

Variables on which level influence the number of reported cases of child neglect?

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Child Protection in Switzerland

- Organizing and providing child protection

- Child protection is a responsibility of cantons (provinces)
- Subsidiarity: Services should be provided at the lowest level possible
- Differences between cantons on which level services and authorities are administered

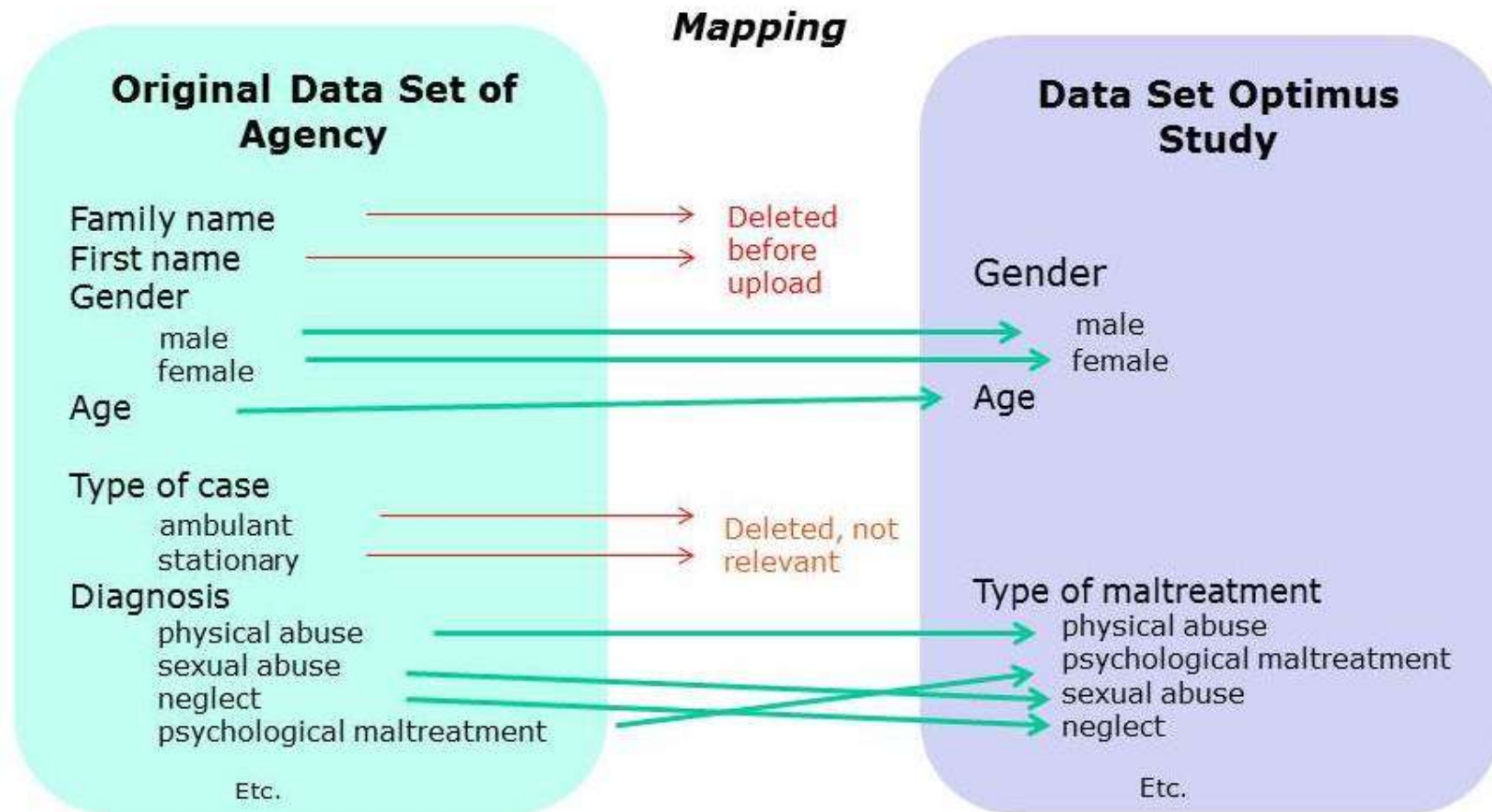
- Three major sectors

Public child protection	child protection authorities, child protective services
Penal authorities	police, prosecution offices, youth advocacy
Social and health sector agencies	interdisciplinary child protection teams, victim aid services, specialized private counselling services

The Neglect of neglect

- Large variety of definitions and measurement (Straus and Kantor 2005)
- Neglect and sociostructural risk factors (e.g. poverty) (Coulton, Crampton et al. 2007; Drake and Jonson-Reid 2014)
- Inclusion of explanatory factors at different levels (e.g. Baumann, Dalglish et al. 2011)
- Individual level & Macro-level

