The Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
Department of Psychology

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2005 University of Victoria M.Sc.
1998 Washington University BA

Psychosocial Functioning of Children Living with a Brain-Injured Parent

Wednesday, October 2, 2013
10:00 AM
UVC, Room A207a

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Catherine A. Mateer, Department of Psychology, UVic (Supervisor)
Dr. Mauricio Garcia-Barrera, Department of Psychology, UVic (Member)
Dr. James Tanaka, Department of Psychology, UVic (Member)
Dr. Susan Tasker, Department of Educational Psychology & Leadership Studies, UVic (Outside Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. James F. Malec, Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Dale Ganley, Peter. B. Gustavson School of Business, UVic
Abstract

Historically, there has been limited empirical study of children whose parents have suffered an acquired brain injury. This is despite the fact that both clinical opinion and qualitative study suggest that these children may represent a population at risk for a variety of emotional and behavioural problems. The current study set out to evaluate the overall psychosocial functioning of a small subset of children whose parents had suffered an acquired brain injury (TBI, stroke) and who were in the more chronic phase of recovery (average time post-injury = 3.3 years). Factors that have been proposed to impact child psychosocial functioning in this population were assessed including the neurobehavioral profile of the injured parent, parental depression, and the child’s report of the parental relationship. In all, ten children (average age = 13 years) from seven families with parental ABI were evaluated both on a comprehensive measure of child psychosocial functioning (BASC-2) and a series of qualitative measures. As compared to a normative sample, results of quantitative analyses suggest a group of children not experiencing general clinical distress. In fact, statistical analyses suggest resiliency in the current sample as compared to normative data. At the individual level, two of the children in the sample evidenced behaviour that warrants further clinical evaluation, though this finding may be on par with the base rates of clinical distress seen in the general population. Qualitative analyses provide a richer understanding of the experiences of these children and their families and suggest avenues for further empirical evaluation. Results are presented in the context of other studies to date. Recommendations for clinicians and researchers based on current findings are provided.

Awards, Scholarships, Fellowships
2007-2008 P.E.O. Scholar Award, International Chapter P.E.O. Sisterhood
2007 W.H. Gaddes Scholarship
2005-2007 Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), Postgraduate Scholarship (PGS-D2)
2006-2007 Drs. Erich and Shelley Mohr Fellowship in Psychology
2006-2007 President’s Research Scholarship
2005-2006 President’s Research Scholarship
2005 CIHR Health Professional Student Research Award

Presentations


Publications


