

## **EXTENDED SUMMARY**

New cases of gender violence are constantly emerging in the media. In 2017, 29,008 victims of gender violence were registered. The rate of victims in relation to the total population of women peaked in the age brackets of 25 to 29 years and 30 to 34 years (with 3.2 victims for every 1,000 women in that stretch). Behind were the intervals between 20 and 24 years (3.0 victims for every 1,000 women) and between 35 and 39 years (2.8 victims for every 1,000 women). The UN defined gender violence in 1995 as "any act of sexist violence that has as a possible or actual result physical, sexual or psychological harm, including threats, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether it occurs in the public or private life".

There are different theoretical frameworks to approach and explain this problem. These include, for example, psychodynamic approaches focused on anger management that affirm that certain individual characteristics are the main causes of violence, systemic perspectives in which violence is seen as a mechanism to maintain certain family dynamics and / or resolve conflicts, or cultural theories that highlight aspects such as control and power as the main causes of this type of violence. Other psychosocial theories affirm that violence against women is closely linked to widely accepted cultural beliefs, as well as differences in power and the need of some men to exercise control. The findings of studies carried out support the belief that the causes of gender violence must be sought in more socio-structural than individual factors.

Sexism is defined as an attitude toward a person or persons by virtue of their biological sex. From a three-dimensional point of view of attitudes, it would be understood as the evaluative response (cognitive, affective and behavioral) before a person because of his or her belonging to one or another biological sex; and from a one-dimensional model we would understand that the sexist attitude (feeling) would be related to certain sexist beliefs and with an intention of discriminatory behavior. Sexism is considered ambivalent because it includes positive and negative aspects and evaluations of women.

There is a certain consensus that aggression and violence are strongly influenced by gender, understanding gender as a social construction beyond purely biological sexual difference. Stereotypes about how men and women should behave and experiences that reinforce that stereotypical behavior contribute to the creation of patterns that legitimize gender violence throughout life and more specifically in close relationships.

Other difficulties encountered with in gender violence are the inability of the young population to recognize that they are victims of abuse, for misinterpreting violent behavior as expressions of love, likewise, tend to idealize violent behavior, based on the notion of romantic love, the justification of behaviors and the dismissal of violent behaviors such as jealousy and obsessive control. These aspects affect the invisibility of this phenomenon.

This study aims to analyze if the young population is able to recognize violent behaviors, as well as to see if there is a relationship with sexist attitudes.

The sample consisted for a whole of 104 young adults (42 men and 62 women), aged between 18 and 35 years old. The mean age of 23.63 is ( $SD = 3.321$ ). In the present study, subjects with different levels of studies, primary and secondary (25%) and degree and postgraduate (75%) participated.

The instrument used for the study is composed of three parts. In the first part, questions have been asked regarding the general characteristics of the sample, the remaining two parts are those composed of the questionnaires selected to measure levels of ambivalent sexism and the perception of violence against women in relationships. The first questionnaire evaluates the perception of psychological violence in heterosexual couple relationships on a Likert scale, composed of 25 items where the subjects must answer the severity of the behavior (1 mild to 5 severe), it must also be indicated if they consider that it is, or not, a violent behavior. The statistical analyzes of the scale obtain a reliability of  $\alpha = .965$ . And the second The Inventory of Ambivalent Sexism (ASI), which consists of 22 items in a Likert format, which are divided into two subscales (hostile sexism and benevolent sexism) of 11 items each. The response options range from "strongly disagree" (0) to "totally agree" (6). The scale has a reliability of  $\alpha = .916$

The administration of the scale has been carried out individually, anonymously and voluntarily. An online questionnaire has been created to increase its scope. The questionnaire includes a brief explanation at the beginning so that the participants who volunteered to answer them would not have any difficulty.

The general objectives proposed for the study are, on the one hand, to explore the degree of tolerance of violent behavior in couple relationships in a sample of young adults between the ages of 18 and 35, and, on the other hand, to explore whether there is a relationship between ambivalent sexism and the perception of violence in relationships.

The analysis of the information revealed that men perceive the behaviors analyzed as less violent. This can be a problem, since not judging them as violent can end up perpetuating them in their relationships. The second analysis carried out, in three of the items of the VEC scale, shows there are significant differences in the consideration of the severity of the violent behaviors (emotional abuse and contempt and coercion), being the men who perceive them with less seriousness. These results go in the same direction as previous studies, where women considered violent behaviors more seriously than men. In the last analysis, results show that men who do not perceive violent behaviors have higher scores in hostile sexism. No significant correlation was found in the case of women. These results differ from previous studies, since no significant differences were found in the type of sexism that men presented.

Ultimately, we can conclude that young men in this study do not perceive behaviors that are classified as violent as such. From the moment that violent behavior is tolerated, even if it is minimal, there is a free way to continue carrying out that behavior or to aggravate or even derive in another. In addition, these violent behaviors are related to the validity of certain negative beliefs about women, which still place them in a lower plane than men. Therefore, it is essential to carry out an intense education work from childhood aimed at zero tolerance in any type of violent behavior (psychological, physical) between boys and girls.

Finally, in consideration of the alarming data of gender violence in our country, which make it a serious social problem, it is essential to continue researching in this area to know in depth the psychosocial processes involved and to be able to intervene.