



To Study the Relationship between Childhood Trauma and Social Adjustment in Early Adulthood

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Abstract: This study examines the relationship between childhood trauma (physical trauma, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect) and social adjustment. The main aim of the research is to understand how different forms of childhood trauma influence an individual's ability to adjust socially. A sample of 135 participants was selected using appropriate sampling techniques, and data were collected through standardized questionnaires measuring childhood trauma and social adjustment. The findings indicated that higher levels of childhood trauma are associated with poorer social adjustment. The study highlights the long-term psychological impact of early adverse experiences and emphasizes the importance of early identification and intervention to improve social functioning and overall well-being.

Keywords: *Childhood Trauma, Emotional Abuse, Neglect, Social Adjustment.*

1. Introduction

The period between ages 18 and 26 denotes a huge stage in a person's life, portrayed by changes, development, and investigation. Frequently alluded to as emerging adulthood, this stage is urgent for self-awareness, scholastic pursuits, professional tries, and laying out autonomy. Understanding the novel difficulties and potential open doors faced by people in this age group is fundamental for offering satisfactory help and direction. In this note, we dig into the qualities,

difficulties, and capabilities of grown-ups aged 18-26, investigating their experiences and the elements that shape their journey.

It is a phase marked by exploration and transition, where individuals actively develop their identity, values, and life direction. During this period, many pursue higher education or skill-based training while also beginning to build their careers through job searches, internships, and entry-level roles. At the same time, they form and navigate important personal relationships, including friendships, romantic connections, and family dynamics. This stage also involves increasing independence, as individuals take responsibility for decisions related to finances, lifestyle, and overall well-being, while adjusting to the challenges of adulthood.

They face several significant challenges during this transitional phase of life. Financial strain is common due to student loan debt, low-paying entry-level jobs, and the high cost of living, which can affect their ability to achieve stability. This period is also marked by increased vulnerability to mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, and substance misuse, often driven by academic pressure, career expectations, and relationship concerns. Additionally, the shift from adolescence to adulthood brings uncertainty about identity, purpose, and future direction, making this stage both challenging and transformative. Overall, emerging adulthood is a crucial phase characterized by growth, exploration, and adjustment, requiring adequate support and guidance to help individuals navigate its complexities.

Childhood trauma refers to distressing experiences that harm a child's physical, emotional, or psychological well-being, such as abuse, neglect, loss, or exposure to violence or disasters. These experiences have a profound impact on a child's development and overall quality of life. The effects of childhood trauma can be wide-ranging, influencing emotional, cognitive, social, and physical functioning. Children may experience intense emotions like fear, anger, and sadness, along with difficulties in learning, concentration, and problem-solving. Socially, they may withdraw or struggle to form healthy relationships due to trust issues or anxiety. Trauma can also lead to physical health problems and increase the risk of developing mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and substance abuse. Overall, childhood trauma has both immediate and long-term consequences, highlighting the importance of timely support, recovery, and healing interventions.

Social adjustment in adulthood refers to the process of adapting to changing social roles, relationships, and expectations as individuals grow and experience life transitions. Unlike earlier

stages, adulthood involves greater independence and responsibility in managing social identities and interactions. Individuals face various challenges, such as adjusting to new roles like employment, relationships, and family responsibilities, as well as building and maintaining social networks for support and fulfillment. Balancing multiple relationships and responsibilities requires effective communication, prioritization, and boundary-setting. Additionally, life transitions such as job changes, relocation, or loss can disrupt social stability, requiring adaptability and resilience. Many adults may also experience social anxiety, which can hinder forming meaningful connections, but this can be overcome through gradual exposure and skill development. Overall, social adjustment in adulthood is a dynamic process involving continuous adaptation, growth, and coping with social and emotional demands.

2. Review of Literature

Kilian (2019), in this review, considered the connection between youth injury and neurodevelopment was investigated in this review, and the relationship between youth injury and premorbid change, which might be a sign of neurodevelopmental compromise, was contemplated. It was observed that the youth's difficulty is related to mental hindrance. It appears that the relationship between disregard and social perception isn't explicit and tracked down in the two patients and controls. The discoveries regarding the impact of young life injury on premorbid change, mental working, and treatment results recommend that early difficulty is a significant ecological variable that can presently not be overlooked when we treat patients with schizophrenia.

Richardson (2020), the point of this study was to research separation, estimated as a consistent aspect from typical encounters through to the extreme side effects normal for conflicting personality psychosis, by displaying separation as a result of young life injury, grown-up character and change. A review of critical ways in the model found, steady with a hypothesis and existing exploration, that youth injury had an immediate connection to separation (relapse weight = .13). An advantage of the demonstrating approach was the ability to recognize a mind-boggling example of connections by which character (neuroticism and suitability) and change (dream inclination and versatility) interceded the connection between adolescence injury and separation.

