

Article

Effects of Negative Communication on Family Dynamic and Dating Violence

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ABSTRACT

Background/Objective: The dating is a recognized problem of great magnitude and related to the family, a cultural reference in the adaptation of its members; It is relevant to know the educational-communicative relationships that are established to know their effects and act accordingly. The objective is to evaluate a model that incorporates the negative communication schemes used by adolescents and young people in their affective relationships as a possible predictor of abusive behaviors in dating. **Method:** This research was carried out with 1801 adolescents and young people using an analytical-transversal-explanatory design and implemented the structural equations method (SEM) to test the hypotheses. **Results:** The prevalence results indicated that it is common for men and women to use violent behaviors against their partner in adolescence and young adulthood, that there are both physical and psychological consequences of dating violence for adolescents and young adults and that the use of negative communication styles to solve problems and the observation of violence between parents was significantly and positively correlated with the use of different types of violence. **Conclusions:** It is postulated that it is possible to raise children with aggressive behaviour and negative feelings by providing them with learning models of violence that they repeat in their affective and social relationships.

Efectos de la Comunicación Negativa en la Dinámica Familiar y la Violencia en el Noviazgo

RESUMEN

Antecedentes/Objetivo: La violencia en el noviazgo es un problema reconocido de gran magnitud y relacionado con la familia, referente cultural en la adaptación de sus miembros; resulta relevante conocer las relaciones educativas y comunicativas que se establecen para conocer sus efectos y actuar en consecuencia. El objetivo es evaluar un modelo con esquemas de comunicación negativa utilizados por adolescentes y jóvenes en sus relaciones afectivas como posible predictor de conductas abusivas en el noviazgo. **Método:** Esta investigación se realizó con 1801 adolescentes y jóvenes utilizando un diseño analítico-transversal-explicativo e implementó el método de ecuaciones estructurales (SEM) para probar las hipótesis. **Resultados:** Los resultados de prevalencia indicaron que hombres y mujeres usan conductas violentas contra su pareja en la adolescencia y adultez joven, hay consecuencias tanto físicas como psicológicas de la violencia en el noviazgo para adolescentes y adultos jóvenes y el uso de estilos de comunicación negativos para resolver problemas de violencia entre los padres se correlacionó significativa y positivamente con diferentes tipos de violencia. **Conclusiones:** Se postula que es posible criar hijos con conductas agresivas y sentimientos negativos al proporcionarles modelos de aprendizaje de la violencia que repiten en sus relaciones afectivas y sociales.

Palabras clave:

Violencia
Estilos de Comunicación
Jóvenes
Aprendizaje
Inadaptación

Introduction

The family is a complex and dynamic system whose function is to help its members develop and integrate into society. It generates emotional stability through the learning of values and establishes clear limits, healthy habits, self-esteem and acceptance of internal problems based on stable, fluid and reflective communication (Pellerone et al., 2017; Park & Kim, 2019). Family functioning is related to interpersonal family factors, relationship quality, problem solving skills, affective expression and assertive communication (Bonilla-Algovia & Rivas-Rivero, 2022). The communication styles to which family members are exposed shape their behaviors, feelings, and thoughts regarding others; for example, learning negative, authoritarian, aggressive or passive communication within the family appears to be related to maladaptive patterns, self-destructive behaviors and violence (Rinaldi et al., 2023).

From this perspective, family dynamics are related to models of imitation and learning that facilitate the acquisition of negative behaviors; in particular, children's exposure to maladaptive behaviors for relating to love partners, which can be learned by observation in situations of intrafamily violence (Bonilla-Algovia & Rivas-Rivero, 2022; Torres et al., 2022). Parental and child-parent violence, family dysfunction and negative communication in particular are related to the perpetration of and victimization by dating violence (River et al., 2022). While research on intimate partner violence and its relationship with communication has focused on married couples or committed adult couples, studies of dating relationships in young people are scarce. However, Cornelius et al. (2010) found that young people who report physical and psychological aggression have higher rates of maladaptive communication and lower rates of adaptive communication. The different communicative behaviors are useful for predicting violence in intimate relationships; for example, the perpetration of physical violence had as a predictive variable feeling overwhelmed due to the inability to process information and actively participate in problem-solving discussions. In the case of victimization by physical violence and victimization by/perpetration of psychological violence, the following emerged as predictors: criticism, a defensive attitude, contempt, withdrawal of one of the members of the couple due to the inability to resolve the conflict; all of these factors result in marked dissatisfaction with the relationship. This finding was replicated by Kast et al. (2016) in samples of adolescents; the researchers found that some maladaptive forms of communication were associated with and predicted dating violence and that adaptive communication behaviors protected adolescents from dating violence.

