

**What do young people think about teen dating violence?
A quantitative survey from a cross-cultural perspective**
**¿Qué opinan las personas jóvenes sobre la violencia en la pareja adolescente?
Un estudio cuantitativo desde un enfoque transcultural**
**O que pensam os jovens sobre a violência entre parceiros íntimos na adolescência?
Um estudo quantitativo a partir de uma abordagem transcultural**

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KEYWORDS:

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ABSTRACT: Teen Dating Violence (TDV) is becoming a matter of growing concern in socio-educational research in Spain. Among the different perspectives, the cross-cultural perspective is the one that is less developed in our context, but not in other contexts such as the Anglo-Saxon one. The aim of this research is to get to know the attitudes and perceptions of a sample of young people from the region of Cuenca (Spain) in relation to the TDV from a cross-cultural perspective and to consider the implications from a social pedagogical point of view. The sample consisted of 394 adolescents from four secondary schools, with a mean age of 15.73 years (SD=1.163), 53.80 % (n=212) girls and 46.20 % (n=182) boys. By means of a survey method, module I of the National Youth Institute of Chile Survey No. 4 was applied. The results show that jealousy and control are predominant attitudes in relation to the TDV. The existence of sexist attitudes is evidenced in adolescent male believers, in those of younger age and Latin Americans. A higher level of acceptance of the attitude of sexual coercion is also observed in adolescent males and a higher level of acceptance of emotional, verbal, and psychological TDV in them and in Latin American adolescents. It highlights the erroneous belief that control, and jealousy are manifestations of love, especially among younger adolescent boys. These findings shed light on the complexity of TDV in the province of Cuenca and have strong socio-educational implications. It is essential to understand these attitudes in order to design educational interventions that promote healthy relationships and prevent the normalization of violent behaviors in adolescent couples. In the context of the results of this study, a set of proposals regarding socioeducational intervention in TDV are suggested.

<p>PALABRAS CLAVE: Violencia en la Pareja Adolescente (VPA); Educación Social; percepciones; transculturalidad; prevención.</p>	<p>RESUMEN: La Violencia en Pareja Adolescente (VPA) se está convirtiendo en un tópico de interés creciente dentro de la investigación socioeducativa en España. De las diferentes aproximaciones con las que se cuenta, la perspectiva transcultural es la que presenta un menor desarrollo en nuestro contexto, no así en otros contextos como el anglosajón. El objetivo de esta investigación fue conocer las actitudes y percepciones de una muestra de jóvenes de la provincia de Cuenca (España) en relación con la VPA desde una perspectiva transcultural y valorar las implicaciones desde la pedagogía social. La muestra estuvo formada por 394 adolescentes de cuatro institutos de educación secundaria, con una edad media de 15.73 (DT=1.163), siendo el 53.80 % (n=212) chicas y el 46.20 % (n=182) chicos. Mediante un método de encuesta se ha aplicado el módulo I del Sondeo nº4 del Instituto Nacional de Juventud de Chile (2016). Los resultados informan que los celos y el control son actitudes preponderantes en relación con la VPA. Se evidencia la existencia de actitudes sexistas en los varones adolescentes creyentes, en los de menor edad y latinoamericanos. También se observa un nivel de aceptación más elevado en la actitud de coerción sexual en varones adolescentes y un nivel de aceptación de la VPA emocional, verbal y psicológica mayor en ellos también y en adolescentes latinoamericanos. Destaca la creencia errónea de que el control y los celos son manifestaciones de amor, especialmente entre adolescentes más jóvenes. Estos hallazgos arrojan luz sobre la complejidad de la VPA con implicaciones socioeducativas significativas. La comprensión de estas actitudes es esencial para diseñar intervenciones educativas que promuevan relaciones saludables y prevengan la naturalización de relaciones violentas en las parejas adolescentes. Se aportan una serie de propuestas relacionadas con la intervención socioeducativa ante la VPA a la luz de los resultados de este estudio.</p>
<p>PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Violência entre Parceiros Intimos na Adolescência (VPI); Educação Comunitária; percepções; transculturalidade; prevenção.</p>	<p>RESUMO: A Violência entre Parceiros Adolescentes (VPA) está a tornar-se um tema de interesse crescente na investigação socioeducativa em Espanha. Das diferentes abordagens disponíveis, a perspetiva transcultural é a menos desenvolvida no nosso contexto, mas não noutros contextos como o anglo-saxónico. O objetivo desta investigação é conhecer as atitudes e percepções de uma amostra de jovens da província de Cuenca (Espanha) em relação à APV a partir de uma perspetiva transcultural e avaliar as implicações na perspetiva da pedagogia social. A amostra era constituída por 394 adolescentes de quatro escolas secundárias, com uma idade média de 15.73 anos (DP=1.163), 53.80 % (n=212) raparigas e 46.20 % (n=182) rapazes. Através de um método de inquérito, foi aplicado o módulo I do Inquérito n.º 4 do Instituto Nacional da Juventude do Chile. Os resultados mostram que o ciúme e o controlo são atitudes predominantes em relação à VPA. A existência de atitudes sexistas é evidente entre os adolescentes crentes do sexo masculino, os homens mais jovens e os homens latino-americanos. Observa-se também um maior nível de aceitação da atitude de coerção sexual nos rapazes adolescentes e um maior nível de aceitação do APP emocional, verbal e psicológico nos rapazes adolescentes e nos adolescentes latino-americanos. É de salientar a crença errónea de que o controlo e o ciúme são manifestações de amor, especialmente entre os adolescentes mais jovens. Estes resultados esclarecem a complexidade da VPA na província de Cuenca e têm implicações socio-educativas significativas. A compreensão destas atitudes é essencial para o desenho de intervenções educativas que promovam relações saudáveis e previnam a naturalização de relações violentas em casais adolescentes. À luz dos resultados deste estudo, são apresentadas algumas propostas relacionadas com a intervenção socioeducativa da APV.</p>

