Children Victims of Parental Substance Abuse and Future Incarceration

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Abstract

The purpose of this mixed-method design study is to discover if the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) of having (a) parent(s) with a substance abuse issues effects the likelihood of the child being incarcerated in their future. In background research, we found that it is very common for abusive parents or other ACE to affect the child's success, especially within their own future family violence and their presence in the criminal justice system. This study will survey approximately 100 inmates in the Topeka Correctional Facility and 100 people in the Topeka, Kansas area who have never been incarcerated or arrested. The self-administered paper survey will ask questions about the individual's parents are their parents use of substances when they were children and being incarcerates as an adult. The average score between the inmate group and the non-criminal group will be compared to see if there was a difference in their parent's substance use severity in their childhoods. Finding these results is significant because it will show us a correlation between parental substance abuse and the link it has to their children's future involvement in the criminal justice system (Correctional facilities). It also provides us with more specific information in relation to parental substance abuse and its effects on the child who falls victim and their future. If we find that this is a common issue and trend that parental substance abuse raises the likelihood of future incarceration for the child, we can also begin researching ways to combat this social issue.

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Introduction

A major idea of the American prison system is the idea of retribution and rehabilitation. However, too often this is not the case. There have been dramatic increases in the prison population and scholars believe this is due to chances in crime policies and a major one being the

"decline of the rehabilitative ideal" For this proposal, the target population is imprisoned individuals who suffered the Adverse Childhood Experience of a parent who suffered from substance abuse. The social issue around this proposal is to address the number of individuals who have been imprisoned in their lifetime that may have had the opportunity of not being imprisoned, if the individuals got help when younger.

The focus of our research is based around Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their impact on adulthood incarceration. This research will focus, specifically on prisoners, by looking at the correlation between having parent(s) with substance abuse issues and the likelihood of experiencing incarceration in their adult life. There are a lot of studies measuring the quantity of all ACE's suffered from and the severity differences based on how many ACE's one suffered from, but there is not much research looking at direct effects of specific Adverse Childhood Experiences. This research will help pinpoint a potential contributing factor to the United States' extremely large prison population

This research is unique from other research that studies ACE's and how it affects children who are more likely to end up in prison in their adult life, because in this study we are focusing specifically on substance abuse as the ACE. This work is relevant to social work due to that this is a social issue and it could help us work towards fixing it. This study is important because if we have the information and knowledge of this issue it could help social workers know how to prevent this outcome in younger individuals.

Literature Review

Adverse Childhood Experiences and Risks

There is evidence that proves that the more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) one faces, the more struggles they are to face in their adult life. These struggles can affect future

violence health, opportunities, and more. (Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2020). The institute for Public Health Research at the University of Connecticut conducted a longitudinal study looking at the connection of a range of ACE's and the connection to adult mental health outcomes (depressive symptoms, drug abuse, and antisocial behavior). According to Schilling (2007), "The public health impact of childhood adversity is evident in the very strong association between childhood adversity and depressive symptoms, antisocial behavior, and drug use during the early transition to adulthood". This shows us researchers that there are a lot of connections between parents with substance abuse and the effects on the likelihood of the affected child experiencing imprisonment in its adult life. This way we can have a deeper understanding of this specific ACE and its risk factors within the corrections realm. According to the United States Census Bureau, the total number of incarcerated people in the US (in a variety of different facilities) was 7,989,323 people (2010). This proposed study will aid in finding a root cause of a big social issue and potentially begin research to find ways in which social work can minimize this issue in our society.

Parental Substance Abuse and Incarceration

Adverse childhood experiences are potentially traumatic events that can have negative effects on someone. There are a variety of ACE's, but we are looking specifically at substance abuse as the ACE and how that can affect the chances of imprisonment in the future. A lot of our research supported our prediction that having parents with substance abuse issues would have a negative effect on your success in your adult life. A few of our articles brought to light the inclusion of foster care in this issue and discussed how having a parent(s) with substance abuse issues often results in foster care, in turn looking at how foster care results in life complications, including raising their chance of incarceration (Conner, 2015; McNichol, 2001).

