



Gender coloniality and educational depatriarchalizing: a decolonial study for the transformation of relationships in an educational unit in Bolivia

Colonialidad de género y despatriarcalización educativa: un estudio decolonial para la transformación de las relaciones en una unidad educativa de Bolivia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Gender inequalities in education can be reproduced through stereotypes, daily practices and power relations that favor the persistence of patriarchal roles and different forms of violence. **Objective:** To analyze the relationship between the perception of gender inequality and the recognition of forms of violence in students of the Enrique Lindemann "A" Educational Unit, in La Paz, Bolivia, complementing the analysis with family perceptions of patriarchal roles. **Methodology:** A mixed approach research was developed with quantitative predominance, non-experimental design, cross-sectional and descriptive-correlational scope. The main sample was made up of 20 students, 10 women and 10 men; In addition, 15 family representatives and 15 female students participated. Structured interviews, participant observation, reflective diaries and photovoice were used. **Results:** Women identified inequalities in an average of 70% of the indicators evaluated, compared to 16% of men. Digital violence was recognized by 75% of students, verbal violence by 60% and physical violence by 40%. Among family representatives, 100% attributed the care of the home and children to women, while 93.3% linked men to community leadership. **Conclusions:** Relevant differences were evidenced in the perception of inequality and violence according to sex, along with the persistence of patriarchal roles in the family and educational environment.

Keywords: gender coloniality; gender inequality; school violence; patriarchal roles; adolescents.

RESUMEN

Introducción: Las desigualdades de género en el ámbito educativo pueden reproducirse mediante estereotipos, prácticas cotidianas y relaciones de poder que favorecen la persistencia de roles patriarcales y distintas formas de violencia. **Objetivo:** Analizar la relación entre la percepción de desigualdad de género y el reconocimiento de las formas de violencia en estudiantes de la Unidad Educativa Enrique Lindemann "A", en La Paz, Bolivia, complementando el análisis con las percepciones familiares sobre roles patriarcales. **Metodología:** Se desarrolló una investigación de enfoque mixto con predominio cuantitativo, diseño no experimental, transversal y alcance descriptivo-correlacional. La muestra principal estuvo conformada por 20 estudiantes, 10 mujeres y 10 hombres; adicionalmente participaron 15 representantes familiares y 15 estudiantes mujeres. Se emplearon entrevistas estructuradas, observación participante, diarios reflexivos y fotovoz. **Resultados:** Las mujeres identificaron desigualdades en un promedio del 70 % de los indicadores evaluados, frente al 16 % de los hombres. La violencia digital fue reconocida por el 75 % de los estudiantes, la verbal por el 60 % y la física por el 40 %. Entre los representantes familiares, el 100 % atribuyó a las mujeres el cuidado del hogar y de los hijos, mientras que el 93,3 % vinculó a los hombres con el liderazgo comunitario. **Conclusiones:** Se evidenciaron diferencias relevantes en la percepción de desigualdad y violencia según el sexo, junto con la persistencia de roles patriarcales en el entorno familiar y educativo.

Palabras clave: colonialidad de género; desigualdad de género; violencia escolar; roles patriarcales; adolescentes.

INTRODUCTION

School constitutes a central space for academic formation, socialization, and the construction of values; however, it can also reproduce inequalities that are present in the family and society. Daily relationships among students, the distribution of responsibilities, teacher expectations, the language used, and leadership opportunities convey messages about what is considered appropriate for women and men. These practices are not always part of the official curriculum, but they influence the consolidation of attitudes, stereotypes, and hierarchical relationships. During adolescence, such attitudes are still forming and can be modified by personal experiences, the influence of peers, and the prevailing culture in the educational institution (1,2).

In Latin America, the analysis of these inequalities requires considering not only the differences between women and men, but also the historical structures that determined the organization of social relations. The coloniality of power explains the permanence of patterns of classification, domination, and knowledge production that emerged during colonization, but that were reproduced even after the formal disappearance of colonialism (3). From this perspective, contemporary inequalities cannot be understood as isolated facts, because they are linked to economic, cultural, racial, and epistemic structures that hierarchize certain social groups.