Introduction

Teen Dating Violence (TDV) is emerging as a scientific and social concern in education. Research in this field, initiated by Makepeace (1981), has focused on aspects such as its composition, evolution, and consequences, considering it a public health and, social justice problem (McDonnell *et al.*, 2010). Although ambiguity and controversy have marked its study, current definitions converge towards the characterisation of TDV as intentional aggression in the course of dating (Rodríguez- Sola & Soriano-Ayala, 2022). Commonly, when addressing TDV, reference is

made to three main forms of violence: physical, psychological, and sexual.

Recent studies (López-Barranco *et al.*, 2022), such as the report “No es amor” by Save The Children Spain (2021) and the gender violence macro-survey of Ministry of Equality (2019), show an increase in dating violence, with rates of physical and sexual violence around 6.5 %, and emotional and psychological violence between 15 % and 25 %. The Gender Violence Delegation (2021) and the National Institute of Statistics (2020) support these data. Internationally, studies such as Makepeace (1981) and the World Health Organisation (2021) estimate that between 24 %

and 26 % of young people between 15 and 24 years of age experience violence. Pereda, Codina and Díaz-Faes (2024), report that the prevalence of TDV victimisation is 13.6 %, being higher in girls with 16.9 % and in boys with 10.5 %. On the other hand, the perpetration rate is 4.8 %, with 6.6 % for girls and 3.1 % for boys.

TDV is usually imperceptible and heterogeneous and is considered to be less serious than adult intimate partner violence. In terms of psychological violence, men and women show similar behavior, but women tend to report more psychological violence. As for sexual violence, boys are more likely to sexually harass and use sexual coercion, while girls report higher rates of victimization. Recent studies also point to a dual role in sexual violence, with adolescents acting as both victims and perpetrators (Taylor *et al.*, 2021).

The relevance of personal and social relationships in adolescence for the development of future attachments stands out when studying the TDV (Pereda *et al.*, 2024). These relationships, while they can provide positive learning, also carry risks, affecting adolescents in psychological and integrity ways, and thus with implications for their learning process for social life (Datta *et al.*, 2022). The impacts include physical, psychological, and sexual consequences, such as depression, substance abuse, unwanted pregnancies and suicidal tendencies (Baiden *et al.*, 2021; Muñoz *et al.*, 2023).

What the available scientific evidence shows is that prevalence rates, risk factors and perceptions of TDV vary according to cultural context, religion and nationality (Ludín *et al.*, 2018). This has led to the development of several explanatory cultural models, some of which are based on higher rates of violence in places with poorer living conditions (Mark & Nishigaya, 2009). Others highlight that phenomena such as collectivism or individualism can foster the development of violence (Archer, 2006) and, finally, those models that focus on the difficulty of cross-cultural comparisons, since they recognize cultural differences in issues related to emotion management, anger control and conflict coping (Monks *et al.*, 2011; Cala & Soriano-Ayala, 2021).

In this paper, the main results of a cross-cultural survey research to learn and understand the perceptions, attitudes, and knowledge of a sample of adolescents about TDV are presented. The main objective was to obtain evidence directly from the experience and voice of young people. It not only provides a deeper understanding of their perspectives toward this problem, but also provides valuable proposals to guide professional practice and evidence-informed social-educational interventions. Therefore, the

understanding of adolescent perceptions of TDV is essential for developing more inclusive and targeted prevention strategies. The incorporation of their views allows the design of interventions more suited to their needs and realities, thus promoting a more inclusive and empowering approach in the struggle against this increasingly prevalent problem in our society.

1. Adolescents' Perceptions and Attitudes Towards TDV

1.1. Sexism, Romantic Love and Emotional Dependency Related To TDV

The study of adolescents' perceptions and attitudes towards TDV is fundamental to understanding this phenomenon, and much of this can be explained by socialisation processes (Padrós *et al.*, 2010). Cantera *et al.* (2009) point out that young people can recognise violence in other people's relationships, but do not recognise it in their own relationships, thus minimising its importance. According to Montilla-Martínez *et al.* (2021), aspects such as sexism, romantic love and emotional dependence play a relevant role in the development of TDV.

