The behavioral specificity of child-to-parent violence

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Abstract: Child-to-parent violence (CPV) is a type of domestic violence that has gained social and scientific visibility in recent years. The objective of this study is to analyze different forms of CPV and their relationship with two groups of variables. The first group includes gender, age, family structure, school year, academic performance, drug use, frequency of drug use and diagnosis of psychopathology. The second analyzes exposure to violence, parental warmth, self-concept, sexism, narcissism and psychopathy. The participants were 225 high school students from 14 to 20 years old, 54.7% of them girls. The CPV rates were lower than those of previous Spanish studies but similar to those in other countries. Most participants engaged in only one behavior, insulting, and hitting never appeared alone, but in combination with at least two other behaviors. The analysis of the data showed that the ability of the variables under study to predict CPV varies for each specific behavior. The results are discussed by proposing that future studies consider CPV as a social problem that goes beyond parent-child relations.

Keywords: Child-to-parent violence; Behavioral specificity; Exposure to violence; Sexism.

Introduction

Child-to-parent violence (CPV) is a type of domestic violence that has been increasing in social and scientific visibility in recent years. The Spanish General Attorney’s Office reflected in its 2018 report the concern regarding the increase in judicial measures for crimes related to CPV (a rise of 7.11% between 2016 and 2017) and the lack of indicators that could point to possible solutions. The media has also echoed the problem, thus contributing to create a greater social alarm (Aroca, Lorenzo, & Miró, 2014; Calvete & Pereira, 2019).

Although more and more parents are choosing to report their children for committing CPV, they are still, in general, reluctant to take this step (Williams, Tuffin, & Niland, 2016), so the scope of the problem may be greater than official statistics reflect. The estimated global prevalence is that between 5 and 21% of children in community samples are violent against their parents, but when it comes to verbal, psychological and emotional CPV the percentage increases to between 33 and 93%, depending on the definition used (Simmons, McEwan, Purcell, & Ogloff, 2018). The data available for the Spanish population is between 7 and 21% for physical aggression towards parents (Calvete, Gámez-Guadix, & Orue, 2014; Ibabe & Bentler, 2016; Ibabe, Jaureguizar, & Bentler, 2013), which rises to 88% when it comes to psychological violence (Ibabe & Bentler, 2016).

When addressing CPV, researchers have encountered two difficulties that are common in emerging fields of research. The first is that the conceptualization and terminology used is very diverse (Hong, Kral, Espelage, & Allen, 2012). Cottrell’s (2001) definition, which is one of the most cited, includes different dimensions: physical (hitting, punching, pushing, breaking and throwing objects, hitting walls, spitting), psychological (insulting, criticizing, threatening, intimating and scaring parents), emotional (maliciously misleading parents, making them think they are going crazy, making unrealistic demands, lying, running away from home, emotional blackmail) and financial (stealing money and belongings from parents, selling them, destroying the house or parents’ property, incurring debts that parents must cover, etc.). More recently, Pereira et al. (2017) have agreed on a definition that includes repeated behaviors of physical, psychological and economic violence.

The second difficulty in this field of research has to do with the methodology used, since there are great differences in the measuring instruments, sample sizes, variables and sources of information used (Gallego, Novo, Farriña, & Arce 2019; Hong et al., 2012; Simmons et al., 2018). How CPV is measured varies from study to study, as there is no agreement on which specific behaviors are manifestations of CPV, ranging from yelling at parents to serving a court order on children for physically assaulting parents (Simmons et al., 2018). The instruments for measuring CPV also change according to research: The Conflict tactics scale child-parents of Straus, Hamby, Finkelhor, Moore, & Runyan (1998) differentiates between psychological violence, moderate physical violence and severe physical violence (Ibabe & Bentler, 2016).
the subscale Child-to-parent violence of the Intra-family violence scale of Ibabe and Jaureguizar (2011) distinguishes between physical, psychological and emotional violence (e.g., Ibabe, Arnoso, & Elorriaga, 2014); the Child-to-parent aggression questionnaire (Calvete, Orue, & Gámez-Guadix, 2013) divides behaviors into physical and psychological aggression (e.g., Calvete, Orue, & González, 2017); and the Child-to-parent violence questionnaire (Contreras & Cano, 2017) considers psychological, physical, and financial aggression, and provides a version for parents (e.g., Contreras, Bustos, & Cano, 2019). Both Calvete & Orue (2016) and Contreras & Cano (2017) include reasons for the aggression.

The common denominator for all these instruments is the categorization of violent behaviors in factors or dimensions. Thus, the same behaviors can be included in different factors depending on the instrument and/or the investigation. As Simmons et al. (2018) point out in their meta-analysis, shouting has been defined both as verbal aggression (Straus & Fauchier, 2008) and psychological aggression (Calvete et al., 2013). Another example could be economic abuse, which has been measured as a construct in itself (Ibane, 2014), as part of psychological abuse (Calvete et al., 2013) and as a factor that combines with physical abuse (Ghanizada & Jafari, 2010). There are also studies that do not use instruments to measure CPV, but instead rely on samples of young offenders who have been prosecuted for CPV (Contreras & Cano, 2014). In this case, the specific type of behavior that has caused the judicial measure is obviated. However, this limits the study to comparing those who are serving or have served judicial measures for CPV with those who have done so for another reason (Simmons et al., 2018).

Methodological difficulties have also led to contradictory findings that make it difficult to generalize results and build a cohesive body of theory (Hong et al., 2012). As a result, instead of testing theoretical models, most CPV studies have opted to analyze the influence of demographic characteristics, attitudes, and personality traits, in some cases using multivariate techniques (Del Hoyo-Bibao, Orue, Gámez-Guadix, & Calvete, 2020; Loinaz & Sousa, 2020).

In terms of gender, boys have been found to exert more CPV, but these results are obtained in judicialized samples in which there are usually more boys than girls (Armstrong, Cain, Wylie, Mufiic, & Bouffard, 2018; Strom, Warner, Tichavsky, & Zahn, 2014). In community and clinical samples, there are no statistically significant differences (Ibabe & Bentler, 2016). For less severe violent behaviors, the percentage of girls is higher (Calvete et al., 2013), while for more severe forms of violence the percentage of boys is higher (Orue, 2019).

