



# Violent Crime and Victimization: Portuguese Studies and Practices

2019 EAPL Annual Conference  
Santiago de Compostela  
July 17-20, 2019





# Childhood trauma victimization

Relationship with emotion regulation difficulties and self-esteem in a Portuguese sample

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# Childhood trauma victimization



- A large amount of research has shown the negative impact of childhood victimization in a lifetime (e.g., Yoon, Yoon, Park, & Yoon, 2018; Mossige & Huang, 2017).
- The experience of child abuse impacts the development of both internalizing (e.g., increased fear, guilt) and externalizing (e.g., aggressive behavior) problems (Yoon et al., 2018).
- Studies show that child abuse is a significant predictor of low self-esteem in adulthood (Matrángolo, Yaccarini, & Paz, 2017), and emotion regulation difficulties (Gilbert, 2012).

# Childhood trauma victimization



- Compared with the general population, victims of child maltreatment are at greater risk of having higher rates of mental health problems.
- Self-esteem may be a powerful mediator linking childhood abuse and symptomatology, including emotion regulation difficulties.

# Childhood trauma victimization – Emotion regulation difficulties

## A Portuguese recent study showed:

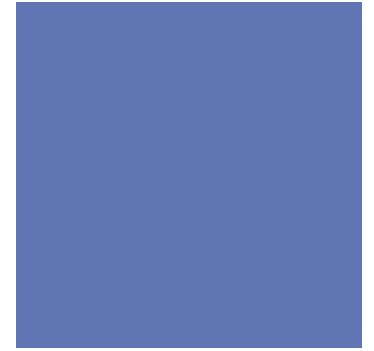
- There are a positive association between **Emotional Abuse** and **Anxiety**:
  - high levels of emotional abuse – high levels of anxiety.
- The **Emotional Neglect** and the **Physical Neglect** show positive correlations with the:
  - Emotion regulation difficulties,
  - Inability to Engage in Goal-Directed Behavior
  - Difficulty to Control Behavior
  - Limited Access to Regulatory Strategies

# Childhood trauma victimization – Self esteem

A Portuguese recent study showed:

- **Negative** relationship between the **self-esteem** and:
  - Emotional abuse,
  - Emotional neglect,
  - Sexual abuse.
- Higher childhood abuse – lower self esteem in adulthood.

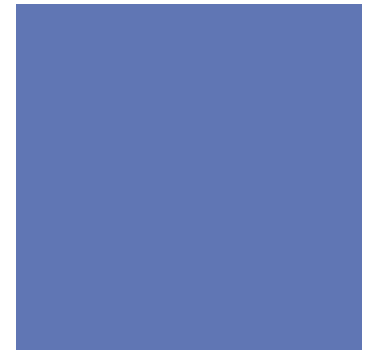
# Objectives



Analyze the relationship between childhood trauma victimization:

- adult emotion regulation difficulties
- self-esteem in adults

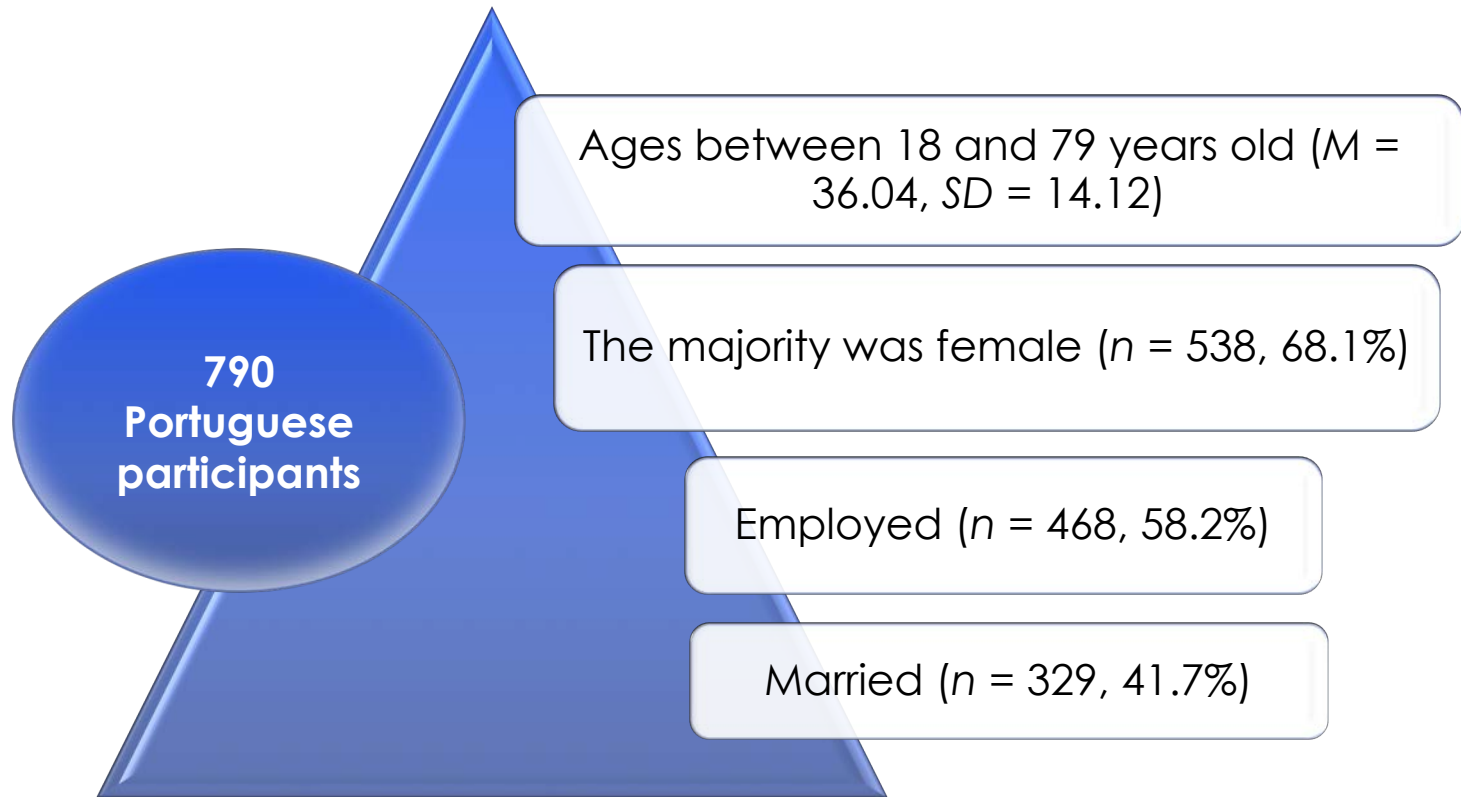
# Method



Participants answered online to the:

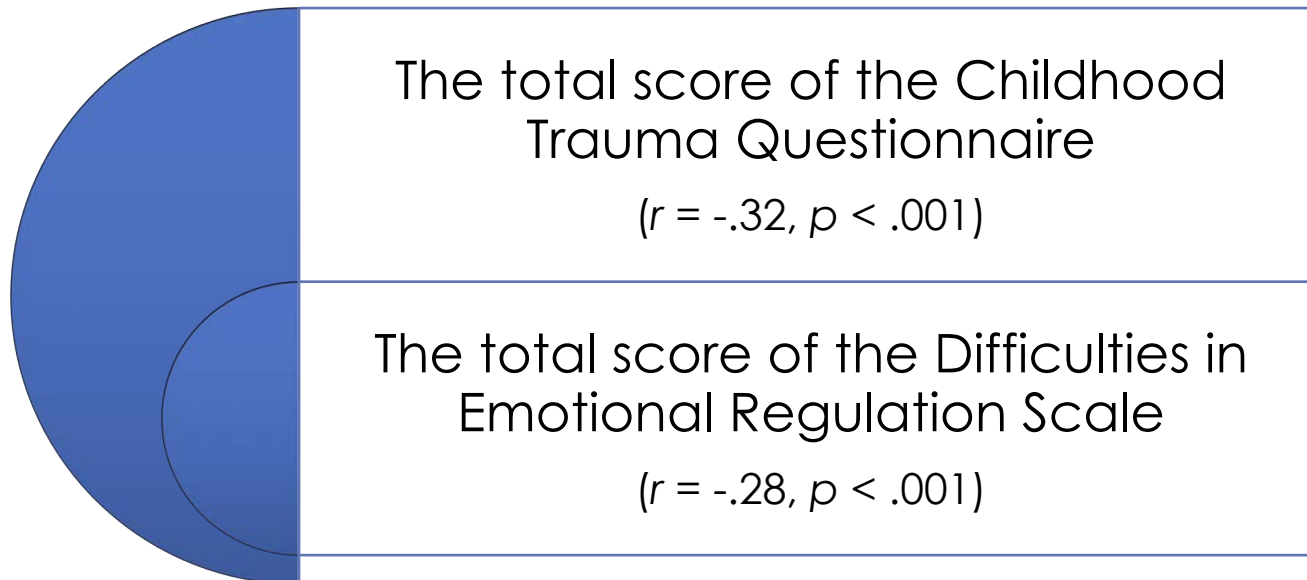
- Sociodemographic questionnaire,
- Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ-SF: Dias et al, 2013),
- Difficulties in Emotional Regulation Scale (DERS: Coutinho, Ribeiro, Ferreirinha, & Dias, 2010),
- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES: Santos & Maia, 2013).

