

Violence forms among university students from Junin Region, Perú

Formas de violencia entre estudiantes universitarios de la Región Junín, Perú

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ABSTRACT

Objective To examine the association among six forms of violence and their levels among Peruvian university students from a public University in Peru's Junin region.

Materials and Methods A cross-sectional study of students of both sexes from the Faculty of Education. Sampling comprised 961 voluntary students (629 females and 332 males) studying in the education faculty from the National University of Center of Perú. Data were collected in the period July-December 2019 using the Domestic Violence Measurements Scale (VIFJ4), which assessed six forms of violence (physical, psychological, sexual, social, patrimonial, and gender). These variables were assessed through three levels of violence (mild, moderate, and severe).

Results All student felt violence in their six forms. A higher percentage of violence was found in females than males. According severe level the forms of violence were ordered as follow: physical > psychological > patrimonial > social > gender. For moderate level: social > sexual > physical > gender > patrimonial > psychological, and mild level: psychological > patrimonial > gender > social > physical > sexual.

Conclusion It was confirmed that there are different forms of violence and their levels in both males and females. This knowledge will serve as a basis for the development and implementation of educational programs that help university students to establish adequate behavior and mental health.

Key Words: Violence; university; students; Perú (*source: MeSH, NLM*).

RESUMEN

Objetivo Examinar la asociación entre seis formas de violencia y sus niveles entre estudiantes universitarios peruanos de una universidad pública en la región peruana de Junín.

Materiales y Métodos Un estudio transversal de estudiantes de ambos sexos de la Facultad de Educación. El muestreo incluyó a 961 estudiantes voluntarios (629 mujeres y 332 hombres) que estudiaban en la Facultad de Educación de la Universidad Nacional del Centro del Perú. Los datos se recopilaron en el período de julio a diciembre de 2019 utilizando la escala de medidas de violencia doméstica VIFJ4, que evaluó seis formas de violencia (física, psicológica, sexual, social, patrimonial y de género). Estas variables fueron evaluadas a través de tres niveles de violencia (leve, moderada y severa).

Resultados Todos los estudiantes sintieron violencia en sus seis formas. Se encontró un mayor porcentaje de violencia en mujeres que en hombres. Según el nivel severo, las formas de violencia se ordenaron de la siguiente manera: física > psicológica > patrimonial > social > de género. Para nivel moderado: social > sexual > físico > género > patrimonial > psicológico; nivel leve: psicológico > patrimonial > género > social > físico > sexual.

Conclusión Se confirmó que existen diferentes formas de violencia y sus niveles tanto en hombres como en mujeres. Este conocimiento servirá como base para el desarrollo e implementación de programas educativos que ayuden a los estudiantes universitarios a establecer un comportamiento y una salud mental adecuados.

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Palabras Clave: Violencia; universidad; estudiantes; Perú (*fuentes: DeCS, BIREME*).

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined violence as “The intentional use of physical force and power, threatened, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either result in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation” (1). Likewise, Ozbilen et al. (2) define violence as a complex phenomenon showed through the destructive and intense occurrence of the feeling of anger, and hostility towards objects and people, encompassing the war, securitization, terrorism, ethnic differences, domestic, crimes, sexual and gender differences, social, psychological, etc. (3–7).

Violence at universities is not a new phenomenon and their presence may disrupt the educational system, cause loss of material, infrastructure destruction, and eventually generate negative implications on the educational process (8,9). Violence among young people is a global public health problem (1). It contributes positively to prevent mortality and morbidity rate for women and men across diverse cultures (10). Consequently, efforts to identify risks and factors have increased (11). Several studies on young students suggest that violence is not exclusively associated to academic issues, if not also to a combination of environmental, individual, cultural, contextual, psychological, social, and situational factors (2,12,13). For instance, Fawole et al. (14) reported gender-based violence by 89.1% y 84.8% for public and private school students, respectively. Flake et al. (6) from a total of 362 university students found that 75.9% suffered and 76.4% perpetrated some kind of violence (psychological and sexual). Likewise, Amórtegui-Osorio (15) assessed the violence among students at National university of Colombia and reported that 226 (45.5%) students were identified as aggressors of a total of 496 students. From 496 students, reported that 226 (45.5%) were considered as aggressors.

Universities are an ideal place for recruiting young people from different beliefs, behavior, religions, etc. because a sizeable proportion of the Peruvian youths are enrolled in public or private universities. Universities are well-respected institutions that offer higher education and research, where young peoples from different socioeconomic or income statuses begin to sociability. However, this place may also generate interpersonal violence in the form of canning and bullying (16). Apart of physical violence (e.g., battering, rape, in extreme cases lead to homicide),

verbal violence (e.g., harassment based on gender, sexual orientation, racial, ethnic group membership, religion), and psychological violence (e.g., intimidation, and fear that can cause loss of social, educational, and mental stability) (17,18), victims of violence reported performance difficulties such as loss of self-confidence, absenteeism, interrupted studies, and incapacity to study (8,9).