With regard to mental health, there is evidence that indicates there is a higher frequency of mental health problems among young people who commit CPV. Young people who carry out CPV tend to report depressive symptoms more frequently and have received psychological and/or psychiatric treatment for them compared to those that do not abuse their parents (Simmons et al., 2018). The scientific literature has also consistently pointed to a relationship between drug abuse and CPV, although research with samples of young offenders suggests that abuse is related to a general pattern of antisocial behavior and not specifically to CPV. This assertion is supported by the fact that no statistically significant differences in drug abuse are found between youth offenders who engage in CPV and youth offenders who do not (Armstrong et al., 2018; Simmons et al., 2018).

Exposure to violence is another variable related to CPV, and it is widely stated that it is one of CPV antecedents (Gallego et al., 2019; Simmons et al., 2018). Children who assault their parents have most often experienced violence within the family, either directly or as witnesses of violent behavior between their parents (Beckmann, Bergmann, Fischer, & Mölle, 2017; Ibabe & Bentler, 2016; Ulman & Straus, 2003). In one of the few longitudinal studies conducted to date on CPV, Brezina (1999) found that victimization suffered by children predicted aggression against parents a year and a half later, while aggression by adolescents allowed for the detection of aggressive behavior by parents.

Other variables that have been studied in relation to CPV, although with inconsistent results, are self-esteem (Calvete, Orue, & Sampedro, 2011; Ibabe et al., 2014) and empathy (Ibane, Jaureguizar, & Díaz, 2009). In addition, some authors (e.g. Estévez, 2013; Garrido, 2005; Garrido & Gálvis, 2016) have suggested that there is a relationship between psychopathy and CPV, but no empirical evidence has been provided so far. One way of approaching psychopathy has been through callous-unemotional traits, which have been linked, in turn, to empathy and behavioral problems in children (Gucci, Baroncelli, Franchi, Golmaryami, & Frick, 2013). Lack of empathy has also been related to juvenile delinquency, although in a moderate way and especially with the cognitive dimension (Férriz, Sobral, & Gómez-Fraguera, 2018). Children with behavioral problems who show callous-unemotional traits, compared to those who do not, tend to be less sensitive to punishment, which is not the case for children with behavioral problems without such traits (Frick, Ray, Thornton, & Kahn, 2014). A review conducted by Frick & White (2008) points out that there is a relationship between these traits and a stable aggressive pattern of antisocial behavior, so that callous-emotional traits can be used to predict criminal behavior.

Narcissism is a variable that has also been linked to psychopathy and juvenile delinquency (Barry, Grafeman, Adler, & Pickard, 2007) and which, according to Calvete, Orue, Gámez-Guadix and Bushman (2015) and Loinaz and Sousa (2020), is able to predict CPV. However, in the first study narcissism turned out to be a predictor of CPV only for boys. In a previous work, Calvete and Orue (2013) found that exposure to violence, which is one of the unquestioned antecedents of CPV, is associated with a narcissistic view of oneself. In their study, they used a sample of adolescents who had suffered abuse and parental neglect. Calvete et al. (2015) believe that children tend to develop a narcissistic view of themselves when parents are not close and caring. In the
study by Loinaz and Sousa (2020), violence and problems between parents enter into the same equation as narcissism. Along these lines, Young, Klosko, and Weishaar (2003) suggest that narcissism is often the result of negative family experiences and hypothesize that narcissistic individuals may behave despotically to compensate underlying feelings of emotional deprivation.

Several studies include this lack of closeness and affection in the construct of "parental warmth" that have been approached using parental style tools (Calvete et al., 2014; Calvete et al., 2015; Contreras & Cano, 2014; Gámez-Guadix, Jaureguizar, Almendros, & Carrobles, 2012). However, this parental warmth is not identified with a specific parental style, as it is defined by positive communication, emotional support, and affection. The available data strongly support the importance of affection and communication for adolescent adjustment, so that those adolescents who perceive more affection claim to communicate better with their parents and show more adequate psychosocial development, as well as greater emotional well-being and behavioral adjustment (Galambos, Barker, & Almeida, 2003; Gray & Steinberg 1999; Laursen & Collins, 2009; Parra, Oliva, & Sánchez, 2004). The way in which parents show affection can also influence adaptive or maladaptive strategies -including CPV- (Gámez-Guadix et al., 2012) that children employ when it comes to achieving their goals and expressing their emotions (Chapple, Tyler, & Bersani, 2005; Tremblay & Dozois, 2009).

Finally, some authors have indirectly linked sexism to CPV, considering it a form of gender-based violence (Dow-ney, 1997). The underlying logic is that the main victim, in community, clinical and judicialized samples, is a woman: the mother. Although studies in the general population do not find gender differences in who exerts the violence, some research reports that the hypothesis of the bidirectionality of violence is more clearly confirmed with boys than with girls (Simmons et al., 2018). It has also been found (Dow-ney, 1997; Ulman & Straus, 2003) that sons, especially boys who commit CPV, tend to be more aggressive toward the mother when she has been physically assaulted by the father (Ibabe et al., 2013).

The direct relationship between sexist attitudes and CPV has not yet been explored, but Cottrell and Monk (2004) suggest that differential socialization of boys and girls, through gender roles and stereotypes that exalt power and control over women in personal relationships are internalized and may be at the root of aggressions towards mothers. Boys would learn this model of masculinity by observing their fathers, while girls would use violence as a way to distance themselves from the image of female weakness represented by the mother. Therefore, when studying gender bias in relation to CPV, one should consider not only the feelings of hostility towards the female gender, but also the benevolent feelings that coexist with them (Glick & Fiske, 1996).

