Development and validation of the acceptance of dating violence questionnaire

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to develop and validate a questionnaire to measure the acceptance of dating violence among young Chileans, that evaluates both victimization and perpetration perspectives. Based on the Intimate Partner Violence Attitudes Scale, items were developed to fulfill these criteria and were refined through experts' revisions and participant focus groups. The 30-item questionnaire created (with 15 similar items to measure both perpetration and victimization) was applied to 1120 Chilean high school and university students (14–27 years old, 59.9% females). Results of factorial analysis showed the questionnaire had an adequate fit with the correlated three-factor model (control, emotional violence, and physical violence) for each version (victimization and perpetration). Reliability analyses indicated an adequate internal consistency, and correlations with dating violence provide evidence on its concurrent validity. Results also showed that boys/men accepted more dating violence than girls/women, and adolescents than emerging adults.

Keywords

Dating violence, adolescents, young, attitudes, intimate partner violence, gender

Dating violence is a pressing issue for social research. Although many Latin American countries have implemented legislation and public policy aimed at curbing intimate violence in recent decades, it is still a major issue jeopardizing women's safety and rights in all ages. Among the various forms of gendered violence, intimate partner violence among young people is of particular concern, because it still seems to have significant levels of prevalence despite the emergence of a public discourse that condemns it, and higher expectations for gender equality among younger generations (Valdivia Peralta & González Bravo, 2014; Valdivia-Peralta et al., 2018). Dating violence is a phenomenon young people are likely to experience as both aggressors and victims in their romantic relationships, it has been recognized as a public health problem, having rates of prevalence comparable to those identified in the context of married or co-habiting couples (Courtain & Glowacz, 2021; Wiersma et al., 2010). Indeed, similarities and differences between dating violence and marital violence have been noticed from the point of view of the theoretical tools used to understand their origins. In the case of dating violence among young people, there are some contributing factors that are deemed youth-specific, such as issues of emotional maturity and limited experience in dealing with strong romantic feelings, and others that could persist into adulthood. Among the latter, beliefs and attitudes related to romantic relationships/partners (including the gendered nature of many of them) and dating violence have been a fruitful area of research, since they have been shown to play an important role in individuals' expectations as to what is normal or acceptable in a romantic relationship (Courtain & Glowacz, 2021; Malhi et al., 2020). This study sought to contribute to this literature by means of developing and validating a questionnaire to measure the acceptance of dating violence using a sample of young Chileans. Complementary to this, we tried to resolve the following research questions:

Are there differences in acceptance of violence between boys/men and girls/women? And what are the differences in acceptance of violence between adolescents and adults? For the Chilean case, a recent review of studies carried out in the country with teenage and young adult populations in the last two decades (Valdivia-Peralta et al., 2019) showed a remarkable variation in the rates of prevalence ranging from less than 10% to over 60%, depending on the definition of dating violence used. The lack of consensus about an operational definition of dating violence applicable to young, unmarried people in the country and elsewhere has made it difficult to provide reliable data on the extent of the problem (Exner-Cortens et al., 2016). Nonetheless, the existing data suggested that there is cause for concern. Prevalence among youth included some high-profile cases such as Gabriela Alca'ino's (17 years old) death at the hands of her 18-year-old boyfriend in 2018, which prompted the Chilean Government to give priority to legislative changes that would consider dating violence as a criminal offence. Up to that point, Chilean legislation did not consider dating ("pololeos," as they are called in Chile) as intimate partner violence.

Literature review

The literature has pointed out several factors that might contribute to dating violence perpetration among young people, such as a family history of violence (i.e., parental maltreatment), substance abuse (including alcohol), or lack of emotional resources to deal with frustration and other negative emotions (Choi & Temple, 2016; Grest et al., 2020; Jennings et al., 2017; Ruel et al., 2020). In addition, a growing body of literature has explored the theoretical and empirical associations between cultural norms, beliefs, and attitudes justifying aggression between dating partners and the actual occurrence of violent episodes in young people (Courtain & Glowacz, 2021; Nydegger et al., 2017;

Malhi et al., 2020). As Ybarra and Langhinrichsen-Rohling (2019) point out, beliefs and attitudes justifying aggression in the context of romantic relationships have been theorized as a factor promoting perpetration because of the existence of specifically sexual, romantic, or dating social scripts that guide how partners are supposed to behave in relevant situations. These scripts are thought to provide a mental map for social and cultural expectations on the acceptable ways of signaling romantic interest, dealing with conflict, or deciding the pace of the relationship (for instance, when it would be appropriate to have sexual contact). Therefore, such scripts would function as the link between perceived accepted social and cultural norms about dating and the behaviors an individual engages into get his or her needs met. These romantic or sexual scripts are usually highly gendered, prescribing a dominant, sexually driven role for men and a more submissive one for women, who are supposed to oversee emotion work (Curran et al., 2015). In recognizing the gendered nature of these scripts, we also acknowledge the conceptual difference between the biological sex of the individuals and the socially constructed character of norms and beliefs about what men and women are expected to do in romantic relationships, which also often assume heterosexual relationships as the norm (Wade & Ferree, 2018).

