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Child Neglect, Child Physical Abuse, and Relationships Among 12-Year-Old Girls

Corrine Dale
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Corrine Dale

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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Child Neglect, Child Physical Abuse, and Relationships Among 12-Year-Old Girls

by

Corrine Ann Dale

MA, Webster University 2002

BS, Washington University 1996

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Human Services-Criminal Justice

Walden University

August 2017

Abstract

Child maltreatment, including physical abuse, neglect, emotional, and sexual abuse is a continuing social problem in the United States, resulting in a number of children who experience challenges with family and peer relationships in adolescence. Child neglect is one of the most common forms of abuse however, it is less likely to be investigated or substantiated than is physical abuse. Female child maltreatment in particular results in possible problems for victims with family and peer relationships in early adolescence. In 2015, state agencies reported an estimated 683,000 victims of child maltreatment, with two-thirds of this group representing child neglect victims. This study examined differences between reported child neglect and child physical abuse in predicting family and peer relationship problems among 12-year-old females. Relational theory provided a theoretical framework for this study's hypotheses. Records from the Midwest site of the LONGSCAN research project provided the archival data from a criterion sample of 68 12-year-old females. The hypotheses were there would be differences in adolescent mother-child and peer relationships between victims of neglect and victims of physical abuse. Data were analyzed using descriptive, correlational, and multiple regression analyses. The results of the analyses revealed the quality of the mother-child relationship was significantly related to both earlier neglect and to physical abuse. In the multiple regression, early child neglect was more predictive of the mother-child relationship in early adolescence than was child physical abuse. This study contributes to social change by directing those who develop and design policy and programs to place additional attention on child neglect interventions to promote family stability.

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Dedication

First and foremost, I dedicate my success to my dear mother, Jeanette Dale, who has encouraged me in my darkest hours. She never let me lose sight of my goals. She allowed me to vent and then wouldn't allow me to accept defeat. For someone to have a child at fifteen and to guide her to the upper level of the educational attainment was difficult to visualize but she never gave up. I relied on her quite strength and her loud voice when I thought about quitting. I would also like to thank my aunts, Carol, Barbara, and Brunette and my uncle, Jerry, who served as surrogate parents and stepped in when my mother could not do it. I would like to thank my nieces, Sharron, Tisa, and Synetta, and my nephews, Lorenzo and LaBralyn, who faith in me kept me going. My family has served as my village and I will continue to depend on their encouragement and belief in me in my future endeavors.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Physical abuse, which represents less than one-third of the reports associated with child maltreatment receives the most attention from researchers and practitioners (Bundy-Fazoli & Hamilton, 2013). Child neglect represents roughly two-thirds of child maltreatment reports, but proportionate studies examining child neglect are lacking (Bundy-Fazoli & Hamilton, 2013). The approach to treating child neglect also includes a hodgepodge of approaches that range from cognitive behavioral to trauma models. This limits the ability of practitioners to access effective treatment which leads to problems later in the child's life. Although both child neglect and child physical abuse are relational in nature neither receive the attention that leads to effective interventions (Bundy-Fazoli & Hamilton, 2013; Daniel 2015; Manion, 2011).

In practice, child neglect is thought to cause less of a problem than physical and sexual abuse (Larsen, Sandberg, Harper & Bean, 2011). However, I proposed in this study that child neglect that occurs in adolescence is relational in nature and requires a relational approach. In a relational approach, mutual growth and development occur (Covington, 2007). There are seven core concepts of relational theory that contributed to female growth and development (Covington, 2007). Because the relational approach is based on female growth and development in this study I focused on female adolescents who were vulnerable to interpersonal problems. A gap in the literature existed around this topic; and a study that examined the effect of mother-child and peer relationships was needed to develop effective interventions for child neglect versus child physical abuse victims.

Infancy and adolescent are the two most important relational transitions periods (Perry, 2001). The attachment relationship that occurs in infancy requires a bond to a particular caregiver and this bond results in relationship foundation that is biological, genetic, emotional, and social (Perry, 2001). Researchers found that the attachment relationship is thought to be the foundation of future relationships (Perry, 2001; Lawson, 2009). An episode of child neglect can transform a healthy relationship into an insecure attachment. From my evaluation of the research I concluded the difference between infant attachment and adolescent relationships is that the dependence the infant has on the caregiver is evident while in adolescence the relational basis is less obvious and interdependent.

The purpose of this study was to identify the predictive ability of child neglect versus child physical abuse on the mother-child and peer relationships among 12-year-old females. The identification of an effective intervention for child neglect versus child physical abuse is imperative due to the large percentage of neglect versus other forms of maltreatment. The most direct route to this identification is the examination of the teen years which is the most explosive growth period and an important time of relationship building. The teen years are a time of conflict without the addition of child neglect and child physical abuse. The addition of child neglect and child physical abuse in the fight to transition to adulthood may require additional help. My aim with this study was to offer a different way of analyzing female adolescents' relationships. In my estimation, child neglect is an interruption in the relational growth and development, especially among females.

The results of this study may change the way child neglect is treated among female adolescents by practitioners and researchers. First, the relational nature of child neglect and child physical abuse is acknowledged by professionals in the field of child maltreatment. Second, the impact of child neglect versus child physical abuse is seen in higher relational dysfunction among female adolescents. Third, the acknowledgment that females grow within the relationship, and child neglect negatively impacts the relationship can lead to a relational approach to treating female adolescents (Toth et al., 2013). Chapter 1 consists of the background of the study background; the problem statement; the purpose of the study; research questions and hypotheses; theoretical foundation; nature of the study which describes the study variables, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, significance, and summary.

Background

In adolescence child neglect is a common pathway to juvenile delinquency, running away, poor peer relationships, and a conflictual mother-child relationship (Manion, 2011). The percentage of child neglect has consistently risen in the last 20 years, yet studies focusing on this form of maltreatment have lagged behind that of physical abuse and sexual abuse. There are several reasons why this is the case. First, physical abuse is identifiable by a mark or a scar, and the damage is external as well as internal. The damage caused by child neglect is mostly internal and is manifested in poor interpersonal relationships. Second, researchers are not focused on this type of maltreatment because it does not generate the same headlines as physical abuse (Manion, 2011; Ryan, et al., 2013). Third, the bond between mother and child that forms the basis

for future relational development is not available in the commission of neglect (Ryan et al., 2013). Overall neglect may be evident but ignored as a nonfatal form of maltreatment.

Juvenile delinquency can be an obvious result of neglect. The lack of a caregiver bond exposes the adolescent to more negative peer groups, engagement in the juvenile justice system and longer periods of contact in the juvenile justice system (Ryan et al., 2013). On the other hand, a relational bond can act as a protective factor for adolescents in contact with the juvenile justice system and can mediate the acts such as running away that precipitate juvenile justice contact (Ryan et al., 2013). Tucker, Ellickson, and Klein (2011) revealed 41% of the adolescents attribute their running to poor relationship dynamics with their parents. Running away can be seen as a final break in the adolescent and caregiver relationship. It is an attempt to survive without the foundation of the mother-child relationship and may involve choices that can lead to poor peer relationships. This is why some view child neglect as simple yet complex (Daniel, 2013).

Researchers have heavily studied child physical abuse, as opposed to child neglect. The definition of physical abuse, which defines physical abuse as the non-accidental injury of a child inflicted by a caregiver, is mostly agreed upon by researchers and practitioners (McLeod, Fergusson & Harwood, 2014; Milner et al., 2010; Bender et al.). The effects of physical abuse are seen as external with some internal factors. Mainly physically abused children as opposed to non-physically abused children are more likely to have cognitive deficits, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, anger, psychological distress, relationship problems, re-

victimization, and adult psychopathology (McLeod, Fergusson & Harwood, 2014; Milner et al., 2010). The range of effects of physical abuse goes from internal to external factors. Another focus of this study was the relational effects of child neglect versus child physical abuse. The relationships of child physical abuse victims are seen as aggressive and anger based while the relationship of child neglect victims is seen as lacking care and an omission of effective modeling (Bender et al., 2007). I wanted to examine the impact of child neglect versus child physical abuse on the mother-child relationship and peer relationships. Bender et al. (2007) explained that an adolescent who perceives their parents as highly punitive may not have the model for the warmth and empathy necessary for relatedness. Bender et al. (2007) explained that harsh physical discipline may also provide adolescents with models of maladaptive relationships (Bender et al., 2007).

While both neglect and physical abuse affect the relationships and the ability of a child to grow and develop within the relationship, child neglect was hypothesized to better able predict poor mother-child and peer relationships. It is further advanced that one is the absence of relational models while the other is an example of a maladaptive relationship. Child physical abuse can result in the absence of relational foundation but is more likely to demonstrate a way to interact that is aggressive, anger fueled, and empathy-free (Bender et al., 2007). The caregiver relationship is as important in adolescence as it is in the infant-caregiver relationship. The comparison of child neglect and child physical abuse along with the relational foundation of female adolescents requires a look at the relational aspect of these populations.

Miller and Richards (1987) explained that relational theory has evolved over the last 20 years in response to the individualism of traditional psychological theories of human development. The authors provided a demonstration of the individualistic and masculine theories of the last 3 decades. The difference between these theories, which range from psychoanalytic to object relations and relational/cultural theory, is the emphasis on the capacity to connect with others in mutually growth-fostering relationships that have become the goal of healthy development (Miller & Richards, 1987).

Miller's work led a group of researchers and practitioners to examine the importance of gender differences in understanding women's psychological development. The Stone Center at Wellesley College was created to examine the qualities of relationships that foster healthy growth in women (Covington, 2007). Females who experience child neglect and child physical abuse do so with greater impact on their ability to grow and maintain healthy relationships (Covington, 2007). The connectedness needed for healthy growth and development in adolescence is affected by the individualization that is encouraged during this period. Covington (2007) explained that the connection is so vital for women that women's psychological problems can stem from disconnection or violation within relationships.

The mutual nature of relational-cultural theory explains the lack of foundation in child neglect and child physical abuse populations when the connection is broken. In this study, I hypothesized child neglect to be more of a relational approach, while I hypothesized child physical abuse as having more of an impact on external factors.

Adolescence is a conflictual and confusing period and dictates a need for relational give and take. Miller (2008) explained "Women's sense of self and worth is grounded in the ability to make and maintain relationships" (p.369). In this study, I examined the relational needs of female adolescents who may have experienced child neglect or child physical abuse.

The lack of research studies on child neglect is evidence of the need for research aimed at this population. While the numbers of child neglect cases have increased yearly, the necessary analysis has not kept pace (Manion, 2011). Thus, I wanted to examine the relational impact of child neglect versus that of child physical abuse among female adolescents. The basis of this analysis laid in the relational-cultural theory that outlines women's growth and development. Knowing how the adolescent female grows and develops directs how individual and family treatment is approached.

With neglect representing the bulk of the child maltreatment population studies that are aimed at developing interventions for this population are vital. The generational nature of child maltreatment and the negative impact that can go well into adulthood requires an effective intervention. The mother-child relationship is the relational model of future relationships and studies aimed at examining this relationship affects current and future relationships. Peer relationship is just as important in setting an example of future relationships. The two together are the basis of relationships in the present and the future.

Problem Statement

Maltreatment of children is a social issue that continues to be a growing concern for social service professionals in America. In 2004 child neglect represented 60% of the child maltreatment reports (Bundy-Fazioli & Hamilton., 2013). In the United States, in 2010 the rate of child neglect reports had risen to 78%, with physical abuse at 18% of reports running a distant second (Bundy-Fazioli & Hamilton, 2013; Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012). By 2014 75% of reported victims were neglected, 17.0 % were physically abused, and 8.3% were sexually abused (Child Maltreatment, 2014). While the rate of reported child neglect has remained high over the last 20 years, research focusing on child neglect has lagged behind that examining physical and sexual abuse. Physical abuse is seen as more readily evident and treatable versus child neglect (Daniel, 2015). The research focused on neglect remains sparse, and consensus on treatment of children remains inconsistent (Chen et al., 2011). In my review of the literature, I have not found studies that combine child neglect and child physical abuse, particularly with children transitioning from childhood to teen years. Neglect and physical abuse affect children as they grow in different ways. In this study, I explored the ability of child neglect versus child physical abuse to predict the level of mother-child and peer relationships among older children.

My review of the current literature revealed that the majority of child neglect studies have used younger child populations (aged 0 to 3), the result of which have resulted in some interventions that may be effective with neglect that occurs at a younger age (Lubit, 2016; Perry, 2001). These included play therapy and parent-focused

interaction under the guidance of professionals. Most of the interventions include the parent or caregiver and revolve around bonding exercises. I found few studies using older child populations such as 12-year-olds (Daniel, 2015). However, child neglect and physical abuse that occurs at an older age have been seen to negatively impact adolescent developmental trajectories (Toth, Gravener-Davis, Guild & Ciechetti., 2013). For example, Toth et al. (2013) reported child neglect and child physical abuse at an older age can affect levels of self-esteem and the development of social skills. It is not clear if child neglect during early adolescence is significant to the children's ability to form relationships that may sustain them in transition years. This study offered me an opportunity to explore and examine factors that may interfere with healthy growth and development of relationships among young adolescents. The results of the study may also, in turn, become a foundation for future investigation into possible responses and treatment.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between child neglect versus child physical abuse and its effect on the mother-child and peer relationships. In this study, there were two independent variables: child neglect and child physical abuse. The dependent variables were peer relationships and the mother-child relation.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

My overall goal with this study was to examine the relationship between child neglect versus child physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12 year-old-females. To address this goal, I developed the following research questions (RQs) and

hypotheses:

1. RQ1. Is there a correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females?

H1_o-There is not a negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H1_a-There is a negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

2. RQ2. Is there a correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females?

H2_o-There is no positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H2_a-There is a positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

3. RQ3. Is physical abuse versus child neglect among 12-year old females more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships?

H3_o-Physical abuse is not more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H3_a-Physical abuse is more predictive peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

4. RQ4. Is child neglect versus child physical abuse among 12-year-old females more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships?

H4_o-Child neglect is not more predictive of peer and mother-child

relationships among 12- year-old females.

H4_a-Child neglect is more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12- year-old females.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework for the Study

Miller (1974) was among the first to pose the question of women's psychological development. Up to this point the common theory of individualization, disconnection, and autonomy was used to describe both men's' and women's' psychological and emotional development (Covington, 2007). While some cite relational theory as a form of psychological and emotional growth that describes women's development only, I hypothesized in this study that child maltreatment occurs within the relationship and thus requires a relational theory to examine and develop interventions (Covington, 2007). To build a foundation for relational theory I reviewed attachment theory. A comparative analysis between attachment and relational theories frames this study. The primary theoretical basis of this study is relational theory. Jordan (2010) and Covington (2007) explained the core concepts of relational development theory includes: (a) people grow through and towards relationships throughout the life span (b) mature functioning involves movement toward mutuality and not movement toward separation (c) building and maintaining relationships characterize growth (d) growth-fostering relationships include mutual empathy and empowerment (e) authenticity is necessary for relational growth and development (f) growth-fostering relationships is not a one-way street but offers all people the opportunity to benefit and (g) the goal of relational growth and development is the increased capacity to connect over the life span. Teen years are a time

of relationship building and child neglect and child physical abuse impacts relational development (Lawson, 2009). The lack of positive relational opportunities may lead to impairment in the area of interpersonal functioning (Lawson, 2009). Identifying the relationship between child neglect and child physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among teens may assist with developing an effective way to interact and model healthy relational models.

Nature of the Study

In this quantitative, archival study, I collected data from the Longitudinal Studies of Child Abuse and Neglect (LONGSCAN) data set which consists of a consortium of five longitudinal research studies about child abuse and neglect. The sample data were drawn from an archival database that includes data collected from 12-year-olds from the Midwest sample of a longitudinal research project. This project began with participants at age zero and continued until they reached the age of 18. I used the LONGSCAN data for this study on child neglect, child physical abuse, and peer and mother-child relationships. I used correlation and regression analysis to examine and compare the relationship between child neglect versus child abuse and peer and mother-child relationships.

The LONGSCAN collection of data was initiated in 1991 with grants from the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (LONGSCAN, 1998). The five research sites include Southwest, Northwest, Midwest, East, and South regions (LONGSCAN, 1998). LONGSCAN (2016) researchers collect information on the child, the caregiver,

the family unit, and the larger social system beginning at age zero and ending at age 18. LONGSCAN (2010) includes variables related to physical, mental, and emotional health; cognitive functioning; behavior; relationships; substance use; violence; school performance; and service utilization.

In this study, my analysis of the LONGSCAN data included an analysis of the correlation between self-reported child physical abuse and child neglect and relational variables such as peer and mother-child relationships. The examination provided by this study can frame the way teen maltreatment is approached. Although secondary data is data used for the purpose other than what it was originally designed which makes it difficult to design an original study, the use of LONGSCAN alleviates this issue somewhat in that its' population includes children exposed to and at risk of child abuse and neglect (LONGSCAN, 1998).

Definitions

Mother-child relationship:

the mother-child relationship is formed from the measure of “the Quality of Mother relationship which is intended to assess an adolescent’s perception of the quality of the relationship with his or her mother or mother figure and the level of their recent involvement, as well as the adolescent’s perception of the mother’s educational aspirations for the adolescent.” (LONGSCAN Briefs, 2010, p.119).

