



Proceedings book Training school

Quality family support and research for social impact

University of Algarve, Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, 2024 July 4 - 5

Faro, Portugal





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Acknowledgments

This proceedings book contains a collection of selected presentations submitted to the EurofamNet Training School on quality family support and research for social impact in 2024. The mission of this Training School is to develop skills and capacities and contribute with high quality training of the future generations of European researchers in the field of family support from an evidence-based and pluralistic approach.

This Training School has become an event for senior and young researchers to present their research, as well as exchange information and deepen their research problems, and develop sustainable cooperation.

There are 16 research presentations submitted by early career researchers and 5 Lectures distributed in two days and thematic sessions: A Quality Assurance Protocol for Family Support Services in Europe (by Lucía Jiménez and María José Rodrigo); Policy briefs and European Guidelines. Social impact of applied research at national and European level (by David Herrera and Ana Pizarro Carmona); Consensus methods in family support research (by Cristina Nunes and Cátia Martins); Quality Assurance in Family Support. A policy & practice view (Martin Litche); Alternative languages to generate social impact (by David Herrera).

The organizers would like to thank you sincerely to all parties involved.

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ADDRESSING CURRENT CHALLENGES IN THE RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED MINDFULNESS PROGRAMS TO GENERATE SOCIAL IMPACT

Ana Pizarro Carmona, Lucía Jiménez & Sofía Baena

University of Seville, Spain

Background/Introduction

Evidence-based mindfulness programs (MBP) has gained worldwide recognition as an effective tool for reducing stress and improving mental and emotional well-being, promoting awareness in daily life performance through the implementation of mindfulness-based skills and strategies accompanied by attitudes of non-judgment, acceptance, compassion or equanimity (Kabat-Zinn, 1982). One of the groups with highest levels of stress are parents, particularly those who are in a vulnerable situation in a clinical setting, including families with children who have mental health problems (Santamaría et al., 2006).

MBP have been widely researched and implemented showing some evidence of effectiveness with parents (Neece et al., 2019). However, it is necessary to adapt the programs to consider their characteristics, needs, and challenges, as well as the context in which they are immersed (Loucks et al., 2022). Evaluating the effectiveness of new programs and demonstrating the durability of the changes achieved through the intervention is crucial to explore to what extent the learning is applied in daily life and whether the acquired strategies are generalized to other contexts (Jiménez et al., 2019). The importance of the role of the professional in achieving the expected results in family support interventions has been pointed out, but there is still a lack of knowledge in this field since most studies have focused on effectiveness, not addressing the evaluation of the professional competencies (Evans et al., 2024).

Aims

The aims to address the current challenges in researching and implementing evidence-based mindfulness programs to generate social impact within the PhD project are:

(1) Incorporate the parenting component in a MBP and the mindfulness approach in parenting promotion programs considering the particular support needs of parents, their context, and explicitly train particular parenting and mindfulness strategies and competencies;

(2) To evaluate the effectiveness of the MBP program that incorporates the parenting component as well as the parenting promotion program that includes the mindfulness component against the originals, to determine their impact on mindfulness, stress, general health, perceived efficacy in the parental role, and emotional intelligence;

(3) To examine the transferability of learning examining the durability of the changes achieved through the intervention, and;

(4) To shed light on the variables related to MBP professional competences that are relevant to know which aspects influence and help to gain benefits of the program participation in different domains, such as health, social, relational and family.

Method

The adaptations of the MBP and parenting promotion program are carried out jointly by professionals with experience in mindfulness approach, in the field of parenting and with extensive knowledge of specific intervention settings. The adaptations are related to the contents and adjustments in the duration of the programs, the specific formal sessions and informal practices. The resulting adapted programs are evaluated quantitatively in terms of effectiveness with a control group. For the evaluation of transferability, follow-up questionnaires were created to examine qualitatively the facilitators and challenges in applying the techniques and strategies to parents' daily lives, as well as the influence of daily practices on the maintenance of changes in the short and medium term. Professional competencies were identified with an inductive thematic analysis of the information collected and provided by the participants of one of the MBP both in open-ended questionnaires and in focus groups. In addition, the content and methodology of MBPs were considered and national and international best practice guidelines and ethical standards of quality were reviewed. For the assessment of professional competencies, it is planned to use the Mindfulness Based Interventions: Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBI:TAC).

Results / Expected results

(1) Adaptations of the MBP and the parenting promotion program integrating additional contents and adapting timetables are expected to be more targeted and facilitate the engagement and adherence to the intervention as well as to improve the parental competences of the participants through mindfulness meditation;

(2) The evaluation of the effectiveness of the tailored MBP has already shown significant improvements in stress levels, as well as in indicators related to health and well-being, compared to a control group. Similar results are expected in the evaluation of the tailored parenting promotion program;

(3) The transferability assessment is expected to reveal how learned strategies are applied in the daily lives of parents and their short to medium-term impact, and

(4) Identification of professional competencies using the MBI-TAC will provide a robust framework for enhancing the delivery of mindfulness-based interventions, developing a greater understanding about the teaching/learning process through which results are achieved and how positive results are produced.

Conclusions/Implications

This research aims to shed light on the processes of mindfulness and parenting components for parents adapting programs, addressing the effectiveness, transferability of acquired skills, and professional competencies in conveying mindfulness and parenting training. The outcomes and dissemination of results across academia, policy, frontline practitioners, and families will generate impact enhancing the quality family support provision and the delivery of evidence-based programs. Through this knowledge, mindful parenting practices will ultimately be improved in this population, which will contribute to the family well-being.

Key words

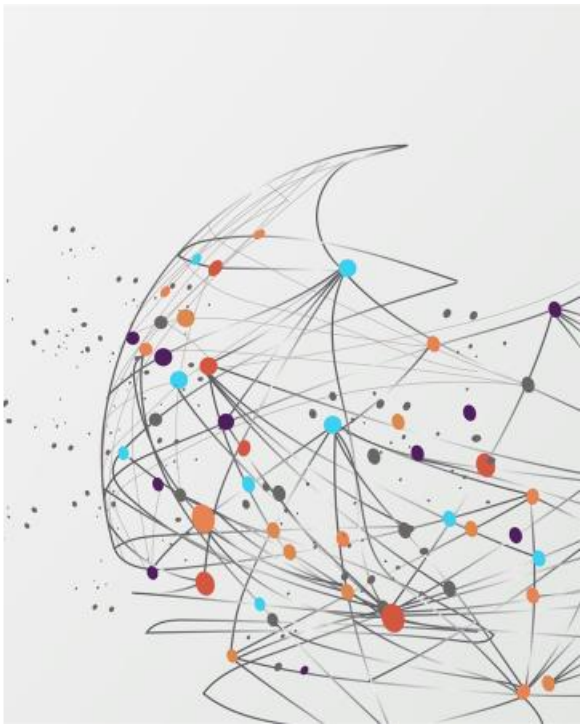
Evidence-based programs; mindfulness-based programs; program evaluation; mindful parenting; professional skills

Addressing current challenges in the research and implementation of evidence-based mindfulness programs to generate social impact

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Training School "Family support and research for social impact"

Faro, July 4-5, 2024



STATE OF THE ART IN THE FIELD OF MBI

Evidence-based mindfulness programs (MBP) has gained worldwide recognition as an effective tool for parents
(Santamaría et al., 2006)

There is evidence on the effectiveness of MBP in reducing stress and improving mental and emotional well-being promoting awareness in daily life performance through the implementation of mindfulness-based strategies accompanied by attitudes of non-judgment, acceptance, compassion or equanimity
(Kabat-Zinn, 1982)

MBP have been widely researched and implemented showing evidence of effectiveness with parents
(Neece et al., 2019)

GAPS

1. Programs are not adapted to consider the characteristics, needs, and challenges of parents, as well as the context in which they are immersed (Loucks et al., 2022)
2. The lack of rigorous evaluations regarding the effectiveness of MBP fails to demonstrate the sustainability of changes achieved through the intervention. It is essential to investigate the extent to which the acquired learning is applied in daily life and whether the strategies learned are generalized to other contexts (Jiménez et al., 2019)
3. While the importance of the professional's role in achieving the expected results in family support interventions has been highlighted, a significant gap remains in the understanding of this area, as most MBSR and MBI studies have focused on effectiveness, without addressing the evaluation of professional competencies (Evans et al., 2024)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

WHAT	HOW
To significantly adapt a MBP and a parenting promotion program	(1) By including the parenting component and mindfulness to consider particular support needs and the context and to explicitly train particular parenting strategies and mindfulness competencies for these parents (2) By extending intervention duration while adjusting formal and informal session times
To evaluate the effectiveness of the MBP program that incorporates the parenting component, as well as the parenting promotion program that includes the mindfulness component, against the originals	Quantitative effectiveness evaluation with a control group determining their impact on mindfulness, stress, general health, perceived efficacy in the parental role and emotional intelligence
To examine the transferability of learning and the durability of the changes	Qualitative evaluation of the transferability with a follow-up questionnaire examining facilitators and challenges in applying the techniques and strategies to the daily lives of parents of children with mental health problems, as well as the influence of daily practices on the maintenance of changes in the short and medium term
To shed light on the variables related to MBP professional competences	(1) Identifying the professional competences with an inductive thematic analysis of open-ended questionnaires and focus groups, also considering the contents and methodology of the program, MBP national and international best practices guidelines and ethical standards of quality (2)Assessing them by MBI:TAC

GENERATING SOCIAL IMPACT

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the parenting promotion program with mindfulness

Adaptation of the parenting promotion program including mindfulness

Evaluation of the transferability of acquired skills

Evaluation of the best practices and profesional competences in MBP

Dissemination of the results to participating families

Dissemination of the results (academia, open science)

Identification of the best practices and professional competences in MBP

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the MBP program

Evaluation of the program implementation

Implementation in real context (hospital)

Adaptation of the MBP program

Done Ongoing

PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT OF INSTITUTIONALIZED ADOLESCENTS: THE INFLUENCE OF INDIVIDUAL, SOCIAL AND CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

Ana Simão

University of Algarve, Portugal

Background/Introduction

All over the world more than 2,700,000 children between 0 and 17 years are living in institutional care. In Portugal institutionalization remains the primary form of care provided for children raised without parental care or in psychosocial danger. These youth present a greater risk for developing various problems in several domains compared to adolescents residing with their biological families.

Psychological adjustment is an emerging area of investigation with these particular vulnerable population in order to understand the factors that underlie the difficulties youth present within this context; it refers to one's self-adjustment and is reflected in emotions, actions and thoughts.

Institutionalization can cause a significant impact in psychological adjustment of young people because they experience negligence, abandonment and unresponsive care from their primary caregivers, and then need do adjust to new peers and caregivers, new norms, routines and expectations in a different socio-affective context. This adaptation will be as positive as the ability of the adolescent to construct and maintain emotional relationships with new significant figures of care. Thus, it is of extreme relevance to study the adolescents' adjustment in residential care because of the long-term consequences on physical, psychological and health plan.

Objectives

The aim of this research is to learn about the determinants of psychological adjustment in young people aged between 12 and 21 years who live in residential care institutions in different regions of Portugal. We pretend to understand how individual, social and environmental factors can influence or explain the adjustment of these boys and girls in this particular stage of development.

Method

We administered self-report questionnaires to 368 adolescents living in residential care, from both sexes, between 12-21 years, to assess how socio-demographic or institutions characteristics can explain psychological adjustment. We also want to test how perceived social support, coping strategies, emotional regulation, attachment and the characteristics of the dark triad of personality influence the psychological adjustment of these young people and their integration into residential care. Simultaneously, we collected data on the young people's adjustment from the caregivers and we believe that the set of variables selected and the triangulation of the data constitute an innovation in this area of research.

Expected results

This research will investigate whether the variables studied influence young people's psychological adjustment, hoping to find gender differences in internalising and externalising behaviours. We hope to confirm the importance of emotional regulation as an indicator of adjustment and a precursor to the development of psychopathology by showing that difficulties in regulating emotions can lead to the appearance of internalising symptoms. We also pretend to adapt and validate a measure about the integration of youth in residential care. Finally, cluster analysis will be used to create profiles of the young people. We expect to get a closer look to what impacts the most these youth and facilitates generalization to professionals working in this field. We hope that the results obtained will make an important contribution to understanding the profile of young people who are institutionalized and the determinants that influence their psychological adjustment.

Conclusions/Implications

The massive rate of youth that are put in residential care as a first placement option justifies this research because of the multilevel impact of this subject. Distinguishing youth in residential care from other types of care is important to strengthen our understanding of the differences that exist in terms of social support, attachment or internalizing and externalizing problems, which are relevant themes to understand their adjustment. Including multiple informants is a way to deepening the results and understanding young people's difficulties in order to develop programs that help professionals to better understand the needs of these young people

Key words

Psychological adjustment, adolescents, residential care

Training school
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PREDICTORS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENT OF INSTITUTIONALIZED ADOLESCENTS:

the influence of individual, social and contextual factors

Ana Simão
2nd year PhD in Psychology
Professor Cristina Nunes

CURRENT STUDY

6347 youth with welfare protection measures

84% living in residential care institutions

25% due to behaviour problems

Psychological Adjustment:

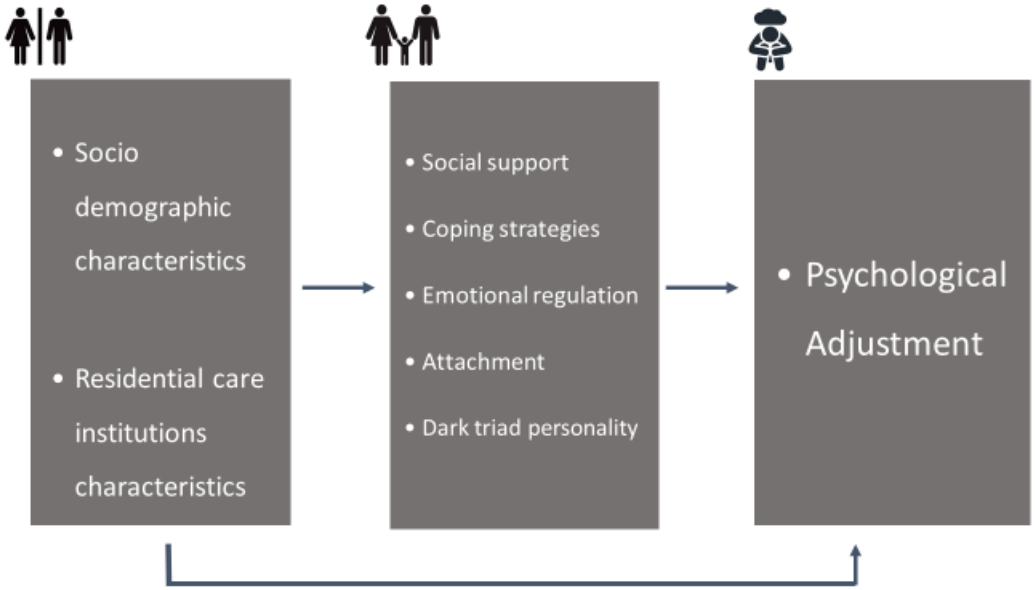
Internalizing problems (e.g anxiety, depression)

Externalizing problems (explicit and disruptive actions: e.g agression, breaking rules, impulsivity)



- n = **368** dyads youth-caregiver
- **12 – 21** years old (53 % boys / 47 % girls)

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



What am I planning to do to generate social impact with my research

- ✓ To map the **psychosocial profile** of young people in residential care;
- ✓ To develop an **explanatory model** on the determinants of the Psychological Adjustment of institutionalised young people;
- ✓ To improve **intervention and educational strategies**: **to reduce** the developmental, health, academic and socio-professional **difficulties** that persist into adulthood, and the perception of themselves as inferior, which affects their **ability to be included in society**.

What to do with these families

- ✓ Provide more **training for technicians** working in child welfare services and in courts in family and juvenile jurisdiction;
- ✓ Emphasise the importance of **networking** when working with at-risk families to ensure that the physical, cognitive, emotional and social needs of children and young people are met;
- ✓ Focussed and **intensive intervention** to achieve family reunification (e.g. improve parental skills; maintaining or re-establishing family ties in cases of interruption or serious disturbance of family coexistence).


THANK YOU !

HIDDEN AND INVISIBLE: CHILDREN IN MAFIA VULNERABILITY

Faustino Rizzo

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Background/Introduction

In regions marked by the presence of organized crime, children are often invisible victims of a cultural, social, and educational system that compromises their psychophysical development. According to a Save the Children report, over half a million children in Italy—546,000, or 5.4% of the population aged 0-17—reside in areas with high mafia density (Cederna, 2015, p. 61). These children are deprived of their rights and, at times, their lives. Among the approximately 1,081 innocent victims of the mafia recorded in the Libera association's database, 115 were children. However, victims are not only those who lose their lives to the mafia; many children are often trapped in a criminal system that forces them to assume dual roles as both perpetrators and victims from a young age (Cascini and Di Bella, 2017, p. 188).