From a gender perspective, young men identify substance use, stress, and anger as risk factors for TDV and associate alcohol use with perpetration of violence (Backer, 2016). On the other hand, women associate TDV with adverse family and social experiences, such as child abuse and domestic violence (Molina-Martínez *et al.*, 2021). The myth of romantic love contributes to the normalisation of violent behaviours in adolescent couple relationships, such as subordination and passivity (Cala & Álvarez, 2021). Jealousy and control are falsely perceived as signs of love, which can lead to toxic relationships (Díaz-Aguado & Carvajal, 2011; Cala & Ayala, 2021). And emotional dependence manifests itself in early dating relationships and is associated with attitudes of accommodation in the relationship (De la Villa *et al.*, 2017). Adherence to the romantic love model is positively associated with online abuse between partners (Borrajo *et al.*, 2015). Last but not least, the use of information and communication technologies in TDV, with most young people accepting controlling and abusive online behaviour as normal. Furthermore, social networks are perceived as a factor that facilitates this phenomenon (Molina-Martínez *et al.*, 2021). In the case of young people in institutions, there is evidence of a positive relationship between hostile and benevolent and total sexism from their perspective (Jimeno & López, 2020). Thus, sexist perceptions increase tolerance for violence

in intimate partner relationships (Shaffer *et al.*, 2018). Ambivalent sexism, which combines hostile and benevolent elements, is still present among young people (Lameiras & Rodríguez, 2002). There are also gender differences in the perception of sexual violence, with adolescent girls being more aware of its consequences, while boys tend to underestimate its seriousness (Ortega *et al.*, 2008).

1.2. The Cross-Cultural Perspective on TDV

The study of TDV requires an in-depth analysis of young people's perceptions and attitudes, especially in a cross-cultural context. The available scientific evidence, mainly from North American studies, highlights the importance of understanding the victimisation and perpetration of TDV from this perspective. For example, Giuliani's (2017) studies reveal a greater vulnerability of ethnic minorities to TDV in the United States, with factors such as the acculturation gap and discrimination gaining in importance. Acculturation, the process of adapting to a new culture, influences attitudes towards TDV and can lead to acculturative stress and conflict between the culture of origin and the host culture. Research by Caetano *et al.* (2007) and DuPont-Reyes *et al.* (2014) shows that acculturation influences the likelihood of experiencing or perpetrating TDV among adolescents, with significant differences between genders and ethnic groups. In Latin America and the Caribbean, lack of knowledge about TDV among adolescents increases their vulnerability, with gender differences in perceptions, as noted by Rangel *et al.* (2021). And in Asia, young people with traditional cultural identities tend to be more supportive of intimate partner violence, according to Pradubmook-Sherer (2011). In Europe, particularly in Spain, studies on TDV are emerging that highlight phenomena such as hypersexuality and the influence of patriarchy in youth relationships, as noted by Tomaszewska & Schuster (2021) and Cala & Soriano-Ayala (2021, 2023). Religion also influences attitudes towards TDV, as shown in the study by Fernández *et al.* (2015), which found that religious youth were less likely to engage in intimate partner violence. However, more recent research by Rodríguez-Sola & Soriano-Ayala (2022) found no significant differences between religious and nonreligious adolescents. And other studies, such as those by DuPont-Reyes *et al.* (2014) and Cala & Soriano-Ayala (2021), highlight the importance of the cultural background of adolescents and their parents, as well as the concept of dating in different cultures, in the perception of TDV. Thomson & Hoffman-Goetz's (2009) systematic review highlights the

importance of the adolescent's country of birth and parental background in acculturation studies.

1.5. Survey Objectives

The aim of the research is to understand the perceptions and attitudes of a sample of adolescents towards TDV from a cross-cultural perspective in order to provide evidence to guide educational interventions. In order to achieve this, the following specific aims have been set: a) to know and analyse the differences in the perceptions and attitudes of the adolescents in the sample with regard to TDV, taking into account variables such as gender and age; b) to compare the differences in the perceptions and attitudes of the adolescents in the sample according to their cultural patterns, such as their religious beliefs and their geographical location; and c) to identify some relevant educational implications for promoting equality education in couple relationships among adolescents.

Methodology

Participants

A total of 394 secondary school students enrolled in four secondary schools in the province of Cuenca (Spain) participated in the study. The sample was selected using non-probability, purposive and accessibility sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 2018), as not all secondary schools in the province and potential secondary schools were allowed to participate in the study in order to complete the survey. The mean age of participating students was 15.73 (SD=1.163), ranging from 14 to 20 years old.

The inclusion criteria for identification and selection were a) be enrolled as a student in secondary education, baccalaureate or vocational training in a secondary school in the province of Cuenca (Spain); b) be between 14 and 20 years old at the time of the study; and c) agree to participate in the study in accordance with the informed consent form.

