

Perceived Parental Love and Care and Child Sexual, Physical and Emotional Abuse: A Study among a Sample of University Students in South Africa

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ABSTRACT This is an investigation into the perceived parental love and care as related to child sexual, physical and emotional abuse among a sample of university students in South Africa. Seven hundred and seventy-two undergraduate students of psychology at the University of the North, South Africa, filled in a retrospective self-rating questionnaire in a classroom setting. The questionnaire asked questions about perceived parental love and care, and childhood sexual, physical and emotional abuse. Logistic Regression Analysis shows that among all the participants, "perceived lack of paternal love and care before the age of 8 years", "perceived lack of maternal love and care from age 8 through 16 years", and "perceived lack of paternal love and care from age 8 through 16 years" predict child sexual, physical and emotional abuse respectively. Mental health and social workers, educators and law enforcement agencies dealing with prevention and protection against child abuse in the province should take note of the above as part of important factors to be considered and looked into while designing programmes for the eradication of child physical and emotional abuse.