Another future issue that this ACE of having a parent who suffers from substance abuse, is violence and conflict when parenting in the future of the child who suffered. Our research shows us that having parent(s) with substance abuse issues raises the likelihood of violence within the home of the parent who was once a child of a parent of substance abuse. (Calhoun, 2015; Corvo, 2000). This raised likelihood of violence raises our awareness of parental substance abuse contributing to the success of the child once they age into adulthood. More likelihood of violence could mean that they have a higher likelihood of incarceration in their adult life, but that is what we want to find in our research. (Raitasalo, 2018) discusses the effect on whether the substance abusing parent in the mother or the father and if the severity of the substance abuse affects the severity of the life complications later. The research found that the mother's substance abuse has a larger impact than the father. The severity of the substance abuse doesn't generally contribute to the severity of the future conflict, just the substance abuse alone (extreme or not) seems to cause/contribute to these future issues we see in the adulthood of the child affected (Raitasalo, 2018). This helps our study because we now know that the specificity and degree of substance abuse is not an important factor in comparison to if the abuse did or did not take place. We will take that into consideration when conducting our study.

We have found multiple studies (Calhoun, 2015; Conner, 2015; Corvo, 2000; McNichol, 2001; Raitasalo, 2018) that look at how ACE's can affect individuals and their chances of being incarcerated later in life. Through research it has been shown that the increase of misbehavior and increase of substance use in youth is correlated with parents' substance abuse (Calhoun, 2015). Therefore, this research aims to see the connection between the Adverse Childhood Experience of parental substance abuse and the chances of imprisonment.

Research Methods

Research Questions and Hypothesis

The intention of this study is to test the connection between the Adverse Childhood Experience of parental substance abuse and the chances of imprisonment. Within this study, we hope to answer the research question- Parental substance abuse increases the child's likelihood of being imprisoned at lease once in their life? All of the research we found has results stating that there is some form of negative impact on the adult life of the child who has a parent(s) with substance abuse (Calhoun, 2015; Conner, 2015; Corvo, 2000; McNichol, 2001; Raitasalo, 2018). Looking at literature surrounding our research, how the effects of having parents who have substance abuse issues will affect your likelihood of being incarcerated in your adult future, this study hypothesizes that this ACE has a negative impact on adult life.

Research design

This study will use a-mixed method design. The quantitative part will be from the survey score they receive out of ten based on their parental substance abuse answers. There will be 5 demographic related questions and 10 yes/no questions relevant to parental substance abuse. This is a 2-group comparison design. The participant from both groups (inmates vs. community adults) will get a percentage score from the amount of yes's they select out of the 10 survey questions. This will give a number value to the severity of their experience with parental substance abuse. We will then compare the differences in scores between the two groups. The qualitative part is asking childhood experience and parental actions.

Participants

Our study will recruit 200 total people by using a convenient samping. For the first research group, 100 prison inmates (50 male, 50 female) from the Topeka Correctional Facility will be recruited. Another 100 volunteers (50 male, 50 female) whom have never been

incarcerated will be invited as a comparison group. This group will be acquired through the community of Topeka and will be open for volunteers who meet the requirements of having 0 criminal background. All participants will be aged from 18-50.

Measurements

We will be using a similar design to the CAGE-AID questionnaire to measure the relationship the Independent Variable, substance use by parents. For this study, we are using a similar design in comparison to the CAGE-AID questionnaire style. This questionnaire will measure the independent variable: parental substance abuse. The CAGE-AID questionnaire is built in a yes/no survey format, measuring the independent variable, and then combining the answers to give an overall score. The utility of the questionnaire is "to screen for alcohol and drug problems conjointly rather than separately" (Brown, n.d.). We are using the yes/no survey style from this questionnaire and adapting the rating and questions to fit the specificities of our study. There will be 5 demographic related questions and 10 yes/no questions relevant to parental substance abuse. The first part of the questionnaire will be five demographic questions such as gender and birthdate. After that we will have 10 questions for the participants to answer that are relevant to parental substance abuse and the severity of it. The questionnaire is estimated to take about 20 minutes.

