

Adaptation of the Parentification Questionnaire for the Brazilian Context

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Abstract

Parentification involves a role reversal phenomenon between family subsystems, including role distortions and hierarchy inversion. The purpose of this study was to adapt and search for validity evidence of the Parentification Questionnaire for the Brazilian context. After translation procedures, the authors applied the instrument in 868 adults of four geographic regions of Brazil, of which 55.4 percent were women. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses revealed the solution of three parentification factors (i.e., emotional parenting, instrumental parenting and perceived unfairness) as adequate, with satisfactory internal consistency rates, following the construct theory. As expected, the authors also found relations with other variables; for example, people who presented parentification indicators in their speeches displayed higher levels in the three factors of the construct; while women displayed higher levels of parentification than men. The Brazilian version of the instrument showed satisfactory validity evidence and appropriate reliability indicators.

Keywords: parentification; test validity; family relations; parental role.

Adaptação do Questionário sobre a Parentalização para o Contexto Brasileiro

Resumo

A parentalização compreende um fenômeno de reversão de papéis entre os subsistemas familiares, incluindo distorções de papéis e inversão de hierarquia. Este estudo teve como objetivos adaptar e buscar evidências de validade do Questionário sobre a Parentalização para o contexto brasileiro. Após procedimentos de tradução, o instrumento foi aplicado em 868 adultos de quatro regiões do Brasil, sendo 55,4% mulheres. Análises fatoriais exploratórias e confirmatórias revelaram a solução de três fatores para a parentalização (i.e., parentalização emocional, parentalização instrumental e percepção de injustiça) como adequada, com satisfatórios índices de consistência interna, consonante com a teoria sobre o construto. Também se encontraram relações com outras variáveis conforme esperado, por exemplo, as pessoas que apresentavam indicadores de parentalização no discurso mostraram maiores níveis nos três fatores do construto; já as mulheres mostraram maiores níveis de parentalização do que os homens. A versão brasileira do instrumento apresentou satisfatórias evidências de validade e indicadores adequados de fidedignidade.

Palavras-chave: parentalização; validade do teste; relações familiares; papel dos pais.

Adaptación del Inventario de Parentalización para el Contexto Brasileño

Resumen

La parentalización comprende un fenómeno de reversión de roles entre los subsistemas familiares, incluyendo distorsiones de roles e inversión de jerarquía. Este estudio tuvo como objetivos adaptar y buscar evidencias de validez del Inventario sobre la Parentalización para el contexto brasileño. Después de procedimientos de traducción, el instrumento fue aplicado en 868 adultos de cuatro regiones de Brasil, siendo 55,4% mujeres. Análisis factoriales exploratorios y confirmatorios revelaron la solución de tres factores para la parentalización (i.e., parentalización emocional, parentalización instrumental y percepción de la injusticia) como adecuada, con índices de consistencia interna satisfactorios, consonante con la teoría sobre el constructo. Conforme esperado, también se encontraron relaciones con otras variables, por ejemplo: las personas que presentaban indicadores de parentalización en el discurso mostraron niveles más altos en los tres factores del constructo; ya mujeres mostraron niveles más altos de parentalización que los hombres. La versión brasileña del instrumento presentó satisfactorias evidencias de validez e indicadores adecuados de confiabilidad.

Palabras clave: parentalización; validez del test; relaciones familiares; rol de los padres.

During childhood or adolescence, it is not uncommon for the offspring to assume roles and responsibilities (normally restricted to adults) that are incompatible with their own development. These behaviors have been studied in the scientific literature

under the name of parentification. Parentification involves a role reversion phenomenon between family subsystems, including role distortions, and hierarchy inversion. (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Spark, 2012, Hooper & Wallace, 2010; Jurkovic, 1997).

Parentification has been studied in several contexts, such as people from divorced families (e.g., Jurkovic, Thirkield, & Morrell, 2001), with family members with mental and physical disorders (e.g., Boumans & Dorant, 2018; Tomeny, Barry, & Fair, 2016; Van Loon, Van De Ven, Van Doesum, Hosman, & Wittman, 2017), with parents who abuse substances such as alcohol and drugs (e.g., Clerici & Vanin, 2002; Goglia, Jurkovic, Burt, & Burge-Callaway, 1992; Pasternak & Schier, 2012; Tedgard, Rastam, & Wirtberg, 2018), and with workaholic parents (Carroll & Robinson, 2000).

