

The effects of maltreatment in childhood on working memory capacity in adulthood

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Individuals that are affected by abusive adults are children whose parents have been abused. Parents that have been abused may have experienced physical and sexual abuse, emotional maltreatment, neglect or have possibly witnessed domestic violence throughout their childhood. There are many factors that have an impact on child abuse and neglect in adulthood. One factor could be the age of the victim's maltreatment. Another factor can consist of the severity of the abuse or the duration of the maltreatment. The last factor may include the different types of abuse or neglect and the relationship the individual had with the perpetrator. Particularly, women who were victimized as children are more apt to become perpetrators of youth and interpersonal violence. Men that experience childhood difficulties were more likely to demonstrate youth violence and commit IPV (Intimate Partner Violence). The purpose of this study was to show the correlation between childhood trauma such as sexual, physical and psychological abuse and how the adult is psychologically affected.

In this study, the subjects examined were 376 females aged from 16 to 67 years of age. 142 of the women were exposed to different forms of abuse and 234 women were not exposed to childhood maltreatment. There were different forms of abuse looked at; physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse and witnessing domestic violence. Research was obtained through the Working Memory Questionnaire by Vallat-Azouvi. The Working Memory Questionnaire was developed to estimate everyday life problems related to deficits of working memory in brain injured patients (Europe's Journal of Psychology, 2018). The questionnaire was designed using Baddeley's memory model, which suggests that the concept of working

memory does not only refer to short-term memory but also incorporates executive functioning abilities (Europe's Journal of Psychology, 2018). The questionnaire determined whether or not there were one out of four difficulties in the working memory. The four difficulties examined were recalling verbal information, recalling numerical information, executive functioning and attention ability.

The questionnaire consisted of 30 questions where the subjects rated themselves on a scale ranging from 0-5; zero being no difficulties and five being severe difficulties on a daily basis. The authors found that 142 of the subjects were victims of one or more forms of child maltreatment. 20.04% were physically abused, 18.26% witnessed family violence, 11.36% were psychologically abused and 7.8% were neglected. Individuals that were physically abused had difficulties in the working memory. 2.125 subjects had verbal memory difficulties, 2.198 had numerical memory difficulties, 2.834 had executive functioning difficulties and 2.051 had attention difficulties. Those that were not exposed to physical abuse numbers was much lower. Persons that were psychologically abused also had difficulties in the working memory. 2.549 participants had verbal memory difficulties, 2.340 had numerical memory difficulties, 2.989 had executive functioning difficulties, and 2.239 had attention difficulties. Participants that were not exposed to psychological abuse numbers was much lower. Lastly, individuals who were neglected had many difficulties in the working memory. 2.554 subjects had verbal memory difficulties, 2.451 had numerical memory difficulties, 2.968 had executive functioning difficulties and 2.273 had

attention difficulties. Persons that were not exposed to neglect had fewer numbers. Limitations/Weaknesses: There are many limitations to consider throughout this study. One major limitation is that the study only focused on women that experienced different forms of abuse and how their working memory capacity was affected. Another limitation was that the study only looked at female's ages between 16 through 67. Individuals who were younger than 16 and older than 67 were not examined. More importantly, researcher's looked at individuals who were not maltreated on a daily basis but looked at those that were maltreated occasionally. Moreover, participants were classified under a certain group according to the type of maltreatment they were exposed to; however, they could have experienced other maltreatments. Another major limitation was that pre-existing mental and physical conditions were not considered, therefore the results of the study could not say with certainty that it was because of maltreatment.

To conclude, because the questionnaire was done electronically, participants could have falsely answered certain questions. " Substance use disorders (SUDs) are characterized by recurrent use of alcohol or drugs results in problems such as failing to meet obligations at home, work, or school (National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2017). " Children who have parents that has a (SUD) substance use disorder are negatively impacted. These children are more apt than children who do not have parents with a (SUD) to be exposed to different forms of abuse and neglect. Negative impacts that result from inappropriate parenting can be behavioral, emotional, cognitive and relationship difficulties.