



ORIGINALES

Study of cultural differences in violent intimate partner relationships in Spain and Peru

Estudio de las diferencias culturales en las relaciones violentas de pareja de España y Perú

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ABSTRACT:

Objective: To examine intimate partner violence in relation to culture, age and educational level of those involved.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study involving a sample of 130 subjects, randomly selected through non-probabilistic sampling by quotas, in Spain and Peru (53 men and 77 women). An evaluation of violent intimate partner relationships was undertaken using a tool known as the "Traffic Light of Gender Violence".

Results: Significant association was found between countries and the items related to the control of dress and outings, punishment by indifference, jealousy, overprotection and control by means of the mobile phone. On the other hand, formal education generates a decrease in gender violence suffered in women. With regard to age, males between 25 and 30 years of age show a significant increase in verbal violence and sexual coercion.

Conclusion: Cultural and traditional rules can affect intimate partner violence. Therefore, they should be considered when educating for equality in order to elaborate new social constructs, focusing particularly on women with low levels of formal education (because they are more vulnerable to gender violence) and on men of the age group that tends to use it more.

Keywords: intimate partner violence, gender violence, culture, sexism

RESUMEN:

Objetivo: Determinar la violencia de género sufrida y ejercida en función de la cultura, edad y nivel educativo.

Metodología: Estudio transversal descriptivo con una muestra de 130 sujetos seleccionados aleatoriamente mediante el muestreo no probabilístico por cuotas en los países de España y Perú, siendo 53 hombres y 77 mujeres, sobre los que se aplicó un test de valoración de relaciones violentas de pareja, llamado el "semáforo de la violencia".

Resultados: Se encontraron asociaciones significativas según países en los ítems relacionados con el control de la vestimenta y de las salidas, el castigo mediante indiferencia, los celos, la sobreprotección y el control a través del móvil. Por otra parte, la educación formal genera una disminución de la violencia de género sufrida en mujeres. Respecto a la edad, los varones entre 25 y 30 años muestran un aumento significativo en la violencia verbal y la coacción sexual que ejercen.

Conclusión: Las normas culturales y tradicionales pueden afectar a las relaciones violentas de pareja. Por lo que han de ser tenidas en cuenta al educar en igualdad para elaborar nuevos constructos sociales, haciendo énfasis en las mujeres con baja educación formal por ser más vulnerables de sufrir violencia de género y en los hombres del grupo etario que más la ejerce.

Palabras clave: violencia de pareja, violencia de género, cultura, sexismo.

INTRODUCTION

The analysis of intimate partner violence needs to be from different perspectives, whether that be through the study of the economic support subsystem; observation of urban or rural residential areas; the study of the characteristics of education; or, as in the present case, geographic and cultural delimitation.

Only in this way can we understand a problem this comprehensive, that includes numerous variables to be taken into account. Conducting a differential study of intimate partner violence in various countries involves analysing the influence of the factor of culture.

To limit bias in the interpretation of the information by the study subjects, it was decided to opt for two Spanish-speaking countries. However, in order for there to be cultural differences, it was decided to choose countries from different continents. The countries chosen were Peru (Latin America) and Spain (Europe).

The context of gender violence in Peru, according to the National Observatory on Violence Against Women and Members of the Family Group, shows a high prevalence of violence in women at the hands of their sentimental partners. Despite this, gender violence has decreased significantly up to the present day (65.4%) compared to 2009, where it was 76.9%⁽¹⁾. The most prevalent forms of violence in Peru are psychological (60-70%), followed by physical (30%) and sexual (6-8%)⁽¹⁾. There has been a decrease in all types of violence in the last decade. However, the decrease has been 11.5 percentage points in verbal or psychological violence and 7.6 points in physical, while sexual violence has only decreased by 2.3%⁽¹⁾.