The relationship between conflict resolution strategies and dating violence has been studied in an effort to learn how young people handle disagreements in their relationships. The results led to the conclusion that those who resort to destructive communication patterns in their relationships, such as launching personal attacks (engaging in conflicts), remaining silent for long periods, refusing to discuss the issue or avoiding the problem (withdrawing) are more likely to be victims of physical and psychological violence in their dating relationships (Garthe et al., 2019). Another study (Smith-Darden et al., 2017) with a sample of 883 students whose average age was 15 years also reported the same findings for the use of anger-related strategies (shouting and arguing with the partner).

In contrast, the use of positive strategies for conflict resolution, such as considering the perspective of the other person or trying to communicate clearly and effectively, showed an inverse and weak association with the different types of violence in dating relationships.

This study proposes and then evaluates a model that incorporates the negative communication schemes used by adolescents and young people in their affective relationships as a predictor of abusive behaviors in dating, based on an integrated model of the intergenerational transmission of violence. This model includes authoritarian parenting practices, family functionality, exposure to violence between parents and jealousy in relationships as related variables. We proposed the following hypothesis (see Figure 1): (a) The communication styles that adolescents and young people use to solve problems in their dating relationships mediate the relationship between authoritarian parenting practices, family functionality, exposure to violence between parents and the frequency of violent behavior toward the partner. (b) Violent behaviors that adolescents and young people exercise in their dating relationships have a dependent relationship with the negative communication styles that adolescents and young people use to solve problems in their relationships, and this mediates the relationship between authoritarian parenting practices, family functionality and experiencing violence between parents.

Method

Participants

A total of 1801 adolescents and young people participated in this research: 762 (42%) men and 1039 (58%) women, with a mean age of 18.59 years ($SD = 2.78$; range 14 to 24 years). Forty percent were high school students (tenth and eleventh grade students), 54% of the participants were university students, and 7% were technical education students. The regions of Colombia from which the data were collected were (a) Boyacá (64.4%), Santander (7.2%), Antioquia (21.3%) and Caesar (7.2%). Regarding socioeconomic status, stratum two had the highest percentage of participants at 31%, followed by stratum three at 30% and stratum one at 20%. The participants were selected using a non probabilistic convenience sampling (see Table 1).

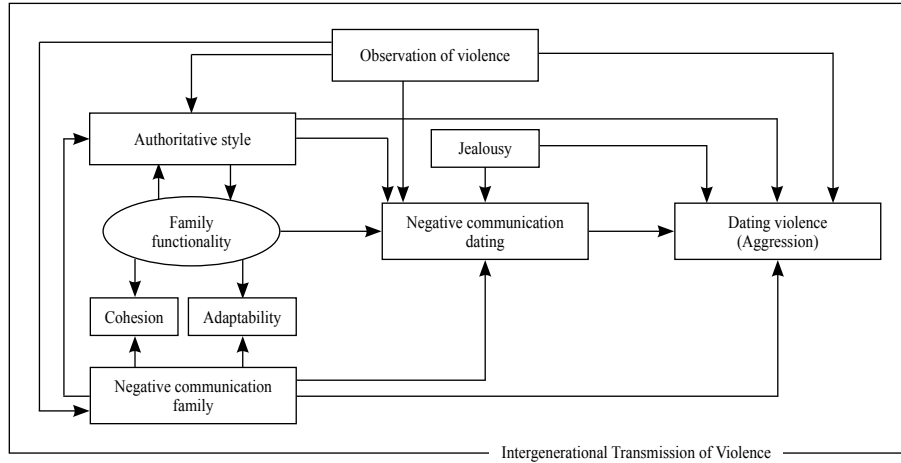
Design and Procedure

This research used an analytical-transversal-explanatory design and implemented the structural equations method (SEM) to test the proposed hypothesis. A total of 1954 surveys were distributed, and 153 were eliminated because the student did not meet the following criteria: (a) having or having had a dating relationship for a minimum of three months in the last six months; (b) being between 14 and 24 years old at the time of administration; (c) having signed the informed consent form (in the case of minors, the informed consent form had to be signed by a parent or guardian); or (d) did not complete the protocol in its entirety.

