

**THE PREVALENCE OF EXTERNALIZING AND INTERNALIZING
BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS AMONG PREADOLESCENTS AND
ADOLESCENTS IN TRANSYLVANIA**

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Introduction

The prevalence of ODD and CD in Castile and Leon, Spain is 5.6% according to a previous study [5].

According to a national survey in Spain, 22.1% of 4-15 year old Spanish children and adolescents show risk factors for mental problems or behavioral disorders (eg. behavioral problems) [8]. In another study researchers found emotional problems ranged from 8.7-22.6%, while behavioral problems ranged from 2.4-14.6% in a population of 11-18 years of age [9].

In a Sri Lanka population of 7-11 years, 13.8% of emotional and behavioral problems have been found, where 8.8% of children showed internalization problems and 8.8% externalization problems. Male participants showed higher externalization problems than female participants [4].

Aims of the study

The main purpose of the research is to calculate the prevalence of preadolescent and adolescent externalizing and internalizing behavioral problems in a population of 10-19 years old preadolescents and adolescents using the self-reported form of the Hungarian version of CBCL. The goal of the research is to examine the results using the standard values and the mean of the population to create the categories.

Results

Table 1- The distribution of values by gender based on the standard values

| Gender | Disorder | | | Externalization | | | TPS | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| | Internalization | | | | | | | | |
| | N | S | C | N | S | C | N | S | C |
| Female N (%) | 141(40.4) | 26(7.4) | 12(3.4) | 169(48.4) | 8(2.3) | 2(0.6) | 152(43.6) | 24(6.9) | 3(0.9) |
| Male N (%) | 148(42.4) | 17(4.9) | 5(1.4) | 138(39.5) | 20(5.7) | 12(3.4) | 146(41.8) | 17(4.9) | 7(2.0) |
| Total N (%) | 289(82.8) | 43(12.3) | 17(4.9) | 307(88.0) | 28(8.0) | 17(4.0) | 298(85.4) | 41(11.7) | 10(2.9) |
| Chi square test (significance) | | | 4.40(0.01) | | | 15.19(0.00) | | | 2.69(0.26) |
| N-Normal, S-Subclinical, C-Clinical | | | | | | | | | |

Table 2- The distribution of values by age/school based on the standard values

| Age/School | Disorder | | | Externalization | | | TPS | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|------------|-----------------|---------|------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| | Internalization | | | | | | | | |
| | N | S | C | N | S | C | N | S | C |
| Secondary N (%) | 195(55.9) | 32(9.2) | 14(4.0) | 216(61.9) | 17(4.9) | 8(2.3) | 205(58.7) | 28(8.0) | 8(2.3) |
| High school N (%) | 94(26.9) | 11(3.2) | 3(0.9) | 91(26.1) | 11(3.2) | 6(1.7) | 93(26.6) | 13(3.7) | 2(0.6) |
| Total N (%) | 289(82.8) | 43(12.3) | 17(4.9) | 307(88.0) | 28(8.0) | 14(4.0) | 298(85.4) | 41(11.7) | 10(2.9) |
| Chi square test (significance) | | | 2.32(0.31) | | | 2.09(0.35) | | | 0.58(0.75) |
| N-Normal, S-Subclinical, C-Clinical | | | | | | | | | |

Table 3- The distribution of values by gender based on one deviation from the mean

| Gender | Disorder | | | Externalization | | | TPS | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | Internalization | | | | | | | | |
| | N | S | C | N | S | C | N | S | C |
| Female N (%) | 85(24.4) | 66(18.9) | 28(8.0) | 132(37.8) | 35(10.0) | 12(3.4) | 100(28.7) | 50(14.3) | 29(8.3) |
| Male N (%) | 107(30.7) | 46(13.2) | 17(4.9) | 91(26.1) | 45(12.9) | 34(9.7) | 96(27.5) | 48(13.8) | 26(7.4) |
| Total N (%) | 192(55.0) | 112(32.1) | 45(12.9) | 223(63.9) | 80(22.9) | 46(13.2) | 196(56.2) | 98(28.1) | 55(15.8) |
| Chi square test (significance) | | | 8.56(0.01) | | | 19.09(0.00) | | | .54(0.97) |
| N-Normal, S-Subclinical, C-Clinical | | | | | | | | | |

Table 4- The distribution of values by age/school based on one deviation from the mean

| Age/School | Disorder | | | Externalization | | | TPS | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | Internalization | | | | | | | | |
| | N | S | C | N | S | C | N | S | C |
| Secondary N (%) | 133(38.1) | 75(21.5) | 33(9.5) | 167(47.9) | 45(12.9) | 29(8.3) | 139(39.8) | 64(18.3) | 38(10.9) |
| High school N (%) | 59(16.9) | 37(10.6) | 12(3.4) | 56(16.0) | 35(10.0) | 17(4.9) | 57(16.3) | 34(9.7) | 17(4.9) |
| Total N (%) | 192(55.0) | 112(32.1) | 45(12.9) | 223(63.9) | 80(22.9) | 46(13.2) | 196(56.2) | 98(28.1) | 55(15.8) |
| Chi square test (significance) | | | .62(0.73) | | | 10.47(0.01) | | | .96(0.62) |
| N-Normal, S-Subclinical, C-Clinical | | | | | | | | | |

