

The psychometric properties of childhood physical and sexual abuse measures in two Canadian samples of youth and emerging adults

Vanessa De Rubeis^{1,2,3} Lil Tonmyr³ Masako Tanaka³ Tracie Afifi^{4,5} Nicole Catherine⁶
 Ana Osorio⁴ Harriet MacMillan^{1,2} and Andrea Gonzalez^{1,2}

1. Department of Psychiatry & Behavioural Neurosciences, McMaster University, Hamilton, ON, Canada; 2. Offord Centre for Child Studies, McMaster University, Hamilton, ON, Canada; 3. Centre for Surveillance and Applied Research, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention, Public Health Agency of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.; 4. Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada; 5. Department of Psychiatry, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada; 6. Children's Health Policy Centre, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, B.C. Canada.

Introduction

- Child maltreatment is prevalent in Canada
- Psychometrically sound self-report measures are essential to appropriately estimate prevalence
- The Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) has fairly good psychometric properties but is timely and costly
- The Childhood Experiences of Violence Questionnaire-Short Form (CEVQ-SF) has been tested against CTQ but not in high-risk subgroups or younger age groups (<15 years)

OBJECTIVE

The objective was to examine the psychometric properties of the CEVQ-SF physical and sexual abuse measures and of the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) 2-item childhood sexual abuse (CSA) measure, compared with the CTQ

Methods

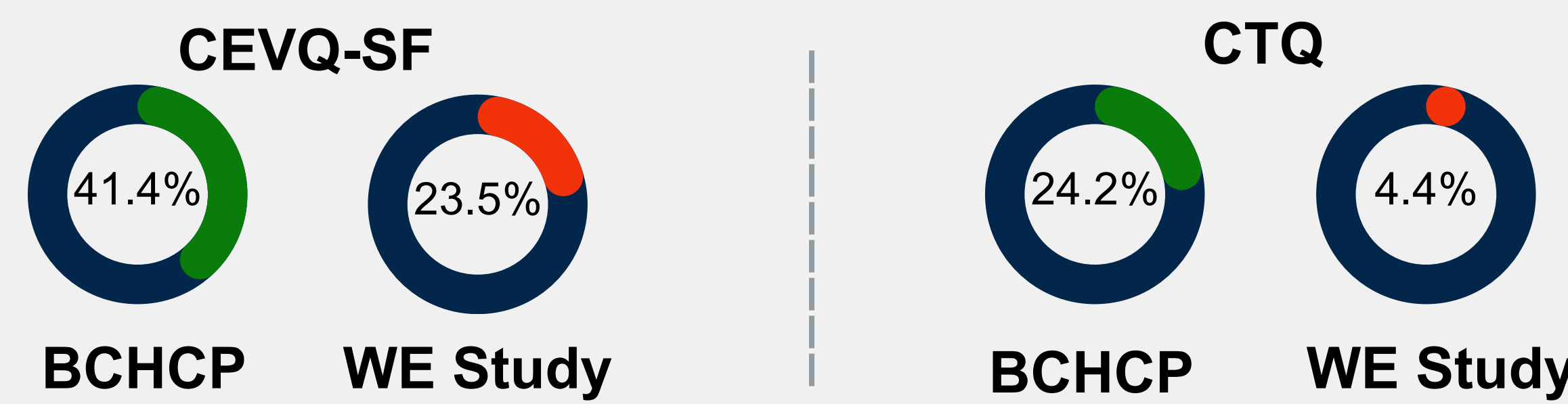
Retrospective, self-reported child abuse history was collected in a sample of pregnant 14 to 24 year-olds from the British Columbia Healthy Connections Project (BCHCP) and a sample of youth aged 18 to 21 years from the Well-Being and Experiences (WE) Study in Manitoba

Psychometric properties tested include:

