

Intrafamily violence: Brazilian adaptation and psychometric evidence of the Children's Natural Environment Signaling Scale

Violência intrafamiliar: adaptação brasileira e evidências psicométricas da Escala de Sinalização do Ambiente Natural Infantil

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Abstract

This study aimed to adapt the Children's Natural Environment Signaling Scale to the Brazilian context, gathering evidence of validity and precision. Specifically, it sought to verify the presence of violent behavior in the adolescents' family environment and to identify the victims of this type of violence. A total of 249 adolescents, between 13 and 19 years old, participated in this study. The results pointed to the existence of few situations of intrafamily violence, with the most frequent victims being children and adolescents. As for the instrument, the confirmatory factor analysis revealed adequate adjustment indexes, confirming the original model of the scale, composed of four factors: physical abuse, emotional abuse, coercion, and control. The reliability, assessed using Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega coefficients, showed similar satisfactory indicators ranging from 0.69 to 0.81. The importance of having a psychometrically robust instrument is highlighted, making it possible to assess intrafamily violence in the Brazilian context.

Keywords: Child abuse; Family; Validation study.

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Resumo

Este estudo objetivou adaptar a escala de Sinalização do Ambiente Natural Infantil para o contexto brasileiro, reunindo evidências de validade e precisão. Especificamente, buscou-se verificar a presença de comportamentos violentos no ambiente familiar dos adolescentes e identificar as vítimas desse tipo de violência. Participaram 249 adolescentes, com idades entre 13 e 19 anos. Os resultados apontaram para a existência de poucas situações de violência intrafamiliar e as vítimas mais frequentes eram crianças e adolescentes. Quanto ao instrumento, a análise fatorial confirmatória revelou índices de ajuste adequados, confirmando o modelo original da escala, composta por quatro fatores: abuso físico, abuso emocional, coerção e controle. A confiabilidade, avaliada através dos coeficientes alfa de Cronbach e ômega de McDonald, revelou indicadores satisfatórios semelhantes que variaram de 0,69 a 0,81. Destaca-se a importância de contar com um instrumento psicometricamente robusto, que possibilite avaliar a violência intrafamiliar no contexto brasileiro.

Palavras-chave: Maus-tratos infantil; Família; Estudo de validação.

Violence against children and adolescents has been frequent in Brazil, becoming a serious health problem. The *Sistema de Informação de Agravos de Notificação – Ministério da Saúde* (Information System on Diseases of Compulsory Declaration – Ministry of Health), in 2011, for example, recorded that approximately 39,281 medical consultations for children and adolescents, ranging from 1 to 19 years old, in the *Sistema Único de Saúde* (Unified Health System), were related to violence in the family context. Among these cases, physical (40.5%), sexual (20.0%), and psychological (17.0%) violence were reported, with parents (i.e., father, mother, stepfather, and stepmother) being the main responsible for the violence (Brazil, 2018).

In addition to the cases identified in the Unified Health System, it is known that there are cases of daily violence that never reach public institutions. Therefore, the real scenario of violence against children in the family environment may be much more serious and little known by society. In this sense, the importance of developing studies that seek to identify this type of violence is highlighted, as well as promoting greater public and professional awareness about this issue.

Intrafamily violence is related to violent behaviors caused by the imbalance of manifested power in the relationships between family members, including parents, children, or even those who exercise a parental function, even without blood ties (Mota et al., 2018). It is worth mentioning that, although the behaviors of intrafamily violence occur between family members, they do not happen only at home, but also in other places, which makes this type of violence different from others, such as domestic violence, which is restricted to the home environment and may involve other people living together, such as employees and relatives (Miura, Silva, Pedrosa, Costa, & Nobre Filho, 2018).

Specifically, intrafamily violence against children and adolescents includes any action or omission that can cause injuries or damage to their physical, moral, emotional, or social development (Revorêdo, Dantas, Maia, Torres, & Maia, 2016). This type of violence may include, for example, the use of violent behaviors as a means of education strategy or conflict resolution, lack of basic care by parents or caregivers, and violent situations witnessed by the child (Lourenço, Salgado, Amaral, Gomes, & Senra, 2011).

