



World Anti-Bullying Forum DUBLIN JUNE 4 - 6, 2019

The measurement invariance of the Personal Experiences Checklist (PECK) over time and across gender.

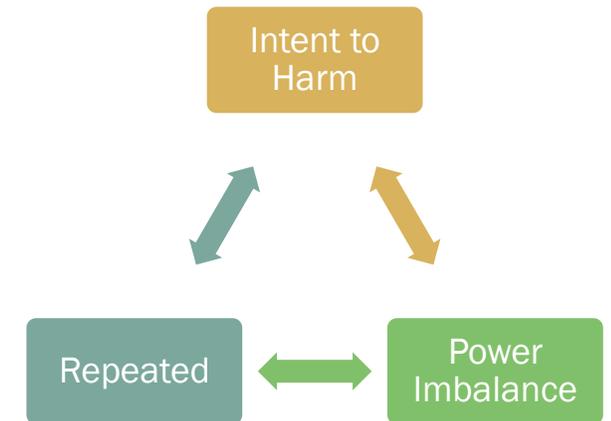
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Background

- Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour (verbal, physical, social/ indirect, cyber).
 - Where there is an intent to cause harm, purposeful activity.
 - The behaviour is experienced repeatedly over time.
 - There is a power imbalance between the person perpetrating the bullying, and the target.
- Large scale surveys suggest prevalence of victimisation ranges between 9 and 32%.
- The relationship between being bullied and poor mental health is well established in the literature:
 - Higher levels of depression, and anxiety.
 - Poorer self-esteem.
 - Higher levels of school withdrawal/ absenteeism.



Measuring Bullying

- Wealth of bullying/ peer-victimisation measures are available.
 - Diversity in the measures used.
 - Can make drawing comparisons across studies difficult.
- Many of these scales provide reliable data.
 - The validity of the tools?
 - Are measures invariance (equivalent) across time and across groups.
- The importance of validity and invariance (measurement equivalence):
 - Required to ensure our research findings are valid.
 - Evaluate interventions appropriately.
 - Be confident that our measure has the same meaning across conditions (e.g. across age groups, across time)



Background:

The Personal Experiences Checklist (PECK)

- Developed between 2004 and 2012.
 - Scale development involved two samples of Australian children (Sample 1, N=647, and sample 2, N=218).
 - Validity of the measure in relation to other bullying measures was established with sample 2.
- A 32 item scale was developed consisting of 32 items which map onto four factors:
 - Relational-verbal bullying (11 items) ($\alpha = 0.91$).
 - Cyberbullying (8 items) ($\alpha = 0.90$).
 - Physical bullying (9 items) ($\alpha = 0.91$).
 - Bullying on the basis of culture (4 items) ($\alpha = 0.78$).
- The four factor structure was confirmed through confirmatory factor analysis
- Adequate test-retest reliability was reported ($r = 0.61$ to 0.86).

Background:

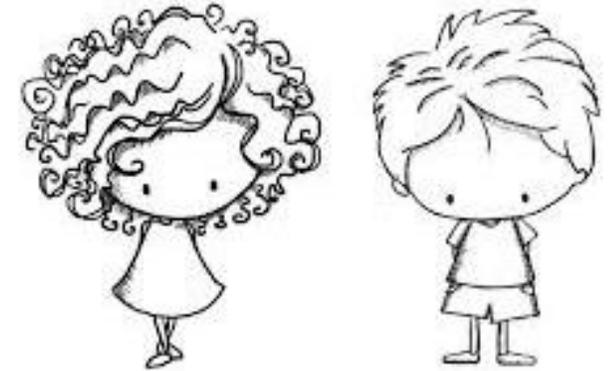
The short version of the Personal Experiences Checklist (PECK)

Thinking about the last month or so at school, how often do the following things happen to you?

