

Beyond bullying: violent and disruptive behavior in high school adolescents from Guadalajara, Mexico

Más allá del bullying: conducta violenta y disruptiva en adolescentes de bachillerato de Guadalajara, México

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Abstract

School violence in adolescents has been recognized as a complex problem that goes beyond bullying, encompassing disruptive and violent behaviors directed toward peers, teachers, and the institution itself. **Objective:** To analyze the prevalence of violent and disruptive behaviors in high school students in Guadalajara, Mexico, differentiating between occasional and recurrent violence. **Methodology:** A quantitative design was used, with a sample of 436 students between 15 and 19 years old, who responded to the School Violence Scale. The data were analyzed in terms of frequencies and percentages to determine the prevalence of general, occasional, and recurrent violence in three areas: against peers, teachers, and the institution. **Results:** The findings revealed that 23.7% of students reported having exercised some form of violence at least once. Occasional violence was more frequent than recurrent violence, especially in minor verbal and physical aggressions toward peers. Disruptive behaviors toward teachers and the school were less common, with higher prevalences in actions of annoyance and minor damage. **Conclusion:** Results suggested that although occasional school violence was prevalent, recurrent violence remained limited, indicating the need for specific preventive and intervention strategies to reduce violent behaviors in school settings.

Key words: Bullying; violence; violent conduct; disruptive behavior; school violence.

Resumen

La violencia escolar en adolescentes ha sido reconocida como una problemática compleja que trasciende el bullying, abarcando comportamientos disruptivos y violentos dirigidos tanto hacia compañeros como hacia docentes y la propia institución. **Objetivo:** Analizar la prevalencia de conductas violentas y disruptivas en estudiantes de bachillerato de Guadalajara, México, diferenciando entre violencia ocasional y recurrente. **Metodología:** Se empleó un diseño cuantitativo, con una muestra de 436 estudiantes entre 15 y 19 años, quienes respondieron la Escala de Violencia Escolar. Los datos fueron analizados en términos de frecuencias y porcentajes para determinar la prevalencia de la violencia general, ocasional y recurrente en tres ámbitos: contra compañeros, docentes y la institución. **Resultados:** Los hallazgos revelaron que el 23.7% de los estudiantes reportó haber ejercido alguna forma de violencia al menos una vez. La violencia ocasional fue más frecuente que la recurrente, especialmente en agresiones verbales y físicas menores hacia compañeros. Las conductas disruptivas hacia profesores y la escuela fueron menos comunes, con mayores prevalencias en acciones de incordio y daño menor. **Conclusión:** Los resultados sugirieron que, aunque la violencia escolar ocasional fue prevalente, la violencia recurrente se mantuvo limitada, indicando la necesidad de estrategias preventivas y de intervención específicas para reducir las conductas violentas en los entornos escolares.

Palabras clave: Bullying; violencia; conducta violenta; comportamiento disruptivo; violencia escolar.

INTRODUCTION

According to Mena *et al.*, (2022), school violence can be defined as a behavior whose purpose is to harm classmates and/or their belongings. In the present study, it is also understood as all those behaviors that are intentionally aimed at disrespecting other members of the educational community, violating their rights (Luna *et al.*, 2021). These are behaviors carried out by students directed towards other adolescents, as well as behaviors aimed at affecting school personnel (such as teachers), and facilities. It should be noted that in the case of acts of violence directed against things, the damage that occurs is to the patrimony of the person who holds the right over the material good in question.

Disruptive behavior refers to those student actions that hinder the normal development of a class and affect coexistence, since they imply violations to the rules of behavior (Gordillo *et al.*, 2014). This disturbance or transgression can be interpreted as violence on some occasions, and on others not, depending on contextual aspects. However, these are behaviors that, in any case, are perceived as contrary to the flow of the experience of living together (Luna *et al.*, 2021).

Considering the difficulty of establishing a clear-cut distinction between violent and disruptive behavior, the present study opted to use a single category that includes both, leaving for future research the possibility of defining and differentiating these forms of behavior more precisely. Thus, the category of violent or disruptive behavior includes actions such as insulting, hitting, generating conflicts in class or bothering the teacher. In this context, victimization experiences will also be taken into account, understood as those behaviors carried out by members of the student body that other students perceive to have been affected.

In addition, it was considered vitally important to differentiate between the prevalence of occasional school violence and the prevalence of repeated or recurrent school violence. The former refers to students who have engaged in violent or disruptive acts almost never or only sometimes; the latter, to those who have engaged in violent or disruptive behavior frequently or very frequently. In this framework, general prevalence is defined

as the group of students who have engaged in violent or disruptive acts at least once against a classmate (general school violence or general prevalence).

It should be noted that the presence of repeated or recurrent school violence is considered in some studies as an indicator of school harassment or bullying. However, in the present study it is considered that such information could only constitute an indication of the latter form of behavior, since it would be necessary to generate more specific information regarding other elements in order to have an indicator of bullying that would be adequate to the concept of the latter. According to Olweus (2007), bullying can be defined as a negative and repeated intentional conduct by one or more individuals against another individual who has difficulty defending himself/herself. Accordingly, it is characterized by: a) being an aggressive behavior that is repeated and temporarily prolonged; and b) there is a real or perceived imbalance of power between aggressor(s) and victim.

