

# PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES AND FACTOR STRUCTURE OF TRIARCHIC PSYCHOPATHY MEASURE (TRIPM) IN PORTUGUESE ADOLESCENTS

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Psychopathy is a personality structure characterized by a set of dysfunctional traits, impulsive and irresponsible behavior, poor and arrogant personal style in social interactions, and lack of prosocial emotions. Although it cannot be diagnosed in adolescents, its presence has been referenced in this population. Its association with antisocial and criminal behavior in young people has been demonstrated. It is therefore important that psychopathic traits be identified as early as possible to predict and control future criminal behavior. However, the specific evaluation instruments for this population are scarce. The aim of the present study is the validation, for this population, of an instrument for the evaluation of psychopathy, the Triarchic Psychopathy Measure (TriPM). The TriPM was applied to a validation sample of 793 young or Portuguese adolescents. Confirmatory factorial analysis (CFA) was performed, and the results found were considered satisfactory,  $\chi 2(1350) = 5980.77$ , p < .001, RMSEA = .067 (95% C.I. = [.064 - .068]),CFI = .915, TLI = .910, and SRMR = .080.

Keywords: Psychopathy. Boldness. Disinhibition. Meanness. Adolescents.

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Over the past 200 years, the scientific, medical, and legal communities have independently, or in unison, sought to understand the behavior of certain individuals who are systematically engaging in inappropriate and antisocial behavior (ASB) and who cause harm to others (Warren & South, 2006). There has been an evolution of the concept of psychopathy overthe years (Villar-Torres et al., 2014), though the scientific community diverges regarding the nuclear characteristics of this personality structure (Drislane & Patrick, 2017). Overall, clinical tradition tends to describe psychopathy as a combination of traits that are inferred and associated with socially deviant behaviors (Araújo et al., 2021).

Cleckley (1941) established several basic criteria to define psychopathy, based in affective and interpersonal components, which did not necessarily include the antisocial component. Thus, the characteristics that are generally present in these individuals are (i) superficial charm and high intelligence; (ii) absence of delusions or other symptoms of irrationalthinking; (iii) absence of nervousness or other psychoneurotic manifestations; (iv) lying or falseness; (v) absence of remorse or shame; (vi) inappropriately motivated ASB; (vii) unreliability; (viii) poor judgment or difficulties in learning from experience; (ix) pathological egocentrism; (x) poverty in affective manifestations; (xi) fanciful and uninviting behavior; (xii) loss of insight; (xiii) lack of reciprocity in affective relationships; (xiv) suicide threats rarely consumed; (xv) impersonal and poorly integrated sex life; (xvi) failure to follow a life plan.

In sum, for Cleckley (1941), it is a deeply rooted, emotional personality structure, but masked by an appearance of mental health. Unlike individuals with other personality structures who appear to be effectively disturbed, individuals with psychopathy tend to be confident and psychologically well-adjusted (Drislane & Patrick, 2017). Thus, it is in the work of Cleckley (1941) that modern conceptions of psychopathy are based (Durand, 2019; Patrick, 2010, Paiva et al., 2022), and it has motivated the development of later studies (e.g., Conradi et al., 2016; Hansen et al., 2013; McCord & McCord, 1964).

McCord and McCord (1964) helped define this personality structure by identifying a set of characteristics, particularly, their inability to love or a lack of feelings of guilt. Hare (1970), byhis side, characterized individuals with psychopathy as manipulative, possessing superficial and insincerity charm, able to convince others to execute acts that are detrimental to their interests, and well as an inability to show empathy or genuine concern for others. It is also important to emphasize the existence of antisocial or unethical, but not necessarily criminal, behaviors (Hare et al., 1991). Consequently, there has been an intense debate about the role of ASB in describing the construct of psychopathy (Simões et al.,



2017). According to the two-factor model proposed by Hare et al. (1991), ASB are defined as being inherent to psychopathy. On the other side, the three-factor model, proposed by Cooke and Michie (2001), and Cook et al. (2004), suggests that ASB is a consequence of this personality structure. To circumvent this difference, Hare (2003) proposed a new four-factor model that included the three factors proposed by Cooke and Michie (2001) and added a fourth, which corresponds to indicators of ASB.

In sum, while some authors suggest that ASB is intrinsic to psychopathy (e.g., Patrick, 2010), others suggest that this behavior is a consequence of more basic psychopathic traits (PT)(Drislane & Patrick, 2017), such as chronic ASB (Bulla et al., 2021), narcissism, impulsivity, callous-unemotional (Zwieten et al., 2013), irresponsibility, absence of remorse or guilt, manipulative style (Bulla et al., 2021), or lack of empathy (Durand, 2019; Hare & Neumann, 2008).