The final sample consisted of a total of 394 participants, of which 53.80 % (n=212) were girls and 46.20 % (n=182) were boys. The mean age of the girls was 15.78 (SD=1.169), and the mean age of the boys was 15.68 (SD=1.156). Regarding geographical area, the majority were from Western Europe (79.9 %, n=315). 11.7 % (n=46) of the sample were from Eastern Europe. 5.3 % (n=21) of the sample were of Latin American origin, and 3 % (n=12) were from the Asian region. Regarding religious belief, 71.5 % (n=296) of the

sample considered themselves believers, and 24.9 % (n=98) non-believers.

Instrument and variables

For the collection of information, a validated and internationally used instrument was employed: the Survey Number 4 of the National Youth Institute of Chile (INJUV, 2016), composed of four modules, of which only module 1 was used.

The instrument consists of a total of 27 variables: 8 correspond to the sociodemographic

and cross-cultural data of the participating students (table 1); 11 are variables linked to risk factors and TDV behaviors (table 2), 1 of them on a non-exclusive polytomous scale and 10 on an ordinal scale (1-3) according to the acceptability of the behavior; 7 on perceptions around TDV on an ordinal scale (1-4) according to the degree of agreement (table 3); and 2 on the social meaning of TDV (table 4) on a nominal scale (public/private). The following tables show each of the different variables grouped according to the information they report.

Table 1: Socio-demographic and cross-cultural variables

Variable	Description
1. Sex	You are asked to specify whether male or female
2. Age	Expressed in years
3. Country of birth	Geographical designation
4. Residence in Spain (time)	If you do not have Spanish nationality or if you have lived most of your life outside Spain, please specify how long you have been living in Spain
5. Father's place of birth	Geographical designation of the person who has the legally recognized role as the father
6. Mother's place of birth	Geographical designation of the person who has the legally recognized role as the mother
7. Belief you identify with	9 exclusive options, with 1 additional option if not included in the 9 identified: Atheist (I do not believe in any religion), Catholic, Muslim, Protestant, Evangelist, Buddhist or Hindu, Jehovah's Witness, Jew, Agnostic, and if other, please indicate
8. Current situation in relation to the couple's relationship	4 exclusive options: at the moment, I am dating someone; at the moment, I am not dating anyone, but I have been dating for the last two months; at the moment, I am not dating anyone, but I have been dating for more than two months; I have never dated anyone
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the results of the RT12018-101668-B-100 project.	

Table 2: Variables related to risk factors and TDV behaviors

Variable
9. Most important risk
10. Pressuring a partner to have sex, even if they do not want it
11. Making jokes with friends or others about your intimate relationships with your partner
12. Ignoring partner's opinions
13. Teasing the partner
14. That the partner does not respect each other's habits and customs
15. Checking a partner's mobile phone secretly
16. Moving away from family, friends, and colleagues at school or work to avoid upsetting the partner
17. Controlling the times and places where the partner goes
18. Giving out Facebook or email passwords is a test of love or trust
19. The following situation: some days my partner says he loves me a lot and other days he ignores me
Source: Project Prepared by the authors based on the results of the RT12018-101668-B-100 project.

Table 3: Variables on beliefs about the TDV

Variable
19. Women sometimes have attitudes that justify receiving violence from their partners
20. Men sometimes have attitudes that justify receiving violence from their partners
21. Violence in intimate partner relationships is more common among poorer people
22. Relationship violence is more common among young people your age than in adult couples.
23. Every person who engages in violence suffers from some form of psychological illness
24. In relationships, it is sometimes better to give in to avoid bigger fights
25. If a person sees violence between his or her parents, it is very likely that he or she will be violent in intimate partner relationships
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the results of the RTI2018-101668-B-I00 project.

Table 4: Variables on the social meaning of the TDV

Variable
26. A private problem to be solved by the partner
27. A social problem to be solved with the help of friends, family, and institutions
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the results of the RTI2018-101668-B-I00 project.

Information about personal characteristics was collected using seven items referring to socio-demographic variables: country of birth, gender, age, religion, country of birth of the father/mother or guardian, and romantic relationship status. Notably, this questionnaire demonstrated adequate reliability, with $\alpha = .845$ and $\alpha_m = .875$.

The cross-cultural perspective was operationalized using two independent variables as proxies: religious beliefs and geographical area. For the geographical area proxy, we recalculated variables by incorporating the country of birth of the adolescent, father, and mother. Consequently, any adolescent with at least one of these variables was assigned to the corresponding attribute within the new variable. The sample was then categorized into four geographical areas: Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia.

Regarding the religious beliefs variable, it was dichotomized to distinguish between two groups: believers and non-believers. These variables were analyzed independently because bivariate analysis (Spearman's Rho) indicated no significant correlation between them.

Procedure

Firstly, the study adhered to the collaboration agreement signed on February 2, 2022, between the Regional Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sport of the Regional Government of Castilla-La

Mancha and the University of Castilla-La Mancha. This agreement aimed at the development of service-learning activities and educational innovation and research activities in non-university educational centers supported with public funds in the autonomous community.