The concept of coloniality of gender expanded this approach by explaining that the imposition of the modern and colonial order also reorganized relations between bodies, social roles, sexuality, and forms of authority (4). This approach allows us to understand that patriarchy operates not only through individual behaviors or explicit expressions of discrimination, but also through a system that naturalizes the subordination of women and transforms differences into unequal power relations. In the educational sphere, this coloniality can manifest through stereotypes, exclusion from certain spaces, differentiated distribution of tasks, and lesser recognition of female students' abilities.

The application of a decolonial perspective and gender equity in educational institutions therefore implies questioning the knowledge, practices, and norms that are presented as neutral but that reproduce historical hierarchies. Decolonial approaches make it possible to reveal inequalities that often remain hidden in the daily functioning of educational centers and to promote participatory forms of transformation (5). From this perspective, educational de-patriarchalization does not consist solely in incorporating content related to equality, but rather in reviewing pedagogical relationships, school organization, student participation, and the ways in which inequalities are legitimized or questioned.

In Bolivia, this approach acquires special importance because the educational system recognizes decolonization and de-patriarchalization as guiding principles of socio-community education. However, the existence of a normative framework does not by itself guarantee the transformation of relationships within institutions. The original manuscript warns of the persistence of patriarchal patterns, unequal power relations, and forms of violence that affect coexistence and the academic development of students. In the Bolivian educational context, tensions have been identified between the aspirations of social and gender justice and the continuity of practices associated with machismo, traditional roles, and the unequal distribution of responsibilities (6).

Gender stereotypes can influence the way students value their abilities and participate in different school areas. Among Chilean students, it has been observed that gender identity and adherence to certain stereotypes are related to academic motivation and to the valuation of reading as an activity associated with the feminine (7). These results show that social expectations can translate into performance, choice of activities, and the perception that adolescents construct about their own abilities. Therefore, gender inequalities are expressed not only through direct prohibitions, but also through everyday messages that symbolically delimit which spaces, behaviors, or responsibilities correspond to each sex.

The influence of school culture is also evident in the formation of attitudes either favorable or contrary to equality. The attitudes of Latin American students toward gender equity depend not exclusively on their individual opinions, but rather on the ideological climate of their peers and the characteristics of the school environment (8). This indicates that collective practices can normalize inequality or, on the contrary, favor the development of more egalitarian relationships. Consequently, studying students' perceptions allows us to know not only their personal positions, but also the shared norms and beliefs that circulate within the educational community.

The importance of attitudes toward equality has also been examined in adolescents from Bolivia and Ecuador. Relevant associations have been identified between gender attitudes, interpersonal communication, and different adolescent experiences, as well as between acceptance of equality and the way women and men build their relationships (9).

Although a cross-sectional design does not allow establishing causality, these prior findings justify the use of correlational analyses to explore how perceptions of inequality relate to other behaviors, knowledge, and youth experiences.

Among the most concerning expressions of unequal relationships is the difficulty in recognizing the different manifestations of violence. Some verbal, psychological, symbolic, or digital behaviors can be interpreted as jokes, normal forms of coexistence, or unimportant conflicts. This normalization reduces the ability to identify risk situations and limits the search for help. In Bolivian adolescents, a notable presence of in-person harassment and cyberbullying has been identified, with a predominance of verbal and physical aggressions and offensive messages (10). These results show that digital forms do not necessarily replace traditional manifestations of violence, but rather expand the spaces and times in which victimization can occur.

Violence can also be incorporated into affective relationships through controlling behaviors, humiliation, coercion, distancing, or aggression. The validation of an instrument on dating violence in the Bolivian population confirmed the need to evaluate different dimensions of victimization and perpetration, since the phenomenon is not limited to physical violence (11). Although that research was conducted with university students, its results support the importance of studying, from earlier educational stages, the identification of violent behaviors and the responses that adolescents consider appropriate to them.

