

# Effects of adverse childhood experiences on social anxiety and job performance



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## Introduction

The early years of a child's life are critical for their brain development (Sciaraffa, Zeannah P. D., & Zeannah C. H., 2017). Children during these years are more susceptible to the toxic stress around them, these stressors can be known as adverse childhood experiences (ACE) (Sciaraffa, et al., 2017). A child can develop adverse childhood experiences from being physically abused, sexually abused and neglected all these can affect a child's wellbeing (Sciaraffa et al., 2017). In one study it was indicated that by the age of twelve 12% of children had zero ACEs while, 20% had five or more (Sciaraffa et al., 2017). Sciaraffa et al. 2017 say children that are exposed to adversity have harder times focusing, difficulty self-regulating, and interpersonal skills.

However, there is not enough research on how adversity affects an adult's wellbeing, along with their work performance and education success.

Therefore, the purpose of the proposed research is to explore how exactly childhood adversity affects one's education and there future wellbeing in the job field.

## Anxiety disorders affecting the quality of life

One of the most common type of anxiety disorder is social anxiety approximately 12% of people have it (Kessler, Berglund, Demler, Jin, Merikangas, & Walters, 2005). A child who experiences childhood

maltreatment and being neglected from parents have a higher chance of developing social anxiety (Kuo, Goldin, Wernerm, Heimbergm, & Gross, 2011). A study conducted by Simon and colleagues 2009 found that children who experience higher amounts of childhood maltreatment are more likely to have a harder time functioning, difficulty with resilience and poorer quality of life. Based on the findings those who had higher rates of emotional abuse and neglect had higher social anxiety (Simon et al., 2009).

### Education

Stress can affect a child's life all the way through adulthood it causes them difficulty with making decisions and connecting with others (Hardcastle, Bellis, Ford, Hughes, Garner, & Rodriguez, 2018). One study conducted looked at how ACEs affect a child's education and the impact it had on their lives. The study indicated that adults who had more than four ACEs had no formal qualifications along with low education levels (Hardcastle et al., 2018).

Being exposed to violent situations at a young age can increase an individual's probability of having lower educational levels (Convey, Menard, & Franzese, 2013; Macmillan & Hagan, 2004).

### Socioeconomics

Eight forms of childhood maltreatment are emotional, physical, and sexual abuse along with witnessing a parent be abuses, parents that were separated and divorced, witness substance abuse and mental illness in the household (Anda, Fleisher, Felitti, Edwards, Whitfield, Dube, & Williamson,

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2004). An adult who suffers with interpersonal skills, emotional distress can perform poorly at work (Anda et al., 2004). Anda et al. 2004 conducted a study and found that eight of the ACEs was associated with increased risk of having job and financial problems along with being absent from work. The study conducted that 11. 5% had job problems, 15. 5% financial problems and 8. 7% absentee from work (Anda et al., 2004). Those who had more than four ACE components were two times as likely to have all three working problems (Anda et al., 2004).

In one study it was indicated that individuals who suffered from a form of maltreatment are two times as likely to be unemployed and to be below the poverty level compared to those who have never experience child abuse (Zielinski 2006). A child who experiences sexual abuse and serve neglect are 80% more susceptible to being below the poverty line (Zielinski, 2006). Data showed that physical abuse in childhood had a 140% chance of being unemployed when compared to non-victims (Zielinski, 2006). Having numerous types of maltreatment increased an individual's employment difficulties (Zielinski. 2006). There has been no extensive research on why different types of maltreatment affect a person employment status (Zielinski, 2006). Therefore, this research study is essential in discovering why certain types of maltreatment affect a person's employment status. While considering how the roles of anxiety and education play into workers performance.

R1: Are there specific associations between anxiety and completion of further education among young adults?

R2:

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