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Childhood Trauma and Adult Distress Symptoms

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Abstract

Childhood trauma is highly prevalent and consist a major public health problem with severe adverse physical and mental effects later in life. The purpose of the study was to investigate the childhood trauma effects on adult psychopathology, as expressed through their distress symptoms. One thousand two hundred ninety-three (1293), healthy individuals (343 men and 894 women) were enrolled in the study. They were divided into two groups on the basis of their responses of experienced negative life events (at least one childhood traumatic event vs. no event) and filled out the SCL-90 questionnaire. Accidents (18%), fears (16%), loss of house and pets (15%), educational queries and doubts (13%) and parental divorce (11%), were the most frequent childhood adversities. Participants who had at least one childhood stressor differed statistically significantly in all SCL-90 subscales, when compared with their counterparts without any childhood adversity (p<0.001). PSDI score for the family violence group differed statistically significantly when compared with the "death" and "disease" group (p=0.002). This study underlines the associations of common childhood adversities, especially domestic violence, with distress symptoms in adulthood and demonstrate the importance of a deeper understanding about the unique effects of some common ELS subtypes.

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