In this context, the main types of abuse against children and adolescents are related to: (1) physical violence, characterized as violent acts that intentionally use physical force, being perpetrated by an older or stronger person; (2) negligence on the part of parents or guardians, who fail to meet basic needs for children's physical, emotional, and social development; (3) sexual violence, which relates to sexual acts or games, practiced by older individuals, which aim to stimulate the child sexually or use it to obtain sexual satisfaction; and (4) psychological violence, related to any action taken by adults in order to reject, discriminate, disrespect, humiliate, or frighten children (Brasil, 2018; Revorêdo et al., 2016; Silva & Gonçalves, 2019).

Still, in the case of psychological violence, it should be highlighted that children and adolescents may witness violent situations in the family environment. In this regard, Sani (2003) emphasizes the exposure

of children or adolescents to interparental violence, that is, when they witness violence between biological parents (who may or may not be married) or when they witness cases of conjugal violence, in which a spouse or both may not be their parents, but are the caregivers. Therefore, witnessing this type of violence between parents or caregivers can cause serious psychological damage to their children.

It is known that the family context is a primary space for embracing, for learning, and for experiences, which has a strong influence on the development of individuals. However, depending on the situation, the family can also act as an important risk factor in the affective and social life of its members (Maia, Nunes, Silva, & Silva, 2017). Children and/or adolescents who live in a home characterized by violence, witnessing conjugal fights, for example, may not be directly abused, but they bear the marks of abuse, experiencing a strange environment in the relationship between parents (or caregivers), which can lead to strong psychological suffering (Sani, 2003).

In addition, the child can be the victim of contempt, yelling, threats, rejection, humiliations, as well as situations in which the aggressor can use it to hurt the mother (Chaves & Sani, 2014). Therefore, it is clear that interparental violence affects the entire family context, especially children, who can be victimized directly or indirectly.

In this direction, several studies (Oliveira et al., 2020; Pereira et al., 2015; Reis, Prata, & Parra, 2018; Sani, 2003; Zambrano-Villalba, 2017) show that children/adolescents who witness or are victims of violence in the family context are more vulnerable to the development of physiological (e.g. increased heartbeat, changes in sleep), emotional (low self-esteem, anxiety, depression), behavioral (attention difficulties, problems with academic performance), and social (aggressiveness with colleagues, involvement with bullying) problems. Such studies still show that the greater the frequency and intensity of the violence witnessed, the greater the problems presented.

In addition, the exposure to intrafamily violence is an important risk factor for the development of violent behaviors in the future, and it may influence, for example, young people's love relationships and their future conjugal relationships, since violence is seen as a strategy for conflict resolution in the most diverse situations (Faias, Caridade, & Cardoso, 2017; Madalena, Carvalho, & Falcke, 2018; Reis et al., 2018). Still, the literature shows that experiencing behaviors of intrafamily violence can cause psychopathological problems in adulthood, such as post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, among others (Correia & Mota, 2017; Kalmakis & Chandler, 2015; Souza, Vizzotto, & Gomes, 2018).

Given the above, it is clear that the violence experienced in the family environment can have harmful consequences in the short, medium or long term, for everyone who lives in this context. Furthermore, it is understood that the indirect victimization of children can be just as damaging as direct violence (Sani, 2003).

From this perspective, it is essential to develop strategies for early identification of violence cases in the family environment, aiming, above all, to promote the prevention of the consequences arising from this experience, as well as to propose psychosocial interventions on the problem. However, as it is a problem difficult to identify and assess, it is necessary for professionals who deal with such demands to equip themselves with instruments that facilitate the unveiling of violence situations. Yet, it is highlighted the fact that there are few psychometric instruments in the Brazilian context that aim to assess violence against children/adolescents in the family environment.

In March 2020, a search conducted in the Scientific Electronic Library Online and Index Psi national databases, using the keywords "intrafamily violence" and "interparental violence" (in Brazilian Portuguese, "*violência intrafamiliar*" and "*violência interparental*"), without delimiting the date or area of study, it was possible to find some measures used to assess violence in the family context. Among them, the following stand out: Parent-Child Conflict Tactics Scales, adapted by Reichenheim and Moraes (2003); Childhood Trauma Questionnaire, adapted by Grassi-Oliveira, Stein, and Pezzi (2006); Scale of Psychological Violence against

Adolescents (Avanci, Assis, Santos, & Oliveira, 2005). In general, all these instruments seek to identify history of mistreatment, abuse, and negligence experienced during childhood/adolescence in the family environment.