In 2018 there were 119 femicides and 241 attempted femicides in Peru⁽²⁾, with an average of 10 femicide victims each month⁽³⁾. These high rates are also manifest in the Quispe study⁽⁴⁾. Of the gender violence detected in 2018, 49.8% represented psychological violence, 40.1% physical, 9.6% sexual, and 0.5% economic⁽⁵⁾.

The Peruvian National Observatory of Violence Against Women and the Family Group Members⁽³⁾ indicates that 2.4% of women aged between 15 and 49 who have maintained or have any relationship (ever-partnered women) have suffered sexual violence in the previous 12 months whilst 10% had suffered physical violence, and 15% were assaulted by their partners or ex-partners under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

The implementation of emergency centres for women (CEM), has significantly increased the number of responses to notifications of gender violence, which has gone

from around 29,844 in 2006, to 133,697 in 2018, of which 62.7% were victims aged between 18 and 59 ⁽⁶⁾. However, 70.8% of women assaulted by their partners did not seek support from any institution ⁽³⁾.

On the other hand, in Spain statistical reports from the Ministry for Equality⁷ state that complaints of gender violence have increased or remained stable in recent years. While in 2009 there were around 135,539 complaints, in the years 2016 and 2017 they have increased to 143,535 and 166,260 respectively. The last macro-survey on gender violence shows that 4.4% of women born in Spain suffer physical violence; 3.7% sexual violence; 13.6% psychological / emotional violence; 16.3% psychological control; and 6.2% economic violence. That is to say, of all types of gender violence, 10% corresponds to physical violence, 8.4% to sexual violence, 67.6% to psychological violence, and 14% to economic violence ⁽⁸⁾.

Another noteworthy fact from these reports is the number of fatalities due to gender violence. Between 2003 and September 2018. There were 959 deaths, of which 47 have occurred in this last year (2018). In spite of everything, there is clearly a slight downward trend in fatalities over the years. While between 2003 and 2010 the minimum yearly number of fatalities was 56 and the maximum 76, with an average of 68 deaths per year, between 2011 and 2018 there was a maximum of 62 and a minimum of 47, which implies an average of 53 deaths per year ⁽⁷⁾.

In the field of education, it can be seen from reports from the Institute for Women and Equal Opportunities ⁽⁹⁾ that in 2017 illiteracy in Spain was higher in women than in men — around 444 thousand women and around 212 thousand men. These are notable figures, despite the improvement since the year 2000 when illiteracy in Spain was estimated at 766 thousand women and 334 thousand men.

There is also a difference between the genders in their use of time ⁽¹⁰⁾. While the time dedicated to personal care and study is similar in both genders. The inequality between time dedicated to the home, the family, and leisure is evident. While men have 5 hours and 23 minutes of free time, women have 4 hours and 32 minutes. Likewise, the time allocated to the home and family in men is around 1 hour and 54 minutes, while that of the woman is 4 hours and 7 minutes.

Taking this information into account, we must consider cultural and educational differences, among others, as possible differentiating elements in the recognition of violent and sexist attitudes in relationships. For this reason, the objective of the study is to determine the gender violence suffered and perpetrated in terms of culture, age and educational level.

METHODOLOGY

The study is an observational, cross-sectional, descriptive study in which violent attitudes within intimate partner relationships are examined in relation to culture, traditions, and education in countries such as Spain and Peru. Non-probabilistic sampling by quotas resulted in 130 subjects aged between 18 and 36 being selected. From the sample obtained, 71 subjects were recruited in Peru and 59 in Spain. Of the total sample, the grouping by gender was 53 men and 77 women.

Given that we are trying to observe whether there are cultural differences in the perception of violent attitudes within the couple, the country, education and age have been taken as variables, while the items of the instrument have been categorised according to gender.

The tool used is an adaptation of the CADRI (Conflict in Adolescent Dating Relationship Inventory) questionnaire, known as the "Traffic Light of Gender Violence"¹¹, since it offers three response options: green, which expresses "no" gender violence; yellow, which shows that "sometimes" there is or has been gender violence and finally red, which shows that "yes" there is gender violence in the relationship.