All the studies described so far analyze CPV as an average of the frequencies of the behaviors included in the instruments used. This paper aims to study separately the different forms of CPV referred to in Cottrell's (2001) classic definition in an attempt to explore relationship patterns that may foster future research. To this end, the relationship of these nine behaviors with two groups of variables will be analyzed. On the one hand, gender, age, family structure, school year, academic performance, drug abuse, frequency of drug abuse and psychopathology diagnosis are analyzed, and, on the other, exposure to violence, parental warmth, self-concept, sexism, narcissism and psychopathy. In the first group, sociodemographic and traditional variables in CPV research have been included. The second group consists of personality variables to which exposure to violence has been added, given the consistency of its relationship with CPV in previous studies. The analysis of this group of variables will include the different dimensions/subscales of the constructs under study, which will be described in the section on instruments. Finally, as CPV behaviors have always been the target of much social reproach (Calvete & Pereira, 2019), the effect of social desirability on them will also be controlled.

Method

Participants

A total of 225 students from secondary and high schools between the ages of 14 and 20 (M = 16.02; SD = 1.23) participated in this study, 54.7% of whom were women. 30.7% were in the third year of Secondary School, 28.9% in the fourth year of Secondary School, 25.3% in the first year of High School, and 15% in the second year of High School. All of them stated that they had not served or were not serving any judicial measure at the time of answering the questionnaire.

The average self-reported academic performance of the participants was 6.46 (SD = 1.72) on a scale of 0 to 10. There were 50.7% who admitted to consuming or having consumed drugs or alcohol, with a mean frequency of 3.34 (SD = 2.32), also on a scale of 0 to 10. With respect to psychopathologies, only 4% of the sample reported having been diagnosed, and in all cases, it was for depression and/or anxiety. Fifty-two per cent lived with both parents, 28.9% with only the mother, 8.9% with the extended family, 5.8% with only the father, and 4%-part time with each; only one of the participants was adopted. Those who lived with only one parent indicated separation or divorce as the cause of single parenthood in 33.8% of cases, widowhood in 2.7%, and being the child of a single parent in 6.2%.

Instruments

To collect information on the variables under study, a booklet was prepared that included the following scales. The nine self-reported CPV behaviors were measured, following Hernández (2016), by means of the following question: “During the time living with your parents or guar-
diarios, how often do you carry out or have you carried out some of the following behaviors?" The participants had to answer in relation to nine items, chosen from Cottrell’s (2001) definition, which refer to behaviors aimed at controlling and/or causing physical, psychological, emotional or economic harm to parents. These behaviors were: Insulting/disrespect; Running away from home; Spitting; Obscene gestures; Stealing; Destroying their things; getting parents into Debt; Intimidating, blackmailing or threatening them; Hitting, punching, throwing objects at them, pushing them. Participants were asked to respond on an 11-point Likert scale, from 0 (Never) to 10 (Very often). Although on this occasion the score of each item was used separately, Hernandez (2016) has provided evidence of validity and reliability for the total scale.

Orue and Calvete (2010) Observed Violence Scale was used to measure previous exposure to violence using 21 items, nine of which relate to direct exposure as a victim and 12 to indirect exposure as a witness. In each case, the items refer to three types of violence (physical, verbal and threats), in four contexts (school, neighborhood, home and TV). Participants were asked to answer each item on an 11-point Likert scale from 0 (Never) to 10 (Every day). This response scale was preferred to the original one from 1 to 5 because it is more similar to the one commonly used in the Spanish educational system. Several investigations have provided evidence of validity and reliability for this scale (see Orue & Calvete, 2010). In this case, the internal consistency, measured with Cronbach’s Alpha for the different subscales was: Seeing violence in the classroom .73, Seeing violence in the street .78, Seeing violence at home .76, Seeing violence on TV .80, Suffering violence in the classroom .75, Suffering violence in the street.70 and Suffering violence at home .79.

The Self-concept Scale Form-5 (AF5) by García and Musitu (2014) is composed of 30 items and was used to measure six dimensions of self-concept: Social self-concept, Emotional self-concept, Family self-concept, Academic self-concept and Physical self-concept. Participants were asked to answer each item on an 11-point Likert-type scale from 0 (Total Disagreement) to 10 (Total Agreement). This response scale was preferred to the original one from 1 to 99, as it is more similar to the Spanish educational system. Several investigations have provided evidence of validity and reliability for this scale (see García & Musitu, 2014). In this study the internal consistency, measured by Cronbach's Alpha, was .88 for Academic self-concept, .79 for Social self-concept, .73 for Emotional self-concept, .86 for Family self-concept and .79 for Physical self-concept.

To measure parental warmth, we used the subscales for the father and the mother from the Parent and Peer Attachment Inventory (IPPA) (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987), revised by Gullone and Robinson (IPPA-R, 2005), in the Spanish version by Delgado, Penelo, Fornieles, Brun-Gasca, and Ollé (2016). These subscales include the same 25 items to measure different qualities of the children’s relationship with the father and the mother. These items are grouped into three actors: Trust (10 items such as "my mother respects my feelings"), Communication (nine items such as "I tell my father about my problems and difficulties") and Anger (six items such as "I get more upset than my father realizes"). Participants were asked to answer using an 11-point Likert scale indicating their agreement, from 0 (Total Disagreement) to 10 (Total Agreement). As mentioned before, this response scale was preferred to the original one of 1 to 5, as it is more like the one commonly used in the Spanish educational system. Several investigations have provided evidence of validity and reliability for this scale (see Gullone & Robinson, 2005). In this case, the internal consistency for the different subscales, measured by Cronbach’s Alpha was: .92 for Confidence with the father, .91 for Communication with the father, .74 for Anger with the father, .90 for Confidence with the mother, .90 for Communication with the mother and .76 for Anger with the mother.

