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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

Relevance of the research topic. Child abuse and neglect constitute a major public health and child protection concern that affects the lives of millions of children and adolescents annually [15]. Reports published by authorities indicate a high prevalence of this phenomenon in Romania, despite the implementation of prevention and intervention programs by specialized associations and institutions [33]. Research in the field highlights that, in any given classroom, between one and five children are victims of abuse and neglect [10]. Cases of child abuse and neglect (CAN) often go unnoticed or unreported by the general public, partly due to deeply rooted beliefs regarding the non-interference of outsiders in a family's private life [43]. In this context, teachers occupy an important position, as their frequent interaction with students provides them with the opportunity to observe emotional, behavioral, and relational difficulties that may signal situations of vulnerability. Nevertheless, the literature highlights that some teachers do not consider themselves sufficiently prepared to address issues related to CAN within the school environment [4, 23, 38]. Consequently, there is a genuine need to address the phenomenon of CAN within the school setting, involving all participants in the educational process.

Description of the situation in the research area and identification of the research problem. The consequences of exposure to child abuse and neglect (CAN) are evident at any stage of life, but particularly during adolescence, when pressure from parents and teachers intensifies. However, research indicates a significant inter-individual variability regarding the manifestation of certain consequences of CAN, with some individuals experiencing positive development following such experiences [9, 29]. Consequently, further studies are needed to evaluate the roles of risk and protective factors in contexts involving CAN [25].

The theoretical foundation of the research integrates two theories, *bioecological theory* and *resilience theory* [12]. In this context, *risk factors*, which can increase the prevalence of CAN and exacerbate negative impacts on school adjustment, relate to both parents (e.g., parental stress) and adolescents (e.g., mental health issues, involvement in bullying/cyberbullying, low academic motivation, and concentration difficulties).

Social support is the most well-documented *protective factor* which can act as a buffer against the stress caused by exposure to child abuse and neglect (CAN), thereby mitigating its negative consequences. Social support has primarily been examined from a descriptive perspective [2] rather than as a moderator or mediator [24, 30, 36]. Furthermore, the majority of research has focused on the link between CAN exposure and mental health [4, 13, 38], paying less attention to the role of social support in the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN [19]. Studies have predominantly investigated the perception of social support among adults with a history of CAN, due to ethical considerations and practical constraints [3, 13, 36], rather than among children or adolescents. The investigation of the distinct contribution of perceived social support from parents, peers, and teachers requires special attention.

In this context, teachers play a significant role both in supporting the school adjustment of vulnerable adolescents and in identifying and reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect (CAN). Frequent interactions with students provide educators with the opportunity to observe manifestations of emotional, behavioral, and relational difficulties; however, the specialized literature highlights challenges in recognizing and reporting such instances of CAN. Investigating the factors associated with teachers' intentions to report these situations can be grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior, which emphasizes the role of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Integrating this perspective with bioecological and resilience-based approaches allows for a more comprehensive examination of the school environment's role in the protection and adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN.

Based on the scientific data presented above, we have identified the **research problem**, which is addressed through the following research questions: 1) What risk and protective factors explain the differences in school adjustment between adolescents with a history of abuse and neglect and those without such a history? 2) What psychosocial variables influence teachers' intentions to actively engage in the prevention, identification, and reporting of cases of abuse and neglect encountered in the school setting? 3) How are parental stress and parents' perceived social support associated with adolescents' experiences of child abuse and neglect, psychosocial functioning and school adjustment? 4) What are the most relevant strategies and methods that should be included in a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program designed to manage the negative consequences of exposure to abuse and neglect manifested by adolescents?

The **aim of the research** was to evaluate the individual, familial, and school-level risk and protective factors involved in the school adjustment and psychosocial functioning of adolescents with a history of abuse and neglect, as well as to develop, implement, and conduct a preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program. This program targeted adolescents, their peers, parents, and teachers, focusing on reducing the negative consequences of exposure to abuse and neglect and strengthening the adolescents' protective resources, providing social support to parents, and preparing and motivating teachers to engage in the prevention, identification, and reporting of abuse and neglect cases encountered in the school environment.

Research objectives:

- conducting an in-depth review of the specialized literature to identify under-explored research themes and the variables to be included and studied in this research;
- selecting and adapting assessment instruments for risk and protective factors - at the individual, family, and school level relevant for the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN;
- investigating the relationship between parental stress, social support perceived by parents, CAN experiences, and adolescents' school adjustment;
- identifying the factors associated with the intention of teaching staff to intervene in and report situations of CAN;

- developing, implementing, and conducting a preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program aimed at adolescents, their peers, parents, and teachers;
- develop recommendations for the practical application of the research results.

The theoretical framework of the research is based on the integration of two theories, *bioecological theory* and *resilience theory* [12, 40], to investigate risk and protective factors; definitions and conceptualizations of child abuse and neglect [6, 17, 28, 31, 39]; the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB, [3]), to investigate factors influencing teachers' intentions to intervene and report child abuse and neglect; and theoretically grounded and empirically validated intervention models for vulnerable groups, such as *Student Success Skills (SSS)* and *Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS)* [42].

The scientific research methodology comprises: *theoretical methods*: studying and synthesizing research findings from the specialized literature; *empirical methods*: questionnaires, tests, observational and control experiments, and psycho-pedagogical interventions; *statistical methods*: descriptive statistics (calculation of absolute and relative frequencies, indices of distribution normality, chi-square tests of association), parametric inferential statistics (t-tests for independent and dependent samples; correlation analyses; ANOVA; mediation and moderation via multiple regression using the PROCESS function), and non-parametric inferential statistics (*Mann-Whitney* test, *Wilcoxon* test).

The scientific novelty and originality of the research stem from a comprehensive approach to the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of child abuse and neglect (CAN), through the concurrent investigation of individual, familial, and school-related variables. The research highlighted: the prevalence of exposure to child abuse and neglect (CAN) and identified differences in psychosocial functioning and school adjustment between adolescents with and without a history of CAN; mediation and moderation models were tested, revealing several statistically significant indirect effects involving risk and protective factors, as well as associations conditional on gender and the source of perceived social support; the relationships between parental stress, parents' perceived social support, and the variables assessed among adolescents were also investigated; an assessment instrument measuring teachers' intentions to become involved in addressing and reporting suspected cases of CAN was translated and adapted, and psychosocial factors associated with these intentions were identified; a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program was developed, implemented, and subjected to a preliminary evaluation of its effectiveness, designed for adolescents with a history of CAN and significant individuals in their family and school environments and may be implemented in school settings by school counselors in collaboration with teachers.

The results obtained that contribute to solving the important scientific problem are*: the description and highlighting* of the association between various forms of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual) and emotional neglect, psychosocial functioning and school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN; *the evaluation* of the role played by parental stress and social support received by parents in the perpetuation of CAN and in the adolescents' school adjustment; *the development and testing* of a

model regarding risk factors (consequences of CAN exposure) and protective factors (social support) that may influence the relationship between CAN exposure and the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN; *the identification*, based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), of factors influencing teachers' intentions to intervene in school-based CAN cases; *and the implementation* of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program involving adolescents with a history of CAN, their peers and parents, as well as teaching staff.

Theoretical significance of the research lies in deepening and expanding knowledge of the psychosocial functioning and school adjustment of adolescents with a history of child abuse and neglect (CAN); identifying and analyzing risk and protective factors, including mediation and moderation effects, in the relationship between exposure to CAN and adolescents' school adjustment; improving understanding of the role of parent-related factors, particularly parental stress and perceived social support, in relation to adolescents' exposure to CAN and school adjustment difficulties; and providing the conceptual foundation for the development, implementation, and conduct a preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program targeting adolescents with a history of CAN, their parents, peers, and teachers.

The practical value of the thesis lies in: the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program, which offers an alternative model for addressing the negative consequences of child abuse and neglect (CAN) on school adjustment; the data obtained from the review of specialized literature and the experimental studies, which can serve as a valuable resource for professionals in the field; the assessment instruments used and adapted in this research, together with the proposed activities, may support school counselors, psychologists, and teachers in identifying the needs of vulnerable adolescents, strengthening social support, and developing interventions tailored to the educational context.

Main scientific findings submitted for defense: Exposure to abuse and neglect within the family environment is associated with a range of negative consequences manifesting during adolescence, such as mental health issues, frequent involvement in bullying or cyberbullying, attention and concentration difficulties, low academic motivation, or poor school adjustment; Parental stress levels and the social support that parents perceive themselves as receiving may be associated with the frequency of child abuse and neglect (CAN) as well as the psychosocial functioning of adolescents; Teachers' willingness to intervene in CAN cases encountered in the school setting can be influenced by factors such as attitudes, perceived behavioral control, knowledge, and norms; Statistical data obtained from the assessment of adolescents, their parents, and teachers indicate the need to develop a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program; Developing and implementing a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program, involving adolescents with a history of CAN, their parents, classmates, and teachers, can contribute to reduced psychosocial functioning difficulties among adolescents, improved parent-adolescent relationships, and strengthened perceived social support from teachers and classmates.

Implementation and validation of the scientific results obtained. The results of the theoretical and experimental research conducted in this thesis were discussed and validated during meetings of the Doctoral School of Psychology and the Department of Psychology at "Ion Creangă" State Pedagogical University in Chișinău; at scientific conferences organized by "Ion Creangă" State Pedagogical University in Chișinău, "Petre Andrei" University of Iași, and the West University of Timișoara; at symposia organized by Educational Resource and Assistance Centers; and in scientific journals.

Publications on the thesis topic: The findings from the studies conducted have been published in 10 scientific papers in specialized journals, both within the Republic of Moldova and Romania as well as internationally, and in the proceedings of national and international conferences.