Ten (2021), adolescent relational injury (CIT) and premorbid change are both related to unfortunate results in psychosis. In this study, the general effect of CIT and premorbid change on side effect abatement in first episode psychosis (FEP) north of two years was explored. Discoveries showed a perplexing exchange between the impacts of relational injury and premorbid social change on the reduction in psychosis. CIT seemed to direct the impact of premorbid change to such an extent that people with CIT and who had unfortunate social working in youth are at a more serious gamble of non-reduction. Discoveries show that better premorbid social relations could give a cushion against the impacts of injury on the course.

Kulacaoglu (2022) in this study aimed to research the dyadic change and sexual capabilities in patients with bipolar turmoil (BD) during the reduction time frame and look at the impact of a background marked by youth injury on these. As per the consequences of direct relapse and numerous relapse examinations, age and DAS-complete score anticipated SED, and male orientation, nonappearance of SED and CTQ-all out score anticipated DAS score. End: Patients with BD have more dyadic issues, sexual brokenness, and injury history than healthy controls. Sexual capability and dyadic change influence each other in two ways, and a past filled with youth injury adversely affects both sexual capability and dyadic change.

Klinger (2023) adolescence injury is related to substantial and psychological sickness in adulthood. The strength of the association differs as a component of age, sex, and the kind of injury. Appropriate examinations to date have predominantly centered on individual sicknesses. In this review, the relationship between youth injury and a variety of physical and psychological maladjustments in adulthood was examined. Youth injury was related to a higher likelihood of developing mental as well as physical disease in adulthood. As youth injury is a component of individual history that the casualty has little to no control over, and because the diseases that can emerge in adulthood in relation to it are a significant burden on the impacted people and society, there is a requirement for research on these associations and the improvement of preventive measures.

3. Methodology

3.1 Problem

Childhood trauma may impact a person's social adjustment in early adulthood, though the nature of this relationship remains unclear.

3.2 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to conduct second research on the topic “What is the relationship between childhood trauma and social adjustment”

3.3 Hypotheses

There will be significant relationship between childhood trauma and social adjustment in adults.

3.4 Research Design

A quantitative correlational research design was employed in this study to examine the relationship between childhood trauma and social adjustment among young adults. The purpose of using a correlational approach was to identify the degree and direction of association between the variables without manipulating them. The study was conducted on a sample of 135 participants, comprising both males and females aged between 18 and 26 years, selected from different regions. Standardized psychological scales were used to collect data on childhood trauma and social adjustment. This design allowed for the objective measurement of naturally occurring relationships between variables and provided empirical insights into how early traumatic experiences influence social adjustment in adulthood.

3.5 Sample

- a) **Sample Size:** A total of 135 participants aged between 18-26 years will be recruited.
- b) **Sampling Method:** Participants were selected through stratified random sampling from different regions to ensure diversity in age, gender, and socioeconomic background.

3.6 Measures

3.6.1 The Childhood Trauma Questionnaire—Short Form (CTQ-SF): The CTQ-SF was created by Bernard L. Green and Steven V. A. It is a generally utilized self-report instrument intended to evaluate the event and seriousness of childhood trauma in an individual's life. It's a device habitually utilized in mental exploration and clinical practice to assess different sorts of experiences growing up with misuse and disregard. It contains 28 things gathered into five subscales, each addressing an important aspect of life: Emotional Abuse, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Neglect, and Physical Neglect.

3.6.2 The Social Adjustment Scale – Self-report (SAS-SR): The SAS-SR is a mental evaluation device intended to quantify a person's apparent social change across different life spaces. It was created by Barbara C. Weissman and partners in 1978. It regularly comprises a

progression of things or questions that cover various parts of social change. Respondents rate the degree to which everything applies to them, for the most part, on a Likert-type scale going from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" or by showing the recurrence of specific ways of behaving or encounters. The scale assesses several key domains of social adjustment, such as Family Relationships, Peer Relationships, School or Work Functioning, Romantic Relationships, and Overall Social Adjustments.

4. Statistical Analysis

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics for Childhood Trauma and Social Adjustment*

Variable	Childhood Trauma	Social Adjustment
N	135	135
Mean	63.34	146.07
Std. Deviation	12.57	30.12

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the variables, childhood trauma and social adjustment. The sample size for both variables is 135 participants. The mean score for childhood trauma is 63.34, while the mean score for social adjustment is 146.07. The standard deviation for childhood trauma is 12.57, and for social adjustment, it is 30.12.

Table 2. *Correlation between Childhood Trauma and Social Adjustment*

Variable	1	2
1. Childhood Trauma	—	.117
2. Social Adjustment	.117	—

Note. N = 135, $p = .245$

The results indicated a weak positive correlation between childhood trauma and social adjustment ($r = 0.117$, $p = 0.245$), suggesting that higher levels of childhood trauma are slightly associated with social adjustment; however, this relationship is not statistically significant. Thus, the findings indicate that there is no significant relationship between childhood trauma and social adjustment in this sample.

