

Predicting Behavior in ASD: The Roles of Parental Adjustment and Positive Parenting

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Introduction

Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Core Symptoms
- Associated behavioral difficulties
 - Internalizing Behaviors
 - Externalizing Behaviors
- Needed supports
 - Interventions
 - Accommodations



Introduction

Parental Adjustment

- The extent to which a parent is able to adjust to the demands associated with parenting.
- Increased stress associated with the aforementioned variables that are also associated with lower levels of parental adjustment

Positive Parenting

- Impact on children
 - Decrease in behaviors
 - Better overall adjustment
 - Interpersonal relationships
- Impact on parents
 - Increases parental adjustment
 - Parenting self-efficacy



The Present Study

Goal → Examine parent-related predictors of internalizing and externalizing behaviors in children with ASD

Hypothesis 1 → Parents who have poorer adjustment would engage in fewer positive parenting behaviors.

Hypothesis 2 → Parents who have poorer adjustment and engage in fewer positive parenting behaviors will report higher levels of internalizing and externalizing behavior in their children.

Hypothesis 3 → Together, parental adjustment and positive parenting will predict internalizing and externalizing behavior in children.



Methods



Participants

- 50 parent-child dyads
- Mothers (66%), Fathers (8%), Both (18%), Other (6%)
- Children were on average 9.5 years old ($SD=2.87$), 92% male, and 8% female; 56% Caucasian, 40% African-American, 4% other

Measures

- The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001)
- The Hopkins Symptom Checklist 25 (HSCL-25; Derogatis et al, 1974)
- The Alabama Parenting Questionnaire (APQ; Frick, 1991)

Procedures

- Parents seeking clinical services for their child were asked to complete the assessments as a part of their child's clinical evaluation and treatment.



Results

Bivariate Correlations

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. Parental Adjustment					
2. Positive Parenting	-.17				
3. Internalizing Child Behavior	.40**	-.40**			
4. Externalizing Child Behavior	.31*	-.47**	.17		
5. Total Child Behavior	.47**	-.56**	.63**	.76**	

* Significant at $p < .05$; ** Significant at $p < .01$

Results

Linear Regressions

	Internalizing R ² = .26, F (2, 43) = 7.72, p = .001			Externalizing R ² = .27, F (2, 43) = 7.90, p = .001			Total R ² = .44, F (2, 43) = 17.14, p = <.001		
	p	SE B	β	p	SE B	β	p	SE B	β
Positive Parenting	.02*	.44	-.33	<.01**	.40	-.43	<.01**	.24	-.49
Parental Adjustment	.02*	.09	.33	.11	.09	.22	<.01**	.05*	.37

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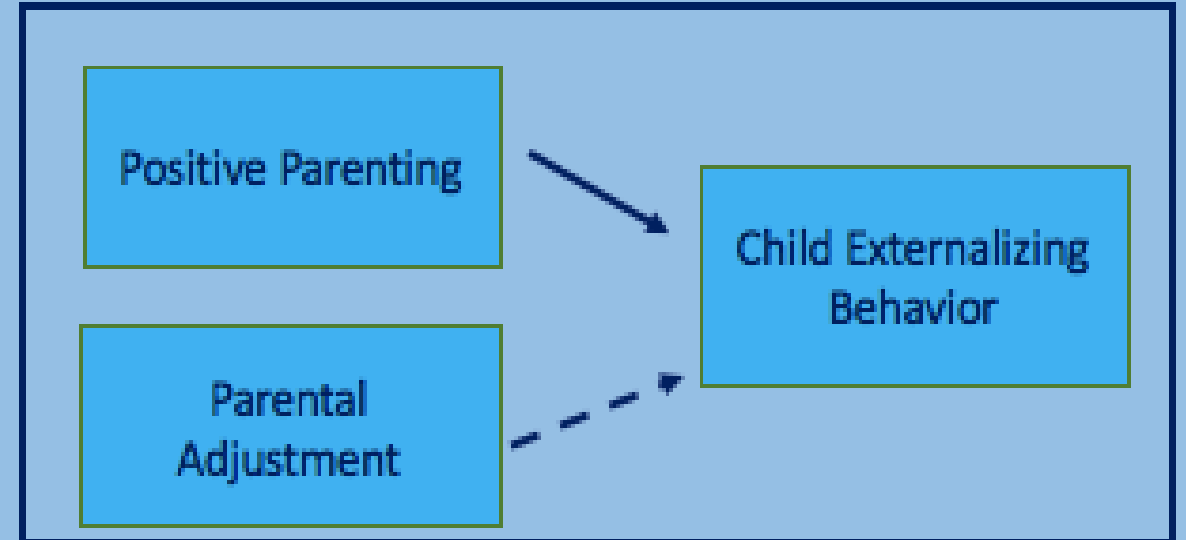
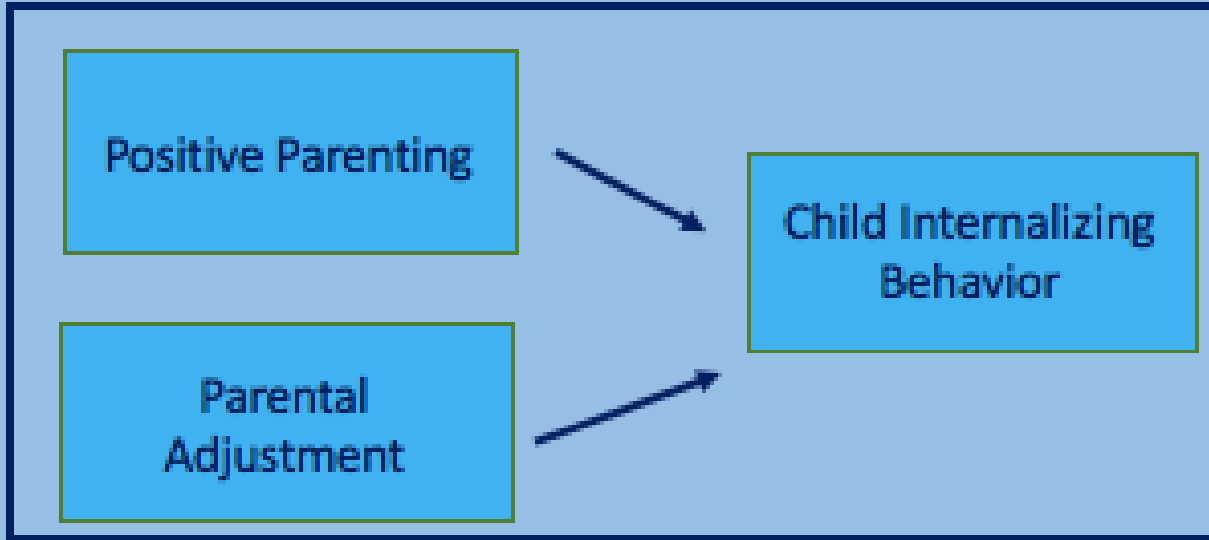
Regression Models



Internalizing Behaviors



Externalizing Behaviors



Discussion



- Importance of positive parenting interventions
- Positive parenting for internalizing symptoms
 - Emotion regulation
 - Problem-solving skills
 - Internalization of warmth and praise
- Need for parental support in this population
 - Further integrate parents in child's therapeutic process
 - Positive parent-child interactions

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Questions?
Comments?
Suggestions?

THANK YOU!

