Men are victims of violence: Social representations, machismo and gender stereotypes

Los hombres son víctimas de violencia: Representaciones sociales, machismo y estereotipos de género

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Abstract

Background: Violence, as a phenomenon, affects both men and women in Colombia. According to reports from The National Institute of Forensic Medicine and Forensic Sciences, 51% of violence cases are concentrated in men without this translating into specific government actions or investigations focusing their attention on this group. Background usually focuses its attention on the man as the perpetrator, hiding his role as a victim and diminishing his value as a subject

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of study, which is why there is little research literature on this phenomenon. Objective: This research analyzes the social representations of men regarding their role as victims of violence and its implications in the perpetuation of gender and machismo stereotypes, as well as their main knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding violence against men. Method: Through a mixed methodological approach, interviews and polls were conducted in order to understand this construct. Results: It was found that men silent the fact that they are victims of violence in order to satisfy social expectations regarding the role that they must play in patriarchal structures. 82% of the participants feel pressured to exercise masculine roles, and a 79% have suffered sexual assault from another person. Conclusion: There is a formal understanding of machismo and the negative implications of its practice; however, its practices are admitted as valid and even as justifiable, so they are   maintained and perpetuated with the associated stereotypes.

Key words: Violence, Gender-based violence, Stereotypes, Men, Machismo

Resumen

Antecedentes: El fenómeno de la violencia afecta tanto a hombres como a mujeres en Colombia; de acuerdo con informes del Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses, un 51% de los casos de violencia se concentra en hombres sin que ello se traduzca en acciones específicas gubernamentales ni que las investigaciones centren su atención en este grupo. Los antecedentes suelen centrar la atención en el hombre como victimario ocultando su papel como víctima y desestimando su valor como sujeto de estudio, razón por la cual existe muy poca literatura investigativa acerca de este fenómeno. *Objetivo:* Esta investigación analiza las representaciones sociales de hombres frente a su papel como víctimas de violencia y sus implicaciones en la perpetuación de estereotipos de género y machismo, así como sus principales conocimientos, actitudes y prácticas frente a la violencia ejercida hacia el hombre. *Método:* A través de una aproximación metodológica mixta, se realizaron entrevistas y encuestas para comprender esta construcción. *Resultados:* Se encontró que los hombres silencian el hecho de ser víctimas de la violencia para responder a las exigencias sociales frente al rol que deben ejercer dentro de estructuras patriarcales. Un 82% de los participantes se sienten presionados para ejercer roles masculinos y un 79% sufrieron agresiones sexuales por parte de otra persona.

Conclusión: Existe una comprensión formal del machismo y de las implicaciones negativas de su ocurrencia, sin embargo, también se reconocen sus prácticas como válidas e incluso justificables, de tal manera que se mantienen y perpetúan con los estereotipos relacionados.

Palabras clave: Violencia, Violencia de género, estereotipo, hombre, machismo

Introduction

This research is focused into expanding the theoretical perspective about social representations of violence against men, due to this topic traditionally being focused on women, or in men as a victimizer. In this way, this research's purpose is to address situations where violence is constructed as a validated, daily and naturalized practice from and toward men in different contexts.

From this premise, hope to know how within the participant's constructed meanings and experiences, the violence is not only accepted but legitimized through heteronormative, sexism and stereotyped discourses that disqualify their emotional expression and hide violence under the pretext of resistance and the role of man's strength into the contemporary society.

Reach out to the phenomenon of violence toward men, not only allows to demystify the fact that men are not victims but also opens the possibility to the analysis of the devices that validate their practices as aggressors, as well as hide being violented under the vail of shame. By doing this, the aim is to review and facilitate the discussion about its transformation in contexts such as that of Latin American countries where violence is a historical and fixed phenomenon more frequent in men than in women.

Accordingly, a series of concepts will be taken as a reference that will allow a more comprehensive reading about this phenomenon, which are sexism gender, cisgender and patriarchy.

Sexism (Machismo) "encompasses a set of beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, which assume the superiority of men over women in various aspects of human coexistence" (Barberá & Martínez, 2004).

In addition, gender alludes to the sociocultural construction that is developed around these [biological] differences, establishing different obligations, expectations, characteristics, spaces and values for each of the sexes (Hawkesworth, 1997). Within this concept, the Cisgender category is defined as "the sexual person who identifies with the sex assigned at birth" (Ramos, 2018, p.6).

Finally, patriarchy refers to "a social order based on asymmetrical power relations that are based on the imposition of the supremacy of the masculine and the consideration of the feminine as inferior and subordinate" (Fernandez and Duarte, 2006, p.145).