References

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Methods

Participants

- 170 boys (N= 170) and 179 girls (N= 179) completed the questionnaires
- the average age of boys is M=13.59 (SD=2.36), the average age of female participants is M=13.84 (SD=2.49)
- there were 241 (n=241) secondary school participants, and 108 (n=108) high school participants

Figure 1: Distribution of the sample by gender

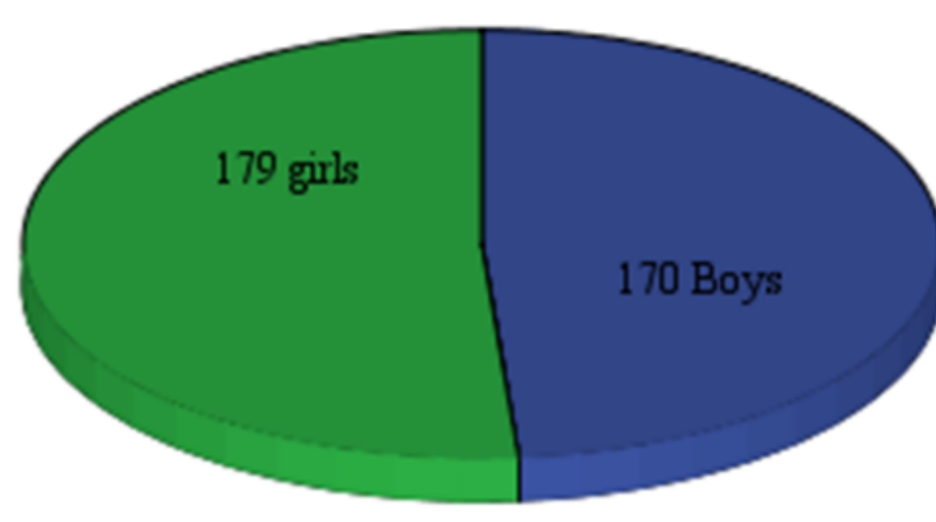
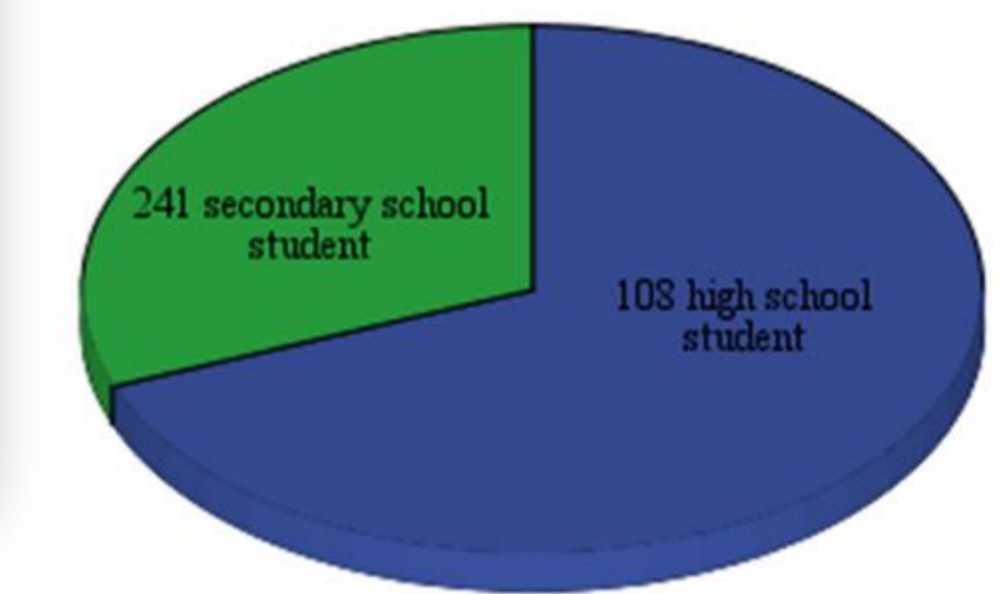


Figure 2: Distribution of the sample by school type



Instruments

- Child Behavior Checklist [1] Hungarian version
- 6 subscales: relationship problems, anxiety and depression, somatization, attention problems, deviant behavior and aggression
- 3 derived subscales: total problem score (TPS), externalization, internalization

Conclusion

- Based on the standard values: 2.9% of the study population showed emotional and behavioral problems.
- Externalizing problems were found in 4.0% of the study population. Internalizing problems were observed in 4.9% of the preadolescents and adolescents studied.
- Based on one deviation from the own mean of the population: 15.8% of the study population had emotional and behavioral problems. Externalizing problems were found in 13.2%, and internalizing problems were observed in 12.9% of the study population.
- The prevalence of externalization was significantly higher among male preadolescents and adolescents
- Internalization problems were significantly higher among female preadolescents and adolescents.
- Preadolescents scored higher on externalization subscale compared to the adolescents, when the results were examined based on one deviation from the own mean of the population.
- These results can draw attention to these behavior problems, and help to make preventions and interventions.
- In further research it is recommended to examine the risk and protective factors of internalizing and externalizing problems.