There is empirical evidence linking the endorsement of highly gendered scripts to a higher likelihood of accepting or justifying dating violence, and engaging in it (Courtain & Glowacz, 2021; Daff et al., 2021; Malhi et al., 2020; Toplu-Demirtas, et al., 2020; Ybarra & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2019). This link is not always straightforward: for instance, Reyes et al. (2016) have argued that is not the endorsement of traditional gender norms or scripts per se what favors dating violence. Rather, it would be the interaction of what these authors identify as personal injunctive norms, which comprise beliefs as to

what an individual considers morally approved or disapproved behavior, and gender role attitudes. Both injunctive norms and traditional gender attitudes, it is argued, could work synergistically to increase risk for dating violence perpetration among boys. In other words, behaviors prescribed by cognitive schema or "scripts" are filtered through selfregulating beliefs, including normative beliefs about the acceptability or unacceptability of a behavior (Reyes et al., 2016). This means that boys holding traditional gender views but reporting low acceptance of dating violence may hold neutral, benevolent, or even protective feelings toward women; in this case, traditional gender role attitudes may in fact discourage dating violence. This study highlights the importance of exploring attitudes towards dating violence in terms of its acceptance among young people.

From a different perspective, recent research has also suggested that age plays a role in both the acceptance of these scripts and the perpetration of dating violence (Fern'andez-Gonzalez et al., 2014; Foshee et al., 2016; Siller et al., 2020), which would be related to the individual's developmental stage. These studies provide evidence demonstrating that physical and sexual aggression in the context of romantic relationships peak during middle-to-late adolescence (16–17 years old) for both boys and girls—although regarding prevalence of sexual aggression perpetration rates are usually much lower for girls than for boys—whereas psychological aggression tends to increase linearly. Regarding physical and sexual aggression in the context of dating, this trend has been explained as related to specific aspects of the developmental stage, in terms of the emotional resources teenagers have to deal with frustration and conflict, particularly in a stage in which they still have limited experience regarding how to communicate with a partner in a romantic relationship, or what is expected from them in terms of gender roles at an moment in life

in which peer approval is particularly important. As teenagers gain more maturity and experience in dating relationships, aggressive or coercive behaviors should diminish. Another explanation related such types of behavior with the teenage tendency to engage in high-risk conduct as a way to "prove" their capacities and worth in the domain of affective, romantic relationships (Fernández-González et al., 2014). Regarding the trend for psychological aggression toward a romantic partner, it has been explained in terms of it being more subtle and considered by teenagers and young adults as less damaging than its physical or sexual counterparts (Ybarra & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2019). In some cases, behaviors such as manipulation, emotional blackmail, or jealousy have been included in the romantic script as a demonstration of romantic interest or even love (Lara & Gómez-Urrutia, 2019; OXFAM, 2018). Experiencing dating violence early in life has important consequences: adolescent victims of dating violence have been reported as more likely to develop mental health issues. Recent research also described this group as reporting lower perceptions of mattering (i.e., the sense that one matters to others) compared with adolescents who have not experienced dating violence (Edwards & Neal, 2017; Siller et al., 2020), which may severely impair their ability to establish healthy, caring and non-violent romantic relationships in the future. This holds for perpetrators too, who may fail to develop non-violent repertoires of action to relate to others romantically, such as the belief in nonviolent conflict resolution, effective communication skills, ability to negotiate and adjust to stress, belief in partner's right to autonomy, shared decision-making, and trust (Pepler, 2012). Failure to develop these abilities might have incidence in other types of aggressive behavior, such as bullying, in adolescents and young adults (Avanti et al., 2019).

Although there is a growing body of research on gender representations and their possible links to the acceptance of intimate violence among young people, such as

gendered assumptions about sexuality and/or romantic love (OXFAM, 2018; Lara & Gómez-Urrutia, 2019), we found a limited availability of instruments to measure the attitudes behind the acceptance of violence in young people. In their review of several instruments specifically designed to measure attitudes towards dating violence in young people, Exner-Cortens et al. (2016) and Jennings et al. (2017) showed a relative dispersión in the theoretical constructs behind these instruments, and some issues regarding discriminatory power and reliability on sex-discordant scales and concurrent validity of the set of scales used. These issues limited the comparability of the results yielded by these studies. Thus, the development of instruments that help to gather reliable and comparable data on this phenomenon is still an ongoing task. The main objective of this study was to adapt and validate an instrument to measure the acceptance of violence in dating relationships in young Chileans, that was able to include adolescents and young adults, and differentiate the perspectives of perpetration and victimization using the same scales for both sexes, thus potentially including same sex couples. As a secondary goal, we analyze differences by sex and age group.