This tool is composed of 20 multiple-choice questions with three types of responses ("no", "sometimes", and "yes"), although for the statistical treatment the variables "sometimes" and "yes" have been unified into a single variable, coded with the name "yes". The test is based on the principle of the recognition of violent activities in relationships, among which are: criticism of the way of dressing, coercive control, isolation, sexual harassment, jealousy, overprotection and offensiveness.

The questions in the test are divided according to gender, with some for females to answer and others for males, thereby appraising the violence suffered or perpetrated. The questionnaire looks at aspects such as criticism of the way of dressing, control, isolation, sexual harassment, jealousy, overprotection and offenses. The questions are as follows (Table 1).

Table 1. The Traffic Light of Gender Violence Questionnaire

Question 1	Does your partner criticise your way of dressing or using make-up and try to convince you to change your appearance?
	Do you think your partner likes to be provocative by wearing the clothes or make-up s/he wants to?
Question 2	Does your partner stop you from going where you want and with whom you want?
	Do you stop your partner deciding when, where and with whom to go because you think that if s/he loves you s/he should not go out with anyone else?
Question 3	Does your partner try to separate you from your family or your friends or criticise and put them down?
	Does it bother you that your partner maintains good solid relationships with their family and friends?
Question 4	Does your partner make you feel inferior, stupid or useless, or make fun of your beliefs?
	Do you make fun of what your partner thinks or does and / or their work?
Question 5	Does your partner insult you or call you offensive names?
	Do you insult your partner or call him/her offensive names?
Question 6	Does your partner ignore or punish you, or show indifference through silence?
	Do you ignore your partner, show indifference, or use silence as a punishment when you want to show your anger?
Question 7	Does your partner get jealous and accuse you of having relationships with other people?
	Do you get jealous and accuse your partner of having relationships

	with other people?
Question 8	Is your partner very overprotective of you?
	Do you think that you should always protect your partner from everything and everyone because you think that s/he alone will not know how or will not be able to?
Question 9	Does your partner constantly call or send messages to your mobile to check what you are doing, where you are and who you are with?
	Do you constantly call or send messages to your partner's mobile to check on what s/he is doing, where s/he is and who s/he is with?
Question 10	Does your partner force you to have sex or insist until you give in for the sake of peace, or because s/he demands "proof of love" and you are afraid of losing him/her?
	If your partner does not want to have sex, do you keep insisting because you think that "no" can be a "maybe", or threaten to break off the relationship because s/he does not "show you love"?

An analysis of the reliability of the tool was also carried out, using the Cronbach's Alpha test applied to the 10 items of the instrument, giving a result of 0.841 in women and 0.634 in men, which gives, on average, a strong level of reliability.

Data collection was carried out through mass screening online via emails, social networks and other messaging applications, and also physically in public places. The data collection took place between November 2018 and the end of January 2019. The questionnaires were self-administered after an explanation of the study, its advantages and the anonymous nature of the statistical treatment. Participation was totally voluntary. The study received a favourable report from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Murcia.

Data analysis was carried out with the statistical program SPSS (version 22), through which a descriptive analysis of the characteristics of the population was carried out, as well as the association of items and characteristics through the use of cross-tabulation with Pearson's Chi-square test.

RESULTS

Characteristics of the Study Population

Of the 130 subjects in the study, 71 came from Peru and 59 from Spain. Analysis of the sample by country of origin shows 54.6% of the subjects with residence in Peru, while 45.4% were resident in Spain. With regard to the gender balance of the study population, 53 of the participants were men and 77 were women, representing 40.8% and 59.2% respectively.

The minimum age of the participants was 18 years and the maximum 36 years with an average of 26.56 years, placing the mode in an age range of 25-30 years.

As to the educational level of the subjects, 3.1% stated that they only attended primary education, 23.8% attended secondary education. 70% went on to higher education, and 3.1% undertook other types of studies.