In January 2022, following authorization from the Regional Ministry of Education in December 2021, telephone contact was initiated with all Secondary Education (SE) in the province of Cuenca (Spain) to request their participation. During this contact, the main aspects of the research were presented while avoiding the disclosure of compromising information. SE that agreed to participate were subsequently sent detailed information via email to facilitate their involvement through their management teams and guidance departments.

Once participation from SE was confirmed and accepted (between February and March 2022), authorization to conduct the field study was sought from the Social Research Ethics Committee (CEIS) of the University of Castilla-La Mancha. Data collection commenced in April 2022 following approval from the CEIS (reference: CEIS-638855-W7Y2). Authorizations were obtained from participating HEIs, and informed consent was acquired from minors (directly provided to those aged 14 or older). Subsequently, questionnaires were distributed to students online using Microsoft Forms® licensed by the

University of Castilla-La Mancha, either through an online link or a QR code. In cases where SE regulations prohibited online distribution, paper questionnaires were utilized (290 distributed online, 104 on paper). The approximate time for completing the questionnaires was 15 minutes per class. To maintain anonymity, alphanumeric codes were used for questionnaire identification.

Data analysis

For the handling and descriptive analysis of the data, IBM SPSS Statistics® Version 28 software, licensed by the University of Castilla-La Mancha, was utilized. Initially, a descriptive analysis was conducted, and due to the non-normal distribution of the data (confirmed with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for a sample size exceeding 50 participants), non-parametric statistical tests were employed. In managing missing values, mean value imputation was chosen, considering the presence of less than 3 % missing data (Tourón, 2023).

Descriptive analysis data were presented as frequencies and percentages. To examine differences in young people's perceptions and attitudes toward TDV based on gender, Mann-Whitney U tests were employed for quantitative variables, Chi-square tests for nominal variables, and Kruskal-Wallis tests for age. Analysis of disparities in adolescents' perceptions and

attitudes toward TDV concerning cultural patterns utilized Mann-Whitney U and Chi-square tests for religious beliefs, and Kruskal-Wallis and Chi-square tests for geographical area (Tourón, 2023). The resulting database and study report have been deposited in Zenodo (Sánchez-Santamaría & López-Garrido, 2024a).

Results

Descriptive analysis and contrast of perceptions and attitudes towards TDV according to gender and age.

According to table 5, categorized by gender and following the structure of the INJUV Survey Module, the responses obtained regarding the most significant attributions of the sample related to TDV are presented. Both boys (56.6 %) and girls (50.5 %) predominantly attributed jealousy to TDV. However, girls attributed machismo (17.9 % vs. 6.6 %) and a history of violence in the family (6.6 % vs. 2.2 %) more significantly to the topic under study compared to boys, who emphasized infidelity (13.2 % vs. 9.9 %), psychological problems (11 %), and alcohol and drug use (10.4 % vs. 3.8 %).

Chi-square analysis was applied, revealing significant differences between the choices of young people and their gender.

Table 5: Attributions of young people to VPA according to sex

Attributions	Sex	N	%	$X^2, (gl), p$
Alcohol and drugs	Man	19	10,4	22,040 (5), $p = ,001^{***}$
	Woman	8	3,8	
Jealousy	Man	103	56,6	
	Woman	107	50,5	
History of violence in the family	Man	4	2,2	
	Woman	14	6,6	
Infidelity	Man	24	13,2	
	Woman	21	9,9	
Machismo	Man	12	6,6	
	Woman	38	17,9	
Psychological Problems	Man	20	11	
	Woman	24	22,3	

* $p \leq 0,05$ ** $p \leq 0,001$ *Source: Own elaboration

Responses regarding the level of acceptance of various actions within a couple, as presented in supplementary material I, revealed significant differences between girls and boys. Boys tended to find it more acceptable to pressure their partner into unwanted relationships and to make jokes about intimacies, actions related to sexual violence. In contrast, girls perceived verbal, emotional, and psychological violence differently, with boys finding it more acceptable not to respect each other's habits and to alternate between showing affection and then ignoring their partner.

Concerning control and jealousy, boys were more inclined to view giving out social network passwords as a sign of love or trust. Age-wise, statistically significant differences were only observed in control and jealousy, specifically in giving social network passwords as proof of love

and trust ($p=0.004$), with 14-year-olds reporting higher scores.

Regarding habitual beliefs, boys showed greater acceptance of violence towards both men (7.1 %) and women (3.8 %) compared to girls (4.2 % and 3.8 %, respectively), indicating significant gender differences. Additionally, adolescent girls perceived more violence in young partners (14.6 % vs. 8.8 % for boys), while boys tended to associate perpetration of violence with psychological problems (20.3 % vs. 14.2 % for girls). Boys also exhibited a greater tendency to yield to avoid fights (27.4 % vs. 18.4 % in girls), with statistically significant differences (refer to table 6).