This research was evaluated and approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of San Buenaventura-Medellín-Colombia in accordance with Resolution 008430 of 1993 of the Colombian Ministry of health (Ministerio de Salud, 1993) and Law 1090 of 2006. It was determined that the level of risk of the study was minimal.

Figure 1

Diagram of the Explanatory Model in Which Negative Communication Schemes are Facilitators of Dating Violence



We contacted the directors of secondary and university education institutions to publicize the objectives and procedures of the research. Participants were contacted in the classrooms, the instruments were administered in groups, and completion took approximately 40 minutes.

Measurement Instruments

Sociodemographic characterization sheet. This form allowed us to evaluate the participants’ age, sex, socioeconomic level, and educational level. In addition, the duration of the relationship and the number of previous relationships were established.

Dating Violence Questionnaire-Revised - DVQ-R (Rodríguez-Díaz et al., 2017). A short version of the Dating Violence Questionnaire (CUVINO) was designed to evaluate the victimization of adolescents who are in a dating relationship or have maintained a dating relationship for at least one month in the last six months. The DVQ-R is composed of 20 items answered in a 5-point Likert-type scale (0 = *Never*, 4 = *Always*). The DVQ-R evaluates five dimensions of dating violence: violence by coercion; sexual violence; physical violence; violence by detachment and violence by humiliation. The questionnaire showed good overall consistency ($\alpha = .85$), with the following Cronbach’s alpha values for the scales: coercion ($\alpha = .64$); sexual ($\alpha = .74$); physical ($\alpha = .75$); detachment ($\alpha = .68$) and humiliation ($\alpha = .72$). For this research, the internal consistency of the instrument was characterized by a Cronbach’s alpha of .82 for the total score and the following alpha scores for the subscales: physical ($\alpha = .75$); sexual ($\alpha = .79$); humiliation ($\alpha = .71$); detachment ($\alpha = .64$); and coercion ($\alpha = .60$).

The Escala de Evaluación de la Cohesión y Adaptabilidad Familiar Structural Validity of the FACES-20Esp (Martínez-Pampliega et al., 2011), a reduced version of the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES) Questionnaire (Olson et al., 1982), was administered to participants. It is based on the circumflex model and evaluates family functionality from the dimensions of cohesion and adaptability. It consists of 20 items scored using a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = *Almost never* to 5 = *Almost always*) and comprises the dimensions of cohesion and adaptability. Regarding internal

Table 1
Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Sample

	Total (N = 1801)	Males (n = 762)	Females (n = 1039)
Age			
Mean	18.59	18.77	18.46
SD	2.78	2.97	2.63
Minimum	14	14	14
Maximum	24	24	24
Schooling			
Basic education	721(40.0%)	340(44.6%)	381(37.0%)
Technical	77(4.3%)	19(2.5%)	58(5.6%)
University	978(54.3%)	387(50.8%)	591(57.3%)
Department			
Boyacá	1157(64.4%)	493(64.7%)	664(63.9%)
Santander	129(7.2%)	49(6.4%)	80(7.7%)
Antioquia	382(21.3%)	189(24.8%)	193(18.6%)
Caesar	129(7.2%)	29(3.4%)	100(9.6%)
Relationship duration in months			
Mean	10.72	8.99	12.45
SD	3.18	3.01	4.85
Minimum	3	3	3
Maximum	14	11	14
Population			
Urban	1581 (86.1%)	678(86.8%)	903(84.8%)
Rural	220 (13.9%)	84(13.2%)	136(15.2%)
Currently with a partner		960(53.3%)	841(46.7%)

consistency, it presents a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.82 for the cohesion dimension and 0.79 for the adaptability dimension. The reliability for the FACES Esp obtained for this study was a = .88 for cohesion and a = .90 for adaptability.

The Parenting Practices Questionnaire (González & Landero, 2012) which evaluates the parenting styles that parents use with their children was endorsed by participants. It consists of 30 items answered on a 5-point Likert-type response scale (1 = *Never*, 5 = *Always*), and it evaluates the following dimensions: Authoritarian and authoritative parenting style. The authors report a total Cronbach's alpha of .88 for the authoritarian style dimension and .93 for the authoritative style dimension. The reliability results that were calculated using the data from this investigation were $\alpha = .949$ for the authoritative dimension and $\alpha = .893$ for the authoritarian factor dimension.

