



REVISTA

# CÁTEDRA

## Intimate partner violence among college students

### *Violencia en las relaciones de pareja en estudiantes universitarios*

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### Abstract

Violence is one of the most common manifestations of subordination, domination and control of subjects over others, and in its different expressions it has been present in social interaction throughout history. Intimate partner violence is one of the classifications of this fact and the object of this study. Gender violence is characterized by the presence of this coercion in the sphere of couple relationships, being, unfortunately, the woman in a higher percentage the recurrent victim of these unequal relationships. An important cause of this fact is the subjective difference established between the sexes. It does not seem to respect age, social class or level of education, being present in various contexts and environments in which people develop. Therefore, the objective of the research was to determine the prevalence of violence in intimate partner relationships in students of the careers of



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Psychopedagogy and Educational Psychology of the Universidad Central del Ecuador. This study was developed under a quantitative, descriptive, documentary and field approach. The results identified the naturalization of violence in the study population, most of whom reported having experienced violence in their relationships. The main etiology was attributed to the cultural factor, and it was found that psychological and sexual violence had the highest prevalence.

## Keywords

university students, intimate partner, violence, gender-based violence, intimate partner violence.

## Resumen

La violencia es una de las manifestaciones más comunes de subordinación, dominio y control de los sujetos sobre los otros, y en sus distintas expresiones se ha presentado en la interacción social a lo largo de la historia. La violencia de pareja es una de las clasificaciones de este hecho y objeto de este estudio. La violencia de género se caracteriza por la presencia de esta coerción en el ámbito de las relaciones de la pareja, siendo, lamentablemente, la mujer en un mayor porcentaje la víctima recurrente de estas relaciones de desigualdad. Una importante causal de este hecho es de la diferencia subjetiva establecida entre los sexos. Parece no respetar edad, clase social o nivel de formación, estando presente en diversos contextos y ambientes en que las personas se desenvuelven. Por tanto, el objetivo de la investigación fue el determinar la prevalencia de la violencia en las relaciones de pareja en estudiantes de las carreras de Psicopedagogía y Psicología Educativa de la Universidad Central del Ecuador. Este estudio se desarrolló bajo el enfoque cuantitativo, de nivel descriptivo, de tipo documental y de campo. Los resultados identificaron la naturalización de la violencia en la población de estudio, que en su mayoría señalan haber experimentado este hecho en sus relaciones. Se le atribuyen al factor cultural su principal etiología y se halló que la violencia psicológica y sexual presentan la mayor prevalencia.

## Palabras claves

Estudiantes universitarios, pareja, violencias, violencia de género, violencia de pareja.

## 1. Introduction

Violence naturalized in our society generates effects, particularly in the early stages of the maturing process of human beings. Aviña refers that the impact of the practices of the different manifestations of physical, sexual and psychological violence, among others, during the development of the personality of children and adolescents is later expressed in the processes of socialization, giving rise to a distorted way of acting, communicating, transmitting feelings and thoughts towards other people (Aviña, 2021, pp. 38-39). As a consequence, these actors inserted in the family and educational centers are influenced by a violent culture that in the future will allow the reproduction of these behaviors in socio-affective relationships in different contexts. From this framework, the concern that led to the present study was what is the prevalence of violence in intimate partner relationships in students of two careers at the Central University of Ecuador? Cormos et al. point out that violence has been legitimized and even justified by the system, thus, at the macro level, economic, political and social factors influence the ideology, behaviors and attitudes of people and these have repercussions at the micro level where the victimizer reproduces and establishes power relationships through violent practices in their relationships; and the



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ontogenetic level that reflects the individual typologies of the victimizer (Cormos et al., 2023, p. 154-155). From this perspective, the general objective of the research was to determine the prevalence of violence in intimate partner relationships in students of two careers at the Universidad Central del Ecuador. Therefore, it is important to analyze violence as a justified practice in all contexts and as a result of adaptation mechanisms to threatening environments that would ensure the maintenance of power over other people. Molina, et al. mention that aggressiveness can have the purpose of survival of the species in obtaining resources, but not violence that has the conscious intention of harming the other (Molina, et al., p. 47-48).