In order to do so, we took as a starting point the Intimate Partner Violence Attitudes Scale, IPVAS, developed by Smith et al. (2005). This scale has been revised and utilized in several studies, which are briefly described below. These provided a reliable basis for its validity and reliability. Smith et al. (2005) created a measure of attitudes toward IPV for college students by drawing on the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention's definition of IPV as actual or threatened physical or sexual violence, or psychological and emotional abuse, directed toward a current or former romantic partner. This description includes current or former dating, cohabiting, and married partners in heterosexual or same-sex relationships (Smith et al., 2005). Smith and collaborators created and validated 23 items comprising three subscales to measure attitudes toward IPV, according to severity and nature of the behavior described in the attitude statement: psychological and verbal abuse, control, and physical violence. The three-structure factor was confirmed empirically in a sample of American White and Hispanic US college students.

Subsequently Fincham et al. (2008) confirmed this three-factor structure in a larger sample of American college students, reducing it to 17 items. This revised version of the IPVAS-R has also been validated with a sample of 280 Turkish college students, showing good construct validity (Toplu-Demirtas, et al., 2017). The three-factor structure of the instrument was confirmed again, although with one minor change involving two subscales— one item originally classified as Abuse was integrated into the Control subscale due to the wider acceptance of jealousy as an expected demonstration of love in Turkish culture, according to the explanation provided by the authors. The revised version of the IPVAS was also used in a sample of Jordanian men and women, providing some evidence of cross-cultural validity (Alzoubi & Ali, 2021).

All this evidence suggested that the questionnaire provides a powerful method for selfreport assessment of attitudes toward IPV, particularly in young adults. All studies briefly discussed above used college samples to test the IPVAS, with the exception of the Jordanian study. However, some important issues remained. First, research on intimate partner violence could probably cross validate the associations and factor structure of the IPVAS in different age groups, attending to evidence suggesting that adolescents tend to accept and legitimize this type of violence more than young adults, arguably due to issues related to emotional maturity and experience (Valdivia-Peralta et al., 2018; Wang, 2016). Giving attention to possible differences by age groups is also relevant because earlier experiences in dating may be considered as a "training ground" for romantic relationships later in life, so it is important to know what current adolescents and young adults deem

acceptable in terms of conflict within their romantic relationships, and to what extent they accept violence as part of "normal" in these relationships. According to Pastor et al. (2020), the belief that it is acceptable to use violence in courtship would be one of the most consistent and strongest factors associated to perpetrating violence in dating relationships.

There was also an issue concerning the wording of the items. The original instrument by Smith and collaborators was comprised of statements that were both positively and negatively worded. Although the use of both regular and reversed items in tests is often recommended in order to reduce response bias, recent studies have pointed out that when studying attitudes the combination of positive and reversed items on the same scale might affect reliability and validity, increasing respondents' likelihood to disagree with attitude questions worded in negative and to agree with equivalent positive ones (Suárez-Alvarez et al., 2018; Pastor et al., 2020). Pastor et al. (2020) provided empirical support for this claim, arguing that the IPVAS wording—with a scale with only positive-worded items (abuse), another scale with only negative-worded items (violence), and another with mixed-worded items (control)—causes an overestimation of its reliability and construct validity and creates a confusing frame of reference for respondents. Therefore, they advised to re-write the instrument using only positive-worded items, which would allow a more accurate measurement.

Another issue related to the perspectives reflected in the items considered in the IPVAS, which stands as a common problem regarding the instruments utilized to measure attitudes on dating violence. Usually, the scales fail to distinguish the perspective of the aggressor from the standpoint of the victim, assuming an equivalence between both that needs to be proven. For instance, in the IPVAS the sub-scales violence and abuse included items that presented the perspective of the aggressor (for instance, "During a heated

argument, it is okay for me to say something to hurt my partner on purpose" or "I think my partner should give me a detailed account of what he or she did during the day"), whereas others represent the viewpoint of the victim (such as "It is no big deal if my partner insults me in front of others" or "I would be flattered if my partner told me not to talk to someone of the opposite sex"). Only the subscale violence presents items in a more neutral, general way (i.e., "Threatening a partner with a knife or gun is never appropriate").

However, there are theoretical reasons that make it interesting to explore the potential differences between both perspectives. On the one hand, even though intimate partner violence is usually characterized by mutual and reciprocal violence, so that boys and girls may be both perpetrators and victims, studies on prevalence suggest that the types of intimate partner violence young women and men engage in are different, as well as their motivations (Kelley et al., 2015; Dardis et al., 2015). Thus, there might be differences in attitudes of acceptance of certain types of aggression by sex, depending on who is the aggressor or the victim. Behind these differences there would be not only differences in physical size, which would make men more likely to attempt to subdue their partner physically in a situation of conflict, but also social discourses and norms (the "scripts") that might be used as justification for men's dominance over women in the context or sexual or romantic relationships. Historically, violence perpetrated by adult men has been considered a somehow socially accepted way of dealing with what is considered women's "misconduct" (i.e., departure from the socially expected norms) in order to restore "normality," particularly when it comes to a romantic partner's sexual behavior (Neves et al., 2019; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2013). Nonetheless, studies of prevalence in younger samples showed that teenage girls are often perpetrators too (Courtain & Glowacz, 2021; Del A' ngel & Rodr'ıguez Barraza, 2015), engaging in milder forms of