The Conflict Resolution Style Inventory (CRSI; Kurdek, 1994) was applied to participants to evaluate the discussion and conflict resolution styles used by individuals within romantic relationships. It can be administered individually or in groups and takes 5-10 minutes to complete. It consists of 16 items used to evaluate the conflict resolution styles of each member of the couple from two sources: the individual and his/her partner. The dimensions include positive problem resolution, conflictive involvement, withdrawal, and conformity. For this research, it was employed the adaptation made by Rojas et al. (2019) for the Mexican context and individuals between 14 and 31 years of age proposes. It comprises 12 items grouped into two factors: positive conflict resolution and involvement in conflict reporting a reliability of between .82 and .85 for the self-report scales and between .81 and .89 for the partner evaluation. For this research, the reliability indices were .73 for positive self-report solutions and .79 for involvement in conflict.

Self-report questionnaire on incidents of spousal violence (Rey-Anacona, 2011). This is a self-report instrument that uses a Likert scale to collect information adolescents' and young people's exposure to 7 types of abusive behaviors by both their father and their mother: Physical violence, verbal violence, verbal threats, threats with a blunt object, sexual violence, economic violence and threats of harm to family members. Rey-Anacona (2011) reported an internal consistency of .86. For this research, the observed internal consistency was .91.

The arguments due to jealousy were measured using 5-point Likert-type response scale (*never, rarely, sometimes, frequent and very frequent*) to the following items: (a) In my relationship, we argue about situations that generate jealousy; (b) In my relationship, we argue about friendships that involve the opposite sex; (c) In my relationship, we argue about issues related to social networks when they involve the opposite sex; and (d) In my relationship, we argue when he or she attends social events, such as parties or meetings. The items were grouped in a factor by an exploratory factor analysis, $KMO = .738$; Bartlett's test was $\chi^2(1261, 580) = 6.00$; $p < .001$, accounting for 54.37% of the variance. The internal consistency of the factor was .72.

Data Analysis

Statistical analyzes were carried out using SPSS version 26.0. The Mann-Whitney U statistic was obtained to compare two independent sample measurements since the data did not have a normal distribution when calculating the Shapiro-Wilk test ($p \geq .05$). Pearson's chi-square test was used to identify the association between gender and types of violence. In addition, the Spearman correlation coefficient was calculated between all of the study

variables. SEM statistical techniques were used to evaluate the proposed model in the AMOS SPSS-26 program; the model was analyzed using the maximum likelihood method; the Mardia test was used to determine the assumption of a multivariate normal distribution, which yielded a coefficient of 21.28 ($CR = 8.94$). The following tasks were carried out: a) establishment of the exogenous and endogenous variables that made up the model and their relationships and covariances; b) verification of the identified theoretical model that contains a relationship between the observed variables and the factors; and c) The goodness of fit was estimated using the Hu's and Bentler's (1999) criteria: $RMSEA < .08$, $GFI > .95$, $CFI \geq .95$. Complementary, the indices proposed by Boomsma (2000) and McDonald & Ho (2002) $RFI \geq .90$, $TLI \geq .90$, $IFI \geq .90$.

Results

In relation to the results, it should be noted that violent behaviors exercised by adolescents and young people in their dating relationships should be identified because far from being superficial, fleeting, and of little importance, they progressively shape and adapt the behaviors, attitudes, and interaction models that will mark the individuals' adult relationships. It is understood and assumed that these behaviors are based on a series of romantic myths that cannot survive the clash with reality that occurs in the early years of adulthood. In the study sample, 85.1% of participants reported having used violence due to detachment in their dating relationships, 74.3% used violence due to coercion, and 35.8% used violence due to humiliation. A total of 24.6% used physical violence in their intimate relationships, and 17.3% used at least one instance of sexual violence directed at their partner. It was found that 84% of the women reported having used violence due to detachment, 73.2% used violence due to coercion, 32.4% used violence due to humiliation, 27.6% used physical violence and, finally, 11.3% reported having used sexual violence in their relationship. Similarly, 86.8% of men reported that they engaged in violence by detachment, 76% reported having used violence by coercion, 40.6% reported having used violence by humiliation, 25.5% reported having used sexual violence, and 20.5% reported having used physical violence (see Table 2).