The Inventory of Callous-Unemotional Traits by Frick (2003), in the Spanish version by López-Romero, Gómez-Fragucla, and Romero (2015) was used to assess psychopathy. This scale is designed specifically for the adolescent population and consists of 24 items that are grouped into three factors: Callousness (which refers to the lack of empathy, guilt and remorse), Uncaring (which refers to the absence of interest in one’s own performance as well as in the feelings of others) and Unemotional (which refers to the absence of emotional expression). Participants were asked to respond using an 11-point Likert-type scale from 0 (Not entirely true) to 10 (Definitely true). This response scale was preferred to the original one, from 0 to 3, for being more like those used in the Spanish educational system. Previous research has provided evidence of reliability and validity for the original scale (Essau, Sasagawa, & Frick, 2006) and for the adaptation to Spanish (López-Romero et al., 2016; Morales-Vives, Cosi, Lorenzo-Seva, & Vigil-Coleto, 2019). For this research, internal consistency, measured by Cronbach’s Alpha, was .61 for the subscale of Unemotional, .72 for Uncaring, and .70 for Callousness.

Narcissism was measured with the Narcissism Scale of Trechera, Millán and Fernández (2008), which consists of 15 items that are grouped into three factors of five items each: Narcissism, Machiavellianism and Dominance. Narcissism has to do with the idea of a distorted image of oneself, the need for recognition and the feeling of belonging to a special category. Machiavellianism expresses the use and handling of other people for one’s own benefit. Dominance reflects the component of dominant leadership, sense of special ability, power and dominance over others. Participants were asked to respond to each item on an 11-point Likert scale from 0 (Total Disagreement) to 10 (Total Agreement). This response scale was preferred to the original one from 1 to 6 for its similarity with ones commonly used in the Spanish educational system. The authors of the scale provide evidence of its validity and reliability (Trechera et al., 2008). The internal consistency in this study, measured with Cronbach’s Alpha,
was .71 for Narcissism, .81 for Machiavellianism, and .45 for Dominance.

To measure Sexism, the Scale of Ambivalent Sexism towards Women by Glick and Fiske (1996) was applied, in the reduced version, adapted to Spanish by Expósito, Moya and Glick (1998). This instrument consists of 12 items and two subscales and is designed to measure ambivalent attitudes, both hostile and benevolent, towards women. The Hostile sexism subscale refers to sexism with a negative emotional tone. The Benevolent sexism subscale refers to sexism with a positive affective tone, which includes the ideas that men should care for and protect women, that female characteristics are complementary to male characteristics, and that men depend on women for certain issues, such as reproduction. To answer, an 11-point Likert-type scale was used, asking participants to choose from 0 (Total Disagreement) to 10 (Total Agreement). This response scale was preferred to the original 1 to 6, because it is more akin to the one commonly used in the Spanish educational system. The factorial structure of the original scale is maintained in the reduced version, which has evidence of reliability for research with adolescents (Rodríguez & Carrera, 2009). Cronbach's Alpha values obtained in this research were .87 for Hostile sexism and .85 for Benevolent sexism.

Social desirability was measured with Crowne and Marlowe (1960) Social Desirability Scale which consists of 33 items and measures the tendency of people to distort their answers to present themselves more favorably. The Spanish version by Ferrando and Chico (2000) was used, and participants were asked to answer each item depending on whether they felt that the sentence reflected (True) or not (False) their habitual way of being. The scale has evidence of validity and reliability both for the original version and for the adaptation to Spanish (Ferrando & Chico, 2000). The value of Cronbach's Alpha obtained on this occasion was .64.

Procedure

After obtaining permission from school principals, participants were told that a study was being conducted from the university to know “the current habits and behaviors of adolescents, both inside and outside the home”. They were assured that their participation was anonymous and voluntary. All adolescents agreed to participate and signed an informed consent form. The questionnaire was completed in the classroom, during regular class hours. It took approximately 40 minutes to complete.

Design and data analysis

To carry out the research, a non-experimental design was followed that involved cross-sectional comparison between the two independent groups on a series of variables (Ato, López, & Benavente, 2013). Data analysis was conducted using the SPSS 22.0 statistical package. First, we calculated the frequency of participants who acknowledged to having carried out each CPV behavior and the difference between the proportion observed in each case and a given value, with the limit for a very small rate, i.e., triviality (.05; McNatt, 2000). In this way, if the observed probability is significantly higher than triviality, the observed rate of that behavior is significantly high. If it is not significant, it is trivial, and if it is significantly less, it is worthless. The effect size for the difference in proportions was obtained from Hedges’ δ (Redondo, Fariña, Seijo, Novo, & Arce, 2019). We also calculated the frequency with which they had performed from 0 to 9 behaviors and the proportion of those who had performed each behavior in relation to the number of total behaviors performed.

Next, the internal consistency of the scales was estimated using Cronbach’s alpha. A descriptive analysis of the variables under study was performed, and the correlations between the score on the social desirability scale and the frequency of performing the nine CPV behaviors were calculated. To measure Sexism, the Scale of Ambivalent Sexism to different between participants who had carried out CPV behavior and those who had not, we used binary logistic regression analysis, in this instance stepwise. This multivariate statistical technique was chosen because it does not assume the variables-distribution premises underlying linear regression or discriminant analysis, especially normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. CPV is, by definition, a variable that does not follow a normal distribution, since most people are not violent towards their parents. This analysis gives us, in addition to the rates of fit (Nagelkerke’s R² and Hosmer-Lemeshow), the percentage of cases correctly classified by the equation and the values of Exp(B) or Odds Ratio for each predictor. The Odds Ratio value indicates to what extent the prediction is better or worse depending on the predictor values.