Thesis volume and structure. The paper consists of: abstracts (in Romanian and English), a list of abbreviations, an introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography (comprising 314 sources), 5 appendices, 15 figures, and 22 tables. The main text of the thesis spans 136 pages.

Keywords: abuse, emotional neglect, adolescents, risk and protective factors, mental health, school adjustment, teachers, psychoeducational counseling program.

THESIS CONTENT

The *Introduction* section argues for the relevance and importance of the research topic and briefly reviews the results of previous studies. It also presents the research aim and objectives, research hypotheses, the results contributing to the resolution of the scientific problem, the methodology, and the thesis's scientific novelty and originality.

Chapter 1, entitled *"Theoretical-Conceptual Framework for Investigating Teacher Involvement in the School Adjustment of Adolescents with a History of Abuse and Emotional Neglect"*, analyzes the main theoretical approaches and empirical findings regarding the consequences of exposure to abuse and neglect for adolescent development, the risk and protective factors involved in school adjustment, and the role of educators in identifying, reporting, and managing cases of abuse and neglect, as well as in supporting vulnerable students.

Child abuse and neglect (CAN) disrupts the normal development of children and adolescents, entailing a range of negative biological, physical, cognitive, psychosocial, and behavioral consequences [5, 14, 23, 26, 32, 34, 35, 41]. These consequences also manifest themselves in the school environment through emotional and behavioral difficulties, reduced motivation to learn, attention and concentration problems, and difficulties integrating into the classroom peer group. In this context, teachers play a central role, as their ongoing interactions with students provide opportunities to observe behavioral changes, adjustment difficulties, and other potential indicators of exposure to child abuse and neglect (CAN). Nevertheless, many cases of CAN remain unidentified or unreported, and research indicates that some teachers do not feel adequately prepared to identify and manage such cases [4, 22, 37].

The literature highlights substantial interindividual variability in the consequences of exposure to CAN. Approximately 20–30% of abuse survivors do not report psychological distress as a consequence of their experiences of abuse [8], underscoring the need to investigate risk and protective factors that may help explain positive or negative adjustment following exposure to CAN [25]. From this perspective, the adolescent–teacher relationship, social support provided by teachers, and the relational climate of the classroom represent relevant dimensions for understanding the dynamics of school adjustment among adolescents with a history of CAN.

Schools, whether public or private, represent one of the main environments in which children and adolescents spend their time and where teachers may observe potential indicators of exposure to CAN [16]. The role of the school environment in child and adolescent development has been extensively investigated in the literature. One frequently used concept is *school adjustment*, an umbrella term encompassing dimensions such as students' positive competencies and outcomes (e.g., academic achievement, self-regulated learning, school attendance, and academic motivation), as well as the absence or reduced presence of adjustment difficulties [43]. Accordingly, risk and protective factors should be investigated in the context of school adjustment among adolescents with a history of CAN.

The theoretical framework of the present research integrates *resilience theory*, drawing on the contributions of Ann Masten [27], and *the bioecological theory of human development*, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner [7]. The complementary nature of these perspectives provides an appropriate theoretical framework for conceptualizing risk and protective factors that may influence the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of abuse and neglect. The *risk factors* selected from the literature and investigated in this thesis included parent-related factors (e.g., parental stress) and adolescent-level factors (e.g., mental health problems, involvement in bullying and cyberbullying, low academic motivation, and attention and concentration difficulties). The *protective factor* investigated was perceived social support, examined from both the perspective of adolescents with a history of CAN (support perceived from parents, peers, and teachers) and that of parents (support perceived from significant others). Particular attention was given to perceived social support from teachers as a potential protective resource in the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN.

A distinct component of the theoretical framework addressed teachers' involvement in identifying, reporting, and managing cases of CAN. In this regard, the *Theory of Planned Behavior* (TPB) [13, 38] was used to explain teachers' intentions to intervene in and report cases of CAN. The variables examined included attitudes toward child-rearing and parenting practices, the reporting of CAN cases, and the punishment of individuals who perpetrate abuse, as well as direct and indirect subjective norms, knowledge, and perceived behavioral control. This approach made it possible to identify individual and contextual factors associated with teachers' willingness to take action in situations involving CAN.

Chapter 2, entitled "*Investigating factors that may influence the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of abuse and neglect*," presents the objectives, hypotheses, and methodology of the experimental research, which involved 326 adolescents (with and without a history of CAN), 275 parents, and 656 teachers.

The aim was to investigate the psychosocial factors that may influence the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN by analyzing the role of risk and protective factors in the adolescents' psychosocial functioning, examining how parental perceived social support and parental stress contribute to school adjustment, and identifying variables that can predict teacher involvement in the prevention, identification, and reporting of CAN cases encountered in the school environment.

The objectives of the descriptive research were: to investigate the prevalence of exposure to one or more forms of CAN among the adolescents in the selected sample; to highlight differences in psychosocial functioning and school adjustment between adolescents with a history of CAN and those without; to investigate the moderating and mediating roles of social support (from parents, teachers, and peers) and gender in the relationship between CAN exposure and school adjustment; and to investigate the link between parental perceived social support, the level of parental stress, and the variables assessed in the adolescents; the investigation of the socio-demographic, cognitive, and psychosocial factors that may influence teachers' intention to intervene in and report cases of child abuse and neglect (CAN).

The following *general hypothesis* was formulated for the descriptive-experimental research: it is posited that the level of school adjustment among adolescents with a history of abuse and neglect (CAN) is determined by the interaction between risk factors (mental health issues, low academic motivation, concentration/attention difficulties, involvement in bullying/cyberbullying/acts of violence) and protective factors (perceived social support from parents, peers, and teachers), as well as by the level of parental stress and the social support perceived by the parents. Furthermore, teachers' intention to intervene in CAN cases is determined by socio-demographic factors, attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, knowledge, and coping strategies, in accordance with TPB.

Variables of the descriptive-experimental research: *independent variables*: a) *adolescents*: exposure to abuse (emotional, physical, sexual) and emotional neglect; socio-demographic variables; b) *parents*: gender, age, marital status, occupational status, background environment, and family composition; c) *teachers*: gender, age, marital status, number of children, background environment, teaching environment, years of teaching experience, and teaching level (lower secondary, upper secondary, lower and upper secondary, school counselor); *dependent variables*: a) *adolescents:* emotional problems, behavioral problems, hyperactivity issues, peer-related problems, anxiety/depression, loneliness/depression, somatic complaints, social problems, school adjustment, low academic motivation and concentration/attention difficulties, perceived social support from three sources (teachers, parents, peers); b) *parents:* perceived social support, level of parental stress; c*) teachers*: knowledge, attitudes (child-rearing, punishment of

abusers, professional responsibility, reporting), subjective norms (direct, indirect), perceived behavioral control (personal, teacher-related), intention to report severe and less severe cases of child abuse and neglect (CAN).

Instruments: a) adolescents: *socio-demographic data questionnaire*; questionnaire on *bullying, cyberbullying, and involvement in fights*; Family Affluence Scale III (FAS); Adverse Childhood Experiences – Short Form (ACE-SF); Trauma and Distress Scale (*TADS*); Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (*SDQ*); Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (*MSPSS*); Social Support from Teachers and Colleagues (*SS-HBSC*); School Adjustment Scale (*SAS*); Study Attitudes and Methods Survey (*SMALSI*); Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment (*ASEBA*); b) parents: Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (*MSPSS*); Parenting Stress Scale (*PSS*); c) teachers: Child Abuse Report Intention Scale (*CARIS*); coping methods questionnaire developed by Hawkins and McCallum.

Processing and interpretation of experimental results: the following data were obtained based on the administration of the psychological instruments:

Results from the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE-SF) Questionnaire and the emotional neglect subscale of the Trauma and Distress Scale (TADS)

Objective: To identify the frequency of the three types of abuse and emotional neglect within the studied sample.

Emotional abuse, physical abuse, and emotional neglect are the most commonly reported types of abuse. Girls report experiencing emotional abuse and emotional neglect more frequently, with statistically significant gender differences observed only for emotional abuse ($\chi^2(1, 326) = 3.94$, $p < 0.05$; low association index: Cramer's $V = .11$, $p = 0.042$). Boys tend to report physical abuse more frequently, though without statistically significant gender differences ($\chi^2(1, 326) = 1.83$, $p = 0.176$).

Results from the Questionnaire on involvement in bullying/cyberbullying and physical fights

Objective: To assess the frequency of involvement in bullying/cyberbullying and physical fights among adolescents with and without a history of child abuse and neglect (CAN), and to highlight differences based on the presence or absence of abuse, the type of abuse, and gender.

Table 2.1 Results of NA vs PA comparison on the Questionnaire on involvement in bullying/cyberbullying and physical fights

Involvement in school violence	No abuse/neglect (*NA*)			Present abuse/neglect (*PA*)			t	*p*
	M	*SD*	*95% CI*	*M*	*SD*	*95% CI*		
Bullying aggressor	1.54	0.91	1.44-1.67	1.90	1.26	1.70-2.10	-3.06	<0 .05
Bullying victim	1.35	0.84	1.23-1.48	1.61	1.01	1.45-1.77	-2.44	0.015
Cyberbullying message	1.12	0.43	1.05-1.18	1.29	0.74	1.17-1.41	-2.54	<0.05
Cyberbullying photos	1.03	0.16	1.00-1.05	1.13	0.45	1.05-1.20	-2.62	0.014
Involvement in physical fights	1.68	1.14	1.51-1.85	1.84	1.27	1.64-2.05	-1.24	0.231

Note: NA group had 170 of adolescents, and PA group had 156 of adolescents.