# Method



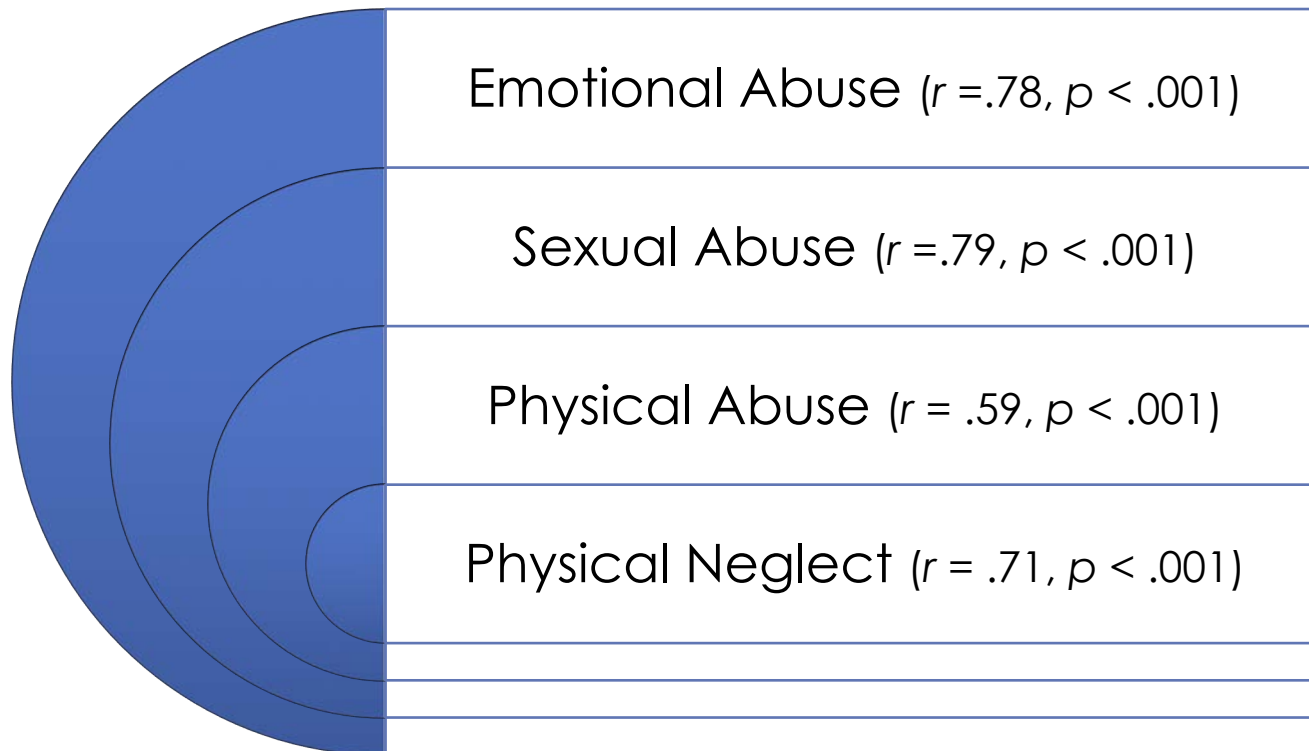
# Results

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale showed significant statistical negative correlations with



# Results

The total score of the CTQ revealed a statistical positive correlations with all their subscales:



# Results

The total Score of the CTQ, showed a positive statistical correlation with all the subscales of the DERS

Non-Acceptance of negative emotions ( $r = .13, p < .001$ )

Inability to Engage in Goal-Directed Behavior when experiencing negative emotions ( $r = .13, p < .001$ )

Difficulty to Control the Behavior when experiencing negative emotions ( $r = .17, p < .001$ )

# Results

The total Score of the CTQ, showed a positive statistical correlation with all the subscales of the DERS

Lack of Emotional Awareness ( $r = .07, p = .026$ )

Limited Access to Regulatory Strategies that are perceived to be effective ( $r = .19, p < .001$ )

Lack of Clarity ( $r = .16, p < .001$ )

# Results

The RSES was negatively correlated with all the subscales of the DERS



Non-Acceptance ( $r = -.16, p < .001$ )

Inability to Engage in Goal-Directed Behavior ( $r = -.17, p < .001$ )

Difficulty to Control the Behavior ( $r = -.16, p < .001$ )

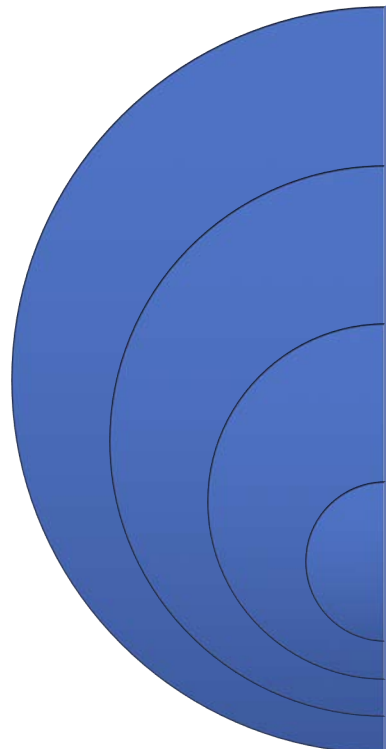
Lack of Emotional Awareness ( $r = -.12, p = .001$ )

Limited Access to Regulatory Strategies ( $r = -.26, p < .001$ )

Lack of Clarity ( $r = -.27, p < .001$ )

# Results

The RSES showed significant statistically negative correlations with all the subscales of the CTQ



Emotional Abuse ( $r = -.36, p < .001$ )
Sexual Abuse ( $r = -.14, p < .001$ )
Physical Abuse ( $r = -.14, p < .001$ )
Physical Neglect ( $r = -.26, p < .001$ )

# Results

The **Emotional Abuse** in childhood predicts **self-esteem** in adulthood in **15%** ( $p < .001$ ).

The **Emotional Neglect** in childhood predicts **self-esteem** in adulthood in **12.3%** ( $p < .001$ ).

# Results

In this sample, 424 participants experienced Trauma in the las 3 years

(e.g., stalking, physical abuse, sexual abuse)



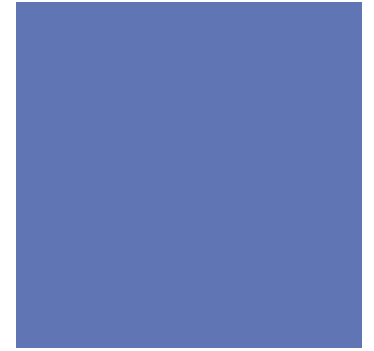
Participants that **experienced** Trauma – show higher scores of:

- Emotional abuse in childhood
- Emotional neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Physical neglect

Participants that **didn't** experience Trauma – show higher scores of:

- Self-esteem
- Conscientiousness of their emotions

# Conclusion



**This research highlights the frequent occurrence of various types of victimization over infant-juvenile development.**

(Finkelhor, Ormrod, & Turner, 2007)

# Conclusion

**Data pointed to a relationship between**

**the high childhood trauma victimization**

**the low self-esteem**

**and the increase of the emotion regulation difficulties  
on several levels.**

# Working with Childhood victimization

## Prevention

- Since self-esteem and emotional regulation are both important in a lifetime...
- that's important to prevent and to intervene in childhood victimization.

## Intervention

- Intervention should allow to promote reinforce and safeguard...
- the positive experiences throughout the stages of the life cycle.



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regulation difficulties and  
self-esteem in a Portuguese  
sample

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