In these family situations, there is often a decrease or absence of parental care and support for the children, and children's parental needs are not met. As a result, children break generational boundaries and play themselves, the care-giving role, which is typical of adulthood. However, the rupture of generational boundaries between parents and their kids has important implications to the children's psychological development, threatening to interfere with security, autonomy, individuality and with the experience of important stages of childhood/adolescence (Kerig, 2005).

Even though some research shows that parentification is associated with positive consequences to the person (e.g., Boumans & Dorant, 2018; Khafi, Yates, & Luthar, 2014), it has been frequently related to several negative outcomes. It has been observed that parentification has a direct effect on teenager's externalizing problems (e.g., aggressiveness), and predicts the increase of internalizing problems (e.g., depression) (Van Loon et al., 2017). In addition, the greater the levels of parentification, the higher the perception of stress by the person and the levels of impostor syndrome (Castro, Jones, & Mirsalimi, 2004; Van Loon et al., 2017). Parentification positively predicts the global psychopathological severity level and somatic symptoms (Hooper & Wallace, 2010). Hooper, De Coster, White e Votz (2011), in a meta-analysis, found a positive connection between parentification during the childhood and the psychopathology in adulthood.

Besides being related to health indicators, the parentification has effects on interpersonal relationships. Baggett, Shaffer e Muetzelfeld (2015), for example, found that daughters that reported having experienced paternal parentification showed less satisfaction with their own love relationship. Researchers also investigated the role of parentification as a mediator of the relationship between parenting behaviors and positive (well-being) and negative outcomes (depression) (Burton et al., 2018).

Jurkovic et al. (2001) highlight three important dimensions of parentification; emotional parentification, instrumental parentification and perceived unfairness. The emotional parentification occurs when the child/adolescent plays the role of fulfilling the emotional or psychological needs in the family (e.g., being parent's confidant, mediating conflicts), having the fact that parents do not perform such functions properly. On the other hand, the instrumental parentification occurs when the child/adolescent is responsible for maintaining the physical well-being of the family (e.g., cleaning the house, shopping, look after siblings). The perceived unfairness in the parentification process occurs when emotional and instrumental care are not recognized or legitimized by other family members, not even support or reciprocity before such care. According to Jurkovic et al., the destructive parentification happens when emotional and instrumental care takes place over a long period, they are inadequate for the children/adolescent development and when there is a high perception of unfairness.

The emotional parentification was positively associated to depression, anxiety, global psychopathological symptoms, and anxious and avoidant attachment (e.g., Cho & Lee, 2019; Hooper & Wallace, 2010; Madden & Shaffer, 2016). In addition, the emotional parentification has an indirect negative effect on constructive communication in the romantic relationship of young adults, mediated by anxious attachment (Madden & Shaffer, 2016). On the contrary, instrumental parentification has proven to be positively correlated with global psychopathological symptoms and avoidant attachment (e.g., Hooper & Wallace, 2010; Madden & Shaffer, 2016). Furthermore, perceived unfairness is a positive predictor of depressive symptoms (Choo & Lee, 2019).

Other studies have investigated parentification in parent-child relationship. Burton et al. (2018) found that the perceived benefits of parentification (similar to low perceived unfairness) plays a mediator role between the positive parenting behaviors and well-being (i.e., positive and negative affect). Additionally, in another study, Nuttall, Zhang, Valentino e Borkowski (2019) found a positive squared relationship, U-shaped, between mothers' instrumental parentification and their children externalizing behaviors (e.g. aggressiveness). Therefore, the higher the mothers' parentification level or instrumental infantilization during their own childhood/adolescence, the greater the children's externalizing behaviors are.

Studies have investigated sociodemographic differences in parentification. Ethnic differences have

been observed in several studies (e.g., Jurkovic et al., 2001; Hooper, Tomek, Bond, & Reif, 2015). Jurkovic et al. (2001), for example, have found that African Americans showed higher levels of instrumental caregiving in their families of origin than European Americans. Gender differences were also investigated (e.g., Burton et al., 2018; Hooper, DeCoster, et al., 2011; Hooper et al., 2015); however, the findings are not uniform. While some studies have found that women show higher levels of parentification than men (e.g., Burnett, Jones, Bliwise, & Ross, 2006; Jurkovic, 1997), others point out that men show higher levels of parentification than women (e.g., Hooper et al., 2015), and suffer greater negative consequences from parentification (Diaz, Siskowski, & Connors, 2007). Besides, there are studies that did not find differences in parentification levels between genders (e.g., Cho & Lee, 2018; Jurkovic, et al., 2001). Finally, precarious financial conditions also seem to be related to a higher predominance of parentification (Bekir, McLellan, Childress, & Gariti, 1993; Burnett, et al., 2006; Jelastopulu & Tzoumerka, 2013), since, under these conditions, families would have fewer resources to face diversities, entailing all family members, including the children, to execute more functions and greater responsibilities than expected.