Neglect was defined as:

“behavior by a caregiver that constitutes a failure to act in ways that are presumed by the culture of society to be necessary to meet the developmental needs of a

child and which are the responsibility of a caregiver to provide” (LONGSCAN Briefs, 2010, p. 3).

Peer Relationships:

Peer relationship scale includes seven adolescent self-report items on peer relationships. Three items assess the adolescent participant’s perception of how “other kids” at school treat them, and single items ask whether or not s/he has a best friend, a friendship group, and level of satisfaction with these friendships” (LONGSCAN Briefs, 2010, p. 93).

Physical abuse:

This measure is “designed to assess a young adolescent’s self reported lifetime history of physical abuse and assault. It was developed for administration to 12-year old respondents using an A-CASI (Audio-Computer Assisted Self Interview) delivery. It is comprised of stem questions asking about specific perpetrator behaviors and injury experiences, which, if endorsed, trigger follow-up questions on age at occurrence and perpetrator” (LONGSCAN Briefs, 2010, p. 156).

Assumptions

Because of the statistics on child maltreatment, I assumed that child neglect and child physical abuse have an impact on mother-child and peer relationships. I assumed that the statistical tests I chose accurately assessed these variables. I assumed the LONGSCAN data set used measures that allow for the accurate assessment of the independent and dependent variables. I assumed that the responses of adolescent participants to the LONGSCAN questionnaires and interviews were honest and accurate

as participation in the study was voluntary. I assumed informed consent outlining the parameters, procedures, and assurances of confidentiality and privacy in the study was obtained. I also assumed interviewers were properly trained and administered questionnaires and interviews in a non-biased manner.

Scope and Delimitations

Internal Validity

In this study, I examined the relationship between child maltreatment and relationships. In particular, I examined the impact of child neglect on mother-child and peer relationships and child physical abuse and the mother-child relationship and peer relationships. The framework I used for this examination was the relational nature of female growth and development. The goal of the study was to develop an intervention that is relational in nature and fits the adolescent female population.

External Validity

LONGSCAN is a 20-year longitudinal study examining the antecedents and consequences of child maltreatment using an ecological-developmental model of factors believed to be associated with child maltreatment. The studies observe and examine children from infancy to 18. Observation and interviews begin at age zero and end at age 18. The sample population are interviewed face to face every two years starting with age 4. In-between face to face interviewing years, telephone interviews were used to maintain sample retention and to track antecedents, moderators, mediators and outcomes of maltreatment. This data collection was designed to measure the onset and progression of children's social, emotional and behavioral outcomes from infancy through young

adulthood (LONGSCAN, 2006).

Generalizability

While the LONGSCAN sample includes youth exposed to child maltreatment at some level, the data I chose to use were limited to a group of female adolescents. The nature of the study includes 12-year-old females and the results are only generalizable to that sample population. The LONGSCAN population of the Midwest sample I chose to use includes 50% African Americans. Overall, the study is generalizable to female adolescents of African American descent who reside in the Midwest area and who have been exposed to child neglect and child physical abuse.

Limitations

There were several limitations in this study as well as in the LONGSCAN data set. First, the questionnaires in LONGSCAN use a self-report survey which may bias the participants in ways that range from social desirability to recall biases. Second, the female only population was limited to that sample. Third, the age group is limited to 12-year-olds. The LONGSCAN sample is restricted to adolescents the majority of whom have been exposed to child abuse and neglect. The sample consists of a majority of African Americans which is not reflective of the United States. Some of the chosen instruments have not been validated on the sample. To offset the sample bias, there was a control group in the Midwest sample. The investigators were trained on the administration of the questionnaires. For example, the Midwest site has its standard staff versus those at other sites. To offset self-consciousness regarding reporting of sensitive

information, each participant was allowed to answer questions on computer-assisted software (LONGSCAN Research Brief, 1998). This eliminates both participant and investigator bias.

I chose the Midwest sample group because of the inclusion of a control group. This helped to offset the limitations of self-report and bias. The restriction of responses to the last year (or in the case of physical abuse ever) reduced the age limitation. The limit of the population to 12- year old's who had the child neglect and physical abuse occur within the last year focuses the study on the current year.

Significance

Child neglect is commonly defined as a parent's or caretaker's inability to meet a child's basic needs, potentially placing the child at risk of serious harm (LONGSCAN, 1998). By definition neglect is seen as an act of omission. It is the withholding or absence of support that drives healthy growth and development. According to my research, this absence of support is hypothesized to lead to a form of relational disconnection which is evident in poor peer relationships, underdeveloped social skills, and poor parental relationships (Larsen et al., 2011). Physical abuse can negatively impact attachment relationships and can lead to disorganized attachment. These relationships are key to forming and maintaining healthy relationships throughout the lifespan (Larsen et al., 2011).

To date, researchers have examined relational deficits with young children. In these cases, the attachment relationship frames the impact of child maltreatment. This type of relationship occurs before the age of 3 and is thought to be more permanent if

treatment is not implemented (Perry, 2001). This study focused on the rarely examined relationship between child neglect, child physical abuse, peer relationships and mother-child relationships among 12-year-olds. Just as young children need the mother-child relationship for healthy growth and development, adolescence is also a time of positive relationship building. The impact of child neglect and child physical abuse on relationships may be twofold: Child neglect and child physical abuse may transform healthy relational models into deficient ones or; they may have a lifelong negative impact on the ability to build new relationships if gone undertreated (Toth et al., 2013). If a positive relationship between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships can be identified, evidence-based and effective intervention could be developed. The results of this study may change the way child neglect among adolescents is defined and treated.

Summary

Child neglect represents the bulk of child abuse and neglect population. However, the rate of studies involving the child neglect population has not kept pace. Child physical abuse and child sexual abuse has received the majority of attention (Larsen et al., 2011). I hypothesized child neglect has a positive impact on relationships versus child physical abuse. The research questions in this study focused on the relationship between child neglect and mother-child and peer relationships and the relationship between child physical abuse and mother-child relationship and peer relationship. To keep the study current the questionnaire examines these variables in the last year (except in the case of child physical abuse where some items asked if this has

ever occurred).

This chapter included the study's background; the problem statement; the purpose of the study; research questions and hypotheses; the theoretical foundation; the nature of the study which describes the study variables; definitions; definitions; assumptions; scope and delimitations; limitations; and significance. Chapter 2 will include a literature review, theoretical foundation, and summary and conclusions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Although child neglect represents roughly two-thirds of the child maltreatment reports, there is a lack of proportionate studies examining the relational basis of child neglect (Ryan et al. 2013). Physical abuse which represents less than one-third of the reports receives the bulk of attention from researchers and practitioners (Ryan et al. 2013). Child neglect is thought to cause less of a problem than physical and sexual abuse (Evans and Burton, 2013)). However, my proposal for this study was that child neglect that occurs in adolescence is relational in nature and requires a relational approach. In a relational approach, mutual growth and development occur. There are seven core concepts of relational theory that contributed to female growth and development (Covington, 2007). As far as transitions, infancy and adolescent are two of the most important transitional periods (Perry, 2001).

The attachment relationship that occurs in infancy requires a bond to a particular caregiver. The relationship foundation is biological, genetic, emotional, and social (Perry, 2001). The attachment relationship is thought to be the foundation of future relationships (Perry, 2001). An episode of child neglect can transform a healthy relationship into an insecure attachment. The difference between infant attachment and adolescent relationships is that the dependence the infant has on the caregiver is evident while in adolescence the relational basis is less obvious and interdependent.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between child neglect versus child physical abuse and the mother-child and peer relationships. The identification of an effective intervention for child neglect is imperative. The most direct

route to this identification is the examination of adolescence, the most explosive growth period, and during an important time of relationship building. The teen years are a time of conflict even without the addition of child neglect and child physical abuse. The addition of child neglect and child physical abuse in the transition to adulthood may require the teens who suffer it to find additional help.

Toth et al. (2013) emphasized the relational nature of child abuse and neglect. They discussed the positive and negative impact of attachment and the need for relational intervention in cases of child abuse and neglect. The importance of relational intervention was reviewed in young and older children (Cashmore, 2011; Toth et al., 2013). The researchers examined different relational interventions that can be used in older children versus younger children who receive the bulk of the research attention. Due to the gap in the research, more studies on adolescence, where mother and child relationships are just as vulnerable, are needed.

Muller, Gragtmans, and Baker (2008) studied childhood physical abuse as a mediating role attachment played on the relationship between child physical abuse and perceived social support in adulthood. In my estimation, the attachment relationship is thought to be the foundation of negative relationship especially among those exposed to physical abuse. Relationships that occur in infancy, childhood, and adolescence are advanced as the key to lifelong relationships. Those that are built from child physical abuse may result in a child that develops a model of self as ineffective and worthless in the context of relationships (Muller, Gragtmans & Baker, 2008). Such an attitude leads to a need for a relational approach to treatment and intervention.

Lawson (2009) based the consequences of child maltreatment, which included a high risk of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, on little or no positive attachment and support by caregivers, on being female, on being younger, and on being African American. The author maintained that the goal of treatment is to build resiliency following the maltreatment that includes a strong and caring mother-child relationship (Lawson, 2009). The key to relational intervention includes a relationship built with the therapist that is similar to that of a strong and caring caregiver (Lawson, 2009). The need for relational intervention as soon as possible following the abuse justifies a look at child maltreatment in the current study which asks about abuse in the last year.

In this chapter I review studies on the impact of child neglect and child physical abuse. The focus is on the relational nature of child neglect and child physical abuse. I review studies that contribute to an understanding of the interconnection between relationships and child neglect and physical abuse. I discuss attachment, bonding, and relational theories. The chapter ends with a summary and conclusion.

Literature Search Strategy

In the Walden Library, I searched for peer-reviewed journal articles within the most recent 5 years. I used the databases of EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and Academic Search Premier, and the search engines of Google and Google Scholar to complete my search. The keyword searched terms I used included-*child neglect*, *child physical abuse*, *child neglect and physical abuse interventions*, *child neglect and physical abuse theories*, *bonding and child neglect and physical abuse*, *attachment and child maltreatment*, *relational theory.*, *bonding and child maltreatment*, and *child maltreatment and juvenile*

delinquency.

Theoretical Foundation

The foundation of relational theory is that true connections promote mutuality, empathy, and empowerment (Covington, 2007). In particular, the core concepts of relational theory include: (a) people grow through and towards relationships throughout the life span (b) mature functioning involves movement toward mutuality and not movement toward separation (c) building and maintain relationships characterize growth (d) growth-fostering relationships include mutual empathy and empowerment (e) authenticity is necessary for relational growth and development (f) growth-fostering relationships is not a one-way street but offers all people the opportunity to benefit (g) the goal of relational growth and development is the increased capacity to connect over the life span (Jordan, 2010). The lack of a relational foundation produces disconnection, non-empathic, and toxic relationships resulting in psychological consequences (Covington, 2007). Psychological and relational disconnection is also seen in those suffering from physical, or sexual abuse, or other forms of trauma (Evans and Burton, 2013). The relationship between the abuser and abused is guided by non-empathic responses of the abuser which leads to mental health symptoms such as dissociation, hypervigilance, and hyperarousal among the abused. In other words, "people who have been traumatized have lived in unsafe, non-growth fostering relationships" (Jordan, 2010, p.83).

Because child neglect and child physical abuse occurs within the relationship most of the theoretical approaches are based on attachment-related theories. Attachment

and relational theory differ in several ways: (a) attachment occurs from 0 to 3 while relational approach covers the entire life cycle (b) attachment relies primarily on the caregiver and child relationship while the relational approach includes interaction between all relationships; and (c) attachment is thought to cause more permanent effects while relational deficits can be more easily addressed (Perry, 2001; Toth et al., 2013).

Miller and Richards (2000) discussed how traditional theories have instituted Western, patriarchal concepts of separation, autonomy, and independence as goals of interventions, as opposed to concepts of connection and interdependence. Relational theory evolved over the last 20 years in response to the individualism of traditional psychological theories of human development (Miller & Richards, 2000).

In regards to child maltreatment and relation theory, there is an absence of growth producing opportunities due to the abusive nature of the relationship. In the present study I used relational theory as the foundation of intervention in cases of child neglect and child physical. Relational theory is the frame through which I reviewed the interaction between child neglect and child physical abuse and relationships.

Child neglect and child physical abuse leave a void in relationship building opportunities of children. Relational theory is a salient approach to child neglect. I found that relational theory is built on attachment theory except for the age range with attachment occurring in infancy and relational theory applying to older children. However, child neglect and child physical abuse studies involving relationships among 12 year -old females are scarce. Attachment theory is not the best approach for this age group. Because adolescence is a time of growth and development, a theory that embraces

this age range is vital and the subsequent intervention is essential. Because of the lack foundation, theory, and intervention among female adolescents who have been exposed to child neglect and child physical abuse this study may be an enlightened approach. Females are overexposed to child abuse and neglect yet studies that expose this factor are rare. This study is rare in that the majority of the sample is females who have been exposed to child physical abuse and neglect.

Milner et al. (2010) hypothesized three different theories to explain the intergenerational nature of child physical abuse. They started with social learning theory where social behaviors are learned through observing and imitating the behavior of models such as parents. Milner et al. (2010) proposed that children who witness physical violence are more apt to become parents who use physical violence. The foundation of social learning theory is that through models physically abusive behavior is learned. Social learning theory is a part of the relational nature of physical abuse as it is passed down from generation to generation.

Milner et al. (2010) explained that when compared to social learning theory, attachment theory focuses more on the relational nature of child physical abuse (Milner et al., 2010). Thus, Bowlby's attachment theory can also be used to explain the relational nature of child physical abuse. According to the attachment theory, children form internal working models of self and others based on early interaction with their parents. The internal working models are relational in nature and are a guiding force in how victims of child physical abuse behave in all relationships. The premise of this study concurs with Bowlby's model (Perry, 2001).

In contrast to social learning theory and attachment theory, Milner et al. (2010) reviewed trauma-based models to explain the intergenerational nature of child physical abuse. In this model, childhood trauma such as physical abuse is thought to result in the perpetration of adult violence. In the case of intimate partner violence, the result of the trauma that occurred in childhood may lead to poor self-concept and emotional dysregulation. These attributes become the model for intergenerational and intimate partner violence (Milner et al., 2010).

However, the three models may not accurately explain the relational nature of child physical abuse and its short term and long term consequences. In this study I suggested that child physical abuse occurs within the relationship and may result in relational deficits that impact the child, the adolescent, and the adult. Therefore, bonding, attachment, and relational theories are more foundational theories than social learning and trauma theories.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables

The Relational Nature of Child Physical Abuse and Child Neglect

Interventions are guided by definitions. Bundy-Fazioli, DeLong and Hamilton (2013) offered a working definition of child neglect which states as a “parent’s or caretaker’s inability to meet a child’s basic needs, potentially placing the child at risk of serious harm” (p.251). This definition is associated with the omission of the act that child neglect represents. These researchers also recognized that poverty along with the lack of an identified support system and family resources are risk factors associated with neglect. Despite the definitions and percentages, child neglect is rarely the sole entity in

research studies (Ryan, Williams & Courtney, 2013; Daniel, 2013). Daniel (2013) described neglect as both simple and complex. The point of view from the child focus on the lack of or the omission of care was fundamental to this study.

Unger and De Luca (2014) examined the relationship between childhood physical abuse and adult attachment styles and offered a definition of child physical abuse that is comparable to other definitions which states “non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a child, physical abuse is the most visible form of child maltreatment” (American Humane, 2016, para 1). The researchers found that physical abuse was associated with avoidant attachment style, and child physical abuse could result in dysfunctional relationships into adulthood. This type of attachment style results in relationships that are negative and disconnected. Regarding to intervention the study results pointed to a need to go slowly in rebuilding relationships and to move towards connectedness in interpersonal relationships with the help of a therapist.

Toth et al., (2013) reviewed relational interventions for child maltreatment and pointed out the relational need for understanding and implementing interventions that are relationship based. The child maltreated population is more likely to develop negative representational models that include negative views of self and caregivers (Toth et al., 2013). The relational model directs intervention in different ways for child neglect and child physical abuse. Although the difference has been pointed out by others, Toth et al., (2013) combined abuse and neglect into one category of child maltreatment with the primary emphasis on child physical abuse. This approach limits the identification of the

core contributing factor to negative relationships.

The importance of a reliable and consistent definition is the foundation of a treatable illness. The impact of neglect is seen as relational due to the lack of or the omission of care (Daniel, 2015; Ryan et al., 2013). This definition should direct studies that include the child neglect population. Neglected children are still seen as a more complicated and difficult population when compared to children who are physically and sexually abused (Daniel, 2015). Child neglect versus physical abuse occurs within the relationship. However, one poses more of a problem in the reforming of relationships. Child neglect includes a more vital model of growth and development because it lacks the model in which one grows and connects. In my assessment, whereas child physical abuse demonstrates a model in which aggression is the example, child neglect demonstrates a model in which disconnection is the example.