The doctoral research Challenges and Perspectives in the Protection of Children's Rights in Mafia Contexts, based on the analysis of protection measures initiated by the Juvenile Court of Reggio Calabria in the project “Liberi di scegliere” (Free to Choose) from 2012 to 2020, defines the concept of “mafia vulnerability”. This concept describes a specific form of familial vulnerability arising from the family’s, particularly the parents’, affiliation or proximity to organized crime. By defining this concept, this study has laid the groundwork for adapting the P.I.P.P.I. (Milani, 2022) program to address the needs of families living with this specific form of familial vulnerability.

Objectives

Following the definition of the concept of “mafia vulnerability”, this variable has been integrated into the pre-assessment criteria of the P.I.P.P.I. program, which operators use for program enrollment in the RPM online system. This integration has made this specific form of vulnerability visible, allowing for better identification of at-risk families. This study aims to evaluate if and how the inclusion of “mafia vulnerability” among the assessment items has changed outcomes for families participating in the program. It seeks to assess the effectiveness of intervention strategies tailored to these families and to determine whether this recognition has led to improved support and protection for children and families in mafia-affected areas.

Method

This study employs a quantitative approach using descriptive statistics to evaluate the impact of integrating “mafia vulnerability” into the P.I.P.P.I. program’s pre-assessment criteria. We analyze data from the RPM online system, focusing on the period before and after the inclusion of this variable. Key metrics include the number of families identified with mafia vulnerability, the initiation of tailored support interventions, and the outcomes for these families. Additionally, we use qualitative data provided by program operators through the RPM online system, including family demographics, the completion of child well-being sub-dimensions, and the use of intervention tools.

This comprehensive approach allows us to measure whether the recognition of “mafia vulnerability” has led to more effective identification and support of families living with this specific form of familial vulnerability.

Expected results

Preliminary results indicate that the inclusion of “mafia vulnerability” in the P.I.P.P.I. program’s pre-assessment criteria has significantly improved the visibility of this specific form of familial vulnerability. This has enhanced the program’s ability to prevent, promote, and protect the rights of children from the risks associated with mafia influence. Recognizing “mafia vulnerability” has led to more tailored and effective support interventions for affected families.

Additionally, these findings highlight the necessity for further research and action-based studies. Engaging both operators and families already included in the program can deepen our understanding and expand the resources available for support. This approach will also inform the design of targeted training programs for practitioners, enhancing their capacity to address the unique challenges faced by families living with mafia-related vulnerabilities. Overall, the integration of this variable underscores the importance of ongoing efforts to protect and support these at-risk children and families.

Conclusions/Implications

The integration of “mafia vulnerability” into the P.I.P.P.I. program has illuminated a previously unrecognized form of familial vulnerability. This study underscores the critical importance of tailored interventions in safeguarding children’s rights and well-being in mafia-affected areas. The findings highlight the necessity for ongoing research and active involvement of program operators and families to continuously refine support strategies. Furthermore, the results advocate for the development of specialized training programs to equip practitioners with the necessary skills to navigate these complex situations effectively. Based on these insights, a research-action-training pathway will be initiated to enhance the effectiveness of interventions and family support systems.

Key words

Mafia; Vulnerability; Family Support; Children; Rights.

Programma
di Intervento
Per la Prevenzione
dell'Istituzionalizzazione

Hidden and Invisible Children in Mafia Vulnerability

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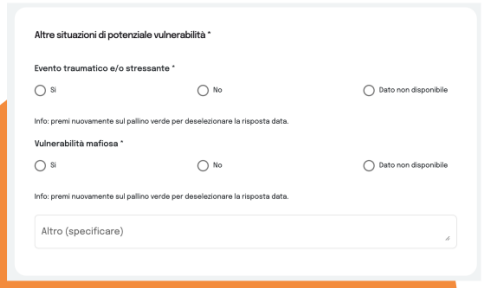
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Per la Prevenzione dell'Istituzionalizzazione

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Mafia vulnerability



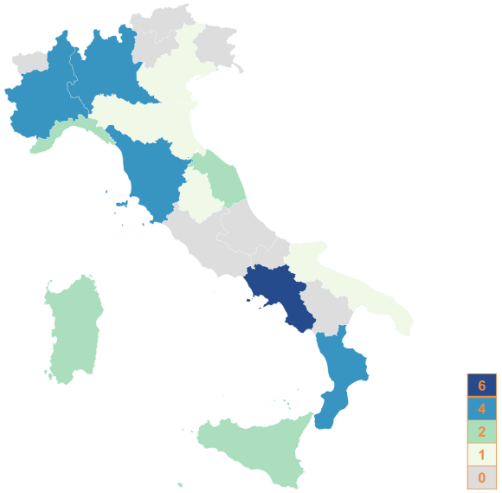
RPMonline

Mafia vulnerability includes a continuum of behaviors and attitudes transmitted within the family and beyond, such as: normalization of crime in the family context, involvement in criminal activities, difficulty in building relationships with incarcerated family members, dropping out of school, lifestyles inadequate to the needs of growing up, traumatic events related to illicit activities, neglect and mistreatment related to mafia culture, and management of gender roles according to mafia patterns.

Programma di Intervento
Per la Prevenzione dell'Istituzionalizzazione

PIPPI 11 – 12 (>25/09/2023-25/06/2024)

Mafia vulnerability	Number of cases	Percentage
No	4147	90,57%
Dato non disponibile	398	8,69%
Sì	**34**	0,74%



Forecast

Annual projection = Monthly average × 12 = 3.78 × 12 = 45.36cases/year

Programma di Intervento
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Interpretation of Results

Historical Data: From 2011 to 2020, the average number of identified cases of mafia vulnerability was 1.2 cases per year.

Recent Data: Between September 2023 and June 2024, 34 new cases were identified in 9 months, with an annual projection of approximately 45.36 cases. When we adjust this projection to account for the 8.69% of unavailable data, we obtain an estimate of about 49.3 cases per year.

Implication: This significant increase suggests that the new implementations of PIPPI 11 and 12, together with improved detection processes, are enabling the identification of far more cases of mafia vulnerability than in the past

THE VISITS: IMPLEMENTATIONS AND EFFECTIVENESS WITH BIOLOGICAL PARENTS IN PORTUGAL

Francisca Ferreira Cunha

University of Algarve, Portugal

Background/Introduction

In Portugal, 70% of children are in the institutional care due to situations of neglect, and whereas 39.8% are to return to their biological families. Parental visitation has long been a crucial factor in reunification decisions for children in institutional care, it occurs in the form of supervised visitation. However, in Portugal, lacks depth and effectiveness in its intervention. Usually, takes place with supervision, by a professional in the institutional facilities, without any guidelines. Research on this topic highlights that supervised visitation could be used as a positive contribution to the established family dynamics. Some research show that visits facilitate the bonds and relationships with family members; they offer a realistic vision of the situation; and they promote family reunification. In this way, intervention programs following the maxim that careful planning of a visit considers the emotions and stress experienced by all of the involved emerge. To our knowledge, there aren't any Portuguese programs that address this specific context. However, in Spain, Bernedo and collaborators (2020) developed "Las visitas: un espacio de desarrolo familiar" [The visits: a context of family development]. Demonstrating an extensive systematization and evidence in its implementation and evaluation since then, it is the selected program to apply in the Portuguese context.

Objectives

Analyze the psychosocial profile and the needs for support and intervention of the families in a process of family reunification going through supervised visitation (FRPSP). Specifically, we intend to: 1. Analyze the psychosocial profile, in the sociodemographic, family, educational and professional aspects of FRPSP; 2. Analyze the practices and training needs of professionals to be able to contribute with guidelines in the standardization of the intervention with FRPSP; 3. Perform the cultural adaptation of the “The Visits: a context of family development” Program and implement it in the Portuguese context; 4. Analyze the levels of perceived parenting competencies, family functioning, stress, mental health, and well-being and the levels of well-being of children before and after the intervention; 5. Evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness of the program.

Method

The program will be implemented by professionals trained in its application. Some cultural adaptations of the contents will be made and the readjustment of the activities to the educational level of the population. To study the impact of the program, a quasi-experimental design with pre-test, post-test will be elaborated. Evaluations will be conducted by the team responsible for implementing the program through interviews with the participants.

After the application of the pre-test to the 25 participants, the program will be applied to the intervention group (randomly selected), while the control group will wait for a future application of the program and may also benefit from its application. At the end of the intervention, post-tests will be applied to the intervention group and the control group. The entire evaluation process will follow the criteria of voluntariness and confidentiality and ethical recommendations of the APA.

Expected results

Since the “The Visits: a context of family development” Program has never been applied in Portugal, the expected results are still unknown. However, research on this topic highlights that supervised visitation could be used as a positive contribution to the established family dynamics. Some researches show that visits facilitate the bonds and relationships with family members; they offer a realistic vision of the situation; and they promote family reunification. Therefore, better visit planning will ensure better protection for the child and subsequently a more positive visit. It will also promote better interaction between child and parent, as well as positive outcomes in parental well-being, mental health, and improved parenting skills. On the flip side, poor planning, poor quality and unsupervised contact can be detrimental, particularly when there is a history of maltreatment

Conclusions/Implications

This project addresses the lack of effective supervised visitation interventions in Portugal. Implementing this program aims to enhance visitation quality, leading to stronger family bonds and higher family reunification rates. It will also highlight training needs for practitioners, ensuring better support for families. Additionally, raising public awareness can drive advocacy for system changes, creating a more supportive environment for children in care and their families, resulting in significant social impact. By improving the quality and consistency of supervised visitations, emotional bonds can be strengthened between children and their birth families and will better equip practitioners to support families.

Keywords

Family Reunification; Supervised visitation; Families at-risk; The Visits

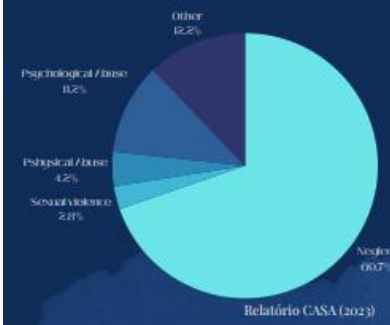
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The Visits:
Implementation and Effectiveness with Biological Parents in Portugal



Francisca Ferreira Cunha
Centro de Investigação em Psicologia, Universidade do Algarve (CIP, UAlg)
Supervisor: Isabel Bernedo & Cristina Nunes

BACKGROUND and AIMS



Relatório CASA (2023)

Parental visitation has long been a crucial factor in reunification decisions for children in institutional care, it occurs in the form of supervised visitation. **However, in Portugal, lacks depth and effectiveness** in its intervention.

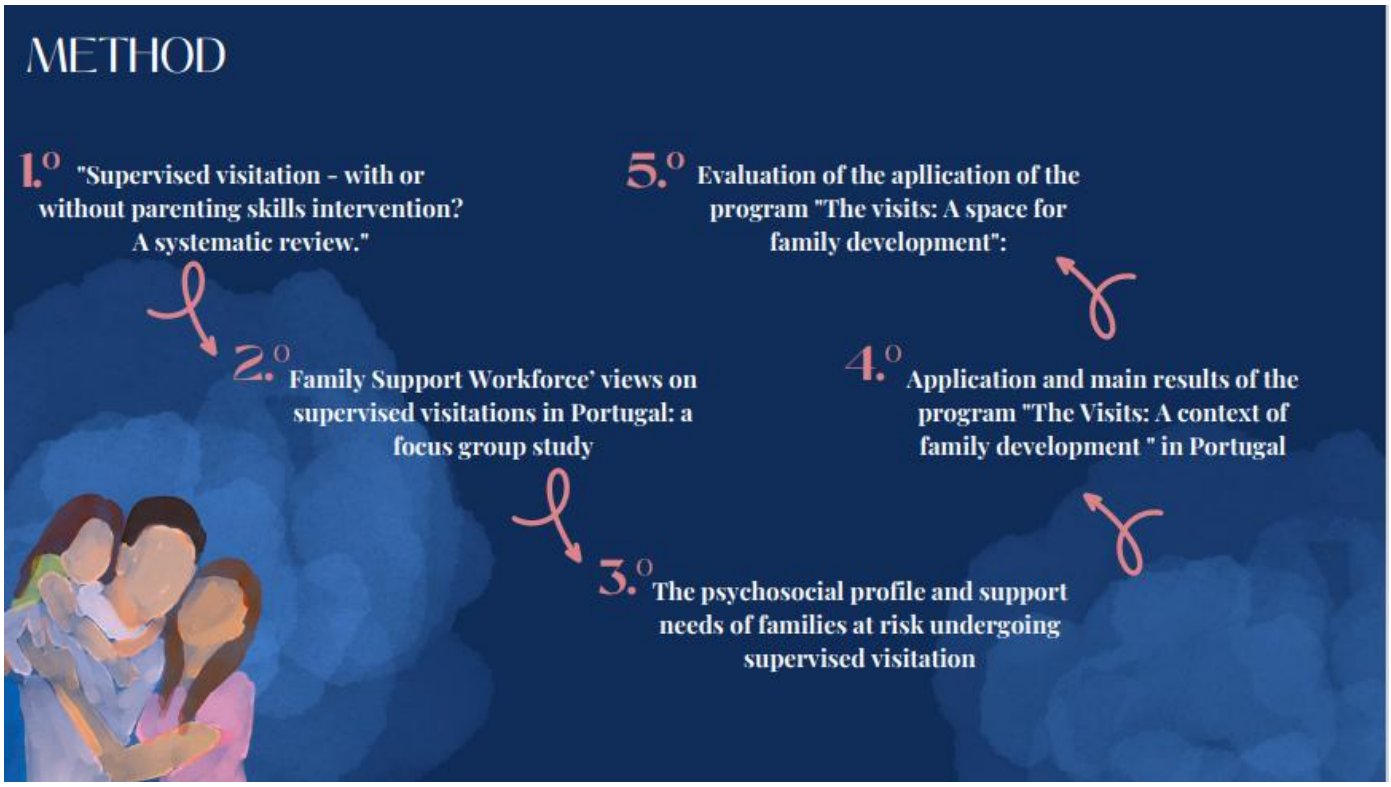
In Spain, Bernedo & colaborators (2020) developed a program that addresses supervised visitation in family reunification:

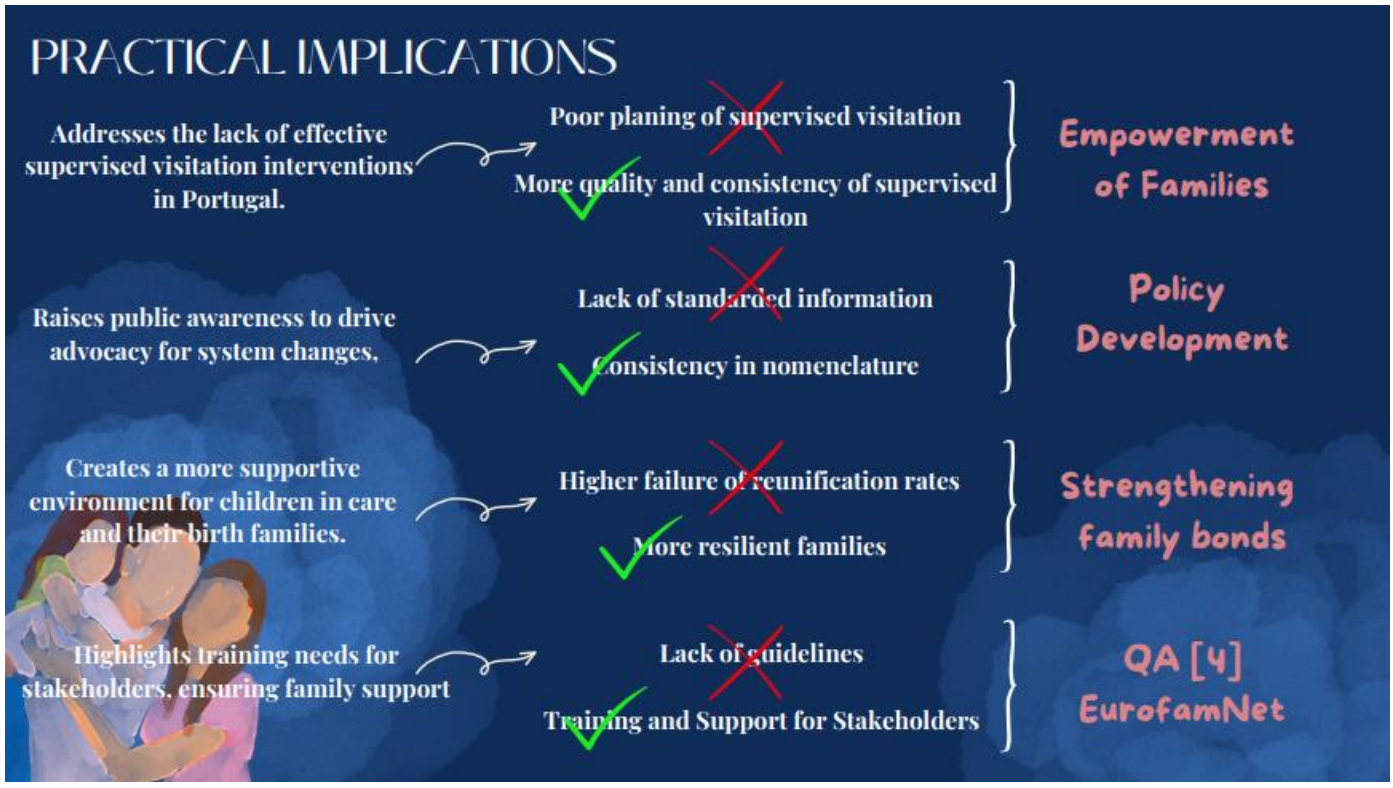
"Las Visitas: Un espácio de desarrolo familiar"



1) Analyze the psychosocial profile, in the sociodemographic, family, educational and professional aspects of families at-risk undergoing supervised visitation;
2) Analyze the practices and workforce skills of stakeholders in families at-risk;
3) Perform the cultural adaptation of the "The Visits: a context of family development" Program* and implement it;
4) Analyze the levels of perceived parenting competencies , family functioning, stress, mental health and well-being;
5) Evaluate the efficacy and effectiveness of the program.