The results showed a significant difference in the use of the negative communication style ($U = 175390.50$, $Z = 11.22$, $p < .001$) by adolescents and young people who used physical violence in their relationship ($Mdn = 8$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 5$). In the same direction, there was a significant difference in the use of the negative communication style ($U = 174689.0$, $Z = -5.20$, $p < .001$) by adolescents and young people who engaged in sexual violence ($Mdn = 8$) and those who did not engage in sexual violence ($Mdn = 5$). However, there was a significant difference in the use of the negative communication style ($U = 207896.0$, $Z = -13.64$, $p < .001$) between those who engaged in violence due to humiliation ($Mdn = 8$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 4$). A significant difference in the use of the negative communication style ($U = 89542.0$, $Z = -12.73$, $p < .001$) was also found between those who engaged in violence by ($Mdn = 6$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 2$). Similarly, there was a significant difference in the use of the negative communication style ($U = 175052.5$, $Z = -11.84$, $p < .001$) between those who engaged in violence by coercion ($Mdn = 7$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 3$).

Table 2
Percentage of Participants who Reported Having Been Abused in a Partner Relationship at Least Once, According to Gender

Type of violence	Gender	n(%)	χ^2	p	ϕ
Physical	Male	152(20.5)	11.65	.001	.081
	Woman	286(27.6)			
	Total	434(24.6)			
Sexual	Male	142(25.5)	61.76	.000	-.186
	Female	116(11.3)			
	Total	308(17.3)			
Humiliation	Male	305(40.6)	12.68	.000	-.085
	Female	331(32.4)			
	Total	636(35.8)			
Detachment	Male	644(86.8)	2.54	.111	-.038
	Female	827(84)			
	Total	1471(85.2)			
Coercion	Male	569(76)	1.92	.166	-.033
	Female	740(73.1)			
	Total	1309(74.3)			

Similarly, a significant difference in the exposure to parental violence ($U = 310312.5, Z = -7.29, p < .001$) between those who engaged in physical violence ($Mdn = 2$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 1$). There was also a significant difference in the exposure to parental violence ($U = 337225.0, Z = -5.13, p < .001$) between those who engaged in sexual violence ($Mdn = 2$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 1$). The results also showed a significant difference in the exposure to parental violence ($U = 324458.5, Z = -5.14, p < .001$) between those who engaged in violence by humiliation ($Mdn = 2$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 1$). Similarly, there was a difference in exposure to parental violence ($U = 303045.5, Z = -4.87, p < .001$) between those who engaged in violence by detachment ($Mdn = 1$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 0$). Similarly, there was a significant difference in exposure to parental violence ($U = 317690.0, Z = -4.65, p < .001$) between those who engaged in violence by coercion ($Mdn = 1$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 0$).

Regarding parenting styles, significant differences were found ($U = 209521.0, Z = -4.00, p < .001$) for the authoritarian style: adolescents who engaged in physical violence in their relationship were more often raised with this parenting style ($Mdn = 26$) compared to those nonengaged in physical violence ($Mdn = 24$). Similarly, there were differences in exposure to the authoritarian parenting style ($U = 169476.0, Z = -2.81, p = .005$) between those who engaged in sexual violence ($Mdn = 25$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 24$). There were also significant differences in exposure to the authoritarian parenting style ($U = 253894.0, Z = -5.09, p < .001$) between those who engaged in violence by humiliation ($Mdn = 25$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 24$). Similarly, there were differences exposure to the authoritarian parenting style ($U = 138030.5, Z = -2.36, p < .001$) between those who engaged in violence by detachment ($Mdn = 25$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 23$). Additionally, the results showed differences in exposure to the authoritarian parenting style ($U = 200325.0, Z = -5.73, p < .001$) between those who engaged in violence by coercion ($Mdn = 25$) and those who did not ($Mdn = 21$).