Violence, according to the World Health Organization (2002) is established as a social problem that affects both men and women from different contexts and at different stages in life. Colombia is not an exception to this. The National Institute of Forensic Medicine and Forensic Sciences (Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses) is a government agency that records violent events, either accidental or not, all over the Colombian territory. Figures on their records show that an annual average of 128,488.91 women and 135.076.96 men (approximately 263,565.87 people on average) were victims of violence between 2015 and the first semester of 2022 (Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses [INMLCF], n.d.). Not only does this reveal the magnitude of the problem but also the concentration of cases in men with respect to women (51% of cases in men and 48% in women).

Even though the submitted figures show alarming levels of violence on both sexes may be regarded as a phenomenon having an impact mostly on men with no specific actions by public policy, as a consequence, nor research development or even focus on reported studies found in literature addressing violence issues (Gómez, 2019).

The severity of this situation, as some studies support is that the phenomenon of violence is appropriate for people (you learn, produce and reproduce) in almost all of social context and in relation to several factors: family (Alvarado, 2018; Cañas, 2018; Palumbo y López, 2023), friends (Lien, 2019; Rodríguez, 2018), romantic partner (Alvarado, 2020; Casiano, 2023; Dim,

2021; García, 2023; Ruiz et al., 2023; Peña, 2019; Salgado, 2023), work (Aeberhard-Hodges, 2018; Pérez y Pérez, 2023), disability conditions (Saxton, 2017), legal and criminal conceptualization and classification (Gómez, 2019; Poggy, 2019), and low availability of access to professionals and related care packages, (Gómez, 2019), among other things.

All of the above hinders the perspective of the man as a victim, generally assigns him the role of perpetrator (Alvarado, 2018), locates him historically in the addressing of gender-based violence against women as focus (Poggy, 2019), hides and underestimates the interest on violence against men through perspectives coming from research (Lien, 2019), politicians (Chynoweth, 2017) and national and international institutions (Gómes, 2019).

The scope of this phenomenon where gender-based violence has become equal to violence against women is reflected on in international documents of great recognition such as the World Conference on Human Rights and the Inter-American Convention on The Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (Jaramillo-Bolivar, 2020), which guide their efforts towards protective actions for the female gender.

Lien (2019) highlights the importance of the approaches used to address violence, different results, prevalence rates, and contextualization will come in accordance to different scope and specificity of a conceptualization of this phenomenon. This variation in the ways research is conducted and information is filtered leads to the documentary inconsistency of the phenomenon, thus hindering its intervention and the development of a comprehensive and consensus-based understanding and conceptualization. This proves difficult as its specificity is primarily directed towards women, disregarding men as victims who are also present in these interactions.

In line with this, raises the need and opportunity to study the phenomenon of violence in men, taking into account the differences in its configuration, expression, and reproduction due to the idiosyncratic conditions of cultural demands and resources, such as those determined by gender stereotypes and machismo, among others (Gómez, 2019).

This research aims to analyze and comprehend violence in the everyday lives of men through its representations, in a way that contributes to a broader and more equalitarian understanding of violence. This, in turn, facilitates the conception of new approaches and mitigating strategies in order to reduce violence.

Violence and Gender-based violence

Violence as a social phenomenon has been addressed from different perspectives all interconnected in its conceptualization with cultural and ideological understandings in specific spatiotemporal contexts. It has been defined in various ways in accordance to specific social needs and issues of each scenario and moment in history.

This is why this phenomenon has been understood from more traditional perspectives to some more inclusive ones (Poggi, 2019). The former equated violence with its evidence (physical manifestations) due to the fact that they emerged in cultural and social contexts where the psychological or social impacts were not yet recognized; and also, to the normalization of attitudes and actions within interactions shaped by gender roles at macro and micro social levels. The latter, more inclusive perspectives, stem from contemporary and complex understandings of social and interpersonal phenomena. They define violence by taking into account acts and attitudes that imply some harm to another person, whether it be of an economic, emotional, physical, or ideological nature, in educational, work-related, political, sexual, or recreational settings (Poggi, 2019).

It is necessary to make a distinction between violence and gender-based violence. When evaluating violence from perspectives and processes that tend towards quantification, one can discuss the prevalence of violence according to its types and settings within different genders. However, the prevalence of a type of violence in a gender does not irreversibly translate into gender-based violence as a specific practice (Jaramillo-Bolivar, 2020).