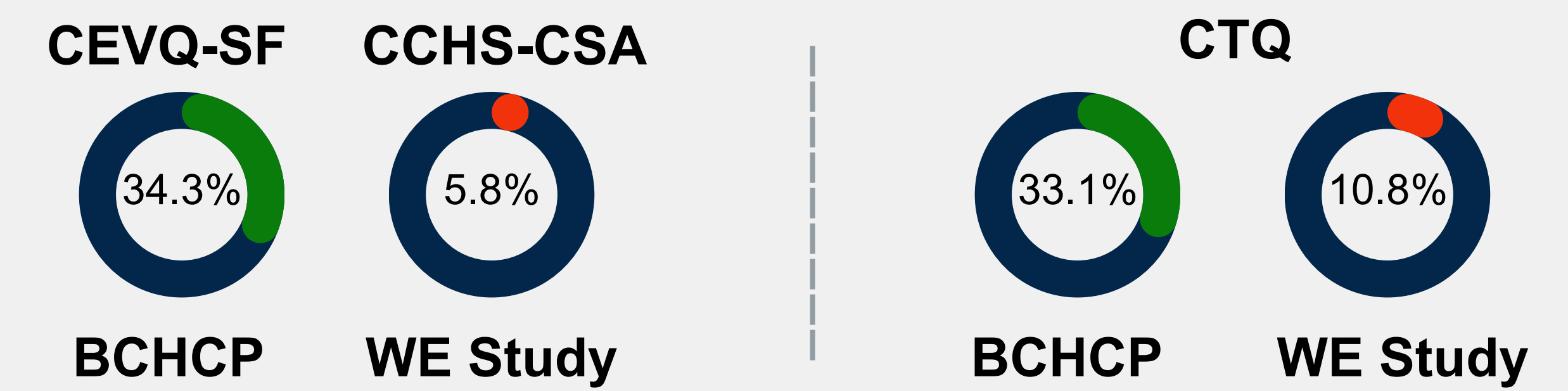
- Internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha (α))
- Criterion validity (Cohen's kappa (κ))
- Construct validity (t-tests to compare CPA/CSA group differences on mental health outcomes)

Results

Prevalence of moderate childhood physical abuse



Prevalence of moderate childhood sexual abuse



RELIABILITY

Childhood physical abuse:

- BCHCP: CEVQ-SF $\alpha = 0.83$
CTQ: $\alpha = 0.85$
- WE Study: CEVQ-SF $\alpha = 0.79$
CTQ: $\alpha = 0.65$

Childhood sexual abuse:

- BCHCP: CEVQ-SF $\alpha = 0.83$
CTQ: $\alpha = 0.85$
- WE Study: CCHS-CSA $\alpha = 0.79$
CTQ: $\alpha = 0.65$

CRITERION VALIDITY

Childhood physical abuse:

- BCHCP: $\kappa = 0.63$
- WE Study: $\kappa = 0.35$

Childhood sexual abuse:

- BCHCP: $\kappa = 0.77$
- WE Study: $\kappa = 0.37$

CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

Table 1. Mental health outcomes by childhood physical abuse using moderate cut-offs

		No CPA Mean (SD)	CPA Mean (SD)
		CEVQ-SF	
BCHCP	K10	20.1 (7.6)	23.6 (8.3)***
WE	PHQ-9	8.1 (5.9)	12.0 (6.7)***
		CTQ	
BCHCP	K10	20.9 (7.9)	23.5 (8.4)***
WE	PHQ-9	8.8 (6.3)	14.5 (6.4)***

Table 2. Mental health outcomes by childhood sexual abuse using moderate cut-offs

		No CSA Mean (SD)	CSA Mean (SD)
		CEVQ-SF & CCHS-CSA ¹	
BCHCP	K10	20.7 (7.8)	23.2 (8.4)***
WE	PHQ-9	8.7 (6.1)	14.3 (6.5)***
		CTQ	
BCHCP	K10	20.8 (7.8)	23.0 (8.4)***
WE	PHQ-9	8.5 (6.1)	13.2 (6.4)***

Note: K10: Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10); Depressive symptoms (PHQ-9); For CSA, the BCHCP only administered the CEVQ-SF & the WE Study administered the CCHS-CSA;*** p<0.001

Discussion



Compared with the CTQ, the CEVQ-SF & CCHS-CSA have good good reliability and validity, and are shorter, cost-effective measures of childhood physical and sexual abuse.