*Bernedo, I., González-Pasarín, L., Martínez, M., & Rebollo, M. (2020). Las visitas: un espácio de desarrolo familiar. Málaga: Grupo de Investigación sobre Acogimiento Familiar, Universidad de Málaga.


METHOD
1.º "Supervised visitation - with or without parenting skills intervention? A systematic review."
2.º Family Support Workforce' views on supervised visitations in Portugal: a focus group study
3.º The psychosocial profile and support needs of families at risk undergoing supervised visitation
4.º Application and main results of the program "The Visits: A context of family development " in Portugal
5.º Evaluation of the apllication of the program "The visits: A space for family development":


PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS
Addresses the lack of effective supervised visitation interventions in Portugal.
Poor planing of supervised visitation
More quality and consistency of supervised visitation
Empowerment of Families
Raises public awareness to drive advocacy for system changes.
Lack of standarded information
Consistency in nomenclature
Policy Development
Creates a more supportive environment for children in care and their birth families.
Higher failure of reunification rates
More resilient families
Strengthening family bonds
Highlights training needs for stakeholders, ensuring family support
Lack of guidelines
Training and Support for Stakeholders
QA [4] EurofamNet

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL: MEASURES, PROCESSES AND POTENTIALS

Helena Mocho

University of Algarve, Portugal

Background/Introduction

Parental involvement (PI) encompasses various dimensions (i.e., multidimensional construct) and plays a crucial role in shaping children's overall positive development (Mocho et al., 2024; Barger et al., 2019). Although many manifestations of PI are different in their nature, they are all closely connected to children's academic adjustement and it has been extensively recognized as a determinant of children's learning, academic and social performance, engagement and a protective factor (Antipkina et al., 2020; Boonk et al., 2018). In addition to knowing the level of parental involvement, it is also important to identify why and how parents are involved with their children (Lerner et al., 2022). Also, would be beneficial to better clarify how different types of parental involvement co-develop over time and how patterns of co-development differ between distinct subgroups (Guo et al., 2022).

In various countries and educational systems, the task of involving parents in the school context is an important goal, which is embodied in different practices. However, research differs in the way it evaluates and studies this phenomenon, from the methodology to the results found. Attending the potential significance of family–school relationships, the demand for measurement tools that differentiate between various types of involvement and accurately assess involvement-related constructs has never been greater.

Objectives

The general objectives of this study are:

1) to explore and evaluate the characteristics of PIS in Portugal, embodied in a greater use of methodologies and digital tools by educational stakeholders and;

2) to analyse the effects of individual and factors (family and school) on the practices of those involved in learning, motivation and the child's quality of life (QoL).

Method

This project includes four studies, with different methodological characteristics, with a correlational and quasi-experimental design, allowing an up-to-date picture of the construct and its practices at school and family level, in order to situate the PIS phenomenon in current national and international contexts, contributing to a better understanding and intervention around it.

Study 1) Identification and analysis of PIS assessment instruments and their theoretical models, through a systematic review;

Study 2) Adaptation and validation of a PIS assessment instrument. This study aims to make a significant contribution to the development of an up-to-date measurement instrument, which will be available for an adequate and effective assessment of PIS;

Study 3) Characterising PIS in the different education cycles and considering the various stakeholders in the educational process (i.e. children, parents and teachers) and potential profiles;

Study 4) Testing and exploring the PIS model proposed in this research and identification of the factors inherent to PIS that have the greatest impact on children's academic and psychosocial adjustment (i.e. QoL and well-being).

Expected results

Through these studies, it is expected to: 1. Identify the national and international instruments available for evaluating PIS; 2. Contribute to the adaptation and validation (or construction) of an instrument for measuring PIS, which includes the current characteristics of this phenomenon. 3. Characterise PIS in the different degrees of education (1st, 2nd and 3rd), as well as the use of digital tools and methodologies in communication between those involved; 4. Analyse the perception of PIS by the different stakeholders involved (i.e. parents, teachers and children) and its relationship with school performance and the child's QoL; 5. Develop and evaluate the proposed model for predicting children's performance and children's QoL, taking into account the role of PIS; 6. Developing a digital resource, inspired by the French Ministry of Education and Youth's Programme "La Mallette des Parents", for schools, parents and children, with the aim of promoting PIS in Portugal.

Conclusions/Implications

This research will make it possible, through a succession of four complementary investigations, to define and adjust an IP measure, updated and contextualised to the Portuguese reality. It will also analyse the different ways in which the child-family-school triad is involved, how this happens and how we can boost this phenomenon, which has been proven to influence children's development and general well-being. Finally, by testing a proposed model, it will be possible to design strategies that are appropriate to the Portuguese context and that effectively promote PI.

To sum up, this research will promote contextualised and up-to-date knowledge about PI and to draw up useful theoretical and practical guidelines for professionals and researchers.

Key words

Child; Parental competences; Parental involvement in school; Parents; Quality of life; School motivation.

UAlg FCHS
UNIVERSIDADE DO ALGARVE

Parental involvement in school: Measures, processes and potentials



PhD
Psychology student

Helena Mocho

4-5 july 2024

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Proactive involvement of parents in various activities and behaviours aimed at promoting learning, development and careful participation in their children's educational process and experiences.

Several benefits for the child and family (e.g. improvement in children's attitudes, behaviour and mental health), but research differs in the way it evaluates and studies this phenomenon, from the methodology to the results found.



Main goals

Explore and evaluate the characteristics of PIS in Portugal, embodied in a greater use of methodologies and digital tools by educational stakeholders;

Analyse the effects of individual and factors (family and school) on the practices of those involved in learning, motivation and the child's quality of life.

Studies

Systematic Review	Adaptation and validation of a PIS assessment instrument	Characterising PIS	Testing and exploring PIS model
Identification and analysis of PIS assessment instruments and their theoretical models	Make a significant contribution to the development of an up-to-date measurement instrument, which will be available for an adequate and effective assessment of PIS	• Different education cycles • Various stakeholders in the educational process • Define potential profiles	Identification of the factors inherent to PIS that have the greatest impact on children's academic and psychosocial adjustment (i.e. QoL and well-being)

Contributions



- ✓ Define and adjust an IP measure, updated and contextualised to the Portuguese reality.
- ✓ Analyse the different ways in which the child-family-school triad is involved, how this happens and how we can boost this phenomenon, which has been proven to influence children's development and general well-being.
- ✓ Design strategies that are appropriate to the Portuguese context and that effectively promote PI.

Promote contextualised and up-to-date knowledge about PIS and to draw up useful theoretical and practical guidelines for professionals and researchers.

Active contribution to its scientificity and direct impact on children's adjustment.

CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE LEGITIMACY OF PARENTAL AUTHORITY IN SPAIN

Helena Reyes Mena, Bárbara Lorence Lara & M.ª Victoria Hidalgo García

University of Sevilla, Spain

Background/Introduction

This project aims to answer one of the major concern of contemporary society, as reflected in the media: is parental authority in crisis? Psychosocial studies that provide empirical and up-to-date evidence on this phenomenon are scarce. Thus, the present study is innovative in this field of research. This project focuses on the study of the legitimate use of parental authority, when children recognise their parents as valid, fair and appropriate authority figures (Smetana, 2011). This positive perception of parental authority is not equally developed in every child. Therefore, it is interesting to know what this variability is related to, especially with regard to factors related to family functioning and the child's psychological adjustment. To this moment, studies have analysed parental authority from the social domain theory (Smetana, 2011; Turiel, 1986) and the parenting styles approach (MacCoby, 2007). They have mainly focused on the focal behavioral component of authority, related to norm establishment and compliance. Our project examines parental authority legitimacy from an emerging and multidimensional theoretical approach that identifies five components (justice, respect and tolerance, mutual understanding, involvement, and admiration) and incorporates a developmental perspective of childhood and adolescence.

Objectives

1. To study perceptions of legitimate parental authority from a multidimensional approach and from a gender perspective.

2. To examine the relationship between perceived parental authority and family functioning.

3. To analyse the relationship between perceived parental authority and psychological well-being in children and adolescents.

Method

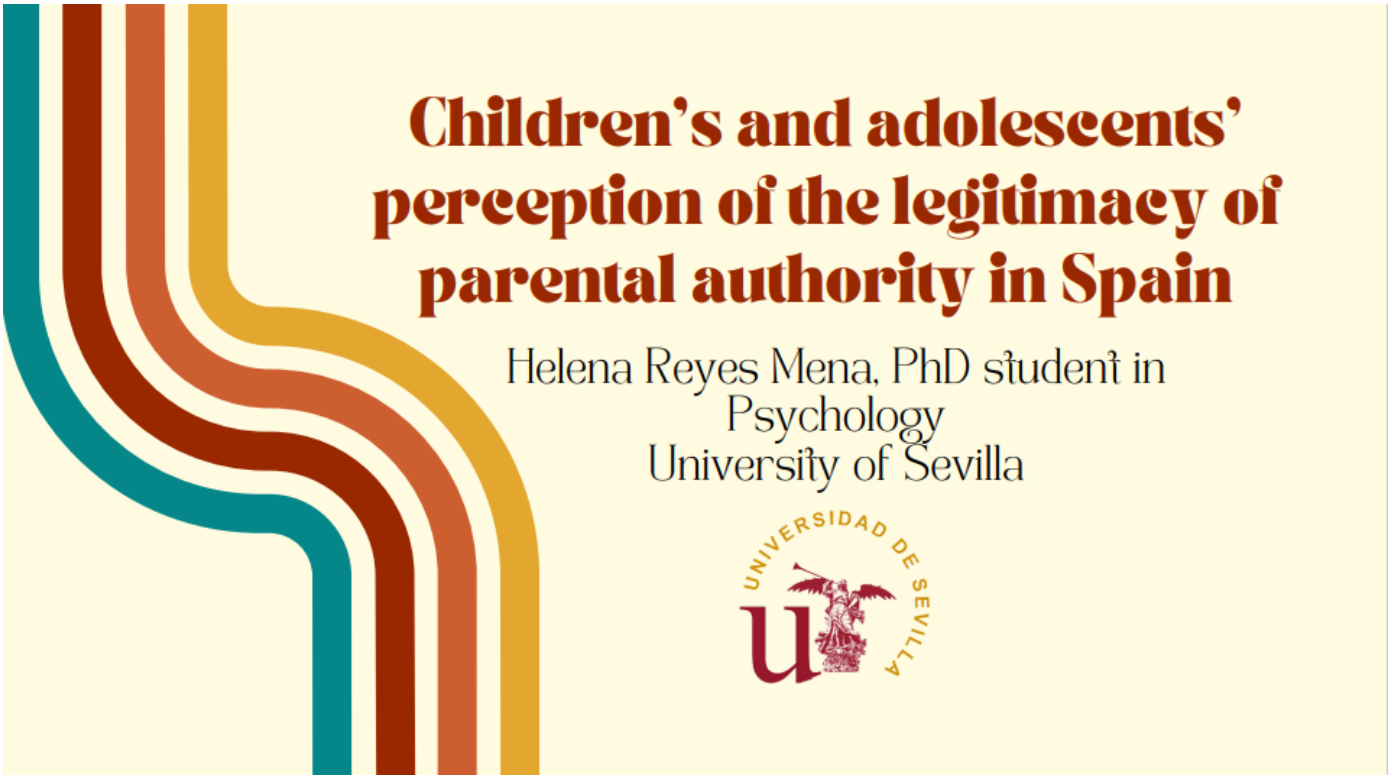
A cross-sectional study with a quantitative and survey-based methodology is proposed. It is expected to reach a sample of 800 children and adolescents aged between 9 and 18 years, balanced in terms of age and gender, and representative of the whole of Spain. The selection of the sample will be: 1) simple randomised sampling by region (50% of the total); 2) non-randomised sampling by convenience, choosing the capital of the selected regions; 3) stratified randomised by the type of school (public, private, charter) and area (urban or rural) (15 schools). In parallel, the research team will request the participation of third-sector organizations working with families and/or young people.

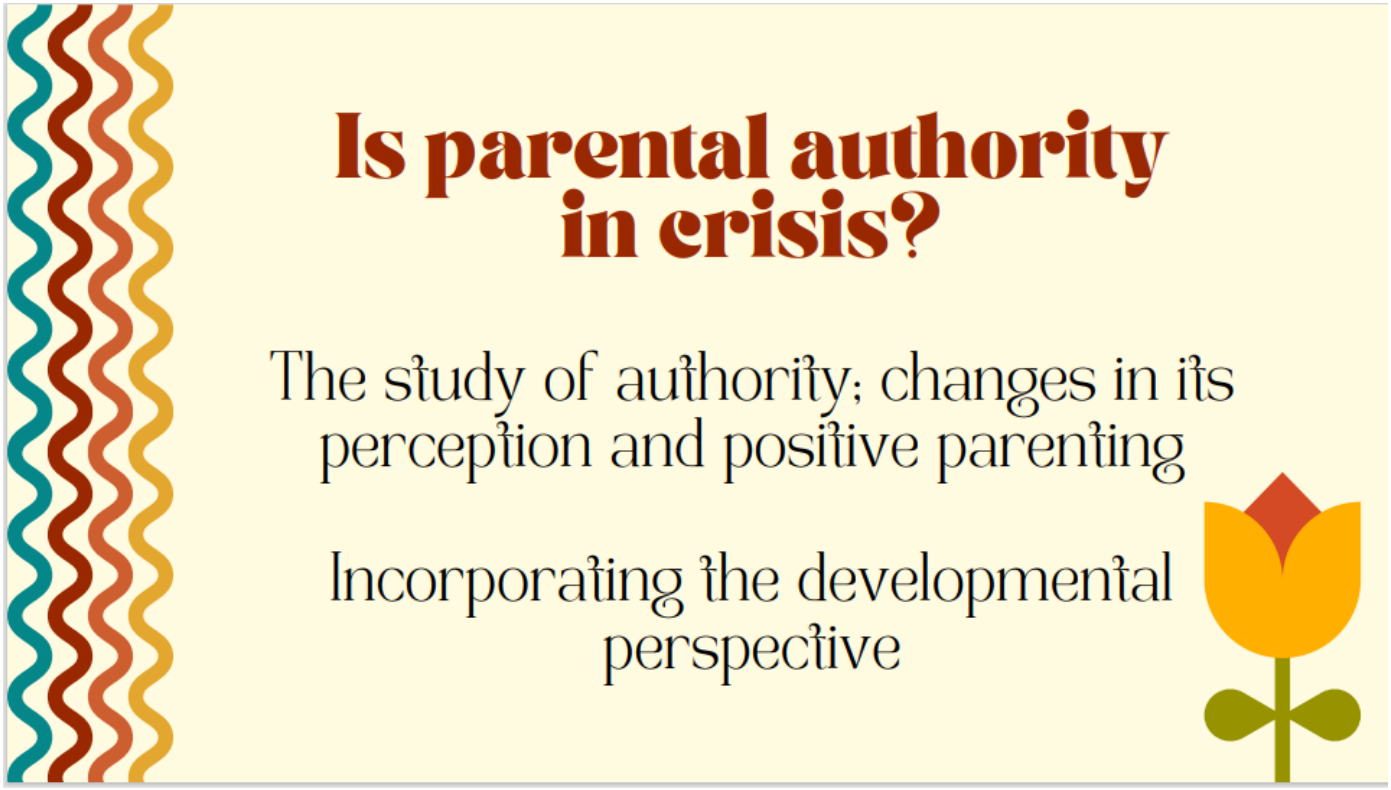
Expected results

The aim of the project is to contribute to the advancement of knowledge of parental authority legitimacy: its understanding, its evolution and its relationship with other variables. The scientific and technological impact of this project will be ensured through the participation in scientific forums and the dissemination of scientific publications in open access journals included in the Journal Citations Reports. The socioeconomic impact will be achieved through the development and dissemination of outcomes using a language and channels accessible to the general public, and through the development of psychoeducational actions based on the evidence of the project. These actions will be shared with educational, psychological and social professionals in order to be implemented. At the end of the project, a webinar will take place, where adolescents, families, professionals, researchers and policy representatives will be invited to discuss the results of the project and to give voice to the actors involved.