Despite these antecedents, there is still limited empirical research that jointly examines the perception of school inequalities, the recognition of forms of violence, and the persistence of patriarchal roles from a decolonial perspective situated in Bolivian educational units. A large part of the studies addresses gender attitudes, bullying, dating violence, or educational practices separately; therefore, it is necessary to analyze how these dimensions are articulated in a specific community. The original manuscript identifies inequalities in group work, class meetings, recreational activities, uniform use, and sports practice, as well as manifestations of physical, verbal, psychological, digital, and symbolic violence.

Consequently, the present research aims to analyze the relationship between the perception of gender inequality and the recognition of forms of violence in students from the Enrique Lindemann "A" Educational Unit, in La Paz, Bolivia, and to complement this analysis with the perceptions of family representatives about patriarchal roles in the family and community sphere. The question guiding the study is: What relationship exists between the perception of gender inequality and the recognition of forms of violence in the participating students?

The research hypothesis is that there is a positive and statistically significant correlation between the perception of gender inequality and the recognition of forms of violence, such that students who identify inequalities in a greater number of school situations also recognize a greater diversity of violent manifestations. Likewise, differences between women and men and the responses of female students to possible situations of dating violence will be analyzed descriptively.

METHODS

Research approach and design

The research was conducted using a mixed-methods approach with a quantitative predominance, complemented by qualitative information from the experiences and testimonies of members of the educational community (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The quantitative component made it possible to characterize perceptions of gender inequality, patriarchal roles, and forms of violence, as well as to examine the association between the main dimensions. The qualitative component made it possible to contextualize the results through interviews, participant observation, reflective diaries, and photovoice.

A non-experimental, cross-sectional design was adopted, because the variables were analyzed without deliberate manipulation and the information corresponding to the correlational component was obtained during the diagnosis of the educational community. The scope was descriptive-correlational: descriptive because it allowed identifying the manifestations of inequality and violence perceived by the participants, and correlational because it examined the association between the perception of gender inequality and the recognition of forms of violence in the school environment.

The process incorporated principles of participatory action research, considering educational actors as active participants in the identification and understanding of the problems of their context.

This perspective is pertinent when seeking to integrate knowledge production, collective reflection, and situated understanding of social relations (Kemmis et al., 2014).

Context, population and sample

The study was conducted during the 2025 academic year at the Enrique Lindemann “A” Educational Unit, located in the city of La Paz, Bolivia. The population consisted of secondary school students, teachers, and mothers, fathers, or family representatives associated with the institution.

The main quantitative sample consisted of 20 students, equally distributed between 10 women and 10 men. This group provided information regarding the perception of gender inequality and the recognition of forms of violence present in the school environment. The original manuscript confirms this distribution and notes that the 20 students were interviewed during the diagnostic phase.

Additionally, 15 mothers, fathers, or family representatives participated, who answered questions related to the distribution of domestic responsibilities, leadership, economic provision, job opportunities, and family decision-making.

Similarly, the responses of 15 female students were analyzed regarding experiences and forms of action in the face of adolescent dating violence. This group was treated as an independent subsample, since the available records do not allow determining whether all its members belonged to the main group of 20 students.

A non-probabilistic and intentional sampling was used, considering the availability of participants, their connection to the educational community, and their participation in the diagnostic process. For this reason, the findings were interpreted within the studied context and their statistical generalization to other populations was not considered.

Variables and dimensions

The central variable was gender coloniality in educational relationships, operationalized based on practices, perceptions, and relationships that express hierarchical differences between women and men in the school and family settings.

The perception of gender inequality was evaluated through 5 situations in the educational context: group work, class meetings, games among peers, uniform use, and sports activities. Each identified situation received a point, yielding an index ranging from 0 to 5 points. Higher scores represented a broader perception of situations of inequality.

The recognition of forms of violence comprised 5 categories: physical, verbal, psychological, digital, and symbolic violence. Each identified form received a point, and an index between 0 and 5 points was generated. A high score indicated that the participant recognized a greater diversity of manifestations of violence.