Association of country of origin and violent attitudes perpetrated / suffered

A relationship was found between the countries of origin and female gender in the violent attitudes referred to in items 1, 2, 6, 7, 8 and 9. Associations between countries for males were observed in items 1, 7, 8, 9 and to a lesser degree item 6. In all of these significant associations of items by countries, an important increase in the affirmative responses was shown in subjects from Peru with respect to those in Spain. All this is represented in Table 2 and, for a better visualisation regarding countries and violence suffered or perpetrated, in Figure 1.

Table 2: Association of country of origin and violent attitudes perpetrated / suffered.

		Females			Males		
		No	Yes	Pearson's Chi ²	No	Yes	Pearson's Chi ²
Q1	Peru	50,0%	50,0%	12,401	48,5%	51,5%	7,067
	Spain	87,2%	12,8%	Sig. 0,000	85,0%	15,0%	Sig. 0,008
Q2	Peru	55,6%	44,4%	11,189	90,9%	9,1%	1,927
	Spain	89,7%	10,3%	Sig. 0,001	100,0%	0,0%	Sig. 0,165
Q6	Peru	54,1%	45,9%	8,403	34,4%	65,6%	3,276
	Spain	84,6%	15,4%	Sig. 0,004	60,0%	40,0%	Sig. 0,070
Q7	Peru	50,0%	50,0%	8,841	45,5%	54,5%	13,292
	Spain	82,1%	17,9%	Sig. 0,003	95,0%	5,0%	Sig. 0,000
Q8	Peru	34,3%	65,7%	15,482	48,5%	51,5%	5,170
	Spain	79,5%	20,5%	Sig. 0,000	80,0%	20,0%	Sig. 0,023
Q9	Peru	32,4%	67,6%	23,819	39,4%	60,6%	16,095
	Spain	87,2%	12,8%	Sig. 0,000	95,0%	5,0%	Sig. 0,000

Figure 1: Association of country of origin and violent acts perpetrated / suffered:

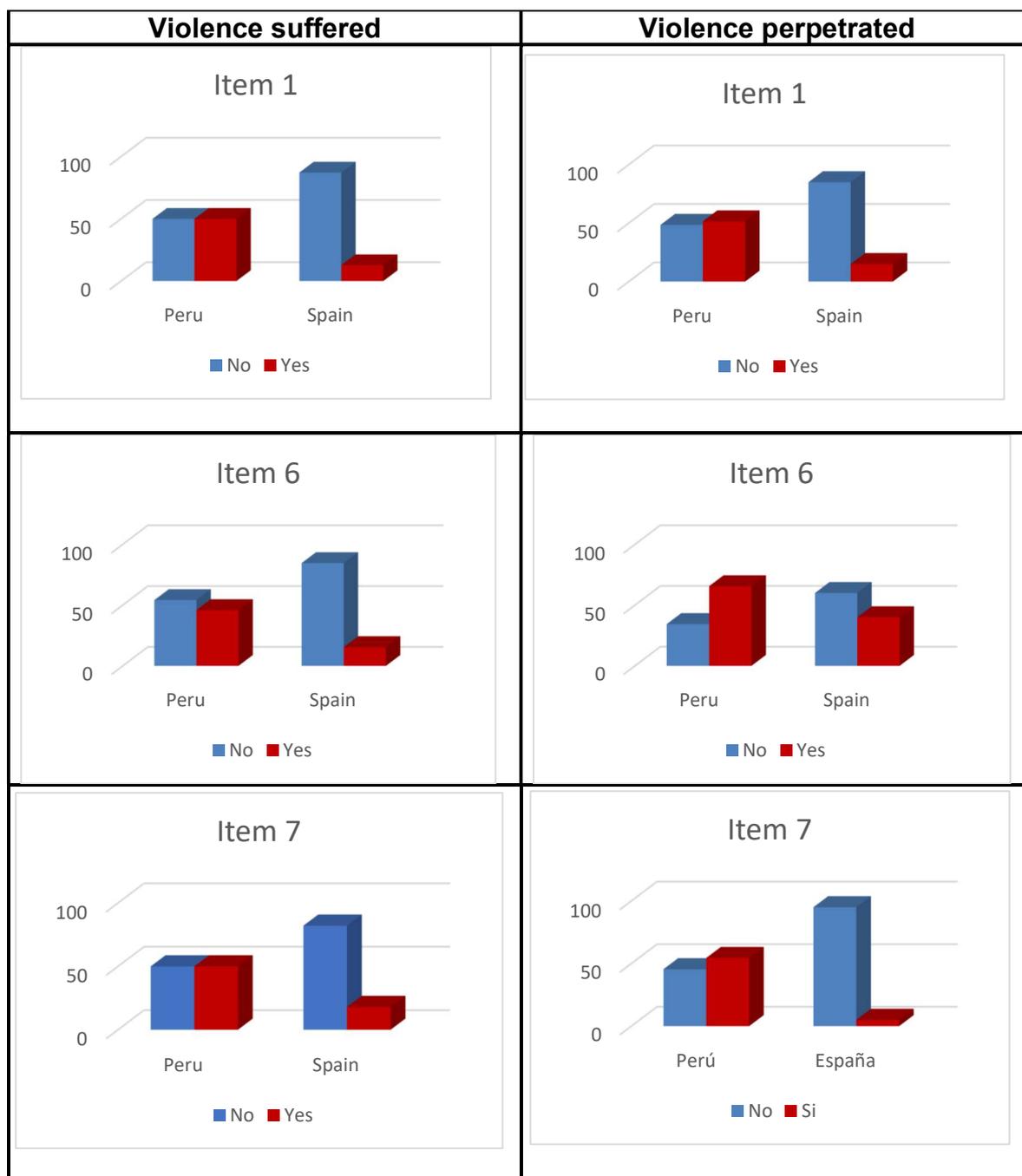
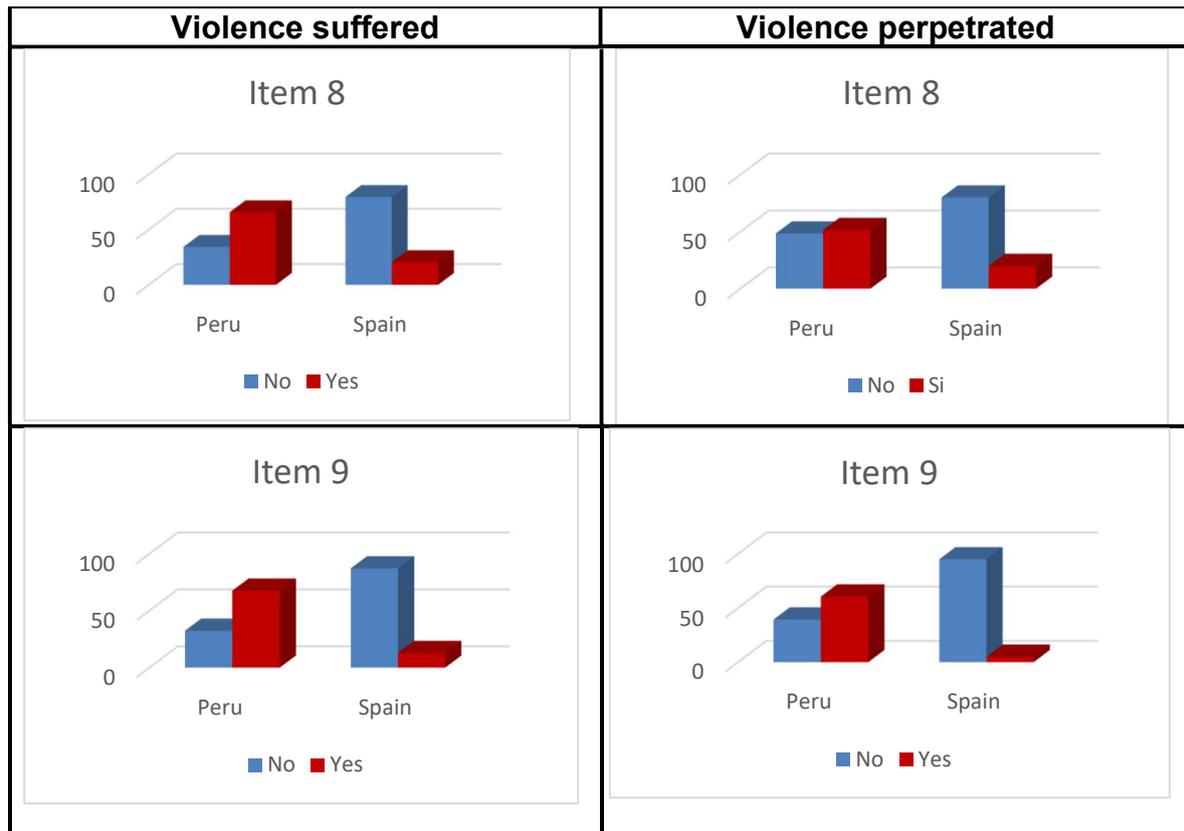