However, none of them assesses, indirectly, children/adolescents who are victimized or reports the conjugal violence of their parents or caregivers. In this direction, it is highlighted the *Escala de Sinalização do Ambiente Natural Infantil* (SANI, Children's Natural Environment Signaling Scale), elaborated in Portugal by Sani (2003), which aims to assess violent behaviors in the family environment, seeking to identify situations that typify physical, psychological, and sexual violence. In addition, it seeks to point who the victims of the violence are. In this way, SANI offers two formats of responses, a Likert-type ranging from 0 (indicating to have never experienced the situation) to 4 (almost always experiencing violence situations); and another one in the checklist format, aiming to identify the victim of each incident, in which the respondent indicates whether such situations happened with a child, an adult, or both.

In addition, Sani (2003) highlights the importance of using instruments that can make an assessment the least intrusive as possible, since the child/adolescent may show some resistance in talking about the family problem. Thus, in the light of all that has been exposed, the present study aimed to adapt SANI to the Brazilian context, gathering evidence of the instrument's validity and precision. Specifically, it was intended to verify the presence of violent behavior in the adolescents' family environment; as well to identify the victims of this type of violence. For this, an empirical study was developed, which will be presented below.

Method

Participants

There were 249 students from elementary (25.5%) and high school (74.5%), from public (49.8%) and private (50.2%) schools in a municipality in the Northeastern Region of Brazil, between 13 and 19 years old ($M = 15.83$; $SD = 1.40$), the majority being girls (51.4%), and living with their parents (97.2%). It should be noted that this is a convenience sample (non-probabilistic), with the participation of people who, when contacted, agreed to collaborate with the study.

Instruments

Participants were asked to respond to two measures:

Escala de Sinalização do Ambiente Natural Infantil (SANI, Children's Natural Environment Signaling Scale): As mentioned earlier, it was developed by Sani (2003) and aims to guide the child into an assessment of his or her family system, in order to identify it or not as a context of occurrence of intrafamily violence situations. The original instrument consists of 30 items, which are divided into four factors: physical abuse, consisting of six items (e.g. Item 28. Pulling or shoving someone until that person falls); emotional abuse, with nine items (e.g. Item 01. Insulting or calling someone bad names); coercion, containing seven items (e.g. Item 22. Threatening to be separated from family members); and control, with eight items (e.g. Item 18. Not letting someone leave the house and go somewhere). They are answered on a Likert Scale (0 = never to 4 = almost always). Next to each item, in a checklist format, the respondent is also asked to indicate whether such situations happened with a child, an adult, or both. Both formats were used in the present study. The internal consistencies (Cronbach's Alphas) presented by the scale author vary from 0.73 (control) to 0.86 (physical abuse).

Sociodemographic Questionnaire: In order to characterize the participants of the study, a set of questions of sociodemographic nature (e.g. education, age, sex, the people with whom they live) was added.

Procedures

Initially, it was sought to submit the SANI Scale to the process of adaptation and semantic validation. Thus, the instrument was used in its original version just to adapt the items to Brazilian Portuguese. In a second step, the two versions (in Portuguese language from Portugal and Brazilian Portuguese) were compared, in order to observe the equivalence of the items in each version, paying attention to the language differences of each country.

Once the equivalence of the preliminary version in Brazilian language was proven, a semantic validation was performed, as suggested by Pasquali (2016), seeking to assess whether the items and the measurement format were understandable. For this, it was gathered a group of 20 individuals, students of elementary and high school, equally distributed regarding sex, since they comprise possible members of the sample intended in the study. At the time, it was found that both the content of the items and the measurement instructions were clear, with no need for modifications.

In view of this, data collection started, which took place in a collective classroom environment, but answered individually by each participant. All of them were informed about their voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality of answers, as well as the right to quit at any time without any penalties. Prior to the application of the instrument, the Informed Consent Form was sent to parents or legal guardians, in order for them to authorize the participation of the adolescents. After the parents' authorization, by signing the Informed Consent Form, as well as a Consent Form signed by the adolescent, data collection was carried out. Each participant took, on average, about 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. This study was authorized by the Research Ethics Committee of the *Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo* (Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo); *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel) opinion nº 29730; *Certificado de Apresentação para Apreciação Ética* (CAAE, Presentation Certificate for Ethical Appreciation): 01873412.8.0000.5482.