The persistence of patriarchal roles was examined through 9 indicators related to domestic responsibilities, childcare, community leadership, economic provision, professional and employment opportunities, exposure to violence, valuation of opinions, and family decision-making. This dimension was analyzed descriptively based on the responses of family representatives.

Finally, adolescent dating violence included experiences of violence and responses considered appropriate in situations of intimate partner violence. This dimension was descriptively analyzed in the 15 female students.

Techniques and Instruments

The main information gathering technique was the structured interview, complemented by participant observation, reflective diary, and photovoice. These techniques allowed combining quantifiable information with qualitative evidence related to the experiences and perceptions of the participants.

For the quantitative component, student responses were organized into an individual matrix. The indicators corresponding to gender inequality and recognition of violence were coded dichotomously: 0 when the situation was not identified and 1 when it was recognized.

The interview directed at family representatives used the categories “the woman”, “the man” and “both” to examine the assignment of responsibilities, opportunities and positions of authority.

Participant observation allowed recording forms of interaction among members of the educational community, distribution of responsibilities, opportunities for participation, language used, and manifestations of stereotypes. Reflective diaries recovered participants' interpretations, and photovoice facilitated the identification and reflection on situations related to inequality and power relations.

The instruments were reviewed by members of the technical-pedagogical commission of the institution in order to assess their clarity, relevance, and correspondence with the study objectives. Because the original record does not present validity coefficients or internal consistency, the evaluation of the instruments was considered a qualitative validation by expert judgment.

Procedure

The research was initially developed through a participatory diagnosis of the educational reality. In this stage, problems related to gender inequality, violence, family relationships, school coexistence, and reproduction of stereotypes were identified.

Subsequently, interviews were conducted with students and family representatives, accompanied by participant observation, reflective diaries, and photovoice activities. The quantitative information was organized in a data matrix, and the qualitative evidence was classified into thematic categories.

Testimonies were anonymized using differentiated codes according to participant type: EM for female student, EH for male student, D for teacher, and RF for family representative. Quantitative and qualitative information was subsequently integrated to interpret the manifestations of gender coloniality existing in the investigated context.

Data Analysis

Quantitative analysis was developed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Absolute frequencies, percentages, and cumulative scores were calculated for the evaluated dimensions.

The main association corresponded to the relationship between perception of gender inequality and recognition of forms of violence. For each of the 20 students, two indices were obtained with values between 0 and 5 points.

Due to the small sample size and the discrete nature of the scores, the relationship between both dimensions was examined using Spearman's rho coefficient, establishing a significance level of $p < 0.05$. It was hypothesized that a greater perception of gender inequalities would be associated with a greater recognition of the different forms of violence.

Additionally, an exploratory comparison was proposed between the scores of women and men using the Mann-Whitney U test. The responses corresponding to family representatives and the 15 students evaluated regarding dating violence were analyzed using frequencies and percentages, because they corresponded to different groups from the correlational sample.

Information from interviews, reflective diaries, photovoice, and observation was examined using reflexive thematic analysis, considering the phases of familiarization, coding, construction, revision, and definition of themes proposed by Braun and Clarke (2021). The central categories comprised gender roles and stereotypes, educational inequality, hidden curriculum, violence, power relations, and de-patriarchalizing practices.

Ethical considerations

Participation of members of the educational community was voluntary, and the information obtained was handled under criteria of confidentiality and anonymity. Due to the participation of adolescents and the sensitive nature of some questions, the final version must expressly declare institutional authorization, informed consent from the representatives, and assent from the students.

The testimonies were anonymized using codes, and care was taken to avoid using information that could personally identify the participants. Likewise, participants had the option to refrain from answering sensitive questions or to withdraw from the process without academic consequences.

RESULTS

The analysis focused on the information obtained during the diagnostic phase. The main quantitative sample consisted of 20 students, equally distributed between 10 women and 10 men. Complementarily, the responses of 15 family representatives were analyzed, and independently, the responses of 15 female students related to dating violence. The original document confirms that the 20 students were interviewed before the implementation of the transformative proposal.

