
Kristen Torres B.S., Lauren Henry, Ph.D., Megan Hennessy B.A., and Jessica Hawks, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION

- Two-thirds of mothers and half of fathers report a lifetime prevalence of a psychiatric disorder
- Research has examined the effects of parent psychopathology on child functioning, finding children who have a parent with mental health concerns are at significantly greater risk of developing emotional and behavioral problems.
- Theorists have suggested high rates of child psychopathology are likely the result of dysfunctional parenting, research supporting the mediation has been inconsistent.
- The current study examines the relationship between parent psychopathology and child behavioral/emotional concerns, aiming to provide further insight into mediating and moderating effects of specific parenting practices and parent confidence.

HYPOTHESES

- Presence of parent psychopathology will predict worse ratings of child functional impairments.
- Use of effective parenting practices will mediate the relationship between parent mental health status and child functional impairment.
- Parents with mental health concerns will report lower levels of parenting confidence.

METHOD

- 114 Children and their parents participated in a study at a large Children's Hospital outpatient mental health clinic. Parents were asked to complete the following:
  - Questionnaire assessing demographic information including parent mental illness status
  - The Alabama Parenting Questionnaire (APQ) to evaluate parenting practices.
  - The Behavioral Assessment System for Children (BASC-3) was used to assess parenting confidence and child emotional/behavioral functioning.

RESULTS

**Step 1: OLS Regression**

Regression analysis, controlling for sex, age, race of the child, and household annual income was conducted to evaluate the effect of parent psychopathology on child functional impairment. Results indicated children had worse outcomes when a parent reported a mental illness ($\beta = .59$, $p < .001$).

**Step 2: Serial Multiple Mediation**

Serial multiple mediation model (Hayes, 2013, PROCESS Model 6) examined the degree to which parenting confidence and effective parenting practices mediated the relationship of parent psychopathology on child functional impairment. Ten thousand bootstrap samples were obtained to estimate confidence intervals for the indirect effects. Coefficients presented in model are standardized. The $c'$ path reflects the direct effect. ($p < .001$). Results show two significant indirect effects: parent psychopathology on child functional impairment through effective parenting practices and parenting confidence ($\beta = -.10, SE = .05; 95% CI: .004, .21$), and parent psychopathology on child functional impairment through effective parenting practices ($\beta = .01, SE = .03; 95% CI = -.05, .09$).

**Step 3: Moderated Mediation Analysis**

The moderated mediation (Hayes, 2013, PROCESS Model 8) was examined using the piecemeal approach. We assessed for the conditional effects on the path from Parent Psychopathology to Effective Parenting practices through the moderator, Parenting Confidence. Results suggested a significant indirect effect ($\beta = .01, p = .001$) from Parent Psychopathology to Child Functional Impairment through Effective Parenting Practices. The Parent Psychopathology $\times$ Parenting Confidence interaction was statistically significant ($\beta = -.5080, p = .001$).

DISCUSSION

- In support of previous research, we found the presence of parent psychopathology to predict impairment in child functioning.
- Further evaluation of the relationship, established parenting practices and parenting confidence as multiple mediators.
- When parenting confidence was held constant, parent psychopathology did not have a significant impact on the use of effective parenting practices. This result led us to question whether parent confidence should be conceptualized as a moderator.
- We found parenting confidence moderated the relationship between parent psychopathology and the use of effective parenting practices.
- Possible limitations for this study include: 1) Rater bias using the APQ or the BASC-3. 2) Parent psychopathology was self-reported. 3) Parents generally reported diagnoses related to anxiety, depression, and PTSD.

CONCLUSION

- By correctly identifying this pathway, we continue to address parent mental health stigma.
- Our models highlight the importance of isolating meaningful intervention variables, effective parenting practices and parenting confidence, during treatment.
- Conclusions support the emphasis of family centered family targeting environmental parenting components.
- Future studies should look to replicate these findings, specifically, parenting confidence in treatment impacts child outcomes.
- Research should continue to address mental health stigma of parents and the impact this has on parents' self-efficacy.
- In review of the model, when controlling for parenting confidence, parents with an existing mental health concern are equally effective in their parenting practices.

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