Gender-based violence does not necessarily imply prevalence, although these two are not mutually exclusive either. According to Jaramillo-Bolivar (2020), it is linked to the social and political domination that has been historically shaped and based on the structure of gender-based discrimination and subordination, taking into account racial, age-related, ethnic, educational, social, and hierarchical factors. Carpenter manages to simplify this distinction by explaining that gender-based violence is "violence directed at men or women due to their sex and/or their socially-constructed gender roles" (Peretz, 2021), e.g.: The murder of a woman does not necessarily equate to femicide; it is the conditions that shape the violence leading to murder that determine whether the murder of a woman is also a femicide.

Social representations and violence against men

Social representations have been established as a pivotal branch of knowledge in the study of social psychology. According to Mora (2002), social representations are: "...a particular

modality of knowledge whose function is the elaboration of behaviors and communication between individuals" (p. 7). This mode of thinking is organized through a body of knowledge and cognitive activities that enable the free exchange of information. In this way, individuals can incorporate their everyday life and experiences into their psychic processes. Based on the arguments of Gutiérrez-Vidrio (2023), derived from the notions established by Moscovici (1981), their function is to make familiar the unknown. In other words, they can transform elements that may seem strange into real aspects and appealing to social interactions.

The above is related to the perspective that Jodelet addresses in her proposal on social representations. According to her, they "correspond to a specific form of knowledge, ordinary knowledge, which is included in the category of common sense and has the particularity of being socially constructed and shared from within the core of different groups" (Jodelet, 2011, p. 134). Thus, when relating this theorization to violence against men, we might observe the sociogenetic model, oriented towards processes of objectification and anchoring, and the components of attitude, information, and field of representation (Carrión et al., 2023), and therefore understand how ideological discourses circulate and are both used and appropriated in subjective experiences.

This research aims to analyze the social representations of men regarding their role as victims of violence and their implications in the perpetuation of gender stereotypes and machismo.

Methodology and its respective paragraphs

Type and design

The research is framed within the principles of mixed methodology. According to the propositions of Morse & Niehaus (2009), mixed research is a methodology that combines various research methods. It is used in specific situations that require a complex understanding of a research phenomenon. According to Öhlén (2010), mixed methods are understood as the:

> … incorporation of one or more methodological or technical strategies drawn from a second method into a single research study in order to access a portion of the phenomena of interest that cannot be accessed solely through the use of the first method" (2010, p. 3).

As a way to support the internal coherence of the research, according to Creswell and Plano (2018), this research is considered to stem from a convergent methodological design, which occurs when the researcher aims to bring together the results of qualitative and quantitative data analysis that can be compared or combined.

For the main component, the method used is narrative analysis (Blanco, 2011; Rojas et al., 2023; Muñoz y Gil, 2023; Castaño & Guisao, 2022). This is, according to Domínguez and Herrera (2013), "… a dynamic process of inquiry based on a series of epistemological assumptions... from the early steps of conception and research design to the way results are processed and analyzed" (p. 625). This dynamic process emphasizes narratives and their interpretation, the object of study of this methodology, given that: "Narratives are fundamental instruments for the creation and communication of meaning" (p. 628). Thus, the intention of this method implies understanding the human experience of six men regarding their own social representations of being victims of violence and their implications in the perpetuation of gender stereotypes and machismo. It is complemented, furthermore, by a historical hermeneutic perspective (Petrella, 2023; Gutiérrez-Pozo, 2023; Conill, 2023; Gadamer, 1995), given its character of subjective interpretative review of the phenomenon.

Regarding the supplementary component of this mixed method, the quantitative approach, we chose to develop a descriptive cross-sectional design, using a survey called KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices). According to Castañeda et al. (2011), it is used in the analysis of behaviors, both in the diagnosis phase and in the planning phase of a project. Therefore, it allows analyzing behaviors that "should" be known, attitudes that "should" be thought, and practices that "should" be engaged in regarding a phenomenon. This allows to understand why people do what they do, and thus assesses the feasibility of behavior change and whether the desired behavior already exists or not.

Population

The population involved in this research consists of 63 participants, who are recruited through convenience or purposive sampling (Hernández et al., 2014). For the qualitative component interviews, participants are requested to participate, up to a total of six participants. The

inclusion criteria were being active students in the undergraduate programs of Physical Culture, Sports, and Recreation or Psychology at a Colombian university, aged between 18 and 25, and identifying as cisgender men. The exclusion criteria were not being active students in the mentioned programs, not identifying as cisgender men, and not falling within the estimated age range.

Data collections instruments

For data collection in this research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected population (Brinkmann, 2018). The interviews, as part of the main component, delved into participants' significant experiences and were focused on identifying the processes of constructing social representations regarding violence against men in relation to sexism and gender stereotypes based on the categories' information, attitude and representational field, according to the postulates of Moscovicci and Jodelet. For the quantitative aspect, the KAP survey (Castañeda et al., 2011) was used as a way to characterize the participants' perceptions of the phenomenon under investigation, from its Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices factors.