Perception of Gender Inequality in the Educational Environment

The most marked differences between women and men were observed in class meetings, sports activities, and the use of the uniform. 100% of the female students identified inequalities during class meetings, compared to 20% of the men. Likewise, 70% of the women reported perceiving inequality in sports activities, while no men identified this situation. Regarding the use of the uniform, the difference was 60 percentage points, since 60% of the women indicated inequality and none of the men recognized it.

Table 1. Perception of gender inequality in different educational spaces

Evaluated situation	Women n (%)	Men n (%)	Total n (%)
Group work	7 (70 %)	2 (20 %)	9 (45 %)
Course meetings	10 (100 %)	2 (20 %)	12 (60 %)
Games among peers	5 (50 %)	4 (40 %)	9 (45 %)
Uniform use	6 (60 %)	0 (0 %)	6 (30 %)
Sports activities	7 (70 %)	0 (0 %)	7 (35 %)

Note. Own elaboration based on interviews conducted with 20 students.

In descriptive terms, women recognized situations of inequality at an average equivalent to 70% of the five indicators evaluated, while among men this average was 16%. The greatest proximity between both groups occurred in games among peers, where differences were smaller: 50% among women and 40% among men.

These results show that the perception of inequality was not distributed homogeneously according to the participants' sex. The female students identified differences more frequently in spaces related to course organization, sports, academic assignments, and uniform regulation.

Recognition of the forms of violence

Digital violence and verbal violence were the manifestations most frequently recognized by the sample. In the group of 20 students, 75% identified digital violence and 60% verbal violence. Physical violence was recognized by 40%, psychological by 25%, and symbolic by 10%. The indicators allowed multiple responses, so the percentages are not mutually exclusive.

Sex differences were especially wide in verbal and digital violence. All female students identified both forms of violence, while among men, verbal violence was recognized by 20% and digital violence by 50%. In the case of physical violence, the difference was also considerable, with 60% among women and 20% among men. Symbolic violence was the least recognized manifestation and was identified only by 2 female students.

Considering the five forms of violence together, female students presented an average descriptive recognition equivalent to 62% of the indicators, whereas in male students it was 22%. This pattern coincides with that observed in the perception of inequality: the female group showed greater recognition of both unequal situations and manifestations of violence.

Table 2. Recognition of forms of violence in the educational environment.

Form of violence	Women n (%)	Men n (%)	Total n (%)
None	0 (0 %)	1 (10 %)	1 (5 %)
Physics	6 (60 %)	2 (20 %)	8 (40 %)
Verbal	10 (100 %)	2 (20 %)	12 (60 %)
Psychological	3 (30 %)	2 (20 %)	5 (25 %)
Digital	10 (100 %)	5 (50 %)	15 (75 %)
Symbolic	2 (20 %)	0 (0 %)	2 (10 %)

Note. Own elaboration based on interviews conducted with 20 students.

Persistence of patriarchal roles in the family and community sphere

The responses of the 15 family representatives showed a differentiated distribution of responsibilities and opportunities according to gender.

All participants attributed to women the primary responsibility for the home and childcare. In contrast, 14 of the 15 participants considered that men had greater possibilities of accessing community leadership positions.

Table 3. Perception of roles and opportunities by gender in family representatives

Indicator	Female n (%)	Male n (%)	Both n (%)
Household responsibility	15 (100 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)
Childcare	15 (100 %)	0 (0 %)	0 (0 %)
Access to community leadership	1 (6,7 %)	14 (93,3 %)	0 (0 %)
Household economic provision	2 (13,3 %)	5 (33,3 %)	8 (53,3 %)
Greater possibility of professional development	2 (13,3 %)	12 (80,0 %)	1 (6,7 %)
Greater exposure to violence	14 (93,3 %)	0 (0 %)	1 (6,7 %)
Most accepted opinion	0 (0 %)	10 (66,7 %)	5 (33,3 %)
Greater likelihood of obtaining employment	2 (13,3 %)	8 (53,3 %)	5 (33,3 %)
Family decision-making	2 (13,3 %)	10 (66,7 %)	3 (20,0 %)

Note. Own elaboration based on the responses of 15 family representatives.