Despite this diversity of conceptions (Weidacker et al., 2017), there is a current consensusthat the term psychopathy refers to a personality structure marked by a set of dysfunctional traits, impulsive and irresponsible behavior (Somma et al., 2016; Araújo et al., 2021), a deficient and arrogant personal style (Bulla et al., 2021), lack of pro-social emotions (Kahn et al., 2016), and difficulties in establishing and maintaining intimate relationships (Conradi et al., 2016; Dotterer et al., 2017). In short, the study of psychopathy can be considered the basis for understanding themost disruptive behavior (Dotterer et al., 2017).

#### ASSESSMENT OF PSYCHOPATHY

Much of the literature on psychopathy has focused on the debate about the usefulness and stability of the construct over the lifetime of the individual, particularly during adolescence (Dolan & Rennie, 2007). The main concerns pertain to the validity of current assessment instruments and their suitability for the developmental pattern (Maurer et al., 2018).

The concept of psychopathy proposed by Cleckley (1941) had a profound impact on the scientific community, due to the strong predictive value of ASB in general, and its association with violent, impulsive, and aggressive behavior. Cleckley's work is a reference and gave rise to one of the main instruments for the categorical assessment of psychopathy, developed and reviewed by Hare (2003): the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R). Its application involves asemi-structured interview, the duration of which may exceed 120 minutes. This instrument includes questions that cover, in detail, various areas of a person's life (e.g., school and professional history, life goals, financial situation, health,



personal and family interpersonal relationships, sexual life and behavior, substance use, ASB in childhood and adulthood, and othermore general issues) (e.g., Shane & Groat, 2018). To triangulate the collected information, or clarify any questions that may arise, other sources may be used. This can be a time-consuming and costly process. In the end, through the joint analysis of the interview and the data form, it is sought to answer 20 items, scored on a three-point scale (i.e., 0 = not applicable, 1 = partially applicable, 2 = totally applicable). Since the PCL-R assesses traits rather than states, to answer the questions raised, one must consider the normal functioning of the individual (e.g., life story) and not his or her current state (Hare, 2003). With a total score of 40 points, Hare (2003) defined30 points as the cut-off point, after which the individual is considered a psychopath (Hansen et al., 2013).

Though the PCL-R is one of the most used instruments for the assessment of psychopathysuccessive studies prove its validity (Shane & Groat, 2018; Yoon et al., 2021). But the PCL-R has some limitations, particularly: (i) long, time-consuming instrument of difficult application; (ii) difficulties in obtaining information; (iii) gender bias in the formulation of the items, which tend to reflect masculine behaviors; (iv) the role of ASB as a central characteristic of psychopathy; (v) subjectivity of some issues, such as superficial charm or proneness to boredom; (vi) use in mostly forensic populations (Simões et al., 2017).

Nonetheless, the PCL-R has originated other instruments, such as the Psychopathy Checklist – Youth Version (PCL-YV) (Simões et al., 2017), the Child Psychopathy Scale (CPS)(Lynam, 1997), the Youth Psychopathic Traits Inventory (YPI) (Andershed et al., 2002) or the Antisocial Process Screening Device (APSD) (Frick & Hare, 2001).

From a dimensional perspective, the Triarchic Psychopathy Model (TriPM) (Patrick et al., 2009) integrates the historical and contemporary findings of psychopathy. On the one side, models such as those operationalized by the PCL-R emphasize emotional deficits and ASB. On the other, the models influenced by Cleckley (1941), such as the Psychopathic Personality Inventory-Revised (PPI-R), emphasize the absence of fear and negative affect (Lilienfeld et al., 2012). The triarchic model interprets these inconsistencies and differentiates the personality structure into three major dimensions: boldness, meanness, and disinhibition (Patrick et al., 2009). More specifically, it reconciles different models, balancing the importance of antisocial personality traits such as impulsivity and aggressiveness, related to characteristics of social dominance, and immunity to stress (Shou et al., 2017). It is important to note that a personality trait is a stable way for an individual to get to know and perceive him or herself, and to understand, experience, and relate to others (Lindberg et al., 2016).



TriPM is a self-report questionnaire composed by 58 items, which operationalizes and maps the main psychopathy traits (PT) as continuously distributed among the general population. Although the sum of all TriPM items allows for the calculation of a total value of psychopathy, and this value obtained presents a significant correlation with total values from other self-report psychopathy inventories (Drislane et al., 2014; Sellbom & Phillips, 2013), the TriPM is mainly intended for the study of the dimensions of psychopathy, taking into consideration its three subscales.