Figure 1: Association of country of origin and violent acts perpetrated / suffered:



It can be seen that in Spain there is a greater disposition toward negative responses, both for violence suffered and perpetrated, when compared with the responses of the sample from Peru, where affirmative responses for both violence suffered and that perpetrated commonly surpass the negative responses in all items.

Association between education and violence suffered or perpetrated

When analysing the association between the items of the instrument and the educational level of the study population, as shown in Table 3, significant factors of association were obtained in items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 9 in the female sample. In males there is no significant association between the items and the formal education received, although it gives some noteworthy data in 1, 8 and 9. This implies that whilst a higher level of formal education leads to less gender violence against women, in the case of men, formal education does not imply a reduction in the perpetration of gender violence.

Table 3: Association between education and violence suffered or perpetrated

			Othe r	Primary Education	Secondary Education	Higher Education	Chi²
Item 1	Females	No	1,9%	0,0%	7,5%	90,6%	27,17 2
		Yes	0,0%	4,2%	58,3%	37,5%	Sig. 0,000
	Males	No	9,1%	0,0%	24,2%	66,7%	6,857
		Yes	0,0%	15,0%	25,0%	60,0%	Sig. 0,077
Item 2	Females	No	1,8%	0,0%	16,4%	81,8%	8,141 Sig.
		Yes	0,0%	5,0%	40,0%	55,0%	0,043
	Males	No	6,0%	4,0%	24,0%	66,0%	5,054 Sig.
		Yes	0,0%	33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	0,168
Item 5	Females	No	1,4%	0,0%	22,9%	75,7%	12,50 4 Sig.
		Yes	0,0%	16,7%	33,3%	50,0%	0,006
	Males	No	6,3%	4,2%	25,0%	64,6%	2,379 Sig.
		Yes	0,0%	20,0%	20,0%	60,0%	0,498
Item 6	Females	No	1,9%	0,0%	15,1%	83,0%	8,383 Sig.
		Yes	0,0%	4,3%	39,1%	56,5%	0,039
	Males	No	8,7%	0,0%	21,7%	69,6%	3,134 Sig.
		Yes	3,4%	10,3%	24,1%	62,1%	0,371
Item 7	Females	No	2,0%	0,0%	11,8%	86,3%	14,24 4 Sig.
		Yes	0,0%	3,8%	46,2%	50,0%	0,003
	Males	No	8,8%	2,9%	23,5%	64,7%	2,959 Sig.
		Yes	0,0%	10,5%	26,3%	63,2%	0,398
Item 9	Females	No	0,0%	0,0%	10,9%	89,1%	14,92 0 Sig.
		Yes	3,3%	3,3%	43,3%	50,0%	0,002
	Males	No	9,4%	0,0%	21,9%	68,8%	7,038 Sig.
		Yes	0,0%	14,3%	28,6%	57,1%	0,071