Finally, the magnitude of the effect sizes was estimated in terms of the Probability of Superiority Effect Size (PSES). The frequencies of the nine CPV behaviors, displayed in Figure 1, show that participants reported violence toward their parents ranging from the mildest behavior of Insulting, 57% of cases, to the most severe behavior of Hitting them in 3.6% of cases. Spitting on them was the least frequent (2.7%). The analysis of the probabilities associated with

The behavioral specificity of child-to-parent violence shows a significantly high rate in the study population for Insulting \((573)\), \(Z (N = 225) = 35.99, p = .000, \delta = 1.83, \text{PSES} = .803\), Running away \((182)\), \(Z (N = 225) = 9.08, p = .000, \delta = .74, \text{PSES} = .397\), Obscene gestures \((142)\), \(Z (N = 225) = 6.33, p = .000, \delta = .57, \text{PSES} = .311\), Stealing \((133)\), \(Z (N = 225) = 5.71, p = .000, \delta = .53, \text{PSES} = .289\), Destroying their things \((93)\), \(Z (N = 225) = 2.95, p = .003, \delta = .32, \text{PSES} = .182\) and Intimidating \((84)\), \(Z (N = 225) = 2.34, p = .019, \delta = .27, \text{PSES} = .151\). With a trivial effect, in behavior getting parents into Debt \((76)\), \(Z (N = 225) = 1.79, p = .073, \delta = .21\), Hitting \((36)\), \(Z (N = 225) = -.96, p = .337, \delta = -.15\), and Spitting \((27)\), \(Z (N = 225) = -1.58, p = .114, \delta = -.28\). The study of the effects of social desirability on self-reporting of CPV behavior only showed a relevant correlation with name-calling \((r = -.21)\), allowing us to establish the true occurrence of such behavior at .645. In other words, the actual rate of children who insult their parents increases approximately to 65%. The probability of superiority effect size \((\text{PSES})\) for the behaviors with a statistically-significant rate indicates that the observed effect size of Insulting is higher than 80.3% of all the other possible effect sizes; Running away, higher than 39.7%; Obscene gestures, higher than 31.1%; Stealing, higher than 28.9%; Destroying things, higher than 18.2%; and Intimidating, higher than 15.1%.

Table 1 shows the percentages of participants who have carried out each specific behavior in relation to the total of those who have carried out the same behaviors. The value shown in each cell corresponds to the percentage of those who have engaged in the behavior shown on the left of each row, when they have also carried out the number of behaviors shown at the top of the column; the percentage of those who have not displayed the behavior would be the difference between that value and 100. Therefore, the sum of each column is 100 only in the case that only one behavior is carried out, since for the rest it would be the number of possible combinations taken in pairs, in threes, and so on up to nine.

![Figure 1. Frequency of participants who admit having carried out each of the CPV behaviors, regardless of their periodicity.](image)

![Figure 2. Frequency of participants reporting 0-9 CPV behaviors.](image)

When only one behavior has been employed, it is Insulting in 83.8% of cases, followed by Obscene gestures, Stealing and getting parents into Debt, each in 3.8% of cases, and Running away and Destroying appear in only 2.5% of cases.

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**Table 1.** Percentage of participants who have carried out each specific behavior in relation to the total of those who have carried out the same CPV behavior.

| Number of violent behaviors carried out | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|----------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Insulting                              | 83.8 | 81.1 | 80 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 0 | 100 |
| Running away                           | 2.5 | 32.4 | 60 | 85.7 | 80 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Obscene gestures                       | 3.8 | 29.7 | 35 | 42.9 | 60 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Stealing                               | 3.8 | 16.2 | 50 | 57.1 | 60 | 50 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Destroying                             | 2.5 | 18.9 | 20 | 28.6 | 40 | 50 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Debts                                  | 3.8 | 8.1 | 25 | 28.6 | 20 | 0 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Spitting                               | 0 | 2.7 | 5 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Intimidiating                          | 0 | 10.8 | 20 | 42.9 | 80 | 100 | 0 | 100 | 100 |
| Hitting                                | 0 | 0 | 5 | 14.3 | 40 | 100 | 0 | 100 | 100 |

*Note:* In each cell there is the percentage of those who have carried out the behavior given their total of behavior; the difference between this value and 100 corresponds to those who have not carried it out.
cases. Spitting, Intimidating and Hitting never occur alone. Participants who only carry out two behaviors never commit Hitting. In fact, Hitting appears in 5% of participants who engaged in three behaviors, in 40% of those carrying out five behaviors, and among 100% of those who displayed eight or nine behaviors.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for each self-reported CPV behavior. The mean for the different CPV behaviors is between .06 and .57, except for Insulting, which stands at 1.66.

In order to analyze the characteristics of the young people who have displayed CPV towards their parents, two groups were created for each of the nine behaviors, and among 100% of those who displayed eight or nine behaviors. The mean for the different CPV behaviors is between .06 and .57, except for Insulting, which stands at 1.66.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the CPV behaviors.

| Behavior          | MIN | MAX  | M    | SD  |
|-------------------|-----|------|------|-----|
| Insulting         | 0   | 8    | 1.66 | 1.97|
| Running away      | 0   | 10   | .57  | 1.59|
| Spitting          | 0   | 9    | .10  | .75 |
| Obscene gestures  | 0   | 8    | .30  | .95 |
| Stealing          | 0   | 7    | .34  | 1.04|
| Destroying        | 0   | 10   | .25  | 1.09|
| Debts             | 0   | 6    | .23  | .91 |
| Intimidating      | 0   | 7    | .26  | 1.05|
| Hitting           | 0   | 4.0  | .06  | .36 |

No statistically significant differences were found in relation to Gender, Age and Family structure. With respect to Drug abuse, Frequency of drug abuse, Psychopathology, Family structure, Age and Academic performance. No statistically significant differences were found in relation to Gender, Age and Family structure. With respect to Drug abuse, a statistically significant relationship was found ($\chi^2(1) = 6.22, p = .013, OR = 1.57$) with Running away. Of the participants who did not consume drugs, only 11.7% claimed to have run away, while among those who did consume drugs, the percentage rose to 24.6%. A statistically significant relationship was also found ($\chi^2(1) = 4.50; p = .034, OR = 1.46$) between Drug abuse and Hitting. There were 6.1% of participants who reported Drug abuse and admitted Hitting their parents, while among those who did not abuse the percentage was only 0.9%. This means that of the eight people who had ever hit their parents, seven admitted to abusing drugs.

As for Frequency of abuse, it was statistically significantly related to Running away ($t(42,234) = 2.28, p = .028, \delta = 0.519$), since minors who ran away admitted that they abused drugs more often ($M = 4.24, SD = 2.51$) than those who did not ($M = 3.05, SD = 2.19$).