Information Interpretation Strategies

The main strategy involved interpreting the interview categories (Campillay-Araya et al., 2023; Espinoza-Freire, 2023). It aimed to develop deductive categories and emergent categories. The deductive categories were derived from the researchers' interests, the research question, the research objectives, and were connected to the disciplinary framework. On the other hand, the inductive categories were generated through the coding of the interviews and were focused on themes that did not fall within the scope of the deductive categories' interpretation. As a method of analysis, a categorical analysis was taken from a hermeneutic perspective that I include in three interrelated phases: data reduction, descriptive analysis and interpretation as referred to by Sanchez et al (2023).

For data reduction, codes were generated using the Atlas Ti software, taking as reference the axes of inquiry proposed to build the instrument, the narratives common to the discourses and those relevant to the research question were identified.

The descriptive analysis involved the integration of the codes into categories that were emergent if they were not derived directly from the initial axes or direct if they did.

Finally, the interpretation focused on the construction of a narrative construction that integrated the emerging categories into a broad concept that answered the research question by articulating the quantitative and qualitative components of the exercise.

Procedure

The procedure of this research was conducted in the following stages:

Stage 1. Interviews and CAP survey: For the implementation of the instruments, students were called upon and grouped by academic year, and the objectives and methodology were shared with them. Some participants were intentionally selected from these groups until the desired sample size for the CAP was reached. Once this survey was administered through Google Forms, six subjects were randomly invited to participate in the interviews which were recorded via audio. The questions for both instruments were validated by judges beforehand, and the average duration was 50 minutes for the interviews and 25 minutes for the CAP survey.

Stage 2: Data collection and analysis: The interviews were transcribed verbatim for subsequent analysis using the coding software ATLAS.ti. Also, the survey responses were organized into a matrix for further statistical analysis.

Ethical considerations

For the implementation of this study, and according to Colombian legislation (Resolution 8430 of 1993), the present study is classified as "risk-free" research. This work lacks conflicts of interest from the perspective of sponsorships or any form of remuneration and was approved by the internal ethics committee of the Faculty of Psychology at Universidad Santo Tomás. Each record in this document has informed consent and authorization for its use for research purposes.

Disclosure statement: The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to the article. The presented results are derived from the research project: Social representations of the role of men as victims of violence: an analysis of the implications of perpetuating gender stereotypes and machismo. Undergraduate program in Psychology at Universidad Santo Tomás, Colombia.

Results

Deductive categories

Understanding of the relationship between machismo, gender stereotypes and violence on the part of interviewees

This category shows the relationship established between gender stereotypes, machismo and violence with and the representation of being a man or a woman. Although the interviewees understand that these are distinct aspects, their narratives demonstrate that their understanding of these elements characterizes their masculine practices, which justifies their behavior. For example, they consider a condition of superiority as a requirement to define masculinity.

One of the interviewees, when asked directly if he believed there was any relationship between gender stereotypes, machismo, and violence, responded with the following excerpt:

> "I do believe there's a link. Say, I read an article the other day which said that machismo exists due to dominance… the man wants to be dominant towards the woman, to show off his supposed superiority, right? And that's where stereotypes come from. From the man wanting to be dominant, wanting to be superior, he finds he can't, men can't cry, he can't express his feelings."

The way the interviewee makes a connection between the dominance present in machismo with the social norms and expectations that govern behavior according to each gender allows for a mutual reinforcement feedback of these two phenomena, further establishing gender inequality. Based on the assumption, coming from a chauvinist perspective, that men are superior and women are inferior, it follows that women should be dominated and guided, while men should have the capacity to dominate and guide them. The adaptation of each gender to their corresponding role requires deviating from the opposite gender's characteristics. Therefore, in order for men to dominate women, they must abandon characteristics associated with femininity, as exemplified by the interviewee when discussing crying and emotional expression.