Data Analysis

Data were tabulated and analyzed using the IBM®SPSS® statistical packages, version 21, and R (R Core Team – 2015), version 3.2.4. With the former, descriptive and reliability analysis were performed, while with the R, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed through the Lavaan package. For the empirical assessment of the model, the following adjustment indicators were considered (Tabachnick, & Fidell, 2013): (1) Comparative Fit Index (CFI), considered an additional model adjustment index, which compares it with alternative models, being admitted values close to or above 0.90; (2) Tucker – Lewis Index (TLI), similar to the CFI, this index proposes to establish whether all indicators are associated with a single latent factor (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2015), serving as a comparison of the estimated model with a null and theoretical model. Values between 0.80 and 0.90 are accepted and a robust adjustment is considered, with values greater than 0.95; and (3) Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) – 90% Confidence Interval (CI = 90%) that takes residuals into account, with a value close to zero meaning that the model is adjusted, since the residuals approach that value; it is suggested that the RMSEA should be between 0.05 and 0.08, accepting up to 0.10 (Byrne, 2016).

In addition, the internal consistency (precision) was verified using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α), based on the polychoric correlations, and McDonald's omega (ω). For that, the Likert response Scale was considered as ordered categories (McDonald, 1999).

Results

To facilitate the readers' understanding, the results of this study will be presented in two main subsections: (1) SANI descriptive statistics and (2) SANI psychometric evidence.

SANI descriptive statistics

The descriptive analysis of SANI revealed that, in the sample studied, there are few situations of violence in the family environment, since the averages of several items of the instrument had values below 1 (which corresponds to the scale as "a few times", that is, he or she witnessed the situations presented once or twice) and very close to 0 (corresponds to never having seen violent situations). Such results can be seen in Table 1.

As shown in Table 1, it appears that few items have averages above 1.00, such as items 6 (Yelling a lot and very loudly at someone), 1 (Insulting or calling someone bad names), 20 (Stop talking to someone for a while) and 18 (Not letting someone leave the house and go somewhere), indicating situations of control and verbal/emotional violence.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics of Children's Natural Environment Signaling Scale items

SANI	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Item 1	1.96	1.46
Item 2	0.83	1.25
Item 3	0.58	1.08
Item 4	0.52	1.06
Item 5	1.17	1.39
Item 6	2.26	1.51
Item 7	0.86	1.39
Item 8	0.50	1.07
Item 9	1.18	1.37
Item 10	0.73	1.19
Item 11	0.78	1.24
Item 12	0.42	0.94
Item 13	0.58	1.07
Item 14	0.90	1.37
Item 15	0.60	1.22
Item 16	0.82	1.26
Item 17	0.24	0.75
Item 18	1.43	1.50
Item 19	0.27	0.72
Item 20	1.66	1.35
Item 21	0.76	1.22
Item 22	0.67	1.12
Item 23	0.30	0.77
Item 24	0.50	0.99
Item 25	0.29	0.82
Item 26	0.22	0.72
Item 27	1.30	1.39
Item 28	0.37	0.89
Item 29	0.37	0.92
Item 30	0.64	1.18

Note: *M*: Mean; *SD*: Standard Deviation.

Considering that the instrument also makes it possible to detect victims through a checklist, it was possible to verify whether the violent situations occurred with adults, children/adolescents or both. In this sense, Table 2 presents the results of situations of victimization.

As can be seen in Table 2, the participants indicated that they did not witness most situations of violence in the family environment. However, when comparing only the percentages of adult victims with child/adolescent victims, it is clear that the second category has a higher percentage in most situations, as in items 2 (Throwing things at someone on purpose), 15 (Kicking or punching someone), 16 (Mocking or laughing at someone to make them feel bad) and 28 (Pulling or shoving someone until that person falls). Thus, in the sample surveyed, there was a higher frequency of violence against children and adolescents in the family context compared to violence between couples.