The structure of this work consists of 6 parts: the first part presents the relevance and importance of research on intimate partner violence in the university context, as well as the objective of this study; the second part points out in more detail relevant statistical data on gender violence in the Ecuadorian context, and also clarifies some related concepts: the third shows the research approach, methodology and instrument through which primary information was collected; part 4 allows to demonstrate the findings and determine the prevalence of violence in the study population; part 5 identifies the coincidences and contradictions with the results of other similar research; finally, the last part establishes the most important conclusions of the research.

## 2. Theoretical framework

Violence would be the natural response of human beings and animals to situations of danger, vulnerability and risk; manifesting itself as a survival resource in defense. It is intended to guarantee organic integrity, life, food or in the struggle for reproduction, gene transmission and perpetuation of the species. While violence is defined as:

The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or a group or community, that causes or has a high likelihood of causing injury, death, psychological harm, developmental delay or deprivation (World Health Organization - WHO, 2002, p. 5).

In other words, violence not only causes physical or psychological harm that must be covered with professional support. It can also lead to the death of the victim and thus to a vicious circle that leads to the naturalization of violent behavior.

As in the case of children who grow up in violent homes or communities, they tend to establish and internalize these behaviors. And they manifest themselves as a way of resolving disputes and tend to repeat such abusive actions against their spouses and children in the future. In the same logic, violence is conceived as a way of violating people's rights and freedoms, so much so that "violence is a human behavior, based on a scheme of unequal powers, whose intention is to subdue and control a person or groups of people to achieve the proposed objectives" (Rodney et al., 2020, p. 2). Therefore, violence, being a social phenomenon, is also anachronistic. Since man organized society, he made it in his own image and likeness, with consistent manifestations of isolation, segregation and exclusion of those who did not have the expected characteristics, with violence as a response to such diversity.

The unfortunate thing is that both men and women have replicated it over and over again, transmitting stereotypes from generation to generation. These stereotypes are the difference in clothing, roles, functions, jobs, among others. Without considering the fact that



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both men and women have strong capacities as well as weaknesses, which would ratify Galton's theory of individual differences. In recent years, Ecuadorian society has been hit with a wave of reports of gender violence, including violent deaths known today as femicide. Despite being typified in the Comprehensive Organic Criminal Code, the Attorney General's Office in the Criminological and Crime Statistics Bulletin, states that between August 2014 and May 2019 in Ecuador 935 cases of femicides were recorded, being 2017, the most violent year with a record of 103 cases nationwide. Likewise, the National Institute of Statistics and Census, mentions that approximately 65 out of every 100 women suffered some type of violence (INEC,2011). It is important to consider that the data come from the official census of 2010, only in 2022 the last population census was carried out and the official results are not yet available; therefore, according to these data, violence in the country is alarming and with the same sociocultural pattern; that is, intimate partner violence occurs in most cases from men to women, this being one of the most infamous forms of violence. On the other hand, violence by women against men within the couple is a reality despite still being considered a social taboo, due to the differences that have been established between the stronger sex and the weaker sex, the latter socially attributed to women by the patriarchal system (Alfaro et al., 2022).

Gender violence within a couple's affective relationship is an evident problem and because of this, thousands of women and men worldwide have taken to the streets to demand and request government authorities to implement laws that favor equal opportunities and rights for all people without any type of exception. In this sense, it is imperative to consider the work of the educational system as a fundamental entity within the development process of a conglomerate. Education should be the means through which the transmission, production and innovation of a culture of peace is promoted, making it possible to undertake and maintain adequate interpersonal relationships.

But what causes these discrepancies between men and women? Perhaps it is the fact that anatomical differences are more important than similarities in cognitive processes. Such is the case that sex, as such, classifies mammals, including humans, based on their physical characteristics, which is not subject to debate or further analysis. The problem is established by the implications that different societies have historically given to this biological fact, describing the sexes with a series of characteristics that should be inherent to them. Consequently, it is pointed out that the "term gender is coined to establish the set of conceptions evidenced in socially established and culturally expected behaviors for men and women, thus differentiating it from sex". (Rubín, 1986, pp.103-104.) In such a way that it emphasizes the roles and functions that are assigned and socially accepted in each of the genders.