All 200 participants will be given the survey and after the researcher receives the results, they will calculate the participants responses and will produce a percentage. For example, if out of the 10 questions they answered yes to 7 of them, we will then divide 10 from 7 and we will produce 70%. The higher percentage will refer to more severe their experience with parental substance abuse. After the researcher has calculated all the participants' scores, they will then compare the scores between two groups. The two groups will be those whose experience is mild

and those whose experience is severe. If they score 50 percent or less on the survey, that participant will be placed in the mild group. If they score over 50 percent, then they will place that participant in the severe group.

Data collection procedures

The study will be advertised via social media and other local platforms. For this study we will be contacting participants through the Topeka Correctional Facility and Topeka Community. For the individuals in the Topeka Correctional Facility we will be going to the facility and collecting paper surveys. For members from the community we will be posting flyers through social media. If individuals are interested, they will then conduct the survey online. Everyone that takes part will conduct a 15-question survey. This survey will be collected one time to determine if the participant grew up with a parent who abused any type of substance.

Expected Results

Looking at literature surrounding our research, how the effects of having parents who have substance abuse issues will affect your likelihood of being incarcerated in your adult future, expect to see that this ACE has a negaative impact on adult life. Many earlier researches (Calhoun, 2015; Conner, 2015; Corvo, 2000; McNichol, 2001; Raitasalo, 2018) supported our idea that having parents with substance abuse issues will have a negative effect on the success in their adulthood. A few of our articles brought to light the inclusion of foster care in this issue and discussed how having a parent(s) with substance abuse issues often results in foster care, in turn looking at how foster care results in life complications, including raising their chance of incarceration (Conner, 2015; McNichol, 2001). Another future issue that this ACE of having a parent who suffers from substance abuse, is violence and conflict when parenting in the future of the child who suffered. Earlier studies show us that having parent(s) with substance abuse issues

raises the likelihood of violence within the home of the parent who was once a child of a parent of substance abuse. (Corvo, 2000; Calhoun, 2015). This raised likelihood of violence raises our awareness of parental substance abuse contributing to the success of the child once they age into adulthood.

Discussion

Our limitation in this study could be the group we have selected. Our results will only be relevant to the prison we chose to include in the study. For future studies it could be helpful to hold the experiment in multiple prisons in different areas. We could then compare the results and make sure that our first results could be relevant to other areas. Another limitation could be that participants could answer questions incorrectly due to not being able to remember correctly. Something we can do to avoid this could be giving participants more time to finish the survey. We could also have the participants complete the survey more than once and see if their answers differ.

Conclusion

This research is conducted to see the connection between the Adverse Childhood Experience of parental substance abuse and the chances of imprisonment. The purpose of this study is to see the rates of individuals who have been imprisoned and parental substance abuse. Although there are anticipated results there are knowledge gaps. There is not a lot of research done on how many individuals who are imprisoned and their childhood history. The study may contribute to if there is a way to help individuals before they become imprisoned. The intention of this study is to test the connection between the Adverse Childhood Experience of parental substance abuse and the chances of imprisonment. The method to conduct research for this study is conducting surveys with 200 participants by using the convenient sampling method. The anticipated results of this study are to show that there is a correlation between

parental substance abuse and the prison population. Therefore, there is a knowledge gap on the actual impact of parental substance abuse and incarceration. The potential impact of the research findings could be significant. The findings could show that the prison population is far too high. In the future, there could be research on how the prison population is too high and it could help with reducing the numbers.

Appendix A-:
Informed Consent

WITNESS TO SIGNATURE (PROJECT STAFF): Staff signature.

If any of the following content sections do not apply to your research, feel free to delete from the consent form.

PROJECT TITLE:

Parental Substance Abuse in the Prison Population

PROJECT APPROVAL DATE:		**PROJECT EXPIRATION DATE:**		**LENGTH OF STUDY:**	1 year

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Jaedn Cooper

CO-INVESTIGATOR(S): Jennifer Hughes and Samantha Rios

CONTACT DETAILS FOR PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS: Email questions to srios@ksu.edu or call (620)-708-6099

IRB CHAIR CONTACT INFORMATION: *For the subject should he/she have questions or wish to discuss on any aspect of the research with an official of the university or the IRB. These are:* Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224; Cheryl Doerr, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224.