Association between age group and violence (suffered or perpetrated)

Finally, in the analysis of the association between the items and the age group of the samples, classified by gender, there was an observable null association between the age group and the answers offered by the women. However, in men there is an association seen in items 5 and 10 with the answer "yes" in the 25 to 30-year-old group, with a significance in the strength of association of 0.015 and 0.037 respectively. The data shows that men between 25 and 30 years old answered in the affirmative those items related to insulting their partner (24%) and sexual coercion (19%), while in the rest of the age groups they responded in a negative way. Other data that shows a relative significance is that corresponding to item 7 (jealousy) which shows a higher index in the group of men aged between 18 and 24 years, reaching the point where this type of violence is manifest in 52% of men who belonged to this age group.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study show, amongst other things, that there is a differentiation of the indicators for cases of gender violence in function of the culture of the country sampled. Thus, higher rates of violence have been observed in all the items in the sample from Peru than in that from Spain, which agrees with the bibliography ⁽⁸⁾ and statistical data presented in the introduction to the study. These significant associations become stronger in the items related to the control of clothing and outings, punishment through indifference, jealousy, overprotection and control by means of the mobile phone.

The high incidence of these items in the subjects from Peru is also reflected in the study by Blichtein-Winicki ⁽¹²⁾, in which the main factors associated with intimate partner violence are the traditional norms such as male control over women's visits to family and friends; feeling threatened by the partner's previous relationships; women having more formal education than men or taking the majority of the decisions in the home.

Although this problem is evident in both countries, it is even more accentuated in the Latin-American country, where victims of gender violence are more vulnerable because their legislation only recognises violence that causes observable damage and injuries ⁽¹³⁾.

On the other hand, a study in EU countries observed that domestic violence and gender inequality at policy level is not adequately diagnosed, since various solutions are offered but the causal agents are not really explained ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Regarding the association of the various items with the level of education of the subjects within the sample, it can be seen that the women in this study who have a higher level of education suffered a lower level of intimate partner violence. This coincides with the findings from González Sala's study ⁽¹⁵⁾, which shows that groups with a higher level of formal education suffer lower levels of intimate partner violence and have less tolerance towards this type of attitude. Furthermore, the fact that women have a higher level of formal education plays an important role in the working conditions they can access. However, this fact, far from improving conciliation with regard to housework, has produced a devaluation and invisibility of domestic tasks that

eventually end up being relegated to predominantly female workers from the poorer sectors who are less educated, thereby perpetuating the problem and favouring male rejection of participation in these tasks ⁽¹⁶⁾.

In the analysis by age groups, certain patterns of violent behaviour can be seen in male subjects between 25 and 30 years of age. There is a greater tendency to use insults and sexual impositions towards their partners in this group. This involves 24% and 19% respectively of the males in the aforementioned age range, which is a great problem to face in young adults. This is related to a series of studies ⁽¹⁷⁻¹⁹⁾, which state that between 25 and 27% of female rape victims were in the 20-35 age range. Also, a similar study in Spanish adolescents offered equivalent percentages in 15 – 19-year-old female victims of sexual violence ⁽²⁰⁾. Another study in the context of Peru shows that 43.1% of adolescents could be submitted to forced sex ⁽²¹⁾.

These types of actions tend to be predictors of physical violence. However, López Zafra ⁽²²⁾ shows that the ages most prone to this type of violence are the older subjects (aged 51 and over), and younger people (under 21 years of age). Likewise, a study in adolescent couples from the north of Spain ⁽²³⁾ shows more sexual violence among young girls with violent intimate partner relationships, where up to 60% of them said they had suffered sexual coercion. Yet another study ⁽²⁴⁾, shows that men manifest more aggressive behaviours in longer relationships. For these reasons, possible future cases of physical violence could be established in the subjects of our sample, although this may vary, in accordance with the study culture.