This term produces a questioning of what is supposedly characteristic of each sex, understanding that "gender not only questions the existence of a feminine and masculine essence, but the social organization of relations between sexes and the naturalization of the inequalities that are established between them" (Quintana and Rosero, 2014, p. 20). In this sense, a systematic analysis of the roles that both men and women have played in different periods of human existence is initiated, as well as the possible causes and consequences of this separation. The logical assumption of gender classification has been accompanied by that of hierarchization, a fact that in most of the world has resulted in inequality as a constant in the dynamics of the relationship between men and women. This serious phenomenon, without a doubt, evidences a predominance of the male gender in religious, political, cultural, sports, economic, family, and other spheres.



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These stereotypes have been established as a paradigm that has implicitly permeated the consciousness of human beings, making their effects on society invisible, to the extent that they are the victims or victims of this hegemonic system of imposition. On the other hand, it is stated that "it is women themselves who are responsible for reproducing the patriarchal order to the extent that they transmit to their sons and daughters the model they have incorporated" (Chodorow, 1978, p.7). The fact that human beings have developed in a society constituted on the basis of these conceptions has not allowed us to intuitively perceive how these mechanisms have deepened discrimination and violence. In this context, the patriarchal system is naturalized, and even justified, by society, as pointed out by:

The vast majority have adhered to the dominant culture and, until well into the 20th century, have not shown a critical perspective with respect to the beliefs and stereotypes about men and women constructed by the patriarchal system that has been imposed on our civilization for centuries (Errázuriz, 2012, p.11).

With this prelude, a worldwide problem is analyzed: gender violence, which refers to all types of mistreatments that occur between a man and a woman. In which the authority and dominance of one of the subjects against the other is evident. In general, based on the statistical frequency, this phenomenon is expressed by the imposition of the man taking the role of aggressor over the woman taking the role of victim.

Therefore, gender violence is present in different spheres such as: in the family, from father to daughter or mother to son, in the couple. In schools, from teachers and authorities to students; in the workplace, from bosses to subordinates, among others. Predominantly in the couple, where women have been socially and historically subjected to the authority of men through intimidation, threats and aggression. They cause physical, psychological or sexual harm, within an evident relationship of inequality and domination. In this sense, Blázquez and Moreno, (2008) state that "intimate partner violence is one of the most frequent manifestations of violence in family contexts" (p. 480). This phenomenon in Ecuador evidences alarming figures presented by the National Institute of Statistics and Census, which show that 6 out of 10 women have experienced some type of violence with a distribution of 47.1 % of single women, 85.4 % divorced, 78 % separated, 62.5 % married and 61.5 % unmarried (INEC, 2011). There is evidence of higher rates of violence among women who live with or have separated from their partners.

Another present phenomenon shows that there are high rates of violence in dating relationships, which causes adolescents and adult women to have romantic relationships before marriage, where women are victims of an unconscious system that has perpetuated violence as a way of life and whoever tries to leave this status quo must overcome difficult paths to become a subject of rights. In the same logic, there are factors that influence or participate in the situation of intimate partner violence, making some women more vulnerable, such as: cultural, age, economic, educational level, health conditions and supportive environments. For example, according to the National Institute of Statistics and Census, in Ecuador, 52.4% of women who have reported being victims of gender-based violence have a university degree, 52.8% have a postgraduate degree, 67% have no education and 70% are literate (INEC, 2011). This shows that having a higher level of education does not guarantee a life free of violence.



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In other words, violence is prevalent among women with lower educational or academic levels, but it is present in more than 1 out of every 2 women at the undergraduate and graduate levels. This is evidence that gender violence is entrenched in society and that the cultural imaginary built over decades is still present in the dynamics of relationships, normalizing behaviors that have undermined the integrity of women. In the case of men who have suffered gender violence, the same society has been determined to hide it, and there are black figures in the judicial and social system. For a man, because of his historical legacy of manhood, he is more susceptible to being mocked or taunted if he tries to ask for help or denounce his victim.

Thus, a study by the National Institute of Statistics and Census at the national level obtained data on the most common types of violence in couples: 87.3% physical, 76.3% psychological and 53.6% sexual (INEC, 2011). An important factor that influences the triggering of all these types of violence in couples is affective dependence. This is characterized by the establishment of relationships with evident imbalance in which the subject, in this case the woman, is conditioned to tolerate all types of violence and is not emotionally capable of abandoning the relationship. Despite the manifestations of suffering, she tends to minimize the negative aspects of the aggressor and magnify the positive ones, reaching a situation of idealization of the partner.