physical aggression (i.e., pushing and shoving). This tendency, unlike emotional violence, seems to decrease with age, although the evidence is not conclusive (Coker et al., 2014). From this perspective, girls are frequently described as circumstantial aggressors, resorting to violence in dating relationships as a response to a partner's aggression or as a self-defense strategy, particularly as they leave behind the teenage years (Kelley et al., 2015; Feiring et al., 2002).

On the other hand, as social discourses and norms are rarely completely unambiguous, these ideas co-exist with conceptions of masculinity that emphasize the protective role, according to which "real" men do not hit women but can limit their autonomy in other ways in order to "protect" them, usually from other men (Conroy & Crowley, 2021; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2013). Research has shown that some ideals of romantic love associate controlling or even aggressive practices (i.e., showing jealousy and restricting a partner's personal space) with strong, passionate feelings of love and/or romantic attraction that could influence attitudes and acceptance toward such practices (Lara & Gómez-Urrutia, 2019; Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2011; OXFAM, 2018). Although these practices could be adopted by either men or women, dominance by the former over the latter is more consistent with the gendered nature of these beliefs, whose pervasiveness might be such that both men and women accept them, but in differentiated roles (perpetrator/victim) (Neves et al., 2019; DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2013). To explore possible differences between the perpetrator/victim perspective and their potential association with sex and age is also important in order to assess how young people might understand aggressive behavior in romantic relationships at different developmental levels. This, in turn, could be useful to design more effective ways of addressing the problem through intervention programs.

Method

Participants

Participants were 1120 Chilean students, 14–27 years old (M = 18.07, SD = 2.93) from high schools (50.1%) and universities (49.9%) in Talca (Chile). Of the sample, 59.9% identified as cisgender women and 40.1% as cisgender men. When the survey was applied, 43.9% of the participants had a romantic partner. Most of the participants were in heterosexual relationships (94.2%) and 5% were in same-sex relationships (.8% did not provide this information). To be eligible for this study, participants had to be or have been in a romantic relationship which did not involve co-habiting with their partner.

Procedure

The data was collected in six secondary schools and five Chilean universities with prior authorization from the educational institutions. Signed assent was requested from participants under the age of 18 in order to participate in the study, as well as signed informed consent from their legal guardians. In the case of adults, informed consent was requested. No student could take part in the study without meeting these requirements. Participants assent/consent rate was 98%, while the parental consent rate was 99%. Administration of the questionnaire was carried out collectively in paper format during school hours. Ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethic Committee of the University of the authors of the study prior to the administration of any questionnaires.

Instruments

Acceptance of dating violence: The original Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scales (IPVAS, Smith et al., 2005) is composed by 23 items grouped in three dimensions (control, abuse, and physical violence), in a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

In this study, we adapted the IPVAS to be used in a different cultural context, Chile, and improved it to (a) increase the age range, including adolescents and not just college students, (b) clarify perspectives to measure perpetration and victimization differently, and (c) include the possibility of being used with participants in same sex relationships. First, the original items were translated into Spanish via a process of forward translation. Second, each item perspective (perpetration or victimization) was analyzed and grouped into three categories: perpetration (10 items), victimization (8 items), and without clear perspective (5 items either referring to a general opinion about intimate partner violence or ambiguous about the perpetrator or victim perspective, e.g., "using a knife or gun on a partner is never appropriate"). Based on this analysis, items without a clear perspective were rewritten into two parallel items to measure the similar attitudes both from the perspective of the victim and the aggressor. Additional revision of the items was carried out to ensure the ability to include same sex couples. Finally, negatively worded items were rewritten positively. We renamed the original factors (control, psychological and verbal abuse, and physical violence) with more accurate labels (control, emotional violence, and physical violence, respectively) based on the content of the items. These original labels could cause confusion; for example, they imply that control or abuse are not forms of violence. Moreover, posterior revisions (e.g., Fincham et al., 2008), renamed the physical violence dimension to "violence," furthering confusion.

After that, items were reviewed by ten experts, Chilean psychologists, who agreed on the aptness for the Chilean context, and improved some statements accuracy and ease of understanding for young Chileans. As recommended by Brown & Hegarty (2018), we assured that the sentences were as clear as possible, avoiding overly complicated language that can lead to comprehension problems. Once the proposals had been unified, the adequacy of items was verified by 54 young Chileans, through nine focus groups (one group for each level of education, covering four levels of high school and five levels of different university degrees), formed of six participants each (three girls/women and three boys/men). Participants in the focus groups revised each of the items were asked about the understating of them and ask for alternatives when the items present compression problems. The final version renamed as Acceptance of Dating Violence Questionnaire (ADVQ) for the Chilean population is presented in Table 1 (the first 23 items of the ADVQ are adapted from the original IPVAS) (Martin-Storey & Fromme, 2021).