Boldness subscale includes more of the adaptive characteristics of psychopathy (Durand, 2019), such as social dominance, low anxiety, desire for adventure, low levels of fear, excitement, and appetite for risk, and immunity to negative effects such as stress and anxiety (Evans & Tully, 2016). Boldness is goal-oriented and interpreted as an adaptive demonstration of courage, reflecting a high tendency to detect threat signals (Drislane et al., 2014). Thus, Boldness presents strong and positive, correlations with instruments that evaluate courage and bravery, and moderate, but negative, correlations with instruments that evaluate negative affect (Shou et al., 2017). Disinhibition subscale comprises purer externalizing factors (e.g., impulsivity, affect deregulation, anger, hostility, focus on immediate gratification). Contemporary psychopathy assessment instruments reflect substantial variations regarding Disinhibition, particularly throughsubscales designed to measure Factor 2 of the PCL-R (Hare, 2003) (i.e., impulsive and irresponsible characteristics of psychopathy). Meanness subscale comprises secondary externalizing items (e.g., lack of empathy and appropriate intimate relations, insensitivity, and cruelty) (Patrick et al., 2009), proneness to exploit others, and sensation seeking (Fanti et al., 2016).

Research comparing TriPM subscales with other psychopathy inventories for adults and youth showed that *Disinhibition* and *Meanness* were strongly represented in the same inventories(Dotterer et al., 2017). However, regarding *Boldness*, this result was not found, except with the Youth Psychopathic Traits Inventory (YPI) (Dotterer et al., 2017). *Disinhibition* indices are strongly associated with the behavioral deviance component of psychopathy, as indicated by the increase in the subscales related to impulsiveness, carelessness, irresponsibility, sensation seeking, and ASB (Patrick, 2010).

Meanness scores are strongly associated with the affective component of psychopathy, particularly in scales involving cold-heartedness, insensitivity, machiavellianism, manipulation, or absence of remorse (Fanti et al., 2016). In addition, Meanness is also a strong predictor of the scores of the Self-Report Psychopathy Scale-III (SRP-III) subscales, Levenson's Self-Report Psychopathy (LSRP) (Levenson et al., 1995), YPI and APSD (Frick & Hare, 2001), as well as oftotal scores on those inventories (Drislane



& Patrick, 2017). Similarly, *Disinhibition* and *Meanness* contributed to the variation of total psychopathy scores in adult psychopathy inventories (Kelley et al., 2018; Yoon et al., 2021). This corroborates the idea that disinhibitory, interpersonal, and affective characteristics must be present in this personality structure (Patrick et al., 2013). However, this pattern was not observed in youth psychopathy inventories, since *Disinhibition* contributes more than *Meanness* to predict total scores. This suggests that the operationalization of psychopathy assessment instruments varies throughout life, with greateremphasis on the disinhibitory characteristics of the youth conceptions (Pechorro et al., 2012).

More recently, the contribution of *Boldness* to psychopathy has been intensely debated (Yoon et al, 2021). Some authors (e.g., Miller & Lynam, 2012) argue that its association with indices of adaptive functioning prevents it from being considered a central element of psychopathy. Conversely, others, on the other hand, believe that adaptive characteristics corroborate Cleckley's (1941) characterization of psychopathy, as a personality structure maskedby apparent emotional stability (Lilienfeld et al., 2012). This emotional stability also differentiates psychopathy from other externalizing conditions associated with negative affect and comorbidity of internalized psychopathology, such as antisocial personality disorder (Patricket al., 2013). A strong association was found between boldness and some indices of maladaptive functioning (e.g., manipulation, callousness, erratic lifestyle, dishonesty, grandiosity, lack of guilt), as well as with indices of adaptive functioning (e.g., superficial charm, absence of stress, social dominance, well-being, achievement) (Dotterer et al., 2017). These results corroborate theidea that boldness encompasses some interpersonal characteristics of psychopathy that are associated with the clinical factor of the PCL-R, comprising items of superficial charm and grandiosity (Patrick et al., 2013). Thus, as operationalized by TriPM, *Boldness* cannot be seen aspurely adaptive, especially if it is accompanied by high indices of *Meanness* or *Disinhibition* (Yoon et al., 2021).

TriPM is short and easy to apply, its access is free, and it can be applied to large groups, and has already been translated into various languages, namely, Portuguese (Paiva et al. 2022), Chinese (Shou et al., 2017), German (Kelley et al., 2018), Greek (Fanti, et al., 2016), Italian (Kelley et al., 2018), Spanish (Patrick & Drislane, 2015), Dutch (Patrick & Drislane, 2015), or Swedish (Kelley et al., 2018), among others. Regarding the adolescent population, to date, and asyou know, only the Italian version has been translated and validated (Somma et al., 2016).