Intervention in child neglect may depend on the type of neglect and the needs of the family. Morton (2012) identified treatment for neglect for families that included an observation that there may be three types of neglect: disorganized neglect, emotional neglect, and depressed neglect. In my study, the Quality of Mother Relationship survey examined physical and emotional neglect. The building of treatment depends heavily on the type of neglect. The Morton study (2012) focused on physical and emotional neglect. It examined the impact of physical and emotional neglect on the building of teen relationships as well as mother-child relationships. Morton (2012) explained teen relationships are complex and may need more than one type of treatment. The most effective treatment is relational based and does not include cognitive behavioral or family

systems approaches until the building of the relationships is undertaken (Morton,2011).

Manion (2011) defined neglect as invasive, difficult to tackle, and commonly seen in the population of children and adolescents brought to the attention of child protection services. Manion (2011) also explained that neglect is often presented as a multiple, persistent, and complex issue. Maintaining public focus on neglect unlike physical abuse is difficult (Manion, 2011).

The Impact of Neglect

Although neglect is most often reported it is rarely the main focus of researchers. Some researchers stated that neglect has the least impact on victims, while others viewed neglect as the most detrimental to young and older children. Younger childhood is seen as the opportune time to address relational aspects of neglect. Older childhood is seen as the most needed time for relational intervention (Manion, 2013; Ryan et al., 2013; Toth et al, 2013). Both require relational interventions for different reasons and results in different outcomes. Secure attachment in childhood is needed to progress normally. Teens need sound relationships at a time when developmental milestones focus on relationship building (Toth et al, 2013).

Involvement in child protection is not the only means that adolescent neglect reveals its' effect. Juvenile justice involvement is also a way in which the impact of neglect is revealed (Ryan,et al., 2013). When confronted with a chance to engage in juvenile delinquency teens who are victims of neglect are more likely to be without social bonds to mediate these opportunities. Teens with ongoing neglect cases are especially vulnerable to continued involvement in the juvenile justice and the adult correctional

systems (Ryan et al., 2013).

Child neglect may be more of a predictor of juvenile offending and reoffending than physical abuse. According to Ryan et al. (2013), adolescent neglect has a different results than neglect of young children. Adolescence is a time of changing and growing relationships. Peer relationships are especially affected by neglect, and juvenile offending is often a result. These factors may contribute to juvenile delinquency and reoffending. The authors proposed adolescent neglect as a primary indicator of juvenile justice involvement (Ryan et al., 2013). The parent-child relationship and the peer relationship are the bases of juvenile justice contact. Dual system adolescents (i.e. teens who are involved in both the child protection and juvenile justice system) whose primary involvement in child protection is neglect are more likely to offend and to reoffend (Ryan et al., 2013).

One of the reasons juvenile delinquency occurs is that the parent-child relationship that entails the forming of a social bond and that promotes social conformity is defective (Ryan et al., 2013). Also, the nature and the timing of the child neglect and offending are dictated by the child-parent and peer relationships. Building these relationships in the face of neglect is difficult. Because of the cognitive, biological, and social growth and development of adolescence, teen offending is a likely result of child abuse and neglect. In Ryan et al.'s (2013) study child neglect was reviewed, and the consequences which include juvenile offending and reoffending were discussed. In the case of juvenile delinquency, the key to intervention ranges from relational to a family system approach.

Physical Abuse Definition

American Humane (2016) provided a working definition of physical abuse as “non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a child, physical abuse is the most visible form of child maltreatment” (para 1). The intentional act frames the relationship in which aggression becomes the model for future relationships. Unger and De Luca (2014) explained that the results of long-term physical abuse are a lack of trust in others, anger, internalization of aggression, and interpersonal difficulties. "Other factors that can contribute to child abuse include parents' immaturity, lack of parenting skills, poor childhood experiences, and social isolation, as well as frequent crisis situations, drug or alcohol problems and domestic violence” (American Humane, 2016. para 1). Milner et al. (2010) agreed that some of the results of child physical abuse includes cognitive deficits, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, anger, psychological distress, relationship problems, re-victimization, and adult psychopathology.

Child Physical Abuse and Relationships

In a study of childhood physical punishment and partnership outcomes at age 30, McLeod et al. (2014) concluded that childhood physical punishment is associated with increases in the number of negative partner relationships, partner adjustment problems, intimate partner violence victimization, and intimate partner perpetration. McLeod et al. (2014) noted that more exposure to childhood physical maltreatment was associated with more changeable, less satisfactory, and more violent partnerships in later life.

The importance of this summation to the current study is the observation that

childhood physical punishment can have ongoing long-term effects and that these effects are relationship based. The outcome of physical abuse is anger and aggression which prohibits the building of satisfactory relationships. The trust and openness needed to grow and develop within the relationship are absent in the child who has been exposed to childhood physical punishment. By age 30, it is evident that the damaged child results in a damaged adult. The damaged child can also be seen in the damaged adolescent who is just beginning to form intimate relationships. Peer relationships rather they are same sex or different sex relationships becomes progressively important. The long-term impact of childhood physical abuse is important in identifying the appropriate intervention at the childhood and adolescent level.

McLeod et al. (2014) study was comparable to other studies in which child physical abuse and intimate relationships were examined and extended the examination of child physical abuse and relationships. They found that the results applied to both men and women. After controlling for a number of variables, the most prominent finding was that both men and women are subject to the negative impact of the abuse on intimate and long-term relationships. Although females are usually the victims of intimate partner violence with a background of child physical abuse, the McLeod et al.'s findings can lead to a better understanding of relational development (Larsen et al., 2011).

The results of the Larsen's et al. (2011) study indicated that physical abuse has a negative impact on relationship quality for both men and women and that the greater the frequency of childhood physical abuse the greater impact on relationship quality. This indication highlights the need for the study of relational quality among boys and girls,

men and women, teens and adults. People grow within the relationship as well as lack the factors to grow within the relationship especially those exposed to physical abuse and neglect (Larsen et al., 2011).

Larsen et al.'s (2011) study included a look at childhood physical and sexual abuse and adult relationships. Larsen et al. (2011) reviewed the impact of physical abuse on the future attachment. Because relationships formed in childhood are the basis of future relationships, abuse leads to interpersonal problems that include insecure attachments and trust issues (Larsen et al., 2011). Parents who experience childhood abuse have difficulty forming relationships with children and `romantic relationships with others. Larsen et al. (2011) found that the experience of physical abuse in childhood creates a dysfunctional view of self and impedes children's ability to accept love in healthy ways because they have been trained to believe that they are not worthy of it, Larsen et al (2011) laid the foundation for this study. It is hypothesized that the mother-child and peer relationships are impacted by physical abuse and it is progressive. In particular,, this study is seeking to identify the impact of child physical abuse on relationships at an age in which the importance of peer and mother-child relationship has resurfaced.

Larsen et al's (2011) examination pointed to an understanding of why child neglect was more apt to be the foundation of separation than child physical abuse, why child neglect or child physical abuse was more predictive of the parent-child relationship or child neglect or child physical abuse was more predictive of peer relationships. While some may believe the relational models that result in problems in the child-mother and

peer relationship is resistant to change, the premise of relational theory is that change in the relationship can result in change in the person (Unger and De Luca, 2014).

In fact, two different personality styles can be seen to impact long term relationships. The excessively compliant child not only avoids the physical punishment but develops a personal style that reflects self-doubt when others are displeased. The second style that results in an impact on long-term relationship is the angry and acting out style that results in a model of how to stay away from harm of the physical abuser (Unger & De Luca, 2014).

Child Abuse and Neglect and Running Away

Running away is a form of separation that is the result of child physical abuse and poor parenting. Running away indicates a form of disconnection and relational breakdown (Tucker, et al., 2011). Teen runaways are more likely to have severed the parental tie because of some type of maltreatment. The connection between child maltreatment and running away indicates physical abuse is among the chief complaints (Tucker et al., 2011).

In addition, running away is a form of separation that is a more permanent form of relationship disconnection. It indicates a need to remove oneself from the abuse that is both draining and disconnecting. The teen years are a confusing time. Some advance that the teen years are a time of separation (Tucker, 2011). However, to grow the relationship has to be stable, consistent, and mutual (Tucker, 2011). If physical abuse is a form of relational disconnection, physical abuse that occurs during the teen years is a reaction to relational risk factors.

Risk factors of teen disconnection include a connection with deviant peers and the absence of parental support. This gap in relational growth may impact the teen's future relationships. While some suggest the teen years are a time of maturity through disconnection, others recognize teen connections are important for relational growth and development (Tucker, 2011). Jordan (2010) noted that growth occurs within the relationship not outside of it. Maturity is a form of progressive relational tasks that ends in an ability to maintain relationships throughout the life span.

If running away is a form of disconnection, provision of the stable relationship presents a way to reconnect. To answer the question why does one run away and why does one form relationships with deviant peers lies in the view that one needs to form and maintain a connection rather it is with deviant or prosocial peers. If assessed, it may become more apparent that people require a relationship rather it is a poor or good relationship.

Future Relationships, Violence, and Bonding

In a study of childhood physical abuse and dating violence Fiorillo et al. (2013) found physical abuse lead to exposure to dating violence. This study confirmed that exposure to an aggressive relationship is a basis for future relationships. Child physical abuse is an act of aggression in the caregiver relationship. This type of relationship causes psychological damage that is relational in nature. Relational reconnection can occur with positive partners. The tendency to base partners on the level of childhood relationships can be redirected using positive bonding experiences among family and peers (Fiorillo et al., 2013).

The reparation of relationships can occur within the therapeutic alliance.

Fiorillo, et al. (2013) advocated that attacking the avoidance or disconnection is key to treatment of college age participants. They emphasized including an option of treatment and lists the interaction of physical abuse and physical violence victimization as examples of the study' result (Fiorillo et al., 2013). For example, in this college sample, 32% of those with histories of childhood physical abuse reported subsequent physical violence victimization in intimate relationships compared to 18% without the history of childhood physical abuse. This finding reinforces the need for an understanding and institution of the relational impact of childhood physical abuse (Fiorillo et al., 2013).

Perry (2001) defined a bond as a connection between one person and another. In the reference to the infant, child, and adolescent development attachment refers to a special bond made up of unique qualities in the mother-child or caregiver-child relationship. Accordingly, the attachment bond is made up of three elements:

- (a) is an enduring emotional relationship with a specific person;
- (b) relationship that brings safety, comfort, soothing, and pleasure; and
- (c) loss or threat of loss of the person evokes intense distress (Perry, 2001. p. 2)

This relationship is the foundation of current and future relationships. A secure attachment is the result of bonding that is safe, trust worthy, and giving. This relationship can occur with anyone who is consistently available, who interacts in a positive manner, and who is emotionally connected. This connection happens in the absence of childhood abuse and neglect. Maltreatment separates the attachment and requires a subsequent bonding period (Perry, 2001).

The biological and genetic aspect of attachment is a basis for the survival of the species. The infants' dependence on the primary caregiver is both emotional and physical. The biological nature and response to needs by the caregiver is the foundation of relationships (Perry, 2001). Child physical abuse and neglect at any stage negatively impacts the relationship. The adolescent stage is a time of biological and emotional change and peer, intimate, and caregiver relationship building. Even though by age three 90% of the brain is developed, adolescence is the biological stage when bonding and attachment occur and remaining development occurs (Perry, 2001). In abusive and neglectful families, it is common for maltreatment to be transgenerational and to affect the ability to form and maintain relationships at the salient periods of infancy and adolescence (Perry, 2001).

Lawson (2009) emphasized the importance of relationships and listed a number of resilience factors associated with the recovery from child abuse. The keys to resiliency are the secure attachment and connection with consistently supportive adults and peer support. While this may occur before age 3, it can be threatened by an abusive relationship. The mother-child relationship is the foundation of all relationships to come. However, this is the most difficult relationship to repair. Focus on treating the caregiver-child relationship begins at an early age and occurs throughout the developmental cycle. Replacing the damaged relationship occurs within the therapeutic alliance.

According to Lawson (2009), both children and therapists rate the therapeutic relationship as more important than specific techniques. The impact of relationships is evident in child maltreatment populations. Lawson (2009) acknowledged that treatment

models that include some combination of cognitive behavioral therapy, psychodynamic-attachment therapy, and parent-family based treatment are not as effective as relational treatment. Currently, these models are thought to have the strongest and most consistent empirical support for treating child maltreatment (Lawson, 2009). The underlying models are relational and require a relationship based approach. Although Lawson (2009) expanded the treatment to include cognitive behavior approaches, relational therapy focuses on rebuilding the mother-child and peer relationships and is the foundation for returning the maltreated child back to a point in which the growth cycle includes reciprocal relationships and growth building opportunities. In my estimation, relational therapy is hypothesized to be more appropriate than the models advanced by Lawson (2009). In Lawson built (2009) does build more of a case for attachment based therapy. At a younger age, attachment-based treatment may be the basis of effective treatment. Relational treatment in the form of growth producing interaction is thought to be more effective with older children (Covington, 2007). In particular, in this study, relational approach is thought to be the foundation of treatment progression (Covington, 2007).

Early Abuse and Relationships

Early abuse and neglect are thought to cause lifelong problems if left untreated. The attachment relationship is thought to be a lifelong model of future relationship. In a study on child abuse and neglect, late foster care placement and the ability to form secure attachments with subsequent caregivers, Joseph, O'Connor, Briskman, Maughan and Scott (2014) examined the interaction between these factors and later development.

Joseph et al.'s (2014) study revealed that "limited data exist on the likelihood that children who experienced poor early care would form a secure attachment relationship, particularly past early childhood (p.76)". However, Joseph et al. (2014) found that adolescents entering foster care as a teen were able to form secure relationships with foster caregivers. When a secure attachment is impacted by maltreatment, its affect on relationship building can be lifelong. If insecure attachment drives relationship building, then an examination of early and teen ability to form secure attachment later in life is imperative.

Understanding the interaction between early child abuse and later relationship quality can lead to interventions that are more effective than those currently available. There is a need to study adolescent relationship quality rather it be in foster caregivers or genetic caregivers. Adolescence is a particularly vulnerable time for separation from biological families. It helps to identify the need for interventions that can begin in adolescence and continue into adulthood. It also offers hope in that insecure attachment need not be permanent. This study can contribute to the literature by examining adolescent relationships and child maltreatment which may lead to foster care placement. Thus, foster placement in adolescence need not be a hopeless event.

Toth et al. (2013) discussed relational treatment that begins in the 80's up to the present time. These researchers focused on the relational nature of child abuse and neglect and the relational nature of healing. Accordingly, the treatment of adolescents begins with parent-child interaction therapy (PCIT) and interpersonal psychotherapy (Toth et al., 2013). Most of the treatment programs begin with younger children as well

as the invested research studies that examines this population. Because the relational interventions are based on attachment theory and the basis that insecure attachment resulting from child abuse and neglect is treatable if caught early, attachment-based treatment is advanced by these researchers (Toth et al., 2013).

Adolescence and Relationships

Toth et al (2013) explained that intervention during adolescence involves two factors. First, adolescence is a transitional turning point in development that presents opportunities and challenges for developmental challenges that include developing an identity and forming romantic relationships. Before relational theory, everyone was thought to go through the same stages of individuation (Covington, 2007). Relational theory proposes that growth and development occur within the relationship (Covington, 2007). This is a rarely used approach with boys versus girls. Second, relational techniques are used to combat the relational impact of child abuse and neglect. Yet many may use the technique of the day which mainly includes cognitive behavior therapy and family system therapy. These interventions ignore the driving force behind child abuse and neglect. It is relational in nature and can have a greater impact on relationships as one grows older (Toth et al., 2013). Toth et al, (2013) recommended more studies examining the developmental and the relational impact on older populations particularly adolescents. Cashmore (2011) explained that infants and children are especially vulnerable to abuse and neglect with the window for secure attachment impacted by poor parenting. This is not the only period of vulnerability; early adolescence is also a time of increased risk (Cashmore, 2011). Adolescence is a time of growth and development that

range from academic to interpersonal relationships. The social bond forms from the interaction between the parent-child and peer relationships.

Attachment and Relationships

Muller, Thornback, and Bedi (2012) investigated attachment as a mediator between childhood maltreatment and adult symptomatology and examined the interaction between childhood maltreatment and relationship formation. Bowlby's attachment theory was used to define the parent-child and adult relationships. They found that psychological maltreatment showed the most robust relationships between attachment and forms of childhood abuse. They also explained when insecure attachment occurs it establishes the nature and progression of negative relationship experiences (Muller et al., 2012).

The importance of understanding the impact of child abuse and the formation of insecure attachment has lifelong implications. The attachment relationship begins early in life. In a child maltreatment case, the negative relationship becomes the foundation of other relationships. If left untreated the insecure attachment becomes the model for future relationships. The results of Muller et al.'s (2012) study did not clearly show what transpires when the abuse occurs later in childhood. Instead, the researchers emphasized the early trauma associated with child abuse and the resultant negative impact on adult relationships.

Among the psychological, physical, and exposure to domestic violence and attachment relationship, psychological abuse had a negative impact on adult relationships. Muller et al. found some relationship between physical abuse and adult

attachment; however, physical abuse and attachment did not demonstrate the interconnection of studies in the past that showed that the relationship model basic foundation as one of aggression and disconnection is not clear. As adolescence is a time of change and new relationship building, those relationships that occur after a bout of physical abuses result in a negative relationship that, if left untreated, will lead into adulthood and result in difficulty forming positive relationships (Muller et al., 2012).