Dating Violence Questionnaire (DVQ): The Chilean version of the DVQ (Lara & López-Cepero, 2021), adapted for Chilean youths, was used to measure traditional dating violence. In this study, we used the extended version that consists of 46 items grouped in eight scales: detachment, (e.g., "Does not acknowledge any responsibility regarding the relationship or what happens to both of you"), humiliation (e.g., "Insults you in the presence of friends or relatives), sexual (e.g., "Insists on touching you in ways and places which you don't like and don't want"), coercion (e.g., "threatens to commit suicide or hurt himself or herself if you leave him or her"), physical (e.g., "Has beaten you"), genderbased (e.g., "Believes that the opposite sex is inferior, and says that its members should obey men (or women)"), instrumental (e.g., "Has stolen from you"), and emotional punishment (e.g., "Refuses to give you support or affection as a punishment"). The present study includes a second set of parallel items modified to assess the frequency with which the participant perpetrated those actions. The DVQ items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (never) to 5 (continuously).

Data analysis

Analysis of the internal structure of the questionnaire was performed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The CFA was carried out using the program Mplus 7.3, on the polychoric correlation matrix, using the Weighted Least Squares Mean and Variance adjusted estimation method (WLSMV). The fit indices included Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA <.06), Comparative Fit Index (CFI >.95), and Tucker–Lewis index (TLI >.95; cut points provided by Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Internal consistency of the scales was analyzed by Cronbach's Alpha (conducted using the software SPSS 25) and ordinal Alpha (using the formula provided by Dominguez-Lara, 2017). Concurrent validity of CDAQ scales was assessed by the Pearson bivariate correlation between the ADVQ scales and the DVQ scales, matching perpetration and victimization perspectives. Finally, differences between boys/men and girls/women, as well as between adolescents and young adults were analyzed using mean comparisons for independent samples (independent sample Student's t test), performed with SPSS 25 software.

Results

The same three-factor model proposed by the original authors of the scale (Smith et al., 2005) was tested for each version, where the three factors that compose the questionnaire were correlated. The results showed that the model presented an adequate fit to the data for both the victimization perspective ($\chi 2 = 271.661$, df = 87, RMSEA= .044, CFI = .986, TLI = .983) and the perpetration perspective ($\chi 2 = 281.058$, df = 87, RMSEA = .045, CFI = .983, TLI = .980), for the total sample. Factor loadings ranged between .41 and .96 for the victimization perspective and between .63 and .93 for the perpetration perspective

(Table 1). Moreover, the results showed that the model presents an adequate fit to the data for boys/men ($\chi 2 = 225.623$, df = 87, RMSEA= .060, CFI = .985, TLI = .982, for the victimization perspective; $\chi 2 = 137.604$, df = 87, RMSEA= .036, CFI = .992, TLI = .991, for the perpetration perspective) and girls/women ($\chi 2 = 168.354$, df = 87, RMSEA= .037, CFI = .988, TLI = .985, for the victimization perspective; $\chi 2 = 238.122$, df = 87, RMSEA= .051, CFI = .982, TLI = .978, for the perpetration perspective), as well as for adolescents ($\chi 2 = 185.909$, df = 87, RMSEA= .046, CFI = .983, TLI = .980, for the victimization perspective; $\chi 2 = 219.323$, df = 87, RMSEA= .053, CFI = .975, TLI = .970, for the perpetration perspective) and adults ($\chi 2 = 159.549$, df = 87, RMSEA= .038, CFI = .993, TLI = .991, for the victimization perspective; $\chi 2 = 139.809$, df = 87, RMSEA= .032, CFI = .994, TLI = .993, for the perpetration perspective).

Reliability

Results of analysis show that using Cronbach's Alpha values were adequate for every scale except for Control from both perspectives, but all of them were adequate when using indexes designed for processing ordinal data, reaching values from .69 to .95 (Table 1).

Table 1. ADVQ items and reliability indexes for ADVQ scales.