Instruments to measure parentification

Several instruments to measure parentification were suggested in the literature (e.g., Boumans & Dorant, 2018; Hooper, Doehler, Wallace, & Hannah, 2011; Jurkovic et al., 2001; Mika, Bergner, & Baum, 1987; Session & Jurkovic, 1986, as cited in Jurkovic, 1997). Most of them have a retrospective nature; in other words, the person is asked to answer the items thinking about how their family of origin's experience was during childhood and adolescence.

One of the first suggested instrument to measure parentification was the Parentification Questionnaire (QP, Session & Jurkovic, 1986, as cited in Jurkovic, 1997), consists of 42 items, with dichotomous answer format (true/false). The items outline the instrumental parentification, the emotional parentification, and the perceived unfairness experienced during childhood and adolescence in the family of origin. In the original version, a total parentification score is computed. The higher the score, the greater the parentification degree. The QP presented adequate indicators of internal consistency, through the Cronbach's alpha coefficient equal to .83 and Spearman-Brown equal to .85, and, the

reproducibility through the test-retest reliability equal to .86 (Goglia et al., 1992; Jurkovic, 1997).

Among the instruments that aim at measuring parentification, as far as we know, only the QP (Session & Jurkovic, 1986, as cited in Jurkovic, 1997) does not include items related to sibling's care. Although caring for siblings can be considered a form of instrumental parentification, the absence of items about siblings allows the questionnaire to be applied to individuals who are only children. Consequently, the QP can be used with any kind of family configuration.

Despite the importance of the parentification phenomenon, for example, its repercussions for mental health and interpersonal relationships, there is no knowledge of available instruments for the Brazilian context. A QP adapted version to the Brazilian context can be used in the psychological assessment in the most diverse contexts, such as couple and family therapy. Therefore, this research aims to adapt and seek validity evidences for the Brazilian population from Parentification Questionnaire of Session e Jurkovic (1986, as cited in Jurkovic, 1997).

Method

Participants

A total of 868 adults aged between 18 and 69 years old participated in the study ($M = 33.7$ years old; $SD = 12.9$), 55.4% women ($n = 481$). Most of the participants were heterosexual (89.7%), and the remainder were homosexual (6.1%) and bisexual (4.2%). Regarding education level, 39.8% had incomplete higher education, 39.0% complete higher education, 13.0% complete high school and the remaining 8.2% incomplete high school. As for the socioeconomic strata, 26.3% of the participants self-classified themselves in the low/medium-low category; 55.1% medium category; and 18.6% medium-high/high category. The majority of the participants, 40.6%, were from Rio de Janeiro's state; 21.5% from Rio Grande do Sul; 13.1% from Minas Gerais; 10.1% from Pernambuco; 8.1% from Distrito Federal; 5.5% from São Paulo; and 1.0% from Mato Grosso do Sul.

Regarding marital status, the majority of the participants, 58.2%, was single; 33.5% married; 4.1% divorced; 1.7% remarried; 1.4% widowers; and the remaining 1% did not disclose marital status. Most part of the participants, 70.1%, claimed to have lived in a family with married parents; 18.1% with divorced parents; 7.5% in a single-parent family; 4.3% in a family with

remarried parents. About the siblings, 34.4% claimed to have only older brothers; 29.5%, only younger siblings; 19.5%, both older and younger siblings; 16.7%, no siblings.

Instruments

Through a biographical evaluation form, general data was collected about the participants, such as gender, age, sexual orientation, education, marital status, place where they lived, social condition, family configuration, age of siblings. In addition, the questionnaire contained the instrument to evaluate the parentification level of the participants and an open question regarding childhood/adolescence. The open question, with discursive response, asked the participant to freely write about experiences they had in their family during their growing phase (childhood and adolescence).

The Parentification Questionnaire (Session & Jurkovic, 1986, as cited in Jurkovic, 1997; adapted for Brazil in this study), in its original version, was composed of 42 answered items in a dichotomous format. The final version, adapted in this study, counts with 24 items. The items correspond to statements that describe a childish experience, that is, an experience that results from the time the participant lived at home, including adolescence, with his family. The participants must indicate whether the statement describes a true or false experience for him. Examples of items: *“In my family, I often felt requested to do more than my share”*; *“In my mind, my family’s well-being was my priority”*; *“When I was a child, people thought I was mature for my age”*.

