

## **Abstract**

Child abuse is known to have deleterious short-term and long-term impact on children's development in all aspects. Considerable studies conducted in the West show a negative association between child abuse and academic performance. However, few studies empirically tested mediating models to understand the mechanisms through which child abuse could impact academic performance. There are also few studies examining the association between child abuse and academic performance within the Chinese context, where the society has a greater tolerance on the use of physical punishment as a child disciplinary technique. Building on existing literature, this study examined the mediating role of self-control, attention problems and loneliness on the association between physical abuse and academic performance using Chinese sample. Results suggest that physical abuse is indirectly associated with academic performance through two pathways: 1) self-control and attention problems sequentially; and 2) loneliness. The present study suggests that physical abuse could impact on academic performance through affecting children's cognitive and social domains of functioning. Implications for future research are discussed.

*Keywords: physical abuse, academic performance, self-control, attention problems, loneliness*