Adolescents in the PA group (present abuse) reported more frequently being bullies ($t(324) = -3.06$, $p < .05$) and victims ($t(321) = -2.44$, $p = 0.015$) in bullying situations; they perpetrate cyberbullying via messages ($t(321) = -2.54$, $p < 0.05$) and photos ($t(318) = -2.62$, $p = 0.014$) (Table 2.1). However, no differences were found between the *NA* group (no abuse) and the *PA* (present abuse) group regarding involvement in physical fights ($t(324) = -1.24$, $p = 0.231$). Girls in the *PA* group reported higher rates of involvement than girls in the *NA* group regarding bullying as perpetrators ($F(1, 189) = 12.11$, $p < 0.001$), cyberbullying via messages ($F(1, 187) = 5.03$, $p = 0.026$) and photos ($F(1, 184) = 4.04$, $p = 0.046$), and physical fights ($F(1, 189) = 4.83$, $p = 0.029$), but no significant results were found regarding involvement in bullying as victims ($F(1, 188) = 2.54$, $p = 0.112$).

Results from the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and the Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment (ASEBA-YSR) self-report questionnaire

Objective: to identify mental health problems among adolescents and to highlight differences based on the presence or absence of abuse, the type of abuse, the number of reported abuse incidents, and gender.

Adolescents in the *PA* group reported significantly higher scores compared to those in the *NA* group across all subscales of the SDQ and ASEBA-YSR questionnaires. Specifically, adolescents in the *PA* group reported higher scores for *emotional problems* ($F(1, 323) = 25.81$, $p < 0.001$), *behavioral problems* ($F(1, 323) = 24.13$, $p < 0.001$), *hyperactivity problems* ($F(1, 323) = 43.43$, $p < 0.001$), and *peer problems* ($F(1, 323) = 26.01$, $p < 0.001$). Regarding the ASEBA-YSR scores, the *PA* group reported higher scores for *anxiety/depression* ($F(1, 325) = 27.75$, $p < 0.001$), *withdrawal/depression* ($F(1, 325) = 38.27$, $p < 0.001$), *somatic complaints* ($F(1, 325) = 19.38$, $p < 0.001$), and *social problems* ($F(1, 325) = 50.22$, $p < 0.001$). These results highlight that exposure to childhood abuse and neglect is associated with difficulties in emotional, behavioral, and social functioning, which can negatively affect school adjustment and relationships with peers and teachers.

Results for the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) and the subscales for peer support (SSc) and teacher support (SScd)

Objective: To explore differences in levels of perceived social support from parents, teachers, and peers based on the presence or absence of abuse, the type of abuse, the number of reported abuse incidents, and gender.

Table 2.6 Results of NA and PA comparison on MSPSS, SSc and SScd

Type of social support	No abuse/neglect (*NA*)			Present abuse/neglect (*PA*)			F	*p*
	M	*SD*	*95% CI*	*M*	*SD*	*95% CI*		
MSPSS	0.26	0.84	0.14-0.39	-0.30	1.07	-0.47- -0.13	26.54	<0.001
SSc	0.31	0.35	0.17-0.45	-0.35	0.95	-0.50- -0.20	41.05	<0.001
SScd	0.20	0.84	0.08-0.33	-0.23	1.10	-0.41- - 0.05	16.45	<0.001

Adolescents in the PA group had significantly lower scores than those in the NA group regarding *social support from parents (*MSPSS) ($F(1, 323) = 26.54$, $p < 0.001$), *teachers* (SScd) ($F(1, 320) = 16.45$, $p < 0.001$), and *peers* (SSc) ($F(1, 323) = 41.05$, $p < 0.001$) (Table 2.6). The type of abuse had a significant effect on perceived support from parents ($F(7, 316) = 15.38$, $p < .001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.254$), peers ($F(7, 316) = 7.327$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = .140$), and teachers ($F(7, 316) = 5.59$, $p < .001$, $\eta p^2 = 0.101$).

Both the number of abusive experiences - the ACE score ($F(3, 316) = 23.24$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = .181$) - and gender ($F(1, 316) = 6.66$, $p = .01$, $\eta p^2 = 0.021$) had significant main effects on social support from parents. Statistically significant gender differences were found only regarding perceived social support from peers among adolescents with a history of three or four types of abuse. Boys who reported the co-occurrence of three or four types of child abuse and neglect report receiving significantly less social support from teachers compared to girls ($t(23) = 2.66$, $p = 0.014$).

Results for the MOTSCA subscale (low academic motivation), the DIFCON subscale (concentration/attention difficulties), and the School Adjustment Scale (SAS)

Objective: To explore differences regarding the MOTSCA, DIFCON, and SAS subscales among adolescents based on the presence or absence of abuse, the type of abuse, the number of reported abuse incidents, and gender.

Table 2.10 Results of NA and PA comparisons on SMALSI and SAS

Variables	No abuse/neglect (*NA*)			Present abuse/neglect (*PA*)			F	*p*
	M	*SD*	*95% CI*	*M*	*SD*	*95% CI*		
MOTSCA	-0.29	0.94	-0.43- -0.14	0.32	0.95	0.17-0.48	34.29	<0.001
DIFCON	-0.42	0.85	-0.55- -0.29	0.48	0.93	0.33-0.63	84.03	<0.001
SAS	0.25	0.88	0.11-0.38	-0.28	1.04	-0.45- -0.12	25.29	<0.001

Adolescents in the *PA* group reported higher scores than those in the *NA* group on the MOTSCA subscale - low academic motivation ($F(1,322) = 34.29$, $p < 0.001$) - and the DIFCON subscale - concentration/attention difficulties ($F(1, 322) = 84.03$, $p < 0.001$) - as well as significantly lower means on the SAS - school adjustment ($F(1, 321) = 25.29$, $p < 0.001$) (Table 2.10). In other words, adolescents with a history of CAN report more frequently low academic motivation, concentration/attention difficulties, and challenges with school adjustment.

Regarding the types of abuse to which the adolescents were exposed, the following results were obtained: adolescents who reported emotional abuse ($F(1, 323) = 26.41$, $p < .001$, $\eta p^2 = .082$), physical abuse ($F(1, 323) = 44.26$, $p < .001$, $\eta p^2 = .114$), sexual abuse ($F(1, 319) = 15.87$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = .048$), and emotional neglect ($F(1, 324) = 16.50$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta p^2 = .043$) reported lower scores on the SAS compared to adolescents with no history of abuse or neglect. Girls tended to report higher scores for school adjustment, but no significant gender differences were found within PA and NA groups.

Moderation analysis results

The analyses conducted revealed three statistically significant moderated moderation models: *Model 1* revealed a significant role of gender in moderating the relationship between exposure to emotional abuse and school adjustment through perceived social support from peers (b = .770, p = .003), with the model explaining 18.7% of the variance in school adjustment (F(7, 316) = 10.36, p < 0.001, R^2 = .187) - perceived social support from peers may play a buffering role in the negative association between exposure to emotional abuse and school adjustment among boys, whereas, among girls, exposure to emotional abuse is associated with a reduction in the adaptive advantage corresponding to high levels of perceived social support.; *Model 2* revealed a significant role of gender in moderating the relationship between exposure to emotional abuse and school adjustment through perceived social support from teachers (b = 0.30, SE = 0.14), with the model explaining 27.6% of the variance in school adjustment (F(7, 313) = 17.07, p < 0.001, R^2 = .276) - the results are consistent with the hypothesis of a possible compensatory role of perceived social support from teachers among boys; *Model 3* revealed a statistically significant interaction between perceived social support from parents and gender (b = −.62, SE = .15, p < 0.001), with the model explaining 21.7% of the variance in school adjustment (F(7, 315) = 12.44, p < 0.001, R^2 = .217) - exposure to physical abuse was associated with significantly lower school adjustment both among girls who perceived low levels of social support from parents (b = −1.25, p < 0.001) and among boys who perceived high levels of such support (b = −1.08, p < 0.001), without, however, confirming a significant moderating role of perceived parental social support in the relationship between exposure to physical abuse and school adjustment.

Mediation analysis results

The analyses conducted identified five statistically significant parallel mediation models, and Table 2.4 presents only the statistically significant mediators.

The data analysis highlighted the following models: *Model 1*, in which the mediators were involvement in bullying/cyberbullying/fighting, was statistically significant (F(6, 309) = 8.58, p < 0.001, R^2 = .143) - bullying as an aggressor was the only statistically significant mediator (b = -.08, BootSE = .04, 95% CI [-.187, -.005]); *Model 2*, in which the mediators were the SDQ questionnaire subscales, was statistically significant (F(5, 317) = 16.48, p < 0.001, R^2 = .206) – behavioral problems (b = -.16, BootSE = .07, 95% CI [-.316, -.041]) and hyperactivity problems (b = -.18, BootSE = .07, 95% CI [-.347, -.049]) proved to be significant mediators; *Model 3*, in which the included mediators were the ASEBA-YSR questionnaire subscales, was statistically significant (F(5, 318) = 15.17, p < 0.001, R^2 = .193) - anxiety/depression (b = -.34, BootSE = .13, 95% CI [-.620, -.091]) and social problems (b = -.15, BootSE = .08, 95% CI [-.325, -.004]) were statistically significant mediators; *Model 4*, which included perceived social support from parents, teachers, and peers as mediators, was statistically significant (F(4, 307) = 29.52, p < 0.001, R^2 = .278) - perceived social support from parents (b = -.20, BootSE = .07, 95% CI [-.375, -.080]) and perceived social support from teachers (b = -.24, BootSE = .09, 95% CI [-.452, -.080]) were significant mediators; *Model 5*, which included low academic motivation (MOTSCA) and

concentration/attention difficulties (DIFCON) as mediators, was statistically significant ($F(3, 320) = 313.85$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = .746$) -MOTSCA significantly mediated the relationship between CAN exposure and academic adjustment ($b = -.84$, Boot$SE = .17$, 95% CI [-1.21, -.513], $p < 0.001$). Overall, the results indicate the existence of statistically significant indirect effects, through which the psychosocial factors analyzed may contribute to explaining the association between exposure to child abuse and neglect (CAN) and school adjustment, without, however, allowing for the formulation of causal conclusions.