Procedures

Translation

A certified bilingual professional translated the 42 items of the Parentification Questionnaire from North American English to Brazilian Portuguese, followed by the instruction to answer them – composing the Parentification Questionnaire. The described translation was submitted to a back-translation procedure, in which another certified bilingual professional translated the result in Portuguese back into English. At a second stage, the translation into Portuguese, the version translated back into English and the original instrument were presented to the participants in the research group coordinated by the first author. At the time, this group was composed by three bilingual English-Portuguese PhD professors, four post-doctoral students, in addition to doctoral, master’s and

graduated psychology students. Then, the group participants evaluated the versions of the instrument in order to determine the translation to Portuguese that would preserve the content of the original items. Next, the three professors of the research group compiled the suggestions and created a final version of the instrument, always looking for the sentence in Portuguese that would best highlight the original meaning in English, in the North American culture. Finally, at a later stage, this final version was used in a simulated application with the members of the research group (pilot study). Since no questions or suggestions emerged from the simulated application, the search for validity evidence for the instrument continued.

Data collection

Data collection took place totally in person. The printed questionnaires were sent to associated researchers from several Brazilian states. After a brief explanation about the project, researchers invited adults to participate in the survey. After signing the informed consent form, those who agreed to participate received and answered the questionnaire in person. The research was referred to the Human Research Ethics Committee and obtained assent under the Protocol No 51207315.2.0000.5699, Plataforma Brasil.

Data analysis

First, in search of validity evidence based on the internal structure of the test, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were performed using *Factor* software version 10.9.02 (Ferrando & Lorenzo-Seva, 2017) and R version 3.5.3 (R Core Team, 2019), *lavaan* package, version 0.6.3 (Rosseel, 2012). For these analyses, data from 98.7% of the participants who answered all items from the Parentification Questionnaire were used ($n = 857$).

Seeking other validity evidence for the instrument, 156 responses from participants were randomly selected regarding the open question about family experiences in childhood and adolescence (from a total of 508 participants who answered it). This number of responses, representing 30.7% of the total, was chosen due the time limitation to complete the qualitative analyses of the responses from all 508 participants. These responses were sent to two evaluators previously trained to recognize parentification indicators in the speech. The evaluators analyzed the responses and classified the people into two groups: a group in which the answers did not present parentification indicators in the

speech ($n = 98$) and another group that did present ($n = 58$). Thus, differences in parentification means between these two groups were tested using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

Differences in parentification means were also tested, using MANOVA, between men and women, people with distinct configuration from the family of origin (married, divorced, remarried, single-parent), people with different phratry configuration (no siblings, only younger siblings, only older siblings, with older and younger siblings). Additionally, correlation coefficients between parentification, age and education were calculated. Finally, in search of reliability indicators, the internal consistency coefficient by the Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20) was calculated, which is similar to the Alpha coefficient, but more appropriate to instruments with dichotomous data (Pasquali, 2003).

Results

In order to test the instrument's structure, a factor analysis was carried out based on the tetrachoric correlation matrix of the 42 items in the Parentification Questionnaire, extraction method Robust Diagonally Weighted Least Squares (RDWLS), rotation Weighted Oblimin, having the fact that the variables had binary response options (see Muthén & Kaplan, 1992). The data proved to be adequate for the factorization, such that Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) = .88; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: $\chi^2(861, N = 857) = 6,994.9; p < .001$. Initially, considering the eigenvalue > 1 factor retention criteria, the emergence of 11 factors was observed. However, a parallel analysis with 500 simulated samples, based on the Minimum Rank Factor (Timmerman & Lorenzo-Seva, 2011), showed that the data variance was greater than the simulated only for the first three factors. These results suggested the retention of the three factors for the instrument, which explained 41.2% of the variance.

An inspection of the items factorial loads revealed that 12 items had no loads greater than .30 in any of the three factors. Consequently, these items were excluded, and a factorial analysis was performed again with the remaining 30 items, using the same method of extraction, rotation and retention as in the previous analysis. Once again, the data proved to be adequate for the factorization, such that KMO = .89; Bartlett's sphericity test: $\chi^2(435, N = 857) = 5,530.1; p < .001$. The emergence of six factors was observed considering the eigenvalue > 1 , with the following values: 8.88, 4.32,

2.04, 1.43, 1.20, 1.07. The parallel analysis with 500 simulated samples, based on the Minimum Rank Factor (Timmerman & Lorenzo-Seva, 2011), showed that the data variance was greater than the simulated only for the first three factors (observed variance of the fourth factor = 5.02; simulated variance of the fourth factor = 6.82%). Therefore, it was decided to extract three factors for the instrument. The three factors explained 50.8% of the data variance. The factorial loads can be seen in Table 1.