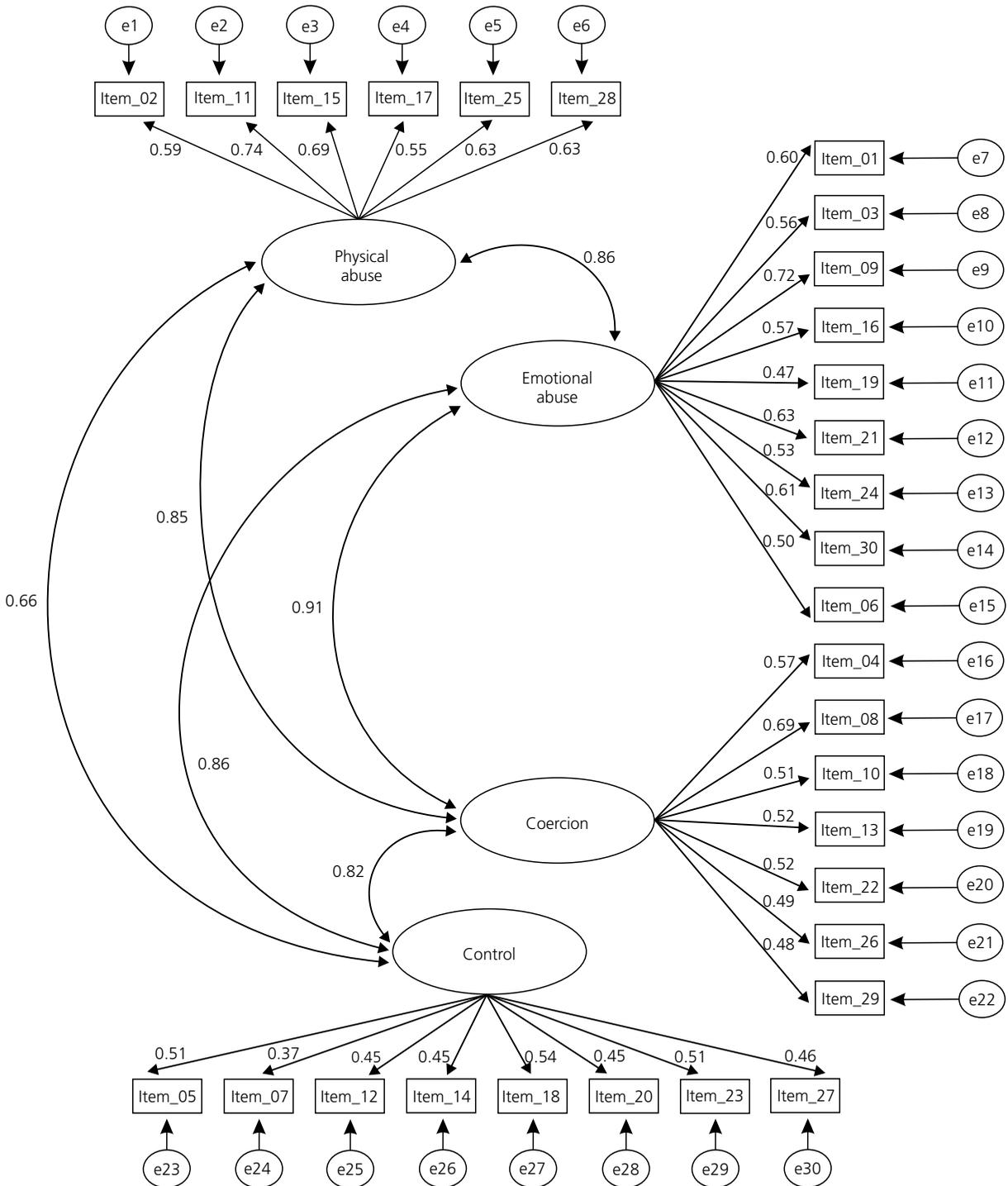
Table 2
Descriptive statistics of the detected victimization situations