In Perú, only exist reports and news treating above women violence (19), but information on violence in young people of universities so far it was reported in the scientific literature. Therefore, this study represents the first local approach to the topic with the objective of known the perception of violence in university students and to identify their knowledge and feeling.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design and participants

A cross-sectional study was performed at the National University of Center of Perú (UNCP), located in the city of Huancayo, Junin region, Perú, from July to December 2019. Inclusion criteria were students ≥ 18 and who agreed to participate in the study voluntarily. A total of 961 (332 males and 629 females) undergraduate students (II to X semester) were selected to participate. The researchers explained the objectives of this study and questionnaire items (indicating implicit consent by completion and return of the form) that were filled out in about ten minutes by each person. Ethical considerations were approved by the ethics committee from the Education Faculty. Ethical issues as plagiarism, misconduct, informed consent, data falsification, and/or fabrication, and submission were monitored by the authors.

Data collection and study variables

The questionnaire Domestic Violence Measurement Scale (VIFJ4) developed by Jaramillo et al. (20) was applied to collect the data. The scale is composed of 25 items and there are 5 alternatives for each item. These are as follows; “rarely (1), seldom (2), sometimes (3), many times (4), and almost always (5). The scale gets a maximum of 75 points. The scale consists of three levels: mild, moderate, and severe violence and their score for each level and type of violence is shown in Table 1. To ensure the validity of the instrument, it was presented to a jury of five experts from the Faculty of Education obtaining a Cronbach-alpha of 0.75.

Table 1. Forms of domestic violence and their levels

Levels of violence	Physic	Psychological	Sexual	Social	Patrimonial	Gender	Total score
Total score	≤ 4 p	≤ 8 p	≤ 6 p	≤ 5 points	≤ 4 p	≤ 4 p	≤ 35 p
Moderate	5-11 p	9-16 p	5 - 11 p	5 - 11 p	5-11 p	5-11 p	36-67 p
Severe	≥ 12 p	≥ 12 p	≥ 12	≥ 12	≥ 12 p	≥ 12	≥ 12

p=points.

Data analysis

Data obtained from the research was assessed with Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), v 20. Sex difference according to levels was studied through the non-parametric chi-square independence. Likewise, frequencies and percentages were computed for ordering and giving opinions.

RESULTS

Of the total of participants (n=961), 332 were male students (34.5%), and 629 were female students (65.5%) (Table 2). From Table 2, it is noted that 614 (71.8%

females and 28.2% male), 252 (50.4% female and 49.6% male), and 95 (64.2% female and 35.8% male) students living with mild, moderate, and severe violence, respectively. Likewise, is observed that the proportion of females increases with the severity of violence. Levels of violence and gender of students were found to be dependent (Chi-square (n=961) =36.35, p=0.000 <0.05). This result may be ascribed that levels of violence increase further among the UNCP students during their relationships.

In Table 3, is presented the distribution of the students by type of violence, levels, and gender. Likewise, the number of males and females, the percentage of gender, and degree also are showed.

Table 2. Distribution of total of students by gender and levels of violence

Gender	Levels of violence						Total	
	Mild		Moderate		Severe		Freq	%
	Freq	%	Freq.	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Male	173	28.2	125	49.6	34	35.8	332	34.5
Female	441	71.8	127	50.4	61	64.2	629	65.5
Total	614	100	252	100	95	100	961	100

Freq=frequency, % = percentage.

Physical violence

The 63.9% of the females presented a mild level of physical violence, while 24.2% a moderate level, and 11.7 severe level. In males, 38.6%, 46.3%, and 15.1% showed mild, moderate, and severe violence, respectively. In general, 55.2% (n=530) of the students (75.8% females and 42.2% males) felt mild physical violence, while 31.8% (n=306) felt moderate violence (49.7% females and 50.3% males), and 13.0% (n=125) felt severe violence. Besides, was found that there is significant dependence between the levels of violence and gender of the students (Pearson’s Chi-square (n=961) =60.67, p=0.000 <0.05).

Psychological violence

650 (67.6%) students (458 females and 192 males) reported having felt mild psychological violence, while that 218 (22.7%) students (122 females and 96 males) and 93 (9.7%) students (49 females and 44 males) felt moderate and severe violence psychological, respectively. Likewise, was found significative dependence between the levels of psychological violence and the gender of

the students (Pearson’s Chi-square (n=961) =22.54, p=0.000 < 0.05).