It was verified that seven items presented cross loads, factorial loads with similar values in more than one factor (difference in loads between factors less than .05). In order to determine the most appropriate factor for these items, the internal consistency coefficient KR-20 was calculated and it was observed in which factors these items shared more variance with the other items. In this process, it was decided to have an item removed that reduced internal consistency in all three factors. After the decision about the factors underlying the items, the KR-20 coefficients for the items in each factor were recalculated. Therefore, it was observed that five items reduced the coefficients in their factors, and it was decided to remove them from the final version of the instrument. The final version of the instrument remained with 24 items. Factor I, called Perceived Unfairness, featured seven items and KR-20 = .80. Factor II, called Emotional Parentification, featured eight items and KR-20 = .67. Factor III, named Instrumental Parentification, featured nine items and KR-20 = .72. A factor analysis conducted with these remaining 24 items, using the same extraction and rotation method as the previous analysis, reinforced the adequacy of the three factors, which explained 56.5% of the data variance (CFI = .99; GFI = 1.00; NNFI = .99; RMSEA = .023).

Subsequently, the correlations between the factor scores were tested and significant coefficients were observed, such that between factor I and factor II $r_{ho} = .22$ was found; between factor I and factor III, $r_{ho} = .44$; between factor II and factor III, $r_{ho} = .44$. Considering these correlations, and the fact that the instrument was designed to measure the global parentification construct, the adequacy of the data to a reflective hierarchical model was tested. A second-order general factor was set up, explaining the three other factors identified in the exploratory analysis, which, on the other hand, explained their related items. For this purpose, we started from the tetrachoric correlation matrix, and we applied Diagonally Weighted

Table 1.

Factor loading of the items, Factorial Analysis with the Diagonally Weighted Least Squares Method (DWLS) and Weighted Oblimin Rotation

| | I | II | III | <i>h</i> ² |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Item 5 | .80 | -.01 | .21 | .67 |
| Item 15 | .79 | -.06 | .36 | .79 |
| Item 16 | .69 | -.07 | .31 | .61 |
| Item 32 | -.76 | .27 | .02 | .79 |
| Item 29 | -.66 | .22 | -.13 | .60 |
| Item 21 | -.66 | -.04 | -.09 | .42 |
| Item 10 | .45 | -.09 | .43 | .43 |
| Item 24 | .03 | -.70 | .03 | .52 |
| Item 03 | .61 | .64 | -.06 | .57 |
| Item 12 | .60 | .61 | -.08 | .55 |
| Item 26 | .19 | -.60 | .28 | .66 |
| Item 20 | .03 | .56 | -.06 | .33 |
| Item 30 | -.40 | -.46 | .15 | .33 |
| Item 02 | .17 | -.34 | .38 | .41 |
| Item 35 | .32 | -.33 | .38 | .50 |
| Item 31 | .03 | -.30 | -.67 | .41 |
| Item 13 | .13 | -.11 | .64 | .49 |
| Item 04 | .29 | -.17 | .62 | .58 |
| Item 40 | -.15 | -.06 | -.61 | .36 |
| Item 09 | .53 | .12 | .60 | .54 |
| Item 01 | .08 | .02 | -.50 | .26 |
| Item 37 | .01 | .35 | -.50 | .49 |
| Item 28 | .42 | -.18 | .51 | .57 |
| Item 07 | .39 | -.10 | .40 | .35 |
| Item 11 | -.21 | -.04 | .37 | .19 |
| Item 22 | .52 | .33 | -.14 | .33 |
| Item 34 | -.27 | .33 | -.05 | .25 |
| Item 36 | .48 | .02 | -.17 | .27 |
| Item 38 | -.04 | -.04 | .50 | .27 |
| Item 39 | -.38 | .39 | .12 | .37 |
| Number of items final version | 7 | 8 | 9 | |
| <i>M</i> | 0.37 | 0.44 | 0.40 | |
| <i>SD</i> | 0.31 | 0.26 | 0.27 | |
| KR-20 coefficient | .80 | .67 | .72 | |

Note. Factorial loads in bold indicates the factor in which the item was retained. Items 11, 22, 34, 36, 38 and 39 were excluded from the final version of the instrument and from the average calculations, standard deviations and KR-20 coefficients. The numbering of the items corresponds to the original version.