Similarly, differences were found in the dimensions of family cohesion and adaptability between adolescents who have not exercised and those who have exercised violent behaviors in their dating relationship; for example, a significant difference was found ($U = 196027.0, Z = -2.43, p = .015$) among young people who have not exercised physical violence in their dating relationship, who have a higher score in family cohesion ($Mdn = 57.0$) compared to adolescents who have exercised this type of behavior in their relationship ($Mdn = 55.0$); likewise, a significant difference was found in the dimension of family adaptability ($U = 198686.0, Z = -3.24, p = .001$) between adolescents who exercise ($Mdn = 34.0$) and not they exercise ($Mdn = 36.0$) physical violence. In the cohesion dimension, a difference was found ($U = 154205.5, Z = -2.82, p = .005$), with adolescents who have not used sexual violence obtaining the highest cohesion score ($Mdn = 57.0$) compared to those who exercise this type of violence ($Mdn = 55.0$); similarly, something similar occurred with adaptability ($U = 158394.5, Z = -2.22, p = .027$), with adolescents who do not engage in sexual violence obtaining the highest score in this dimension ($Mdn = 36.0$) compared to the who exercise ($Mdn = 34.0$). Likewise, a difference was found ($U = 258647.5, Z = -2.54, p = .011$) in young people who did not exercise humiliating behaviors, who reported greater family adaptability ($Mdn = 36.0$) compared to with those who engage in this type of behavior in their courtship relationship ($Mdn = 35.0$). No differences were found ($U = 269497.5, Z = -0.62, p = .537$) between young people who practice and do not practice violence due to humiliation in the dimension of family cohesion. No, there was evidence of significant differences in the dimensions of family cohesion and adaptability between those who exercised or did not exercise violence due to detachment and coercion.

The Spearman correlation coefficients corroborated the bivariate relationship proposed for this study. Therefore, negative communication styles and experiencing violence between parents was significantly and positively correlated with the five types of dating victimization that were considered. Family cohesion was negatively correlated with physical violence and sexual violence but was not correlated with the other three types of violence. Family adaptability was negatively correlated with three types of violence: physical violence, sexual violence, and humiliation. Similarly, an authoritarian parenting style was positively correlated with the five types of violence that were evaluated (see Table 3).

Each model proposed from the theory of intergenerational transmission was valid and the fit indices shown in Table 4 were satisfactory since X^2/df was not higher than 3, the RMSEA value did not exceed .08, and the NFI, RFI, IFI, TLI, and CFI indices were $\geq .90$. For violence by coercion, the general model for men and women ($n = 1801$) explained 20.8% of the variance. When the model was compared between men and women, the fit was good; in the sample of women ($n = 1039$), the model explained 26.9 of the variances. For the sample of men ($n = 762$), the model explained 16.6% of the variance. Similarly, the general model of humiliation that was proposed for men and women ($n = 1801$) explained 15.6% of the variance. For the sample of women ($n = 1039$), the model explained 10.3% of the variance; for the sample of men ($n = 762$), the proposed humiliation model explained 17.7% of the variance (see Table 4).

The general model of sexual violence ($N = 1801$) explained 5.6% of the variance. For the sample of women ($n = 1039$), the

Table 3*Correlation Between Violent Behaviors in Dating and Communication Styles, Observation of Violence Between Parents and Family Functionality*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Physical violence	1	.322**	.381**	.229**	.334**	.034	.276**	.187**	-.061*	-.079**	-.053*	.108**
2. Sexual violence		1	.333**	.215**	.345**	-.042	.131**	.104**	-.069**	-.054*	-.044	.079**
3. Humiliation			1	.349**	.417**	.065**	.353**	.111**	-.020	-.067**	.002	.138**
4. Detachment				1	.435**	.191**	.402**	.143**	.041	.047	.021	.142**
5. Coercion					1	.146**	.381**	.126**	.016	.025	.061*	.172**
6. Posi. communication						1	.387**	.071**	.149**	.078**	.145**	.008
7. Negat. communication							1	.220**	.023	-.025	.009	.121**
8. Observation of violence								1	-.191**	-.200**	-.097**	.151**
9. Cohesion									1	.734**	.440**	.037
10. Adaptability										1	.392**	.044
11. Authoritative style											1	.169**
12. Authoritarian style												1

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

model explained 4.1% of the variance, and for the sample of men ($n = 762$), the proposed model of humiliation explained 9.7% of the variance. The general model of violence by detachment ($n = 1801$) explained 18.4% of the variance. In the sample of women ($n = 1039$), the model explained 19.6% of the variance, and for the sample of men ($n = 762$), the model explained 19.3% of the variance (see Table 4). Finally, the general model ($n = 1801$) for physical violence explained 13.7% of the variance. When the model was compared between men and women, the indices were adjusted appropriately, and the model explained 14.8% of the variance for

the women ($n = 1039$) and 12.7% of the variance for the sample of men ($n = 762$) (see Table 4).