Culture, understood in the broadest sense of the word as tradition, involves knowledge, beliefs and customs, repeated over time, and included in the deepest layer of collective social identity. This generates habits and trends that guide the way of thinking and acting in the individual's daily life.

Johan Galtung in his work ⁽²⁵⁾, speaks of two types of violence. On the one hand, visible or direct violence, in which the act and the agents in which the aggression manifests itself are evident. On the other hand, we have what Galtung qualifies as invisible violence, the basis for which are the cultural constructs manifest through minimal respect for non-human nature, spiritual hardships, damage to the social and global structure, the transfer of structures to the next generation, and a violent culture of trauma and glory.

In this way, the author insists that direct violence reinforces structural and cultural violence.

Glynis Breackwel ⁽²⁶⁾ explains how violent acts are legitimised by cultural gender stereotypes and by their prevalence over time. The implantation of violent gender-based acts in the structural substratum of society, as Galtung explains, and its legitimisation by cultural presence over time as Breackwell indicates, makes this a really difficult problem to eradicate.

Furthermore, these cultural constructs make gender-based violence even more invisible by transforming the visible violence that Galtung described into something that should be carried out in the privacy of the family nucleus. Thus, Rafaela Vos Obeso ⁽²⁷⁾ explains how intimate partner violence should be resolved according to the "customs" in the intimate zone of the home.

With regard to tackling this problem, Espinar Ruiz ⁽²⁸⁾ points to dealing with the issue in a way that explains that this cultural construction, which allows violence within the relationship, is largely due to the processes of differential socialisation, where different messages are learned and transmitted depending on gender.

In this way, we are faced with social and individual learning of behaviours, roles and identities which are judged according to gender and which finally translate into inequalities in gender relations.

With respect to the cultures that this study encompasses, Rivers and Peristiany ⁽²⁹⁾ say:

... The cultural patterns of Mediterranean and South American societies have been called Cultures of Honour, because of the great importance they attach to traditional social structures and the weight that public opinion has as a social entity. In these cultures, men are responsible for caring for the family, and protect women from dishonourable behaviour, usually associated with sexual behaviour. The defence of the women of the family ends up nullifying them or even humiliating them, treating them as another property of the family. The use of violence is normal, in the form of threats or aggression if the rules that preserve the reputation of the family are not met.

In this way, the theory of 'honour culture' emerges, where cultural and emotional ideals emerge as legitimators of intimate partner violence, and which are learned collectively — but which can also be used to prevent this type of action ⁽³⁰⁾.

CONCLUSIONS

The results obtained show a high association between culture and intimate partner violence (both suffered and perpetrated), especially in the items related to control of dress and outings, punishment through indifference, jealousy, overprotection and control through the use of the mobile phone. In the case of the sample from Peru, these items have scored much higher than in the sample from Spain, which may imply a different social learning, based on cultural and traditional norms that may affect gender relations.

The level of formal education has been shown to be a protective factor with regard to gender-based violence for the women of the study, decreasing the number of affirmative responses in the items related to the control of dress and outings, insults, punishment through indifference, jealousy, and control through the use of the mobile phone (in both the Spanish and Peruvian populations). However, in men there is no significant association, either in the increase or decrease of the items. This leads one to think that the mechanisms associated with gender-based violence go beyond that implied by the level of formal education.

In males between the ages of 25 and 30, certain violent behaviours were identified, such as insults and sexual impositions on their partners, which were not found in other age ranges.

Among the conclusions to be extrapolated is the clear call to act on the social constructs that determine gender roles, given that this collective knowledge, whilst

difficult to eradicate, can be combated with new social constructs that, if prevalent over time, can eradicate 'honour culture'.

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