KR-20 coefficient for Global Parentification factor is equal to .83.

Least Squares (DWLS) estimator, considering that the variables had binary response options. The following adjustment indexes were obtained for the model: $\chi^2(249, N = 857) = 1646.1; p < .001$; Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) = .91; Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = .90; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .91; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .081 [I.C. 90%, .077 – .085]. The KR-20 coefficient for the global factor was .83.

Seeking other validity evidence for the instrument, differences in the level of parentification were tested between those who presented and those who did not present parentification indicators in answer to the open question, about family experiences during childhood and adolescence. A significant difference was established between the two groups for the first-order multifactorial construct Λ de Wilks = .68; $F(3, 152) = 23.7; p < .001; \eta^2_p = .32$. The univariate analysis showed that people with parentification speech presented higher levels of Perceived Unfairness, Emotional Parentification and Instrumental Parentification than those without parentification speech, respectively

$F(1, 154) = 31.4; p < .001; d = 0.93, F(1, 154) = 50.6; p < .001; d = 1.18, F(1, 154) = 64.8; p < .001; d = 1.33$. The means and standard deviations of the groups can be seen in Table 2.

Differences in parentification were also found as a first-order multifactorial construct between men and women, Λ de Wilks = .93; $F(3, 861) = 22.0; p < .001; \eta^2_p = .07$, between people with different family settings, Λ de Wilks=.97; $F(9, 2027) = 2.44; p = .009; \eta^2_p = .01$, between people with different phratry configuration, Λ de Wilks=.94; $F(9, 2059) = 5.76; p < .001; \eta^2_p = .02$, and between people with different socioeconomic levels, Λ de Wilks=.96; $F(6, 1724) = 6.63; p < .001; \eta^2_p = .02$. The results of the univariate tests showed that women presented higher levels than men in the three parentification factors: Perceived Unfairness, $F(1, 863) = 23.3; p < .001; d = 0.33$, Emotional Parentification, $F(1, 863) = 55.3; p < .001; d = 0.51$, and Instrumental Parentification, $F(1, 863) = 21.1; p < .001; d = 0.31$.

Among groups of people with different family settings, *post hoc* Bonferroni tests show that people from “single-parent families” had higher levels of

Table 2.

Averages and Standard Deviation in Parentification for Research Groups

| | <i>n</i> | Perceived Unfairness | | Emotional Parentification | | Instrumental Parentification | | Global Parentification | |
|---|----------|----------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|
| | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| No parentification speech | 98 | 0.31 | 0.34 | 0.36 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.30 | 0.33 | 0.29 |
| With parentification speech | 58 | 0.61 | 0.28 | 0.72 | 0.26 | 0.71 | 0.26 | 0.68 | 0.20 |
| Men | 384 | 0.32 | 0.30 | 0.37 | 0.24 | 0.36 | 0.24 | 0.35 | 0.19 |
| Women | 481 | 0.42 | 0.32 | 0.50 | 0.27 | 0.44 | 0.27 | 0.45 | 0.22 |
| Family of origin – married | 588 | 0.35 | 0.30 | 0.43 | 0.25 | 0.39 | 0.26 | 0.39 | 0.21 |
| Family of origin – divorced | 152 | 0.41 | 0.32 | 0.49 | 0.29 | 0.42 | 0.28 | 0.44 | 0.23 |
| Family of origin – remarried | 36 | 0.46 | 0.31 | 0.48 | 0.32 | 0.44 | 0.27 | 0.46 | 0.23 |
| Family of origin – single-parent | 63 | 0.48 | 0.34 | 0.45 | 0.27 | 0.44 | 0.25 | 0.45 | 0.20 |
| Phratry – no siblings | 142 | 0.37 | 0.32 | 0.47 | 0.23 | 0.41 | 0.26 | 0.42 | 0.21 |
| Phratry – only with younger siblings | 251 | 0.40 | 0.32 | 0.51 | 0.28 | 0.44 | 0.28 | 0.45 | 0.23 |
| Phratry – only with older siblings | 293 | 0.36 | 0.30 | 0.39 | 0.25 | 0.34 | 0.24 | 0.36 | 0.19 |
| Phratry – with older and younger siblings | 166 | 0.38 | 0.32 | 0.41 | 0.26 | 0.45 | 0.27 | 0.42 | 0.22 |
| Socioeconomic strata – low/medium-low | 228 | 0.45 | 0.32 | 0.46 | 0.25 | 0.48 | 0.25 | 0.47 | 0.21 |
| Socioeconomic strata – medium | 478 | 0.36 | 0.31 | 0.44 | 0.26 | 0.39 | 0.26 | 0.40 | 0.21 |
| Socioeconomic strata – medium-high/high | 161 | 0.33 | 0.31 | 0.43 | 0.27 | 0.33 | 0.25 | 0.36 | 0.22 |