#### PSYCHOPATHY IN ADOLESCENCE

According to Berger (2003), adolescence begins at about 12/13 years and ends when the individual reaches the age of majority (i.e., 18 years). However, other authors argue that it may extend to 20/21 years (e.g., Leenarts et al., 2017). It is a phase in which individuals seek to assertthemselves and establish their identity alongside their family and/or peer group. Therefore, oppositional behaviors and rebelliousness, marked by a greater or lesser degree of aggressivity, are normative and frequent (Araújo, 2024). However, and not infrequently, these may assume contours of some severity (Dolan & Rennie, 2007).

The presence of PT among young people with behavioral problems is associated with a more severe pattern of ASB (Araújo, 2024; Paiva et al., 2022). Several studies have shown thatyoung people with high levels of psychopathy exhibit precocious ASB associated with high levels of delinquency and recidivism when compared to adolescents with more moderate PT (Leenarts et al., 2012; Nijhof et al., 2011). Some authors suggest that ASB tend to start early, reaching their peak in late adolescence or early adulthood (Rodríguez et al., 2016). Thus, it is believed that the severity of ASB will increase up to ten times during this developmental period(Araújo, 2024; Zwieten et al., 2013). The severity of these behaviors can be enhanced by exposure to peer groups, especially if they exhibit equally deviant tendencies (Zwieten et al., 2013).

The influence that the interaction with peer groups exerts on the delinquent behavior of anadolescent depends on the level of his or her own PT, as well as the traits evidenced by his or her peers (Larsson, 2012). Thus, the more increased these traits are, the higher the tendency to influence (Nijhof et al., 2011) and the lower the likelihood of being influenced (Larsson, 2012). The study of PT in adolescents has gained increasing relevance as a research topic (Pechorro etal., 2012). Studying psychopathy in this age group can help professionals and researchers understand the different patterns of severe ASB as well as better understand the etiology of this personality structure in adulthood (Somma et al., 2016).

Moreover, the consequences of the behavioral manifestation of high PT are widely described (e.g., Paiva et al., 2022). Thus, to reduce its effects, it is crucial to identify and evaluate these traits as early as possible (Decuyper et al., 2013; Nijhof et al., 2011). As such, adequate psychological assessment tools adapted to this population are essential (Somma et al., 2016). In sum, all the research developed to date demonstrates the social and scientific relevance of this study. Therefore, the main objective is to test, in Portuguese adolescents, the factor structure of the TriPM, an instrument initially developed by Patrick et



al. (2009) for adults, and later adapted for adolescents, like what was developed by Somma et al. (2016), among Italian adolescents.

#### **METHOD**

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

The instruments were administered to 793 individuals. The majority (n = 408) were female, with ages between 10 and 21 years (M = 16.8, SD = 2.88), and a mean of 10.3 schooling years (SD = 2.50). Participants were recruited from various schools (i.e., primary and secondary), universities, and other institutions. Dynamic e-mails were also sent to members of the PortugueseSociety of Psychiatry and Psychology of Justice, as well as to individuals who attended recreational institutions, to cover a wider range of ages and schooling years. All participants, native and fluent Portuguese speakers, completed the questionnaires voluntarily and an anonymously, without financial compensation involved.

#### **INSTRUMENTS**

# Sociodemographic Questionnaire (QS)

The QS aims to assess some sociodemographic characteristics of participants (e.g., sex,age, years of schooling).

#### **Triarchic Psychopathy Measure (TriPM)**

The TriPM, developed by Patrick et al. (2009), is a self-report questionnaire that assesses personality dimensions. It consists of a total of 58 items, subdivided into three subscales: (i) *meanness* (19 items), which evaluates the tendency towards cruelty, aggression or sensation seeking; (ii) *boldness* (20 items), which reflects the relationship between social dominance, low anxiety and adventure seeking; (iii) *disinhibition* (20 items), which relates to the tendency towards impulsivity, irresponsibility, anger or opposition (Durand, 2019; Patrick, 2010). The items are evaluated by the participants on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (false) to 3 (true) (Evans & Tully, 2016; Patrick, 2010). The validation for adolescents of Somma et al. (2016) showed that the TriPM has good psychometric qualities, namely good internal consistency(*Cronbach*'s  $\alpha = .89$  [*Boldness*], .90 [*Meanness*], and .89 [*Disinhibition*]), good reliability and good construct validity. In the current study, the values were .74 (*Boldness*), .85 (*Meanness*), and .83 (*Disinhibition*).



