

Trauma Symptom Check-list 33 and 40 (TSC-33 and TSC-40)

John Briere, Ph.D. and Marsha Runtz, Ph.D.

Please note: Use of this scale is limited to professional researchers. The TSC-40 is a research measure, not a clinical test. It is not intended as, nor should it be used as, a self-test under any circumstances.

This page contains a psychometric review of the TSC 33/40, with references up to mid-1998, followed by a free copy of the TSC-40 (at the end of this page) for use by researchers. Cut and paste to your word processor as needed (formatting will require adjustment).

This summary is substantially adapted from Briere, J. (1996), Psychometric review of the Trauma Symptom Checklist-40, in B.H. Stamm (Ed.). Measurement of stress, trauma, and adaptation. Lutherville, MD: Sidran Press.

TYPE OF POPULATION: Adults

COST: None

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WHAT IT MEASURES: The TSC-40 is a research measure that evaluates symptomatology in adults associated with childhood or adult traumatic experiences. It measures aspects of posttraumatic stress and other symptom clusters found in some traumatized individuals. It does not measure all 17 criteria of PTSD, and should not be used as a complete measure of that construct. The TSC-40 is a revision of the earlier TSC-33 (Briere & Runtz, 1989). Those requiring a validated psychological test of posttraumatic response, using a similar format, should consider the Trauma Symptom Inventory (TSI) or (for evaluation of a specific trauma) the Detailed Assessment of Posttraumatic Stress (DAPS).

MEASURE PROCEDURE AND CONTENT: The TSC-40 is a 40-item self-report instrument consisting of six subscales: Anxiety, Depression, Dissociation, Sexual Abuse Trauma Index (SATI), Sexual Problems,, and Sleep Disturbance, as well as a total score. Each symptom item is rated according to its frequency of occurrence over the prior two months, using a four point scale ranging from 0 ("never") to 3 ("often"). The TSC-40 requires approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, and can be scored in approximately 5-10 minutes.

PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES SUMMARY: Studies using the TSC-40 indicate that it is a relatively reliable measure (subscale alphas typically range from .66 to .77, with alphas for the full scale averaging between .89 and .91). The TSC-40 and its predecessor, the TSC-33, have predictive validity with reference to a wide variety of traumatic experiences (see reference section). The TSC-40 also appears to predict perpetration of intimate violence (e.g., Dutton, 1995) and vicarious traumatization in psychotherapists (e.g., Chrestman, 1995).

GENERAL COMMENTS: The TSC-40 is a research instrument only. It is freely available to researchers. No additional permission is required for use or reproduction of this measure, although Briere and Runtz (1989) should be cited.

MEASURE AUTHORS: John Briere, Ph.D. (USC) and Marsha Runtz, Ph.D. (Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, P.O. Box 3050, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, V8W 3P5)

PAPERS USING THE TSC-33 OR TSC-40

[Please note – this reference list is valid only up to the middle of 1998. For more recent references, do a PILOTS search under the instrument name and/or the authors' names]

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Trauma Symptom Checklist – 40 (TSC-40)

Subscale composition and scoring for the TSC-40 The score for each subscale is the sum of the relevant items, listed below:

Dissociation: 7,14,16,25,31,38

Anxiety: 1,4,10,16,21,27,32,34,39

Depression: 2,3,9,15,19,20,26,33,37

SATI (Sexual Abuse Trauma Index): 5,7,13,21,25,29,31

Sleep Disturbance 2,8,13,19,22,28

Sexual Problems 5,9,11,17,23,29,35,40

TSC-40 total score: 1-40

TSC-40

How often have you experienced each of the following in the last two months?

0 = Never 3 = Often

1. Headaches 0 1 2 3

2. Insomnia (trouble getting to sleep) 0 1 2 3

3. Weight loss (without dieting) 0 1 2 3

4. Stomach problems 0 1 2 3

5. Sexual problems 0 1 2 3

6. Feeling isolated from others 0 1 2 3
7. "Flashbacks" (sudden, vivid, distracting memories) 0 1 2 3
8. Restless sleep 0 1 2 3
9. Low sex drive 0 1 2 3
10. Anxiety attacks 0 1 2 3
11. Sexual overactivity 0 1 2 3
12. Loneliness 0 1 2 3
13. Nightmares 0 1 2 3
14. "Spacing out" (going away in your mind) 0 1 2 3
15. Sadness 0 1 2 3
16. Dizziness 0 1 2 3
17. Not feeling satisfied with your sex life 0 1 2 3
18. Trouble controlling your temper 0 1 2 3
19. Waking up early in the morning and can't get back to sleep 0 1 2 3
20. Uncontrollable crying 0 1 2 3
21. Fear of men 0 1 2 3
22. Not feeling rested in the morning 0 1 2 3
23. Having sex that you didn't enjoy 0 1 2 3
24. Trouble getting along with others 0 1 2 3
25. Memory problems 0 1 2 3
26. Desire to physically hurt yourself 0 1 2 3
27. Fear of women 0 1 2 3
28. Waking up in the middle of the night 0 1 2 3
29. Bad thoughts or feelings during sex 0 1 2 3
30. Passing out 0 1 2 3
31. Feeling that things are "unreal" 0 1 2 3
32. Unnecessary or over-frequent washing 0 1 2 3
33. Feelings of inferiority 0 1 2 3
34. Feeling tense all the time 0 1 2 3
35. Being confused about your sexual feelings 0 1 2 3
36. Desire to physically hurt others 0 1 2 3
37. Feelings of guilt 0 1 2 3
38. Feelings that you are not always in your body 0 1 2 3
39. Having trouble breathing 0 1 2 3
40. Sexual feelings when you shouldn't have them 0 1 2 3