Thus, the victim tends to use different cognitive fallacies to justify the aggressor's acts of aggression, even blaming herself for them. Thus, "rationalization is a very human reaction, which does not necessarily indicate a serious problem. But it begins to be when, on a regular basis, one finds oneself excusing unacceptable behavior by one's partner" (Forward, 1993, p. 21). That is, she empowers herself in her role as a victim, because she feels safe within that hell. While she continues to cede control of her life to the person who takes the role of victimizer. Therefore, it is urgent to create safe environments, of trust in the other and above all of self-love, where every human being, men and women, can complement each other in the joint construction of a more equitable and respectful society.

### 3. Methods and Materials

The research was conducted under a quantitative, descriptive, documentary and field approach. It was carried out in the careers of Educational Psychology and Psychopedagogy of the Faculty of Philosophy, Letters and Educational Sciences of the Universidad Central del Ecuador, whose general objective was to determine the prevalence of violence in intimate partner relationships in students of two careers of the Universidad Central del Ecuador. The first specific objective was to determine the socio-cultural influence of violence in couple relationships of university students; the second objective was to establish the frequency of psychological, physical, economic and sexual violence in couple relationships; the third objective was to analyze the level of violence in a couple relationship; and the fourth objective was to determine the relationship between the different types of violence. A total population of 263 students participated in the study on a voluntary basis and with guaranteed anonymity, of whom (94) are enrolled in the Educational Psychology and Counseling program and (169) are enrolled in the Psychopedagogy program, corresponding to (71) men and (192) women, of legal age, who declared to be in a dating relationship (224 persons), married (22 persons) and in a common-law relationship (17 persons), all of whom signed the informed consent form. The questionnaire was applied in the classrooms of the 2 careers, and authorization was requested from the career management of the 2019-2020 period.



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In order to investigate the existence of violence in intimate partner relationships and determine the level of violence, the Maltrato en el Noviazgo (CMN) questionnaire by Osorio et al. 2008, which is composed of a demographic data sheet and 66 Likert-type items; 53 of them evaluate the presence and level of partner abuse, with responses ranging from 1=Never to 5=Always; 13 items reveal the possible influence of sociocultural factors, of which 8 items (type of response from 1=Completely disagree to 5 Completely agree) and 5 items (type of response from 1=No, 2=Yes and 3=Maybe). The questionnaire has an internal constancy of 0.89. The test is composed of five subscales called: E1. Psychological violence, with 28 items ( $\{\alpha\}= 0.88$ ); E2. Physical violence, with 7 items ( $\{\alpha\}=0.69$ ); E3. Economic violence, with 7 items ( $\{\alpha\}= 0.72$ ); E4. Sexual violence, with 10 items ( $\{\alpha\}= 0.72$ ); E5. Sociocultural influence, with 13 items ( $\{\alpha\}=0.68$ ). At the end of the instrument, two types of measures were obtained: one for each of the subscales indicating the type of violence and another general one indicating the level of violence.

The questionnaire was applied, the data were emptied into a spreadsheet using Excel, and errors, possible duplications in data and identification of missing data were verified and purged, the adequately structured database was imported into SPSS where descriptive analyses were performed, The database, properly structured, was imported into SPSS where descriptive analyses were performed, presented in tables in the results, allowing the determination of the frequencies in the different types of mistreatment, as well as their respective levels, and the correlational analysis by determining the Pearson coefficient, using a significance level of 0 in this research. 01.

#### 4. Results

The following results were obtained with respect to socio-cultural influence:

Scale	<i>F<sub>s</sub></i>	<i>F<sub>s</sub></i> %
Disagree	34	12.9
Neither agree nor disagree	222	84.4
Agree	7	2.7
Total	263	100.0

Table 1: Socio-Cultural Influence of Violence Findings

It is shown that 84% of the participants of the study answered neither agree nor disagree with respect to the statements: if you love you must forgive violence, violence is part of marriage, if you love your partner you must accept negative attitudes. These results are highly worrying, since they show that within the cultural imaginary of university students there persist ideas that allow normalizing and even justifying violence. Although the approval of these assertions is not statistically significant with 2.7%, neither is the rejection of these positions categorically expressed, since only 12.9% state that they do not disagree.