Sexual violence

53.2% of the students felt mild sexual violence, of them, 74.2% are women and 25.8% men, while 34.6% felt moderate violence where 53.2% are men, and 12.1% who experienced severe violence, 80.2% are women. In addition, was observed significative dependence between the levels of sexual violence and the gender of the students (Pearson’s Chi-square (n=961) =79.50, p=0.000 <0.05).

Social violence

From Table 3, it is observed that 550 (69.1% females and 30.9% male), 345 (60.9% female and 39.1% male), and 66 (59.1% female and 40.9% male) students reported felt mild, moderate, and severe violence social, respectively. It was also found that exists a significant dependency between the levels of social violence and the gender of the students (Pearson’s Chi-square (n=961) =7.61, p=0.022 <0.05).

Patrimonial violence

The 65.9% (46.9% females and 19.0% males), 26.5% (46.9% females and 19.0% males), and 7.5% (46.9% females and 19.0% males) of the student felt mild, moderate, and severe patrimonial physical violence, respectively. Besides, was reported significant dependence between levels of patrimonial violence and the gender of the students (Pearson's Chi-square ($n=961$) = 30.26, $p=0.002 < 0.05$).

Gender violence

The 65.4% of students felt mild gender-based violence, including 71.4% are women and 28.6% were male, while 28.8% felt moderate violence where 54.5% are women, and 5.7% who felt severe violence 52.7% are women.

In general, the results showed (Table 3) that all student felt violence in their six forms. For severe (n = number of students), is ordered of the following manner: physical ($n=125$) > sexual ($n=116$) > psychological ($n=93$) > patrimonial ($n=72$) > social ($n=66$) > gender ($n=55$). Likewise, moderate violence: social ($n=345$) > sexual ($n=336$) > physical ($n=306$) > gender ($n=277$) > patrimonial ($n=255$) > psychological ($n=218$). Mild violence was found in the following order: psychological ($n=650$) > patrimonial ($n=634$) > gender ($n=629$) > social ($n=550$) > physical ($n=66$) > sexual ($n=55$). Female showed sever violence for all forms of violence compared to males.

DISCUSSION

In this study, the interview form aimed to reveal the perception of the forms of violence among education students studying in the Faculty of Education, UNCP university, and to analyze the relation of these data with the violence levels. Based on the results found was proved that inside this university exist different levels (mild, moderate, and severe) and forms of violence, indicating that the undergraduate students suffered some form of violence. Amórtegui-Osorio (15) and Turan et al. (16) reported different levels and forms of violence among undergraduate students in one university from Colombia and in three universities from Turkey, respectively. Also, was found that there is significant dependence between all forms of violence and the gender of the students.

Based on the severe level of violence the forms of violence were ordered as follows: physical, sexual, psychological, patrimonial, social, and gender. A similar result was reported by Flake et al. (6) who concluded that psychological violence followed by sexual violence was the most prevalent among undergraduate students of two universities (one public and one private) from Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Concerning physical violence, the results found in this research present similar tendencies as the ones in international studies, where females (60.0%) suffer more physical violence than males (40.0%). Physical violence is the intentional use of physical force that can cause injury or harm (21). According, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), 1 in 4 females and 1 in 9 males experience severe intimate partner physical violence (22). In Norway, Steen and Hunskaar (23) reported that 354 females were attacked by males and only 33 males by women. These results show that females are the most physically abused.

About sexual violence, a major number of females (80.2%) felt sexual abuse than males (19.8%). Sexual violence is a sexual act through forcing and without the free consent of the victim (21). This proportion found is according to the NISVS who published that 1 in 5 females and 1 and 59 males suffer sexual assault or are during his/her life (22). Besides, Senn et al. (24) reported that of 899 university female students (mean age=18.5 years), 58.7% had experienced one or more forms of victimization since an early age, 35.0% had experienced attempted rape, and 23.5% had been raped.

In Psychological violence, females (52.7%) showed a slightly higher value than males (47.3%) for a total of 93 students. Psychological violence involves the use of verbal and non-verbal communication with the intent to make feel bad someone (21). Vidourek (25) reported that of a total of 777 participants (351 males and 410 females) that 13.5% of females and 6.3% of males (6.3%) felt emotional abuse, respectively. Also, reported that the main factors to feel emotional abuse were the early consumption of alcohol, cigarette, and marijuana compared to their non-using peers. Alcohol consumption is commonly present among university/college students and contributes to emerging peer-group relations (26). Undergraduate students from Huancayo, are not the exceptions. For instance, Valdivia-Lívano et al. (27) reported the risk of alcohol intake in the student of three universities from Huancayo and concluded that a large number of students consumed alcohol due to the presence of problems and depressive symptoms.