Table 2.11 Results of the mediation analyses

Mediator	Effect VI →mediator (*a*)	Single effect mediator (*b*)	Indirect effect (*ab*)	BC 95%	
				CI_{min}	CI_{max}
Bullying aggressor	.42(.12)*	-.19(.09)*	-.08(.04)	-.187	-.005
Behavioral problems	.47(.11)**	-.34(.11)*	-.16(.07)	-.316	-.041
Hyperactivity problems	.60(.10)**	-.30(.11)*	-.18(.07)	-.347	-.049
Anxiety/depression	.76(.10)**	-.44(.15)*	-.34(.13)	-.620	-.091
Social problems	.62(.10)*	-.26(.11)*	-.15(.08)	-.325	-.004
Social support parents	-.54(.10)**	.37(.09)**	-.20(.07)	-.375	-.080
Social support teachers	-.34(.11)**	.71(.10)**	-.24(.09)	-.452	-.080
Low academic motivation	.53 (.10)**	-1.59(.06)**	-.84(.17)	-1.21	-.513

Note: *p<.05; **p<.001.

Results regarding the role of parental stress and parental perceived social support

Regarding experiences of child abuse and neglect (CAN) involving their own children, parental stress correlated positively with the perpetuation of emotional abuse ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$), physical abuse ($r = 0.39$, $p < 0.001$), and emotional neglect ($r = 0.24$, $p < 0.001$), whereas the correlation was non-significant for sexual abuse ($r = 0.10$, $p = 0.075$). Conversely, social support correlated negatively with all forms of abuse, except for sexual abuse, where the correlation was non-significant.

Parental stress correlated positively with adolescents' involvement in bullying as aggressors ($r = 0.15$, $p = 0.011$) and victims ($r = 0.12$, $p = 0.041$), as well as in photos-based cyberbullying ($r = 0.13$, $p = 0.027$), and with all mental health issues assessed. Regarding school adjustment, parental stress correlated positively with low academic motivation ($r = 0.17$, $p < 0.001$) and concentration/attention difficulties ($r = 0.30$, $p < 0.001$), and negatively with school adjustment ($r = -0.17$, $p < 0.05$).

Results of statistical analyses regarding teachers

One-third of the teachers (34%) indicated having reported at least one case of child abuse or neglect (CAN) during their careers. A statistically significant association was found between the level at which teachers worked and their prior experience in reporting CAN ($\chi^2(5) = 39.41$, $p < 0.001$), with a moderate association index (Cramér's V = .24). School counselors (57.7%) had the highest reporting rate, followed by lower secondary school teachers (31.1%) and upper secondary school teachers (28.7%). Less than half of the teachers (46.3%) indicated that they had not reported at least one case of CAN, despite being aware of its existence.

Regarding the coping methods used by teachers when identifying a case of CAN in school, several statistically significant differences were observed. Lower secondary school teachers reported significantly lower scores on the *informational coping subscale* (*M* = 7.56, *SD* = 3.04) and the personal *coping subscale* (*M* = 7.37, *SD* = 2.29) compared to school counselors (*M* = 9.33, *SD* = 3.87; *M* = 8.68, *SD* = 1.90) and upper secondary school teachers (M = 8.95, SD = 3.64; M = 8.09, SD = 2.02). The differences were statistically significant for *informational coping*, (F(3, 652) = 7.66, p < 0.001), and for *personal coping* (*F*(3, 652) = 9.86, *p* < 0.001).

Table 2.12 Results of multiple hierarchical regression with the predictors of intention to report severe and less severe cases of CAN

Variables	**Intention to report severe and less severe cases of CAN**							
	Model 1		**Model 2**		**Model 3**		**Model 4**	
	B	**β**	**B**	**β**	**B**	**β**	**B**	**β**
Constant	53.03**		31.97**		17.58**		12.10*	
Participation in training programs	5.09**	0.13	4.22**	0.11	3.34*	0.09	1.35	0.03
Experience in reporting CAN	2.47*	0.07	1.22	0.03	0.83	0.02	-0.41	-0.01
Knowledge	.53**	0.09	0.25	0.04	0.20	0.03	0.15	0.03
Attitudes regarding:								
Child-rearing			-0.66**	-0.10	-0.45*	-0.07	-0.47*	- 0.07
Punishing the abuser			0.14	0.49	0.04	0.01	0.08	0.02
Professional responsibility			1.67**	0.34	1.26**	0.25	0.99**	0.20
Filing a report			-0.44**	-0.10	-0.38**	-0.09	-0.15	-0.03
Subjective norms:								
Direct Norms					2.94**	0.19	1.70	0.11
Indirect norms					1.57	0.09	1.29	0.07
Perceived behavioral control								
Teacher							-0.37*	-0.07*
Personal							1.10**	0.27**

To investigate the extent to which the factors included in the study contribute to teachers' intention to report cases of CAN (both severe and less severe), a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted using the following predictor variables: participation in training programs, experience in reporting CAN, knowledge, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Four models were run, yielding the following results (Table 2.12): in *model 1*, participation in training programs, prior experience in reporting CAN, and knowledge contributed significantly to the intention to report CAN (*F*(3, 652) = 10.78, *p* < 0.001, R^2 = .04); in *model 2*, adding the four subscales regarding teachers' attitudes to the equation resulted in a significant increase in R^2 of .17 (*F*(6, 648) = 35.63, *p* < 0.001) - the subscales for *attitude toward child-rearing* and *attitude toward filing a report* were negative predictors, the attitude *toward*

professional responsibility subscale was a positive predictor, and the *attitude toward punishing the abuser* predictor was not statistically significant; in *model 3*, in addition to the previously included variables, we added the two subscales regarding subjective norms, resulting in an R^2 increase of .06 ($F(8, 646) = 27.94$, $p < 0.001$) - only the *direct subjective norms* subscale was a significant predictor; in *model 4*, the subscales were added regarding *perceived behavioral control*, which resulted in a .06 increase in R^2 - the predictors of the intention to report CAN that remained statistically significant were attitude *toward child-rearing, attitude toward professional responsibility,* and *perceived behavioral control*.

Conclusions to Chapter 2

1. Emotional abuse was the most frequently reported form of abuse, followed by physical and sexual abuse. Girls reported emotional abuse and emotional neglect more frequently than boys.

2. Compared with adolescents without a history of CAN, adolescents with a history of CAN reported greater involvement in *bullying* and *cyberbullying*, both as perpetrators and as victims, as well as higher scores on emotional, behavioral, and social difficulties; lower levels of *perceived social support from parents, peers, and teachers*, although differences were observed depending on the type of abuse and gender; significantly lower *school adjustment* scores; and higher scores on *low academic motivation* and *attention/concentration difficulties*.

3. The results of the moderated moderation analyses revealed that the role of *perceived social support from peers and teachers* in the relationship between exposure to emotional abuse and school adjustment differed significantly by gender. Regarding perceived social support from parents, the results revealed gender differences in its association with school adjustment, without, however, confirming a significant moderating role in the relationship between exposure to physical abuse and school adjustment.

4. The parallel mediation analyses identified statistically significant indirect effects through *involvement in bullying as a perpetrator, behavioral problems, hyperactivity problems, anxiety/depression, social problems, perceived social support from parents, perceived social support from teachers,* and *low academic motivation*. These findings suggest the existence of multiple psychosocial pathways through which experiences of CAN are associated with school adjustment, without allowing causal mechanisms to be established on the basis of the analyses conducted.

5. At the parental level, higher levels of *parental stress* were associated with a greater frequency of CAN behaviors, whereas *parents' perceived social support* represented a protective factor for the mental health and school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN.

6. The findings regarding the reporting of CAN cases revealed differences according to professional category and educational level: school counselors reported CAN cases more frequently, followed by lower secondary school teachers. Regarding the coping strategies used when identifying

cases of CAN, lower secondary school teachers reported lower scores on informational and personal coping compared with school counselors and upper secondary school teachers.

7. The results of the hierarchical regression analysis highlighted several predictors of teachers' intentions to report CAN, including *attitudes toward child-rearing*, *attitudes toward professional responsibility*, and *perceived behavioral control at the individual level*. These findings underscore the relevance of attitudinal factors and perceptions of one's own ability to act in explaining self-reported intentions to report CAN.

Based on the findings of the observational study, a *multilevel psychoeducational counseling program* was developed for adolescents with a history of abuse and neglect. The program aims to strengthen social support resources, develop emotional self-regulation skills, support academic motivation, and train teachers to identify and manage situations involving CAN.

Chapter 3, entitled "*Implementation and Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Multilevel Psychoeducational Counseling Program*," presents a detailed account of the intervention program, which involved adolescents experiencing abuse and neglect, their parents, classmates, and teachers.

The aim of the formative stage was to develop, implement, and conduct a preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program for adolescents with a history of CAN, designed to reduce mental health symptoms and the frequency of involvement in school-based violence, by activating personal resources, optimizing psychosocial functioning, developing emotion and behavior management skills, and strengthening the ability to utilize social support from parents, teachers, and peers, with the ultimate goal of enhancing school adjustment and motivation while mitigating concentration and attention difficulties.

The objectives of the formative and control process were:

1. Development and structuring of the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program by defining the objectives, content, methods, and intervention activities designed for adolescents with a history of childhood abuse and neglect (CAN), their parents, teachers, and classmates.

