



Human Development  
and Violence  
*Research Centre*

# UNIQUE AND SHARED RISK FACTORS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD VICTIMISATION AND POLYVICTIMISATION IN A BRAZILIAN BIRTH COHORT

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# BACKGROUND

## CHILD VICTIMISATION AND POLYVICTIMISATION

- Violence against children (VAC):
  - Major public health and human rights problem
  - Many different forms of violence
  - Rarely happen in isolation = POLYVICTIMISATION
  - Short- and long-term adverse outcomes



# BACKGROUND

## CHILD VICTIMISATION AND POLYVICTIMISATION

- Understanding modifiable risk factors critical to inform prevention
- Published evidence focused on:
  - Specific types of violence
  - Polyvictimisation restricted to few victimisation types and/or specific settings
- In Brazil, population-based studies on childhood violence still non-existent



- To describe the violence exposure at age 4 years in the 2015 Pelotas Birth cohort (Southern Brazil)
- To identify unique and shared risk factors for different types of violence

- 2015 Pelotas (Brazil) Birth Cohort Study
  - 4-y follow-up; N ~ 4,000
- Juvenile Victimisation Questionnaire (JVQ-R2):
  - Comprehensive range of childhood victimisations
  - 33 questions (yes/no) about lifetime victimisation
  - Confidential interviews with mothers or primary caregivers (90% mothers)



- 5 modules of JVQ-R2:
  - Conventional crime
  - Child maltreatment
  - Peer and sibling victimisation
  - Sexual victimisation
  - Witnessing and indirect victimisation
- Polyvictimisation:  $\geq 6$  positive questions (out of 33)
  - Top 10% of children with largest number of victimisations (Finkelhor 2009; Turner 2010)

