Experiencias tempranas adversas y positivas, rasgos de personalidad y desregulación emocional en jóvenes colombianos

Nombres y apellidos

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RESUMEN

Las experiencias adversas en la infancia constituyen uno de los factores de riesgo más ampliamente documentados en la literatura científica para el desarrollo de psicopatología a lo largo del ciclo vital, particularmente en la adultez. Su prevalencia es especialmente elevada en contextos de alta vulnerabilidad social como Colombia, donde las condiciones estructurales aumentan la exposición temprana a situaciones de riesgo. A pesar de la relevancia clínica y social de esta problemática, la investigación sobre el papel diferencial que desempeñan las experiencias protectoras tempranas, los rasgos de personalidad y la desregulación emocional en este proceso permanece escasa en esta población específica, lo que justifica la necesidad de estudios que profundicen en estos mecanismos.

El presente estudio tuvo como objetivo examinar las relaciones entre experiencias infantiles adversas (ACEs), experiencias infantiles benevolentes (BCEs), rasgos de personalidad y desregulación emocional en adultos jóvenes colombianos. Para ello, se empleó un diseño transversal correlacional con una muestra de 294 participantes colombianos con edades comprendidas entre los 18 y los 45 años (M = 27.79, SD = 6.31), de los cuales el 62.2% correspondió a mujeres. Los participantes fueron seleccionados mediante muestreo no probabilístico por conveniencia. Los instrumentos administrados fueron el ETI-SF, la escala de BCEs, el DERS y el BFI-2-XS, todos ellos con evidencia de validez reportada en población colombiana, lo que respalda la pertinencia de su uso en este contexto.

Los resultados revelaron niveles elevados de adversidad temprana en la muestra: el 94.2% de los participantes reportó haber vivido al menos una ACE a lo largo de su infancia, y el 72.1% presentó alta exposición, definida como cuatro o más ACEs. En cuanto a las experiencias benevolentes, el 62.2% de los participantes alcanzó niveles altos de BCEs, lo que indica que, si

bien la adversidad fue predominante, una proporción considerable de la muestra también contó con experiencias protectoras durante su desarrollo.

En relación con las asociaciones entre variables, las ACEs correlacionaron de manera positiva y estadísticamente significativa tanto con la desregulación emocional ($r = .39$, $p < .01$) como con la emocionalidad negativa ($r = .33$, $p < .01$), sugiriendo que una mayor exposición a adversidad temprana se asocia con mayores dificultades en la regulación de las emociones y con una tendencia más pronunciada hacia el afecto negativo. En contraste, las BCEs mostraron correlaciones negativas y significativas con la desregulación emocional ($r = -.35$, $p < .01$) y con la emocionalidad negativa ($r = -.37$, $p < .01$), lo que indica que las experiencias benevolentes durante la infancia operan como un factor protector frente a estas dificultades. Adicionalmente, la emocionalidad negativa fue el rasgo de personalidad con mayor asociación con la desregulación emocional dentro de la muestra ($r = .56$, $p < .01$), destacando su relevancia como variable mediadora o moderadora en este proceso.

Los hallazgos del presente estudio permiten concluir que las experiencias tempranas adversas y benevolentes operan como factores transdiagnósticos con efectos diferenciales y opuestos sobre la regulación emocional y los rasgos afectivos negativos en jóvenes colombianos. Asimismo, la emocionalidad negativa emerge como un rasgo temperamental con gran relevancia en la relación entre la adversidad temprana y las dificultades de regulación emocional, lo que sugiere que este rasgo podría constituir una vía a través de la cual la adversidad infantil ejerce su impacto sobre el funcionamiento psicológico adulto. Estos hallazgos tienen implicaciones directas para el diseño de intervenciones preventivas y clínicas que integren de manera simultánea tanto la reducción de la adversidad como el fortalecimiento de experiencias

protectoras durante el desarrollo temprano, con el fin de promover una mayor resiliencia emocional en poblaciones vulnerables.

Palabras clave:

Experiencias Adversas; Experiencias Benevolentes; Desregulación Emocional; Personalidad; Salud Mental; Colombia.

ABSTRACT

Adverse childhood experiences represent one of the most widely documented risk factors in the scientific literature for the development of psychopathology across the lifespan, particularly in adulthood. Their prevalence is especially high in contexts of significant social vulnerability such as Colombia, where structural conditions increase early exposure to risk situations. Despite the clinical and social relevance of this issue, research on the differential role played by early protective experiences, personality traits, and emotional dysregulation in this process remains scarce in this specific population, which underscores the need for studies that delve deeper into these mechanisms.

The present study aimed to examine the relationships between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), benevolent childhood experiences (BCEs), personality traits, and emotional dysregulation in young Colombian adults. A cross-sectional correlational design was employed with a sample of 294 Colombian participants aged between 18 and 45 years (M = 27.79, SD = 6.31), of whom 62.2% were women. Participants were selected through non-probabilistic convenience sampling. The instruments administered were the ETI-SF, the BCEs scale, the DERS, and the BFI-2-XS, all of which have reported validity evidence in Colombian populations, supporting their appropriateness for use in this context.

The results revealed high levels of early adversity in the sample: 94.2% of participants reported having experienced at least one ACE during childhood, and 72.1% showed high exposure, defined as four or more ACEs. Regarding benevolent experiences, 62.2% of participants reached high levels of BCEs, indicating that, although adversity was predominant, a considerable proportion of the sample also had access to protective experiences during their development.

With respect to the associations between variables, ACEs correlated positively and statistically significantly with both emotional dysregulation ($r = .39$, $p < .01$) and negative emotionality ($r = .33$, $p < .01$), suggesting that greater exposure to early adversity is associated with increased difficulties in emotion regulation and a more pronounced tendency toward negative affect. In contrast, BCEs showed negative and significant correlations with emotional dysregulation ($r = -.35$, $p < .01$) and negative emotionality ($r = -.37$, $p < .01$), indicating that benevolent childhood experiences function as a protective factor against these difficulties. Additionally, negative emotionality was the personality trait most strongly associated with emotional dysregulation within the sample ($r = .56$, $p < .01$), highlighting its relevance as a potential mediating or moderating variable in this process.

The findings of the present study support the conclusion that early adverse and benevolent experiences operate as transdiagnostic factors with differential and opposing effects on emotion regulation and negative affective traits in young Colombians. Furthermore, negative emotionality emerges as a temperamental trait of considerable relevance in the relationship between early adversity and emotional regulation difficulties, suggesting that this trait may constitute a pathway through which childhood adversity exerts its impact on adult psychological functioning. These findings have direct implications for the design of preventive and clinical interventions that simultaneously integrate both the reduction of adversity and the strengthening of protective experiences during early development, with the aim of fostering greater emotional resilience in vulnerable populations.

Key Words: Adverse Childhood Experiences; Benevolent Childhood Experiences; Emotion Dysregulation; Personality; Mental Health; Colombia.

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