		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most Days	Everyday
1	The other kids ignore me on purpose.					
2	The other kids make fun of my language.					
3	The other kids tease me about things that aren't true.					
4	The other kids threaten me over the phone.					
5	Other kids tell people not to hang around with me.					
6	Other kids won't talk to me because of where I'm from.					
7	Other kids say nasty things to me by texting.					
8	Other kids tell people to hit me.					
9	Other kids send me nasty e-mails.					
10	Other kids say mean things behind my back.					
11	Other kids shove me.					
12	Other kids say nasty things about me online.					
13	Other kids tell people to make fun of me.					
14	Other kids hit me.					

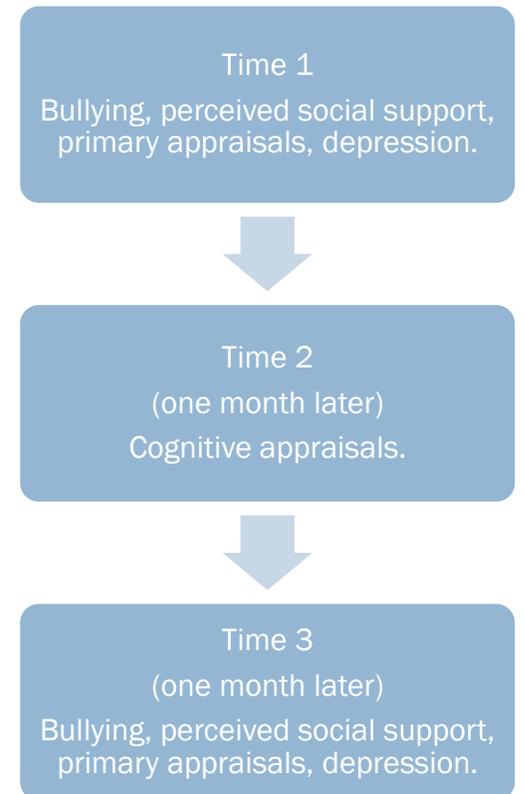
The current study

- The aim of the current study is to focus on the short version of the scale. To test for:
 - Invariance over time.
 - Invariance across boys and girls.
- Aim to test:
 1. Simple Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).
 - Is a one factor solution a good fit?
 2. A configural model.
 - Is the pattern of factor loadings the same across time?
 - Is the pattern of factor loadings the same for boys and girls?
 3. A weak invariance model.
 - Are the factor loadings statistically equivalent over time?
 - Are the factor loadings statistically equivalent for boys and girls?
 4. A strong invariance model.
 - Are the intercepts/ thresholds the same across time?
 - Are the intercepts/ thresholds the same for boys and girls?



Method

- Part of a three wave longitudinal study.
 - The PECK was used at time 1 and time 3.
- Analysis was based on the participants who completed the survey at time 1 (N=744) and time 3 (N=333, 44.76%), from four schools.
 - 342 (46%) were male.
 - 366 (49.2%) were female.
 - 28 (3.8%) reported that they preferred not to say.
 - 8 (1.1%) did not answer the question.
- School Year
 - 258 (34.7%) were from Year 7 (S1) (aged 11 and 12).
 - 288 (38.7%) were from Year 8 (S2) (aged 12 and 13).
 - 189 (25.4%) were from Year 9 (S3) (aged 13 and 14).
- Participant ages
 - Mean age at time 1 = 12.72 (sd=0.84).
 - Mean age at time 3 = 12.82 (sd=0.89).



Data Analysis

Steps for testing invariance

1. An initial confirmatory factor analysis for the PECK at time 1, to confirm a one factor solution.
2. Test a configural model.
3. Test of weak invariance.
4. Test of strong invariance.

Analysis conducted in MPLUS

- Indicators were treated as categorical (ordinal) data).
- Items were skewed and kurtosed.
- Paths were estimated with the WLMSV estimator.
- To test for strong invariance we tested for equivalence in thresholds.

Identifying invariance

- Chi-square change should be non-significant.
 - However sensitive to sample size.

