Abstract

The aim of this study is to obtain dimensions from a categorical diagnostic interview. 512 children aged 8 to 17 attending public centers for children’s mental health and presenting some form of psychological disorder were interviewed with the «Diagnostic Interview for Children and Adolescents »(DICA-IV). Analysis of the principal components indicate that a two-dimensional model (externalizing- internalizing) satisfactorily explain the data collected from the children and their parents. The data from the adolescents are better represented by a three-dimensional model (attention problems- internalizing-antisocial behavior). The factor scales show good internal consistency and significantly relate to other criteria of psychopathology and incapacity (concurrent validity). These results show that it is possible to use DICA-IV to obtain categorical and dimensional indicators simultaneously. The latter are particularly sensitive for measuring changes over the course of disorders.