Discussion

The prevalence data that were considered for the first specific objective of this research corroborated that it is common for both males and females to use violent behaviors against their partner in adolescence and young adulthood (López-Barranco et al., 2022). This becomes a risk factor for physical and psychological health

Table 4*Goodness-of-fit Indices Through the Structural Equations Analysis Applied to the Five Hypothetical Models Proposed for Engaging in Dating Violence*

Fit indices	χ^2	χ^2/df	p	GFI	RFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Models for women ($n = 1039$)									
Coercion model	23.42	2.34	.009	.984	.941	.990	.965	.990	.036
Humiliation model	21.05	2.11	.021	.983	.937	.991	.966	.991	.033
Sexual model	21.90	2.43	.009	.981	.923	.989	.953	.988	.037
Physical model	23.45	2.35	.009	.981	.933	.989	.961	.989	.036
Detachment model	19.85	2.21	.019	.985	.940	.992	.966	.992	.034
Models for men ($n = 762$)									
Coercion model	17.40	1.74	.066	.984	.944	.993	.975	.993	.031
Humiliation model	16.93	2.12	.031	.985	.932	.992	.963	.992	.038
Sexual model	16.39	2.05	.037	.984	.929	.992	.962	.992	.037
Physical model	16.88	2.1	.031	.984	.929	.992	.962	.991	.038
Detachment model	15.133	1.68	.087	.987	.947	.995	.978	.994	.030
General model for men and women ($N = 1801$)									
Coercion model	22.546	2.255	.013	.991	.966	.995	.981	.995	.026
Humiliation model	21.926	2.741	.005	.990	.956	.994	.971	.994	.031
Sexual model	21.245	2.656	.007	.990	.954	.994	.971	.994	.030
Physical model	21.186	2.648	.007	.991	.958	.994	.973	.994	.030
Detachment model	23.849	2.385	.008	.990	.963	.994	.978	.994	.028

Note. NFI = Normalized fit index; RFI = Relative fit index; IFI = Incremental fit index; RMSEA = Root mean square error of approximation; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; CFI = Comparative goodness-of-fit index; χ^2/df = Chi-squared and degrees of freedom ratio.

problems due to the consequences of experiencing violence in intimate relationships (Spencer et al., 2020). The participants in this research reported that the type of violence that they most frequently exercised in their relationships was violence due to detachment, characterized by an attitude of indifference and discourtesy toward the partner and his or her feelings. Violence by coercion was the second most frequently reported form of violence; this type of violence aims to exert pressure on the partner to force his will or his behavior through the threat of using another type of violence to condition the behavior of the partner and ensure that he or she does what the victimizer wants; in this way, the perpetrator gains control over his or her partner. The third most frequently reported type of violence was humiliation, characterized by the use of personal criticism to attack the self-esteem and personal pride of the partner or the use of neglect, denial of support and other behaviors to lower the partner's self-esteem.

These results are consistent with similar studies conducted in young couples, which report that women make greater use of physical and psychological violence against their partner while men report more sexual violence towards their partner (Dokkedahl & Elklit, 2019; Herrero et al., 2020; López-Barranco et al., 2022; Spencer et al., 2019); it was found that both men and women used violence in their dating relationships. An important aspect of these studies was that they did not find significant differences in the execution of violence by men and women (Miranda-Mendizabal et al., 2019). Some, for example, reported that women more often engage in psychological violence and men more often engage in sexual violence. In addition, many studies have found that men engage in more behaviors of physical violence in their relationships (Park & Kim, 2019; Pérez-Sánchez et al., 2020). This was the case in the study of Reyes et al. (2016) among adolescents in North Carolina, in which women reported greater use of psychological violence and men reported greater use of sexual violence. In addition, it has been found that psychological violence is the type of violence that occurs most frequently in dating relationships, followed by physical, emotional and sexual violence; less frequently, economic and negligent violence are used.

