work research- promoting researches on the area, experimenting new intervention techniques, 4)social work institutions can plan intervention strategies and work in coordination the schools, fieldwork placements- concurrent and block could be taken up under the direct supervision of faculty members. Appropriate social work intervention may help the effected to

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strengthen the self efficacy, support the adolescents affected by emotional violence to lead more fruitful life and achieve their goals.

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