Relational Theories

While growth and development have been advanced to depend heavily on individualism, teen growth and development depends heavily on the group, inclusion, and interdependence (Miller & Richards, 1987). Seminal growth and development theories depend heavily on the patriarchal view that man reaches maturity when he fully separated from caregiver relationships. (Covington, 2007; Miller, 2008; Miller & Richards, 1987). Relational theory emphasizes the interdependence and the mutual growth and development within the relationship which is a key to my study. The view that one way of developing is for men and one way is for woman builds a foundation of relational interventions.

Covington (2007) reviewed Miller's work and clarified the way disconnection and separation impacts the individual. The connection that results from the relationships is a foundation for healthy growth and development, particularly among females. Disconnection that occurs within the abusive relationship causes diminished self-worth and a turning away from relationships (Covington, 2007). The point that Miller and Covington made is that a natural progression of connections lead to maturity. Child

physical abuse and neglect is steeped in disconnection and results in psychologically damaged individuals. The sooner the relationship can be rebuilt, the better the chance the individual will return to normal functioning.

The Characteristics of Child Abuse and Neglect

Child physical abuse is seen as an act of aggression within the caretaker relationship. This act models anger and forms the seeds of separation. This separation, in turn, leads to a form of disconnection that can only be psychologically damaging. It matters when child physical abuse occurs in the developmental process. Child physical abuse that occurs in infancy may not be as impactful as physical abuse that occurs as a teen. The bonding that is lacking in an infant-caregiver relationship may lead to a form of detachment that results in an inability to form healthy relationships. At some point in the development process, a connection can occur between infant and caregiver. This process may begin with a connected caregiver; one who models a connected and bonded individual.

Child neglect is a lack of giving and the absence or a lack of interaction that results in positive models for growth and development. Young children and infants are more dependent on the caregiver. The consistent availability of the caregiver forms a bond that is the basis of future relationships. At this point, the relationship is more biological and genetic which allows for the survival of the species. As a teen, child neglect results in the absence of a much-needed relationship. The model for peer group membership and caregiver relationship is the presence of relational growth opportunities. The disconnection that happens as a teen leaves one with a lack of psychologically

important opportunities.

Summary and Conclusions

The themes in the literature have as the primary foundation the importance of relationships. The need for an understanding of attachment and bonding leads to a better analysis of teens who experiences child neglect and child physical within relationships. Understanding the difference between attachment and relational theories allow a better analysis of the effectiveness of interventions for child neglect and physical abuse. Child neglect and physical abuse occur within the relationships and their results can be treated when a stable mother-child relationship is reinstated through growth producing opportunities. The relational nature of abuse and neglect limits the opportunity for growth and development especially in teen years when relationships are the core of growth.

The interaction of the relationships and child neglect and child physical abuse is unknown. The treatment of child neglect is not as evident as the treatment for child physical abuse. There are limited studies on teen neglect and physical abuse. Researchers acknowledged that the teen years are a difficult time that requires connection, but that often results in disconnection. Similar to child attachment, teen relationships are fundamental to growth and development; however, studies on teen neglect and physical abuse and relationships are limited.

The present study fills the gap in the studies involving teen neglect and physical abuse and relationships. Child neglect and physical abuse are rarely studied together. The majority of studies involve child physical abuse and sexual abuse and combine them

with child neglect to form an all-inclusive study of child maltreatment. The absence of studies of child neglect and physical abuse together leaves a gap in an important period of growth and development. Child neglect is thought to be less detrimental to health and development and is thus the least studied among the child neglect and abuse population. How children grow and develop within the relationship is important to understand to implement interventions that work.

Chapter 3 will develop further the population of 12-year-old females who have been exposed to child neglect and physical abuse. I will discuss the research design and rationale, the population, data collection analysis, and ethical procedures

Chapter 3: Research Method

This chapter includes an overview of the study's research design and rationale, the setting and sample population, instruments used, data collection and analysis, instrumentation and operationalization of constructs, threats to validity, plausible rival explanations, and a chapter summary. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between child neglect versus child physical abuse and the mother-child and peer relationships.

Research Design and Rationale

This is a quantitative, archival study. The study variables include the following were child neglect, physical abuse, the mother-child relationship, and peer relationship. Bundy-Fazioli & Hamilton (2013) describes child neglect as a "parent's or caretaker's inability to meet a child's basic needs, potentially placing the child at risk of serious harm" (p.251). I measured this variable by information I gathered from a self-reported survey in the LONGSCAN data set. Physical abuse-American Humane (2016) defined physical abuse as "non-accidental trauma or physical injury caused by punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a child, physical abuse is the most visible form of child maltreatment" (para 1). This variable was measured in this study from information from a self-reported survey from the LONGSCAN data set. The mother-child relationship as a variable was measured by the mother-child quality survey from the LONGSCAN data set. I measured the peer relationship variable by the quality of peer relationship self-report survey found in the LONGSCAN data set.

Population

LONGSCAN is a consortium of research studies operating under common by-laws and procedures. It was initiated in 1991 with grants from the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect through a coordinating center at the University of North Carolina Injury Prevention Research Center and five satellite sites (Chicago (Midwest), Baltimore,(Eastern) North Carolina (South), San Diego (Southwest), and Seattle (Northwest) (Knight et al., 2016). Each site is conducting a separate and unique research project on the etiology and impact of child maltreatment (Knight et al., 2016). While each project can stand alone on its own merits, through the use of common assessment measures, similar data collection methods and schedules, and pooled analyses, LONGSCAN is a collaborative effort. In this study, I used the Midwest sample which includes 245 participants, 53 % of which are females (Knight et al., 2016).

The coordinated LONGSCAN design permits a comprehensive exploration of many critical issues in child abuse and neglect in a combined sample of sufficient size for unprecedented statistical power and flexibility (Knight et al., 2016). Built into the design is also the ability to replicate and extend findings across a variety of ethnic, social and economic subgroups (Knight et al., 2016). The majority of the participants are from African American populations. In the Chicago (MW) sample, 53.5% are of African American descent with Caucasians running a distant second at 13.1%. (Knight et al., 2016).

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The goal of LONGSCAN is to follow the children and their families until the children themselves become young adult (Knight et al., 2016)). Comprehensive assessments of children, their parents, and their teachers are scheduled to occur at child ages 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16, and 18 (Knight et al., 2016)). Maltreatment data is collected from multiple sources, including record reviews, at least every 2 years (Knight et al., 2016)). Yearly telephone interviews allow the sites to track families and assess yearly service use and life events (Knight et al., 2016).

Archival Data

The findings of LONGSCAN provide a scientific basis for policy-making, program planning, and targeting service delivery by increasing society's understanding of the following:

- The child, family, and community factors which increase the risk for maltreatment.
- The differential consequences of maltreatment, depending upon its timing, duration, severity, and nature.
- The child, family, and community factors that increase the harm caused by different forms of maltreatment.
- The factors that increase the probability of positive child outcomes despite maltreatment and other adverse life circumstances.

- The strengths and weaknesses of various societal interventions such as child welfare programs, foster care, mental health services, parenting classes, etc. (Knight et al., 2016).

The procedure and process for gaining access to the LONGSCAN dataset include the following:

- The researcher should assess their research needs and ensure the dataset is what they need
- Submit their contact information through the online form
- Complete a digital Terms of Use Agreement (PDF) for each dataset they want to receive.
- All data files are distributed in SPSS and SAS compatible formats. Some datasets are distributed as text files with import statements for SAS, SPSS, and STATA.
- Data files are distributed via a secure Web download portal. Users receive a time-limited link to retrieve what they requested. Each dataset is distributed in one compressed .zip package which contains the data files.
- I have contacted and requested access to the LONGSCAN data set
- I received permission via e-mail
- The dataset was downloaded on my password protected computer

As far as historical documents the LONGSCAN dataset use child protection files which they received from child protective service files (Knight et al., 2016). Since the dataset is

dedicated to child maltreatment, this was the best source of data for child abuse and neglect. Users do not have access to the historical documents (Knight et al., 2016) . I used this data for a secondary analysis in which the files from the MW site were examined.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

Instrumentation

The instrument, About My Parents, is adapted from the Neglect Scale as developed by Straus, Kinard and Meyer Williams in 1995 and 1997. The measure is a self-report of neglectful parent behaviors during the adolescents' elementary school years and in the last year (LONGSCAN, 1998). This was relevant to my study because the instrument measures neglect as seen through the eyes of the child. This perspective is thought to be more accurate than caregiver report. The instrument is part of a data set where permission to access surveys has been granted. Access to the data set was obtained via e-mail correspondence. Once permission was received the LONGSCAN data file was accessed via a link that was downloaded to the password protected computer. The instrument has been used with adolescents as a self-report measure. The authors of the original Neglect Scale report the scale has good internal consistency and construct validity (LONGSCAN, 2006). The preliminary version of the Neglect Scale was administered to students in undergraduate sociology courses in the spring of 1995 (LONGSCAN, 2006). These were mostly Caucasian middle-class participants (LONGSCAN, 2006). To better reflect the African American LONGSCAN population the scales were given and changed according to the statistical makeup of the

LONGSCAN population (LONGSCAN, 2006). For example, LONGSCAN revised the “phrasing of the items, the timeframes, and the response set from the original measure” (LONGSCAN, 1998).

The Self-Report of Physical Abuse and Assault measure was designed to assess an adolescent’s lifetime history of physical abuse and assault (LONGSCAN, 1998). It was developed using a 12- year old population using Audio Computer Assisted Self-Interview delivery (LONGSCAN, 1998). The measure was designed to measure both experienced harm and threat of harm by abuse by asking about specific caregiver behaviors and injuries using a yes/no stem question format (LONGSCAN, 1998). As of this date, no validity or reliability studies have been conducted. This self-reported scale was important to my study because it measured physical abuse from the view of the child. Further, the 12 year old population was important to my examination of physical abuse among adolescents.

The Quality of Relationship with Mother is a scale designed to measure an adolescent's perception of the mother or mother figure relationship along with their recent involvement (LONGSCAN, 1997). It also assesses the adolescent's perception of the mother or mother figure level of educational aspirations for the adolescent (LONGSCAN, 1997). The internal consistency of the Quality of Relationship means scores for the LONGSCAN sample were excellent (LONGSCAN, 1997). The internal consistency for the Mother Involvement sum scores for the LONGSCAN sample was good (LONGSCAN, 1997). Correlations were demonstrated across the three quality of

relationship measures (LONGSCAN, 1997). For example, the child report of the mother, child report of the father, and the caregiver of the child have some significant correlations between measures at both ages 12 and 14 (LONGSCAN, 1997).

Peer Relationships is an LONGSCAN project developed survey which includes seven adolescent self-report items on peer relationships (LONGSCAN, 1998). The survey's results can be used to assess the adolescent participant's perception of how 'other kids' at school treat them along with a single question about whether the participant has a best friend, a friendship group, and their level of satisfaction with those friendships (LONGSCAN, 1998). The reliability is measured using the Teacher's Estimation of Peer Status (LONGSCAN, 1998). When compared to the Teacher's Estimation there is some correlation between the surveys (LONGSCAN, 1998). The validity of the age 12 and 14 peer relationship items was examined through correlations with the Internalizing Behaviors and Social Competence T scores of the Child Behavior Check List and the Youth Self Report (LONGSCAN, 1998). Moderate correlations were found between these scores (LONGSCAN, 1998).

Operationalization

The evidence of child neglect can be developed using the About My Parents survey. It is a self-report survey that assesses the adolescent's perception of child neglect. In this study, I referred to it as the neglect survey. There are four subscales that include Physical Needs, Emotional Support, Monitoring Supervision, and Educational Support (Knight et al., 2010). Higher scores indicate less neglectful/more optimal parent behavior (Knight et al., 2010). The scores are summed to arrive at an indication of neglect (Knight

et al., 2010). The following is an example of the self- reported survey questions:

- How often have your mother done things with you just for fun in the last year?
- How often have you mother helped you with your homework in the last year?
- Within the last year /parents took care of you when sick (Knight et al, 2010, p.3).

Child Physical Abuse-The evidence of child physical abuse is self-reported on the Self-Report of Physical Abuse and Assault. Physical abuse includes 15 items that include Endangerment and Physical Injury Items. Higher scores on these items indicate more physical abuse or assault experienced. Thus, scores are summed and lead to an overall score indicative of child physical abuse (LONGSCAN, 1998). The following is an example of the self- reported survey questions.

How often have your caregiver performed the following acts in the last year or ever:

- Hit you with something really dangerous like a baseball bat or a shovel?
- Has any adult ever kicked or punched you?
- Has any adult ever bitten you?
- Has any adult ever pushed or thrown you around, like against a wall or down stairs?
- Has any adult ever tried to choke, drown or smother you?
- Has any adult ever shot you with a gun, but didn't hit you?
- Has any adult ever burned or scalded you on purpose?
- Has any adult ever bruised you, or given you a black eye (Knight et al., 2010, p.156)?

The Quality of Relationship with Mother measure is intended to assess an adolescent's perception of the mother and child relationship (Knight et al., 2010). The score is accrued by summing the individual items and the mean score gives an indication of the level of the mother-child relationship (Knight et al., 2010). Higher scores indicate higher levels of relationship quality, mother involvement and mother's perceived educational aspirations for adolescent (Knight et al., 2010). The following is examples from the self-reported survey.

How often:

- Have you gone shopping with her?
- Have you played a sport with her?
- Have you gone to a religious service or church-related event with her?
- Have you talked about your friends or things you were doing with friends with her?
- Have you talked with her about a personal problem you were having (Knight et al., 2010, p.119)?

The Peer Relationship survey was developed by the project staff to assess adolescent's perception of peer relationships. It is a seven-item survey that sums the items to produce a score that is indicative of peer relationships. The first three items asking about peers at school have response options of 1 (Almost no one....) to 4 (Almost all the kids). Higher scores on these items indicate more peer problems. Items 4 and 5 ask questions regarding best friends and best friend group, have yes/no response options.

Yes responses are followed up by an item on the level of satisfaction with this friendship with response options ranging from 1=Not at all satisfied to 3=Very Satisfied (Knight et al., 2010, p.93)

Data Analysis Plan

In this study, the confidence interval was set at 95%, which means that there was a .05% chance that the null hypotheses could be incorrectly rejected. Use of this confidence level allows for a rejection of null hypotheses at a level where data is deemed significant despite the small sample size (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). After identifying the confidence interval, I computed a power analysis, which is the name given to the process for determining the sample size for a research study. The technical definition of power refers to the probability of detecting a "true" effect when it exists. For this study, with power set at .80, the G*Power analysis recommended a sample size of 68 adolescents (G*Power, 2016).

Descriptive analysis, which provides a summary of the data, begins with an examination of the mean and standard deviation. Descriptive statistics not only allows for the identification of group differences and similarities but it also allows for a systematic check of problematic characteristics of the data set (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). For example, descriptive statistics assists with the early identification of problems with normality such as a distribution of scores that departs substantially from a bell-shaped curve and outliers which are scores that are widely outside the range of other scores. Descriptive results can also be transformed into graphics such as a normal plot which provides a visual identifier of normality and nonnormality (Frankfort-

Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The descriptive analysis is followed by more complex statistical analyses that utilize inferential statistics to make inferences about the research population. Inferential statistics allows for analyses of relationships between variables and analyses of the data results guides the determination of rather or not to reject the null hypotheses which is a primary goal of research studies. In this study, correlation and multiple regression analyses were used to identify relationships among variables and to test the null hypotheses.

In a correlational research design, I attempt to identify a relationship between variables (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). In this research design, I examined the relationship between child abuse variables and relationships. This analysis allowed me to move on to a more complex regression analysis. Correlation analysis provides an estimate of the relationship between two variables without any assumption of whether one comes before the other. Correlation coefficients have a value between -1 and 1. A positive coefficient means that x and y values increase and decrease in the same direction. A negative correlation means that as x and y move in opposite directions, one increases as the other decreases. The coefficient of 0 means x and y are associated randomly. Pearson's correlation coefficient is used when the data is parametric or when both variables are continuous and normally distributed (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). In this study, Pearson r was used to identify relationships between variables as well as any interrelationship among variables. The Pearson r allows for the identification of multicollinearity which is a key assumption of multiple regression analysis. In both correlation and multiple regression statistics the null hypotheses are

equal to 0 and are formatted as follows:

$H_0: P_{xy}=0$ where p is the population coefficient

$H_0: B_1+B_2+B_3+\dots=0$ where B is the regression coefficient

Multiple regression analysis refers to a family of techniques that predicts one variable (the criterion or outcome variable) from a set of variables (the predictor variables). The regression analysis results in a regression equation that can be used to predict an individual's score on the criterion or outcome variable of interest. In this study, the predictor and criterion variables are as follows:

Child neglect predicts higher scores on mother-child relationship quality and peer relationship quality than child physical abuse.

Physical abuse predicts higher scores on mother-child relationship quality and peer relationship quality than child neglect.

