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NEWSLETTER

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## **The Impact of Psychological Abuse and Neglect on Adolescents' Externalizing Problem Behaviors: The Mediating Effect of Antisocial Attitudes and Moderating Effect of Gender**

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**E**XTERNALIZING problem behaviors mainly refers to behaviors that violate social ethics and harm others, including antisocial, illegal, aggressive, and bullying behaviors. Adolescence is a period of high incidence of individual externalizing problem behaviors, which have a negative impact on the physical and mental health, interpersonal communication, and academic performance of adolescents.

This study used the Psychological Abuse and Neglect Scale, Adolescent Antisocial Attitudes Questionnaire, and Health Risk Behaviors Questionnaire (Externalizing Behavior Dimension) to investigate 1218 adolescents aged 9 to 20 in a city of Sichuan Province. Among them, 54.19% were from urban areas, 44.66% from rural areas, and 1.15% did not report where they were from. The article attempted to explore the mechanism of the influence of psychological abuse and neglect on adolescents' externalizing problem behaviors by analyzing descriptive statistics and mediation effects.

The research findings showed that there were positive relations between psychological abuse and neglect, antisocial attitudes, and externalizing problem behaviors. Psychological abuse and neglect could directly affect the externalizing problem behaviors and could also indirectly influence them through the mediation of antisocial attitudes. The influence of psychological abuse and neglect on antisocial attitudes was moderated by gender. Psychological abuse and neglect have a stronger predictive effect on antisocial attitudes of boy students, that is, boy students were more likely to identify with behaviors that violate morality and norms under the influence of psychological abuse and neglect, and as a result, they are more likely to develop antisocial attitudes.

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