# **Antisocial Process Screening Device – Self-Report (APSD-SR)**

The APSD-SR was developed by Frick and Hare (2001), and adapted to the Portuguesepopulation by Pechorro (2013) to assesses psychopathic personality traits in the adolescent population. It consists of 20 items evaluated by participants on a 3-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from 0 (false) to 2 (often true). Some studies present a two-factor structure of the APSD-SR (e.g., Frick et al., 1994; Oshukova et al., 2015): (a) callous- unemotional, which reflects the interpersonal and affective dimensions of psychopathy, such as absence of guilt and lack of empathy, and (b) impulsivity, which reflects behavioral problems and impulse control deficits. However, other studies (e.g., Frick et al., 2000) report the existence of three factors: (a) Callous-Unemotional (CU), which reflects the interpersonal dimensions of psychopathy; (b) Conduct Problems (I-CP), which is subdivided into two: (i) Narcissism (Nar), reflecting the emphasis on personal needs and (ii) *Impulsivity* (Imp), which reflects the behavioral problems and impulse control deficits. Research has shown that the APSD-SD has good psychometric qualities, particularly good internal consistency (*Cronbach's*  $\alpha = .75$  [ASPD Total] and .68 [Nar]; however, this was not observed for the dimensions of [CU] .56 and [Imp] .47) (Pechorro et al., 2013). In the current study, the values of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  were also adequate for Total APSD: Cronbach's  $\alpha$  = .76 and .64 [Nar]; however, adequate internal consistency was not observed for the dimensions of [CU]  $\alpha$  = .53 and [Imp]  $\alpha$  = .55.

#### **PROCEDURE**

The Portuguese version of the TriPM for adolescents was developed with the consent of theauthors of the original version (Patrick et al., 2013). The first step was the parallel translation and adaptation of the original version, by two experts in Forensic Psychology. The next step was to conduct a pilot study using the method of spoken reflection with ten adolescents with a medium ormedium-to-low schooling level (equal to or less than nine years) to guarantee comprehension, thatis, to test intelligibility and the suitability of the items and proceed to the face validity of the translated version (Loubir et al., 2015). The characteristics of these adolescents were like those of the population in which the instrument was to be validated, regarding the variables of age and vertical schooling.

The method of spoken reflection aimed at elucidating the researchers the difficulties and the perceptions that the adolescents may have regarding the questionnaire, namely, to verify that the language used in the instructions and the content of the items were adequate and appropriate inlinguistic and cultural terms for the populations for whom it is intended. The designed protocol included questions about the comprehension of the instructions and



response options, where the adolescent was asked to state whether he or she considered them to be clear or whether the responsescheme seemed appropriate. The adolescent was expected to verbalize any doubts he or she mighthave about the meaning of any statement and to feel free to provide comments or suggestions, particularly about improving the items. The purpose of this procedure was to test the clarity and self-sufficiency of the instructions and the comprehensibility of the items, as well as the adequacyof the response options. Care was taken to ensure the standardization of the procedure (American Educational Research Association [AERA], American Psychological Association [APA], and National Council on Measurement in Education [NMCE], 1999; Shafique et al., 2017).

After the fine-tuning resulting from spoken reflection, a psychologist fluent in English and Portuguese performed the back-translation, and the final version was sent to the author of theoriginal instrument to proceed with its validation. Throughout this phase, care was taken so that any effects due to cultural differences were minimized (AERA/APA/NCME, 1999; Shafique et al., 2017).

#### **DATA ANALYSIS**

Firstly, there was elimination of eight participants who revealed skewness (Sk) and kurtosis (Ku) values that indicated severe violations to the normal distribution (|Sk| > 3 and |Ku| > 10) (Mardia, 1970), as well as  $D^2$  values (Mahalanobis square distance) that suggested they were severe outliers (p1 and p2 < .001) thus ensuring the assumptions of univariate and multivariate normal distribution of the items, linear relationships between variables, non-zero sample covariances and absence of multicollinearity (McDonald, & Ho, 2002; Muthén, 1983).

Care was taken to analyse other indicators of psychometric quality so that the internal consistency of each factor of the instruments under study was analyzed and evaluated by Cronbach's  $\alpha$  (.60 to .70 acceptable > .70 recommended) (Marôco, 2014).

An exploratory factor analysis (AFE) (Marôco, 2014) was conducted, with oblique rotation since the factors are not independent and might correlate (Hair et al., 2009). Another wayto guarantee the validity of the instrument was through concurrent validity, that is when the results agree with other instruments that also evaluate the construct, and in this case, the APSD- SR was used (Pechorro, 2013).