Psychopathology analyses indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship also with Running away ($\chi^2(1) = 4.36, p = .038, OR = 1.46$). Participants who had a diagnosis of mental illness, in all cases due to anxiety and depression, ran away more (44.4%) than those who did not have (17.1%).

In terms of Academic performance, a statistically significant relationship was obtained with getting parents into debt ($t(223) = 2.49, p = .013, \delta = .626$), so that participants who got parents into debt had lower Academic performance ($M = 5.47, SD = 1.70$) than those who did not ($M = 6.5, SD = 1.69$).

Finally, the School year was only significantly related to Intimidating ($\chi^2(3) = 9.83; p = .020, OR = 1.76$). 20.6% of the students in 2nd year of High School claimed to have intimidated their parents, compared to 1.8% of those in 1st year of High School, 8.7% of those in 3rd year of Secondary school and 7.7% of those in 4th year of Secondary School.

Subsequently, total scores and descriptive statistics were calculated for the other scales described in the instruments section. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the variables under study.

| Category           | MIN | MAX  | M    | SD  | Cronbach’s Alpha |
|--------------------|-----|------|------|-----|------------------|
| SOCIAL DESIRABILITY|     |      |      |     |                  |
| Unemotional        | 20  | 10   | 5.15 | 1.88| .64              |
| Uncaring           | 25  | 9.38 | 2.88 | 1.38| .72              |
| Callousness        | 55  | 7.27 | 3.31 | 1.41| .70              |
| PSYOPATHY          |     |      |      |     |                  |
| Narcissism         | 0   | 9.60 | 4.05 | 2.05| .71              |
| Machiavellianism   | 0   | 9.00 | 1.75 | 1.82| .81              |
| Dominance          | 0   | 9.25 | 3.03 | 1.87| .45              |
| NARCISSISM         |     |      |      |     |                  |
| Hostile sexism     | 0   | 10   | 2.73 | 2.16| .87              |
| Benevolent sexism  | 0   | 9.83 | 3.65 | 2.58| .85              |
| SEXISM             |     |      |      |     |                  |
| Trust with the father| 0  | 10   | 6.68 | 2.71| .92              |
| Communication with the father | 0  | 10   | 6.28 | 2.75| .91              |
| Anger with the father| 0  | 10   | 3.61 | 2.31| .74              |
| Trust with the mother| 0  | 10   | 7.81 | 2.28| .90              |
| Communication with the mother | 0  | 10   | 6.74 | 2.47| .90              |
| Anger with the mother| 0  | 9.50 | 3.17 | 2.22| .76              |
| ATTACHMENT         |     |      |      |     |                  |
| Academic self-concept | .83| 10   | 6.25 | 1.77| .88              |
| Social self-concept | .40| 9.83 | 5.34 | 1.92| .73              |
| Emotional self-concept | .50|      |      |     |                  |
The behavioral specificity of child-to-parent violence

| MIN  | MAX  | M    | SD   | Cronbach’s Alpha |
|------|------|------|------|------------------|
| Familiar self-concept | .50  | 10   | 7.68 | 2.14  | .86   |
| Physical self-concept  | .17  | 9.83 | 5.66 | 2.08  | .79   |

EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE

|                        | MIN  | MAX  | M    | SD   | Cronbach’s Alpha |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|------------------|
| Seeing violence in the classroom | 0    | 9.67 | 4.52 | 2.18  | .73   |
| Seeing violence in the street | 0    | 10   | 4.55 | 2.25  | .78   |
| Seeing violence at home  | 0    | 10   | 1.34 | 1.99  | .76   |
| Seeing violence on TV    | 0    | 10   | 5.67 | 2.59  | .80   |
| Suffering violence in the classroom | 0    | 9    | 1.89 | 1.98  | .75   |
| Suffering violence in the street | 0    | 8.67 | 1.33 | 1.73  | .70   |
| Suffering violence at home | 0    | 9.67 | 1.21 | 1.88  | .79   |

The averages of the scores in Machiavellianism: Seeing violence at home, Suffering violence in the classroom, Suffering violence in the street and Suffering violence at home are below 2. The highest average is for Family self-concept (7.81) followed by Social self-concept, Communication with the mother, Trust with the father and Academic self-concept, between 6 and 7. The rest of the averages are between 2 and 6.

The scores obtained by the participants in these scales, including Social desirability, were analyzed by means of step-by-step logistic regression analyses, taking as the classificatory variable whether or not they had carried out each of nine violent behaviors separately. Results indicate that there is a statistically significant function for all behaviors except Intimidating, and that Social desirability was not significant in any of the cases. Table 4 shows the statistics corresponding to each of these functions, as well as the percentage of cases accurately classified.

Table 4. Step-by-step logistic regression analysis for each of the CPV behaviors, except Intimidating (n = 211).

|               | Insulting | Running away | Spitting | Obscene gestures |
|---------------|-----------|--------------|----------|-----------------|
| p            | Exp (B)   | CI           | p        | Exp (B)         | CI          |
| Uncaring      | .002      | 2.786        | 1.476    | 5.262           |             |
| Callousness   | .023      | 1.239        | 1.030    | 1.490           |             |
| Narcissim     | .023      | 1.239        | 1.030    | 1.490           |             |
| Machiavellianism | .025   | .859         | .751     | .981            |             |
| Hostile sexism| .013      | 2.283        | 1.187    | 4.393           |             |
| Benevolent sexism| .028    | .512         | .282     | .931            |             |
| Communication with the mother |          |              |          |                 |             |
| Anger with the mother |          |              |          |                 |             |
| Family self-concept |          |              |          |                 |             |
| Physical self-concept | .012     | 1.265        | 1.054    | 1.518           | .003        | 1.344    | 1.113    | 1.650    | .000      | 1.094    | 1.921    |
| See violence at home |          |              |          |                 |             |
| Suffer violence in the street | .008    | 3.022        | .000     | .0061           | .000       | .000     | .000     | .027     |            |
| Constant      |           |              |          |                 |             |

Nagelkerke’s $R^2 = .032$  Nagelkerke’s $R^2 = .090$  Nagelkerke’s $R^2 = .447$  Nagelkerke’s $R^2 = .136$
Hosmer-Lemeshow = .528  Hosmer-Lemeshow = .554  Hosmer-Lemeshow = .945  Hosmer-Lemeshow = .917
% of cases well classified = 58.8 % of cases well classified = 81.0 % of cases well classified = 98.1 % of cases well classified = 85.3
The highest percentages of cases accurately classified were for Spitting (98.1%), Hitting (97.2%), getting parents into Debt (92.9%) and Destroying things (91.9%), while the lowest was for Insulting (58.8%). For the rest of the behaviors, this percentage ranged from 85.3% for Obscene gestures, 84.8% for Stealing and 81% for Running away.