The results obtained for the sociocultural construct of violence as part of family dynamics are presented below.



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Scale	<i>F<sub>s</sub></i>	<i>F<sub>s</sub>%</i>
No	166	63.1
Yes	87	33.1
Maybe	10	3.8
Total	263	100.0

Table 2: Findings on the socio-cultural construct of violence as part of the family dynamic

The results show that a significant 63.1% of the people surveyed mentioned that they did not come from violent families, while the remaining 36.9% mentioned having been influenced by this type of environment, where they have witnessed and experienced frequent aggressions in their homes.

The descriptive results of the different types of violence are presented below.

Scale	Economic violence		Physical violence		Psychological violence		Sexual violence	
	<i>F<sub>s</sub></i>	<i>F<sub>s</sub>%</i>	<i>F<sub>s</sub></i>	<i>F<sub>s</sub>%</i>	<i>F<sub>s</sub></i>	<i>F<sub>s</sub>%</i>	<i>F<sub>s</sub></i>	<i>F<sub>s</sub>%</i>
Some of the time	240	91.3	222	84.4	200	76.0	212	80.6
Several times	21	8.0	40	15.2	58	22.1	48	18.3
Many times	2	.8	1	.4	5	1.9	3	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3: Frequency of violence according to its typology

The findings on economic violence show that 91.3% of the participants in the study indicated that they had ever suffered some type of control, manipulation or threat to regulate their behavior on the part of their partners, basing these behaviors on economic aspects. This is not the most predominant type of violence in this age group and this may be due to the fact that they are not married or in a situation of dependence on their partners.

The evidence of physical violence showed that 84.4% of the students affirm that they have sometimes been pushed, hit, slapped or intimidated while observing their partner hitting or throwing objects; and although it is not significant, 15.6% indicate that several or many times they have been victims of this type of behavior, which is worrisome considering that they are just in a dating relationship and that violence increases with the passage of time.

Regarding psychological violence, 76% of the students indicated that they have sometimes been victims of behaviors related to threats, blackmail, prohibitions, interrogations, insults, mockery or indifference. It is striking that 24% indicate that they have suffered this type of actions several or many times, which is unacceptable and establishes this type of violence as the most frequent in the group participating in the research.

And with respect to sexual violence, 80% of the students indicate that they have been forced to have sex or have suffered some type of abuse in this sense. It is also striking that 19.4 % indicated that they have felt affliction on the part of their partner. This makes this type of violence the second most frequent above economic and physical violence.



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On the other hand, the results are presented based on the positions taken by the distribution of the answers on the types of violence, thus presenting the levels found in the researched population.

Position	Economic violence		Physical violence		Psychological violence		Sexual violence	
	<i>fs</i>	<i>fs%</i>	<i>Fs</i>	<i>fs%</i>	<i>fs</i>	<i>fs%</i>	<i>fs</i>	<i>fs%</i>
Very Low	0	0.00	0	0.00	28	10.65	0	0.00
Low	155	58.94	96	36.50	65	24.71	88	33.46
Moderate	0	0.00	65	24.71	81	30.80	82	31.18
High	90	34.22	78	29.66	67	25.48	72	27.38
Very High	18	6.84	24	9.13	22	8.37	21	7.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4: Levels of violence according to its typology

Regarding economic violence, 58.94% of the responses are accumulated in a low position, which indicates that economic violence is not the main type of violence in the group studied. Once again, the characteristics of the sample with which the present study was developed, students at the university level, share to a large extent the fact that they still live under the economic dependence of their families, so that many of the respondents still do not live together and do not share their expenses with their partners. Likewise, 41.06% of the responses are accumulated in the high and very high positions; being that these behaviors are characterized by limitations and prohibitions that are made to the freedom of the couple in aspects such as shopping, studies and spending money. These percentages are worrisome and call upon the authorities, the University Welfare Department and teaching staff to address this problem in a technical and specialized manner.