Factor name and item description	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Ordinal Alpha
Control Victimization factor 1. Me sentiría bien si mi pareja me pidiera que no hablara con alguien del sexo opuesto (o del mío en relaciones homosexuales). [I would feel good if my partner told me not to talk to someone of the other sex (or the same sex in homosexual relationships)].	.617	.51	.69
 Me gustaría que mi pareja me preguntara que he hecho cada minuto del día. [I would like my partner to ask me what I did every minute of the day]. 	.432		
 9. Estaría con una pareja que tratara de evitar que compartiera con otras personas. [I would stay with a partner who tried to keep me from doing things with other people]. 	.959		
Emotional Victimization factor 5. Es aceptable que mi pareja saque algo del pasado para herirme. [It is acceptable that my partner brings up something from the past to hurt me].	.730	.71	.92
6. Me da lo mismo que mi pareja haga algo solamente para ponerme celoso/a. [I don't mind my partner doing something just to make me jealous].	.412		
10. Mientras que mi pareja no me agreda, las amenazas son tolerables. [As long as my partner doesn't hurt me, threats are tolerable].	.817		
14. No es un problema si mi pareja me insulta en frente de otros.[It is no big deal if my partner insults me in front of others].	.776		
21. Está bien que mi pareja me culpe por las cosas que él o ella hace mal. [It is ok my partner blames me for the things he/she does bad].	.876		
25. Está bien que mi pareja critique mi apariencia. [It's ok that my partner criticizes my appearance].	.782		
26. Durante una discusión fuerte, está bien que mi pareja saque cosas del pasado para herirme. [During a heated argument, it is ok that my partner brings up something from the past to hurt me].	.873		
29. Durante una discusión fuerte, está bien que mi pareja diga algo solo con la intención de lastimarme. [During a heated argument, it is ok that my partner says something just to hurt me on purpose].	.937		
Physical Victimization factor		.77	.95

8. Es apropiado que mi pareja me amenace con un cuchillo o una pistola. [It is appropriate that my partner threatens me with a gun or a knife].	.823		
27. Está bien que mi pareja dañe algo que me es mío. [It is ok that my partner damages something that belongs to me].	.919		
28. Es aceptable que mi pareja me pegue (patear, morder o pegar con el puño). [It is acceptable that my partner hit me (kick, bite, or punch)].	.893		
30. Es apropiado que mi pareja me golpee o trate de golpearme con un objeto [It is appropriate that my partner hits or tries to hit me with an object].	.964		
<i>Control Perpetration factor</i> 15. Está bien decirle a mi pareja que no hable con alguien del sexo opuesto (o del mismo en relaciones homosexuales). [It is ok for me to tell my partner not to talk to someone of the opposite sex (or the same sex in homosexual relationships)].	.766	.62	.80
19. Creo que mi pareja debería decirme todo lo que ha hecho durante el día. [I think my partner should tell me everything he or she did during the day].	.625		
12. Trataría de evitar que mi pareja compartiera con otras personas. [I would try to keep my partner from doing things with other people].	.875		
<i>Emotional Perpetration factor</i> 24. Es aceptable sacar algo del pasado para herir a mi pareja	.902	.79	.93
[It is acceptable to bring up something from the past to hurt my partner].13. Sacarle celos a mi pareja me ayuda en mi relación.[Making my partner jealous helps me in my relationship].	.783		
18. Amenazar a mi pareja está bien mientras no lo/la lastime. [Threating my partner is ok as long as I don't hurt him/her].	.866		
 Es apropiado insultar a mi pareja en frente de otros. [It is appropriate to insult my partner in front of others]. 	.652		
4. Está bien culpar a mi pareja cuando yo hago cosas malas. [It is ok to blame my partner when I do bad things].	.759		

7. Pienso que está bien criticar la apariencia de mi pareja. [I think it's ok to criticize my partner's appearance].	.679		
11. Durante una discusión fuerte, está bien sacar cosas del pasado de mi pareja para herirlo/a. [During a heated argument, it is ok for me to bring up something from my partner's past to hurt him or her].	.817		
22. Durante una discusión fuerte, está bien decir algo solo con la intención de lastimar a mi pareja. [During a heated argument, it is ok for me to say something just to hurt my partner on purpose].	.882		
<i>Physical Perpetration factor</i> 16. Es apropiado amenazar a mi pareja con una pistola o un cuchillo. [It is appropriate to threaten my partner with a gun or a knife].	.919	.76	.94
17. Está bien dañar algo que es de mi pareja. [It is ok to damage something that belongs to my partner].	.929		
20. Es aceptable pegar (patear, morder, golpear con el puño) a mi pareja. [It is acceptable to hit (kick, bite, or punch) my partner].	.807		
23. Es apropiado golpear o tratar de golpear a mi pareja con un objeto. [It is appropriate to hit or try to hit my partner with an object].	.921		

Concurrent validity

To assess the concurrent validity of the ADVQ, we analyzed correlations between the scores of its three factors and the eight dimensions of the DVQ matching the perspectives (victimization and perpetration). Results showed that all the correlations were positive and statistically significant (Table 2).

Table 2. Correlations between ADVQ dimensions and dating violence behaviors.

	Acceptance of dating violence					
Dating violence	CV	EV	PV	СР	EP	PP
behaviours						
Physical	.151**	.242**	.306**	.163**	.305**	.357**

Sexual	.103**	.203**	.214**	.176**	.298**	.283**
Coercion	.124**	.204**	.177**	.204**	.295**	.205**
Gender	.086**	.153**	.186**	.128**	.305**	.228**
Humiliation	.119**	.228**	.259**	.187**	.358**	.281**
Detachment	.093**	.159**	.146**	.180**	.268**	.178**
Emotional Punishment	.125**	.183**	.199**	.166**	.328**	.247**
Instrumental	.147**	.262**	.318**	.193**	.342**	.317**

Note. CV = Control Victimization, EV = Emotional Victimization; PV = Physical Victimization; CP = Control Perpetration; EP = Emotional Perpetration; PP = Physical Perpetration. **p < .01.