The observed pattern reflects a particularly marked differentiation between caregiving roles and positions of authority. While domestic responsibilities were attributed exclusively to women, community leadership, professional development, acceptance of opinions, job opportunities, and decision-making were mainly associated with men.

80% considered that men had greater opportunities for professional and career development, while 66.7% indicated that men's opinions were more accepted within the community. An equivalent proportion attributed final decision-making within the household to men. Similarly, 93.3% identified women as the group most exposed to situations of violence. The original results develop this pattern in the responses of family representatives.

Adolescent dating violence

The specific analysis of the 15 female students showed that a significant proportion acknowledged having experienced some form of violence in their intimate relationships. According to the original table, 40% indicated an experience of physical aggression, 27% reported another situation of violence, and 33% indicated not having experienced any of the situations consulted.

Responses regarding the course of action showed that 33% considered they would continue the relationship if there was a commitment of non-repetition, while 27% stated they did not know what to do. 20% indicated they would end the relationship without filing a complaint, 13% would communicate the situation to another person, and 7% indicated they would end the relationship and file the corresponding complaint.

Overall, these results evidence limited guidance regarding the available protective actions in situations of dating violence, given that 6 out of 10 participants were located between the conditioned continuity of the relationship and uncertainty about how to act.

Table 4. Experiences and responses to violence in adolescent dating

Component	Category	n	%
Experience	Violence situation category 1*	4	27
Experience	Physical violence situation	6	40
Experience	None	5	33
Action	Continue if there is a commitment to non-repetition	5	33
Action	Communicate the situation to another person	2	13
Action	Report and terminate the relationship	1	7
Performance	Ending the relationship without reporting	3	20
Action	Not knowing how to act	4	27

Note. n = 15.

Relationship between perception of inequality and recognition of violence

The descriptive results show a convergent pattern between the two main dimensions. Women reached an aggregate average recognition of 70% on inequality indicators and 62% on forms of violence; in men these values were 16% and 22%, respectively. This coincidence suggests that the groups that most frequently identified situations of inequality also tended to recognize a greater diversity of manifestations of violence.

However, these aggregated percentages do not allow a valid calculation of Spearman's rho coefficient between individuals. To test the correlational hypothesis proposed in the methodology, the responses of each of the 20 students on the ten indicators used to construct the two indices are required. The tables in the manuscript only retain the totals by sex and category.

Therefore, we must not invent a correlation value. In the final version, when we have the individual matrix, this section will be expressed in a table like the following:

With this reorganization, we can eliminate the 5 original figures, because they repeated the information in the tables, and keep at most 5 tables. The results become much more empirical and compact; we reserve the comparisons with the references we selected for the Discussion, as we had planned.

Table 5. Correlation between perception of gender inequality and recognition of forms of violence

Variables	Spearman's rho	p	Interpretation
Perception of inequality ↔ recognition of violence	Slope	Slope	Slope

Note. The calculation must be performed with the individual responses of the 20 students.

DISCUSSION

The results evidenced a differentiated perception of gender inequalities between women and men. Female students more frequently identified inequalities in class meetings, group work, sports activities, and uniform use, while men showed considerably lower levels of recognition. This finding suggests that certain school practices may be normalized for those who do not directly experience their effects. The hidden curriculum constitutes a relevant space for understanding the reproduction of gender inequalities, since it transmits norms, expectations, and relationships that are not necessarily explicit in the formal curriculum (15).

This interpretation is strengthened when considering that the situations identified by the students correspond mainly to everyday practices of the institution. Gender biases can be reproduced through seemingly ordinary school experiences, which highlights the need to make visible practices, stereotypes, and forms of violence embedded in the hidden curriculum (16). In the present study, differences related to participation, sports, and course organization precisely show that inequality can manifest in everyday spaces without being recognized in the same way by all students.