Children's Natural Environment Signaling Scale	Valid percentage in each category			
	Adult	Children adolescent	Both	No record of violence
Item 1	30.1	26.5	24.9	18.5
Item 2	8.8	24.9	7.6	58.6
Item 3	10.0	18.1	5.6	66.3
Item 4	15.3	11.2	4.4	69.1
Item 5	16.9	26.5	11.2	45.4
Item 6	26.9	23.3	31.7	18.1
Item 7	10.4	22.1	6.8	60.6
Item 8	8.8	11.2	6.4	73.5
Item 9	12.9	26.5	16.1	44.6
Item 10	10.4	22.1	5.2	62.2
Item 11	7.6	24.9	7.6	59.4
Item 12	14.9	6.0	4.0	75.1
Item 13	8.0	16.5	9.2	66.3
Item 14	16.9	14.9	8.8	59.4
Item 15	5.6	19.7	5.6	69.1
Item 16	4.8	28.1	9.2	57.8
Item 17	1.2	12.0	3.6	83.1
Item 18	13.3	37.3	10.8	38.6
Item 19	3.6	13.7	3.2	79.5
Item 20	21.3	38.6	18.1	22.1
Item 21	11.2	18.5	6.0	64.3
Item 22	19.3	8.8	6.8	65.1
Item 23	7.6	8.0	4.0	80.3
Item 24	11.6	10.0	7.6	70.7
Item 25	6.4	8.4	3.2	81.9
Item 26	0.8	10.0	2.4	86.7
Item 27	20.5	23.3	12.0	43.8
Item 28	4.0	14.9	3.2	77.9
Item 29	3.6	13.7	4.8	77.9
Item 30	7.2	16.1	7.2	69.1

SANI psychometric evidence

In order to ascertain the factorial structure of SANI, a CFA was carried out, adopting the approximation method of Robust Weighted Least Squares. It is noteworthy that, as suggested by Marôco (2014), it was opted in this study to only use the CFA, given that the instrument's factors and items were established based on a presented theoretical model, being widely disseminated in the Portuguese context.

As shown in Figure 1, there is a structure composed of four factors that gathered satisfactory model adjustment indicators, attesting to evidence of its psychometric adequacy: CFI = 0.99; TLI = 0.99, and RMSEA (90% CI) = 0.03 (0.02 – 0.04). In addition, it was found that all saturations (Lambdas) were statistically different than zero ($\lambda \neq 0$; $z > 1.96$, $p < 0.05$), with a mean value of 0.55 ($SD = 0.09$), which ranged from 0.37 (Item 07. Not procrastinating tasks that must be done) to 0.81 (Item 11. Hitting or trying to hit someone with things).



Regarding the reliability of SANI, it was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α) and McDonald's omega (ω) coefficients. The results found attest to good indicators of internal consistency for the four factors: Physical abuse ($\alpha = 0.80$; $\omega = 0.80$); Emotional abuse ($\alpha = 0.81$; $\omega = 0.81$); Coercion ($\alpha = 0.74$; $\omega = 0.74$), and Control ($\alpha = 0.69$; $\omega = 0.69$).

Discussion

The importance of early identification of violence cases in the family environment, combined with the scarcity of instruments that facilitate such identification, led to the development of the present study, which was mainly focused on gathering psychometric evidence of SANI in the Brazilian context. Specifically, it was sought to verify the presence of violent behaviors in the adolescents' family environment and to identify the victims of this type of violence. Considering the reported results, it is believed that the objectives were achieved.

Initially, it was found that, in general, adolescents demonstrated to witness few situations of violence in their family environment. However, among the violent behaviors most mentioned by these children/adolescents are those related to psychological violence, more specifically verbal violence, and control behaviors. The literature points out that, frequently, children and adolescents have been victims of psychological aggressions in the family environment, which involves behaviors such as yelling, insulting, humiliating, and threatening (Mota et al., 2018; Rocha & Moraes, 2011; Sani, 2003, Silva & Gonçalves, 2019). In addition, these authors emphasize that such behaviors are used daily as an education strategy, being considered extremely common.

In this sense, it is important to make families, especially parents, aware that this type of violence can negatively influence the development of children/adolescents, causing damage to self-esteem, learning difficulties, socialization problems, and even mental disorders, such as anxiety and depression (Maia et al., 2017; Rocha & Moraes, 2011; Silva & Gonçalves, 2019). In addition, violent behaviors experienced in the family environment can have negative long-term consequences, and, for example, may lead individuals to repeat the patterns they experienced in their future love relationships, thus generating violence when they are dating or in their conjugal lives (Faias et al., 2017; Madalena et al., 2018).

Regarding the victims of violence in the family environment, it was possible to notice that both adults and children/adolescents are victimized in different situations. However, there was a higher frequency of violent behavior against children and adolescents, compared to violence between adults or couples. Such results are in line with the literature, insofar as intrafamily violence is related to the imbalance of manifested power in the relationships between family members (Mota et al., 2018); children and adolescents are the most affected, as they are more physically and emotionally vulnerable (Maia et al., 2017).