Table 4 (cont.). Step-by-step logistic regression analysis for each of the CPV behaviors, except Intimidating (n = 211).

| Behavior                | Stealing | Destroying | Debt | Hitting |
|-------------------------|----------|------------|------|---------|
| p          | Exp (B)  | CI         | p    | Exp (B)  | CI     | p    | Exp (B)  | CI     |
| Uncaring               |          |            |      |          |        |      |          |        |
| Calloousness            | .009     | 1.264      | 1.060| 1.508    |        |      |          |        |
| Narcissism              |          |            |      |          |        |      |          |        |
| Machiavellianism        | .042     | 1.292      | 1.009| 1.654    |        |      |          |        |
| Hostile sexism          |          |            |      |          |        |      |          |        |
| Benevolent sexism       | .008     | .808       | .689 | .947     |        |      |          |        |
| Communication with the mother | | | | | | | |
| Anger with the mother   | .016     | .766       | .616 | .928     |        |      |          |        |
| Family self-concept     |          |            |      |          |        |      |          |        |
| Physical self-concept   |          |            |      |          |        |      |          |        |
| See violence at home    | .002     | 1.352      | 1.122| 1.628    |        |      |          |        |
| Suffer violence in the street | .049 | .298     | .000 | .053 | .140 | .290 | .000 | .006 |

Constant

Nagelkerke’s R² = .30 Nagelkerke’s R² = .96 Nagelkerke’s R² = .12 Nagelkerke’s R² = .99
Hosmer-Lemeshow = .706 Hosmer-Lemeshow = .700 Hosmer-Lemeshow = .389 Hosmer-Lemeshow = .232
% of cases well classified = 84.8 % of cases well classified = 91.9 % of cases well classified = 92.9 % of cases well classified = 97.2

Discussion

The aim of this study was to analyze separately the different forms of CPV referred to in Cottrell’s classic definition (2001). This was done by comparing a group of adolescents from the general population who admitted having displayed CPV with a group from the same population who had not, in relation to two types of variables. On the one hand, there were the sociodemographic variables and traditional variables commonly used in the study of CPV. On the other hand, personality variables to which exposure to violence added, given the consistency of its relationship with CPV in previous research.

The percentages of CPV in the study sample ranged from 3.6% in the case of Hitting to 57.3% in the case of Insulting. Indeed, if we take all the behaviors together, more participants claimed to have displayed some form of CPV (68.4%) than those who claimed not to have (31.6%). Even so, these rates are still lower than those found in some research in Spain (Calvet et al., 2014; Ibabe and Bentler, 2016; Ibabe et al., 2013), but fall within the range of estimates in other countries (Simmons et al., 2018). It is interesting to note in this regard that the social desirability effect was only found in relation to Insulting behavior, the most frequent, so that the percentage of participants who performed it is estimated even higher (65%) than their responses reflect. If we also consider that in this case, the probability of the effect is greater than 80% of all possible, this behavior does not seem
to be a valid indicator of CPV. Finally, the percentage of participants who acknowledge getting parents into debt, hitting and spitting on parents is trivial.

Attention should also be drawn to the fact that most participants engaged in only one behavior, usually insulting, whereas behaviors such as hitting, intimidating or spitting never appeared alone, but in combination with other behaviors, as if they were the result of a previous escalation of violence. However, while hitting and spitting are forms of physical violence, intimidating is, following Cottrell (2001), part of psychological violence. The frequency with which participants claimed to have carried out each of the nine behaviors was very low, except for insulting, which only exceeded the midpoint of the scale in 10% of the cases. These differences with respect to previous studies could be because the frequencies of behaviors of different severity in the same variable were not averaged but considered separately. It is also possible that the social context of the sample has had an influence, since other Spanish studies with a normalized population have been carried out in territories different from that of the participants in this study, who were mainly from tourist areas, rather than from urban or rural areas. This explanation is tentative, since very little is known yet about how the social and normative context in which the research is carried out, beyond the family and the peer group, has an effect on CPV (Holt, 2016; Simmons, McEwan, & Purcell, 2019; Simmons, McEwan, Purcell, & Huynh, 2019; Williams et al., 2016).

The proportionally smaller size of the group of those who admit to having been violent towards their parents, compared to those who do not, recommends caution when interpreting the results. This disproportion may be due to the fact that most adolescents who do not belong to judicial or clinical populations are not usually violent towards their parents. Some adolescents are at times mildly violent, but those who display repeatedly severe behaviors are a minority and sooner or later become part of judicial or clinical samples. Disruptive behaviors, if they are mild and occur sporadically, are typical of the developmental stage of adolescence (e.g. insulting) and, as such, can be interpreted as expressions of rebellion and questioning of authority figures (Coogan, 2011). These behaviors, although reprehensible, are manifestations of poor education and lack of respect for parents, and should not be considered CPV, since they are not perceived as forms of abuse and in our society, by dint of being normative in terms of frequency, have become acceptable (Simmons et al., 2019).

CPV is, by definition, socially reproachable and therefore anti-normative (Calvete and Pereira, 2019). It does not follow a normal distribution but in the form of a mirrored J, since the number of deviates is inversely proportional to the degree of deviation. Only a few people deviate completely from the norm, while most, at the other end of the continuum, carry out anti-normative activities only occasionally (Allport, 1934). The problem with this distribution is that it considerably limits the type of statistical analysis and, consequently, the conclusions to be drawn. The results obtained should therefore be interpreted with caution but valued to the extent that they provide complementary evidence to that already available.