Multiple regression analysis was also conducted to identify the relationship between a predictor and criterion variable. For example, in my study, the type of child abuse is hypothesized to identify the level of relationships in 12-year-old females. This hypothesis is based on relational theory which identifies the relational growth opportunities among 12-year-old females. While researchers often debate using multiple regression analysis in both predictive and explanatory capacities, evidence shows that the two are inclusive rather than exclusive (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). Therefore, in this study, I used multiple regression analysis to both predict and explain to fill the gap in knowledge regarding variables relating to and affecting interpersonal relationships. The following is an example of the regression equation:

$y = b_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + \dots + b_{12}x_{12}$ where

y is the predicted score

b_0 refers to the regression constant and represents the value of the criterion variable y when the value on each of the x is 0.

b_1 is called the partial regression coefficient. The partial regression coefficient tells you the expected increase in b_i resulting from a unit change in x_1 while the values of the other predictors are held constant.

x_1 represents the predictors

The regression model results in a squared multiple correlation (R^2) which measure the proportion of variation in the criterion that is accounted for by the set of predictors and an F test which identifies the significance of a variable (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008).

The data were analyzed using the SPSS v23 statistical software, a quantitative approach that use SPSS to review and clean the data set. The LONGSCAN data set is an archival set aimed at analyzing child maltreatment and a variety of variables starting at age 4 and ending at age 18. The data cleaning plan utilizes SPSS to identify outliers and missing data. The descriptive data which include the “mean”, “standard deviation”, “minimum”, and "maximum and “skewness” directs the cleaning process in this study (“Cleaning your data”, 2016).

Through SPSS I analyzed the following research questions and hypotheses:

1. RQ1. Is there a correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females?

H1o-There is not a negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H1a-There is a negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

2. RQ2. Is there a correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H2o-There is no positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H2a-There is a positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

3. RQ3. Is physical abuse versus child neglect among 12-year old females more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships.

H3o-Physical abuse is not more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H3a-Physical abuse is more predictive peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

4. RQ3. Is child neglect versus child physical abuse among 12-year-old females more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships.

H4o-Child neglect is not more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12- year-old females.

H4a-Child neglect is more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12- year-old females.

Definition of Validity

I discuss validity in the context of correlational design, not in the context of measurement. Internal validity refers specifically to whether an experimental treatment or condition makes a difference or not; and whether there is sufficient evidence to support the claim. External validity refers to the generalizability of the treatment or condition outcomes.

In the case of the LONGSCAN data set the threat to internal validity may include:

- Instrumentation--the changes in the instrument, observers, or scorers which may produce changes in outcomes (Ohlund and Chong-ho, 2016).
- Statistical regression--regression to the mean- caused by the selection of subjects on the basis of extreme scores or characteristics. For example, "Give me forty worst students and I guarantee that they will show immediate improvement right after my treatment" (Ohlund and Chong-ho, 2016).
- Selection of subjects--the biases which may result in the selection of comparison groups. (Ohlund and Chong-ho, 2016)

The threat to external validity in the LONGSCAN data set may include:

- Reactive or interaction effect of testing-a pretest might increase or decrease a subject's sensitivity or responsiveness to the experimental variable.
- Reactive effects of experimental arrangements-it is difficult to generalize to non-experimental settings if the effect was attributable to the experimental arrangement of the research.
- Multiple-treatment interference-as multiple treatments are given to the same

subjects, it is difficult to control for the effects of prior treatments.

The data set may also be subject to threats to internal and external validity because of repeat testing, the changing of the instrumentation, and its ability to transfer to non experimental settings. The data set is separated among five sites threat to external validity is minimal. Selection bias is evident because the sample consist of children who have been exposed to child maltreatment.

Access to the LONGSCAN data set requires permission obtained from the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN). This is secondary data that protects participants from identification. Each participant receives a special LONGSCAN ID number that protects the privacy of that individual. I will keep the dataset on a password protected computer and a flash drive. Data access will continue for 3 years. Only I will have access to the data. I will keep results of the data for 5 years.

Ethical Procedures

Institutional Review Board approval was obtained by the LONGSCAN researchers before initiating their original study. I also obtained Institutional Review Board approval from Walden University before the initiation of the present study (Approval number 12-05-16-00066991). The data used for the study were coded with assigned identification numbers to protect the identity of participants. The LONGSCAN data were downloaded and stored on a password protected computer and on a USB flash drive. The data were exported to the IBM SPSS statistical software for analyses. I did not share the data nor the USB flash with any other researcher. I stored the computer and flash drive in a secure location, specifically in a locked home office where I am the only

one with access to the data. I will shred the data after 5 years (Copeland, 2013).

Summary

In this quantitative study, I used secondary data to assess the difference between child neglect and mother-child relationship, child neglect and peer relationships, child physical abuse and mother-child relationship, and child physical abuse and peer relationship. The goal was to predict the level of mother-child and peer relationship among the child neglect and child physical abuse population. The study includes descriptive statistics, correlational design, and multiple regression statistical approaches. I present the results of data in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between child neglect versus child physical abuse and the mother-child and peer relationships. The examination informed me of the need for more studies on child neglect and child physical abuse and directed me on the necessity of relational intervention. The overall RQ to determine if there was an existence of a relationship between child neglect and child physical abuse and mother-child and peer relationships was the focus of my study and I found that there does appear to be a relationship. A correlation exists between mother-child relationship and child neglect and child physical abuse. There was also a predictive relationship between these variables. Peer relationship did not yield predictive relationship, yet there was a correlational relationship. The null was accurately rejected in the mother-child relationship and child neglect and child physical abuse (H_{10}) analysis. These relationships were significant at $p < .01$ which indicates that there is 99% chance that the relationship was not due to chance alone. The research questions and hypotheses are as follows:

1. RQ1-Is there a correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females?

H_{01} -There is no negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{a1} -There is a negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

2. RQ2- Is there a correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-

child relationships among 12-year-old females?

H_{o2} -There is no positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{a2} -There is a positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

3. RQ3- Is physical abuse versus child neglect among 12-year old females more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships?

H_{o3} -Physical abuse is not more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{a3} -Physical abuse is more predictive peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

4. RQ4-Is child neglect versus child physical abuse among 12-year-old females more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships?

H_{o4} -Child neglect is not more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12- year-old females.

H_{a4} -Child neglect is more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12- year-old females.

Following the Introduction, I will review how the data was collected in the study.

After the data collection, I will present a section on the result where I will focus on the minimal returns on the examination of the data. Finally, I will provide a summary of the results.

Data Collection

The LONGSCAN data set was composed of interviews involving parents and children from age 0 to 18. The data set is composed of five sites which range from children at risk of child maltreatment to those that were victims of child maltreatment. The attrition rate from baseline to age 14 was 25% (NCAND, 2015). Table 1 offers a visual of the LONGSCAN population. Except for the Seattle site, the majority of the populations are of African-American descent. Females are the majority at each site. This preliminary examination tells us that the population represents people of color who are female.

Table 1 *A Brief Description of the LONGSCAN Samples*

	Baltimore (n=282)	Chicago (n=245)	North Carolina (n=243)	San Diego (n=330)	Seattle (n=254)	Total (n=1354)
Cohort						
Birth Year	1988-91	1991-94	1986-87	1989-91	1988-94	1986-94
Race (%)						
African-Americans	92.9	53.5	63.0	37.6	20.5	53.3
Caucasian	5.0	13.1	35.8	28.5	50.0	26.2
Hispanic	0.4	13.9	0.0	16.7	2.8	7.2
Mixed	1.1	17.1	1.2	15.8	24.0	11.9
Other	0.7	2.4	0.0	1.5	2.8	1.5
Gender (%)						
Male	52.1	46.9	45.3	47.3	50.8	48.5
Female	47.9	53.1	54.7	52.7	49.2	51.5
Maltreatment Status at Recruitment (%)						
Reported	24.1	60.8	34.2	100.0	100.0	65.3
At Risk	36.5	-	56.8	-	-	17.8
Control	39.4	39.2	9.0	-	-	16.9

Interviews occurred at ages 0 and continued to follow the participants at regularly scheduled intervals (Ages 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16, and 18) using extensive face-to-face interviews with the primary caregiver(s) and the child (LONGSCAN, 2006).. During each intervening year, there were annual telephone interviews designed to enhance sample retention and to track antecedents, moderators, mediators and outcomes of maltreatment (LONGSCAN, 2006).. Data collection is designed to measure the onset and progression of children's social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes from preschool through young adulthood (LONGSCAN, 2006).

Results

I used correlation and multiple regression to analyze the LONGSCAN data. Before the analyzes could be implemented, several key assumptions had to be met. Linear regression makes several key assumptions which are:

- Linear relationship
- Multivariate normality
- No, or little multicollinearity
- Homoscedasticity (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016)

First, linear regression needs the relationship between the independent and dependent variables to be linear (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016). It is also important to check for outliers since linear regression is sensitive to outlier effects (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016). The linearity assumption can best be tested with scatter plots. Second, the linear regression analysis requires all variables to be multivariate normal. This assumption can best be checked with a histogram and a

fitted normal curve or a Q-Q-Plot (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016). (See the scatter plots and histograms in Figures 2-9). The figures reveal no evidence of outliers and relationship appears linear. Thirdly, linear regression assumes that there is little or no multicollinearity in the data (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016). Multicollinearity occurs when the independent variables are not independent from each other (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016). A second important independence assumption is that the error of the mean must be independent from the independent variables. The collinearity diagnostics revealed the independent variables are independent from each other. Where variance inflation factors (VIF) was < 10 indicated multicollinearity had not occurred (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016).

