

Reviewing the Effect of Parental Mental Health on a Child's Development

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Abstract

- This study expands on previous work that examines the relationship between parental mental health and the effects it has on child development.
- When looking at the effects of mental illness on parental engagement with children, symptoms of mental illness in parents were found to potentially decrease the amount of engagement they have with their children.
- This study used the secondary data attained from CHIS data set that was a project of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.
- The data analysis was a cross-sectional study of the population in California, in which the sample size included 3,631 adult and 1,600 child interviews.
- Statistical significance was found between parental life impairment, parental psychological distress, parental mental health symptomology, parental emotional interference and the amount of engagement parents displayed with their children.
- Results indicated that the use of developmentally appropriate educational tools potentially can neutralize the effects of parental mental illness on amount of the interaction they have with their children.

Introduction

Significance of Study

- In the U.S., one in five adults experience a mental illness each year, and one in 25 adults experience a severe mental illness every year.
- The lack of a healthy attachment style due to mental illness can create lifelong effects for children and their life trajectory.

Purpose

- To examine the effects of parental mental health status on a child's development.

Research Question

- Does a parent's mental health effect their child's development?

Hypothesis

- Parents that experience higher levels of mental health related issues are more likely to negatively affect their child's development.

Literature Review

- Different mental health illnesses that parents experience and have affected child outcomes include depression, anxiety, pre and post-partum depression, substance abuse, and post-traumatic disorder.
- When looking at the effects of mental illness on parental engagement with children, symptoms in mental illness in parents were found to potentially decrease the amount of engagement they have with their children.
- A mother's psychological distress and depression alone was a risk for a child internalizing symptom, in contrast to a father's expression of psychological symptoms alone or when compared with a mother's symptoms did not predict a child's mental health.
- Mothers that experience anxiety tend to show less warmth, less encouraging messages, are less engaged, and display higher levels of control over their children than mothers without anxiety.
- Research has shown maternal education and use of developmental tools were important in pre and post-partum mental health in parents that affected the amount of engagement and development of attachment mothers had with their children once born, therefore verifying the effect of education and developmental tools on a child's development.
- Literature has shown to linked parental engagement to a child's development, where this study will add to the validity of previous research along while reviewing how parental mental health effects that link.

Methods

Research Design

- The current study is a secondary data analysis collected from the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) data set that is a collaborative project of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for Health Policy Research, the California Department of Public Health, and the Department of Health Care Services.
- CHIS surveys examine public health issues in California, and the data includes information for all ages on health status, health conditions, health-related behaviors, health insurance coverage, access to health care services, and other health-related issues.
- The CHIS is a population-based telephone survey of California's residential, noninstitutionalized population.
- The data analysis was a cross-sectional study of the adults and children living in the same household.
- The current study reviewed the correlation between parental mental health and child development in the same household between 2017 and 2018 of randomly selected participants.

Sample

- The original study used a dual-frame, multistage sample design.
- The dual frame multistage sample design included a random-digit-dial (RDD) sample with telephone numbers from both landlines and cellular phones.
- In order to examine the correlation of parental mental health and child's development, that sample had to be restricted to adults and children living in the same household where both adult and child interviews were completed.
- The current study's sample size includes approximately 3,631 adult participants and 1,600 child participants.
- The current study sample includes married couples with children and single parents with children.

Measures

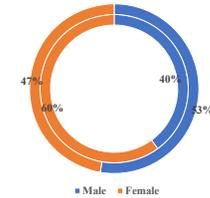
Independent Variable: Parental Mental Health

- Self reported data
- Mental Health Symptomology
 - 6-point Likert scale
- Psychological distress
 - 5-point Likert scale
- Distress timeframe
 - 5-point Likert scale
- Amount of emotional interference in daily life and relationships
 - 6-point Likert scale