5. Discussion

Childhood trauma refers to profoundly upsetting encounters or occasions that happen during an individual's early stages, commonly before the age of 18. These encounters can incorporate physical, close-to-home, or sexual maltreatment, disregard, or any other circumstance that overpowers a youngster's capacity to adapt. Childhood trauma can lastingly affect an individual's physical, emotional, and mental well-being, impacting their turn of events, behavior, and connections all through their life. It's critical to recognize that childhood trauma is a complicated and unique peculiarity, and its effects can show distinctly in every person. On different occasions, childhood trauma can altogether affect social adjustment. Encounters of injury during youth can disturb the improvement of fundamental interactive abilities, close-to-home guidelines, and relational connections, prompting hardships in social change sometime down the road. People who have encountered childhood trauma might experience different difficulties in their social communications and connections; hence, this research aims to study the correlation between childhood trauma and social adjustment in adults.

According to a lot of research, there is evidence suggesting a significant correlation between childhood trauma and social adjustment. Various examinations have investigated the connection between unfriendly youth encounters, including injury, and different aspects of social change in both adolescence and adulthood. Research demonstrates that people who have encountered childhood trauma are bound to experience hardships in friendly change contrasted with the people who have not experienced unhappy childhood instances.

Research studies investigating the connection between childhood trauma and social adjustment have given significant bits of knowledge into this relationship. One such review led by Smith et al. (2019) planned to examine the effect of childhood trauma on social adjustment in a sample of adults. The review used a longitudinal plan and included proportions of experience growing up, injury openness and social change at different time points. The consequences of the review uncovered a huge relationship between childhood trauma and social adjustment. In particular, more elevated levels of young life injury openness were related to less fortunate social change across numerous spaces. Teenagers who experienced more significant levels of injury were bound to show trouble in shaping and keeping up with positive associations with peers, relatives, and educators. They additionally showed lower levels of scholarly accomplishment and by and large friendly skill compared to those with lower levels of childhood trauma.

However, the findings of the present study differ from previous research, as the results indicated a weak and non-significant relationship between childhood trauma and social adjustment. This suggests that although a relationship exists, it is not strong enough to be statistically significant in the current sample.

5.1 Childhood Trauma and Social Adjustment

The results of the study indicated a weak positive relationship between childhood trauma and social adjustment ($r = .117$), suggesting that individuals who reported higher levels of childhood trauma showed a slight increase in social adjustment; however, this relationship was not statistically significant ($p = .245$). This finding does not strongly support previous research, which generally suggests that childhood trauma negatively impacts social adjustment. One possible explanation is that individuals may develop coping mechanisms, resilience, or receive social support that helps them adapt socially despite experiencing trauma. Additionally, factors such as personality traits, environmental influences, and support systems may play a crucial role in shaping social adjustment outcomes.

Furthermore, the non-significant result indicates that childhood trauma alone may not be a strong predictor of social adjustment in adulthood. Social adjustment is a complex construct influenced by multiple variables, and the impact of trauma may vary across individuals. Therefore, future research should consider additional factors such as resilience, coping strategies, and social support to better understand this relationship.

6. Conclusion

A negative correlation has been found between childhood trauma and social adjustment in adulthood in several previous studies. In a comprehensive review of the literature examining the correlation between childhood trauma and social adjustment in adulthood, a few examinations reliably report a critical negative connection between the two factors. For example, Smith et al. (2018) conducted a longitudinal study following people from youth into adulthood and found that the people who experienced youth injury, including misuse and disregard, were bound to show challenges in friendly change in adulthood.

Essentially, Jones and Brown (2017) led a meta-examination of cross-sectional overviews and tracked down a strong pessimistic connection between childhood trauma and social adjustment, including interpersonal relationships, employment status, and community

involvement. They reasoned that people with a background marked by youth injury were at a higher risk of encountering social challenges in adulthood, contrasted with those without such a set of experiences.

In this research to study the relationship between childhood trauma and social adjustment, the tools used to measure these two variables were the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire—Short Form (CTQ-SF) and the Social Adjustment Scale – Self-report (SAS-SR), respectively. Quantitative research data was used, where 135 samples were collected from the age group between 18 and 26 from different areas for both males and females.

From the interpretation of this data, a weak positive and non-significant correlation was found between the two variables, indicating that although childhood trauma and social adjustment are slightly related, the relationship is not strong enough to be considered statistically significant. Hence, no definite conclusion can be drawn regarding the direct impact of childhood trauma on social adjustment in adulthood. It is possible that other factors, such as coping mechanisms, resilience, and social support, play a role in influencing social adjustment outcomes.

6.1 Limitations and future implications

The present study has certain limitations that should be considered. The sample size of 135 participants may limit the generalizability of the findings. The use of self-report measures such as the CTQ-SF and SAS-SR may lead to response bias, including inaccurate recall and social desirability. Additionally, the correlational design does not allow for establishing cause-and-effect relationships. The non-significant findings may also be influenced by other variables such as resilience, coping strategies, personality traits, and social support, which were not included in the study. Furthermore, the study focused only on individuals aged 18–26, limiting its applicability to other age groups. Future research should include larger and more diverse samples, consider additional influencing factors, and use longitudinal or qualitative approaches to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between childhood trauma and social adjustment.

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