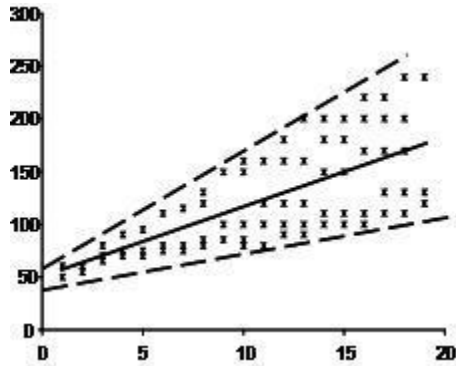


Figure 1

Scatter plot example

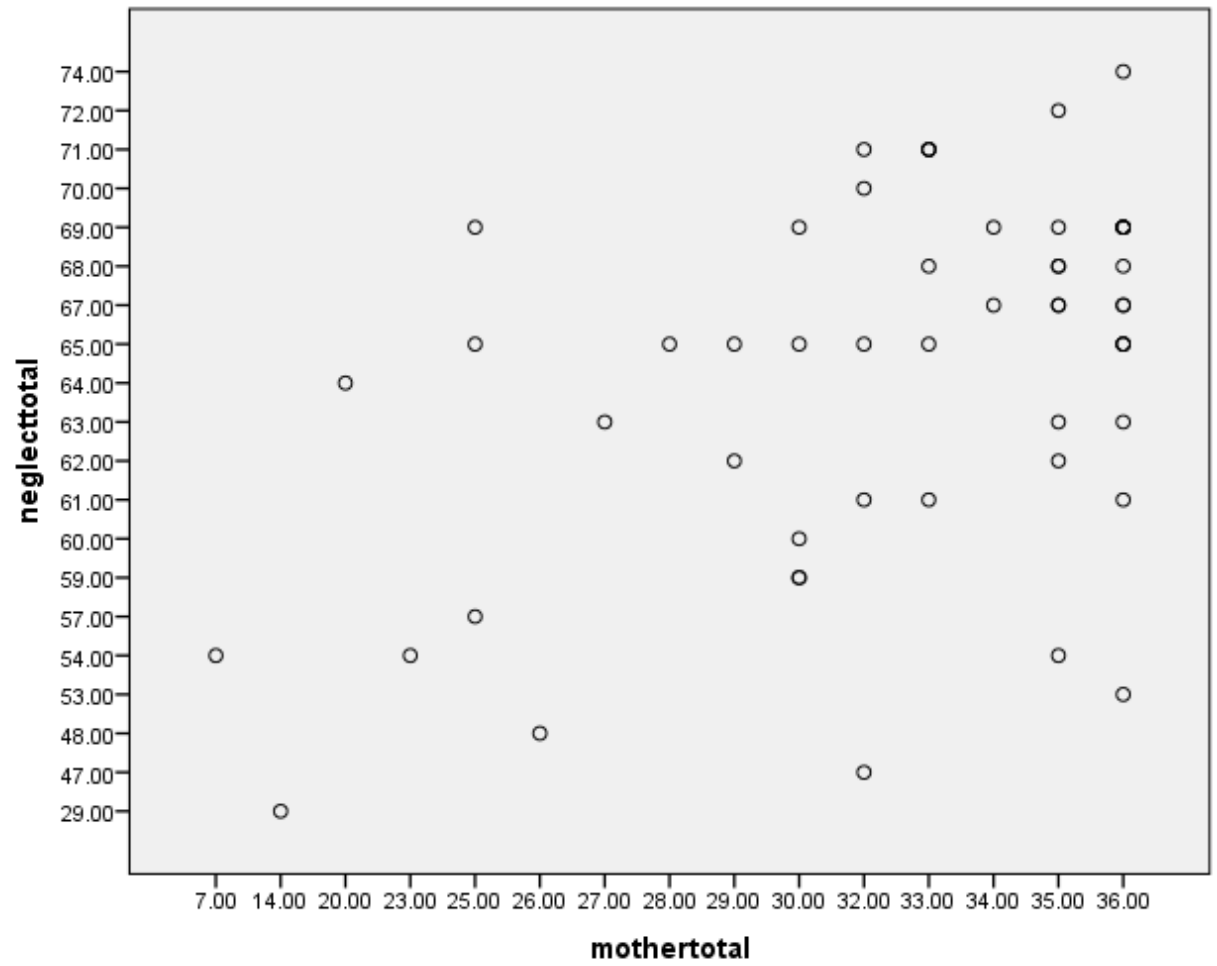


Figure 2

Mother-child and neglect scatter plot

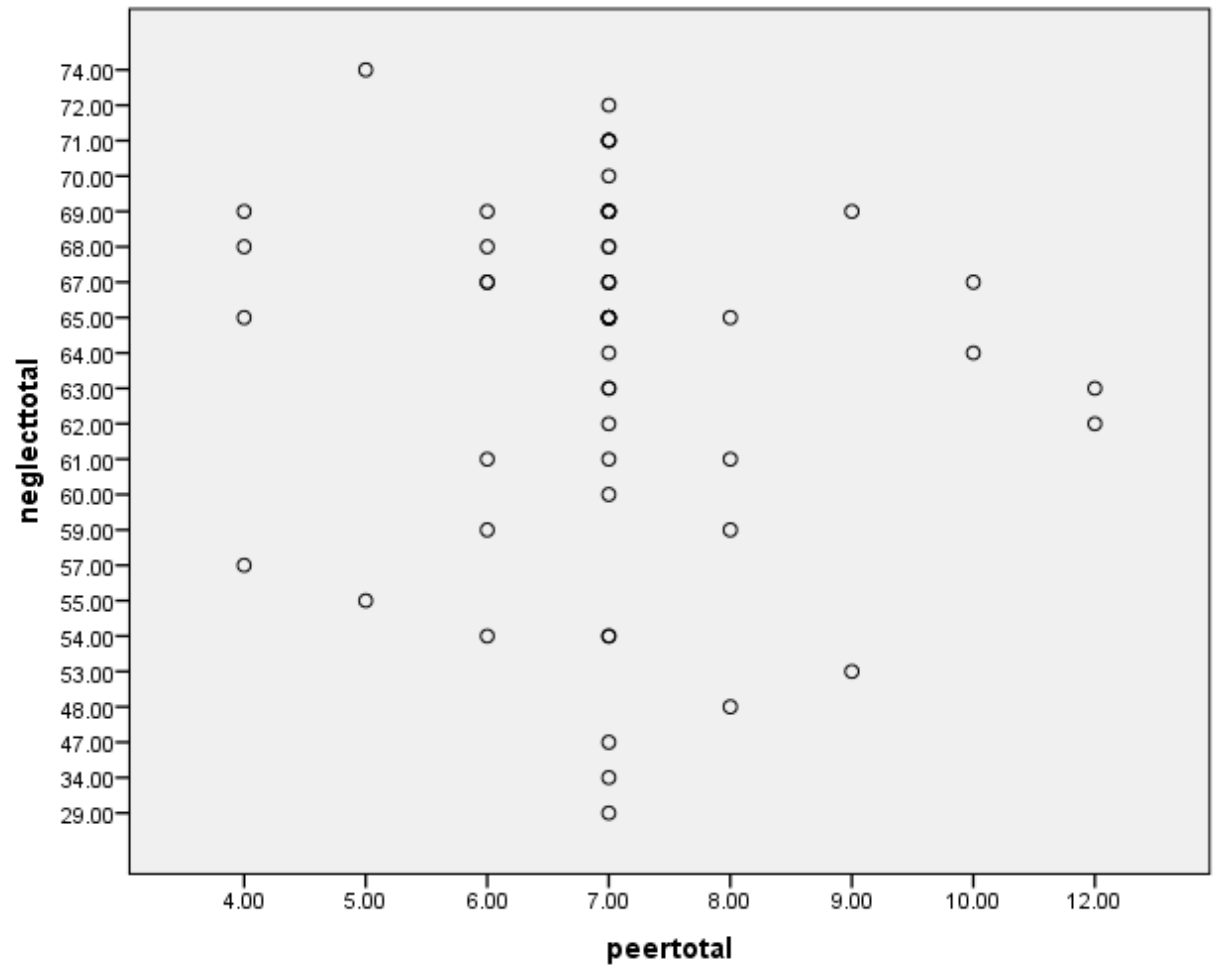


Figure 3

Neglect and peer relationship scatter plot

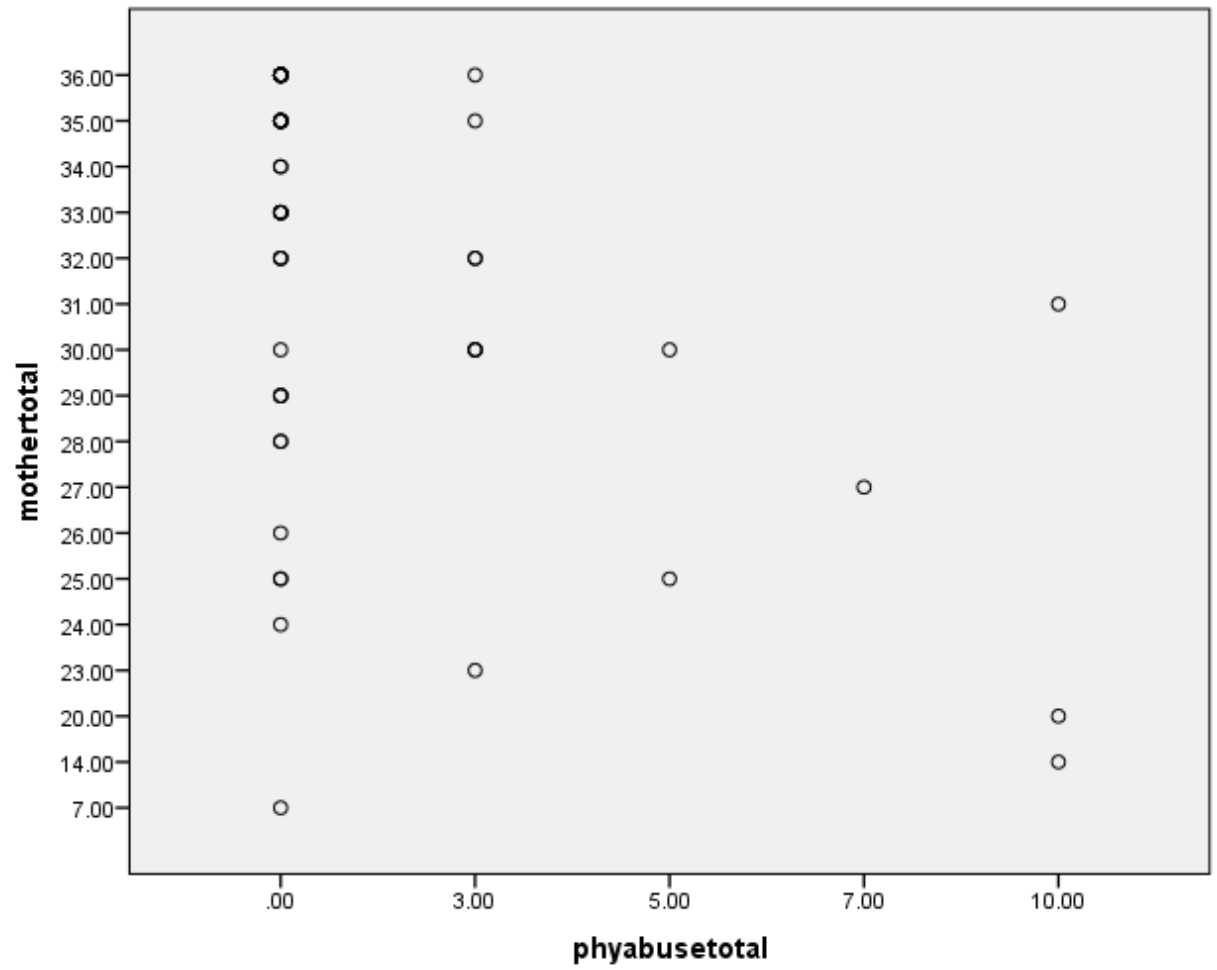


Figure 4

Physical abuse and mother-child relationship scatter plot

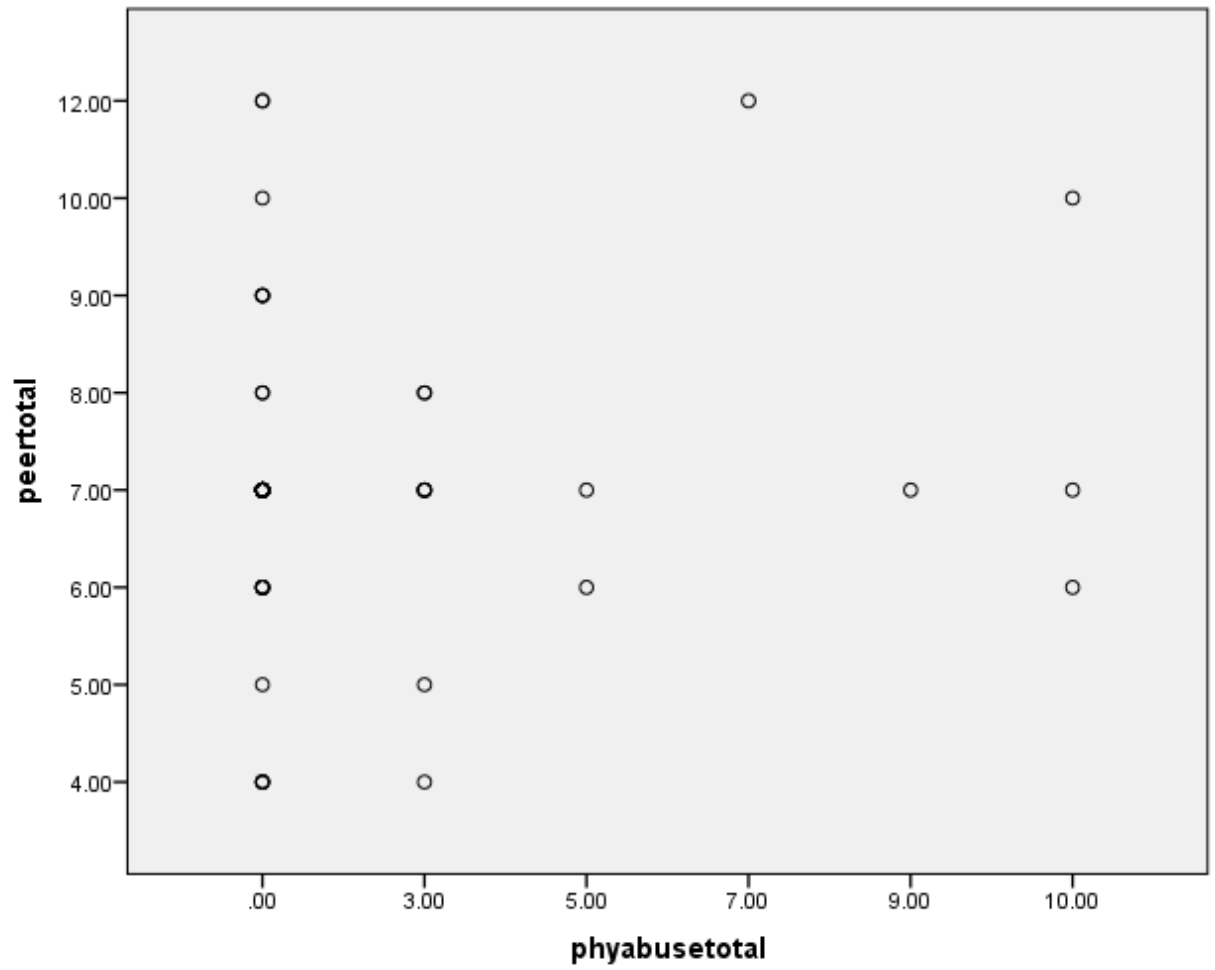


Figure 5

Physical Abuse and Peer Relationship Scatter Plot

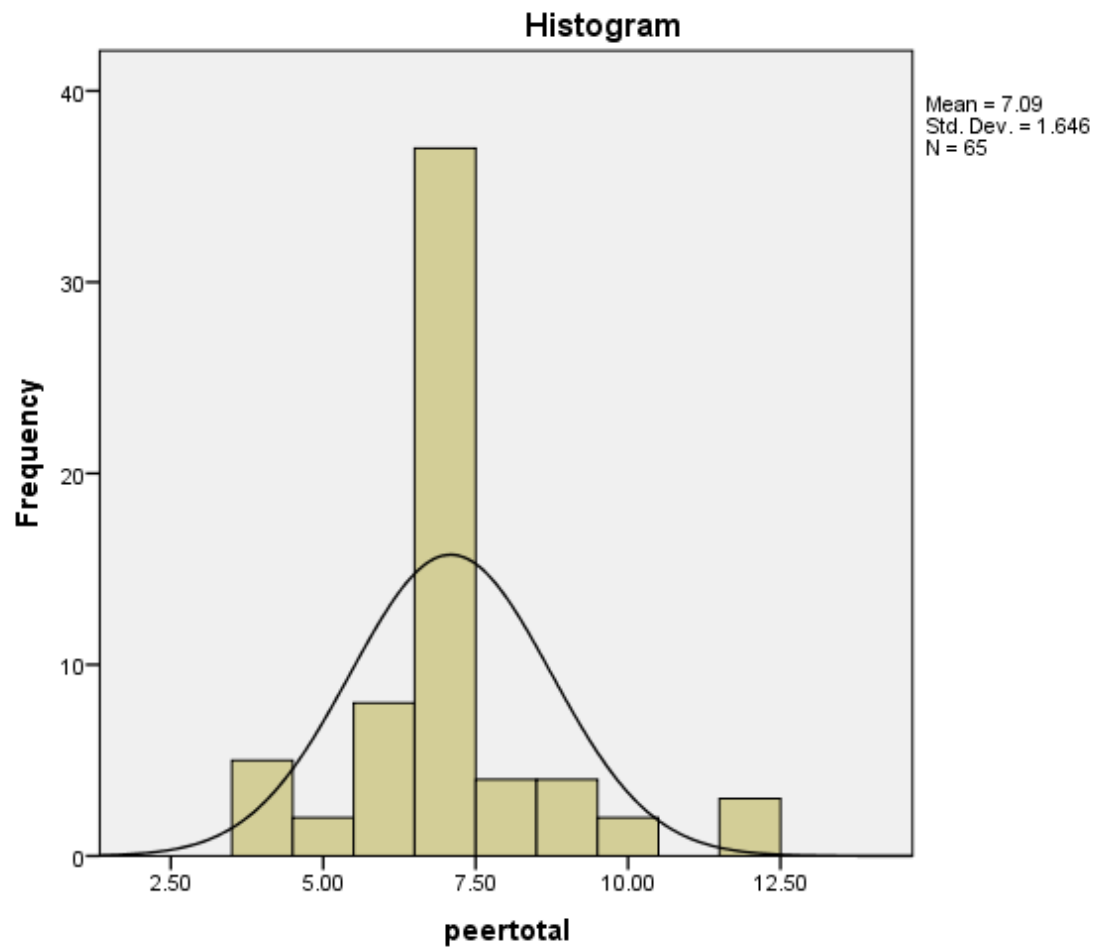


Figure 6

Peer Relationship Histogram

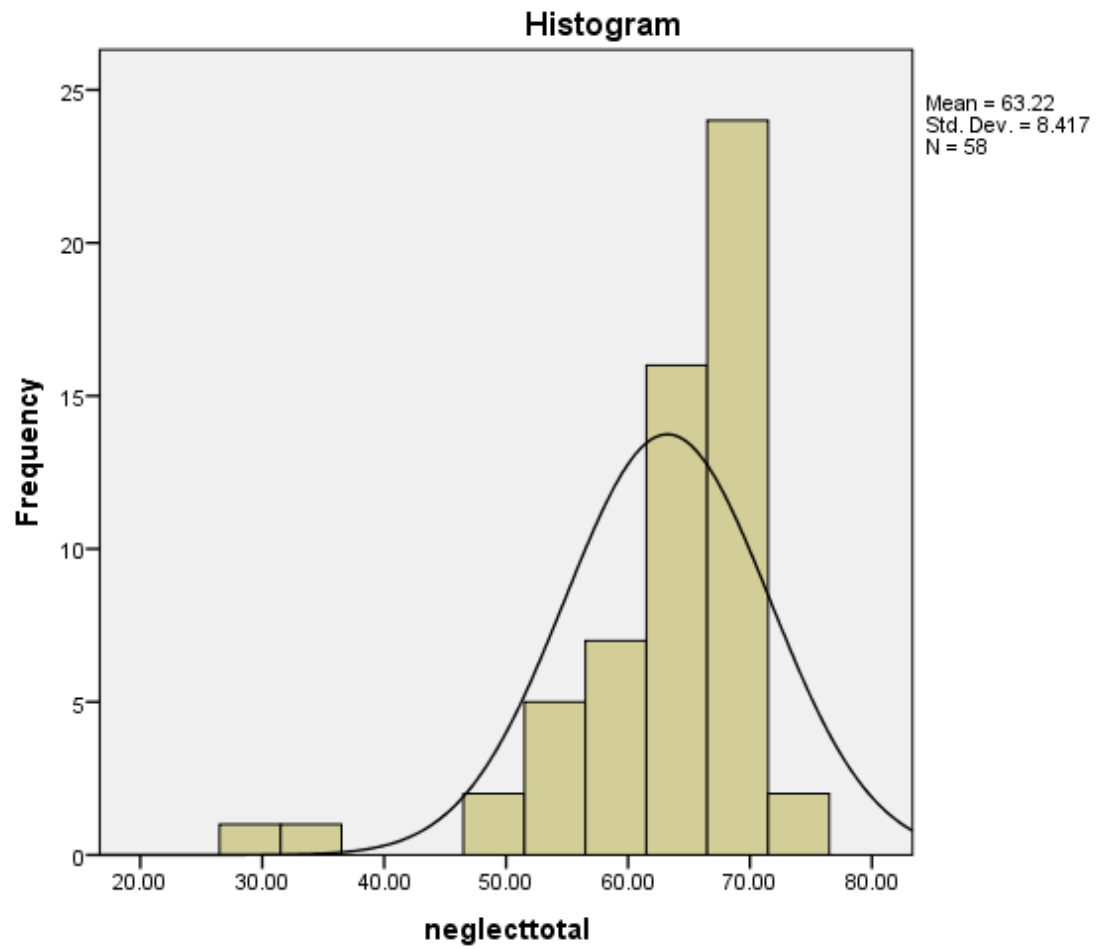


Figure 7

Neglect Histogram

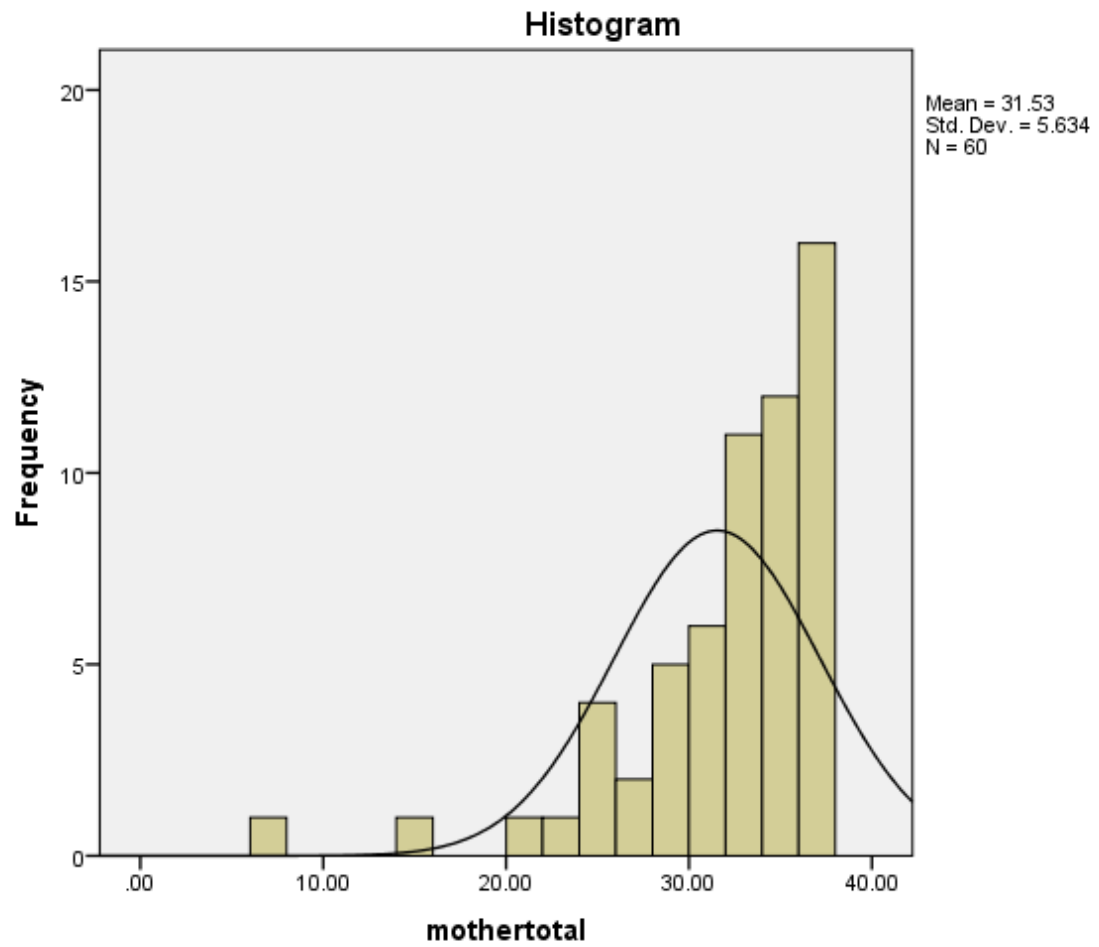


Figure 8

Mother Histogram

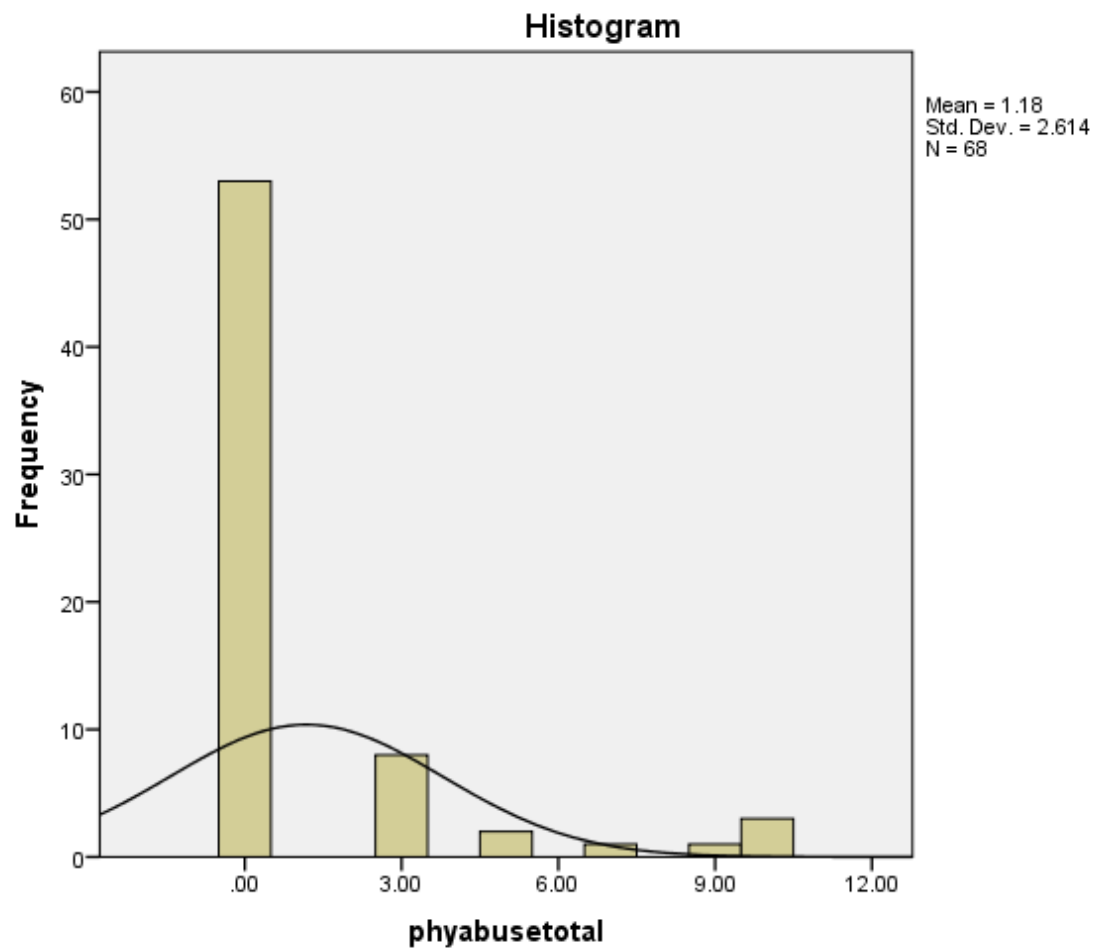


Figure 9

Physical Abuse Histogram

The last assumption the linear regression analysis makes is homoscedasticity. The scatter plot is a good way to check whether homoscedasticity (that is the error terms along the regression are equal) is given (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016). If the data is heteroscedastic the scatter plots looks like the previous example in Figure 1 (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016). After a review of Figures 2–5, the scatter plots did not reveal the presence of homoscedasticity. Thus far, the assumptions for effective analysis had been met. The next step was my attempt to clean the data to carry out effective data analysis. The frequency tables revealed several missing data but no presence of erroneous input (Assumptions of Multiple Linear Regression, 2016). The original data set was guarded against missing and erroneous input by using computer assisted input. However, there was some missing data which had to be cleaned. Using SPSS, I transformed the missing data into mean totals. The remaining data were adequate and ready for analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

The demographic data in Table 2 revealed that 77% of the sample was of African-American descent. The original population included 56.4 % African Americans which limited the generalizability of this study to African Americans who are 12 years old and are female. Also, the data in Table 3 revealed that for the majority of this study's population the income level is between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per year. Overall, the generalizability of this study includes African American female adolescents living in poverty or below the poverty line (Bishaw, 2011). This is not outside the normal population of the child maltreatment population; they are mainly people of color living in

poverty with little or no resource (Bishaw, 2011)

Table 2

Demographics of the Population: Race

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Caucasian	4	5.9	5.9
African Americans	53	77.9	83.8
Hispanic	4	5.9	89.7
Native American	1	1.5	91.2
Mixed Race	6	8.8	100.0

Table 3

The Demographics of the Income of the Sample Population

Per Year	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
=< \$5,000	19	27.9	27.9
\$5,000- \$10,000	24	35.3	63.2
\$10,000- \$15,000	8	11.8	75.0
\$15,000- \$20,000	11	16.2	91.2
\$20,000- \$25,000	2	2.9	94.1
\$25,000- \$30,000	1	1.5	95.6
\$30,000- \$35,000	1	1.5	97.1
=> \$50,000	2	2.9	100.0

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SMEAN (mothertotal)	68	7.00	36.00	2144.27	31.533	5.287
SMEAN (neglecttotal)	68	29.00	74.00	4299.24	63.224	7.763
SMEAN (peertotal)	68	4.00	12.00	482.28	7.092	1.608
SMEAN (physicaltotal)	68	.00	10.00	80.00	1.176	2.614
VALID N (listwise)	68					

Overall, the analyses for this sample revealed there was a high level of quality of the relationship between mother and child. It also revealed that a high level of neglect totals was indicative of a high level of neglect in this sample. Peer totals revealed problems with peer relationships. Finally, the physical abuse total indicated little physical abuse was reported in the sample population.

I conducted correlational analyses to determine the correlation between mother-child and peer relationships and the presence of neglect and physical abuse. The hypotheses read as follows:

H_0 2-There is no positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-

child relationships among 12-year-olds.

H_{a2} -There is a positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-olds.

The mother-child relationship was significantly related to the presence of neglect which resulted in the following equation ($r=.48$, $n=68$, $p<.01$). This was a positive relationship that revealed as mother-child relationship totals increased less neglectful behavior increased. This positive relationship allowed for the rejection of the null. It leads to a conclusion that with $p<.01$ there is a 99 % certainty that the relationship was not due to chance alone. As the perception of mother-child relationship increased, the less neglectful behavior increased. The peer relationship did reveal a positive relationship, but not at a significant level.

The mother-child relationship also revealed significance among physical abuse. The physical abuse analysis revealed the following equation: $r=-.411$, $n=68$, $p<.01$. As the perception of the quality of the mother-child relationship increased the self-report of physical abuse decreased. With these hypotheses, which reads as follows:

H_{o1} -There is no negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{a1} -There is a negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

the null could be rejected. The relationship was significant at the $p<.01$. The relationship can be interpreted as follows: the perception of the mother-child relationship increased as physical abuse decreased. There was a 99% certainty that the relationship was not due to

chance alone.

Although the analysis of the peer relationship indicated a negative relationship between mother-child relationship and physical abuse, it did not reveal a significant relationship, and therefore was not included in the multiple regression model. Thus, based on the correlation analyses, a multiple regression model was conducted on the dependent variable mother-child relationship and the independent variables child neglect and child physical abuse. The model summary was as follows: R^2 of .203, $F(2,65) = 9.522, p < .01$). The equation revealed that 20 % of the variance is accounted by neglect among the mother-child relationship. As the total for less neglectful behavior increases the perception of the mother-child relationship increases. As indicated in Table 5, the b weight indicated that for every point increase in the mother-child relationship there is a .252 increase in neglect. There was also a significant relationship between child physical abuse and the mother-child relationship. This was a negative relationship which indicated that higher physical abuse scores lead to lower mother-child relationship scores. The b weight indicated that for every point increase in the mother-child relationship there is a -.838 decrease in physical abuse.

Table 5 *Multiple Regression Model*

Variable	Mean	STD	Correlation with Mother relationship	b	B
Mother total	7.00	5.634	1.00		
Neglect total	63.224	7.763	.475**	.252	.382
Physical Abuse total	1.177	2.614	-.411**	-.838	-.382

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level

In the case of the mother-child relationship, there were two relationships evident. Both allowed for the rejection of the null that there was no positive relationship between the mother-child relationship and child neglect, while the other which stated there was no negative relationship between the mother-child relationship and physical abuse allowed for the rejection of the null. The hypotheses were as follows:

H_{o1} -There is no negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{a1} -There is a negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and the mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{o2} -There is no positive correlation between child neglect and peer and the mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{a2} -There is a positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

The analyses revealed a positive relationship between child neglect and the mother-child

relationship. The relationship between child neglect and peer relationship although not significant it was positive and therefore the null could be rejected.

The predictive ability of child neglect and child physical abuse was analyzed using the multiple regression models which revealed child neglect was predictive of the mother-child relationship. While physical abuse was predictive of the mother-child relationship, the null could not be rejected because the predictability did not exceed the predictability of the child neglect and mother-child relationship. The hypotheses read as follows:

H₀₃-Physical abuse is not more predictive than child neglect of peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{a3}-Physical abuse is more predictive than child neglect of peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H₀₄-Child neglect is not more predictive than child physical abuse of mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{a4}-Child neglect is more predictive than child physical abuse of peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

Physical abuse is not more predictive than child neglect of mother-child relationships among 12-year old females. Thus, the null could not be rejected. However, child neglect was more predictive than child physical abuse of the mother-child relationship as demonstrated by the results of multiple regression analysis. The equation for physical abuse reads as follows: R^2 of .146 $F(2,65)=6.715$, $p<.005$. Physical abuse accounts for 15% of the variance between child physical abuse and the mother-child