Patrimonial (or property) violence is considered as the violation of female's property rights and is stronger related to physical, psychological, and sexual violence (28). In this work, patrimonial violence was observed in mild ($n=634$), moderate ($n=255$), and severe ($n=72$) level, being females (46.9%, 13.7% and 4.8%) more harmed than males (19.0%, 12.8%, and 2.7%). Deere et al. (28) demonstrated that patrimonial violence is not uncommon in Ecuador, which leave females vulnerable in case of

Table 3. Distribution of students by forms of violence, levels, and gender

Forms of violence	Degree		Female	Male	Total
Physical	Mild	N	402	128	530
		Gender (%)	75.8	24.2	100.0
		Level (%)	63.9	38.6	55.2
	Moderate	N	152	154	306
		Gender (%)	49.7	50.3	100.0
		Level (%)	24.2	46.3	31.8
	Severe	N	75	50	125
		Gender (%)	60.0	40.0	100.0
		Level (%)	11.9	15.1	13.0
Psychological	Mild	N	458	192	650
		Gender (%)	70.5	29.5	100.0
		Level (%)	72.8	57.8	67.6
	Moderate	N	122	96	218
		Gender (%)	56.0	44.0	100.0
		Level (%)	19.4	28.9	22.7
	Severe	N	49.0	44	93
		Gender (%)	52.7	47.3	100.0
		Level (%)	7.8	13.3	9.7
Sexual	Mild	N	380	132	512
		Gender (%)	74.2	25.8	100.0
		Level (%)	60.4	39.8	53.3
	Moderate	N	156	177	333
		Gender (%)	46.8	53.2	100.0
		Level (%)	19.4	53.3	34.7
	Severe	N	93.0	23	116
		Gender (%)	80.2	19.8	100.0
		Level (%)	14.8	6.9	12.1
Social	Mild	N	380	170	550
		Gender (%)	69.1	30.9	100.0
		Level (%)	60.4	51.2	57.2
	Moderate	N	210	135	345
		Gender (%)	60.9	39.1	100.0
		Level (%)	33.4	40.7	35.9
	Severe	N	39.0	27	66
		Gender (%)	59.1	40.9	100.0
		Level (%)	6.20	8.1	6.90
Patrimonial	Mild	N	451	183	634
		Gender (%)	71.1	30.9	100.0
		Level (%)	46.9	19.0	65.9
	Moderate	N	132	123	255
		Gender (%)	51.8	48.2	100.0
		Level (%)	13.7	12.8	26.5
	Severe	N	46.0	26.0	72.0
		Gender (%)	63.9	36.1	100.0
		Level (%)	4.8	2.7	7.50
Gender	Mild	N	449	180	629
		Gender (%)	71.4	28.6	100.0
		Level (%)	46.7	18.7	65.4
	Moderate	N	151	126	277
		Gender (%)	54.5	45.5	100.0
		Level (%)	15.7	13.1	28.8
	Severe	N	29.0	26.0	55.0
		Gender (%)	52.7	47.31	100.0
		Level (%)	3.0	2.7	5.7

N= number of female or male; Gender (%): percentage of gender; degree (%): degree percentage.

separation, widowhood, or divorce. In the case of students would be by the break-in their lover’s relationships.

Social violence showed the same behavior with a major number of females (59.1) that suffered social violence than males (40.9%) at a severe level. Social violence is any type of violence committed by individuals or communities, including gang violence, armed conflict, terrorism, robbery, parent-to-child physical aggression, and gang violence (29). This form of violence may be ascribed to students whose parents or relatives felt or lived terrorism years ago. A report made by the National

Institute of Statistic and Informatic (INEI) found that more than 86% Peruvians feel afraid and unsafe of falling in robbery mainly (30).

About gender violence, Henning and Feder (31) reported that female arrestees were significantly less than males for assaulting and intimate partner in Shelby County, USA. Similarly, Brillhante et al. (32) after a bibliometric study (mainly Web of Science database, from 1982-2102) confirmed that females followed children, adolescents, and finally males reported gender violence.

Relating to all forms of violence suffered by university students could be inferred that they are associated and that usually, one type of violence leads at a certain time to others to trigger and become negative results, i.e. with an assaulted person and an aggressor.

Therefore, there is an urgent necessity to address various prevention programs and treatment against rape, mental health, or other medical screenings in both females and male students.

This study reveals that when gender is taken into consideration, it can be said that female students get more exposed to all forms of violence and their levels than male students. Based on the level of violence was found the severe violence was represented by physical, sexual, and psychological, while moderate violence by social, sexual, and physical, and finally mild violence by psychological, patrimonial, and gender.

The findings in this research bring the confirmation of the need to apply actions, and public policies in this direction, with the objective of produce important knowledge for implement prevention programs, addressed to adolescents and youngest people, to minimize the chances of committing any form of violence ♥

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