On the other hand, the results of physical violence show that the accumulated relative frequency between moderate, high and very high reaches 63.50 % of the answers, which is an alarming figure that shows the presence of shouting, pushing, throwing objects, intimidation by hitting walls or doors and direct aggression accusing injuries. Likewise, psychological violence shows that the relative frequency accumulated between the moderate and very high positions reaches 64.64%. The results are alarming, since this type of violence damages people's self-esteem and is usually a preliminary step to physical violence.

This includes behaviors such as teasing, social and family prohibitions, blackmail, social exposure to embarrassing situations, imposition of will, comparison with another person. Also, limitation of activities related to personal interests, threats against the safety of oneself and family members, persuasion to commit crimes, interrogations on personal and intimate topics, intimidation.

Finally, sexual violence with 66.54% of the results show that it is the most prevalent among the types of violence studied. It presents behaviors such as: criticism of sexual performance and behaviors, threats of abandonment, forcing to maintain relations, imposition of



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shameful or degrading sexual activities, manipulation of sexual organs. Regarding the correlation between the types of violence, the results show that:

		<b>Economic violence</b>	<b>Physical violence</b>	<b>Psychological violence</b>	<b>Sexual violence</b>
<b>Spearm Economic an's rhoviolence</b>	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.576**	.452**	.392**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
<b>Physical violence</b>	Correlation Coefficient	.576**	1.000	.511**	.373**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
<b>Psychologica l violence</b>	Correlation Coefficient	.452**	.511**	1.000	.414**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
<b>Sexual violence</b>	Correlation Coefficient	.392**	.373**	.414**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
	<b>N</b>	263	263	263	263

Table 5: Correlation between types of violence

Although the results in both level and frequency show that economic and physical violence are not the most prevalent in this population, they are not absent. Furthermore, considering that they are in the dating period without cohabitation, these findings become alarming, since a moderate statistically significant linear relationship was found between the factor economic violence and physical violence ( $r_s=0.576$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The correlational analysis yielded a statistically significant moderate linear relationship between economic violence and psychological violence ( $r_s=0.452$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These results allow us to interpret that economic violence is a subscale of psychological violence, since threats and blackmail are habitual behaviors.

Also, a statistically significant low linear association was found between economic violence and sexual violence ( $r_s=0.392$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), which may be due to the fact that in the case of women who feel some type of economic dependence are more vulnerable to tolerate sexual requests and physical aggression from their partners. In the same framework, a statistically significant moderate linear relationship was found between the factor physical violence and psychological violence, evidencing a moderate positive association ( $r_s=0.511$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Both the classic literature and the findings of global studies show that physical violence is always accompanied by shouting, insults, threats and intimidation; therefore, aggression not only affects the physical integrity of the victim, but also his or her affective-emotional



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integrity. Undoubtedly, the violation of the freedom, rights and autonomy of the victims of sexual violence affects in a very important way the set of dimensions that make up the personality of the assaulted person, which is evidenced by the finding of a statistically significant moderate linear relationship between psychological violence and sexual violence ( $r_s=0.414, p < 0.01$ ).

## 5. Discussion

The romantic idealization of love as a cause of social factors influences the development, actions and thoughts of people in a natural way. It is interesting to note that, of the 4 types of violence, 155 people reported having suffered a low level of economic violence, while psychological, physical and sexual violence are the factors that are located between moderate to very high levels of violence, finding a clear sociocultural influence, since the vast majority of those investigated affirm, among other indicators, that alcohol releases the abuser from responsibility and that after marriage there is no more violence.

The population studied indicated that specifically in the psychological area, their partners, after a violent fight, tend to be attentive and affectionate, in addition to giving gifts and details, typical behavior of people who do not control their anger, as explained by Walker 1984, in the cycle of violence. It is common that once the couple enters this dynamic, the degree and consequences of the violence suffered increase. According to the study by Hidalgo and Valdés 2014, psychological violence prevailed, followed by physical and sexual violence; in the same way they stated that sexual violence is not expressed in a remote manner, but always includes a high dose of physical and psychological violence; closely related to the population investigated.

In the sexual area, according to studies conducted in the university population by Osorio and Ruiz 2011, they found considerable levels of sexual violence, which is consistent with the study conducted in Puerto Rico by Toro and Rodriguez 2003. In relation to the results of the present research, it is evident that the population of university students (from the careers of Psychopedagogy and Educational Psychology and Guidance) present considerable rates of sexual violence, being that those investigated refer that their partners touch parts of their bodies without their consent and ask them to perform sexual acts that they do not like and with which they do not agree.