Key words

Parental authority; child-to-parent violence; positive parenting


Children's and adolescents' perception of the legitimacy of parental authority in Spain
Helena Reyes Mena, PhD student in Psychology
University of Sevilla
UNIVERSIDAD DE SEVILLA


Is parental authority in crisis?
The study of authority: changes in its perception and positive parenting
Incorporating the developmental perspective


The study
Components of legitimate parental authority
Cross-sectional study with survey-based methodology
Results and social implications
Better prevention and intervention
Increase family welfare

HOW CAN WE BEST SUPPORT PARENTS TO REDUCE CHILDREN'S ANXIETY?

Karen Rienks

University of Amsterdam

Background/Introduction

Anxiety is one of the most common mental health problems in childhood and causes severe and persistent impairment in children's lives. Parents can play a key role in the development of children's anxiety symptoms. Yet, the effects of parent-focused interventions are limited and inconsistent. Traditional randomized trials of 'package deal' interventions provide little insight into what specific parental risk factors should be targeted to most effectively reduce children's anxiety. Teasing apart the effects of these interventions is important to identify the active ingredients of these interventions to reduce anxiety in children. In my PhD project, I plan to do this using a multi-method approach; in the form of a meta-analysis (Study 1), a qualitative cross-cultural study (Study 2) and a factorial experiment (Study 3).

Objectives

Study 1 aims to discover how effective parent-focused interventions are in reducing children's anxiety, and what (clusters of) intervention components are associated with better outcomes. Study 2 aims to provide insights in Greek, Indian, and Dutch parents' perceived acceptability of three intervention components: (i) reducing family accommodation, (ii) increasing empathetic reactions, and (iii) parental cognitive restructuring. Study 3 will test the effects of the components in reducing children's anxiety, life interference, risk factors for anxiety, and wider- and boundary effects. Additionally, it will answer the question of how (i.e., potential mediators) and for whom (i.e., potential moderators) these components work.

Method

For Study 1 we systematically searched databases for RCTs on parent-focused interventions. We used robust variance estimation to estimate main effects and differential effects by theoretical components, and network meta-analysis to estimate the effects of clusters of components. For Study 2, we qualitatively investigate opinions of parents of anxious children (7-11 years old) from Greece, India and the Netherlands on the three intervention components in a semi-structured interview. Parents are asked about the acceptability and credibility of these techniques. Parents' responses will the thematically coded.For Study 3 266 parents of children with anxiety aged 7;0 to 11;11 years are randomly allocated to any combination and order of the three components in a factorial experiment. Assessments take place at baseline, after the first component, after the final component, and six weeks after the final component. Data will be analyzed using ANCOVA-based methods following intention-to-treat principles.

Expected results

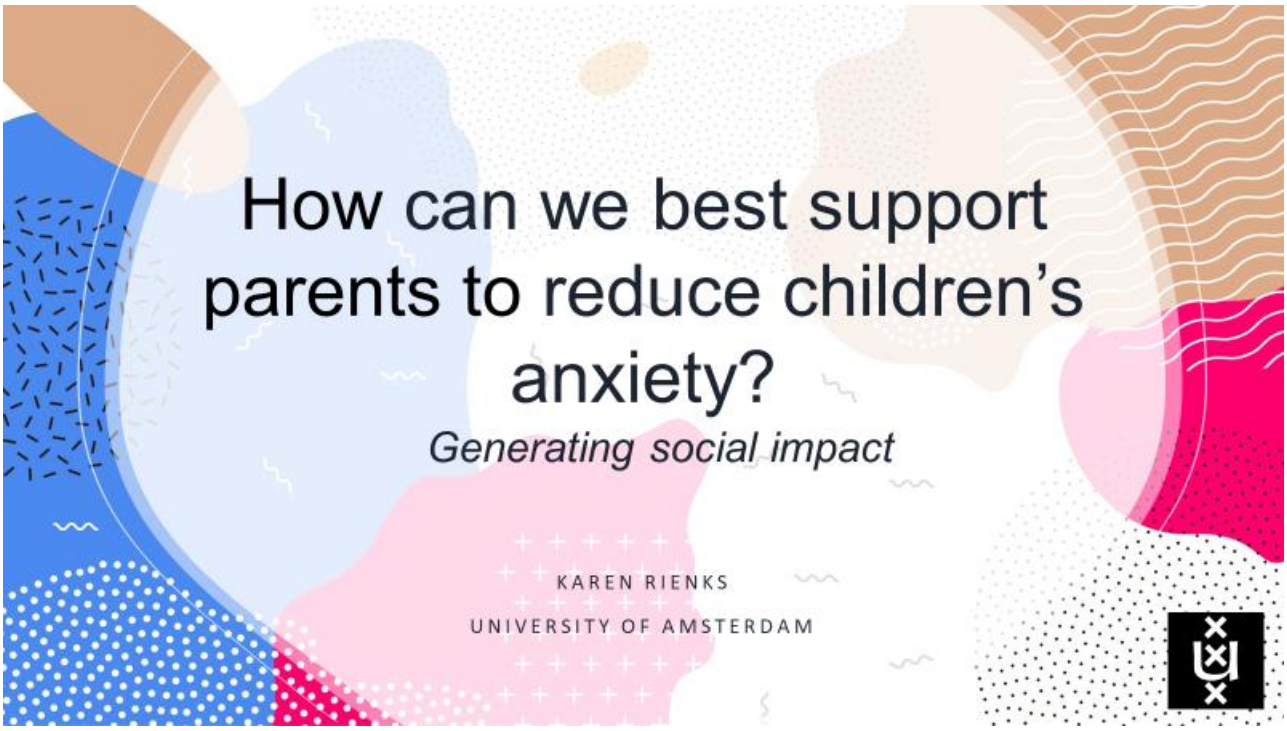
For study 1, we identified 26 studies (k = 157) with 4,098 participants. Parent-focused interventions had a significant medium effect on children's anxiety (d = −0.59; 95% CI [−0.92, −0.26]). Interventions used seven theoretically distinct components. No significant differential effects of individual components were found, but all clusters of components that produced significant effects contained a behavioral component. Adding cognitive and emotional components seemed to yield beneficial effects. For study 2, data collection is still in process, there are currently N = 4 Greek parents enrolled. These parents tended see the cognitive restructuring as most acceptable. Eventually, our cross-cultural study will provide qualitative information to understand the generalizability of evidence-based interventions. For study 3, data collection is still in process, there are currently N = 80 parents enrolled. This study will provide data on the effectiveness of the three intervention components, mechanisms, and moderating factors.

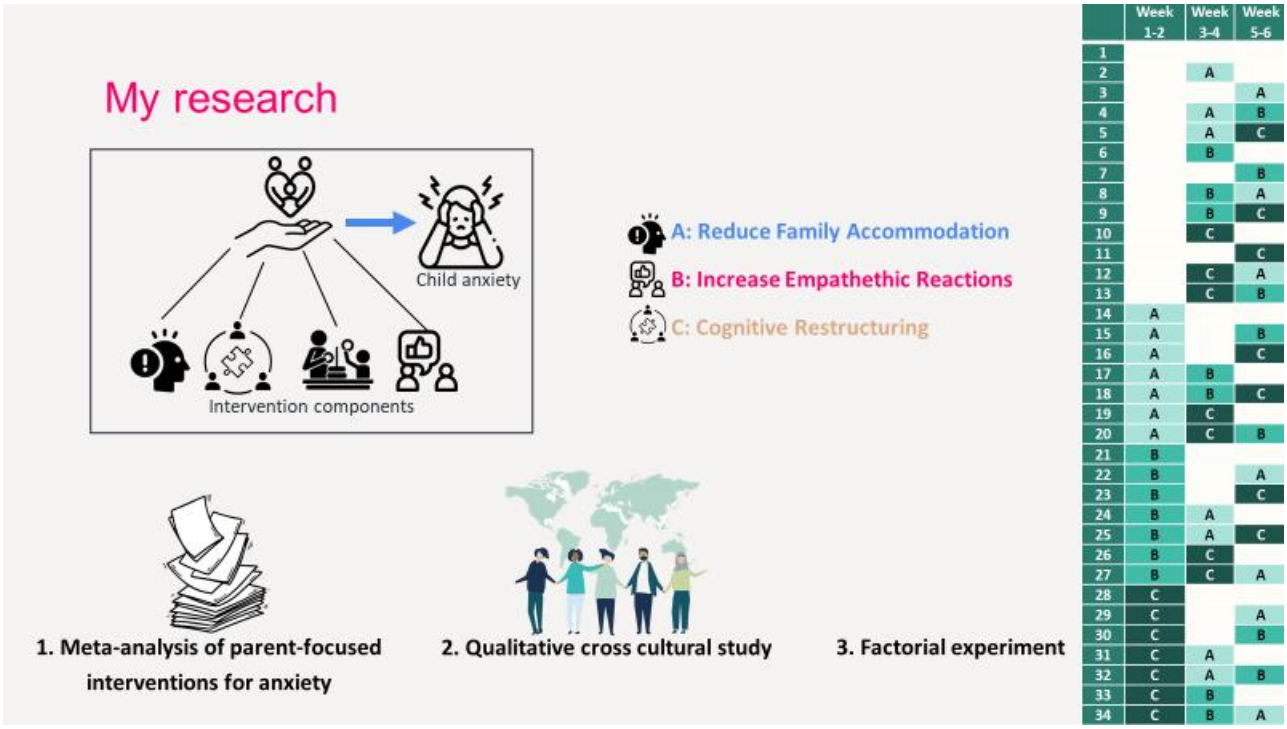
Conclusions/Implications

The studies of the PhD project will contribute to our understanding of the role that parents play in children's anxiety. Knowledge of which parental risk factors should be targeted can guide future intervention development. Identifying potential mediating variables will provide more insight in the mechanisms of intervention components. Knowledge on who benefits from parent-focused interventions components to reduce anxiety in children and who does not, can help match interventions to the needs of individual families.

Key words

Anxiety; Children; Intervention Components; Parents


How can we best support parents to reduce children's anxiety?
Generating social impact
KAREN RIENKS
UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM


My research
Child anxiety
Intervention components
A: Reduce Family Accommodation
B: Increase Empathethic Reactions
C: Cognitive Restructuring
1. Meta-analysis of parent-focused interventions for anxiety
2. Qualitative cross cultural study
3. Factorial experiment
Week 1-2
Week 3-4
Week 5-6

Generating Social Impact

In the ideal world:

Use knowledge on effective components to aid the development of prevention and treatment programs and help parents deal with their child's anxiety

How?

- Publish in magazines/journals for professionals
- Contact parenting magazines/journals
- ?

How can we best support parents to reduce children's anxiety?

Generating Social Impact

Issues:

- Not one to one applicable? Research on the borderline between fundamental/applied research
- How to reach clinicians and parents? And intervention developers?

More ideas or questions? Let me know!

Karen Rienks
k.rienks@uva.nl

How can we best support parents to reduce children's anxiety?

PATHWAYS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A POSITIVE PARENTING PROGRAMME FOR VULNERABLE FAMILIES: A PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

Lucía González Pasarín

University of Lleida, Spain

Background/Introduction

One of the most significant social challenges currently faced by the EU is the search for new forms of social and educational innovation that contribute to the promotion of positive parenting, and the transition towards quality family- and community-based care services (Council of Europe, 2006; European Commission, 2024). Since the adoption of Recommendation on policy to support positive parenting, political, educational, and social measures and commitments have been made aligned with the challenge of strengthening families to ensure the rights of children, especially in at-risk families and social exclusion, where exercising this type of parenting can be particularly difficult.

This framework has enabled the Research Group on Childhood, Adolescence, and Family (GRIAF) to develop the “FRAME+P” (Balsells et al., 2023) a socio-educational action model that organises and provides resources to work with vulnerable families under the positive parenting approach; and the "Comprehensive care programme for children, adolescents and their families at risk" (Balsells et al., 2024).

In line with the scientific contributions of the research group, recent literature supports the need to continue investigating innovative and scientific knowledge regarding ecological, inclusive, interdisciplinarity and participatory approaches from the positive parenting approach in the child protection system, especially regarding the reality of interventions with families of origin in situations of risk and social vulnerability (Bernedo et al., 2023). Meanwhile, recent work by the EurofamNet has established evidence standards related to programme evaluation (Özdemir et al., in press; Rodrigo et al., 2023).

Objectives

The aims of the project to be presented are as follows:

- To evaluate the design of the "Comprehensive care programme for children, adolescents and their families at risk situation. From positive parenting approach"
- To establish the challenges for the development of this positive parenting programme.

Within these, in particular, the research has focused on identifying the strengths and limitations for the programme implementation from practitioners' perspectives and within the framework of implementation science. The final purpose is to promote a more advanced evidence-based approach in Spain that offers practitioners quality family and community- based programmes and services for specific family contexts.

Method

The programme adopts a participatory, improvement-oriented methodology grounded in reflective practice, encompassing its design, implementation, and evaluation. It is being implemented in the city of Lleida (Spain) by practitioners from family support services under the follow-up of the research team within the research agreement between the Lleida Council policymakers and the Chair of Education and Adolescence at the University of Lleida, and the R&D project.

Within the framework of implementation science, this programme was designed and evaluated through participatory research, thanks to collaborative efforts of practitioners from social services and the research team in weekly sessions. Specifically, reflective practice methodology was employed—an educational approach based on knowledge derived from personal and professional experience that considers contextual nuances. Reflective practice involves 4 iterative steps: knowing, reflecting, doing and adapting.

So far, the programme has been implemented with 57 children and adolescents, 49 families, involving 57 practitioners in primary care or community social services for family preservation.

Expected results

Practitioners' involvement in the research through reflective practice has enable the identification of strengths and limitations related to a) programme's design; b) programmes' methodology and c) programme's implementation process. Furthermore, it has enabled the determination of the necessary actions to be undertaken both within research and political spheres to address limitations and ensure programme sustainability.

These findings imply adapting theoretical research to the real practical and policy context, generating changes in the programme that are evidence-based and culturally sensitive.

Conclusions/Implications

The implications for policy and practice of this study are:

- Importance of establishing collaborative relationships between researchers, policymakers, and practitioners for the development of a new evidence-based, family and community based and culturally sensitive model of work with vulnerable families within social services that responds to the rights of children, adolescents, and parents.
- Participatory research and reflective practice are useful mechanisms to establish an iterative dialogue between research and practice, enhancing evidence-based practices.
- Identification of necessary actions to effectively transfer research into practice to ensure programme's sustainability.

