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Lack of Family Support and Psychopathy Facilitates Antisocial Punishment Behavior in College Students

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ABSTRACT

Both a lack of social support and psychopathy show a positive association with aggressive behavior. This study investigated whether a perceived lack of family support and psychopathy would facilitate "antisocial punishment behavior," which was defined as punishment behavior to cooperators in a trust game. The participants were four groups of university students with low or high levels of psychopathy who had also reported low or high levels of family support (N = 48). In a trust game played on a computer, participants were given the chance to reduce the compensation as a punishment of their (simulated) partners based on whether they were cooperators or non-cooperators. We found that high-psychopathy participants with low family support gave cooperators significantly more punishment than did participants with low psychopathy and high family support. The study indicates that an interaction between a lack of family support and psychopathy contributes to aggressive behavior, such as antisocial punishment behavior.

KEYWORDS

Family Support; Psychopathy; Aggression; Antisocial Punishment; Decision-Making

Cite this paper

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