Sex and age differences

Mean comparisons for independent samples show that boys/men presented higher scores than girls/women in the three dimensions of the victimization perspective and in control from the perspective of the perpetration (Table 3). The scores were generally low, suggesting that—overall—participants in this study do not endorse aggressive behaviors toward a romantic partner.

Regarding differences based on age, mean comparisons for independent samples showed that adults presented higher scores than adolescents in control—both as victim and as perpetrators—and in emotional from the perspective of the victim (Table 4). This suggests that as individuals grow older, the more evident manifestations of violence—that is, physical—tend to be discarded, because they can be evidently identified as the type of behavior that is socially unacceptable or difficult to justify. However, more subtle forms of violence may gain acceptance in adulthood, such as emotional abuse or limiting a partner's autonomy.

Table 3. Gender differences on ADVQ scales.

	Male	Female	t	gl	р
	(n = 446)	(n = 671)			
	<i>M</i> (SD)	<i>M</i> (SD)			
Control Victimization	1.71 (0.65)	1.46 (0.53)	7.06	1115	<.001
Emotional Victimization	1.30 (0.40)	1.16 (0.26)	6.72	1115	<.001
Physical Victimization	1.09 (0.30)	1.05 (0.21)	2.75	1115	.042
Control Perpetration	1.46 (0.58)	1.34 (0.55)	3.61	1115	<.001
Emotional Perpetration	1.17 (0.34)	1.15 (0.29)	1.09	1115	.279
Physical Perpetration	1.07 (0.26)	1.06 (0.23)	0.50	1115	.616

Discussion

Our results showed that the Acceptance of Dating Violence Questionnaire had the same three-factor structure proposed by the original authors of the IPVAS (Smith et al., 2005); however, the ADVQ distinguishes more accurately types of behavior that could be included under the common label of violence, but that represent distinctive ways of exerting pressure or coercion on a partner (control, emotional violence, and physical violence).

These three factors were verified in both the perpetration and the victimization scales, providing a clear way to differentiate the two perspectives in the same dimensions. Internal reliability was adequate for all the scales when using indexes designed for processing ordinal data, reaching values from .69 to .95. The ADVQ also showed positive and statistically significant correlations with an instrument used to measure traditional dating violence in Chilean population, providing evidence of concurrent validity. These

correlations were low or moderate, as expected since having attitudes toward violence are a risk factor of developing dating violence, but there are several other factors that contribute to the development of dating violence (Lara & Providell, 2020). All the items in this instrument were worded positively, avoiding the potential distortions and biases introduced by mixing positively and negatively worded statements (Suárez-Alvarez et al., 2018; Pastor et al., 2020).

Regarding differences by sex, mean comparisons for independent samples showed that, although accepting attitudes toward dating violence were not characteristic for the majority of youngsters in this study-the scores are generally low-boys/men presented higher scores than girls/women in the three dimensions of the victimization perspective and in control from the perspective of the perpetration. These are somewhat surprising results, considering the existing gendered scripts that prescribe men must be the dominant partner in a romantic or sexual relationship. However, as we mentioned before, these same scripts contain a fundamental ambiguity: on the one hand, they present models of hegemonic masculinity as strong, dominant and emotionally detached; but, on the other hand, they demand that men be protective of "their" women (i.e., romantic partners or women in their family). In this context, violence perpetrated by women (particularly physical violence) is often downplayed, seen as less capable of hurting strong, less emotionally involved men. For boys and particularly young adult men, to present themselves as victims is not socially accepted, as it undermines notions of traditional hegemonic masculinity (Curran et al., 2015; Daff et al., 2021). This, of course, does not mean it does not occur, or that it does not have negative impacts on young men (Shorey et al., 2012), but this might influence men's attitudes toward female aggression. Research on prevalence shows that men tend to suffer less sexual and physical violence than women in the context of heterosexual relationships—instead,

they are more often the perpetrators of it, although this varies in different age groups (Daff et al., 2021; Dardis et al., 2015).

And when they experience it, the evidence points to situations of cross-violence, where there is reciprocal aggression (Kelley et al., 2015). From this perspective, aggression by women toward their partners would be tolerated or given less importance, skewing boys and men toward more accepting attitudes in heterosexual relationships.