2. Implementation and preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program.

3. Drawing conclusions and developing recommendations for parents, teachers, and professionals in the field, based on the results obtained during the intervention and control phase.

General hypothesis: participation in a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program will be associated with a reduction in mental health symptoms, improved school adjustment and motivation, reduction in concentration/attention difficulties, and the strengthening of perceived social support from parents, peers, and teachers among adolescents with a history of emotional and physical abuse and emotional neglect.

Participants:

Experimental and control groups – adolescents: GE_a consisted of 10 adolescents (5 boys and 5 girls), and GC_a consisted of 12 adolescents (5 boys and 7 girls).

Experimental and control groups – parents: GE_p comprised 10 mothers aged between 34 and 42 (M = 37.2, SD = 4.12); GC_p included 12 mothers aged between 36 and 43 (M = 36.5, SD = 1.94).

Experimental and control groups – teachers: these consisted of the homeroom teachers of the classes being evaluated and other teachers who wished to participate and taught the classes in question; GE_{cd} included 7 teachers (5 of whom were homeroom teachers) aged between 24 and 56 (M = 42.2, SD = 12.77); GC_{cd} included 9 teachers (5 of whom were homeroom teachers) aged between 31 and 56 (M = 42.56, SD = 8.96).

Compliance with Ethical Principles in Research: the research and the implementation of the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program were conducted with the approval of the school administration, based on written informed consent provided by parents or legal guardians and the voluntary assent of the participating adolescents. The selection of the experimental group targeted adolescents with a history of exposure to child abuse and neglect (CAN) who exhibited subclinical levels of difficulties (as assessed using the ASEBA-YSR and SDQ), while those with clinical-level difficulties were referred to other specialists. Identified cases of sexual abuse were referred to the competent authorities and were not included in the intervention program. The activities included in the intervention program were psychoeducational in nature and were conducted within the scope of the professional duties and competencies of the school counselor. Throughout the research, efforts were made to maintain the confidentiality of information, protect participants' dignity, prevent stigmatization, and ensure a psychologically safe environment, while prioritizing the best interests of the child.

The Multilevel Psychoeducational Counseling Program was implemented over a period of seven months and included individual and group sessions organized across four levels of intervention: Level I – intervention for Adolescents - this level comprised 12 individual counseling sessions (50 minutes each), aimed at developing socio-emotional competencies and improving school adjustment; level II – intervention for parents: this level included 1–2 individual sessions (50–130 minutes) and two group sessions (100 minutes), with the objectives of reducing parental stress, strengthening perceived social support, and improving the parent–adolescent relationship; level III – intervention for teachers: this level included one group training session and periodic sessions (six mandatory sessions), aimed at developing professional competencies for the identification and appropriate management of CAN situations in the school environment.; level IV – intervention for adolescents' peers: this level comprised three group counseling sessions (150 minutes), conducted at the classroom level in collaboration with homeroom teachers, and two sessions conducted with the school counselor (100 minutes). The activities aimed to foster an empathetic and supportive relational climate, prevent social exclusion, and strengthen emotion regulation skills.

Non-parametric statistical methods were used for data analysis.

Post-intervention results on the questionnaire regarding involvement in bullying, cyberbullying, and physical fights

Objective: evaluation of the association between participation in the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program and involvement in bullying, cyberbullying, and physical fights in the school environment.

Working hypothesis: participation in the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program will be associated with a reduction in the involvement in bullying, cyberbullying, and physical fights; there will be statistically significant differences between the GC_a group and the GE_a group

Statistically significant results were obtained for the experimental group (GE_a) in the test-retest analysis only regarding involvement in *bullying* (z = -2.041, p = 0.041), with a large effect size (d = 0.81), whereas results for c*yberbullying* were non-significant (z = -1.633, p = 0.102). Furthermore, following participation in the program, adolescents reported less frequent involvement in *physical fights* at school (z = -2.414, p = 0.016), with a large effect size (d = 1.21). At the *retest* stage, statistically significant differences were identified between the control group GC_a (M = 2.33) and the experimental group GE_a (M = 1.20) regarding involvement in *physical fights* (z = -2.397, p = 0.030), whereas results for *bullying* and *cyberbullying* were non-significant (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Mean values of the results regarding involvement in bullying, cyberbullying, and physical fights

Variables	GE_a				GC_a				GE_{retest} vs GC_{retest}	
	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	z	p
Bullying	2.30	1.40	-2.041	0.041	2.08	2.00	-0.577	0.564	-0.882	0.456
Cyberbullying	1.70	1.30	-1.633	0.102	1.58	1.66	-1.001	0.371	-1.119	0.346
Physical fights	2.40	1.20	-2.414	0.016	1.75	2.33	1.734	0.083	-2.397	0.030

Post-intervention results on the SDQ and ASEBA questionnaires

Objective: evaluation of the association between participation in the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program and mean scores on the SDQ and ASEBA questionnaires.

Working hypothesis: participation in the program will be associated with a reduction in scores on the SDQ questionnaire (emotional problems, behavioral problems, hyperactivity, and peer problems) and the ASEBA questionnaire (anxiety/depression, withdrawal/depression, somatic complaints, social problems) for the GE_a group, but not for the GC_a

A decrease in scores was observed across all ASEBA questionnaire subscales, indicating a reduction in symptom intensity for the experimental group (GE_a) following program participation (Table 3.2). A large effect size (d = 0.87) was obtained for the *anxiety/depression* subscale, highlighting the reduction in symptoms (z = -2.820, p = 0.005). Regarding the *withdrawal/depression* and *somatic complaints* subscales,

medium effect sizes were obtained (d = 0.56 and d = 0.57, respectively). For the *social problems* subscale, the effect size was small (d = 0.43), with a slight decrease in scores (z = -2.598, p = 0.009). In the control group (GC_a), significant test-retest results were obtained for the *withdrawal/depression* subscale (z = 2.484, p = 0.013), with adolescents reporting significantly higher scores at the retest stage (M = 9.75, SD = 2.41) compared to the initial testing stage (M = 8.33, SD = 1.87).

Table 3.2 Mean values of the results regarding SDQ and ASEBA questionnaires

Variables	GE_a				GC_a				GE_{retest} vs GC_{retest}	
	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	z	p
Emotional problems	5.80	3.80	-2.121	0.034	5.33	5.58	1.342	0.180	-3.459	0.001
Behavioral problems	4.60	2.70	-2.873	0.004	4.33	5.16	1.801	0.072	-3.836	<0.001
Peer problems	5.60	2.80	-2.555	0.011	5.41	6.16	1.282	0.200	-3.668	<0.001
Hyperactivity problems	4.60	4.50	-0.378	0.705	4.83	4.91	0.264	0.792	-0.747	0.497
Anxiety/Depression	11.50	7.40	-2.820	0.005	10.6	10.41	-0.647	0.581	-3.313	0.002
Withdraw/Depression	8.30	5.70	-2.831	0.005	8.33	9.75	2.484	0.013	-3.185	0.001
Somatic complaints	10.01	8.20	-2.565	0.010	9.10	9.10	-0.175	0.861	-0.589	0.582
Social problems	8.90	5.80	-2.598	0.009	8.75	8.41	-1.242	0.214	-2.737	0.006

At the *retest* stage, statistically significant differences were identified between the GC_a and the GE_a on three of the SDQ questionnaire subscales. In other words, adolescents in the GE_a group reported lower scores for *emotional problems* (z = -3.459, p = 0.001), *behavioral problems* (z = -3.836, p < .001), and *peer problems* (z = -3.668, p < .001). No statistically significant results were obtained for the *hyperactivity problems subscale* (z = -0.747, p = 0.497). Regarding the ASEBA questionnaire, statistically significant differences between GC_a and GE_a were found on the *anxiety/depression* (z = -3.313, p = 0.002), *withdrawal/depression* (z = -3.185, p = 0.001), and *social problems* (z = -2.737, p = 0.006) subscales. No statistically significant results were obtained for the *somatic complaints* subscale (z = -0.589, p = 0.582); GC_a (M = 9.10, SD = 2.97) and GE_a (M = 8.20, SD = 2.33) showed similar mean scores at retesting.

Post-intervention results for the MSPSS, SSc, and SScd subscales

Objective: evaluation of the association between participation in the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program and the level of perceived social support from parents, peers, and teachers.

Working hypothesis: participation in the program will be associated with an increase in perceived social support scores from parents, teachers, and peers in the GE_a group, but not in the GC_a group

Table 3.3 Mean values of the results regarding MSPSS, SS_c and SS_{cd} subscales

Variables	GE_a				GC_a				GE_{retest} vs GC_{retest}	
	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	z	p
MSPSS	15.80	18.10	2.694	0.007	14.83	14.16	-1.579	0.114	2.355	0.017
SS_c	8.80	9.90	2.333	0.020	9.00	9.08	-0.322	0.748	0.631	0.539
SS_{cd}	7.30	10.50	2.576	0.010	8.16	8.00	0.520	0.603	2.008	0.042

Statistical analysis results showed statistically significant *test-retest* differences in the GE_a group for the *MSPSS* subscale, with a medium effect size (d = 0.58); adolescents reported a slight increase in *perceived social support from parents* (z = 2.694, p = 0.007). Significant test-retest differences were also observed for the *SSc* subscale (z = 2.333, p = 0.020), though the effect size was small (d = 0.34), indicating a smaller increase in *perceived social support from peers* following program participation. Regarding *perceived social support from teachers*, program participation had a large effect (d = 1.40), with a significant increase in GE_a scores at *retest* (M = 10.50, SD = 1.50) compared to the initial test (M = 7.30, SD = 2.86).

