

Trauma Relating to Somatization and Pain Sensitivity

Julia Cipriano, Dr. Samuel Jeannite, Dr. Sonia Suchday

Pace University, United States

Abstract

Approximately sixty to eighty percent of the population experiences at least one traumatic event in their lifetime (Boals, 2017). This study focused on the relationship of these traumatic experiences with somatic symptoms and pain sensitivity. To determine this, the study recruited one hundred forty-nine (n=149) participants of a general population to complete a survey containing questionnaires such as the Life Events Checklist for DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition; LEC-5) Standard Version to measure lifetime traumatic experience, Adverse Childhood Experiences Survey (ACEs) to measure childhood traumatic experiences, the Cohen–Hoberman Inventory of Physical Symptoms (CHIPS) to measure somatization, and the Pain Sensitivity Questionnaire (PSQ) to measure pain sensitivity. Similar to previous research, the results of the current study found both childhood and lifetime trauma to be significantly and positively correlated to somatic symptoms, suggesting consistency amongst populations and stress disorders and traumatic experiences. However, different from previous research, neither childhood nor lifetime trauma was significantly correlated to pain sensitivity, suggesting a difference in populations or type of pain studied. This study serves to understand the presence of relationships between these variables, but additional information should be further studied to understand how to help individuals with traumatic experiences.

Keywords: childhood adversity; foundational study; lifetime trauma; mediational analysis; self-report measures