Keywords

Participatory research; positive parenting programme; vulnerable families; implementation science; programme sustainability



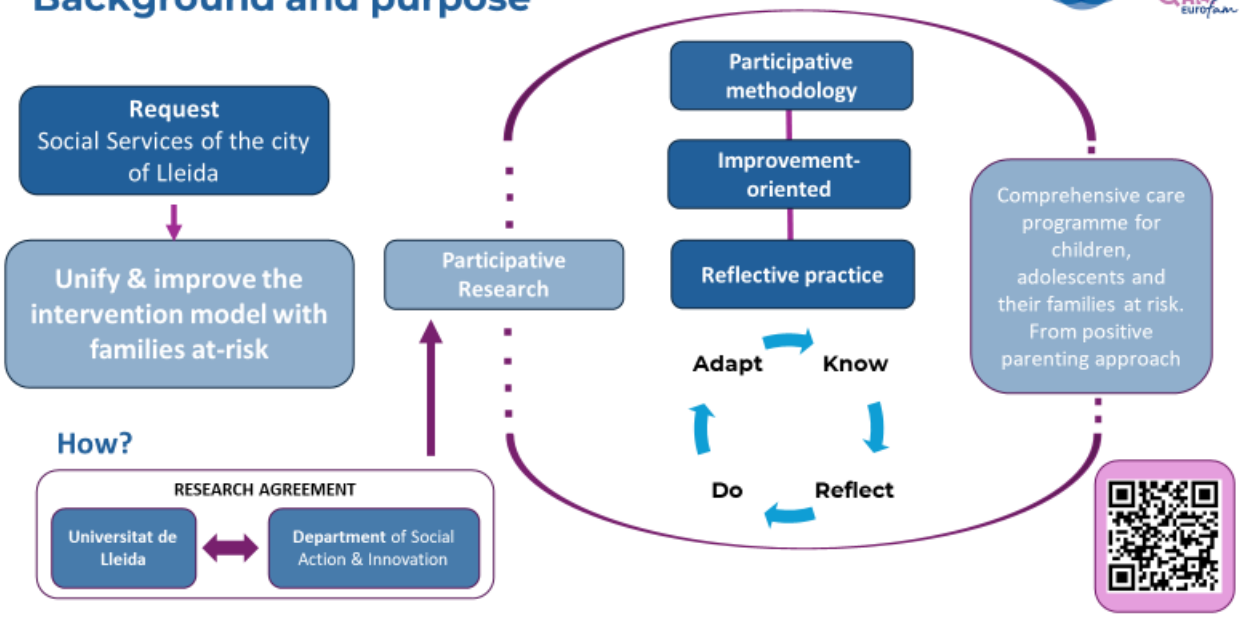
Pathways for the implementation of a positive parenting programme for vulnerable families: A participatory research

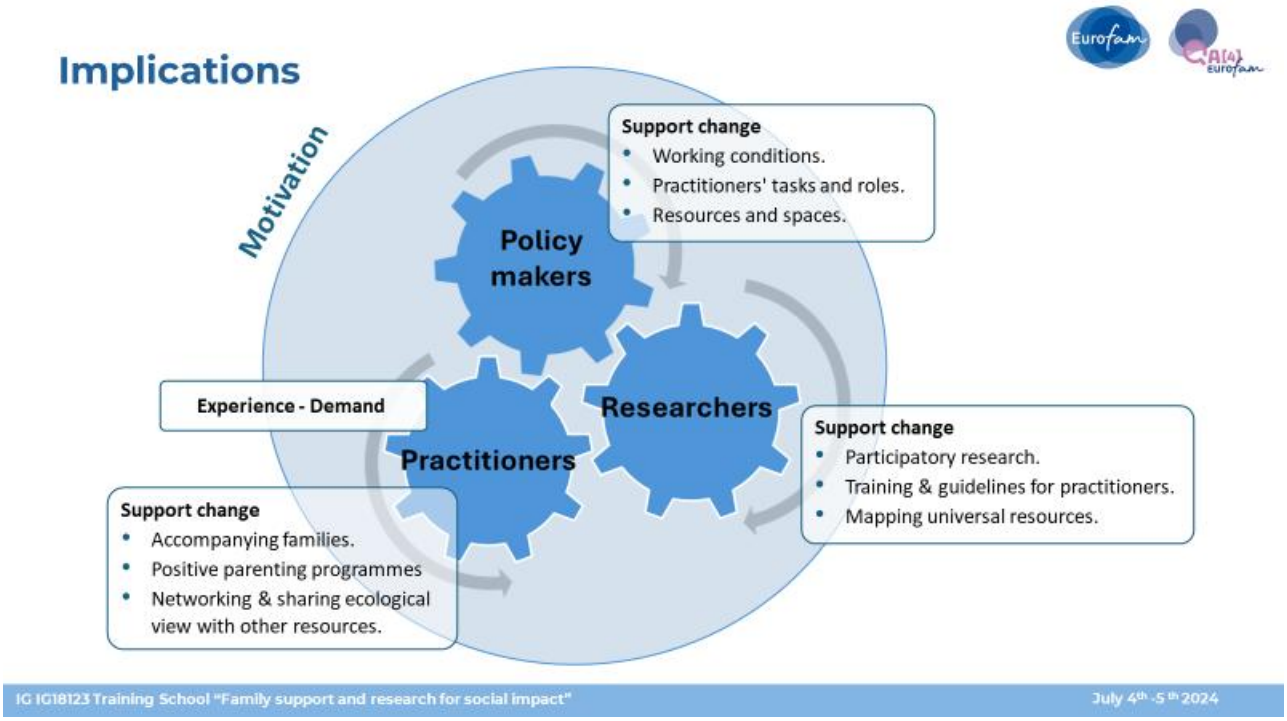
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Background and purpose





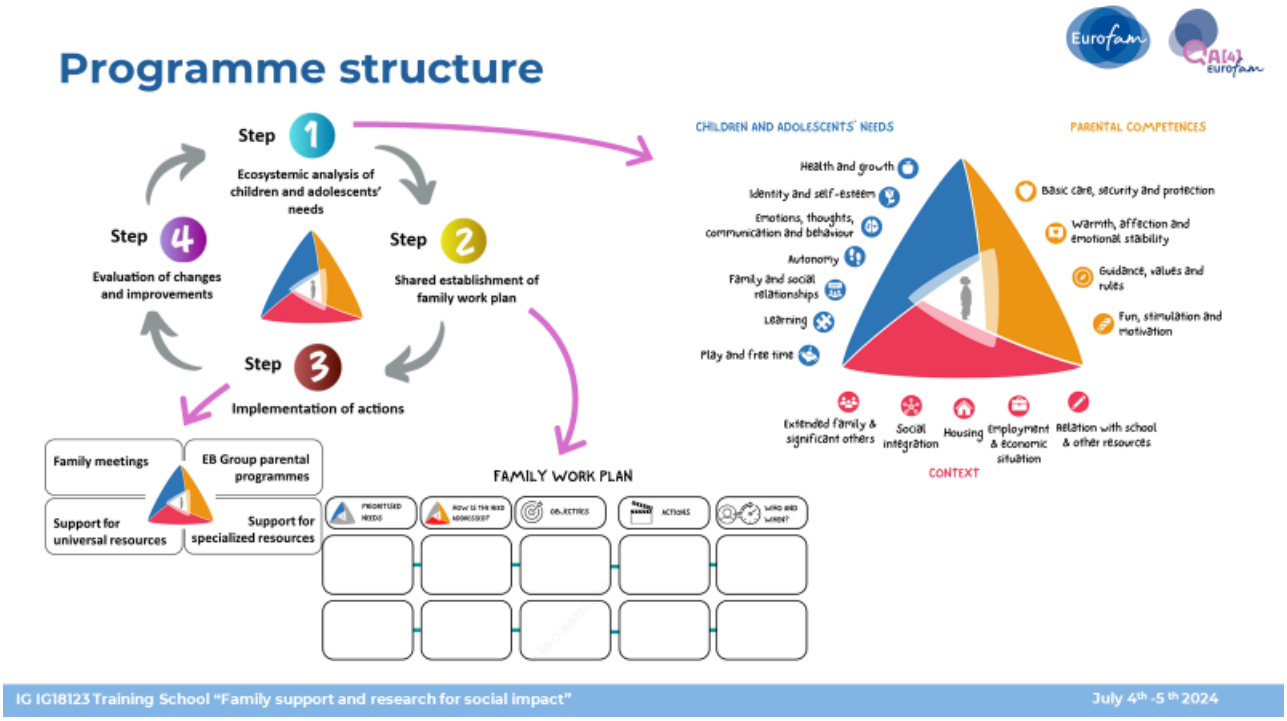


Pathways for the implementation of a positive parenting programme for vulnerable families: A participatory research

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Programme structure
Step 1
Ecosystemic analysis of children and adolescents' needs
Step 2
Shared establishment of family work plan
Step 3
Implementation of actions
Step 4
Evaluation of changes and improvements
Family meetings
EB Group parental programmes
Support for universal resources
Support for specialized resources
FAMILY WORK PLAN
CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS' NEEDS
Health and growth
Identity and self-esteem
Emotions, thoughts, communication and behaviour
Autonomy
Family and social relationships
Learning
Play and free time
PARENTAL COMPETENCES
Basic care, security and protection
Warmth, affection and emotional stability
Guidance, values and rules
Fun, stimulation and motivation
Extended family & significant others
Social integration
Housing
Employment & economic situation
Relation with school & other resources
CONTEXT
IG IG18123 Training School "Family support and research for social impact"
July 4th -5 th 2024

KEY DETERMINANTS OF THE CHILD'S SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING – A LONGITUDINAL INQUIRY

Maja Kućar

Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Zagreb, Croatia

Background/Introduction

Subjective well-being (SWB) refers to an individual's tendency to perceive their life in a positive or negative light. The structure of SWB has been a subject of debate, with various conceptualizations suggesting different approaches. The tripartite model of SWB identifies life satisfaction, positive, and negative affect as its key components. Some researchers consider these components as separate facets, but many researchers agree that SWB is a hierarchical construct comprising these elements. In this research, SWB is viewed as a hierarchical construct, incorporating life satisfaction, positive, and negative affect.

Children's well-being is often understood within the context of family dynamics. Family well-being encompasses various aspects of family life, including parental physical and mental health, family self-sufficiency, and resilience. In this research, we focus on three domains of family well-being: parental subjective well-being, parental perceived physical health status, and family self-sufficiency - their education level, employment status, and family income per household member. This research also investigates how these factors within family well-being align with Newland's Theory of Change, which posits that improvements in family well-being positively influence children's outcomes. By examining the connections between parental and child's SWB, as well as parental physical health and family self-sufficiency, we aim to contribute to understanding the mechanisms through which family dynamics impact children's overall well-being.

Objectives

Overall, this research aims to longitudinally explore the role of parental SWB, assessed physical health, education, income, and employment in explaining children's SWB.

More precisely, there are two main aims – one is to investigate whether measures of family self-sufficiency (education, income, employment), maternal and paternal physical health, and mother's and father's SWB are associated with child's SWB measured two years later. The other aim is to test whether the same determinants are associated with the child's SWB in two age subgroups (younger and older children) and between genders.

Method

The data is already collected in three time points, with one year between measurement points as part of the CHILD-WELL project. It includes data collected in a study with 1548 children (third to sixth grade of primary school at first time point), their mothers and fathers. The project is implemented in 15 primary schools in two Croatian counties.

Children were included in this particular analysis only if both parents participated. After this, 843 (M age=11.04, 48% boys) children and their mothers (M age=41.44) and fathers (M age=43.81) were left in the analysis. Children and parents gave consent for participation in the project. Children filled out questionnaires during school hours and brought their parents' questionnaires home. Parents completed the questionnaires at home and stored them in sealed envelopes which children then brought back to school. In their questionnaires, children assessed their life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, while parents assessed all the determinant measures.

Expected results

A similar analysis was already conducted on data from the first measurement point. A cross-sectional design of such a sort has many downsides, e.g. no possibility of controlling for criteria variance from the previous time point and no possibility of causal inferences. However, the cross-sectional research also provided valuable insights into the factors influencing a child's SWB. Only mother's educational attainment and mother's SWB were positive predictors of the child's SWB. The model was tested with respect to two age and gender groups, and it yielded similar results. Upon excluding mother's SWB from the analysis, the remaining significant predictors were fathers' SWB and mothers' education. Overall, the tested model explained a low amount of variance in the criteria. The results were only marginally aligned with the Theory of Change. In the longitudinal model, a similar pattern of results is expected – mother's SWB and education as possible positive predictors, but also self-sufficiency measures could emerge as significant predictors as well.

Conclusions/Implications

The conducted study explored some relevant predictors of the child's SWB. Unlike previous studies that rely on single data sources or limited predictors, the study integrated parental well-being with socio-economic factors commonly used in psychological research, such as parental education and employment status. The model will be longitudinally tested again, which will bring more clarity and robustness to this topic. If the results are similar to the cross-sectional study and the explained amount of variance is still quite low, researchers should consider the possibility that child's SWB is more influenced by genetic or some other, unmeasured, factors, and not primarily by family well-being (as proposed in Theory of Change).

Key words

Subjective well-being, family well-being, self-sufficiency, educational attainment, Theory of Change

Key determinants of the child's subjective well-being – a longitudinal inquiry

Maja Kućar, *mag.psych*, PhD candidate

Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Zagreb, Croatia

Background

- Subjective Well-Being (SWB): involves an individual's overall perception of their life → life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect
- Family Well-Being: encompasses parental physical and mental health, family self-sufficiency, and resilience, crucial for children's well-being
- Theory of Change (Newland, 2015)
- Aims:
- (1) to investigate whether measures of family self-sufficiency (education, income, employment), maternal and paternal physical health, and mother's and father's SWB are associated with child's SWB measured two years later
- (2) to test whether the same determinants are associated with the child's SWB in two age subgroups and between genders

Method

- Data - already collected in three time points, with one year between measurement points (CHILD-WELL project)
- 1548 children (third to sixth grade of primary school), their mothers and fathers
- 15 primary schools in two Croatian counties
- Children were included in this particular analysis only if both parents participated → 843 triads in the analysis
  - children (M age=11.04, 48% boys)
    mothers (M age=41.44)
    fathers (M age=43.81)
- Children filled out questionnaires during school hours and brought their parents' questionnaires home - Parents completed the questionnaires, stored them in sealed envelopes which children brought back to school
- Children assessed their life satisfaction, positive and negative affect, while parents assessed all the determinant measures

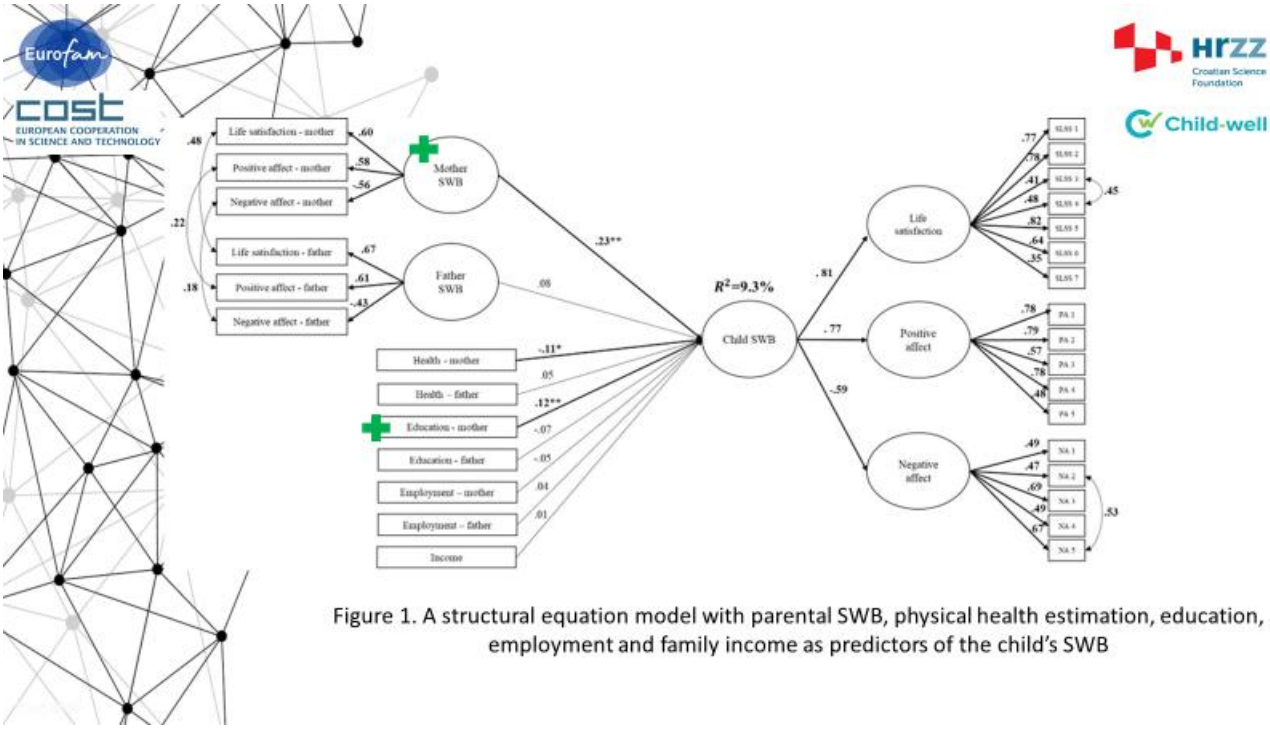


Figure 1. A structural equation model with parental SWB, physical health estimation, education, employment and family income as predictors of the child's SWB

Results

- A cross-sectional design - no possibility of controlling for criteria variance from the previous time point and no possibility of causal inference
- Only **mother's educational attainment and mother's SWB** were positive predictors of the child's SWB
- The model was tested with respect to two age and gender groups → similar results
- excluding mother's SWB from the analysis → significant predictors: fathers' SWB and mothers' education
- Overall, the model explained a low amount of variance in the criteria
- The results only marginally aligned with the Theory of Change

Implications

- This study → integrated parental well-being with socio-economic factors commonly used in psychological research, such as parental education and employment status
- Various sources of data (3)
- Longitudinal model → more clarity and robustness to this topic
  - a similar pattern of results is expected – mother's SWB and education as possible positive predictors, but also self-sufficiency measures could emerge as significant predictors
- If the results are similar to the cross-sectional study and the explained amount of variance is still low - researchers should consider **the possibility that child's SWB is more influenced by genetics or some other, unmeasured factors, not primarily by family well-being** (as proposed in Theory of Change)

EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGY INTERFERENCE ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF FATHER-CHILD INTERACTION

Matea Bodrožić Selak

Catholic University of Croatia

Background/Introduction

Brief interruptions in interpersonal interactions between children and parents caused by digital technology use in the literature is termed as technoference (McDaniel & Coyne, 2016). Although research on technoference is still not conclusive, there is evidence that interruptions due to parental smartphone use while with children have significant effects on child and adolescent development (e.g., McDaniel, 2019; McDaniel & Coyne, 2016; McDaniel & Radesky 2018; Merkaš et al., 2021). However, the nature of technoference has not yet been explored in detail. Theoretically, this phenomenon can be explained from various theoretical perspectives. According to the displacement hypothesis (Valkenburg & Peter, 2007), digital technology devices can "displace" significant face-to-face interactions and activities in the family environment. According to this hypothesis, the use of digital technology devices shifts signs of (non)verbal communication from face-to-face interaction to the device itself (e.g., Hiniker et al., 2015; Radesky, 2014). Using a mobile phone during interactions with others for a purpose not relevant to their current nondigital activity (e.g., scrolling through Facebook posts while dining with a friend) may lead participants to miss out on the benefits of face-to-face interaction.