A role for each gender: What machismo demands from each individual. Machismo, manifested as a hierarchical social structure, entails the organization of individuals according to specific criteria that involve the superiority of men and the inferiority of women. Furthermore, like any social structure, for it to be sustained, it must be successfully transmitted to new individuals and establish mechanisms that perpetuate the participation of the majority of its members, regardless of their reasons for doing so (whether coercive or actively participatory). This transmission occurs within the primary socialization circles of each individual, thereby

establishing family, friendship circles, and educational institutions as focal points of this process. The following narrative illustrates how this phenomenon unfolds.:

> P2. 2:2: "I think that it is socially learned. I mean it's not like someone told me "Look, this is what machismo is". No, but in the context, one interacts, be it high school or other type of contexts. You end up seeing it here and there, I mean, in the way people act or the way other people tell you: "Don't do that because a man shouldn't do that", or "that is a girly attitude, why are you doing it? It's like it's been socially put into our minds, I mean, we already make it our own, so, obviously both men and women have a masculine and a feminine side. I mean, obviously the masculine side should stand out if you're a man, and the feminine side should stand out if you're a woman, right? But, as I'm telling you, both men and women have those two sides, right? Obviously, then society gets a bad impression when a man expresses his feminine side. It doesn't look good, ok? But that's also because of the message they give us "If you're a man you must behave this way, and if you're a woman you must behave this other way.""

The learning that takes place within this structure involves assuming specific roles and functions that dictate the acceptable and expected behavior for each gender. These roles and functions are taught by the caregivers of the new individuals through the stimulation or suppression of skills, preferences, interests, behaviors, and thoughts that either conform to or deviate from each gender. However, beyond the interaction with caregivers, society as a whole establishes certain codes or rules that indicate how to be or not to be a man and how individuals should behave in different realms of relationships.

Social and normative matters: Disadvantages of being a man

Another phenomenon that men, as well as women, must face is prejudice and stereotypes; however, each gender faces them differently. Within institutions that seek to regulate and guarantee the integrity of citizens, there is discrimination against men due to prejudices related to violence: if a man is involved in a scenario involving violence, it is presumed a priori that the man's role is the perpetrator one. This gender discrimination against men has an impact on the legal attention given to each gender, as mentioned by one of the participants:

> P3. 3:2: "Well, in my life, I had a particular experience, I had some problems in my family and I went to the Commissioner for the family and in the chanced I got to attend,

well, they listened to me and they scheduled an appointment for a conciliation with involved family members, which were men, there was only a man involved once, and that was it. One day, one of those people, a woman, went to the same Commissioner to press charges for psychological abuse against me and she wasn't scheduled a conciliation appointment, she was immediately given a restraining order."

Like other participants, this individual expresses a difference, based on gender, in the attention given by governmental and non-governmental institutions that ensure the integrity of citizens. These differences, as another participant pointed out, can be reflected in the custody battle for children, as it is usually granted to women by default unless significant circumstances make it tangible to grant it to men. In essence, the assumption of gender roles involves biased perspectives from society. However, it is noteworthy that in the case of men, there is also a normalization that these roles should be ignored or overlooked, which can result in certain circumstances, such as instances of violence against them, being underestimated or even disregarded in the context of guaranteeing their rights. Institutional actions have a significant responsibility to acknowledge and address these situations that, although less frequent than in the case of women, also have significant repercussions for men.

Emerging categories:

What a man can and cannot do: Contradictory discourses.

Although the interviewees, in a general perspective, demonstrated an understanding of the categories studied in the present investigation, they also articulated some contradictions that reveal differences between ideologies and practices. One of the most relevant narratives in this regard is as follows:

P2. 2:17: "_Interviewee That's what I'm telling you, cause, like, it's not a good thing from the social role. I mean, I don't, well… this is going to sound super sexist… seeing my son playing with dolls.

_Interviewer: You wouldn't like it.

_Interviewee: It's not right. I mean, what they have taught us is that boys play with cars, action figures, guns… girls play kitchen, right? That… I think machismo may also come from there, from the way they teach us, like "Ok. If you're a man the colors you can wear

are these, because the colors belonging to the girls are pink, purple" All of that comes from education."

Apparently, within the participants' discourse, there is a formal or rational understanding of machismo and its negative implications. However, when referring to everyday practices where the negative effects of machismo may not be evident, they are considered as being valid or even justified. For instance, participants may agree that machismo leads to violence and is associated with negative or questionable practices towards women. However, when confronted with other situations reflecting machismo, such as gender markers in clothing or behaviors associated with masculinity or femininity, the chauvinist conception carries more weight or is justified as a natural way of behaving in relationships between men and women, in pursuit of social acceptance.

