The Effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences on Parenting Practices
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Abstract

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) refer to traumatic sources of stress that a child may endure before the age of 18. Although extensive research reveals the link between ACEs and poor physical, social, and psychological health, few studies have examined how ACEs relate to later negative parenting practices. This study examined the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and the quality of current parenting practices. Results indicated that parental stress was a significant predictor of negative parenting practices (poor supervision, inconsistent discipline, and use of corporal punishment). In addition, an interaction between ACEs and resilience was present for corporal punishment. These results suggest an intergenerational trauma cycle in which childhood trauma is passed down through negative parenting practices. Researching ACEs within a framework that incorporates the parent-child relationship highlights the importance of decreasing parental stress and improving positive parenting to break this trauma cycle.

Outline

1. Introduction
   a. Inspiration
   b. Purpose of study
   c. Literature review
   d. Research Questions
      i. What is the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and later parenting practices?
      ii. What is the protective role of resilience in moderating this relationship?
2. Methodology
   a. Procedures
      i. MTurk, compensation, completion time
   b. Participants (N=301)
   c. Measures
      i. Alabama Parenting Questionnaire (APQ)
      ii. Linear regression model: demographics, religion, Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS), Adverse Childhood Experience (ACEs) Questionnaire, Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 10), ACEs x Resilience, Parenting Stress Index-Short Form (PSI-SF)
3. Results
   a. Demographics
   b. Resilience is significant direct predictor of positive parenting practices
   c. ACEs not significant direct predictor of negative parenting practices
      i. Parental stress is significant direct predictor of negative parenting practices
   d. Unexpected finding: significant interaction for those with high ACEs, high resilience leads to more use of corporal punishment than low resilience
4. Discussion
   a. Dysregulation of stress-response system
   b. Dark side of resilience
5. Limitations
6. Implications
   a. Improve parenting competency to decrease parental stress
      i. Ex: Positive Parenting Program
   b. Future research

Selected References

This study examined dysfunctional parenting, specifically looking at child abuse, in order to reveal intergenerational transmissions of parenting. It found that early experiences of parental abuse lead abused individuals to treat their own children in the same manner.

This article demonstrates how extreme resilience can drive individuals to hold unrealistic expectations that they believe will be met. The more they demand for these expectations to be met, the more they become intolerant of unpleasant or counterproductive circumstances. This idea can be transferred into the context of high parental resilience resulting in the use of corporal punishment.

This study revealed groundbreaking findings regarding the relationship between childhood trauma and detrimental long-term effects, such as increased risks for depression and severe obesity. This study has become the basis for adverse childhood experience research.

These authors demonstrated the benefits of implementing parenting programs that teach communication strategies, conflict resolution, emotional regulation, and other parenting competency techniques. The program they analyzed, Promoting Positive Parenting, ultimately led to reduced substantiated cases of abuse, out-of-home placements, and maltreatment injuries.

This review established a model of intergenerational transmission of parenting in which genetic or contextual continuity is considered. The researchers developed a view of parenting that suggests that current parents use similar parenting techniques that they received when they were children.