Levels of Resilience and Life Satisfaction in Those with a History of Child Sexual Abuse

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History of Child Sexual Abuse and Current Life Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of Resilience

Kimberly Iannacone  C. Thresa Yancey

Georgia Southern University

ABSTRACT

The current study examined the relationship between instances of child sexual abuse and life satisfaction. Specifically, we investigated the role resilience may play as a potential moderator between past child sexual abuse and current satisfaction with life. Participants were 95 undergraduate students at a large southeastern university. Participants completed questionnaires assessing history of traumatic life events, current level of resilience, and current satisfaction with life. There was a strong positive correlation between history of child sexual abuse and life satisfaction. However, resilience was not a significant moderator in the current study.

INTRODUCTION

Previous literature establishes certain predictable outcomes in those with a history of child sexual abuse (CSA), including resiliency. Resilience is defined as the process of effectively negotiating, adapting to, managing significant stress or trauma (Windle, 2010). In studying levels of resilience, Liem et al. (1997), found a strong positive correlation between levels of resilience and life satisfaction with life. Participants were 95 undergraduate students at a large southeastern university who completed surveys assessing previous life events (i.e., childhood sexual abuse), current level of resilience, and current satisfaction with life. Please see Table 1 for demographic information.

METHOD

Participants were 95 undergraduates at a large southeastern university who completed surveys assessing previous life events (i.e., childhood sexual abuse), current level of resilience, and current satisfaction with life. Please see Table 1 for demographic information.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants were 95 undergraduates at a large southeastern university who completed surveys assessing previous life events (i.e., childhood sexual abuse), current level of resilience, and current satisfaction with life. Please see Table 1 for demographic information.

RESULTS

Participants were 95 undergraduates at a large southeastern university who completed surveys assessing previous life events (i.e., childhood sexual abuse), current level of resilience, and current satisfaction with life. Please see Table 1 for demographic information.

The current study examined the relationship between instances of child sexual abuse and life satisfaction. Some potential variables may be age of CSA, gender, ethnicity, and current level of resilience and current satisfaction with life. Please see Table 1 for demographic information.

Participants answered questions related to previous trauma (e.g., “Have you ever been coerced into performing sexual acts?”). Participants also answered questions assessing their level of resilience to life events on the CD-RISC (e.g., “I am able to adjust when changes occur,” “I tend to bounce back,” “I give my best efforts no matter what”). Finally, participants answered questions assessing their overall satisfaction with life via the SWLS (e.g., “At this point in my life, I am close to ideal,” “The conditions of my life are excellent”). Questions were randomly presented to participants.

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DISCUSSION

The main purpose of the current study was to investigate the relationship between a history of child sexual abuse and satisfaction with life. Specifically, this study examined moderating effects of resilience. It was hypothesized that there would be a negative relationship between history of child sexual abuse and satisfaction with life and a negative relationship between history of child sexual abuse and resilience. It was also hypothesized that there would be a positive relationship between resilience and satisfaction with life. The bivariate correlations do support these hypotheses. These findings suggest that individuals with a higher level of resilience reported a higher level of satisfaction.

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There are likely other variables that do moderate the relationship between history of CSA and current satisfaction with life. Some potential variables may be age of CSA onset, CSA severity and duration, or other variables such as current social relationships and support.

REFERENCES


Table 1: Demographic Information

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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>Biracial</td>
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Table 2: Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis (N=95)

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<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
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<td>CSA × RES</td>
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<tr>
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<td>CSA × RES</td>
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</table>

Note. CSA: Child Sexual Abuse; RES: Resilience; CI: Confidence Interval

Table 3: Intercorrelations among Measures of Child Sexual Abuse, Resilience, and Satisfaction with Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSA</td>
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<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RES</td>
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<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWLS</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. CSA: Child Sexual Abuse; RES: Resilience; SWLS: Satisfaction with Life Scale

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