PROJECT SPONSOR:

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

The purpose of this study is to close a gap in the research of ACE's and their more specific effects on adult life. There are a lot of studies measuring the quantity of all ACE's suffered from and the severity differences based on how many ACE's one suffered from , but there is not much research looking at direct effects of specific Adverse Childhood Experiences ACEs. This research will help pinpoint a potential contributing factor to the United States' extremely large prison population

PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED:

This study will use a mixed method design. The study will be advertised via social media and other local platforms. For this study, we are using a similar design in comparison to the CAGE-AID questionnaire style. This questionnaire is built in a yes/no survey format, measuring different variables, and then combining them to give an overall score. The utility of the questionnaire is "to screen for alcohol and drug problems conjointly rather than separately" (Brown, n.d.). We are using the yes/no survey style from this questionnaire and adapting the rating and questions to fit the specificities of our study. There will be 5 demographic related questions and 10 yes/no questions relevant to parental substance abuse. The participants from both the control group and study group will get a percentage score from the amount of yes's they select out of the 10 survey questions. This will symbolize the severity of their experience with parental substance abuse. We will then compare the differences in scores between the two groups.

BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES COLLECTED (Describe procedure, storage, etc.):

N/A

[Select a statement from the drop-down menu]

[Select a statement from the drop-down menu]

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES OR TREATMENTS, IF ANY, THAT MIGHT BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO SUBJECT:

N/A

RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS ANTICIPATED:

There are no known risks during this survey. If participants feel they need a break, then they are welcome to do so. The survey will also be taken wherever the participant feels comfortable and safe and they are welcome to stop the survey if they no longer wish to continue.

BENEFITS ANTICIPATED:

This study will provide a better understanding of the correlation between parental substance abuse and it being a contributing factor to the world's prison population.

EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:

To protect a participant's confidentiality. Each participant will receive a number specified to them, that way they will not have to put any identifying information on the survey. All information will be kept in a folder that will be locked in a desk. The information will go into the computer but only with the participants identification number. Only researchers will have access to this information.

[Select a statement from the drop-down menu]

IS COMPENSATION OR MEDICAL TREATMENT AVAILABLE IF INJURY OCCURS? **x**☐ Yes ☐ No

PARENTAL APPROVAL FOR MINORS:

PARENT/GUARDIAN APPROVAL SIGNATURE: **DATE:**

Terms of participation: I understand this project is research, and that my participation is voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.

I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.

(Remember that it is a requirement for the P.I. to maintain a signed and dated copy of the same consent form signed and kept by the participant).

PARTICIPANT NAME:			
PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE:		**DATE:**	
WITNESS TO SIGNATURE: (PROJECT STAFF)		**DATE:**	

Appendix B: Survey Questionnaire

Survey Questionnaire

Answer all the questions below honestly to the best of your knowledge.

Demographic Questionnaire ID Number:

1. Gender Male Female Other
2. Date of Birth _____/_____/_____
3. Were you born in the United States of America? Yes No
4. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? Yes No
5. If you answered yes to the question above was the crime violent? Yes No

Questionnaire **ID Number:**

Circle the answer that best matches your response to each statement

Yes or No

1. As a child I often had a parent gone at night either knowing, or not knowing what that parent was out doing. Yes No
2. As a child I was often left alone due to a parent going out. Yes No
3. As a child I was aware that one or both of my parents abused drugs/alcohol Yes No
4. As a child, I saw my parents abusing drugs? Yes No
5. As a child, one or both of my parents excessively drank alcohol? Yes No
6. As a child I saw one or both parents taking pills often. Yes No
7. As a child I felt my basic needs such as food, safety, and shelter were not met. Yes No
8. As a child I knew my parents were participating in some sort of addiction support group(s) Yes No
9. As a child I knew of one, or both parents being admitted into a hospital due to overdoes or alcohol poisoning? Yes No
10. As a child I had one or both parents arrested due to a drug/alcohol Related crime. Yes No