Perceived Unfairness than those from “married families”, $F(3, 835) = 5.61$; $p = .001$ $d = 0.43$. Regarding the different phratry configurations, the results were significant to the Emotional Parentification, $F(3, 848) = 11.2$; $p < .001$, and Instrumental Parentification factors, $F(1, 848) = 8.23$; $p < .001$. In the case of Emotional Parentification, *post hoc* Bonferroni tests indicated that “people with no siblings” showed higher levels than “only with older siblings”, $d = 0.33$; in the meantime, “people with only younger siblings” had higher levels than the ones with “only older siblings”, $d = 0.46$, and the “with younger and older siblings”, $d = 0.36$. As for Instrumental Parentification, those with “just younger siblings” and “with younger and older siblings” showed higher levels than “just with older siblings”, respectively, $d = 0.37$ and $d = 0.41$.

Finally, regarding the parentification differences between people with different socioeconomic strata, univariate analyses showed differences between groups for the factors Perceived Unfairness, $F(2, 864) = 9.16$; $p < .001$, and Instrumental Parentification, $F(2, 864) = 16.7$; $p < .001$. In the Perceived Unfairness, people from the ‘low/medium-low’ strata showed higher levels than those from the strata ‘medium’ $d = 0.30$, and ‘medium-high/high’, $d = 0.38$. In the Instrumental Parentification factor, people from ‘low/medium/low’ strata also had higher levels than those of strata ‘medium’, $d = 0.34$, and ‘medium-high/high’, $d = 0.56$. Besides that, people from ‘medium’ strata showed higher levels than those from ‘medium-high/high’ strata, $d = 0.29$.

Discussion

The objective of this research was to adapt and seek validity evidences for Brazil of an instrument that measures adults parentification, proposed by Session and Jurkovic (1986, as cited in Jurkovic, 1997). Initially, the adequacy of the three-factor structure for the instrument was verified using exploratory analyses. The structure that was found for the instrument is consistent with other studies about the construct (e.g., Hooper & Wallace, 2010; Jurkovic, et al., 2001). These factors concern the Perceived Unfairness, the Emotional Parentification, and the Instrumental Parentification (Jurkovic, 1997; Jurkovic, et al., 2001). The Perceived Unfairness factor is related to the lack of recognition or legitimacy by other family members, regarding the care of the child/adolescent. The Emotional Parentification factor refers to the child/adolescent that plays the role of fulfilling the

emotional or psychological needs in the family. On the other hand, Instrumental Parentification occurs when the child/adolescent is responsible for maintaining the physical well-being of the family.

In addition, the adequacy of a model with a second-order factor explaining the three first-order factors was verified (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013; Vehkalahti & Everitt, 2019). The results coincide with the theory that underpin that parentification is composed of a global and three specific factors. The global parentification factor relates to performing care functions (instrumental and emotional) in the family during childhood/adolescence, along with high perceived Unfairness (Jurkovic et al., 2001). This result suggests that the instrument can be used to evaluate the specific factors and one global parentification factor.

It is noteworthy that in the Brazilian version of the Parentification Questionnaire (Session & Jurkovic, 1986, as cited in Jurkovic, 1997), 18 items out of 42 of the original version were excluded. The exclusion of items was expected because, although the original instrument contains items that refers to specific factors, it was not built with the intention of differentiating the factors (Jurkovic et al., 2001). Therefore, in this study, only items with moderate shared variance with the factors were retained. Both the three first-order and the global second-order factor showed satisfactory internal consistency rates, despite that Emotional Parentification factor presented $KR-20 = .67$ (Pasquali, 2003). These results are similar to those found in other studies (e.g., Goglia et al., 1992; Burnett et al., 2006). Future studies can be developed in order to increase the accuracy of the Emotional Parentification factor. For example, creating or inserting items from existing scales that measure the same factor.

