

SEARCHING MOTIF AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF GIRLS SEEKING PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY

Bruna Holst¹; Sílvia Cristina Marceliano Hallberg²; Luísa Feijó Pinheiro Mello²; Roberta Iankilevich Golbert²; Sabrina Menger²; Laura Wolf de Souza²

¹Integrated Studies in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy – ESIPP – www.esipp.com.br

²Center for Studies and Research on Childhood and Adolescence – CEAPIA – www.ceapia.com.br

115, Eng. Ildefonso Simões Lopes Street - Porto Alegre/RS 91330-180- Brazil

434, Cel. Bordini Street - Porto Alegre/RS 90440-002 – Brazil

INTRODUCTION

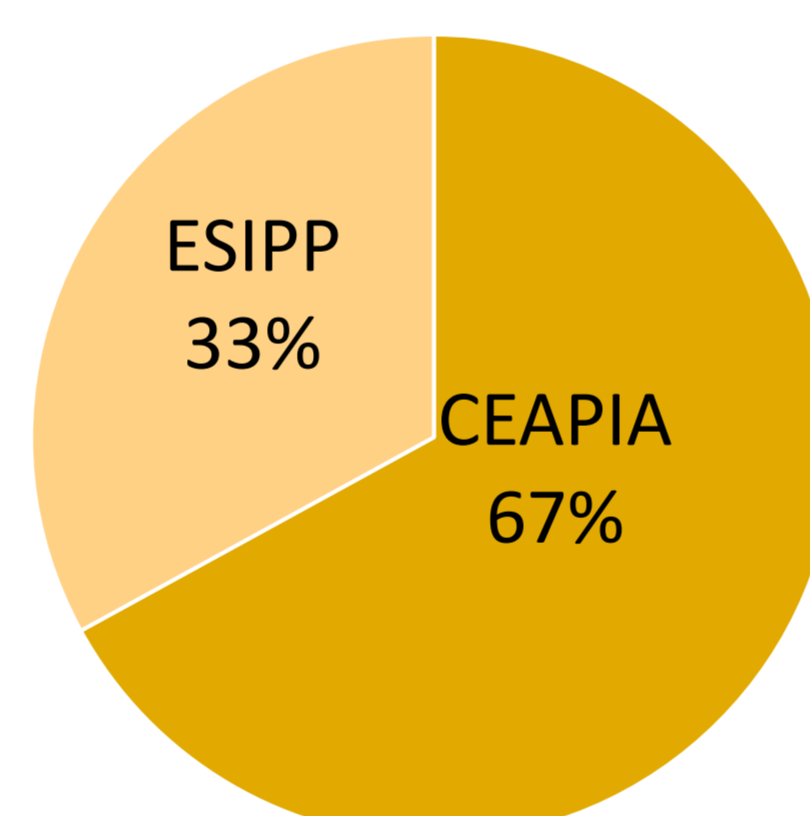
- Historically the search for psychotherapy occurred only in cases of serious illness, with stigmatization of people seeking mental help. Although this scenario has changed, it is still characterized by greater demand and access by **female patients** (Liddon, Kingler, & Barry, 2017).
- Clinical interventions in childhood and adolescence** are essential for the promotion of mental health and quality of life, as well as for the prevention of severe disorders in adulthood (Costello & Maughan, 2015; Souza, Osório, & Fleck, 2015).

GOAL

- To understand the main complaints that lead girls to seek psychotherapy in contemporary times.

