



SCAN ME

Introduction

- Child neglect involves the failure of a caregiver to provide for the child's basic physical, emotional, and educational needs, which can lead to long-lasting physical, psychological, and developmental consequences.
- The causes of neglect are multifaceted, with various socio-economic and psychological factors playing a significant role.
 - Neglect is more prevalent in families facing unemployment and economic instability (University of Oxford, 2017), given the increased parental stress and reduced emotional availability. Moreover, job loss and unstable income are linked to increased rates of depression, substance abuse, and domestic violence—all of which are risk factors for neglect .
 - Parental mental health disorders and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have also been found to contribute to risk for child neglect. Many mental health disorders are frequently rooted in ACEs, and can disrupt caregiving roles (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2016)
 - Finally, substance use disorders (SUDs) have been found to disrupt parents' ability to properly care for children.
- Despite research noting these risk factors for child neglect, there is a gap in research examining neglect in infancy within the child welfare system.
- Therefore, understanding the factors that contribute to child neglect is essential to developing effective prevention and intervention strategies aimed at protecting vulnerable children and supporting at-risk families.

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Unemployed parents will be more likely to have a child who experience child neglect as opposed to employed parents

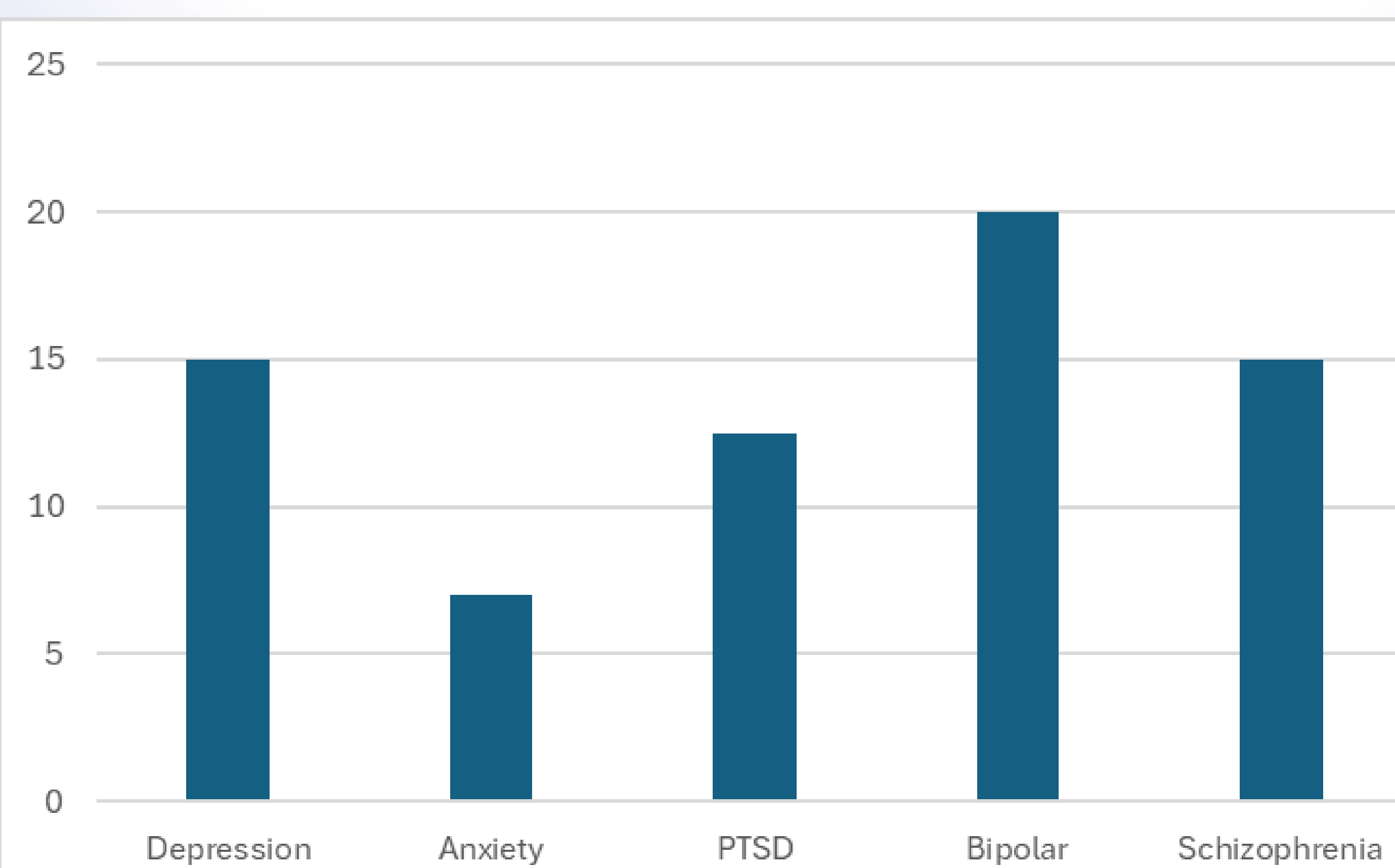
Hypothesis 2: Parental mental health issues, particularly trauma-related disorders (e.g, PTSD), will predict neglectful practices as compared to other mental health issues

Hypothesis 3: Parental substance use disorders will be associated with child neglect as compared to parents without a substance use disorder

Methods

- This study utilized a cross-sectional, observational design with existing data from the LSUHSC Infant Team that focused on families in which neglect was substantiated versus other forms of maltreatment.
- A binomial logistic regression was used to test the association between neglect and parental employment status, mental health diagnoses, ACES, and substance use disorders.

Mental Health Diagnoses



Results

- According to the study, 47.5% of parents had mental health diagnoses while 20.0% of parents were identified as not having symptoms consistent with mental health diagnoses. The most frequent mental health diagnoses was bipolar.
- The percentage of mothers who had a substance abuse problem was 47.5
- On average the parents had 1.38 adverse childhood experiences
- 70% of cause involved child neglect
- Using binomial logistic regression, the overall model for child neglect using SUDs, mental health diagnoses, unemployment and ACEs as predictors was not significant.
- When examining individual predictors, maternal mental health diagnosis was approaching significance
- The result show that Depression, anxiety, PTSD, Bipolar, and Schizophrenia all have no cause in the neglect of children.

Conclusion

- This study aimed to explore the contributing factors to child neglect in young children, focusing on parental unemployment, mental health diagnoses, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and substance use disorders (SUDs).
- The results indicated that ACEs, unemployment, mental health diagnoses, and SUDs did not significantly predicted child neglect in this study.
- Additional factors could be the cause of neglect such as parental attachment, educational status, parental stress, or living environment.
- In conclusion, this study provides valuable insight into the relationship between maternal mental health and child neglect. Although the overall model show that neglect is not cause by mental health diagnoses. It is important to find other contributing factors that warrants further exploration.