Regarding age and TDV beliefs, significant differences were observed solely concerning yielding to avoid major fights ($p=0.038$), with older adolescents (20 years old) exhibiting higher scores.

Table 6: Young people's perceptions of the type of problem that VPA I as a function of gender

Adolescent intimate partner violence is fundamentally...	% Men	% Women	Mann-Whitney U Test Sig.
A private problem to be solved by the couple	36,8	18,9	,000**d
A social problem to be solved with the help of friends, family and institutions	66,2	81,1	

^d * $p \leq 0,05$, ** $p \leq 0,001$. *Source: own elaboration

In relation to how adolescents perceive TDV as a problem, significant differences were found concerning gender, as outlined in supplementary material II. Boys predominantly perceive TDV as a private issue that should be resolved solely by the couple, while girls advocate for a more social approach, suggesting that the problem has broader implications and should be addressed with the support of friends, relatives, and institutions.

Descriptive analysis and comparison of perceptions and attitudes toward TDV were conducted based on cultural patterns, including religious beliefs and geographical area.

Regarding acceptance of actions related to TDV, significant differences were observed based on religious affiliation, particularly concerning sexual violence (making jokes with friends about intimate matters with their partner, $p=.001$). Non-believing adolescents exhibited higher acceptance of this action (27.5 %) compared to believers (13.5 %). Geographical area also showed significant differences for actions related to verbal, emotional, and psychological violence

(teasing the partner, $p=.004$). Moreover, non-believers tend to perceive TDV more as a social problem, while believers view it as a private problem to be addressed by the couple. Latin American adolescents (23.8 %) exhibited the highest acceptance, followed by Asians (16.7 %) and Eastern Europeans (13 %), compared to 5.1 % of Western Europeans.

Regarding habitual beliefs in TDV among believers and non-believers (refer to supplementary material III), significant differences were observed in justifying violence towards men and women, with believers more likely to agree with such beliefs. Additionally, there is generally more agreement with justifying violence towards women than towards men. Significant differences between the groups were also found regarding the belief that yielding in relationships avoids major conflicts, with believers more inclined to agree with this notion.

No significant differences were found between groups in terms of geographical area regarding young people's habitual beliefs about TDV. However, the study results indicate significant differences concerning religious belief and the perception of whether TDV is a social or private problem. Non-believers tend to perceive the issue more as a social problem requiring assistance

from friends, family, and institutions, whereas believers tend to view it more as a private issue to be resolved by the couple. Furthermore, no significant differences were observed between the perception of the nature of the problem and

geographical area (refer to table 7). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that Latin American adolescents are more inclined to perceive the issue as a private problem.

Table 7: Young people's perceptions of the type of problem that VPA is as a function of religious beliefs and geographic area

The VPA is fundamentally...	Believers	% Non-believers	Mann-Whitney U test Sig.	% Western Europe	% Eastern Europe	% Latin America	% Asia	Kruskal Wallis Sig
A private problem to be solved by the couple	30,4	17,3		26	2,3	42,9	25	
			,012* ^g					,412
A social problem to be solved with the help of friends, family and institutions	69,6	82,7		74	71,7	57,1	75	

^g * $p \leq 0,05$, ** $p \leq 0,001$

Socio-Educational Implications and Recommendations in the Face of TDV

The research aims to provide scientific evidence for the development of educational interventions based on empirical research (Kumah *et al.*, 2022). In this context, social pedagogy, as a scientific educational discipline focusing on democratic and critical citizenship from a human rights perspective and across the life cycle (Del Pozo, 2020), holds potential for enhancing the professional competence of social educators for evidence-based practice (Sánchez-Santamaría *et al.*, 2024). This approach aims to foster equality and social justice in dynamic societies (Sánchez-Santamaría *et al.*, 2024). Thus, incorporating students' perspectives on TDV is pivotal to engaging them in its prevention and reduction, thereby reinforcing the inclusive and coherent nature of socio-educational strategies advocated by social pedagogy (Sánchez-Santamaría & López-Garrido, 2024b).

The educational implications stemming from the study's findings can be outlined as follows (Velasco *et al.*, 2022; Piolanti & Foran, 2022; Vizoso-Gómez & Fernández-Gutiérrez, 2022):

- It is imperative to promote socio-educational interventions elucidating the true nature of TDV to dispel misperceptions and myths in dating, especially regarding jealousy and control, often misconstrued as signs of love and trust by many young people (Cala & Soriano-Ayala, 2023).

- Attention must be directed towards preventing addictive behaviors associated with alcohol and drug use, given that some adolescents correlate substance use with TDV (Vizoso-Gómez & Fernández-Gutiérrez, 2022).

- The empowerment of egalitarian relationships in couples is crucial for fostering gender equality and personal autonomy, where mutual respect, effective communication, and shared decision-making serve as foundational principles for social and personal growth (Cala & Álvarez, 2021; Rebollo-Catalán *et al.*, 2022).