Objectives

This research aims to examine the effects of technology interference in father-child interactions due to father's mobile phone use on parental responsiveness, children's attention-seeking behaviors, and the quality of father-child interaction.

Method

The participants in the study will be preschool-age children (from 5 to 6 years) and their fathers in Croatia. In the first part of the research, an online questionnaire for fathers will be administered to investigate the child's temperament, difficulties in emotion regulation among fathers, fathers' digital skills, fathers' and children's executive functions along with sociodemographic data. In the second, experimental, part of the research, data will be collected by coding the behaviors of fathers and children during the task of drawing sketches using Etch A Sketch Online applying the coding system. The research will be conducted via the Zoom platform, where interested fathers and children, after providing consent, will create sketches using the keyboard on Etch A Sketch Online. In the study, there will be two groups: one control group and one experimental group, which will differ based on the level of technoference. The results of participants in the different conditions, experimental and control groups, will be compared based on variables of interest.

Expected results

This research will test the hypothesis regarding the negative effects of parental use of digital technology on parent-child interactions and the association between parental behavioral patterns and children's reactions. It is expected that in situations of technoference, parents will be less responsive, children will have more bids for attention, and their interactions will be of lower quality. The results of this research will contribute to understanding within attachment theory (Bowlby, 1973) and neoecological theory (Navarro and Tudge, 2023).

Conclusions/Implications

The advantage of the research lies in the use of experimental methodology and observational methods. The combination of these research methods enables conclusions about causality and, thanks to direct observation of real behaviors, provides deeper insight into the behaviors studied. Additionally, the contribution of this research lies in studying technology interference as a potential risk factor in the family environment that can contribute to the development of problematic behavior patterns in children. Previous research indicates a lack of knowledge about fathers' behavior in the context of technology interference in parent-child relationships. Therefore, studying the specifics of fathers' behavior in interactions with children represents an important contribution of this research, as most previous studies have focused on the behavior of mothers or caregivers. The results of this research can serve as guidelines in creating scientifically grounded family preventive programs aimed at reducing problematic behavior patterns in children and problematic mobile phone use by parents.

Key words

Smartphones, technology interference, fathers, children

Quality family support and research for social impact

Examination of the effect of technology interference on the characteristics of father-child interaction

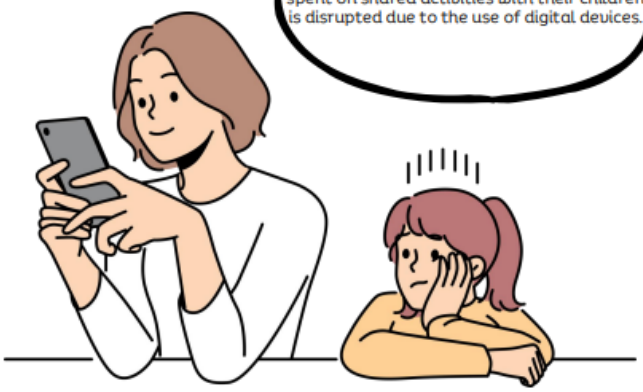
What I have done or am planning to do to generate social impact with my research?

Digital technology in the family: patterns of behaviour and effects on child development

Background

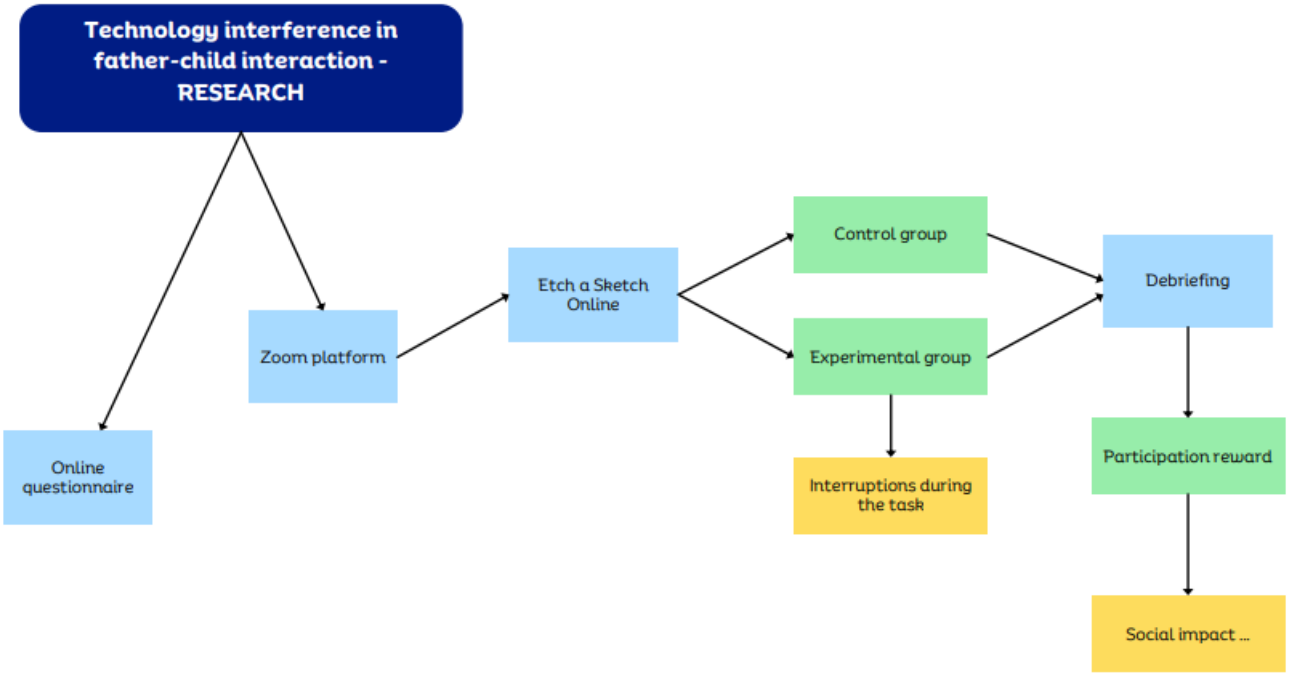
during playtime, free time with the child, educational activities, meals, bedtime, disciplining the child

parents report that 42% to 71% of the time spent on shared activities with their children, is disrupted due to the use of digital devices.



What is technoference?

- short "interruptions" or breaks in communication and conversation
- active use - occasional, unintentional, externally prompted, brief usage may or may not have harmful effects on the interaction and the other person in the interaction
- child's perception



What I have done or am planning to do to generate social impact with my research?

METHODOLOGY

Experimental methodology and observational methods

- the combination of these methods enables conclusions about causality and provides deeper insight into the behaviors studied through direct observation of real behaviors
- validation of the coding system that can be used for further research and practice

RESEARCH RESULTS

Technology interference as a risk factor

this research aims to identify how tchnoference can contribute to the development of problematic behavior patterns in children

Address the knowledge gap on fathers' behavior

focusing on the specifics of fathers' behavior in interactions with children, as previous studies have predominantly focused on mothers or caregivers

EDUCATION

Develop educational content and recommendations for parents

The results of the research will be implemented in educations for parents, and based on these findings, recommendations for parents will be created

PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS

Develop scientifically grounded family preventive programs

Results of this research can serve as guidelines for creating family preventive programs aimed at reducing problematic behavior patterns in children and problematic mobile phone use by parents

IDENTIFYING HOW DIFFERENT RISK FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO DISRUPTIVE CHILD BEHAVIOR IN DIFFERENT CHILDREN

Merlin Nieterau

University of Amsterdam

Background/Introduction

Disruptive behavior in children jeopardizes the mental health of children later in life, especially if left untreated. We have long tried to identify the most effective parenting therapies, assuming that disruptive behavior in children have core underlying risk factors that can be targeted with therapy. Evidence accumulates, however, that not every family is the same and the field is more leaning towards a personalized approach.

To do so, we not only need to know to what extend certain risk factors are present but even more: we need to know to what extend those risk factors actually contribute to children's disruptive behavior.

In this project we therefore zoom in on common risk factors that are mostly present in families struggling with disruptive child behavior, to see whether those risk factors are not only present but also relevant, or in other words contribute to children's disruptive behavior.

Objectives

To understand how changing the risk factors that are targeted in intervention programs, impact the child's disruptive behavior, we first need a deeper understanding of how risk factors may precede or co-occur with disruptive behavior at the first place. The overall aim of this research project is therefore to identify how different risk factors can contribute to child disruptive behavior in different families.

Method

To answer the questions in Study 1, parents of 156 children (3−8 years old) with elevated levels of disruptive child behavior provided daily reports for 14 consecutive days (1,911 data points). Multilevel latent profile analyses were used to model profiles of daily disruptive child behavior, parental harshness, and giving in to children's demands. Analyses are preregistered at https://aspredicted.org/px4qf.pdf.

To test the hypotheses in Study 2, 200 parents with children aged 3 to 8 years old with elevated levels of disruptive behavior will participate in this study. Using experience sampling (ESM), participants will report on disruptive child behavior, parental warmth, and harshness up to 6 times a day for 12 days. Dynamic structural equation modeling (DSEM) will be used to evaluate within-family dynamics and between-family differences therein.

Expected results

Results from Study 1 could offer a more comprehensive understanding of how various risk factors contribute to disruptive child behavior within different families. The findings suggest that families with emerging disruptive child behavior are not yet “stuck” in a single interaction pattern. Instead, families alternate between profiles across days and families differ in this process.

Results from study 2 could offer a more comprehensive understanding of how various risk and protective factors contribute to disruptive child behavior within different families. This is a crucial step to improve our precision in matching the right intervention to the needs of each family. Only if risk factors are not only present but actually contribute to the child’s disruptive behavior, will family support focused on these factors, yield meaningful change.

Conclusions/Implication

The Results from Study 1 may function as a realization for facilitators and policymakers that most days of families with emerging disruptive child behavior are relatively positive. This insight can be used to optimize parenting support interventions. For example, increasing parental self-efficacy by having parents reflect on what is going well in their parenting can be an effective intervention tool and complement traditional skill-focused interventions.

Results from Study 2 could inform parenting interventions by highlighting whether immediate warmth or consistent long-term warmth better mitigates the effects of harsh parenting.

Key words

Child disruptive behavior, parent-child interaction, experience sampling method (ESM)

UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM



Daily Parent-child Interactions

In Families with Elevated Levels of Disruptive Child Behavior

Eurofamnet CIG training school
Merlin Nieterau

Why?

Risk factor relevance

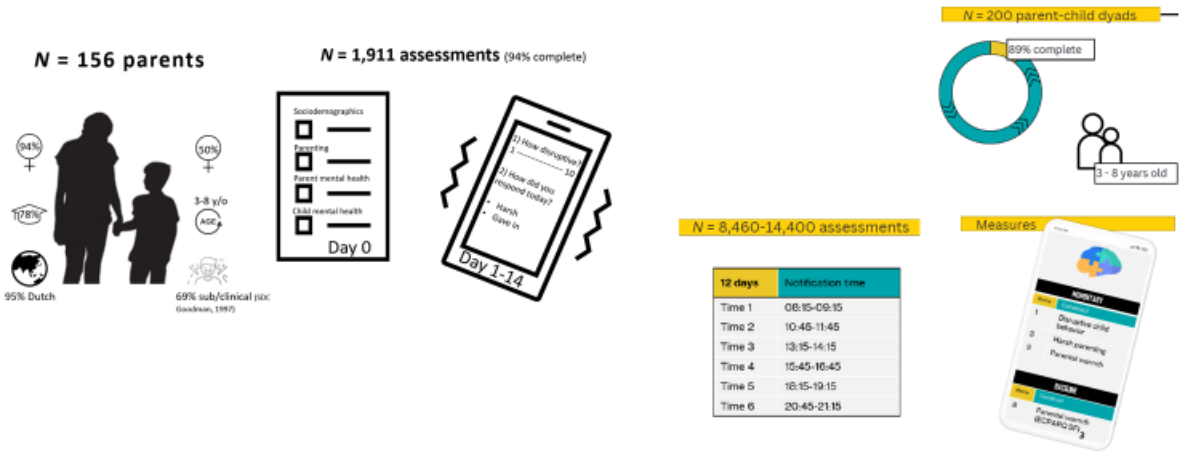
- Thé most effective parenting therapy
- Personalized approach

- To what extend do risk factors contribute?
- Zoom in on common risk factors

What?

Study 1

Study 2



Social impact

What?

Study 1:
- realization for facilitators and policymakers most days are relatively positive
- optimize parenting interventions

Study 2:
- inform parenting interventions whether immediate warmth or consistent long-term better mitigates the effects of harsh parenting

How?

?

Share results with practitioners, policymakers:



BREAKING THE CYCLE: NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE MODEL IN THE CHILD-TO-PARENT VIOLENCE AND ABUSE INTERVENTION

Mirian Junco Guerrero

University of Málaga, Spain

Background/Introduction

In recent years, the visibility of a type of domestic violence known as child-to-parent violence and abuse (CPVA) has increased, awakening the interest of researchers and the exponential growth of studies. CPVA “is an abuse of power through which a child or adolescent under the age of 18 coerces, controls or dominates parents” (Coogan, 2018, p.25).

The Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) intervention, developed over a decade by Haim Omer and colleagues, address aggressive and self-destructive behavior in children. This intervention was then adapted in Ireland to find an answer to the suffering of families with this problem. The NVR model is a brief, systemic, solution-based and evidence-support intervention adapted with CPVA. The NVR key elements are:

– Parental Commitment to NVR
– De-escalation skills
– Increased Parental Presence
– The Support Network
– Family announcement
– Act of Reconciliation by parents to the child.
– Refusing Orders and Breaking Taboos.
– The Sit-in.

Even though the primary emphasis is on gradually implementing the model across 10 to 15 sessions, practitioners can adjust the NVR approach according to the unique needs of each family.

Objectives

- To analyze the information obtained from the interviews with the practitioners to learn about the key elements of the NVR model.
- To analyze the information obtained from the interviews with the practitioners to know the NVR effectiveness in intervening with child-to-parent violence and abuse.
- To disseminate of the research finding in Ireland and Spain.

Method

Constructivist Grounded Theory will be used to conduct the interviews. Interviews will be conducted with practitioners to assess their views on NVR in CPVA intervention. The aim is to find out the practitioners' perspective on the key elements of NVR, and its application in the intervention with families immersed in conflict. In addition, the opinion of the practitioners on the effectiveness of NVR in the intervention will be known.

Expected results

Through the interviews to the practitioners, we hope to learn about the key elements of NVR in the intervention with CPVA, as well as its effectiveness in reducing this problem in families. In addition, we hope to learn about practitioners' perspectives on the use of NVR in CPVA, as well as their concerns about the use of NVR in CPVA.

Interview 1: “The programme is so impactful in all sorts of different types of families including where children have lots of different diagnosis” “Non blaming and then I guess as well it’s the fact that it’s solution-focused and strengths-based and so positive in terms of positive parental presence”.

Interview 2: “I like the way that it’s not judgmental. It’s not about making the child the villain or the bad person. It’s very much focuses on repairing the relationship as well as spending time with the child parental presence”.

Interview 3: “I like about NVR is its flexibility. They’re very simple concepts, but actually they’re very powerful. You can visualize it. And so, I think it’s quite simple. What I really like is the de-escalation skills”.

Interview 4: “I like it as a life set of values. So, it’s applicable anywhere, everywhere, as you choose and as you wish. It’s in your toolkit”.

Conclusions/Implications

Previous studies indicate that practitioners argue that the use of the NVR model is appropriate for CPVA intervention, being useful and intuitive for families. Practitioners argue that the NVR model consists of a toolbox that can be used in a flexible and adapted way in the intervention. Professionals identify that one of the most important elements is de-escalation skills, as it breaks the cycle of violence in the family.

The NVR application in other countries, such as Spain, could lead to resistance from practitioners to adopt a model with a social perspective, which integrates the support network as one of its main elements.