relationship. When compared to the 20 % of the variance in the child neglect and mother-child relationship the null hypotheses of (H_03 :

Physical abuse is not more predictive than child neglect of mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females)

could not be rejected.

In the case of child neglect the null hypothesis (H_04 :

Child neglect is not more predictive than child physical abuse of mother-child relationships among 12- year-old females):

could be rejected, and multiple regression analysis resulted in a more predictive relationship between child neglect versus child physical abuse and the mother-child relationship.

Summary

The results of the correlation and multiple regression analyses indicated a relationship between child neglect and physical abuse and the mother-child relationship. The correlational analysis resulted in a relationship between child neglect and mother-child and peer relationships and physical abuse and the mother-child relationship. The child neglect and mother-child relationship revealed a positive relationship, while the physical abuse and the mother-child relationship revealed a negative relationship both of which were significant and resulted in the rejection of the null. Overall there were four hypotheses that resulted in a rejection of the null. They read as follows:

H_01 -There is no negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H₀2-There is no positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H₀3-Physical abuse is not more predictive of mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H₀4-Child neglect is not more predictive of mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

It was assumed the mother-child and the peer relationships would result in a significant relationship. However, the peer relationship was not significant. I will analyze this result in more depth in Chapter 5. I will also discuss the implications for the culture of child maltreatment and change related to the approach of dealing with victims of child neglect versus child physical abuse. The chapter also includes the limitations of the study, recommendations, and conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, Recommendations

I examined the relational nature of child neglect and child physical abuse in this study. The two forms of child maltreatment, child neglect, and child physical abuse, makes up more than 80% of child abuse and neglect reports (Bundy-Fazioli & Hamilton, 2013). However, studies involving both the child neglect and child physical abuse are minimal when compared to studies involving child physical or child sexual abuse. In particular, child neglect lacks the attention that the numbers call for. Thus, I determined the need for a study of this kind due to the lack of available studies involving child neglect, child physical abuse, and relationships. The importance of an effective intervention to treat adolescents that are victims of child neglect and child physical abuse also needed to be examined. Without an effective approach to this type of maltreatment, the generational nature of child abuse and neglect will continue and possibly increase. With this understanding, in this study I examined the relationship between child neglect and child physical abuse and relationships among 12- year-old females. Specifically, I examined child neglect and the mother-child and peer relationships and child physical abuse and the mother-child relationship and peer relationships.

The findings revealed a relationship between child neglect and the mother-child relationship and child physical abuse and the mother-child relationship. There was not a significant relationship between child neglect and peer relationships and child physical abuse and peer relationships. The negative relationship between child physical abuse and the mother-child relationship led me to reject the null (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_a). The positive relationship between child neglect and the mother-child

relationship led to the rejection of the null (H_{02}) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_{a2}). I conducted multiple regression with the LONGSCAN data on child neglect and child physical abuse and mother-child relationships. My analysis revealed a failure to reject the null (H_{03}) in the case of physical abuse which hypothesized physical abuse versus child neglect was not more predictive of the mother-child relationship. My rejection of the null (H_{04}) hypothesis is based on the percentage of the variance in both instances. Child neglect accounted for more of the variance than child physical abuse when other variables are held constant. In other words, it was found that child neglect and mother-child relationship resulted in being more predictive of the mother-child relationship than physical abuse.

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings revealed that the mother-child relationship is important in adolescence as well as infancy. In infancy, the relationship is referred to as the attachment relationship. It is assumed that if the attachment relationship is not established than future relationships would not be formed. This may not be true in the case of adolescent relationships. The research questions and hypotheses read as follows:

1. RQ1-Is there a correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females?

H_{01} -There is not a negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_{a1} -There is a negative correlation between physical abuse and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

2. RQ2-Is there a correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females?

H_02 -There is no positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_a2 -There is a positive correlation between child neglect and peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

3. RQ3-Is physical abuse versus child neglect among 12-year old females more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships?

H_03 -Physical abuse is not more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

H_a3 -Physical abuse is more predictive peer and mother-child relationships among 12-year-old females.

4. RQ4-Is child neglect versus child physical abuse among 12-year-old females more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships?

H_04 -Child neglect is not more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12- year-old females.

H_a4 -Child neglect is more predictive of peer and mother-child relationships among 12- year-old females.

In the case of physical abuse, the correlation was, in fact, a negative one in which child physical abuse and the mother-child relationship had an inverse relationship. In other words, as the number of physical abusive behaviors increases the greater the level of problems in the mother-child relationships. In the case of child neglect, the

relationship was positive, which means the higher the level of non-neglectful behavior the greater perception of good mother-child relationships. The results of the correlation led to a multiple regression model in which child neglect versus child physical abuse was found to be more predictive of the mother-child relationship. The connection between both child physical abuse and child neglect and the mother-child relationship can be seen in the bonding and attachment relationship that may have occurred in infancy and can lead to a realization of a need for a connection to a caregiver at age 12.

Child Abuse and the Bond

RQ1. The relationship between physical abuse and the mother-child relationship versus the peer relationship maybe a reflection of attachment and bonding that occurs in infancy. This may explain why the mother-child relationship indicated a significant relationship while the peer relationship did not. Perry (2001) explained the attachment relationship that occurs in infancy require a bond to a particular caregiver. The results of this study appear to concur with the literature in that the attachment relationship is the foundation of relationships and has a life-long effect on the mother-child relationship. This bonding differentiates the caregiver relationship from the peer relationship in adolescence. It would be expected that the physical abuse and neglect impacts both mother-child and peer relationships. However, the results demonstrated an impact on the mother-child relationship without the concurrent impact on the peer relationship.

While physical abuse and neglect occur within the caregiver relationship, it does not translate into a relational factor that impacts both mother-child and peer relationships. I expected that episodes of neglect and child physical abuse would impact the mother-

child relationship. And to further impact the peer relationship where give and take is expected, but the unconditional regard that is often present in the mother-child relationship was not present in my findings. The results of the analysis, which revealed peer relationships were not significant, challenges the literature which has peer group and peer relationships as among the most important factors in adolescence.

Fiorillo et al. (2013) explained in their study that physical abuse had a negative impact on peer relationships and intimate partner relationships. Physical abuse is an act of aggression that can negatively impact the mother-child and peer relationship. The findings of this study revealed that the negative impact of physical abuse on the mother-child relationship was significant. The negative relationship between physical abuse and the mother-child relationship may replace the bonding that occurred in infancy or in some cases the lack of bonding. It may be easy to conclude that physical abuse negatively impacts all relationship, but this requires a closer look at the relational nature of child physical abuse.