Also examined changed in fit indices

- Change in CFI should be <0.010
 - ≥ -0.010 evidence of non-invariance
- RMSEA
 - Point estimate of preceding model should be included in the 90% CIs of the new model.
- Change in RMSEA should be >0.015
 - change in RMSEA that is ≤ 0.015 is evidence of non-invariance.

Results

	Total Sample	Males	Females
PECK time 1			
Alpha	0.90	0.90	0.83
Scores	14 - 70	14-70	14-49
Mean (sd)	19.44 (6.98)	18.22 (6.25)	19.96 (5.76)
PECK time 3			
Alpha	0.93	0.95	0.88
Scores	14-70	14-70	14-43
Mean (sd)	19.20 (7.79)	18.94 (8.27)	19.01 (6.15)

Results

- Most frequently experienced behaviour at time 1 and time 3 was *other kids say mean things behind my back*.
- Least frequently experienced behaviours at time 1 was *other kids won't talk to me because of where I'm from* and at time 3 *other kids send me nasty emails*.
- The proportion of participants at time 1 who reported experiencing the 14 behaviours *most days* or *every day* ranged between 8.2% (N=61) and 0.9% (N=7).
- The proportion of participants at time 1 who reported experiencing the 14 behaviours *most days* or *every day* ranged between 0.3% (N=1) and 10.7% (N=35).
- Three items at time 3 had low frequencies for *most days* and *everyday*.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most days	Everyday
T3 PECK 6: Other kids won't talk to me because of where I'm from.	314 (95.2%)	10 (3%)	5 (1.5%)	0	1 (0.3%)
T3 PECK 8: Other kids tell people to hit me.	292 (88.8%)	30 (9%)	9 (2.7%)	0	1 (0.3%)
T3 PECK 9: Other kids send me nasty e-mails.	318 (95.8%)	8 (2.4%)	5 (1.5%)	0	1 (0.3%)

Results: invariance over time

	χ^2	Diff test χ^2	RMSEA	Δ RMSEA	CFI	Δ CFI
CFA Time 1	460.65, df=78, p<0.001		0.082 (0.075: 0.089)		0.955	
Configural Model	826.98, df=337, p<0.001		0.044 (0.041:0.048)		0.966	
Weak (Metric) invariance	814.68, df=350, p<0.001	57.01, df=13, p<0.001	0.043 (0.039:0.046)	-0.001	0.968	+0.002
Strong (Scalar) invariance*	1,118.00, df=402, p<0.001	567.21, df=52, p<0.001	0.049 (0.046:0.053)	+0.006	0.951	-0.017

*Excluding threshold 4 for PECK 6, 8, and 9

Results: invariance across gender

	Most days		Everyday	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
T1 PECK 4: The other kids threaten me over the phone.	3 (%)	1 (%)	3 (%)	0
T1 PECK 5: Other kids tell people not to hang around with me.	3 (%)	8 (%)	2 (%)	0
T1 PECK 6: Other kids won't talk to me because of where I'm from.	0	2 (%)	2 (%)	0
T1 PECK 7: Other kids say nasty things to me by texting.	0	8 (%)	4 (%)	0
T1 PECK 8: Other kids tell people to hit me.	2 (%)	0	3 (%)	0
T1 PECK 9: Other kids send me nasty e-mails.	1 (%)	1 (%)	1 (%)	0

Discussion

Key findings

- ✓ Confirm a one factor structure for the short scale
 - ✓ Confirm that the factor loadings have the same pattern of loadings (configural) and the factor loadings are statistically equivalent (weak).
 - ✗ Cannot confirm strong invariance.
 - ✗ Cannot confirm the equivalence of the measure for boys and girls.
- When using the short version of the PECK to test for gender differences in experiences of bullying, or changes in experiences of bullying over time, need to interpret findings with caution.

Evaluation

- Good sample size at time 1, but attrition at time 3 (~45%).
- Proportion of participants who reported frequent experiences of some of the behaviours.
 - A reflection of the items?
 - Highlights the need for a larger sample, but how large?