Defining a chauvinist society

From a broader perspective, understanding machismo, gender stereotypes, and violence as structurally configured phenomena, there are certain essential characteristics that distinguish them from other phenomena. However, to gain insights on the participants' perspective from a more pragmatic and everyday point of view rather than a theoretical or conceptual one, they were asked to identify the factors or actions that must initially be present in a society for them to consider it chauvinist. In response to this inquiry, the interviewees stated:

> P3. 3:9: "A chauvinist society, I think, it's made up totally from the law, I mean, if it were totally chauvinist, let's say you could actually see in the law differences on treatment towards women and men. For example, some years ago, women were not allowed to vote, that's a chauvinist society. Why do I think so? Because if there is not, in the law, anything justifying these actions from any of the two parts, something can be made to minimize their impact, right? So, let's say, for instance, the wage gap. If wage gaps are found we can do something or take action so the company doesn't have this type of differences between men and women.
>
> P5. 5:11: "_Interviewee: [...]For example, what I told you about your parents – the invalidation of emotions is very common, and you... when I talked to my grandpa or my

father, they used to tell me… they tell me that, that you are the man, you must never give in, you must always stand firm…. That's what they used to tell me."

P6. 6:13: "I think that the main thing is to see, say, the man as the strength from any point of view, any aspect; and the feminine as the fragile, the incapable… which makes impositions possible, because they can […] I think language too, the ways of interacting, if they do, may be, jokes or … […] or they pull a prank between men, or a woman to men, or well, to a man, and say "Oh look, are you going to cry?" because of the joke, and everybody takes it lightly because he doesn't receive the needed validation. I think that... language."

Factors such as language and the invalidation of men's emotions constitute essential aspects of social interaction from a more organic perspective. On the other hand, issues like laws and structural problems such as wage gaps and access to voting highlight the prevalence and inequality of one gender over the other by assuming the rights of one gender while normative frameworks are required to guarantee the rights of the other. However, it is noteworthy that inequality is not only observed in established norms (necessary for the visibility of marginalized populations) but also in those laws which are not yet available for populations or needs that have not been addressed. This is the case for men in relation to rights associated with healthy coexistence and psychosocial needs.

CAP findings

Regarding the characterization of knowledge, attitudes, and practices in young people regarding machismo and gender-based violence, some of the most important findings are presented:

Figure 1. Machismo towards non-traditionally masculine men.

Note: Prepared by the authors.

The majority of the surveyed young people (93%) acknowledge the presence of stereotypes related to machismo in their discourse, even when directed towards individuals with non-normative sexual orientations, such as homosexuals. There is an expectation for them to conform to traditionally associated masculine responses, such as being strong, not crying, or not complaining, among others. This information is related to the knowledge available to young people and how it influences their interactions with others.

Figure 2. Men must have better positions and income.
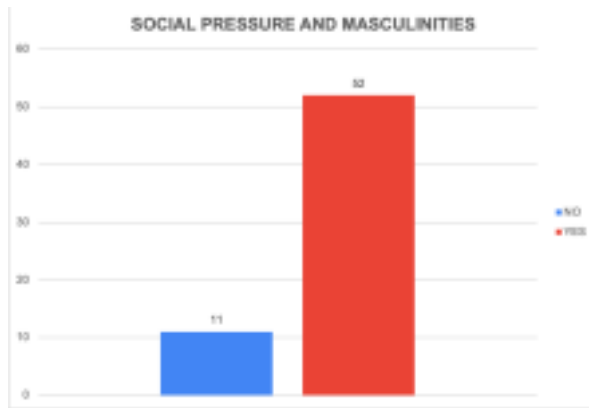
Fuento: Prepared by the authors

Regarding the gender-mediated assigned roles, within the knowledge of the interviewed young people, it is assumed that in intergender interaction, it is primarily the man who should access better positions and income, and even bear the predominant economic responsibility in relationships. 82% of the surveyed participants believed that men should have better jobs and, consequently, a greater financial burden and responsibility than women.

Figure 3. Sexual harassment against men
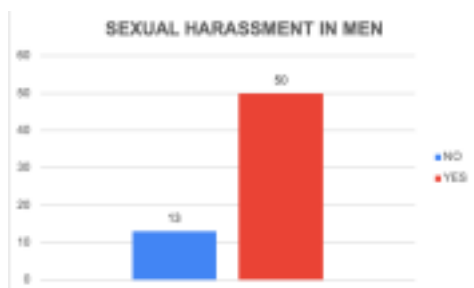
Fuente: Prepared by the authors

Regarding the attitudes of men towards certain practices by women, 79% of the surveyed participants reported having experienced some form of harassment by another person (woman or man), or having considered this situation as quite likely in their contexts of interaction. It is noteworthy how this statement is consistent with a discourse that claims that the perspective on violence against men from institutional sources is often biased or neglectful when it comes to cases where men are recognized as victims, as in the emerging category "Social and Normative Matters: Disadvantages of Being a Man."