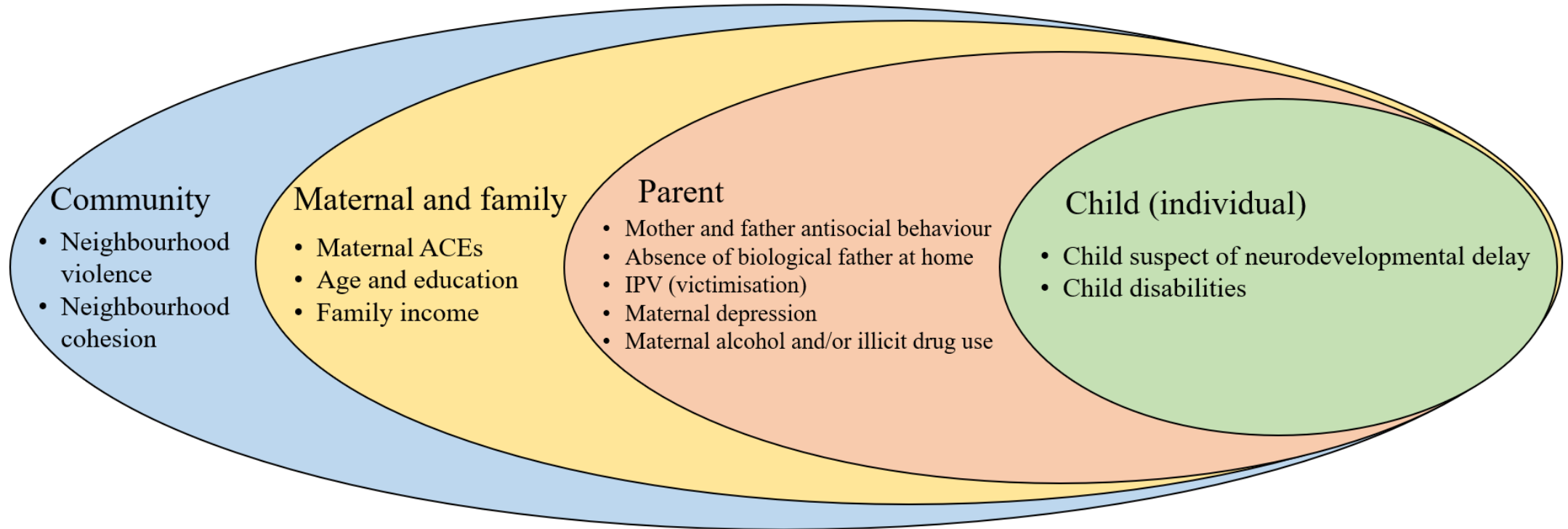


Fig. 1. Four-level social-ecological model

# RESULTS

## PREVALENCE

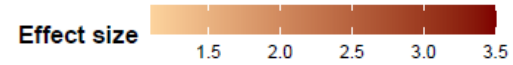
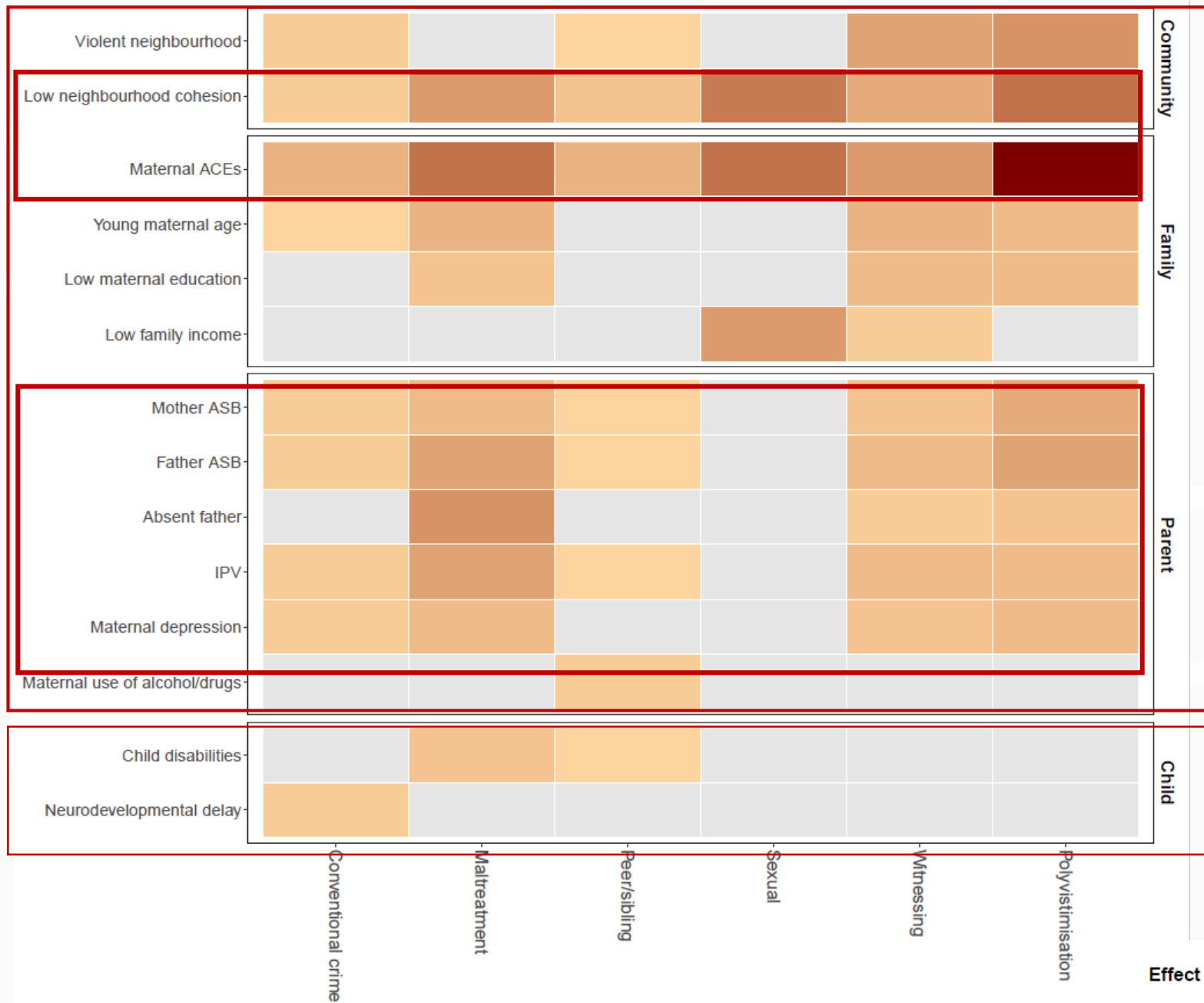
**Table 2.** Prevalence of types of victimisation and polyvictimisation in the sample, stratified by sex (N=3,993)

Modules of victimisation	Prevalence (%)			p-value*
	All	Boys	Girls	
Conventional crime	46.0	48.5	43.5	0.001
Child maltreatment	11.3	12.6	10.0	0.009
Peer or sibling victimisation	46.5	49.6	43.4	<0.001
Sex victimisation	1.4	1.4	1.3	0.892
Witness/indirect victimisation	26.9	26.5	27.3	0.059
Polyvictimisation	10.1	11.3	8.8	0.013

\*Fisher's exact test for the difference between boys and girls  
 Polyvictimisation: 6 or more positive questions of JVQ-R2



# RESULTS



# CONCLUSIONS

- Prevalence of child victimisation was high
  - Some specificities (e.g.: sex victimisation)
- Multiple types of victimisation commonly co-occurred
  - 1 in 10 children had 6+ victimisation experiences
- Common rather than unique risk factors place children at increased risk of multiple types of victimisation
  - Across different levels of socioecological model

# CONCLUSIONS - STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

- Population birth cohort with high follow-up rate (93,4%)
  - Urban city
- Possible lack of power for sexual victimisation
- Maternal reports:
  - Best report for young ages
  - Unique source
  - Mental health
  - Recall biases (lifetime -> 4 years)

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Prevention programmes should target multiple risk factors
- ✓ Multi-level (community, family, parent) approaches in the context of nurturing care
- ✓ Prevention should begin early in life

THANK YOU! OBRIGADA!