Key words

Non-Violent, Resistance, Families, De-escalation

Breaking the cycle: Non-Violent Resistance model in the Child-to-parent violence and abuse intervention

University of Málaga
Junco-Guerrero, Miriam; Coogan, Declan; Cantón-Cortés, David
University of Galway

Introduction

Child-to-parent violence and abuse (CPVA) "is an abuse of power through which a child or adolescent under the age of 18 coerces, controls or dominates parents" (Coogan, 2018, p.25).

Can we tackle child-to-parent violence without blaming parents or solely focusing on the child?

One response to CPVA: The Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) model

The NVR model is a brief, systemic, solution-based and evidence-support intervention adapted with CPVA.

Even though the primary emphasis is on gradually implementing the model across 10 to 15 sessions, practitioners can adjust the NVR approach according to the unique needs of each family.

NVR KEY ELEMENTS

COMMITMENT TO NVR GOALS
Traffic light system

DE-ESCALATION SKILLS
"Pressing the pause button"
"Strike when the Iron is cold"

INCREASED PARENTAL PRESENCE
Re-connect with the child.

THE SUPPORT NETWORK
Anyone in the family (and other systems) who could support parents.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT
"Declaration of non-acceptance and resistance in home"

ACTS OF RECONCILIATION

REFUSING ORDERS AND BREAKING TABOOS
Stop activities they feel forced to do.
Start doing things they feel have been "forbidden".

THE SIT-IN
Act of resistance to the child's violent behavior in a peaceful protest.

Methodology

Constructivist Grounded Theory
Interviews with practitioners who use NVR in the CPVA intervention.

Results

Interview 1: "The programme is so impactful in all sorts of different types of families including where children have lots of different diagnosis""Non blaming ant then I guess as well it's the fact that it's solution-focused and strengths-based and so positive in terms of positive parental presence"

Interview 2: "I like the way that it's not judgmental. It's not about making the child the villain or the bad person. It's very much focuses on repairing the relationship as well as spending time with the child parental presence"

Interview 3: "I like about NVR is its flexibility. They're very simple concepts, but actually they're very powerful. You can visualise it. And so I think it's quite simple. What I really like is the de-escalation skills.

Interview 4: "I like it as a life set of values. So, it's applicable anywhere, everywhere, as you choose and as you wish. It's in your toolkit"

Conclusions and Implications

Practitioners and researchers propose that the use of the NVR model is appropriate for CPVA intervention, being useful and intuitive for families.

Practitioners and researchers suggest that the NVR model consists of a toolbox that can be used in a flexible and adapted way in the intervention.

Participants identify that one of the most important elements is de-escalation skills, as it breaks the cycle of violence in the family.

What about Spain-Ireland?

In Spain, specifically in Andalusia, there are no practitioners who apply the NVR model for CPVA.

It could be challenging but it is possible for practitioners to integrate a social perspective into their practice through the NVR support network.

However, it could go a long way towards reducing the suffering of families and generating a different view of CPVA.


Breaking the cycle: Non-Violent Resistance model in the Child-to-parent violence and abuse intervention
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NEEDS AND FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT FOR AN EARLY RELATIONAL INTERVENTION: USING PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH AND PRIORITIZING SUSTAINABILITY FOR ACHIEVING SOCIAL IMPACT

Pablo Carrera

University Isabel I, Spain

Background/Introduction

In Andalusia, an early relational evidence-based intervention for foster families caring for young children could be a useful addition to the psychosocial intervention landscape (Dozier & Bernard, 2023); Andalusia is the Spanish region with the largest number of children in foster care, and, particularly, with the highest number of children aged 0 to 6 years in foster care (Observatorio de la Infancia, 2023).

However, for a successful implementation, it is key to conduct a comprehensive need and feasibility analysis and to establish partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including families, practitioners, and local authorities (Stirman & Beidas, 2020). Through participatory research, practitioners, regional authorities, and families may collaborate throughout the research process, which enhances the likelihood of successful implementation of an evidence-based intervention thanks to the commitment by all stakeholders and their input (Mulvey et al. 2020).

Furthermore, translational research aiming for social impact should be designed with sustainability in mind, so evidence-based practices and assessments are not abandoned once researchers stop being involved (Shelton et al., 2018). Another way to promote sustainability is to validate and disseminate pragmatic measures, characterized by a low burden, broad applicability, and sensitivity to change (Glasgow & Riley, 2013).

Objectives

•To establish working collaborations with relevant stakeholders following a community-participatory research approach.

•To evaluate the perceived need, appropriateness, acceptability, and feasibility for an evidence-based attachment intervention with stakeholders (families, practitioners, and regional authorities) in the field or foster care using mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative).

•To assess the need for an evidence-based attachment intervention by assessing relevant parenting skills among foster caregivers of children aged 1 to 6 years.

•To validate pragmatic measures related to parenting skills and child development in the context of child protection and foster care practice.

Method

Sample and procedure. We would contact agencies serving foster families in the provinces of several Andalusian provinces, as well as with regional child protection authorities and foster families associations. Community and foster families would be invited to participate in the parenting behavior and representation assessment. Foster families, practitioners, and the staff of the regional authorities would be invited to participate in the implementation outcomes assessment. A working group with all stakeholders would be established to consult and collaborate throughout the research project.

Measures. Relevant parental behavior -particularly parental sensitivity- and representation variables would be measured using standardized, pragmatic observational measures and questionnaires. Psychometric information would be gathered to assess the validity of such measures in Spain. Qualitative measures (e.g., focus groups and semi-structured interviews) would be used for assessing implementation outcomes like acceptability and feasibility.

Expected results

We expect that families would perceive a need for an intervention addressing attachment difficulties and promoting parental sensitivity for young foster children and that practitioners and regional authorities would perceive it as feasible and acceptable, certainly with caveats and potential adaptations. We also expect enough variability in parental sensitivity among foster caregivers to consider that such an intervention could be beneficial.

The main impact of the research project would be to provide preliminary data for a potential future pilot implementation of an attachment-based intervention in the foster care system in Andalusia. We also expect to validate pragmatic measures of parental behavior, representation, and child behavior that could be used in standard foster care practice.

Conclusions

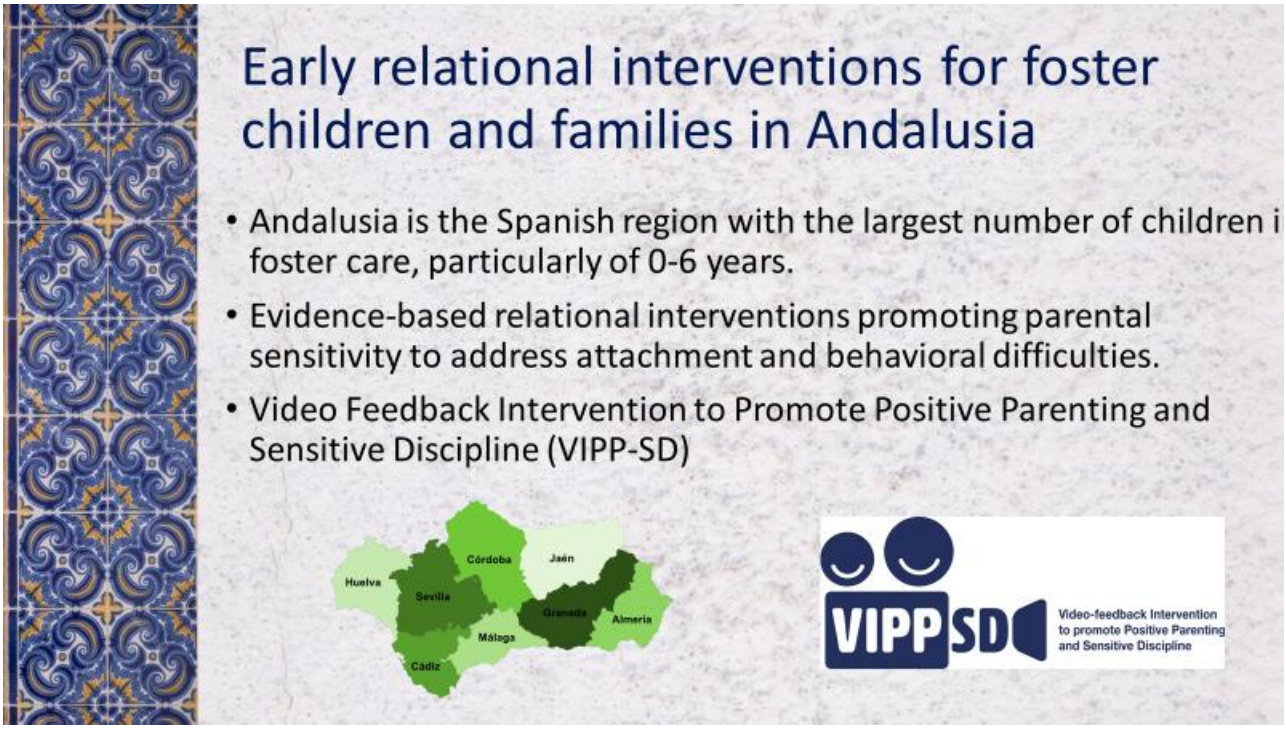
From a scientific point of view, we hope to translate state-of-the-art developmental and implementation science concepts and procedures to the psychosocial intervention field in Andalusia, while showing the feasibility of doing so using participatory research and engaging in working collaborations with stakeholders.

From a translational point of view, we expect that the work developed in this study, including aspects like qualitative information and the working collaborations with stakeholders, would set the stage for the success of a future pilot implementation of an evidence-based relational intervention for foster children and their caregivers.

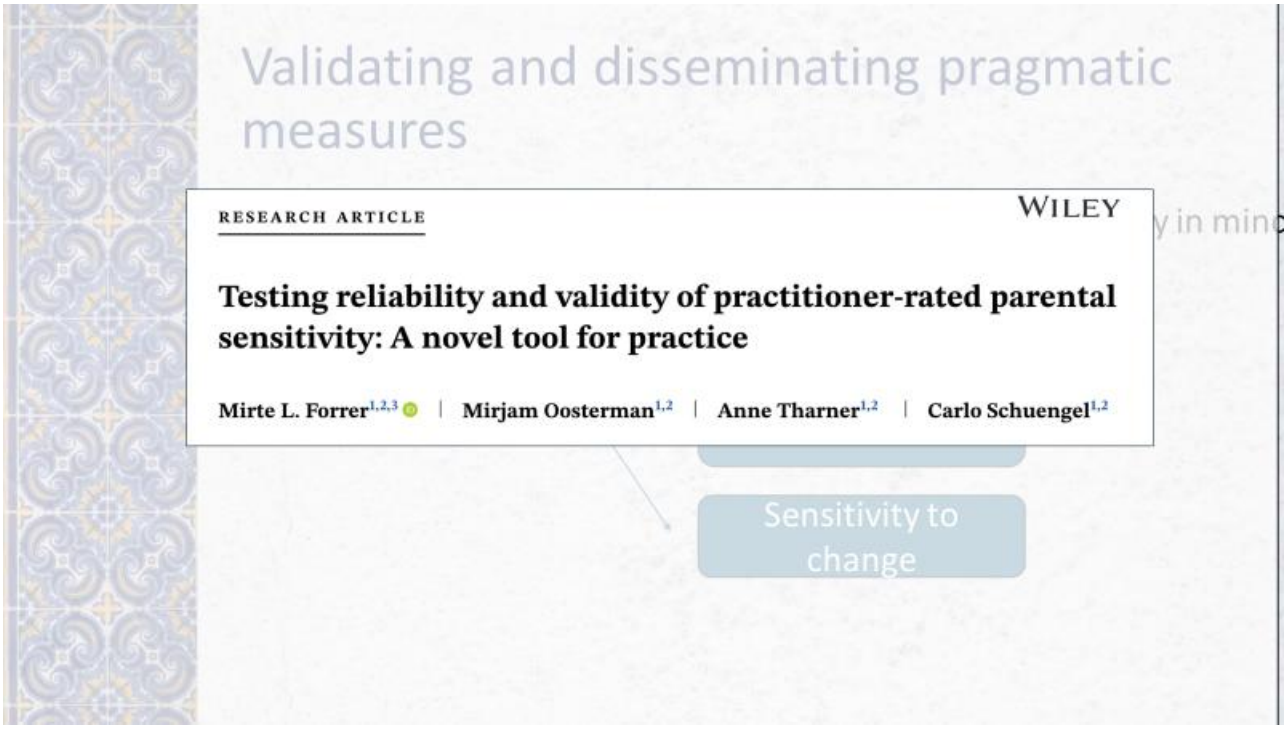
Key words

Parenting intervention; feasibility; participatory research; sustainability; foster care.


Needs and feasibility assessment for an early relational intervention: using participatory research and prioritizing sustainability for achieving social impact
Pablo Carrera
Universidad Isabel I (Spain)
Eurofam Training School "Family support and research for social impact"
4th-5th July 2024, Faro (Portugal)


Early relational interventions for foster children and families in Andalusia
• Andalusia is the Spanish region with the largest number of children i foster care, particularly of 0-6 years.
• Evidence-based relational interventions promoting parental sensitivity to address attachment and behavioral difficulties.
• Video Feedback Intervention to Promote Positive Parenting and Sensitive Discipline (VIPP-SD)
Huelva
Córdoba
Jaén
Sevilla
Granada
Almería
Málaga
Cádiz
VIPP SD
Video-feedback Intervention to promote Positive Parenting and Sensitive Discipline


Using participatory research for needs and feasibility assessment
Promoting adoption of evidence-based practices for practitioners
Enhancing buy-in, engagement and sustainability of evidence-based interventions
Families receive more effective interventions
Research projects are more successful
Social justice and power dynamics
Junta de Andalucía
Márgenes y Vínculos


Validating and disseminating pragmatic measures
RESEARCH ARTICLE
WILEY
Testing reliability and validity of practitioner-rated parental sensitivity: A novel tool for practice
Mirte L. Forrer | Mirjam Oosterman | Anne Tharner | Carlo Schuengel
Sensitivity to change


Thank you!
pablotomas.carrera@ui1.es

EVALUATING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF AN EVIDENCE-BASED PARENTING PROGRAM IN REAL-WORLD COMMUNITY SETTINGS

Rita Pinto

Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, University of Porto, Portugal

Background/Introduction

The implementation of Evidence-Based Parenting Programs (EBPP) in real-world settings is fundamental to making effective programs widely available and improving the lives of children and their families. The quality of implementation is considered the most critical threat to program effectiveness, even when programs are evidence-based. However, there remains a knowledge gap on how EBPP are implemented in real-world settings, especially with parents involved with child protective services (CPS). A challenge is ensuring flexible implementation, yet without compromising fidelity to the program's core functions. Nowadays, sustainability is recognized as a significant translational research challenge. Failure to sustain EBPP means that the intended benefits are short-lived and that real losses are incurred on research investment, time, and resources. Therefore, implementation and post-implementation studies of EBPP are needed, to further our understanding of the relationships between fidelity, flexibility, and sustainability.

Objectives

Through a scoping review, Study1 aims to map the available evidence of how EBPP are implemented under real-world conditions. Study2 aims to examine practitioners' experiences implementing the Standard Triple P (STP) parenting intervention with CPS-involved families. Study3 aims to examine whether families who completed STP are more likely to have their child protection case closed than families who dropout; and whether program dosage predicts case closure. Study4 aims to examine the extent to which practitioners sustained STP use over time and to explore the perspectives of practitioners and stakeholders on the factors related to the sustainability of EBPP in CPS.

Method

In Study 1, the scoping review follows the methodological framework described in the Joanna Briggs Institute's Manual for Evidence Synthesis. In Study 2, participants are 10 practitioners implementing STP. The methods of data collection included the STP session summary checklists and focus group discussions with the practitioners. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. In Study 3, each case manager reported, at each assessment point, whether the family continued receiving support from CPS or whether the case was closed. In this study, we operationalized program dosage as the number of sessions attended by each family. We performed logistic regressions to investigate the research questions of this study. In Study 4, participants are the practitioners and stakeholders at the system and organization level. Data collection includes individual semi-structured interviews, and data will be analyzed using the SWOT model and the thematic analysis framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2012).

Expected results

This Ph.D. project sheds light on the implementation and sustainability in real-world community settings of an EBPP with families involved with CPS. The scoping review already published highlighted the need for a more detailed description of the implementation of parenting programs, with greater consistency in terminology, operationalization, and measurement of implementation outcomes across studies. With the remained studies integrated into this Ph.D. project, we expect to provide a greater empirical understanding of how EBPP are implemented, modified, and experienced by their end users in real-world practice settings, the role of an EBPP in improving the families' trajectories in the CPS, and what are the predictors of the sustained use of an EBPP in real-world community settings. Outcomes will ultimately serve to improve practice in CPS and best assist the families and children who need effective services the most.