The criteria determined for the extraction of the factors in the EFA were the following: i) through the Kaiser criterion, retain factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 (Kaiser, 1960), and through the Scree plot retaining factors to the left of the inflection point (Cattell, 1966). However,in this study, since the post-extraction commonalities were less than .70, the



criterion to be used for factor extraction was Screeplot. This option was also in line with that of the author of the instrument. Regarding the quality of the items and the factors to retain an item, commonality was considered superior to .30 (Hair et al., 2009) and appropriate saturations higher than .32 (Tucker & Lewis, 1973).

The validity of the TriPM was analysed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), by the values of high factor weights ( $\lambda \ge .50$ ) and by adequate individual reliability ( $R^2 \ge .25$ ) (Kline,2016). The model fit was performed from the modification indices (higher than 11; p < .001) produced by AMOS and based on theoretical considerations (Byrne, 2010). Subsequently, global results of the subscales were obtained based on the results matrix and factor weights. The overall goodness of model fit was assessed according to the Chi-square goodness of fit test ( $\Box 2/df$ ); Goodness of Fit Index (GFI > .90); Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI > .08); Comparative Fit Index (CFI > .90); Parsimony Comparative Fit Index (PCFI > .80); Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA < .05) (Kline, 2016). The level of statistical significance was  $p \le .05$ .

#### **RESULTS**

Missing data diagnostics revealed that no data were missing. Omega point estimates were satisfactory (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

## CONTENT VALIDITY—CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

The structural model fit the data reasonably well,  $\chi 2(1592) = 11898.402$ , p < .001,

However, because  $\chi 2$  /df, the RMSEA, the SRMR were both slightly higher and the CFI, TLI were both slightly lower than required. So, we have examined individual items. Consequently, items 1, 16, 25 and 50 of TriPM were not satisfactory, because factor loads are lower than .20 (i.e.,  $\lambda = .08$ ,  $\lambda = .19$ ,  $\lambda = .05$ ,  $\lambda = .16$ , respectively). Thus, those four items are removed, and the CFA was repeated once again. According to this replication, the structural model fit the data better,  $\chi 2(1350) = 5980.77$ , p < .001, RMSEA = .067 (95% CI = [.064 - .068]), CFI = .915, TLI = .910, and SRMR = .080 (Model 2). We found that composite estimated reliability values exceeded the recommended minimum of .60 (Bagozzi & Kimmel, 1995). Also, Cronbach'salphas had values higher than .70 (Field, 2024) (Table 1).



Table 1. TRIPM Adolescents Factor weights, Cronbach alpha (α) and Composite Reliability (CR)

Factor	Item	λ	□ (95%CI)	CR			
Boldness			.74 (.7177)	.72			
	Item 1	.08					
	Item 4*	.21					
	Item 7	.30					
	Item 10*	.22					
	Item 13	.46					
	Item 16*	.19					
	Item 19	.68					
	Item 22	.25					
	Item 25*	.05					
	Item 28	.47					
	Item 32	.34					
	Item 35*	.25					
	Item 38	.75					
	Item 41*	.53					
	Item 44*	.16					
	Item 47	.53					
	Item 50*	.16					
	Item 54	.48					
	Item 57*	.47					
Meanness			.85 (.8287)	.92			
	Item 2*	.28					
	Item 6	.51					
	Item 8	.48					
	Item 11*	.35					
	Item 14	.63					
	Item 17	.65					
	Item 20	.67					
	Item 23	.69					
	Item 26	.71					
	Item 29	.69					
	Item 33	.48					
	Item 36	.64					
	Item 39*	.37					
	Item 40	.79					
	Item 42	.77					
	Item 45	.58					
	Item 48	.80					
	Item 52*	.34					
	Item 55	.75					
Disinhibition			.83 (.8185)	.90			
	Item 3	.21					
	Item 5	.48					
	Item 9	.51					
	Item 12	.55					
	Item 15	.59					
	Item 18	.60					
	Item 21	.23					
	Item 24	.69					
	Item 27	.25					
Item 30*			.40				
Item 31			.51				
Item 34			.83				
Item 37			.70				
Item 43			.71				
Item 46			.46				
Item 49			.56				
lt∈	em 51		.59				



Item 53	.80
Item 56	.66
Item 58	.81

*Note.* \*= inverted item;  $\lambda$  = Factor weights;  $\alpha$  = Cronbach alpha; CR = Composite reliability.

#### **CONVERGENT VALIDITY**

Concurrent estimates the correlation between instruments that evaluate similar constructs, thus moderate/high correlations are the expected results. The concurrent validity between the TriPM and APSD subscales was analysed, to verify whether there is a relationship between them(Table 2).

