

Prevalence Rates of Child Maltreatment in High Income Countries

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Editorial

Children's functional and emotional impairment is frequently caused by maltreatment. The societal costs are enormous because a significant amount of resources have been allocated for various sorts of services related to child maltreatment. Acute therapy, long-term care, family rehabilitation programmes, and judicial actions are among them. This article addresses these critical issues in the context of the debate sparked. The role of health economics in improving children's health care. Child maltreatment, also known as child abuse and neglect, refers to any forms of physical and emotional abuse, as well as sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation, that cause actual or potential harm to a child's health, development, or dignity, in children aged 0 to 18. Globally, it is estimated that 1 in every 15 children under the age of 18 is subjected to maltreatment each year. Because of a variety of circumstances, including differing legislative frameworks and recording systems, comparing child maltreatment prevalence rates and related statistics between countries is challenging. However, it is widely acknowledged that this is a global epidemic affecting about 150 million people in both low and high-income countries.

According to the most recent data from the European Union, maltreatment prevalence rates in the United Kingdom and Italy were reported to be 11.2% and 9.5%, respectively, in the United Kingdom and Italy, figures that are comparable to those in the United States (12.1%) and Canada (9.5%) (9.7%). Unfortunately, statistics on the prevalence of child and adolescent maltreatment have not been standardised in many economically developed areas around the world, including Brazil, Russia, India, and China, making reliable cross-national and cross-continental comparisons impossible. According to recent studies and data analyses from various nations, the costs of medical treatments, social rehabilitation programmes, justice, and long-term support plans for maltreated children result in an increase in public expenditures that could be avoided. Preventive programmes, improved medical care quality, and the rationalisation of health and social services are some of the suggested cost-cutting solutions. According to data from the United States, child maltreatment is a severe public health and socioeconomic issue in high-income countries. In 2011, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States recorded 580-740 incidents of child maltreatment, including fatal (n=1740) and non-fatal cases. According to the report's eye-catching economic analysis, the overall financial burden of child maltreatment is anticipated to be almost \$210 000 over the lifetime of each victim who survives, with a conservative total cost of \$124 billion per year. These numbers include expenditures associated with child and adult health care, child welfare, productivity losses, criminal justice costs, and special education, and are said to be equivalent to total lifetime costs per individual associated with other major illnesses [1-5].

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The situation in Europe is comparable to that in the United States. The European Commission calculated that the average economic and social costs of child maltreatment in Europe are around 4% of each country's GDP each year. The costs of child health care, social welfare, justice, and lost productivity are all included in this statistic. According to the European Report on Preventing Child Maltreatment, sexual, physical, and emotional abuse affect 117 million children under the age of 18. Furthermore, the report claims that abuse kills roughly 850 children under the age of 15 every year. These values appear to be a conservative estimate. This is due to a variety of factors, including the fact that paediatricians often have difficulty recognising child abuse, owing to a lack of proper training in this area, and the possibility that they will fail to report child maltreatment due to the social and legal implications of such a diagnosis. In Europe and other parts of the world, child maltreatment has a significant socioeconomic impact. Victims have been shown to suffer unfavourable effects like as mental and physical health issues, as well as behaviour disorders like anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation. Furthermore, these individuals had a high rate of dysfunctional interpersonal connections and delinquency. Child maltreatment has both ethical and economic ramifications, and drawing attention to it contributes to a recent debate about how to develop proper economic models aimed at improving children's health, within the framework of the "5 rights" of protection, prevention, provision, and rehabilitation.

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