Externalizing Behaviors in Head Start Children: The Role of Caregiver Employment Status
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Introduction

PREVIOUS LITERATURE
- Major increases in maternal employment and an increased percentage of single-parent families make non-maternal child care an important factor in children's development (Clarke-Stewart & Allhusen, 2002).
- Individual differences in children's capacity for regulation at each developmental stage are important for the parent–child relationship and for understanding children's developing self-regulation (Blair, 2003).

PARTICIPANTS
- A total of 49 Head Start children (28 females, 21 males) ranging in age from 3 to 5 years (M = 3.82, SD = 0.70).
- Caregivers of the children ranged in age from 20 to 51 years (M = 30.27, SD = 6.99).
- The primary Head Start classroom teacher of the child.

MEASURES AND PROCEDURE
- Demographics Form, where parents provided information about the child's family and the parent's current occupation.
- Child's externalizing behaviors subscale

METHODS
- An independent samples t-test was calculated with results indicating that child externalizing behavior problems did not significantly differ [t(45) = 0.72, p = 0.29] between working caregivers (M = 52.84, SD = 11.19) and non-working caregivers (M = 49.44, SD = 18.48).
- Results demonstrated that the working status of a child's caregiver did not indicate a significant difference in externalizing behaviors in the classroom.

RESULTS

INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST
- An independent samples t-test was calculated with results indicating that child externalizing behavior problems did not significantly differ [t(45) = 0.72, p = 0.29] between working caregivers (M = 52.84, SD = 11.19) and non-working caregivers (M = 49.44, SD = 18.48).

LIMITATIONS
- Only two caregiver groups (i.e., working or not-working)
- Small sample size of children with subclinical behavior problems
- Variability of non-working group (e.g., stay-at-home parent, disabled, unemployed)

CONCLUSION
- In the future, there should be more than just two groups of caregiver types because some caregivers may be unemployed for health reasons or other factors.
- Future studies should take different types of occupations and socioeconomic statuses into consideration.

REFERENCES

IMAGES