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UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL PAULISTA
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**DESENVOLVIMENTO E VALIDAÇÃO DE UM INSTRUMENTO
DE PESQUISA PARA AVALIAR O ESTRESSE
INTERPESSOAL**

**ARAÇATUBA – SP
2024**

VITÓRIA IAROS DE SOUSA

**DESENVOLVIMENTO E VALIDAÇÃO DE UM INSTRUMENTO DE
PESQUISA PARA AVALIAR O ESTRESSE INTERPESSOAL**

Dissertação apresentada à Faculdade de Odontologia de Araçatuba da Universidade Estadual Paulista (Unesp), para obtenção do título de "Mestre em Odontologia" - Área de Concentração Estomatologia

Orientador: Professor Associado Daniel Galera Bernabé

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“O período de maior ganho em conhecimento e experiência é o período mais difícil da vida de alguém.”

- Dalai Lama

Sousa VI. Desenvolvimento e validação de um instrumento de pesquisa para avaliar o estresse interpessoal [dissertação]. Araçatuba: Faculdade de Odontologia de Araçatuba da Universidade Estadual Paulista (Unesp); 2024.

RESUMO

Pessoas com alta sensibilidade à rejeição interpessoal (SRI) podem ter emoções negativas desencadeadas por muitos eventos sociais. A intensidade do sentimento de rejeição pode levar a comportamentos relacionados à dificuldade de adaptação que têm sido reconhecidos como prejudiciais à saúde física e mental. Na literatura existem alguns instrumentos utilizados para mensurar a SRI, porém eles não estão focados nas experiências emocionais subjetivas causadas pelo sentimento de rejeição. Este estudo se propõe a desenvolver e validar a Escala de Sentimento de Rejeição da UNESP (ESRU), instrumento para mensurar o sentimento de rejeição derivado das relações interpessoais na população geral brasileira. **Métodos:** Os itens da ESRU foram elaborados com base em um modelo teórico e revisados por um painel de especialistas. A validação do ESRU exigiu um total de 30 voluntários. Foi realizada análise fatorial exploratória, seguida de seleção fatorial e análise fatorial confirmatória. A consistência interna e a confiabilidade dos itens foram avaliadas pelo coeficiente alfa de Cronbach. **Resultados:** Na análise exploratória foram extraídos quatro fatores. O cálculo do alfa de Cronbach identificou valor satisfatório de consistência interna de 0,9. A análise fatorial confirmatória indicou valores de GDI=0,5062 e RMSEA=0,1919 (IC95% = 0,1711 - 0,2126). O valor do GDI indicou que os fatores obtidos foram razoáveis e o RMSEA acima do esperado. **Conclusão:** A Escala de Sentimento de Rejeição da UNESP apresentou validade e consistência interna satisfatórias para mensurar o sentimento de rejeição na população adulta geral.

Palavras-chave: Avaliação psicológica. Psicometria. Rejeição psicológica. Sentimentos.

Sousa VI. Development and validation of a psychometric instrument to assess interpersonal stress [dissertação]. Araçatuba: Faculdade de Odontologia de Araçatuba da Universidade Estadual Paulista (Unesp); 2024.

ABSTRACT

People who have a high interpersonal rejection sensibility (IRS) can trigger negative emotions derived from many social events. The intensity of the feeling of rejection can lead to maladaptive behaviors which have been recognized as detrimental to physical and mental health. Although there are some instruments used to measure IRS, they are not focused on the subjective emotional experiences caused by the feeling of rejection. This study proposes to develop and validate the UNESP Rejection Feeling Scale (URFS), an instrument to measure the feeling of rejection derived from interpersonal relationships in the general Brazilian population. **Methods:** The URFS items were elaborated based on a theoretical model and reviewed by a panel of specialists. The URFS validation required a total of 30 volunteers. An exploratory factorial analysis was carried out, followed by factor selection and confirmatory factor analysis of internal consistency and reliability of the items were evaluated by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. **Results:** In the exploratory analysis four factors were extracted. Cronbach's alpha calculation identified a satisfactory internal consistency value of 0.9. Confirmatory factor analysis indicated values of GDI=0.5062 and RMSEA=0.1919 (95%CI = 0.1711 - 0.2126). The GDI value indicated that the factors obtained were reasonable and the RMSEA was above expectations. **Conclusion:** The UNESP Rejection Feeling Scale presented a satisfactory validity and internal consistency for measuring the feeling of rejection in the general adult population.