Table 2. TriPM and APSD Convergent Validity

	Boldness	Meanness	Disinhibition	Narcissism	Impulsivity	Callous- unemotional
Meanness	.126**					
Disinhibition	.151**	.399**				
Narcissism	.102**	.537**	.329**			
Impulsivity	015	.619**	.215**	.392**		
Callous- unemotional	001	274**	.352**	.325**	.161**	
APSD total	.069	.703**	.407**	.807**	.738**	.591**

Note. \*\* p ≤ .001

Regarding the correlations between the TriPM and APSD subscales, moderate and significant positive correlations were found between *Narcissism* and *Meanness* (r = .537, p < .001) and between *Narcissism* and *Disinhibition* (r = .329, p < .001) and a weak but equally significant relationship between *Narcissism* and *Boldness* (r = .102, p < .001). Similarly, there were significant positive and moderate correlations between *Impulsivity* and *Meanness* (r = .619, p < .001), and between *Impulsivity* and *Disinhibition* (r = .215, p < .001). However, there was no relationship to *Boldness*. Regarding *Callous-unemotional*, there was a weak correlation with *Meanness* (r = .274,p < .001), and a moderate and significant correlation with *Disinhibition* (r = .352, p < .001). Finally, concerning the total APSD scale, there were moderate and significant positive correlations betweenall TriPM and APSD subscales, except for the *Boldness* subscale (TriPM) (all correlations p < .001).

### **DISCUSSION**

The aim of the present study was the adaptation and validation, for the Portuguese adolescent population, of the TriPM, which evaluates the presence of PT according to the Triarchic Psychopathy Model (Patrick et al., 2009). To compare the results obtained (i.e., convergent validity) (Marôco, 2014), we used another instrument for evaluating ASB, and specifically psychopathy, among young people, the APSD (Pechorro, 2013).



Regarding the AFC, it was expected that goodness of fit indices for the three-factor solution would be adequate, as proposed by Patrick et al. (2009), in the original version of the TriPM. However, the observed values suggest that this did not occur (Bagozzi & Kimmel, 1995). The analysis of the items allowed us to conclude that four of them presented saturation loads withvalues below the desirable. In this way, they were removed. It should be noted that the positioning of the participants about the items may have been biased by cultural issues (Shafique et al., 2017), interpretive errors (Loubir et al., 2015), or because their translation may have affected their real meaning (Somma et al., 2016). Additionally, any effects of social desirability cannot be ruled out. This may explain the differences found.

Boldness, conceptualized as the adaptable side of the model, initially was composed of 19 items. However, by the end of the AFC (model 2), was constituted by 15 items, since four of

them were withdrawn (item 1 "I'm optimistic more often than not,"16 "I have a hard time making things turn out the way I want," 25 "I don't think of myself as talented," and 50 "I don't stack up well against most others"). These different conceptions of *Boldness*, influenced by cultural issues(Araújo et al., 2023), may explain the differences found.

Meanness, was conceptualized as the tendency for cruelty, aggression, and disrespect forothers, as well as a lack of empathy, exploitation of others, or excitement through destruction (Fanti et al., 2016), initially comprising 19 items, and Disinhibition, related to impulsivity, irresponsibility, anger, or opposition (Patrick, 2010), constituted by 20 items, at the end of the CFA, no differences were found, which means that both factors maintained their composition.

As expected, low to moderate, but significant and positive, correlations were found among all TriPM subscales. These values, consistent with what has been observed in previous research (e.g., Somma et al, 2016), suggest that all factors converge towards the same construct, that is, psychopathy (Sica et al., 2015). In addition, as suggested by Sica et al. (2015), the observed correlation values suggest that the factors are different from each other, which is consistent with the conceptual model underlying the TriPM conceptualization (Patrick et al., 2009). However, some studies (e.g., Dotterer et al., 2017) indicate the existence of a strong correlation between *Boldness* and *Meanness*, which was not observed in the present study. This may have been due, once again, to such cultural differences or interpretative errors (Loubir et al., 2015; Shafique et al., 2017). Additionally, significant positive correlations were also found between *Disinhibition* and *Meanness* and the total value of APSD scores, including the scores ofits subscales. These results also suggest that both instruments converge towards the same construct (i.e., psychopathy) (Sica et al.,



2015).

The internal consistency values found for the TriPM are consistent with those reported in the literature, and may therefore be considered suitable (e.g., Drislane et al., 2018). This suggests coherence in responses (Marôco, 2014). However, regarding the APSD, the values found are low.Nonetheless, they are in line with those found by the author of the Portuguese version (Pechorro et al., 2013), which were not adequate either (Marôco, 2014).