As for physical violence, it is manifested through hitting, pushing, shaking, kicking, suffocation or burns. The study population manifests that they have been occasionally hit by their partner, presenting bruises / scars, screams when they argue, have been threatened with weapons or sharp objects, or have been shaken. In the same line, Sanhueza 2016 explained that the relationship between the main social factors and types of violence yielded that the lack of family communication is related to violence: physical, psychological, and economic. In the case of the present research, there is a moderate relationship between physical violence, with economic violence and psychological violence, and although low with sexual violence.

In terms of economic violence, the respondents mentioned that their partners forbid them to study or work, tell them what to buy, ask for money or valuables. According to Sanders and Shnabel (2004, cited by Vélez and Meireles, 2017) "it is important to understand that not having one's own income compromises economic and human rights, as well as the autonomy to decide the course of one's own life" (p.4).



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That is, the roles assigned at the social level have established that men provide economic sustenance to women, generating the idea that, whoever brings money home is the authority that decides what has to be done and even eat or dress, which brings with it for women a low self-esteem and lack of autonomy for the achievement of their goals. In the 1993 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, it was pointed out for the first time that one of the consequences of violence against women is the fact that they have little access to legal, political, social, and economic spheres. According to the above "living in a country that discriminates against women in access to land and other assets is a strong risk factor related to domestic abuse" (Heise and Kotsadam, 2015, cited by Vélez and Meireles, 2017, p.3).

One of the attributed variables that is frequently handled in the literature as protective of social prejudice and stereotypes is the academic level of individuals. In the present research, the level of studies is high, since one hundred percent of the population attends the third level; however, a large majority of the population mentioned being in complete agreement with phrases such as The person who abuses when taken is not responsible for his actions or thinking that, with marriage, his partner will change, which is related to the study conducted by Osorio with homosexual couples, who points out that violence is naturalized and not identified, and the most serious thing is that the abused people think that they are responsible for the situation (Osorio,2011).

All this coincides with the explanations of González and Echeburúa, who state that among the risk factors in the dynamics of violence in young couples are the violence experienced in the school context and traditional attitudes regarding gender roles (González and Echeburúa, 2008). Another factor that cannot go unnoticed is the existence of social influence, adolescents, and young people in constant search of approval from their peers, which motivates them to engage in behaviors that are considered to be accepted.

## 6. Conclusions

At the end of the investigation, the following conclusions were reached:

- Violence is socially generalized, in various dimensions of human activity; the economy, education, the family and in couple relationships it has become naturalized. 61.22% of the participants' responses allow us to attribute this phenomenon to sociocultural influence. It is stated that behaviors observed since childhood are adopted as normal. In the 21st century, in a largely urban society and with a population with access to higher education, it has been observed that the type of interrelationship between parents, alcohol consumption, socioeconomic class and the set of beliefs rooted in the culture influence the behaviors that characterize the interrelationship present in couples.
- In addition, it was determined that there is undoubtedly violence in this group, unfortunately present in its different modalities, the most prevalent with 24% psychological violence, in second place 19.4% sexual violence, 15.6% physical violence and 8.8% economic violence. The fact that most of the couples do not live together is evidence that there is still no economic dependence, so this type of violence is the least present in this population, but it is striking that in a dating situation psychological and sexual violence is so high. Threats, blackmail, manipulation and prohibitions are the most frequent behaviors.
- Among the participants who indicated that they had suffered situations of violence by their partners in relation to the level of violence in intimate partner relationships



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is a current problem among university students, it is found that 64.89% of the responses of the participants correspond to levels between moderate, high and very high, in three of the four types of violence: physical violence, psychological violence and sexual violence; although no differences are found between the three types of violence, in terms of sexual violence the highest rate is observed with 66.54%. In relation to economic violence, a rate of 41.06% was found, which is still a cause for concern.

- On the other hand, economic violence presents a moderate significant correlation with physical violence, which may be due to the fact that if there is some type of economic dependence, people are more vulnerable to tolerate physical aggressions. Likewise, there is a moderate significant correlation between psychological violence and physical violence, because verbal aggressions such as insults, shouting, threats and others are linked to physical violence.

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