



POTENTIAL GENDER DIFFERENCES IN CHILD AND ADOLESCENT VICTIMS OF MALTREATMENT

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BACKGROUND

Rates of maltreatment show clear gender differences, wherein girls are at higher risk for certain types of maltreatment relative to boys (Afifi et al., 2014). In particular, girls are 2 to 3 times more likely than boys to experience sexual violence (Buczycska & Conroy, 2017; May-Chahal, 2006). Surprisingly, little is known about the gender-specific impacts of maltreatment. Rather, much of the extant literature has either statistically “adjusted” for gender or restricted analyses to a single gender (Olff, 2017). This research sought to investigate whether girls and boys exhibit unique trauma symptoms and whether such differences vary with age.

METHOD

- Participants:**
- 267 8-16 year old youth (63% female) referred for services at community mental health agency.
 - Referrals include sexual, physical, and emotional abuse, neglect, or intimate partner violence.
- Measures:**
- Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (TSCC; Brier, 1996)
- Analyses:**
- Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) used to test gender differences
 - Moderated regression models were estimated to examine moderation by age

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Do child and adolescent victims of maltreatment report gender differences in trauma symptoms?
- Do gender differences in trauma symptoms vary with age?

HYPOTHESES

- Girls will report higher trauma symptoms than boys.
- Gender differences in trauma symptoms will become more pronounced with age.

RESULTS

Figure 1. MANOVA Results

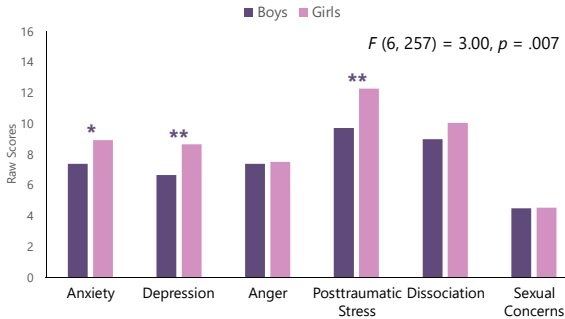
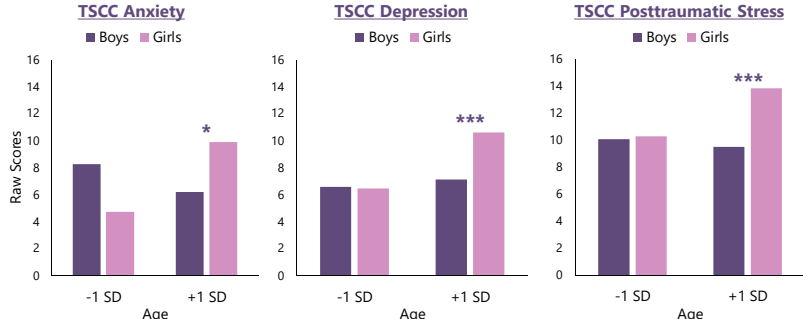


Table 1. Moderated Regression Analysis of TSCC Clinical Scales

Step	Variable	B	SE _B	95% CI	R ²	R ² Change	F
Dependent Variable: TSCC Anxiety							
1	Age	-0.37	0.22	[-0.80, 0.06]	0.04	-	4.07**
	Gender	-8.27	3.60	[-15.35, 1.18]			
2	Age × Gender	0.77*	0.28	[0.22, 1.31]		0.03	7.65**
Dependent Variable: TSCC Depression							
1	Age	0.04	0.21	[-0.38, 0.46]	0.10	-	9.42***
	Gender	-7.43*	3.53	[-14.38, -0.47]			
2	Age × Gender	0.72**	0.27	[0.19, 1.26]		0.02	7.03**
Dependent Variable: TSCC Posttraumatic Stress							
1	Age	-0.15	0.25	[-0.64, 0.34]	0.07	-	6.60***
	Gender	-7.83	4.11	[-15.93, 0.26]			
2	Age × Gender	0.80*	0.32	[0.17, 1.42]		0.02	6.33*

Figure 2. Significant Age × Gender Interactions



DISCUSSION

- Girls reported significantly more anxiety, depression, and trauma symptoms than did boys.
- Gender differences were moderated by age.
- Significant differences emerged for older, but not younger participants.
- Results may indicate age-related differences in the impact of maltreatment on girls.
- All interactions were maintained after partialling out the effects of sexual abuse.

Implications

- Results correspond with gender differences for rates of adolescent emotional disorders.
- Psychosocial and biological factors likely impact these differences.
- Longitudinal study is needed to clarify when and how age-related gender differences arise.
- Future studies will examine the impact of gender on treatment outcomes at Radius.

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