In this sense, no statistically significant differences were found based on gender, age or family structure, but there were differences with respect to drug abuse and academic performance. The results regarding the gender of the aggressor are consistent with previous research (Ibabe & Bentler, 2016; Orue, 2019; Simmons et al., 2018), since boys and girls exert CPV equally in all the behaviors studied. Previous studies do systematically relate drug abuse to CVP in global terms (Del Hoyo-Bilbao et al., 2020), but in this case the relationship is only with hitting (physical violence) and running away from home (emotional violence). It is also those who run away (emotional violence) that are diagnosed with mental illness, while those who get parents into debt (economic violence) are the worst academic performers. Adolescents in the later years of schooling are more likely to intimidate (psychological violence) their parents. These results are broadly consistent with the findings of Calvete et al. (2013), Del Hoyo-Bilbao et al. (2020), Ibabe et al. (2013), Pagani et al. (2004, 2009) and Simmons et al. (2018), but only in relation to these specific behaviors and not the total.

Also in line with previous research is our finding that exposure to violence is related to CPV (Gallego et al., 2019; Simmons et al., 2018), though only in the cases of running away (emotional violence) and making obscene gestures (psychological violence). Moreover, having suffered violence on the street discriminates between those who run away (emotional violence) and make obscene gestures (psychological violence) and those who do not, whereas having seen violence at home discriminates between those who destroy things (financial violence) and those who do not. These data could be interpreted in terms of the bi-directionality of violence between parents and children (Brezina, 1999; Gallego et al., 2019; Ibabe & Bentler, 2016; Ulman & Straus, 2003), but they could also suggest the existence of beliefs that justify the use of violence as a way of resolving conflicts (Cardeñoso & Calvete, 2004). The question is to see why these and no other forms of exposure to violence have an impact on these behaviors or on other manifestations of CPV. In this regard, it is interesting to note how in the study by Del Hoyo-Bilbao et al. (2020), seeing violence enters the multivariate model, but not suffering violence, despite the fact that this variable has previously been consistently related to CPV (Gallego et al., 2019).

The results obtained previously on the relationship between CPV and self-esteem are not consistent (Calvete et al., 2011; Ibabe et al., 2014; Loinaz & Sousa, 2020), so in this research, we chose to analyze self-concept, a more stable construct over time and which can manifest itself differently in the various domains of adolescent life (Garcia & Mustiu, 2014). The results support the interest in considering the different facets of self-concept separately, insofar as it is the family self-concept that reduces the probability of getting in-
to debt (financial violence) with parents and the physical self-concept reduces that of insulting them (psychological violence).

One of the twists introduced in this work with respect to previous research has been to approach "parental warmth" through the dimensions of attachment (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987; Delgado et al., 2016; Gullone & Robinson, 2005), rather than the classic parental socialization styles (Calvete et al., 2014; Contreras & Cano, 2014; Gámez-Guadix et al., 2012; Ibabe & Bethler, 2016). Poor communication with the mother discriminates between those who steal from their parents (financial violence) and those who do not, and anger with the mother between those who hit (physical violence) and those who do not. These results may indicate, according to Chapple et al. (2005), that it is the lack of affection and attachment, rather than lack of discipline, that can lead children to adopt inappropriate problem-solving strategies and aggressive interaction patterns, including CPV behaviors (Gamez-Guadix et al., 2012). They are also consistent with work that shows that getting the family back is one of the most important reasons for starting the process of desistance from crime (Martín, Padrón, & Redondo, 2019).

Another contribution of this work is to analyze the relationship between sexism and CPV. The results show a differential pattern with respect to the two manifestations of sexism, as in other areas of domestic violence (e.g. Martín-Fernández et al., 2018; Juarras-Basterrechea, Overall, Herre-ro-Olaizola, & Rodríguez-Díaz, 2019). Hostile sexism increases the probability of stealing (financial violence) and spitting (psychological violence), while benevolent sexism reduces the probability of spitting only (psychological violence). It is interesting to note how in the case of stealing (financial violence) and hitting (physical violence), bad communication and anger with the mother, respectively, play important roles. The question is whether sexism is at the root of miscommunication and anger with the mother or whether they independently influence behavior.

When the different dimensions of psychopathy were analyzed, it was observed that callousness (lack of empathy and remorse) discriminates only in relation to obscene gastrores (psychological violence), while uncaring does so for spitting on parents (psychological violence). These results are consistent with research that finds that the interpersonal dimension of psychopathy is a better predictor of antisocial behavior than the affective dimension (García et al., 2018). No statistically significant relationship was found between unemotional and CPV behaviors, although in the study by Ciucci et al., (2013), this influence was only indirect, through lack of empathy.

Something similar occurs with the factors of machiavellianism, since the previous results on narcissism, by Calvete et al., (2015) with boys and by Loinaz and Sousa (2020) including girls, are replicated only with running away (psychological violence). Machiavellianism is only related to getting into debt (financial violence) with parents, while narcissism and dominance were never statistically significant. One of the questions that this work leaves unanswered, waiting for future research, is why none of the predictors, except for school year, allows for differentiation between those who intimidate their parents and those who do not. When continuous, not dichotomized, scores of the variables are used, only correlations with confidence, anger and communication with the mother are found, which, although statistically significant, produce a very small effect size.

The results obtained, although exploratory, provide valuable empirical information that may arouse interest in a new perspective in the study of CPV. This perspective is based on the strength of the knowledge provided by previous works but proposes to encourage research on the problem from different approaches. The effect sizes obtained with the variables studied so far suggest that it may be necessary to analyze the contribution of other psychosocial variables whose influences are at the inter-group and community level, since CPV is a social problem, which goes beyond the mother-child relationship (Holt, 2016). Increasing the size of the sample may obtain greater statistical significance of the results, but if other levels of analysis were also introduced, as has been done with intimate-partner violence (Martín-Fernández et al, 2018), it is likely that their substantive significance would also increase.

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