

CAUSES OF EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS (EBDs)

Introduction

This topic explores the causes of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) in children, focusing on both biological and environmental factors. Biological causes include brain injuries, genetic inheritance, and temperament traits, which influence a child's emotional and behavioral responses. Environmental causes encompass family, school, and community factors, with particular attention to the influence of family relationships, school dynamics, and societal conditions such as poverty, peer influence, and harmful cultural practices. The unit highlights the significance of early identification and intervention in addressing these disorders, emphasizing the role of parents, educators, and communities in mitigating risk factors.

Audience

This topic is intended for educators, mental health professionals, and researchers in early childhood education, particularly those focusing on children with emotional and behavioral disorders.

Length of topic

The topic is designed to be delivered over a span of 2-3 hours, allowing for in-depth exploration of each cause of EBD and interactive discussions.

Topic Outcomes

By the end of this topic, the audience should be able to:

- Identify the major biological and environmental causes of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) in children.
- Analyze how biological factors such as brain injury, genetics, and temperament contribute to the development of EBD.
- Evaluate the role of family, school, and community environments in influencing the emotional and behavioral well-being of children.
- Understand the importance of early intervention in the prevention and management of EBD.

Technology Requirements

- A computer or tablet with internet access for interactive activities or research.
- Audio/visual equipment for videos or case study discussions especially for audience with disabilities.

Causes of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBDs) overview

There are two major causes of emotional and behavioral disorders which are;

- A. Biological causes
- B. Environmental causes

Biological Causes

- These are brain disorders which are the result of abnormality in the brain caused by brain injury due to accidents like falling from the tree, car accident, and diseases like cerebral malaria, which ended up altering the structure of the brain.
- It is also due to the issues related to temperament and genetics. This is a link between a child and parents. If parents are carrying abnormalities in their chromosomes, there is a great risk for the child to inherit. Example; schizophrenia which is the kind of mental illness has a strong genetic link of which if parents have a child must inherit. Schizophrenia is a form of mental illness characterized by auditory hallucinations and groundless fears of persecution (harassed, maltreatment, discrimination while it is not real/true)
- Temperament/trait- is a biologically determined behavior style or typical way of responding to situation that all children are born with. There are two types of temperament
 - a. Easy going temperament
 - b. Difficult going temperament (destructive behaviors, withdrawal from situation, frequent fierce/violent). The people with this kind of temperament have the great

chance of getting EBD. It can be changed to easy going temperament through bearing/behavior/attitude.

- However, during pre-natal development, a child can inherit ABD due to some reasonable factors for instance mothers' emotional state ect.

Environmental Causes

These are external factors which can be family factors, school factors and community factors.

Family factors

- This involves relationship between a child and parents. The way parents treat their children, take care about them, relationship they make to them affects the children ways of behaving to others significantly. These include;
- The attachment style, the type of attachment a child has with the primary caregiver, may influence the child's view of himself/herself and learn what to expect from other people. For instance children who are over-cared by their parents seem not to be friendly with their environment and other people due to unrealistic fear and worries they develop due to being not be free to explore their world.
- Interaction style among family members for instance negative or positive interaction have a great influence on one's behavior
- Child maltreatment and parental psychological disorders; antisocial children in most cases are the children who come from parents who are inconsistent in attending and treating children behavior problems for instance being, harsh, rejecting their children's concerns, very aggressive, admit excessive punishments, show

little love to their children, having no time to spend with their children, not attentive to children views, ect generally authoritarian parents.

When parents inflict emotional pain to their children that means they cause emotional weaknesses and disturbance to the children hence children end up suffering EBD. It is advised that, parents should play a key role of treating the feelings of their children to prevent them from internal pain which eventually help children to experience emotional and behavioral freedom and pleasure. Emotional Pain –leads Emotional Disturbance= EBD

School Factors

Consideration of school factors is very important in analyzing causes of EBD to children because children spent much time in schools. School factors involve;

- Ineffective instruction given to learners that result to academic failure. If the instruction are not clear they often cause academic failure and this failure is what harm the emotions of the children to the extent that they develop EBD.
- Unclear rules and expectations for appropriate behavior. This is when teachers hold high or low expectation to their students. If it happens those students perform below or above expectations such students must get disturbed emotionally, thus they are in large risk of developing EBD
- Inconsistent and punitive discipline practices. If we are supposed to softly punish bad behavior we need to do so consistently. When a teacher is found not to be consistent in providing punishment children will be in a great chance of developing EBD because they

will commit a certain behavior hoping that the teacher will strictly punish but a teacher chooses to praise or stay silent, such children's emotions and behaviors will be in dilemma.

- Inconsistent teachers praise and approval for students' academic and social behavior. The role of consistent praise to students is rising self-concept, self-esteem, confidence, hopeful trial, self-acceptance, trust, ect
- Failure to individualize instructions to the students, that instructions be provided in accordance to the diverse needs of the children for instance for V.I., H.I., I.I. the need to avoid general instructions

Community and Cultural Factors

- This is all about the interaction between children and the community. The development of EBD to the children depends on whom children interact with. If a child often associates with peers who hold EBD characters like being aggressive or suffer emotional disturbance, such a child will likely become the EBD victim. Children trust their peers mostly thus whatever they find in them they basically imitate and practice without questioning.
- Stressful living condition for instance poverty/low income which holds 78% for EBD
- Children raised with single parent whether due to divorce, death of one parent or those born before marriage. Being raised with 1 parents contributes EBD for 44% because children lack love, care, attention, necessary needs sometimes from the parent who is absent.

- Children who are living in foster care/rising children centers
- Homeless children/street children are said to experience 3 to 4 times emotional problems more frequently than others
- Children maltreatment, sometimes ended up being street children who easily develop delinquency behaviors
- Physical abuse due to severe punishments which makes child feels worthless and lowers their self-esteem and meaning to life
- Sexual abuse makes child feels not secured, not loved, unprotected hence isolation and withdrawal
- Harmful Cultural Practices like FGM, sex preference, food taboos,

References

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional_and_behavioral_disorders
2. https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9067/10/1/86?type=check_update&version=1
3. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Causes_of_mental_disorders