Next steps

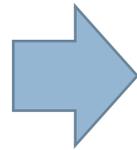
- Gather more longitudinal data using the short version of the PECK to further test for invariance across time and gender.
- Examine some of the problematic items, consider changing for other items from the original PECK.

Discussion

Items in italics are in the current short scale

PECK 6:

Other kids won't talk to me
because of where I'm from.



Bullying based on culture

Other kids make fun of my language

Other kids make fun of my culture

Other kids tease me about my voice

Other kids won't talk to me because of where I'm from

Physical bullying

Other kids hit me

Other kids punch me

Other kids kick me

Other kids shove me

Other kids trip me over

Other kids tell people to hit me

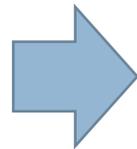
Other kids say they'll hurt me if I don't do things for them

Other kids wreck my things

Other kids play practical jokes on me

T3 PECK 8:

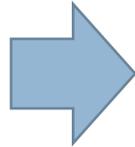
Other kids tell people to hit me.



Discussion

PECK 9:

Other kids send me nasty e-mails.



Cyberbullying

Other kids say nasty things to me by SMS

Other kids threaten me over the phone

Other kids send me nasty e-mails

Other kids harass me over the phone

Other kids say nasty things about me on websites

Other kids send me computer viruses on purpose

Other kids say nasty things about me on an instant messenger or chat room

Other kids make prank calls to me



Thank you for listening.

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Results: CFA

	Unstandardised	Standardised
T1 PECK 1: The other kids ignore me on purpose.	1.00	0.74
T1 PECK 2: The other kids make fun of my language.	0.52	0.50
T1 PECK 3: The other kids tease me about things that aren't true.	0.90	0.71
T1 PECK 4: The other kids threaten me over the phone.	1.25	0.81
T1 PECK 5: Other kids tell people not to hang around with me.	1.24	0.81
T1 PECK 6: Other kids won't talk to me because of where I'm from.	1.36	0.83
T1 PECK 7: Other kids say nasty things to me by texting.	1.25	0.81
T1 PECK 8: Other kids tell people to hit me.	1.33	0.83
T1 PECK 9: Other kids send me nasty e-mails.	1.09	0.75
T1 PECK 10: Other kids say mean things behind my back.	1.38	0.84
T1 PECK 11: Other kids shove me.	0.94	0.72
T1 PECK 12: Other kids say nasty things about me online.	1.44	0.85
T1 PECK 13: Other kids tell people to make fun of me.	1.19	0.80
T1 PECK 14: Other kids hit me.	0.92	0.71

Results: invariance over time

	Time 1		Time 3	
	Unstandardised	Standardised	Unstandardised	Standardised
T1 PECK 1: The other kids ignore me on purpose.	1.00	0.71	1.00	0.71
T1 PECK 2: The other kids make fun of my language.	0.56	0.49	0.58	0.49
T1 PECK 3: The other kids tease me about things that aren't true.	1.02	0.72	1.71	0.72
T1 PECK 4: The other kids threaten me over the phone.	1.46	0.83	1.97	0.83
T1 PECK 5: Other kids tell people not to hang around with me.	1.41	0.82	1.61	0.82
T1 PECK 6: Other kids won't talk to me because of where I'm from.	1.50	0.83	1.71	0.83
T1 PECK 7: Other kids say nasty things to me by texting.	1.53	0.84	2.22	0.84
T1 PECK 8: Other kids tell people to hit me.	1.41	0.82	1.45	0.82
T1 PECK 9: Other kids send me nasty e-mails.	1.06	0.73	1.61	0.73
T1 PECK 10: Other kids say mean things behind my back.	1.43	0.82	2.28	0.82
T1 PECK 11: Other kids shove me.	1.05	0.72	1.63	0.72
T1 PECK 12: Other kids say nasty things about me online.	1.62	0.85	1.97	0.85
T1 PECK 13: Other kids tell people to make fun of me.	1.33	0.80	1.65	0.80
T1 PECK 14: Other kids hit me.	1.04	0.72	1.09	0.72