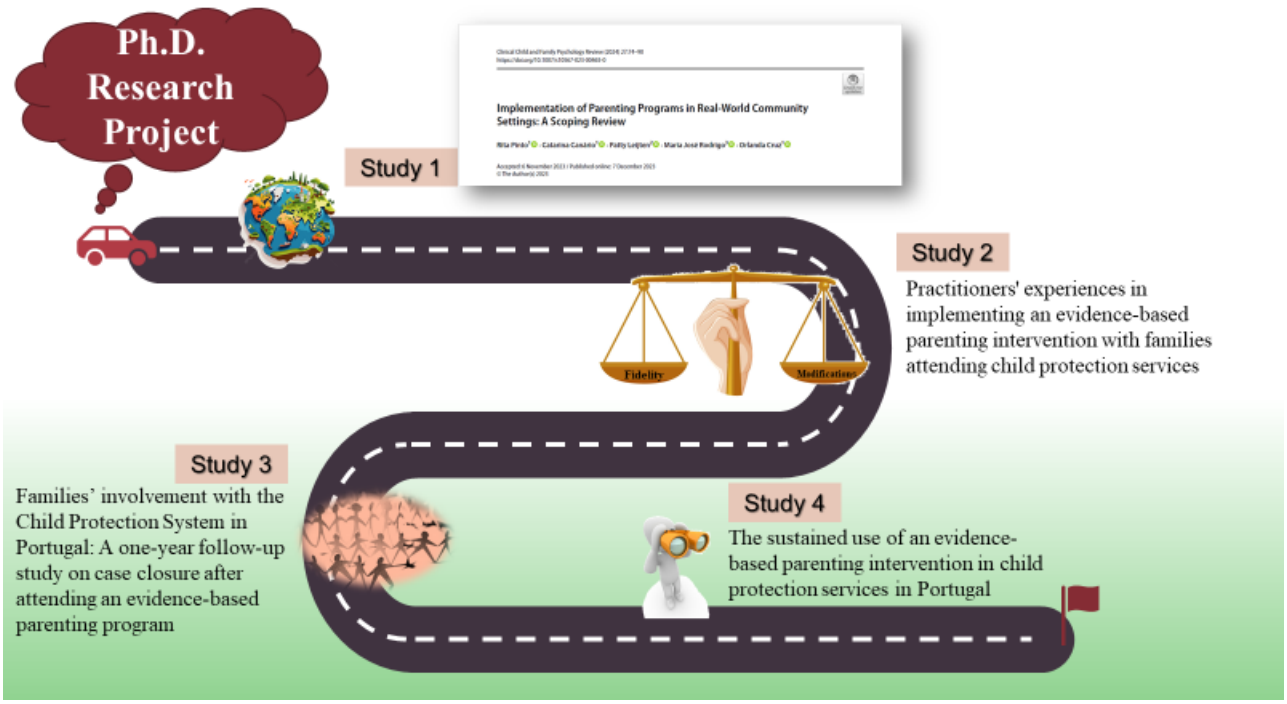
Conclusions/Implications

This research will contribute to 1) Understanding how EBPP are implemented in real-world settings, which is essential for improving programs, family-support services, and outcomes for children and families; 2) Supporting practitioners in achieving flexibility within fidelity, which is essential to guarantee that interventions are delivered responsively to families and in a contextually sensitive way; 3) Guiding decisions within CPS about which approaches are more likely to provide effective support, and encouraging administrators, practitioners, and policymakers to incorporate EBPP in their practices and policies; and 4) Informing issues related to the sustained use of EBPP, which will serve to strengthen evidence-based practice in CPS.

Keywords

Parenting and family support; evidence-based intervention; implementation; sustainability; real-world settings.


Evaluating the Implementation and Sustainability of an Evidence-Based Parenting Program
Training School | "Family support and research for social impact"
Rita Pinto | July 4-5, 2024
U.PORTO
CENTRO DE PSICOLOGIA DA UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO
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Ph.D. Research Project
Study 1
Implementation of Parenting Programs in Real-World Community Settings: A Scoping Review
Study 2
Practitioners' experiences in implementing an evidence-based parenting intervention with families attending child protection services
Fidelity
Modifications
Study 3
Families' involvement with the Child Protection System in Portugal: A one-year follow-up study on case closure after attending an evidence-based parenting program
Study 4
The sustained use of an evidence-based parenting intervention in child protection services in Portugal

What have I done, or I am planning to do, to generate social impact with my research?

1. Selecting a research topic that helped to bridge the gap between research and practice.



2. Going beyond academia: Adopting the principles of open science and disseminating the findings to the public so they can make better decisions.



3. Contributing to the achievement of SDGs.



My research will contribute to:

- Understanding how evidence-based parenting programs (EBPP) are implemented in real-world settings, which is essential for improving programs, family-support services, and outcomes for children and families.
- Supporting practitioners in achieving flexibility within fidelity, which is essential to guarantee that interventions are delivered responsively to families and in a contextually sensitive way.
- Guiding decisions within the child protection system about which approaches are more likely to provide effective support to children and families, and encouraging agency administrators, practitioners, and policymakers to incorporate EBPP in their practices and policies.
- Informing issues related to the sustained use of an EBPP in real-world settings, which will serve to strengthen evidence-based practice in CPS and best assist the families and children who need effective services the most, enhancing family support practice and reducing social burden.

EXPERIENCES, NEEDS AND FAMILY QUALITY OF LIFE OF FAMILIES OF INDIVIDUALS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

Sofía Baena, Lucía Jiménez & Victoria Hidalgo

University Loyola Andalucía, Spain

Background/Introduction

Parents of children on the autism spectrum have higher levels of stress and adjustment difficulties (Estes et al., 2009; Hayes & Watson, 2013; Meltzer, 2011). Having a child on the autism spectrum leads to more intense and long-lasting family support needs (Tijeras, 2017), due to the chronic characteristics of the disorder, and the changing nature of the support needs of the children. Thus, it is important to have an understanding of the support needs throughout the family life cycle and be able to adapt them to each developmental stage (McStay et al., 2014; Tijeras, 2017). Understanding the needs of the families from their own perspective, in different moments of the life cycle and taking into account the cultural and national background is essential to be able to provide adjusted and quality support to these families.

Objectives

1) To contribute to the understanding of the experiences and needs of the families living with a person on the autism spectrum from a culturally sensitive and systemic approach

2) To provide information on how to improve the support these families have, giving them voice in their own process.

The objectives are: 1. To explore the experiences and needs of families of individuals on the autism spectrum in the South of Spain, going in-depth on the experiences of different family members and their support needs. 2. To analyse the role of the personal, relational and family characteristics in the adaptation of the family members.

Method

The sample consisted of 170 family members (parents, siblings and grandparents) of individuals on the autism spectrum, from a total of 110 families from the South of Spain.

We used a mixed methods design, with semi-structured interviews and a battery of questionnaires. Through the interviews we identified the impact on the different family members, their experience with the diagnostic process, their needs and useful strategies as well as their perception of the future. The questionnaires measured different aspects such as family quality of life, parenting stress, family empowerment or satisfaction with life.

We did a thematic analysis on the impact on siblings and grandparents, as well as a qualitative content analysis on the experiences of parents of children in school-age, a content analysis on the needs and strategies of grandparents and parents. We have also done a structural equation modeling for family quality of life for both mothers and fathers.

Expected results

Results showed a heterogeneous experience for parents, grandparents and siblings, with both difficulties and positive aspects. Results highlighted the importance of bidirectional relationships to understand the experiences of these families. Results also indicated the importance of social support and family empowerment for family quality of life.

We identified several support needs in families of children on the autism spectrum. Some of them are:

(1) The need for informal and formal support in instrumental and emotional aspects. This included the need for more information and help navigating and identifying resources. In this regard, we did a resources catalogue for families, with general information and resources organized by each developmental stage.

(2) The need for more training for practitioners. We have included the experiences and needs of parents, siblings and grandparents, as part of the content in undergraduate and graduate studies.

(3) The need for continuous support through the diagnostic process, not only in the moment of the diagnosis. These experiences were presented in conferences targeting early childhood intervention practitioners.

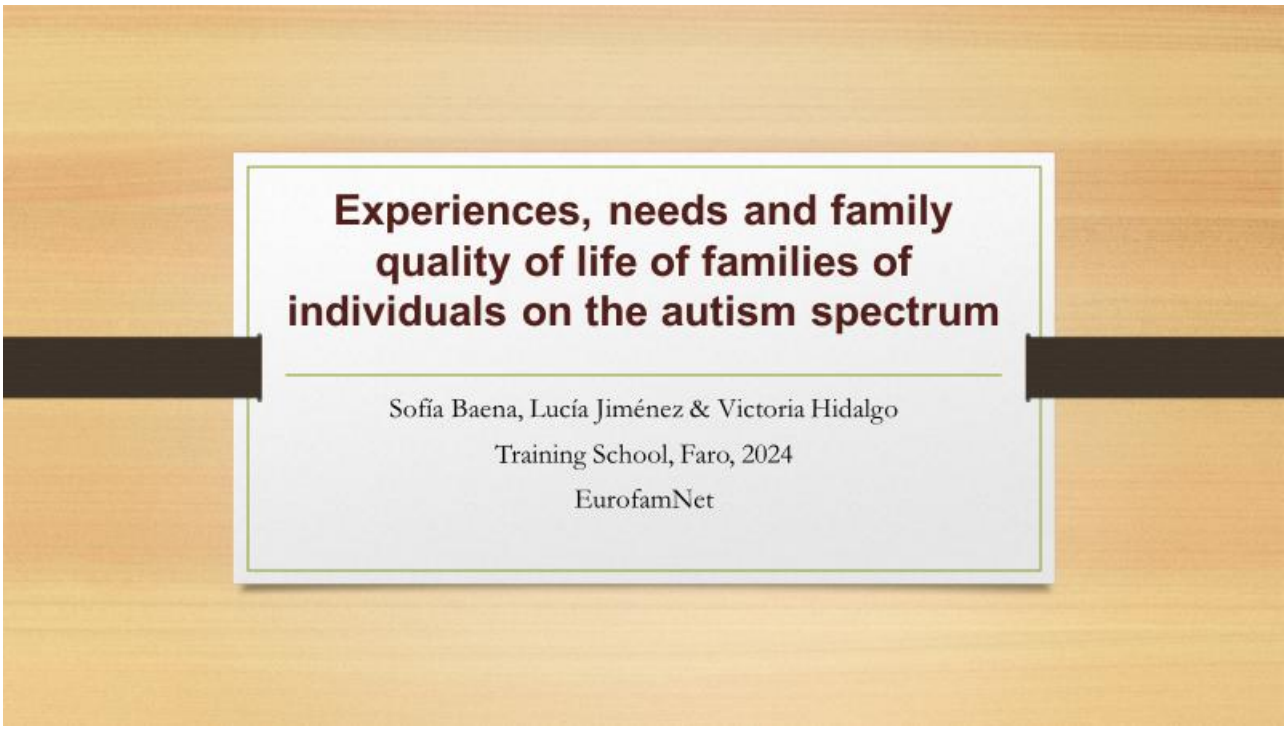
Conclusions/Implications

Families of persons on the autism spectrum have several needs. The identification of the experiences and needs of these families is essential as to provide an adjusted and quality support, and a first step to generate and impact for these families.

Our next steps would be first to finish the resources catalogue and make it available for families and practitioners, to broaden the dissemination channels of results, for example by presenting the results directly to family associations, translating these results into applied products and finally to try and reach families more and try to reach the policy level. Finally, more in depth research is needed to continue addressing the support needs of these families.

Keywords

Autism spectrum disorder, family, needs, impact.


Experiences, needs and family quality of life of families of individuals on the autism spectrum
Sofía Baena, Lucía Jiménez & Victoria Hidalgo
Training School, Faro, 2024
EurofamNet


What have we done?
Contribute to the understanding of the experiences and needs of the families living with a person with ASD.
Provide information on how to improve the support these families have
170 individuals from 110 families in the South of Andalucía: parents, siblings and grandparents.
Semi-structured interviews
Battery of questionnaires
Thematic analysis + structural equation models
Experience of siblings, grandparents and parents is heterogeneous. Not everything is bad.
Importance of bidirectional relationships and support.
Support needs: e.g. informal and formal support, trained practitioners, continuous support, information and resources…
Importance of family empowerment

How have we tried to generate impact?

Practitioners

- Inclusion of related content at undergraduate and masters level
- Presentations about related topics in school
- Participation in conferences targeting practitioners

Families

- Catalogue of resources
- Volunteering



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Equipo de trabajo	Psicólogos, Pedagogos, Logopedas, y Psicoterapeutas.
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Next steps

- Finish the catalogue of resources and make it available
- Publication of results in AETAPI website.
- Presentation of results to family associations.
  - Possible report on needs?
- Use the knowledge to impact the intervention level:
  - Possible design of programs?
- Include other dissemination channels (e.g. podcast or university media)
- Continue analyzing data

How do we generate more impact in the families?

How can we reach the policy level?

USING LEARNING AND INNOVATION LABS IN SERVICE DELIVERY

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Background/Introduction

Learning and Innovation LABs have been used in the social sciences as an innovative way to tackle different challenges in service delivery by fostering collaboration and overcoming professional and managerial barriers. LABs develop a methodology supported by new tools and products that equip staff and stakeholders with the skills and competencies to address organizational and professional barriers to change. This project is part of the wider Erasmus+ project, and it is designed to address the needs of Roma families in early childhood development within a Laboratory for Innovation and Learning. It includes two fields of work: 1. Networking and coordination of relevant actors in areas of early development that support parenting in Roma families; and 2. Adapting approaches and interventions to support Roma families in parenting and early development. A network of relevant stakeholders was created to work on new and innovative ways to support Roma families in early childhood development. Stakeholders in the network come from all the sectors relevant to early development: social protection, health, education, umbrella institutions (such as municipalities and Secretariats), and NGOs.

Objectives

The objective of the project is to develop innovative ways to address the identified problem: Support services for Roma families in the area of parenting and early development are poorly available and not adapted to their needs and contexts. Research questions are: 1. What are the current ways of addressing the needs of Roma families in early development and parenting? 2. What are the challenges in addressing these needs? 3. How can current governmental programs for support of early development be adjusted to respond better to the needs of Roma families? 3. How can the adjusted programs be evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the programs and understand why the program is or is not working?

Method

The methodology used for this research will include: 1. A baseline study of the current state of need of Roma families in the field of early development and the ways these needs have been addressed so far. 2. A one-year co-creative process with relevant stakeholders of analysis, piloting and evaluating the new ways in addressing these needs with the relevant stakeholders in the LAB. 3. Focus groups and interviews with Roma families included in the LAB

Expected results

The expected results of this project are to develop new and innovative ways of providing services that will better support Roma families' needs in parenting and early childhood development, within the network of relevant stakeholders that will continue to function after the project is finished. The idea is to implement new ways of addressing the needs in the regular work of these stakeholders. The expected result is also a developed, piloted, and evaluated training program for professionals on how to adjust current government programs in early childhood development to better address the needs of Roma families.

Conclusions/Implications

Learning and Innovation LABs can be a good method for developing new ways of providing services to vulnerable groups and addressing wicked problems. There are several concerns to be taken into account when implementing LABs: special attention needs to be paid to the process rather than results; the evaluation of the LAB needs to take into account things that worked rather than those that did not work and the evaluation process needs to be created in a way to grasp those situations that worked, and ways for those that didn't to work in the future.

Key words

Family support, early childhood development, Roma families

Using Learning and Innovation LABs in service delivery

Training school

Quality family support and research for social impact

University of Algarve, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences

July 4 - 5 2024, Faro, Portugal

What is LAB?

Our LAB: Support services for Roma families in the field of parenting and early development are poorly available and not adapted to their needs and contexts

Addressing the problem through two activities:

- Networking and coordination of relevant actors in the field of early development that support parenting in Roma families
- Adjusting approaches and interventions in supporting parenting and early development in Roma families

Actitvities

Networking and coordination of relevant actors in the field of early development that support parenting in Roma families

The following stakeholders are participating in the LAB:

- City Secretariat for Social Welfare, Municipality of Zemun, Preschool institution in Zemun, Center for Social Work in Zemun, Health care centre in Zemun, UNICEF, and NGOs - Center for youth integration,SOS Children Villages, and Bibija

Adjusting approaches and interventions in supporting parenting and early development in Roma families

- Strengthening the existing and creating new ways in cooperation between the selected stakeholders in order to establish more efficient intervention for Roma families
- Adjusting the existing approaches and intervention in the areas of education and healthcare to better respond to the needs of Roma families

The current focus of the LAB

- Focus of the LAB:

1. Improvement of intersectoral cooperation mechanisms that will enable better inclusion of children from Roma families in kindergartens and preschool institutions
2. Inclusion of a bigger number of children from Roma families in development counseling centers and PORI (Family-oriented early intervention) in a culturally sensitive manner.

- The stakeholders meetings are being held regularly and actions are being taken to fulfill these goals
- The plan is to have a stronger influence on important issues on early childhood development via social media
- Hot topic: enrollment in preschool: currently the vulnerable Roma children are being identified by the stakeholders and the coordinated action planned to enroll at least 5-10 Roma children in preschools in Zemun municipality