At the *retest* stage, we obtained statistically significant results between GC_a and GE_a on the *MSPSS* (z = 2.355, p = 0.017) and *SScd* (z = 2.008, p = 0.042) subscales. Although perceived social support from peers increased significantly within the experimental group, the difference between the experimental and control groups at retest was not statistically significant (z = 0.631, p = 0.539).

Post-intervention results for the MOTSCA, DIFCON, and SAS subscales

Objective: evaluation of the association between participation in the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program and low academic motivation, concentration/attention difficulties, and school adjustment

Working hypothesis: participation in the program will be associated with a decrease in scores on the MOTSCA (low academic motivation) and DIFCON (concentration/attention difficulties) subscales and an increase in scores on the SAS (school adjustment) subscale in the GE_a group, but not in the GC_a group

Table 3.4 Mean values of the results regarding MOTSC, DIFCON and SAS subscales

Variables	GE_a				GC_a				GE_{retest} vs GC_{retest}	
	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	z	p
MOTSCA	30.2	17.8	-2.829	0.005	27.3	26.5	-0.755	0.450	-3.212	0.001
DIFCON	31.0	28.0	-2.836	0.005	26.0	25.1	-0.052	0.540	0.749	0.427
SAS	6.90	10.4	2.821	0.005	6.58	6.75	0.520	0.603	3.361	0.001

The results of the *test-retest* comparisons in the GE_a group were statistically significant for all subscales (Table 3.4): for the *MOTSCA subscale*, adolescents reported lower scores (z = -2.829, p = 0.005) with a large effect size (d = -1.69); for the *DIFCON subscale*, they also reported lower scores (z = -2.836, p = 0.005), but with a small effect size (d = 0.46); for the *SAS subscale*, the analysis results showed an improvement in school adjustment scores (z = 2.821, p = 0.005) with a medium effect size (d = 0.56).

At the *retest* stage, comparisons between GC_a and GE_a were statistically significant for the *MOTSCA subscale* (z = -3.212, p = 0.001); adolescents in GE_a (M = 17.80, SD = 4.77) had significantly lower scores than those in GC_a (M = 26.5, SD = 5.97). Adolescents in GE_a reported lower scores for low academic motivation compared to those in GC_a.

Although *test-retest* comparisons for GE_a were significant for the *DIFCON subscale*, the GC_a-GE_a comparison at *retest* was not significant (z = 0.749, p = 0.427). Additionally, adolescents in GE_a had

significantly higher scores for *school adjustment* than those in GC_a ($z = 3.361$, $p = 0.001$) (Table 3.4).

Post-intervention results for the questionnaires administered to parents: PSS and MPSS

Objective: evaluation of the association between participation in the multilevel educational counseling program and parental stress levels and the social support perceived by parents

Working hypothesis: participation in the program will be associated with a decrease in scores on the Parental Stress Scale (PSS) and an increase in scores on the questionnaire assesing social support perceived by parents (MPSS), in the GE_p group, but not in the GC_p group

Table 3.5 Mean values of the results regarding PSS and MSPSS subscales

Variables	GE_p				GC_p				GE_{retest} vs GC_{retest}	
	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test\text{-}retest}$	p	z	p
PSS	53.5	38.8	-2.812	0.005	50.8	47.5	-1.826	.068	2.529	0.011
MSPSS	32.6	38.0	2.807	0.005	25.2	25.8	0.954	.340	-2.779	0.004

Statistically significant results were obtained for GE_p (*test-retest*) for both measures. Following their participation in the intervention program, parents in the GE_p group reported lower *PSS* scores ($z = -2.812$, $p = 0.005$), with a large effect size ($d = 2.08$), and higher *MSPSS* scores ($z = 2.807$, $p = 0.005$), with a medium effect size ($d = 0.77$). At the retest stage, comparisons between the GC_p and GE_p groups showed that, following participation in the program, *PSS* scores decreased ($z = 2.529$, $p = 0.011$) and *MSPSS* scores increased ($z = -2.779$, $p = 0.004$).

Post-intervention results for the questionnaire administered to teachers: CARIS-R

Objective: evaluation of the association between participation in the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program and factors that might influence teachers' intention to intervene in and report CAN

Working hypothesis: participation in the program will be associated with significant changes across all subscales of the CARIS-R questionnaire, in the GE_{cd} group, but not in the GC_{cd} group

Test-retest comparison results showed that teachers in the GE_{cd} group reported significantly higher scores at the retest stage on the following subscales: *attitudes regarding the responsibility to file a report* ($z = 2.060$, $p = .039$), *personal behavioral control* ($z = 2.232$, $p = .026$), *teacher behavioral control* ($z = 2.070$, $p = .038$), *knowledge* ($z = 2.401$, $p = .016$), and *personal coping* ($z = 2.371$, $p = .018$), and lower scores for *filing a report* ($z = -2.214$, $p = .027$) and *informational coping* ($z = -2.120$, $p = .034$)(Table 3.6).

At the *retest* stage, comparisons between the GC_{cd} and GE_{cd} revealed significant differences regarding the following subscales: *attitude toward punishing the abuser* (teachers in the GC_{cd} reported higher scores); *teacher behavioral control* (following participation in the intervention program, those in the GE_{cd} recorded higher scores); *knowledge* (higher scores for the GE_{cd}); *informational coping* (lower scores for the GE_{cd}); and *personal coping* (higher scores for the GE_{cd}). No other differences were statistically significant.

Table 3.6 Mean values of the results regarding CARIS-R subscales

Variables	GE_{cd}				GC_{cd}				GE_{retest} vs GC_{retest}	
	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test-retest}$	p	M_{test}	M_{retest}	$z_{test-retest}$	p	z	p
A. child-rearing	5.85	4.42	-1.891	0.059	4.88	4.55	-1.342	0.180	-0.699	0.485
A. punishing the abuser	21.28	22.85	1.801	0.071	26.11	27.00	1.342	0.180	2.090	0.037
A. reporting responsibility	21.42	23.14	2.060	0.039	21.55	21.88	1.118	0.447	-1.484	0.138
A. filing a report	11.28	8.14	-2.214	0.027	9.44	10.33	1.604	0.109	1.763	0.078
Personal behavior control	11.42	13.71	2.232	0.026	14.00	14.33	1.732	0.083	0.546	0.585
Teacher behavioral control	11.42	13.85	2.070	0.038	9.66	9.33	-1.342	0.180	-2.734	0.006
Knowledge	2.85	9.14	2.401	0.016	4.44	4.44	-	-	-2.672	0.008
Student-centered emotional coping	13.71	14.42	1.342	0.180	14.66	14.00	-1.342	0.180	-0.387	0.699
External emotional coping	21.14	21.17	1.001	0.317	21.55	21.88	1.001	0.317	0.539	0.606
Informational coping	21.42	17.42	-2.120	0.034	22.33	22.77	1.342	0.180	2.723	0.006
Personal coping	8.71	13.14	2.371	0.018	9.33	9.88	1.002	0.318	-2.193	0.031

At the *retest* stage, comparisons between the GC_{cd} and GE_{cd} revealed significant differences regarding the following subscales: *attitude toward punishing the abuser* (teachers in the GC_{cd} reported higher scores); *teacher behavioral control* (following participation in the intervention program, those in the GE_{cd} recorded higher scores); *knowledge* (higher scores for the GE_{cd}); *informational coping* (lower scores for the GE_{cd}); and *personal coping* (higher scores for the GE_{cd}). No other differences were statistically significant.

Chapter 3 Conclusions

1. The results revealed a favorable trend in involvement in aggressive behaviors within the experimental group. The most consistent findings were observed for *involvement in physical fights*, for which statistically significant results were obtained both in the test–retest comparison and in the between-group comparison at retest. Regarding *bullying*, the significant reduction between testing and retesting was not accompanied by significant between-group differences at retest. As for *cyberbullying*, although mean scores decreased, the changes did not reach statistical significance. Overall, the findings suggest that participation in the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program was associated with reduced involvement in direct aggressive behaviors, whereas the findings regarding bullying and cyberbullying were less conclusive.

2. Following the implementation of the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program, statistically significant differences were found between the scores of adolescents in the *experimental group (GE_a)* and the *control group (GC_a)*. Specifically, adolescents in the experimental group (*GEa*) reported significantly lower scores on *emotional problems, behavioral problems, peer problems, anxiety/depression, withdrawn/depressed symptoms*, and *social problems*. These findings were also supported by significant

differences between the experimental and control groups at retest. For *somatic complaints* and *hyperactivity problems*, the results did not reach statistical significance. These findings suggest that the program was associated with improvements in certain dimensions of emotional, behavioral, and social functioning, whereas the results concerning hyperactivity and somatic complaints require more cautious interpretation.

3. Adolescents in GE_a reported statistically significant increases in *perceived social support from parents, peers, and teachers* between testing and retesting. However, the differences between GE_a and GC_a at retest were statistically significant only for perceived social support from parents and teachers. These findings suggest that the program was associated with strengthening the support resources perceived by adolescents, particularly in their relationships with parents and teachers. Regarding perceived social support from peers, the results indicate the need to explore additional intervention strategies and evaluate their long-term effects.

4. Participation in the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program was associated with improved *school adjustment* and reduced scores on *low academic motivation* and *attention/concentration difficulties*. Statistically significant differences between the two groups at retest were also identified for school adjustment and low academic motivation. In contrast, the reduction in attention/concentration difficulties was statistically significant only in the test–retest comparison within GE_a. These findings highlight the relevance of interventions aimed at improving school adjustment and academic motivation, whereas reducing attention/concentration difficulties may require additional interventions and subsequent evaluations.

5. Parents in the experimental group (GE_p) reported a statistically significant reduction in *parental stress* and a statistically significant increase in *perceived social support from significant others*. Differences between GE_p and the control group (GC_p) were statistically significant at retest for both variables.