Figure 4. Machismo and gender stereotypes in relevant experiences
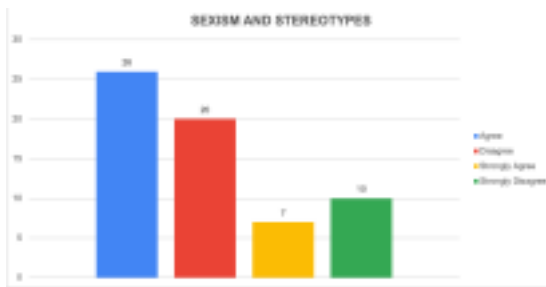
Fuente: Prepared by the authors.

Perceptions of young people regarding the influence of stereotypes and machismo on vital experiences in their development suggest that the majority of them (73%) have encountered situations that have influenced their personal development or have affected their self-perception as men in society.

Figure 5: Normative support to violence issues against men.
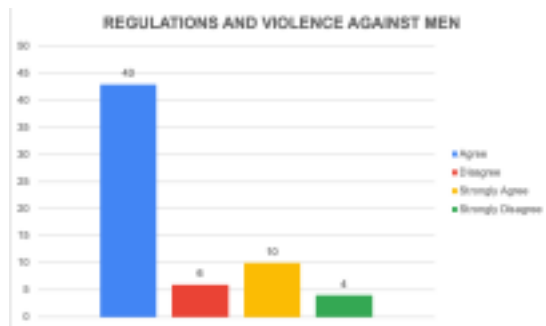
Fuente: Prepared by the authors

In the same vein, 89% of young individuals perceive the normative support for issues of violence where men are victims as inadequate, as they consider it non-existent or revictimizing due to the lack of appropriate mechanisms for their care and resolution.

Figure   6:   Men   considered   as   perpetrators,   not   victims.
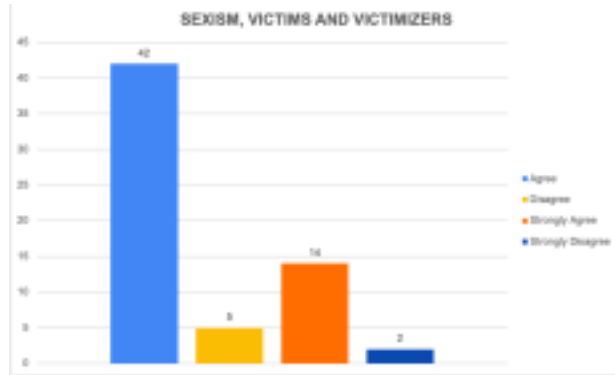
Fuente: Prepared by the authors

In line with the previous item, one of the explanations present in both the quantitative and qualitative analysis is that the precariousness of support in cases of violence against men is related to a social representation of men as perpetrators and not as victims. 75% of the surveyed population considered that men are often viewed from a sexist perspective where they are primarily or exclusively seen as perpetrators and not as victims.

Discussion and conclusions

In social representations, information, attitudes, and fields of representation are configured in a way that is closely linked to the history and narratives of each individual, while at the same time prioritizing or giving more importance to certain information over others. This allows for the formation of social representations that do not require coherence, as the content within these fields may not always align or correspond, and their prioritization depends more on the subjective importance and meaning attributed to them rather than the content itself. This explains why individuals may exhibit inconsistencies in their practices and discourses, prioritizing their interests based on their own experiences.

The role of sociocultural contexts in shaping ideas about machismo and its cultural premises (how it is exercised and demanded from others) is emphasized. These ideas, in relation to gender stereotypes, form a form of violence against men based on the disqualification and devaluation of their psycho-affective needs, and the overvaluation of characteristics related to their utility and invincibility.

Social representations of men as part of society and their main issues related to violence tend to focus on their role as transgressors. However, men are also victims of violence considering the social expectations placed upon them within patriarchal structures that are chauvinist and violent. It was also found that the majority of surveyed men have experienced harassment, sexual harassment, and discrimination based on sexism. They have been victims of machismo, they are pressured to conform to masculine roles, and believe that constitutional, governmental, and institutional regulations should bring more visibility to and address violence against men.

The invisibility and lack of addressing these issues perpetuate practices and thoughts based on machismo and gender stereotypes. It enables and perpetuates violent behaviors towards men and hinders the transformation of male roles and their participation in society for the sake of better coexistence and overall improvement in the quality of life in society.

The results suggest that although men can recognize violent behavior directed towards them, they do not identify specific mechanisms to act in their defense or to guarantee their rights. This means that although men know that they are victims of violence, since there are no clear normative or legal actions that allow them to channel or generate effective responses to these events, it does not make sense to publicly declare that they are victims of violence.