The results obtained with the family representatives also show that these differences transcend the school space. In 100% of cases, responsibility for the home and for the care of the children was attributed to women, while community leadership, professional development, and decision-making were associated mainly with men. From a decolonial perspective, this pattern can be interpreted as the persistence of representations that assign differentiated functions according to gender. Colonial gender representations can be maintained even within educational structures formally oriented toward equality, which highlights the need to critically examine both the curriculum and the social practices that accompany it (17).

Another relevant result was the recognition of different forms of violence. Digital violence reached 75%, verbal violence 60%, and physical violence 40%, while psychological and symbolic violence presented lower percentages. The low identification of symbolic violence is particularly significant because it contrasts with the presence of gender-differentiated practices observed in other dimensions (18). This suggests that certain behaviors can be recognized as unfair or unequal without being conceptualized as forms of violence. The analysis of the gender curriculum allows less visible mechanisms through which differences and hierarchies are reproduced in educational spaces to be evidenced (19).

The relationship between violence and the family environment also constitutes an important element for interpreting the findings.

Studies of secondary school students in northern Potosí, Bolivia, have analyzed the social effects of intrafamily violence on adolescents, highlighting its link with social and educational dynamics (20). In the present study, the coexistence of markedly differentiated family roles and distinct expressions of school violence suggests that understanding these problems requires simultaneous consideration of the family and educational context.

The results on dating violence reinforce this need. Among the 15 students analyzed, 40% reported an experience related to physical violence; In addition, 33% considered that they could continue the relationship in the face of a promise of non-repetition and 27% said they did not know how to act. Latin American studies have also shown that violence in adolescent relationships can take different manifestations and occur in both women and men. In a sample of 2,469 adolescents from public schools in Panama, manifestations of emotional, physical, and sexual violence in intimate partner relationships were identified, highlighting the need for preventive interventions during this stage of development (21).

In descriptive terms, the students simultaneously presented higher levels of identification of inequalities and greater recognition of the different forms of violence. This pattern is compatible with the proposed hypothesis of a possible association between both dimensions; however, it does not allow statistical confirmation of the correlation as long as the individual responses of the 20 students are not available. Therefore, the results should be interpreted as an empirical tendency and not as definitive evidence of association.

Finally, the findings support the relevance of developing educational actions that question stereotypes and improve the recognition of situations of inequality and violence. A school program specifically designed to reduce gender stereotypes and biases fostered more egalitarian attitudes (22), while an educational intervention targeting equality and prevention of gender violence in adolescents also yielded favorable results (23). Consequently, the educational de-patriarchalization proposed for the studied context is supported by the need to critically transform the practices, relationships, and knowledge reproduced in the school space (24).

CONCLUSIONS

The perception of gender inequality markedly differed between women and men. Female students identified inequalities more frequently in course meetings, sports activities, group work, and uniform use, whereas men exhibited considerably lower levels of recognition. The largest gap occurred in course meetings, where 100% of women reported inequality compared with 20% of men.

Digital violence and verbal violence were the most recognized manifestations in the educational environment, with 75% and 60% of all students, respectively. Female students identified both forms more frequently than male students, whereas symbolic violence was recognized by only 10% of the sample, indicating a lower capacity to identify less visible expressions of inequality and violence.

The results obtained from the 15 family representatives revealed a traditional distribution of responsibilities and positions of power: 100% attributed the care of the home and children to women, while 93.3% associated men with community leadership and 80% with greater opportunities for professional development. This confirms that the inequalities identified at school arise in a family context where differentiated gender roles persist.

In the subsample of 15 female students, 40% reported an experience of physical violence in dating relationships. Furthermore, 33% believed they could continue the relationship if there was a promise of no repetition, and 27% stated that they did not know how to act in a situation of violence. These results reveal concrete difficulties in recognizing protective responses, seeking help, and breaking off violent relationships.

The descriptive results show a coincident pattern between perception of inequality and recognition of violence: the female group presented higher levels in both dimensions. However, the hypothesis of a statistically significant relationship cannot be confirmed with the available information, because the manuscript retains aggregated results and not the individual responses necessary to calculate Spearman's rho coefficient. Therefore, the study allows establishing an empirical trend, but not yet affirming a statistical correlation between both dimensions.

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