6. Among teachers in the experimental group (GE_{cd}), statistically significant changes were identified in attitudes toward reporting cases of abuse and neglect, perceived behavioral control, knowledge, and coping strategies. At retest, significant differences between the experimental and control groups were found in attitudes toward punishing perpetrators of abuse, perceived behavioral control at the professional level, knowledge, and informational and personal coping strategies. These findings suggest promising effects of the program that require confirmation through further research.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Child abuse and neglect (CAN) remain highly relevant topics in the scientific literature, with consequences that may manifest across all stages of development, particularly during adolescence, when biological changes are intense and pressure from parents and teachers to successfully meet academic demands increases. Adolescents spend a significant portion of their time in the school environment, where teachers and peers may observe manifestations associated with exposure to CAN, and where access to support interventions can be facilitated.

2. The school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN remains insufficiently explored in the literature. However, the observational study made a significant contribution by: (1) examining a range of risk factors (at the family level: parental stress; at the adolescent level: mental health problems, involvement in bullying, cyberbullying, and physical fights, low academic motivation, and attention/concentration difficulties) and protective factors (at the parental level: perceived social support; at the adolescent level: perceived social support from parents, peers, and teachers) that may act as mediators or moderators in the relationship between exposure to CAN and school adjustment; and (2) describing the factors influencing teachers' intentions to become involved in addressing and reporting CAN in Romania, based on the Theory of Planned Behavior.

3. The findings of the observational phase indicated that adolescents with a history of abuse and neglect more frequently reported involvement in bullying, cyberbullying, and physical fights, experienced more mental health-related difficulties, particularly those exposed to multiple forms of victimization, and perceived lower levels of social support from parents, teachers, and peers. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the role of *perceived social support from peers and teachers* in the relationship between exposure to emotional abuse and school adjustment differed significantly by gender. Regarding perceived social support from parents, the results revealed gender differences in its association with school adjustment, without, however, confirming a significant moderating role in the relationship between exposure to physical abuse and school adjustment.

4. The parallel mediation analyses identified statistically significant indirect effects through *involvement in bullying as a perpetrator, behavioral problems, hyperactivity problems, anxiety/depression, social problems, perceived social support from parents, perceived social support from teachers,* and *low academic motivation*. These findings suggest the existence of multiple psychosocial pathways through which experiences of CAN are associated with school adjustment, without allowing causal mechanisms to be established on the basis of the analyses conducted.

5. Parents who reported higher levels of parental stress were more likely to engage in CAN behaviors, whereas perceived social support among parents may represent a protective factor by reducing the likelihood of engaging in such behaviors.

6. Among the predictors of teachers' intentions to report severe and less severe cases of CAN, identified in the research, are *attitudes toward child-rearing, attitudes toward professional responsibility, attitudes toward making a CAN report,* and *perceived behavioral control at the individual level*.

7. The implementation of the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program was associated with the following outcomes: a) *Adolescents:* Increased levels of perceived social support from parents, peers, and teachers; fewer emotional, behavioral, social, and somatic problems, as well as fewer anxiety/depression and withdrawn/depressed symptoms; reduced frequency of involvement in bullying and physical fights; higher school adjustment scores; and lower scores on low academic motivation and

attention/concentration difficulties; b) *Parents:* Reduced levels of parental stress and increased levels of perceived social support from significant others; c) *Teachers:* Greater perceived responsibility regarding involvement in addressing and reporting CAN, higher levels of perceived behavioral control, changes in the coping strategies used in situations involving the disclosure of CAN, as well as an increase in knowledge regarding CAN.

Implementation recommendations:

Based on the research findings, recommendations for their practical application were formulated and structured across four levels:

At the parent and family level, it is recommended to develop parental psychoeducation programs aimed at raising awareness of the consequences of abuse and neglect for adolescents' development and school adjustment, managing parental stress, improving parent–adolescent communication, and promoting nonviolent parenting practices.

At the teacher level, it is recommended to incorporate the research findings into good practice guidelines and continuing professional development programs to strengthen teachers' competencies in identifying, managing, and reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. The CARIS-R questionnaire may be used to assess factors associated with intentions to report CAN cases and to tailor training programs to teachers' needs.

At the level of school counselors and psychology professionals, it is recommended to adopt a multidimensional assessment of individual, family, and school-related factors associated with the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN. The multilevel psychoeducational counseling program developed as part of this research may serve as a starting point for developing interventions tailored to their needs, aimed at reducing emotional and behavioral difficulties, strengthening social support, and improving school adjustment.

At the institutional and school level, it is recommended to develop prevention and intervention programs aimed at strengthening supportive relationships among adolescents, parents, peers, and teachers, as well as enhancing collaboration among schools, school counseling services, and child protection agencies to facilitate the early identification and appropriate management of cases of abuse and neglect.

Suggestions for future research:

1. Extending the research to larger and more geographically and sociodemographically diverse samples, as well as conducting longitudinal studies, to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships between exposure to child abuse and neglect (CAN), mental health, and adolescents' school adjustment.

2. Investigating additional risk and protective factors, such as emotion regulation, self-efficacy, and school climate, as well as examining the associations between polyvictimization and adolescents' school adjustment.

3. Continuing the evaluation of the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program by including follow-up assessments at 6 and 12 months after the intervention and exploring additional strategies to reduce hyperactivity and attention and concentration difficulties, as well as alternative formats for individual and group interventions.

The results of this doctoral thesis should be analyzed with certain **limitations** in mind:

1. Characteristics of the investigated samples. The observational study was conducted using a convenience sample comprising adolescents and parents from Neamț County, with a predominance of participants from rural areas, which limits the generalizability of the findings to the adolescent population in Romania. Furthermore, the small number of participants involved in the evaluation of the multilevel psychoeducational counseling program calls for caution when interpreting the findings regarding its effectiveness.

2. Use of self-report measures. Data collection through self-report questionnaires may be influenced by social desirability bias and individual differences in perception. The use of multiple sources of information, including assessments provided by parents and teachers, could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the variables investigated.

3. Cross-sectional design of the observational study**.** This design allowed for the identification of associations between experiences of abuse and neglect, psychosocial factors, and school adjustment, but did not allow causal relationships or the temporal sequence of the phenomena investigated to be established.

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LIST OF SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC

Note: The scientific publications published under the name *Cristescu* were authored by the author of the present doctoral thesis, *Mihalache*, whose surname changed following marriage.

Papers in ***specialized scientific journals:***

1. OLĂRESCU, V., **CRISTESCU, D.S.** Evaluating the Differential Role of Risk and Protective Factors in the School Adaptation of Adolescents with a History of Abuse. In: *Psihologie. Revistă ştiinţifico-practică*, 2025, vol.47, nr. 2, pp. 20-31. ISSN 1857-2502 (tipărit); ISSN 2537-6276 (online) DOI: 10.46728/pspj.2025.v47.i2.p20-31

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9. **CRISTESCU, D.S.**, DIACONU, M. Intervenţii psihopedagogice informate de traumă la elevii în situaţii de risc din instituţiile de învăţământ general. In: *Management şi asistenţă psihopedagogică pentru beneficiarii serviciilor educaţionale.* Bucureşti: Pro Universitaria, 2024, pp. 87-95. ISBN 978-606-26-2040-0

10. DIACONU, M, **CRISTESCU, D.S**. Prevenirea apariţiei tulburărilor emoţionale la elevii din gimnaziu prin activităţile de consiliere psihopedagogică. In: *Management şi asistenţă psihopedagogică pentru beneficiarii serviciilor educaţionale.* Bucureşti: Pro Universitaria, 2024, pp. 96-100. ISBN 978-606-26-2040-0

ADNOTARE

Delia-Simona Mihalache. Implicarea cadrelor didactice în adaptarea la şcoală a adolescenţilor cu istoric de abuz şi neglijare. Teză de doctor în Psihologie. Chişinău, 2026.

Structura tezei: Teza conţine: adnotări, lista abrevierilor, introducere, trei capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, bibliografie (314 titluri), 5 anexe, 136 pagini de text de bază, 15 figuri și 22 tabele. Rezultatele obţinute sunt publicate în 10 lucrări ştiinţifice.

Cuvinte cheie: abuz, neglijare emoţională, adolescenţi, factori de risc şi protecţie, sănătate mintală, adaptare şcolară, cadre didactice, program consiliere educaţională.

Domeniul de studiu: psihologia abuzului, neglijării şi adaptării şcolare

Scopul cercetării a constat în evaluarea factorilor de risc şi de protecţie de la nivel individual, familial şi şcolar implicaţi în adaptarea şcolară şi funcţionarea psihosocială a adolescenţilor cu istoric de abuz şi neglijare, precum şi elaborarea, implementarea şi evaluarea preliminară a eficienţei unui program multinivelar de consiliere psihoeducaţională, adresat adolescenţilor, colegilor acestora, părinţilor şi cadrelor didactice, orientat spre reducerea consecinţelor negative ale expunerii la CAN şi consolidarea resurselor protective ale adolescentilor, oferirea suportului social parintilor, pregatirea si determinarea cadrelor didactice de a se implica în prevenirea, identificarea şi raportarea cazurilor de abuz şi neglijare întâlnite în mediul şcolar.

Obiectivele cercetării: studierea aprofundată a literaturii de specialitate pentru a identifica temele de cercetare insuficient explorate și a variabilelor ce vor fi studiate; selectarea și adaptarea metodelor și instrumentelor de evaluare a factorilor de risc și de protecție la nivel individual, familial și școlar relevanți pentru adaptarea școlară a adolescenților cu istoric de CAN; investigarea relațiilor dintre stresul parental, suportul social perceput de către părinți, experiențele de CAN, funcționarea socio-emoțională și adaptarea școlară a adolescenților cu istoric de CAN; identificarea factorilor asociați intenției cadrelor didactice de a interveni și raporta situațiile de CAN; elaborarea, implementarea și evaluarea preliminară a eficienței unui program multinivelar de consiliere psihoeducațională destinat adolescenților, părinților, colegilor și cadrelor didactice; formularea unor recomandări pentru valorificarea practică a rezultatelor cercetării.