Additionally, the fact of recognizing oneself as a victim of violence also goes against the established roles socially related to being a man, such as those that link it with being strong, protector or leader, which is a reason not to manifest the violent acts that will be meanings by society as a sign of weakness. For a large majority of those surveyed, recognizing violence is associated with an attitude of victimization or with an inability to respond effectively to attacks.

The interviewees can identify how violence against men comes from sexist understandings of society and the participation or interaction with the family, according to gender stereotypes that are transmitted by socialization in different contexts. Therefore, although a direct social representation of violence cannot be established, it is identified that it is found rather in the social interaction ascribed to sexist behaviors and thoughts, which configure gender stereotypes.

This is how, despite the fact that the interviewees are able to reference the violations they have suffered and the social and historical origin of these, and that in the survey there is a transversal thread in which men state that violence, sexism and stereotypes gender have promoted ignorance and little attention to this problem, at the same time it was found that men do not actively participate in changing this situation, but rather tend to accept and validate its permanence.

This may be because it is possible to find men who understand the implications of violence on their gender, but who simultaneously consider that it is not necessary to take measures for their transformation since this would imply losing the implicit benefits that the recognition of his masculinity.

This work is a contribution to the study of violence against men from the perspective of gender stereotypes, machismo and its social representations, which allows progress in knowledge and intervention on gender violence and widens the doors to new approaches to this recent field of exploration.

Both machismo and the stereotypes that have been built around the idea of being a man promote gender violence directed towards women, and at the same time, impact the process of development of masculinity, limiting the possibility of a free and healthy expression of emotions, due to it is based on the premise that it is an inappropriate behavior for men.

This sort of limitations in the construction of what is "masculine" has effects on the men's mental health, being a barely developed field of analysis that requires research that places the man from a different comprehension, that is beyond the perpetrator and recognizing him as a subject with transformation possibilities, as well as a victim in a context that determines him

psychologically, historically and culturally, and so, guiden their individuality expressions in society.

Although this study represents a great advance in the understanding of violence against men, there are some limitations that can not be ignored. To carry out the study, there were no found any quantitative-standardized test that evaluated this specific phenomenon, so, a KAP test had to be developed based on the factors included in some test for violence against women, as well as in other addressed by the literature found regarding the violence against men, as an exploratory alternative. These kinds of evaluative proposals open new possibilities for analyzing the phenomenon of gender-violence focused on men, and contribute to the analysis of male role in the gender-violence phenomenon.

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Anexo 2. Entrevista

No.	Ítem
	¿Qué entiendes por machismo?
	¿Cómo aprendiste lo que era el machismo hacia los hombres?
	¿En qué situaciones has identificado el machismo?
	¿Qué piensas acerca del machismo?
	¿Qué piensas de las personas machistas?
	De la afirmación "el machismo puede llegar a ser útil", ¿qué piensas?
	¿En qué contextos piensas que es más frecuente el machismo?
	¿Qué situaciones podrían justificar el machismo?
	¿Qué piensas que caracteriza a una sociedad machista?
10	¿Qué entiendes por estereotipos de género?
11	¿Cómo aprendiste lo que eran los estereotipos de género?
12	¿En qué situaciones has identificado los estereotipos de género hacia los hombres?
13	¿Qué piensas cuando identificas los estereotipos que hay hacia tu género?
14	¿Qué piensas de la frase "los estereotipos de género pueden llegar a ser útiles"?

15	¿Qué piensas de las personas que hacen uso de los estereotipos de género?
16	¿En qué contextos son más frecuentes los estereotipos de género?
17	¿Qué situaciones podrían justificarse los estereotipos de género?
18	¿En qué situaciones sociales crees que no se debería hacer uso de los estereotipos de género?
19	¿Qué es la violencia?
20	¿Qué tipos de violencia conoces?
21	¿Cómo aprendiste lo que es la violencia?
22	¿Cómo se presenta la violencia hacia los hombres a nivel social?
23	¿Qué piensas de las personas que han sido violentas con un hombre?
24	¿Qué piensas de las personas que se oponenen a la violencia hacia los hombres?
25	¿Qué piensas de la frase "he sido violento contra otros hombres"?
26	¿En qué situaciones crees que no debe haber violencia hacia los hombres?
27	¿En qué situaciones se ha justificado la violencia hacia ti como hombre?
28	¿Qué ideales o modelos de pensamiento opinas que contribuyen a la violencia contra los hombres?
29	¿Cómo ha sido tu experiencia con la violencia, el machismo o los estereotipos de género?
30	¿Quieres hacer una invitación o algún aporte para la investigación que quieras que quede registrado de forma literal en los resultados de la investigación?