- Heightened awareness of privacy and digital vulnerability is warranted. The study has highlighted a high degree of acceptance of actions linked to sharing social network passwords, perceived as signs of love and trust. Efforts should focus on developing digital competence and citizenship to safeguard digital privacy and mitigate risks associated with control and jealousy in the virtual realm (Cala & Del Carmen, 2022; Montero-Fernández *et al.*, 2022).

- Socio-educational work on combating sexist attitudes and behavior is paramount. It is imperative to equip young people with tools and strategies to challenge beliefs that perpetuate TDV and prevent the justification of unacceptable behaviors based on gender (Rebollo-Catalán *et al.*, 2022).

- f) Although awareness-raising efforts have been robust in PVA prevention, it is vital to emphasize adolescents' understanding of the seriousness and consequences of TDV, underscoring the importance of seeking help and support to address these instances of violence (Calvete *et al.*, 2019).
 - g) Inclusion of the religious and cultural variable is essential. Prevention programs and actions should address the role of cultural and religious differences in shaping perceptions about relationships. This entails a deeper understanding of the influence of these variables in constructing healthy relationships and their contribution to VAW prevention (Cala & Soriano-Ayala, 2021; Dalouh *et al.*, 2023).
 - h) Professional training in citizenship and social education is critical for detecting, managing, and preventing TDV, as well as fostering cultural and religious sensitivity as sources of knowledge, coexistence, and respect within the framework of human rights (Dalouh *et al.*, op. cit.).
 - i) Promotion of dialogue and youth participation surrounding TDV is essential. Through open and active dialogue, research citizenship can play a significant role in designing and implementing proposals addressing awareness, prevention, and education on the negative personal consequences of TDV effectively (Taylor *et al.*, 2021; Jiménez *et al.*, 2022).
- utilizing role-playing and focus groups to promote mutual understanding.
 - b) Addictive behaviors associated with alcohol and drug consumption. Launch information campaigns and experiential activities illustrating the adverse effects of alcohol and drug use, in collaboration with municipal drug plans and secondary schools. Offer stress management and peer pressure resistance skills workshops within tutorial frameworks. Employ problem-based learning strategies through cooperative learning.
 - c) Equal relationships. Conduct interventions and interactive workshops on mutual respect, effective communication, and shared decision-making. Address machismo and gender violence through prevention and early intervention initiatives featuring socio-educational, recreational, and artistic activities promoting pro-social behavior. Utilize applications "like DectAmor" (Junta de Andalucía, 2023) or "Ligando de buen rollo" (Diptuación de Granada, 2023) to address issues related to machismo or promoting equality in relationships.
 - d) Privacy and digital vulnerability. Design initiatives fostering healthy and respectful technology use among young people while addressing digital vulnerability, particularly in social network contexts susceptible to behaviors fostering control and jealousy. Implement early intervention strategies and digital competence workshops integrated with social and emotional competence development. Understanding privacy and digital exposure is crucial for TDV prevention, especially in light of the rise of artificial intelligence.
 - e) Sexist attitudes and behaviors. Implement tailored interventions targeting risk factors associated with sexist attitudes and behaviors leading to TDV. Employ individual, community, and family-based approaches, emphasizing affective-sexual education, particularly addressing pornography consumption (Sedano *et al.*, 2024).
 - f) Awareness of severity and consequences of TDV and seeking support. Offer activities identifying TDV warning signs and raising awareness of available resources and protocols for addressing TDV incidents. Utilize support groups and safe spaces as effective strategies.
 - g) Inclusion of the religious and cultural variable. Organize intercultural dialogue activities within local equality, coexistence,

Any socio-educational proposal should aim to equip young people with tools for self-awareness and interpersonal skills (Melendro, 2014). Accordingly, based on the implications drawn from the study results, potential socio-educational proposals aimed at preventing and/or mitigating factors associated with TDV (Vizoso-Gómez & Fernández-Gutiérrez, 2022; Soriano *et al.*, 2022; Rebollo-Catalán *et al.*, 2022) can be specified as follows:

- a) Myths in courtship related to jealousy and control. Implement communication and conflict resolution workshops proposing non-violent solutions to differences to enhance interpersonal relationships. Conduct social communication and awareness-raising campaigns featuring testimonies and messages that challenge myths surrounding jealousy and control, emphasizing their detrimental effects on human relationships. Organize emotional competence workshops addressing aspects such as self-esteem, self-awareness, and empathy towards others,

and community development programs, as well as SE orientation plans.

- h) Training for citizenship and social education professionals. Develop specific training programs addressing TDV covering understanding (importance, prevalence, concept, types, warning signs), gender approach, strategies for primary and secondary intervention, evaluation of intervention, and networking with families and communities.
- i) Research citizenship approach and its role in design and implementation. Promote participatory research among young people on TDV, design and develop materials and resources for peer education, and establish peer-to-peer TDV education programs.