Nonetheless, there is recent empirical evidence on young people suggesting that teenage girls and young women do engage more often in emotional violence (Courtain & Glowacz, 2021; Kelley et al., 2015). This is consistent with the social script according to which women are in charge of emotion work in romantic relationshipsthat is, initiating problem talks, checking on the partner's emotional state (Curran et al., 2015). This not only gives women more capabilities to know "where it hurts" emotionally, but it could help to make this type of aggression more accepted by men, given the (socially assumed) sensitive, emotional nature of women. Likewise, boys/men reporting more perpetration on the dimension of control is consistent with the idea that men should be the dominant party in the relationship, assuming the task of monitoring their partner's behavior to avoid deviance from what is considered acceptable for women, particularly regarding sexual exclusivity (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2013). Regarding differences based on age, mean comparisons for independent samples showed that adults presented higher scores than adolescents in control—both as victim and as perpetrators—and in emotional abuse from the perspective of the victim. These results could be expected, as previous studies on dating violence prevalence suggested that, as they grow up, teenagers learn to better control their impulses and to manage their intensifying feelings for romantic partners according to socially accepted normative

standards in intimate relationships. In their study with High School Spanish students, Fernández-González et al. (2014) reported that psychological aggression increased linearly with age, whereas physical aggression had a negative quadratic association, peaking at 16–17 years for both sexes. In a similar vein, it could be expected that, as they became more aware of normative standards that condemn physical violence—for instance, through education (Wang, 2016)—and gain more experience dating, attitudes towards these types of aggression turn less accepting, either because individuals become more aware of the damage they can inflict on a partner or because they realize that declaring to accept or justify physical or sexual aggression would not fit social desirability standards. In other words, it may be the case that the younger students with less maturity and experience in understanding the partner's point of view are more likely to agree with statements that justify physical violence, whereas the older students may be more aware of the need to eschew such attitudes because they realize these are increasingly socially unacceptable (Feiring et al., 2002).

Control, however—particularly control framed in terms of guaranteeing a partner's sexual exclusivity—stands in a much more ambiguous position because it is often intertwined with myths about the meaning of specific behaviors in romantic relationships.

Limiting a partner's interactions with other people because of jealousy is often regarded as a sign of passionate love and justified on those grounds (OXFAM, 2018; Lara & Gómez-Urrutia, 2019), particularly when exerted by men. Control is often seen as tied to the (somehow legitimate) desire to secure a partner's exclusive attention, and therefore it stands more chances to pass into young adulthood as a socially accepted mate-retention strategy. As long as it does not involve overt violence, control justified by jealousy seems to be even expected by many youths as a sign that their relationships are characterized by strong feelings.

These findings are somewhat consistent with the de-legitimization of violence in statesponsored public discourse in Chile—particularly physical violence—since 1990, when the country returned to institutional democracy and gender violence entered the policy agenda. Young Chileans have grown up in a society in which intimate partner violence is no longer considered a private issue or a normal part of romantic relationships. However, this discourse often co-exists with traditional gender notions about what women and men are expected to do in the context of intimate sexual and family relationships. This helps explain that the unacceptability of physical violence can co-exist with higher levels of tolerance for emotional abuse or controlling mate-retention strategies that can be framed as signaling concern, passion or even love. Albeit the scores presented in this study are relatively low, it is important to monitor the acceptability of these types of behaviors among the younger generations. Chilean young people are entering adulthood in a moment in which the old cultural scripts are being questioned, but newer ones are not always ready at hand to replace the old ways of understanding romantic relationships.

Conclusions and Implications

While this study has addressed some of the problems identified in the measurement of attitudes toward dating violence in young people, some limitations should be noted. While differentiating the victim/aggressor perspectives using items that mirror each other allowed us to avoid the issue of reliability of sex-discordant items, and could be used on same sex couples, our sample does not allow us to put this hypothesis to the test (94.2% of the sample declared that they were in heterosexual relationships), which is a

limitation of this study. Research on this specific group (Martin-Storey et al., 2021; Martin-Storey & Fromme, 2021) suggests that individuals who identified themselves as bisexual, gay, or lesbian were more likely to experience dating violence than their heterosexual or cisgender peers. However, for this group of young people, minority stressors generally accounted for this greater vulnerability for dating violence—that is, gender nonconformity would be associated with discrimination and other forms of violence which, in turn, would make them more likely to be in the high victimization and perpetration of dating violence groups. Therefore, it would be necessary to test this questionnaire specifically in this population in order to assess its usefulness regarding non heterosexual youth.

Nonetheless, having an instrument that is gender-sensitive without the need of constructing items differentiated by gender (i.e., sentences that would represent male or female viewpoints) might help to better understand the phenomenon of cross-violence in early adolescent relationships. Likewise, more research would be needed on the mechanisms that justify the use of control as part of the usual repertoire of behavior deployed in romantic relationships, that allow this form of violence to persist not only in young adulthood, but also in later stages of life (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2013). This would add to our understanding of the complex cultural and social dynamics behind dating violence in young people, thus helping to better design intervention programs aimed at curbing it as early as possible.

Finally, we must note limitations relating to the demographic information of the sample; for instance, race/ethnicity, disability status or socioeconomic class was not included. Looking at dating violence through the lens of these characteristics would be a valuable topic for further research.

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