Rezultatele obținute care contribuie la soluționarea problemei științifice sunt: *sistematizarea* rezultatelor cercetărilor prezentate în literatura de specialitate; *descrierea şi evidenţierea* unor asocieri între forme diferite de abuz (fizic, emoţional, sexual) şi neglijarea emoţională, funcţionarea psihosocială şi adaptarea şcolară a adolescenţilor cu istoric de CAN; *evaluarea* rolului pe care stresul parental şi suportul social primit de către părinţi îl are frecvenţa sau ocurenţa CAN şi în adaptarea şcolară a adolescenţilor; *elaborarea şi testarea* unui model al factorilor de risc (consecinţele expunerii la CAN) şi de protecţie (suport social) ce pot influenţa relaţia dintre expunerea la CAN şi adaptarea şcolară a adolescenţilor cu istoric de CAN; *identificarea,* conform cu Teoria Comportamentului Planificat (TCP), a factorilor ce pot influenţa intenţia cadrelor didactice de a se implica în cazurile de CAN din şcoală; *implementarea* unui program multinivelar de consiliere psihoeducaţională care a fost asociat cu: a) adolescenţi - *reducerea* unor dificultăţi de sănătate mintală, *reducerea* frecvenţei implicării în comportamente violente, *creşterea* motivaţiei academice, *creşterea* nivelului de adaptare şcolară şi a suportului social perceput de la părinţi şi cadre didactice; *b)* părinţi – *scăderea* nivelului de stres parental şi *creşterea* nivelului suportului social perceput; *c)* cadre didactice – *îmbunătăţirea* cunoştinţelor privind CAN, *consolidarea* intenţiei de implicare în CAN, *dobândirea* unor metode de coping potrivite pentru adresarea situaţiilor de CAN.

Noutatea şi originalitatea ştiinţifică rezidă în abordarea integrală a adaptării şcolare a adolescenţilor cu istoric de CAN, prin investigarea concomitentă a unor variabile individuale, familiale şi şcolare. În cadrul cercetării: s-a evidenţiat prevalenţa expunerii la abuz şi neglijare şi diferenţele în funcţionarea psihosocială şi adaptarea şcolară între adolescenţii cu istoric de CAN şi cei fără; s-au testat modele de mediere şi moderare complexe, care au surprins cateva efecte indirecte semnificative (factori de risc şi de protecţie) şi asocieri condiţionate de gen şi sursa suportului social; s-au investigat relaţiile dintre stresul parental şi suportul social perceput de părinţi şi variabilele evaluate la adolescenţi; s-a tradus şi adaptat un instrument de măsură (CARIS-R) şi au fost identificaţi factorii psihosociali asociaţi acestei intenţii; s-a dezvoltat, implementat şi evaluat preliminar eficienţa unui program multinivelar de consiliere psihoeducaţională.

Semnificaţia teoretică constă în: aprofundarea şi extinderea cunoştinţelor privind funcţionarea psihosocială şi adaptarea şcolară adolescenţilor cu istoric de abuz şi neglijare (CAN); identificarea şi analiza unor factori de risc şi de protecţie (mecanisme de moderare şi mediere) în relaţia dintre expunerea la CAN şi adaptarea şcolară a adolescenţilor cu istoric de CAN; înţelegerea rolului unor factori care ţin de părinţi (stresul parental şi suportul social perceput), în asociere cu expunerea adolescenţilor la CAN şi cu dificultăţile de adaptare şcolară; fundamentarea conceptuală, implementarea şi evaluarea preliminară a eficienţei unui program multinivelar de consiliere psihoeducaţională, adresat adolescenţilor cu istoric de CAN, părinţilor acestora, colegilor şi cadrelor didactice.

Valoarea aplicativă a lucrării constă în: elaborarea unui program multinivelar de consiliere psihoeducaţională, ce oferă un model alternativ de abordare a consecinţelor negative ale expunerii la CAN asupra adaptării şcolare; datele obţinute în urma sistematizării literaturii de specialitate şi rezultatele studiilor pot fi o sursă importantă de documentare pentru specialiştii din domeniu; instrumentele utilizate şi adaptate şi activităţile propuse pot sprijini consilierii şcolari, psihologii şi cadrele didactice în identificarea nevoilor adolescenţilor vulnerabili, consolidarea suportului social şi dezvoltarea unor intervenţii adaptate contextului educaţional.

Implementarea rezultatelor ştiinţifice: rezultatele sunt utilizate în pregătirea consilierilor şcolari, cadrelor didactice, dar şi a altor specialişti din domeniul sănătăţii mintale.

ANNOTATION

Delia-Simona Mihalache. Teacher's Involvement in the School Adjustment of Adolescents with a History of Abuse and Neglect. PhD thesis in Psychology. Chișinau, 2026.

Thesis structure: The thesis contains: Introduction, three chapters, General conclusions and recommendations, Bibliography (314) and 5 Annexes, 136 pages of text, 15 figures and 22 tables. The results obtained are published in 10 scientific papers.

Keywords: child abuse, emotional neglect, adolescents, risk and protective factors, mental health, school adjustment, teachers, educational counseling program.

Field of study: psychology of child abuse, neglect and school adjustment

The aim of the research was to assess the individual, familial, and school-level risk and protective factors associated with the school adjustment and psychosocial functioning of adolescents with a history of abuse and neglect, as well as to develop, implement, and to conduct a preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program involving adolescents, their peers, parents, and teachers. The program was designed to reduce the negative consequences of exposure to child abuse and neglect (CAN), strengthen adolescents' protective resources, provide social support to parents, and enhance teachers' preparedness and willingness to engage in the prevention, identification, and reporting of suspected cases of CAN in the school settings.

Research objectives: to conduct a comprehensive review of the literature in order to identify under-explored research areas and relevant variables to be studied; to select and adapt assessment methods and instruments measuring individual, family, and school-level risk and protective factors associated with the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of child abuse and neglect (CAN); to investigate the relationship between parental stress, parents' perceived social support, experiences of CAN, and adolescents' socio-emotional functioning and school adjustment; to identify factors associated with teachers' intentions to intervene in and report suspected cases of CAN; to develop, implement, and preliminary evaluate the effectiveness of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program targeting adolescents, parents, peers, and teachers; and to formulate recommendations for the practical application of the research findings.

The results obtained that contribute to solving the scientific problem consist of**:** *systematizing* the results of research from the scientific literature; the identification and description of associations between different forms of abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual), emotional neglect, and the psychosocial functioning and school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN; the *assessment* of the role of parental stress and parents' perceived social support in the occurrence or frequency of CAN related behaviors and adolescents' school adjustment; the *development* and *testing* of a model incorporating risk factors (consequences of CAN exposure) and protective factors (social support) that may influence the relationship between CAN exposure and school adjustment; the *identification* – in accordance with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)- of factors associated with teachers' intention to become involved in school-based CAN cases; the *implementation* of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program that was associated with: a) adolescents – *reduction* in certain mental health issues, *reduced* frequency of involvement in violent behavior, *increased* academic motivation, and improved school adjustment and perceived social support from parents, teachers, and peers; b) parents – *reduced* parental stress and *increased* perceived social support; c) teachers – *improved* knowledge regarding CAN, *strengthened* intention to become involved in addressing CAN, and the *acquisition* of appropriate coping methods for handling situations of CAN.

Scientific novelty and originality. The scientific novelty of the research lies in its integrated approach to the school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN through the simultaneous investigation of individual, family, and school-level variables. The study examined the prevalence of exposure to abuse and neglect and identified differences in psychosocial functioning and school adjustment between adolescents with and without a history of CAN. Mediation and moderation models were tested, revealing several statistically significant indirect effects involving risk and protective factors, as well as associations conditional on gender and the source of perceived social support. The relationships between parental stress, parents' perceived social support, and variables assessed among adolescents were also investigated. Furthermore, a measurement instrument (CARIS-R) was translated and adapted, and psychosocial factors associated with teachers' intentions to report CAN were identified. A multilevel psychoeducational counseling program was developed, implemented, and subjected to a preliminary evaluation of its effectiveness.

The theoretical significance of the work consists in: expanding and deepening knowledge of the psychosocial functioning and school adjustment of adolescents with a history of CAN; identifying and analyzing risk and protective factors, including statistical mediation and moderation effects, in the relationship between exposure to CAN and adolescents' school adjustment; improving understanding of the associations between family-related factors, particularly parental stress and perceived social support, adolescents' exposure to CAN, and school adjustment difficulties; and providing the conceptual foundation for the development, implementation, and preliminary evaluation of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program involving adolescents with a history of CAN, their parents, peers, and teachers.

The applied value of the work lies in the development of a multilevel psychoeducational counseling program that offers an alternative approach to addressing the negative consequences of exposure to CAN for school adjustment. The synthesis of the scientific literature and the empirical findings may serve as valuable resources for professionals in the field. Furthermore, the assessment instruments used and adapted, together with the proposed intervention activities, may support school counselors, psychologists, and teachers in identifying the needs of vulnerable adolescents, strengthening social support, and developing interventions tailored to educational settings.

Implementation of scientific results: the results are used in the training of school counselors, teachers, and other specialists in the field of mental health.

MIHALACHE DELIA-SIMONA

TEACHERS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT OF ADOLESCENTS WITH A HISTORY OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

SPECIALITY 511.02 – DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Summary of the PhD Thesis in Psychology

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