Previous results show that dating violence is frequent and that its prevalence could be high, with serious physical and psychological consequences for adolescents and young adults (Basile et al., 2020; Bolívar-Suárez et al., 2022; Paíno-Quesada et al., 2020; Rey-Anacona & Martínez-Gómez, 2021). When we analyzed the correlation of these variables with the different types of violence, we found that the use of negative communication to solve problems and experiencing violence between parents were significantly and positively correlated with the five types of violence (physical, sexual, humiliation, detachment and coercion). Family cohesion was negatively correlated with physical and sexual violence, the family adaptability was negatively correlated with physical and sexual violence and humiliation. Similarly, authoritarian parenting styles were positively correlated with the five types of violence that were evaluated in this study.

These findings are similar to those of research that found associations between violence and having experienced an authoritarian parenting style, characterized by coercive behaviors, imposition of power, low affective involvement, not giving reasons for orders, not stimulating dialog, indifference to the support of children, few affective relationships, the use of punitive measures

and aggression. This parenting style carries the possibility of raising children who engage in aggressive behaviors and have negative feelings, in addition to presenting children with models of violence that they may replicate in their affective and social relationships (Calvete et al., 2018).

Many studies have analyzed the involvement and impact of having experienced violence between parents and being a victim of domestic violence (Borges et al., 2020; Kalaitzaki, 2019). They found an increased likelihood of being the perpetrator or victim of domestic violence among those who experienced one of the above situations in their family of origin and indicated that exposure to violence between parents could present models that facilitate victimization (Gómez & Rojas-Solis, 2020; Ibabe et al., 2020).

This study supported the models in which communication styles acted as mediators between authoritarian parenting practices, family adaptability-family cohesion, and exposure to violence between parents explain the use of violence. This is related to learning that occurs in the family of origin of adolescents and young people when some type of violence has been observed. From this perspective, our results indicate that engagement in violent behaviors in dating relationships is influenced by family models of aggressive conflict resolution. Under these circumstances, it would be more likely that adolescents and young people who experienced authoritarian parenting models, observed violence between their parents, and were victims of domestic violence would learn to use aggressive communication styles to solve their problems. These individuals would have an increased risk of exerting violence of any kind toward their romantic partner because they do not possess socially competent behaviors for solving problems and prosocial behaviors that allow them to assume healthy affective relationships (Garthe et al., 2019).

The models that proposed to explain the use of violence included communication styles that can function as mediators between authoritarian parenting practices, adaptability-family cohesion, and the observation of violence between parents. This is in line with the results of Park and Kim (2019), who found that witnessing violence between parents is a predictor of dating violence. In addition, authoritarian or negative parenting patterns (rejection of children, inconsistent discipline), family problems (fights, humiliation), and child abuse (physical, psychological, or sexual abuse by parents) are positively related to dating violence. Therefore, the results obtained contribute to the conclusion that adolescents and young people learn coercive and aggressive behaviors toward their partners in their family. In addition, adolescents can develop a negative communication style due to a lack of models of these behaviors in their family of origin (Hébert et al., 2019; Spencer et al., 2020), which increases the risk of violence in their dating relationships. Hardesty and Ogolsky (2020) reported that adolescents who grew up in a family in which they were witnesses or victims of violence were more likely to imitate or tolerate these behaviors in their relationships. According to these results, it is possible that observing models of violence between parents generates attitudes in adolescents and young people that favor the legitimization of abuse between partners (Paíno-Quesada et al., 2020; Powers et al., 2020). In terms of attitudes, members of a couple who exercise this type of abuse usually believe that it is justified or that it is socially allowed, and the abuse is accepted as something that is "normal" in the courtship of adolescents (Martínez-Gómez et al., 2021; Paat et al., 2020).

It could be concluded that the use of violence is a phenomenon caused by both individual and sociocultural factors. This can be explained by a multicausal model in which authoritarian parental practices, family functionality, the observation of violence between parents and the communication styles used by adolescents and young people to solve conflicts in their relationships are factors that influence the use of violent behaviors in affective interpersonal relationships. These findings present a call to incorporate training in communication skills into prevention and intervention programs for the development of satisfactory relationships in which problems are solved in an assertive way.

These results have limitations arising from the cross-sectional design of the study, which examines data from a specific period of time and a specific sample. Additionally, information was collected through self-reports. In future research, it would be interesting to use a longitudinal design and to collect information through reports by others or through structured or semi structured interviews.

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