Data Collection Optimus Study III

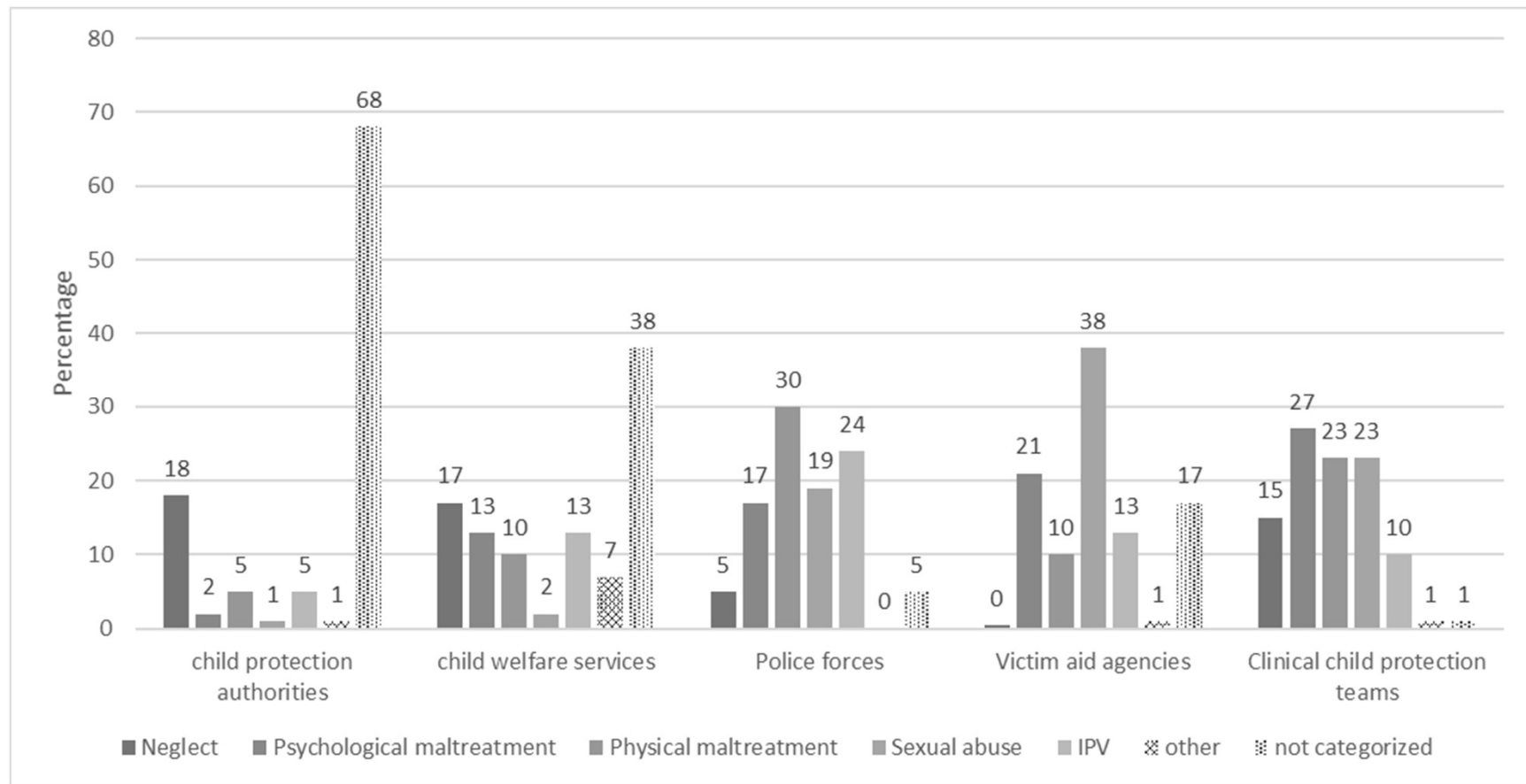


Participation rate & Number of reported cases

➔ Participation rate: **81%**

Reported by participating agencies (3 months)	Extrapolation to all child protection agencies (3 months)	Extrapolation to all child protection agencies (year 2016)
7'651 cases	10'035 cases	30'000-50'000 cases

Primary type of child endangerment documented by agencies



Notes: Weighted proportion based on 7,651 cases referred/reported between Sept 1 and Nov 30, 2016; the relatively small number of children referred to regional child protection teams is not displayed separately.

Multi-Level Analysis

Level 1 (child)	Odds Ratio	p	[95% Conf. Interval]	
female gender	1.14		0.99	1.32
> 10 years of age	0.69	***	0.59	0.80
multiple maltreatment	2.65	***	2.22	3.18
public child protection	3.75	***	2.99	4.67
police forces	0.83		0.60	1.15
Level 2 (canton)	Coefficient	p	[95% Conf. Interval]	
mean caseload per agency	1.43		0.50	4.11
social welfare (percentage)	0.00		.	.
single-parent households (percentage)	0.00		.	.
budget "family and youth"	4.88	***	1.72	10.79
Notes: Level 1 n = 7503; Level 2 n = 26; *** p < 0.01; AIC/BIC decrease from null to full model; moderate ICC				

Discussion

- Overall, **few cases of child neglect documented**
 - difficulties in defining non-acts
 - lack of clear-cut threshold: not-quite-optimal upbringing <-> neglect
- **Younger children** are (perceived as) more dependent of their caregivers
 - Incidents of neglect less important or less identified in youth
- **Increased social budget** helps to recognize definitionally difficult situations

Limitations

- ~~– Professional view on child maltreatment~~
- Missing variables and missing data

Conclusion

- Explore more macro-level factors / in-depth analyses
- Consensus-process on shared variables and definitions (cf. Jud & Voll, in press)
- Increase policy-maker awareness on child neglect

References

Baumann, D. J., et al. (2011). *The Decision-Making Ecology*. Washington, DC, American Humane Association.

Coulton, C. J., et al. (2007). "How neighborhoods influence child maltreatment: A review of the literature and alternative pathways." *Child Abuse & Neglect* **31**(11): 1117-1142.

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Straus, M. A. and G. K. Kantor (2005). "Definition and measurement of neglectful behavior: some principles and guidelines." *Child Abuse & Neglect* **29**(1): 19-29.