However, as previously mentioned, the violence practiced by figures of authority that are so significant for the child or adolescent, such as parents or caregivers, who must be responsible for embracing and protecting them, can cause several problems, whether physical, psychological, or even social (Lourenço et al., 2011; Reis et al., 2018; Zambrano-Villalba, 2017). Thus, the importance of the quality of the family environment is highlighted, as it is fundamental to the health and well-being of the individuals.

About the factorial validity of SANI, through the CFA, it was possible to find adjustment indicators that endorse the factorial structure found in the original study (30 items distributed in 4 factors). The tetrafactorial model showed satisfactory adjustment indexes (CFI = 0.99; TLI = 0.99 and RMSEA = 0.03), as recommended by the literature (Hair et al., 2015).

Regarding internal consistency, it was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's omega, the latter considered more robust when compared to the former (Zinbarg, Revelle, Yovel, & Li, 2005). The coefficients proved to be acceptable for the four factors, since values ranging from 0.69 to 0.81 were observed (McDonald, 1999), being one additional evidence for the tetrafactorial structure.

In view of this, the proposal initially presented by Sani (2003) can be considered appropriate to the Brazilian context, composed of four factors: the first, called Physical Abuse, brings together a set of items related to actions that result in physical damage to the victim, including behaviors like hitting, kicking or punching, shoving, and holding; the second, Emotional Abuse, includes acts that cause psychological damage to the victim, especially at the emotional level, such as threats, humiliations, and disrespect; the third and fourth factors represent a subcategory of psychological violence, one of which is called Coercion (including behaviors of obligation and repression) and the other Control (including actions aimed at exercising influence and authority over the victim).

Thus, considering that the items are grouped into theoretically significant factors, they adequately represent the construct that is intended to be assessed. In addition, it can be said that SANI has satisfactory psychometric indexes, which can be used in studies that focus on assessing violent behavior in the family environment, as well as signaling who are the victims of this violence. Still, this instrument can serve as an assessment tool for professionals who work with children and/or adolescents, in order to identify whether they experience violent behaviors in the family context.

Finally, it should be noted that violence in the family environment is a difficult problem to be identified, especially due to the discomfort and resistance of the victims in talking about the subject. Besides, considering the fact that self-report was used as a measure, which may have introduced effects of social desirability in the data collected, that is, adolescents may have omitted to report certain situations of violence in the family, thus presenting more socially acceptable answers. Another aspect pointed out as a limitation concerns the sample, which is restricted to only one state in the Northeastern Region of Brazil, which makes it impossible to generalize the results. In addition, it should be noted that, unlike the original study, this one only covered adolescents. However, such limitations do not invalidate the results found here.

As future possibilities, studies with larger and more heterogeneous samples are suggested, allowing the comparison of groups with respect to variables such as age, sex, and social class. It is also necessary to carry out research that seeks to ascertain additional evidence of validity, such as convergent-discriminant and criterion evidences, using, for example, a sample with adolescents who have a history of intrafamily violence and adolescents who have not experienced such situation in order to verify the instrument's discriminatory capacity. Furthermore, in subsequent investigations, the relationship of this construct with similar variables can be approached, such as in dating or conjugal violence.

Conclusion

Escala de Sinalização do Ambiente Natural Infantil (SANI, Children's Natural Environment Signaling Scale) is a measure that leads the child or adolescent to make an assessment of their family system, aiming to detect the presence or not of intrafamily violence situations, in addition to identifying who are the victims of this type of violence. The importance of this instrument is evidenced by the need for early identification of violence cases against children and adolescents in the family environment, in view of the negative consequences arising from these experiences. Having this type of instrument in the Brazilian context makes it possible to identify intrafamily violence, as well as reflections on strategies for psychosocial interventions to prevent or treat this type of problem.

Contributors

J. L. F. SANTOS and P. N. FONSECA participated in the stage of conception and design of the study. J. L. F. SANTOS, J. F. SOUZA FILHO, P. G. N. SILVA, and R. N. COUTO contributed to the analysis and interpretation of data, as well as the discussion of the results. Finally, P. N. FONSECA and J. F. SOUZA FILHO reviewed and approved the final version of this article.

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