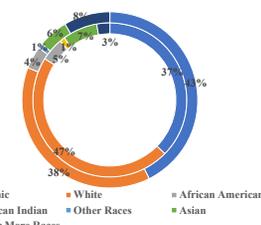
Dependent Variable: Child's Development

- Reported data from parent
- Child's mental health
 - 3-point Likert scale
- Amount of developmental services used
 - 3-point Likert scale
- Amount of parent engagement with the child
 - 3-point Likert scale

Parent & Child Gender Demographics



Parent & Child Ethnicity Demographics



Parental mental health symptomology & child development criteria

- This was also the case for parents that felt hopelessness and criteria of talking with a child after engagement strategies were presented, $X^2(12, N=1582) = 29.39, p = .00$.
- Results displayed statistically significant results between a parent feeling of depression in the past 30 days and singing engagement to their children, $X^2(12, N=1582) = 61.12, p = .00$.

Child Development Criteria	All of the time (n=1582)	Parents feeling of hopelessness				df	Chi-Square	Sig
		Most of the time (n=1582)	Some of the time (n=1582)	A little of the time (n=1582)	Not all of the time (n=1582)			
Talk with child								
Less	0%	5%	0%	0%	0.3%			
Same	20%	10%	37.5%	30.1%	28.8%	12	29.399	.00*
More	20%	30%	17.9%	15.9%	15.9%			
Sing w/ child								
Less	0%	10%	0.0%	0%	0.1%			
Same	20%	15%	39.3%	32%	31%	12	110.979	.00*
More	20%	20%	16.1%	13.8%	13.8%			

Parental emotional interference and development criteria

- Frequencies displayed a significance between parent's emotions interfering with work in the past year and a parent's use of materials used from the First 5 "new parent kit", $X^2(8, N=1582) = 17.40, p = .03$.

Discussion

Significance of Findings

- Results showed how parents who felt any psychological distress, or any mental illness related symptoms tended to engage with their children using developmental tools about the same rate that parents who did not feel any psychological distress or mental illness related symptoms.
- These results indicated that parents who used developmental tools tended to engage with the children at the same amount of rate regardless of having any psychological distress or having any mental health symptoms.
- Reviewing results, regardless of a parent's emotional well-being, engagement with children tended to be the same only after having heard or seen messages that described the importance of engagement with children on their development.
- The use of developmentally appropriate educational tools potentially could have been an intervening variable that effected the results of the study.

Limitations and Future Directions

- The current study's limitations include: use of secondary data, use of self-reported data increasing bias, and lack of diversity within the surveyed population.
- Future directions should include attaining primary data that is collected in away that considers bias and interviewing variables.

Practical Implications for Social Work Practice

- The current study reviews how developmental tools and parent and child engagement may neutralize parental mental health effects.
- The current study displays how more research must be conducted to review the interaction between parental and child engagement, mental health status, and developmental tools used.
- For mental health practitioners, it would be important to know the effects of parental mental health screening services and psychoeducation along with the use of developmental tools for children could be used as resources to support individuals and families while receiving mental health treatment.

Acknowledgments

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Results

- A person chi-squared was computed to determine the relationship between parent's mental health and a child's development.
- Parental life impairment & child development criteria**
 - The relationship between parents work impairment in the past 12 months and engaging in singing with child after hearing messages about the importance of singing to children was significant, $X^2(9, N=1582) = 18.11, p = .03$.
 - Parental work impairment in the past 12 months was also statistically significant in relation to parent's use of First 5 free parenting kit, $X^2(6, N=1582) = 18.29, p = .01$.
- Parental psychological distress & child development criteria**
 - There was also statistically and clinically significant results for parents who likely had experience psychological distress in the past month and child development criteria.
 - Parents that likely experienced psychological distress had a statistically significant relationship with engagement singing to their children after seeing or hearing messaged around the impact of engagement with children, $X^2(3, N=1582) = 11.62, p = .01$.
 - There was a statistical relationship between a parent's psychological distress in the past year and engagement singing with children after engagement strategies provided, $X^2(3, N=1582) = 13.45, p = .00$.

Parental Psychological Distress in the Past Year and Engagement Singing with Child After Engagement Strategies were provided