It is also worth referencing the mean results obtained for the TriPM scales, which do not differ much from those found in previous studies (e.g., Somma et al, 2016). Given the above, andas expected, the results are conclusive, that is, the version of TriPM resulting from the present study is valid for the evaluation of psychopathy in the Portuguese adolescent population, as verified in the TriPM validation study for the Italian adolescent population (Somma et al., 2016). This is the greatest contribution of this work. Therefore, from now on, the TriPM may be used to evaluate this population, by mental health professionals in general, and in the forensic field.

Some authors (e.g., Araújo, 2024) suggest that in more competitive settings, psychopathy may be adaptive. Thus, the display of certain behaviors, considered inappropriate in other contexts, such as coldness, aggressiveness, or impulsivity may be beneficial to individuals in specific contexts (e.g., in a competitive environment). Thus, it is expected that institutionalized youth, often exposed to a past characterized by scarcity, emotional deprivation, or exposure to maltreatment (Simões et al., 2017) or for a need to survive, develop maladaptive behavior (Rijo et al., 2017), and reveal emotional deficits (e.g., in understanding emotions, their own or those ofothers; Moreira et al., 2014). These facts may explain the tendency of these young people to manifest greater behavioral maladjustment, reflecting the existence of diverse disorders (Rijo et al., 2017), among them psychopathy (Drislane & Patrick, 2017). This may be corroborated by some high value found for *Disinhibition*, considered by Patrick (2010) as being associated with behavioral deviance. Moreover, it may also explain the higher values of *Meanness*, considered by Patrick (2010) as associated with negative affection, machiavellianism, or manipulative style, very present in these young people.

# **LIMITATIONS AND POTENTIALITIES**

This work presents some limitations, related to the natural difficulties of accessing the participants, who, as adolescents, required the consent of parents/guardians. The need to circumvent these difficulties (e.g., use of contact networks) has restricted the area of



residence of the participants, thus the overwhelming majority are from a single region of the country and of Caucasian ethnicity. As such, cultural differences between the different regions of the country may not be evidenced in the present study.

Moreover, the dimensional approach adopted by the TriPM does not allow us to access anosologically entity that makes it possible to confirm whether the individual is a psychopath. In addition, despite the abundance of studies (e.g., Dotterer et al., 2017; Fanti et al., 2016), psychopathy is still poorly understood by the scientific community, so there are still many questions regarding its approach (i.e. categorical or dimensional), presentation or etiology (Moreira et al., 2015; Paiva et a., 2022). Thus, developing instruments for the evaluation of psychopathy is even more difficult (Araújo et al., 2023).

Therefore, psychopathy is not well known for some mental health professionals, who tendto devalue it, in favor of other personality structures (Moreira et al., 2014). As such, it is necessary to develop further studies, to better understand this personality structure and to compare the results obtained here with those obtained with other instruments.

Notwithstanding the limitations, this study also presents several potentialities. Thus, it offers it contributes to fill a need perfectly identified by the scientific community, especially those who are dedicated to the forensic field, or to the study of the criminal phenomenon: the existence of few specific instruments for this field, and particularly about the adolescent population (e.g., Agulhas & Anciães, 2015).

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE INVESTIGATIONS

Some authors (e.g., Moreira et al., 2015) suggest that in more competitive settings, psychopathy may be adaptive. Thus, the display of certain behaviors, considered inappropriate in other contexts, such as coldness, aggressiveness or impulsivity may be beneficial to individuals in specific contexts (e.g., in a competitive environment). Thus, it is expected that institutionalizedyouth, often exposed to a past characterized by scarcity, emotional deprivation, or exposure to maltreatment (Simões et al., 2017) or for a need to survive, develop maladaptive behavior (Durand, 2019), and reveal emotional deficits (e.g., in understanding emotions, their own or thoseof others; Moreira et al., 2014). These facts may explain the tendency of these young people to manifest greater behavioral maladjustment, reflecting the existence of diverse disorders (Rijo et al., 2017), among them psychopathy (Drislane & Patrick, 2017). This may be corroborated by some high value found for the dimension of disinhibition, considered by Patrick (2010) as being associated with behavioral deviance. Moreover, it may also explain the higher values of meanness, considered by Patrick (2010) as associated with negative affection, Machiavellianism or



manipulative style, very present in these young people (Durand, 2019).

On the other hand, and according Araújo et al. (2021), most of the studies conducted in this field, include, mostly, individuals from the community, and male. Thus, it would be of enormous relevance, scientific and social, to conduct more studies using greater samples, which included individuals of both sexes, and from other contexts (i.e., forensics), to perceive the existence of differences in the manifestation of PT between these groups (Efferson &Glen, 2018). In addition, the importance of understanding the way psychopathy manifests itself would be crucial. So, it would also be important to conduct a study to define the normative and stratifieddata (e.g., according to age and level of schooling) for the Portuguese youth population.

# 7

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