In addition to evidence of validity based on the internal structure, the instrument also showed relation with other variables as theoretically expected. For example, it was observed that in the face of an open question about family experiences during childhood and adolescence, compared with those who respond with no parentification indicators, the participants who responded with parentification indicators obtained higher averages regarding parentification factors. These results indicate that the questionnaire is able to properly differentiate people that, in their speech, showed parentification indicators.

The results also revealed that women obtained higher averages in the three parentification factors. These results are in accordance with results of studies

from other countries that used this same instrument (e.g., Burnett et al., 2006; Jurkovic, 1997). Additionally, these results were expected since the care function is performed more often and intensely by women, both regarding the house and people (IBGE, Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics 2019; Kehjstadt, 2018). Furthermore, women, youngsters and adults tend to show higher levels of the socialization personality factor and altruism aspect than men (De Bolle et al., 2015). These factors are strongly associated with cooperative behavior, which could explain the higher parentification. Future studies can investigate factor relations.

These result of gender differences is also in line with other Brazilian studies and statistics. For example, Dellazana-Zanon, Zanon and Freitas (2014) found that girls accomplished, on average, more household chores than boys. According to IBGE (2017), in 2016, girls between the ages of five and 17 dedicated more weekly hours to housework and care for people (children, adolescents, elders or people with special needs) than boys in the same age group. Girls between the ages of five and 13 dedicated, on average, 6.9 hours/week in these activities; on the other hand, the boys, 5.8 hours/week. This difference between girls and boys becomes even more evident when we compare adolescents between 14 and 17 years old: girls dedicated 12.3 hours/week; boys 8.1 hours/week.

The data also showed that people with single-parent families presented higher levels of Perceived Unfairness than those from married families. This result endorses the Haxhe postulations (2013), Jurkovic (1997) and Kehjstadt (2018), that emphasize single-parenting as a context that encourages children's parentification process. In these cases, the parental figure may be less available for the care functions, increasing the children's perceived unfairness. For a better understanding of how the configuration of the family of origin is associated with the child's perception of unfairness, it would be necessary, however, to conduct more research with this population.

Regarding phratry, the results revealed that people who only have younger siblings tend to show higher levels of emotional and instrumental parentification than those who have only older siblings. This result is in line with other national and international surveys that investigate siblings' relationships. Frequently, older siblings are important caregivers of their younger siblings (Dallazana-Zanon et al., 2014) and take over many family responsibilities (Blaciotti, 2019; Kehjstadt, 2018; Wu, Kim, Nagata, & Kim, 2018).

The results also highlighted differences in the parentification levels between different socioeconomic strata. Individuals of lower socioeconomic levels showed higher levels of Instrumental Parentification and Perceived Unfairness. These differences were expected, since, in families with lower socioeconomic conditions, there is a higher probability that the family will not be able to adequately meet the basic needs of its members. This situation may cause that the children, while still young, have to instrumentally help the family, consequently being substitutes, for example, of those responsible for carrying out domestic activities. Research about parentification has also highlighted the relationship between poor economic conditions and high levels of parentification (Bekir et al., 1993; Burnett et al., 2006; Jelastopulu & Tzoumerka, 2013). Furthermore, we can assume that children who provide parental care, often inappropriate to their age, may feel wronged, particularly, when compared to other similar ones who do not execute such functions, and when such behaviors are not recognized by the family (Féres-Carneiro, Benghozi, Mello, & Magalhães, 2019).

It is important to highlight that the interpretations of the results should take into account the limitations of this study. The technique used for the sample selection was the non-probabilistic type, and eventually, may have restricted the diversity of participants. In addition, caution is recommended with the interpretations of the results of different levels of parentification between groups (gender, family of origin, phratry and socioeconomic strata), given that the effects proportions founded were relatively small.

Future studies should be conducted to search for other validity evidence in the Parentification Questionnaire. It is suggested, for example, that longitudinal studies be carried out to monitor the development of parentalized people during childhood and adolescence. It is also important to carry out studies that investigate the impact on the health of parentalized people. These studies can contribute to the knowledge about the parentification construct, specially, in the Brazilian context.

Finally, the adaptation of the Parentification Questionnaire to the Brazilian context will allow its use assisting families and couples in the psychological services of school-clinics in the country, becoming another instrument for evaluate family members, for research and intervention purposes. The results of these evaluations, used in clinic, allow very important data regarding

family dynamics to be revealed in a shorter time, collaborating in a relevant way for the development and effectiveness of the therapeutic process.

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