METHOD

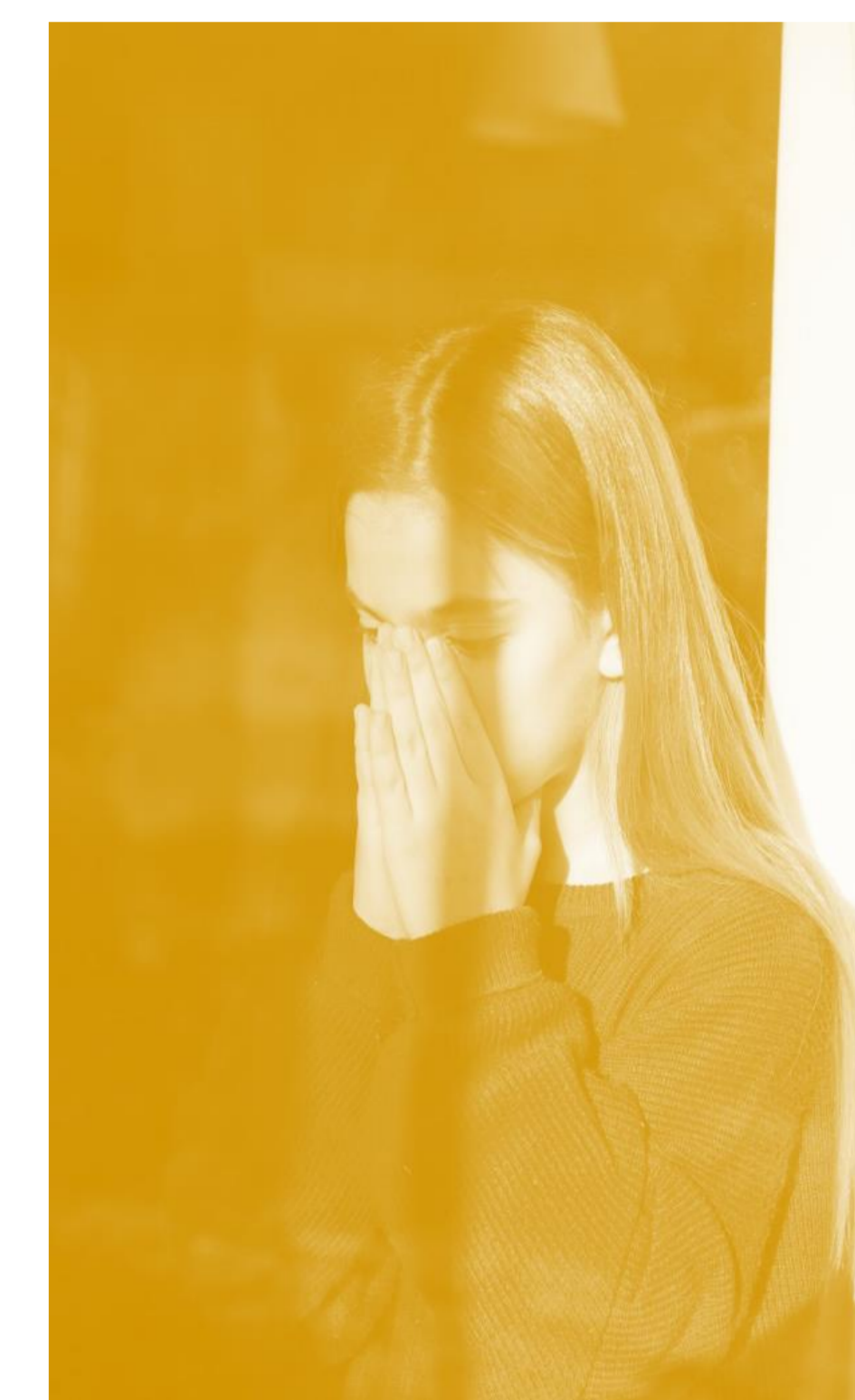
- Descriptive, quantitative and cross-sectional design.
- Participants were girls between 4 and 18 years of age (M=11.0; SD=4.2), who sought psychoanalytic psychotherapy in 2018 at two clinics located in southern Brazil.
- 35.1% of the participants had previously undergone psychotherapy.
- 12.8% used psychiatric medication.
- 82.4% were brought to care by their mother, father (16.5%) or others caregivers (1.1%).
- All participants involved in the study authorized in a consent letter form the use of their information for research purposes.
- The instruments used are the **Youth Outcome Questionnaire 2.01** (Y-OQ 2.01) and a social-demographic data questionnaire.
- Y-OQ 2.01 is a measure of treatment progress for children and adolescents receiving mental health intervention and is meant to track **change and outcome in psychotherapy**.



RESULTS

MAIN COMPLAINT THAT LEAD GIRLS TO SEEK PSYCHOTHERAPY

- Intrapersonal Stress** (M=24.4; SD=13.1): **Anxiety, depression, hopelessness** → **Internalizing** dimension.
- Our results were aligned with other studies (Liu, Chen, & Lewis, 2011; Rescorla et al., 2007) that showed vulnerability for girls to **hide** or **internally attempt** to manage their suffering.



LESS REPORTED COMPLAINTS THAT LEAD GIRLS TO SEEK PSYCHOTHERAPY

- Social Problems** (M=4.36; SD=4.20): Behavioral problems, such as aggressive or delinquent behavior, breaking social norms, missing school, promiscuous sexual behavior, escape from home.
- Typically externalizing dimension, very present in males.

Girls tend to express more **positive emotions**, especially in adolescence and in situations of social pressure (Chaplin & Aldao, 2013). **Internalizing emotions** may lead to **depressive and anxious disorders** in adulthood.



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROUPS REGARDING MEDICATION USE

- SOCIAL PROBLEMS dimension:** There were significant mean differences between girls with a history of medication use (M=7.6; SD=6.8) and girls without (M=3.9; SD=3.5); $t(9.6) = 1.673, p = 0.008$. **Same difference appeared for the CRITICAL ITEMS dimension:** Girls with a history of medication use: M = 8.4; SD=6.7 / Girls with no history: M = 0.9, SD = 3.5; $t(10.8) = 1.718, p = 0.009$.

CONCLUSIONS

- Our findings confirm the literature in the area: **Internalizing complaints are more prevalent in girls.**
- Girls with a **history of medication** have broader and more severe symptoms.

DIMENSIONS ASSESSED BY THE Y-OQ 2.01 (Burlingame et al., 2005)

Intrapersonal Distress	Evaluates children and adolescents' emotional stress, such as anxiety, depression, fear or hopelessness.
Somatic	Measures somatic symptoms, such as headaches, dizziness, weakness, nausea, muscle and joint pain.
Interpersonal Relations	Evaluates the relationship with parents, other adults and peers, communication and interaction with friends, level of cooperation or aggression.
Social Problems	Assesses severe cases of social norms' violation such as absenteeism, promiscuous sexual behavior, domestic escape and substance abuse.
Behavioral Dysfunction	Evaluates the child/adolescent's ability to organize and complete tasks, and assesses episodes of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity.
Critical Items	Assesses critical symptoms such as paranoia, hallucination, delusions, suicide attempt and eating disorders.