Keywords: Psychological assessment. Psychometrics. Psychological rejection. Feelings.

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Fig. 1. Summary of the theoretical model of “The UNESP Rejection Feeling Scale”.17

LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS

GFI	Goodness-of-fit index
IRS	Interpersonal Rejection Sensitivity
RMSEA	Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation

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1. INTRODUCTION¹

Understanding subjective feelings or emotional experiences has been proven to be essential to comprehending various aspects of human life. Many emotions can emerge by either impersonal or interpersonal events. In interpersonal situations, the emotional response is mediated by the reaction of another individual or group [1,2]. Interpersonal emotions can not only reflect reactions to real events, but they can also emerge from anticipated, remembered, or imagined social situations [3]. An example of a common interpersonal event is being exposed to rejection. When someone is exposed to interpersonal rejection, there is a high probability of feeling severe emotional (and even physical) pain and stress [1]. The feeling of rejection can derive from many social events such as romantic rejections, the dissolution of a friendship, estrangement from family members, or being excluded from a group [3]. Independent of the source, rejection has been pointed as one of the most distressing events in a person's life [1,3].

It is intrinsic for human beings to avoid rejection. The intensity of the feeling of rejection varies for each individual. While most individuals have the experience minimized due to development of adaptive coping mechanisms, some people seem more vulnerable to emotional dysregulation due to rejection [4]. In fact, the most common initial response to rejection is to behave in ways that promote acceptance, increasing the perception to social cues and helping behavior, all of that in an attempt to show that one has high relational value [1,5]. However, some individuals develop antisocial reactions to rejection, which can lead to maladaptive behaviors, including

¹Formatado de acordo com a revista "Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics" - <https://karger.com/pps/pages/guidelines>

avoidance, detachment and hostility, which can eventually lead to social isolation [5,6]. People who have a high rejection sensibility can trigger negative emotions even in the most subtle cue of relational devaluation, believing they are not accepted, or respected [5].

There is an emerging discussion about how positive emotions from healthy relationships can stimulate healthier behaviors, such as a healthier diet and increase in physical activities [7]. Social support has been proven to act as a protective factor for harmful habits like smoking and alcohol consumption; there is also proof that social support can help prevent some important illnesses, such as cardiovascular disease [7,8]. On the other hand, negative interactions, for example social rejection, have been recognized as detrimental to physical and mental health, including less physical activity and higher alcohol consumption [6,7]. As previously mentioned, social isolation can also be a consequence of rejection, leading to poor sleep quality, impaired immunity and mental disorders, including depression [1]. There are studies that point to a bidirectional relation between social rejection expectations and depressive symptoms, suggesting that a cognitive-behavioral intervention could intervene in the rejection sensitivity in order to prevent the development and progression of depressive symptoms [9]. This way, it becomes relevant to characterize and keep track of interpersonal rejection and the emotions derived from this state, due to the possibility of adapting treatment and prevention for certain diseases that can appear.

Different research methods have been used in the attempt to measure rejection. There are a few experiments used to manipulate the feeling of rejection [10]. For example, Cyberball and the train ride paradigm, both experiments select one participant to be ignored from a group activity [11,12]. However, this method is controversial due to the analysis of the results depending on the investigator's

interpretation. Another method to measure rejection is through psychological instruments [10]. The instruments can be self-reports or behavioral measures. Some instruments do not investigate a direct experience of rejection but expectations, associations, or memories of rejection [10]. For example, the Sensitivity to Rejection Scale and the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire, both instruments used to measure interpersonal rejection sensitivity [13,14]. Other instruments focus on evaluating the internal states following rejection, such as mood, arousal, and self-esteem [10]. However, there is a lack in literature of psychological instruments that help the researcher or clinician to measure the feeling of rejection triggered by human relationships. In this study, we developed and validated an instrument to identify and measure the feeling of rejection derived in different dimensions of relationships in the general Brazilian adult population.

5. CONCLUSION

The UNESP Rejection Feeling Scale (URFS) proves to be appropriate for measuring the feeling of rejection in the Brazilian adult population. The instrument presented a satisfactory validity and internal consistency for broader analysis of the feeling of rejection triggered in romantic, family and social relationships. Given the lack of similar instruments, the URFS can be a useful tool for professionals and researchers in assessing the feeling of rejection and its stressful consequences in human beings.

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