Discussion and Conclusions

The study aimed to explore perceptions and attitudes towards TDV from a descriptive and cross-cultural perspective, utilizing data from a sample in the province of Cuenca (Spain) through Module I of the Chilean INJUV Survey N.º4. The findings indicated that both boys and girls attribute alcohol and drug use or psychological problems to TDV, while girls associate it more with social and familial factors such as machismo or a history of family violence, consistent with prior research by Díaz-Aguado & Carvajal (2011) or Taylor *et al.* (2021). Jealousy and control emerged as predominant factors for both sexes, often misinterpreted as signs of love and trust (Díaz-Aguado & Carvajal, 2011). The widespread acceptance of actions like sharing social network passwords or checking a partner's mobile phone suggests a tolerance toward control and jealousy, contributing to a heightened victimization in this type of violence, especially among younger individuals, aligning with Borrajo *et al.* (2015) and Ballesteros *et al.* (2019). Additionally, it was observed that male adolescents tend to perceive actions linked to emotional dependence in relationships as more acceptable, while boys exhibit greater acceptance of sexually coercive attitudes, in line with sexist attitudes justifying violence towards women (Ortega, Ribera & Sánchez, 2008).

From a cross-cultural perspective, significant differences were found in TDV perception. Believers tended to be less accepting of sexual violence compared to non-believers, although they expressed greater justification of violence towards men and women, viewing the solution to sexual violence as a private matter within the couple (Rodríguez-Sola & Soriano-Ayala, 2022). Conversely, Latin American youth exhibited

greater acceptance of verbal, emotional, and psychological violence compared to other geographical regions (World Health Organization, 2018; Ministry of Equality, 2019).

As presented in the socio-educational implications and recommendations section of the study and adopting a perspective from social pedagogy and social education, there is a justified need to address TDV from an intercultural perspective through educational programs, acknowledging the diversity of experiences and perspectives of adolescents based on their cultural, religious, and geographical context (Cala & Soriano-Ayala, 2021, 2023). Promoting intercultural education, fostering dialogue between different cultural groups, and raising awareness among young people about mutual respect and gender equality in relation to TDV are recommended (Malhotra *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, it is essential to address cultural differences in the perception and acceptance of TDV in future research and intervention programs and to overcome biases and limitations such as social desirability bias and low cultural diversity in research samples (Ramos *et al.*, 2021). Educational programs should incorporate strategies to address these biases and promote the inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives in TDV analysis (Ragavan *et al.*, 2021; Dalouh *et al.*, 2023).

Despite abundant research on TDV, recent studies underscore the scarcity of literature focusing on the perspectives of young people from different ethnicities or geographies and the cultural impact on TDV. The acculturation gap has been associated with higher levels of acceptance and perpetration of TDV, emphasizing the need for intervention programs addressing acculturative stress and ethnic identity (Kerig *et al.*, 2010; Malhotra *et al.*, 2015; Cala & Soriano-Ayala, 2023).

The socio-educational implications and proposals must be considered within an intervention context where established educational actions with young people already exist (Melendro, 2014; Cabello *et al.*, 2019; Fernández & García, 2023). These can be adapted through programs, workshops, support groups, learning communities, service-learning or community service programs, and other educational activities to prevent and/or reduce TDV, with a greater emphasis on a cross-cultural perspective (Soriano *et al.*, 2022). This should be viewed from a multi-causal perspective of the phenomenon of gender-based violence, characterized by its complexity and the dynamics of its social construction processes, as well as the values of inequality and discrimination. In this regard, the determinant role of male violence as

a factor associated with violence among minors, whether as aggressors or victims, should not be underestimated (Díaz-Aguado *et al.*, 2020). This necessitates evidence-informed socio-educational interventions to promote comprehensive social education and adopt a person-centered approach considering the influence of the social and cultural context. Therefore, the importance of educational and training proposals for prevention and intervention that integrate young people's perceptions of TDV is emphasized, essential for implementing inclusive, coherent, and transformative strategies contributing to its prevention and eradication (López-Garrido & Sánchez-Santamaría, 2024).

Finally, it is important to note the limitations of this study. When considering the results, it is crucial to account for certain biases present in the research. These include social desirability,

influenced by self-report instruments based on participant perspectives; sample selection bias due to accessibility; a bias related to the lack of cultural diversity in the studied context and the challenge in defining and measuring the emerging concept of transculturality; as well as the use of the variable sex instead of gender. Additionally, the scarcity of specific literature on young people's perceptions and opinions about TDV from a cross-cultural perspective limits the depth of discussion regarding the findings. These results should be interpreted considering the participants' profile in this sample, necessitating caution regarding the generalizability of the results, a limitation of the study. Although efforts were made to access a larger sample, not all SE were willing to participate. Further research on the influence of cross-cultural variables on TDV is recommended to gain a better understanding of its impact.

Contributions

Contributions	Authors
Conception and design of work	Author 1, Author 2
Documentary search	Author 1, Author 2
Data collect	Author 1
Critical data analysis and interpretation	Author 1, Author 2
Review and approval of versions	Author 1, Author 2

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Conflict interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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