RQ2. Child neglect revealed a significant relationship between the mother-child relationship without the concurrent impact on the peer relationship. Child neglect is the absence of relational growth opportunities and, the absence of extending bonding experiences into later years (Perry, 2001). As an adolescent, it may represent itself as a failure to connect with same aged peers. As the bonding and attachment relationship occurs in infancy, the occurrence of neglect can lead to insecure attachment and a lack of bonding experiences (Perry, 2001). This may lead to relational deficits throughout the life span (Toth et al., 2013). Toth et al. (2013) found child abuse and neglect does occur

within the relationship. My findings suggest child neglect has a relational impact. It does not lead to a conclusion that child physical abuse has an affect on the mother-child or peer relationships.

Child Physical Abuse Interpretation

RQ1. Childhood physical abuse is linked to poor intimate relationships in adulthood (McLeod et al., 2014, Muller et al., 2012). I expected that the child physical abuse would be related to poor mother-child and poor peer relationship as the literature appears to support this idea (McLeod et al., 2014). Accordingly, the relationships in my study are seen to have an inverse affect in which as physical abuse increases the level of the mother-child relationship decreases. The peer relationship was not significant in this study. This may be a result of the bias in the self-report questionnaires, or it may reflect the fact that child physical abuse does not impact peer relationships as adversely as first advocated. This may also be a result of the reduced level of child physical abuse reported in this study. Physical abuse was rarely revealed in this study. Whether or not this was a result of the age level was not as clear as the fact that there is a relational level of this type of abuse.

I expected that child physical abuse would result in a low level of mother-child relationship and peer relationships. The aggression and anger associated with physical abuse were expected to lead to a foundation for relationships that was disconnected and negatively correlated. However, the lack of physical abuse in this population may have resulted in this lack of connection between physical abuse and peer relationships. Therefore, this can lead to more focus on the child neglect hypotheses as stated in the

purpose of the study. The fact that 70% of the population admitted to some form of child neglect while less than the reported 17% admitted to some form of child physical abuse leads to a future focus on child neglect (Bundy-Fazioli & Hamilton, 2013).

The literature supported my findings in this study that physically abused 12- year-olds would have a less optimal mother-child and peer relationship (Toth et al., 2013). I expected that the presence of physical abuse would lead to problems with peer and mother-child relationships. The relational nature of abuse and neglect was hypothesized to be the foundation for healthy relationships. However, in the case of child physical abuse the mother-child relationship was shown without the concurrent physical abuse effect on peer relationships. Based on my analysis, physical abuse does result in poor mother-child relationships. The analysis of child neglect on the other hand resulted in a positive relationship as expected.

Child Neglect Interpretation

RQ2. The presence of a positive correlation between child neglect and mother-child relationship led me to analyze of the mother-child relationship versus peer relationships. While both correlations were positive, the mother-child relationship and neglect resulted in significance which led to a 99% certainty that the relationship was not due to chance alone. This interpretation led to a further understanding of the child neglect and mother-child relationship. Since child neglect is the absence of factors that help to form the relationship, it may lead to an absence of factors that does not allow one to establish and maintain peer relationships. The disconnection that is evident in the child neglect hypotheses may lead to reasons for juvenile justice contact, running away,

and connection with deviant peers (Ryan et al., 2013). Child neglect offered more of a foundation for problems with relationships than physical abuse.

Overall, child neglect was the foundation of the analyses of the mother-child relationships. It proved to be consistent with the finding that the absence of factors associated with the relationship leads to a lack of a foundation for healthy relationships. Without the understanding that child neglect and the mother-child relationship pave the road to the relational nature of child abuse and neglect, the need for more studies could and should be called for. The absence of the availability of the core concepts of relational theory leads to a lack of factors that direct relationships.

The analyses involving 12-year-old females resulted in a proposed health of future relationships. The lack of a relationship proves that peer relationships among this age group may not be as vital as first thought. I can assume that the peer relationship is important, but without the significant association, it is difficult to maintain that it is as vital as the mother-child relationship. Child neglect is the most important factor in building and maintaining relationships. My study results revealed that the absence of connecting factors as seen in child neglect is more important than the presence of aggressive connectors as seen in physical abuse.

The relational theory is present in the child neglect and physical abuse and mother-child relationship analysis. The core concepts that range from mutual growth producing opportunities to building and maintaining relationships characterizing growth were the foundation of the relational nature of child neglect (Covington, 2007). Since the analysis did prove to have a positive correlation among child neglect and the mother-

child relationship and a negative relationship among child physical and mother-child relationships, child neglect was more predictive of child physical abuse and interventions can be designed with the adolescent population in mind. Understanding that relational interventions are the optimal approach to the treatment of child neglect was one of the foci of this research study. The identification of child neglect and the mother-child relationship as significant factors in the approach to the treatment of child neglect can be seen in this analysis. From attachment to bonding to relationships the study found child neglect have an impact on future relationships. This calls for further relationship based research among adolescents. This study can serve as the foundation of the relational nature of child neglect research.

Relational Nature of Child Abuse and Neglect

RQ3. Larsen et al. (2011) study looked at childhood physical and sexual abuse and adult relationships. Their findings that abuse leads to interpersonal problems that range from issues with trust to insecure attachment were also supported by the present study. When this break in the relationship occurs, a negative view of self is often the result (Larsen et al., 2011.). This may be a reason for the non-significant result of peer relationships. Relational theory underscores the need for mutual growth experiences that occur within the relationship. If physical abuse and child neglect is present, the result may be dysfunctional relationships among boys and girls (Larsen et al., 2011). Therefore, future studies should include both boys and girls and should also measure the severity of the child neglect and child physical abuse.

In the face of child physical abuse and child neglect disconnecting experiences

such as running away affects both the mother-child and peer relationships (Tucker et al., 2011). The act of running away indicates a need to separate and is most often traced back to experiences of child neglect and abuse (Tucker et al., 2011). Furthermore, the act of running away not only separates one from growth producing mother-child relationships but also may lead to negative peer interactions. Often runaways experience additional abuse. Their victimization may prevent the opportunity to engage with positive peers and with positive adults. The foundation of the child neglect and child physical abuse relationships is based on an ability to engage, connect, and bond with positive individuals. Running away is a chaotic experience where one is not sure of caregivers, peers, or social health.

In this study's sample, child neglect and child physical abuse affected the mother-child relationship. Child neglect and child physical abuse were predictive of effect on the mother-child relationship. 20 % of the variance accounted for child neglect on the mother-child relationship. 15 % of the variance accounted for child physical abuse on the mother-child relationship. This led to an assumption that child neglect had more of an impact on the mother-child relationship. I also assumed that the mother-child relationship may have had more time to develop and thus had a good relational foundation before the maltreatment occurred. This should translate into an ability to build outside relationships such as the peer relationships. The mother-child relationship, however, did not appear to have a significant impact on peer relationships. The foundation may not be there for this sample and while it results in relational deficits, the question of can other relationships grow when the mother-child relationship is unstable is

not answered.

Relational Treatment

RQ4. The study results revealed child neglect is more predictive of the mother-child relationship among 12-year-old females than child physical abuse. Based upon this result a look at the relational nature of the child neglect can help to lead to an effective form of treatment. Lawson (2009) believed the mother-child relationship can be repaired leading to a better chance of developing positive peer relationships. Perry (2001) listed keys to resiliency and stated the development of a more positive mother-child relationship in the face of child neglect and child physical abuse can occur with anyone who is consistently available, who interacts in a positive manner, and who is emotionally connected. Child neglect is the omission of these entities. However, as a 12-year-old, neglect may largely impact the mother-child relationship and thus the peer relationship. Attachment and bonding that may have occurred in infancy is affected by neglect and physical abuse in adolescence. The social and emotional ramifications of maltreatment at 12-years-of age leads to a need for individual as well as mother-child psychological treatment. Accordingly, the 12-year-old can understand the reasons for the disconnection they feel and the need to trust and feel safe to grow within the relationship.

The understanding of this disconnection and need to trust and feel safe lead to a form of therapy that is relational and that occurs within a safe relationship. The mother may not be able to immediately provide this, as child neglect or child physical abuse was committed by them, and the trust, safety, and connection will take time to reoccur. Relational therapy allows the victims first to grow through the therapeutic alliance.

During this therapy is where the core relational principles are instituted. Following the establishment of what a healthy relationship entails the mother can join the session with the goal of hearing and understanding the child's story. Adolescents must feel safe and connected enough to tell their story and their journey following the neglect or abuse. This view can lead to a path of reconnection and the rebuilding of the foundation that offsets the feelings of low self-worth and the turning away from relationships (Covington, 2007).

Limitations of the Study

The LONGSCAN data is a longitudinal data set that allows analyses of secondary data. Findings from this data can lend itself to future studies. In this research study, I examined the relational nature of child neglect and child physical abuse. The focus was on 12-year-old females who were victims of child neglect or child physical abuse. The results of the study were limited by age range, location, and risk level of child physical abuse and child neglect.

Once the data were cleaned and missing data transformed, the results were limited to 12-year-old females who resided in the Midwest and who are of African American descent, reflecting Lawson's (2009) assertion that child maltreatment risk factors include being female, being younger, and being African-American. There was significant negative data related to child physical abuse. There was a low level of child physical abuse. Females averaged 1.1 on a scale of 10 in the report of child physical abuse. The regression data revealed a lack of predictive ability versus child neglect that may be a result of the self-report survey which revealed little to no physical abuse in the sample.

The lack of reported physical abuse may also be due to the extreme nature of the questions asked. Thus, the results were limited to child neglect and the ramifications of this form of child maltreatment. The location of the study was limited to the Midwest site. It may be possible to generalize the results to other locations as each site involved had the self-reported questionnaires. However, the age limitation applies across sites. Overall, the study was limited to 12-year-old African American females exposed to child neglect.

Recommendations

This research study focused on 12-year-old African American females who reside in the Midwest. The primary focus was on the child neglect and child physical abuse among this population. Future research on the child neglect and child physical population should include females of all races and should include adolescents aged 12-18. Future studies will also need to include boys, European Americans, and children of higher age limits, which may range from 12 to 18 years old. The lack of data on physical abuse in this sample may occur due to the stigma teenagers may connect with this type of maltreatment. I recommend that future research involving the child physical abuse sample should depend on third party reports as well as self-report. When observing child physical abuse, more studies should focus on the aggressive level of all relationships.

Fiorillo et al. (2013) noted that physical aggressive factors direct relationships in the future. They recommended that the aggressive nature of child physical abuse be studied with the goal of identifying effective treatment (Fiorillo et al., 2013). One of the keys to examining the interaction between child physical abuse and relationships is the

development of measurement instruments that measure both child physical abuse and the relational impact on the mother-child, peer, and intimate relationships. To begin the healing process, a strategy to allow for the telling of the story needs to be developed. While adolescence is an age of great development, it is also a period of conflict and confusion. Lawson (2009) reviewed the resilience factors among which relationship building through the therapeutic relationship is one of the keys to the healing journey. Physical abuse not only results in physical effects but also emotional effects. More studies need to focus on the mental nature of child physical abuse.

In the present study, child neglect was associated with a more predictive model of the mother-child and peer relationship. The results concur with Ryan et al. (2013) who found the disconnection associated with neglect not only impacts child protection involvement but also juvenile justice involvement. The mother-child relationship which has the greatest impact on developing social bonds including the peer relationship was evident in this study. Negative peers are the keys to juvenile justice contact. The results of this study revealed that the mother-child relationship is vital to future relationships and did not show that peer relationships were as significant. More studies on the relationship between child neglect and peer relationships can lead to a foundation for future healthy relationships with peers.

Connecting child neglect to other forms of relational deficits should be among the keys for future research. The omission of the factors needed to build a foundation for healthy relationship must be recognized and treated. Recognizing the emotional nature of child neglect and child physical abuse can lead to the direction of treatment effectiveness.

Future studies should examine the mental and emotional impact of child neglect and child physical abuse. This can lead to a platform through which effective treatment for victims of child abuse and neglect can be built.

Implications

The need for the study of child neglect and child physical abuse in childhood with its impact on family, community, and society is evident. However, studies involving child neglect and child physical abuse in adolescence are not as prevalent, and the impact maltreatment has on victims is not as evident. This sample consisted of females of African American descent who reside with mothers with incomes <\$10,000, which is at or below the poverty level (Bishaw, 2011). This may result in both financial and relational child neglect. The impact of child neglect on the child and family should extend to the adolescent in the community and society. Victims of child neglect and child physical abuse left unassessed and untreated can lead to disconnected and socially underdeveloped individuals.

The ability to assess and treat adolescent victims of child neglect and child physical abuse can lead to a better understanding of the relational base of child maltreatment. While the family is the focus of the attachment that is the foundation of healthy relationships, in adolescence, the individual and society is the basis for future relationships. Studies involving adolescent victims of child abuse and neglect can lead to interventions that result in individually connected individuals. This must occur within a certain time period to be the foundation of effective treatment. Assuming adolescents can tell their stories without assistance is a mistake that may lead to lingering emotional

problems.

The relational nature of child neglect and child physical abuse demands an approach that is individual, family, and societal based. The most effective treatment for these types of maltreatment is based on the relationship or the therapeutic alliance. Although the perpetration of the abuse directs the focus on those that committed the act, today the treatment should include the victim. This focus on the victims includes a foundation upon which victims can tell their stories. Child neglect and child physical abuse among female adolescents calls for a relational gender specific approach towards treatment. The results of this study not only encourages this approach but also demands it with female adolescents who are victims of child neglect and child physical abuse.

Treatment for families involved in child abuse and neglect calls for a therapeutic approach that includes the individual as well as the family. Understanding that females develop in the relationship lends itself to an approach that is relational in nature. Future studies should also include male and female adolescents as this is a time of change when relationships become the focus of development. This study showed that the revealing of the story is among the keys to effective treatment. Why child neglect versus child physical abuse was easier to admit is not clear. This can be a focus of future studies. I hypothesized that the omission of relational role models versus the appearance of an aggressive relational role model has more of an impact on adolescent victims. Understanding that the relationship, rather it be mother-child, peer, or intimate relations requires a look at the story that brought one to the point of being a victim of child maltreatment. The adolescent relationships cannot be assessed without an understanding

of the impact of child neglect and child physical abuse.

The results of this study direct a way child neglect and child physical abuse can be approached and suggests that victims of neglect are more impacted by the mother-child relationship versus the peer relationship. The study results show that self-reported physical abuse is not as affected by the mother-child or the peer relationship and direct the future focus on child neglect versus child physical abuse. Whether child physical abuse among adolescents is less likely or if the stigma attached to such abuse makes it less likely to be reported is not clear. Instruments that assist with the self-report is needed to open the opportunity to victims especially among those affected by child neglect to tell their stories. Although the impact of physical abuse can be seen, it still needs to be assessed for the emotional impact of the abuse. Future studies should keep the focus on the ability of victims to tell their stories and how it impacted their relationships.

Conclusion

Child neglect and child physical abuse are among the most prominent forms of child maltreatment. Although child neglect makes up 75 % of child maltreatment reports it is not studied as often as child physical abuse and child sexual abuse (Bundy-Fazioli & Hamilton, 2013). Up to this point, research on child physical abuse is considered more important because of the easily identified components of physical abuse. This study was vital in starting the conversation on the impact of child neglect on relational growth and development. However, this study revealed that child neglect is more predictive of relational deficits specifically in the mother-child relationship. Peer influence is thought

to be prominent in adolescence (Ryan et al., 2013; Tucker et al. 2011). However, this study did not show the importance of peer relationships.

Among 12-year-old females exposed to child neglect, I found the mother-child relationship was significant. This result can be used to establish treatment and prevention programs and also begins the conversation around child neglect which is rarely studied. Among the list of understanding are the following factors: (a) child neglect may have an impact on peer relationship; (b) child neglect is more predictive of relationships than physical abuse; and (c) child neglect can be viewed as impacted by the absence of role models.

I noticed in this study that the stigma attached to abuse and neglect might be more of a factor in the reporting of child physical abuse versus child neglect. In this study, adolescents rarely reported child physical abuse which impacted the analysis of the relational nature of child physical abuse. The outcome reveal child neglect is relational and requires a relational approach to treatment. Child physical abuse is not as relational as child neglect among 12-year-old female adolescents. The change in views of child neglect and child physical abuse transform the focus from the perpetrator to victims. The family relations, while important, cannot become healthy without the treatment of the individual. Therefore, individual treatment is the pathway to familial, community, and societal connections.

Among this group, maltreatment and relationships were difficult to assess. However, child neglect is a serious problem that impacts infants as well as 12-year-olds. I would like to see studies that focus on the attachment relationship as well as peer

relationships. The age of the sample population may have an impact on the results. 12-year-olds are at the beginning of adolescence and may not present with the same needs as a 16-year-old who is well into adolescence. Improvement is needed in the assessment instruments that measure child neglect and physical abuse.

Several changes may result in better understanding of child neglect and child physical abuse and relationships. First, self-report of maltreatment must adjust for the problem of under-reporting. Second, assistance with telling the abuse story should be the basis of treatment. Third, the fact that relationships appear to be more impacted by the absence of a healthy role model in which growth producing interaction occurs should be understood by future researchers. Fourth, learning to tell their story ensures the connection or reconnection of individual to the family and society. Overall, change can occur in the face of maltreatment through the establishment of healthy reporting of the abuse and through the establishment of a bond that is based on telling the story or understanding the journey from disconnection to reconnection.

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