Taking into account the large number of studies about bullying that have been developed in recent years, it was considered useful to focus the present research more generally on the violent or disruptive behavior of adolescents at school, focusing also on the prevalence of victimization in this regard.

A problem that has been repeatedly pointed out by academics who have taken on the task of making a general assessment of the state of knowledge on school violence and bullying is that the results are not easily comparable given the diversity of approaches and methodologies used in the research. For example, following their review of studies on the prevalence of bullying and cyberbullying in Latin America, Garaigordobil *et al.* (2019) explain that: a) some investigations include those who have experienced or performed these behaviors at least once, adding occasional and frequent cases, while others consider only aggression and severe victimization, that is, those who suffer or commit behaviors very frequently; b) the studies use different instruments that do not always measure the same behaviors; c) the samples vary in age (children, adolescents and young people), which influences the results; and d) the time interval evaluated differs among studies.

In relation to Mexico, there are some studies in this regard, such as the following. First, the Social Cohesion Survey for the Prevention of Violence and Delinquency 2014 (ECOPRED, from Spanish initials) conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, from Spanish initials), allows estimating that approximately 32.2% of young people aged 12 to 18 who attended school in 2014 were victims of bullying (Gamboa & Valdés, 2016).

On the other hand, the results of the Third National Survey on Exclusion, Intolerance and Violence in Higher Secondary Schools conducted by the Ministry of Public Education (2014), at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, reported that 65% of women and 72% of men responded that they had suffered some type of aggression from their schoolmates in the last 12 months. The most prevalent situations of aggression were: having been ignored and having been insulted, with percentages close to 37%.

In addition, Vega-Cauich (2019) examined 27 studies carried out within the Mexican Republic, estimating on this basis a nationwide prevalence of 20% for victimization and 19% for aggression with regard to traditional bullying. In a similar vein, González & Treviño (2019) report 39.3% of sixth-semester high school students in Nuevo León, from public and private schools, reporting having suffered violence of some kind (physical, verbal or theft), according to information from databases prepared by the National Institute for the Evaluation of Education (INEE) under the National Plan for the Evaluation of Learning (PLANEA) 2017.

The review study on the prevalence of bullying and cyberbullying in Latin America, for the period 2005-2018, carried out by Garaigordobil *et al.* (2019), found that in Mexico percentages have been reported ranging between 13% and 25.8% for victims, 8.2% and 31.3% for aggressors, and 34.5% and 49.7% for witnesses or observers, with regard to traditional or in-person bullying.

At the international level, a meta-analysis developed by Modecki *et al.* (2014), which systematized 80 studies on bullying and cyberbullying worldwide, found that, for both victims and aggressors, the prevalence of traditional bullying and cyberbullying was around 35% and 15%, respectively.

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning the bibliometric study conducted by Herrera-López *et al.* (2018), which concluded that globally approximately one third of children are involved in some form of bullying and one fifth in cyberbullying.

Finally, it is important to mention the results of the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2018) published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2020). According to the report on average, 23% of students in OECD nations said they experienced bullying at least a few times a month, while 8% reported being victimized frequently. Significant differences were revealed among nations, some with prevalences below 15%, such as Portugal, Korea, Chinese Taipei and the Netherlands, and others above 40%, such as the Dominican Republic, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Morocco and the Philippines, in terms of having been bullied at least a few times a month. Frequent bullying was reported by less than 5% of students in countries such as Iceland, Chinese Taipei, Japan, China (Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu and Zhejiang), and the Netherlands, and by more than 20% in the Philippines, Dominican Republic and Brunei Darussalam.

In the PISA 2018 note for Mexico, the OECD (2019) points out that this country was at an average prevalence level (contrary to what was pointed out in some journalistic reports). According to the report, 23% of students in Mexico reported being victims of bullying at least a few times a month, and 9% reported being victims frequently. In addition, 86% of Mexican students agreed or strongly agreed that it is important to help those who cannot defend themselves, in congruence with the OECD average of 88%. All this information can be corroborated by reviewing the data tables in the full report on bullying (OECD, 2020 pp. 48-49).

According to Garaigordobil *et al.* (2019), although the results of the different investigations are not easily comparable, it is visible that they all converge in pointing out the importance of the problem, thereby emphasizing the need to prevent, evaluate and intervene. In a previous review paper, the same Garaigordobil (2013) had already noted the circumstance that, although there is a great variety of approaches and instruments that limits and makes it difficult to

compare the findings, beyond all that diversity, it is possible to observe a certain general trend: the frequency and characteristics of bullying are quite consistent in all countries. All studies confirm the presence of bullying among peers, suggesting that it is a widespread phenomenon in schools around the world.

Ruiz-Ramírez *et al.* (2020) refer to this issue when they note that bullying continues to exist because it is based on institutions such as capitalism, the patriarchal order, and systems of social classification and domination. According to the National Report of Results of the National School Coexistence Program, corresponding to the 2018-2019 school year, conducted in Mexico by the Ministry of Public Education of the Federal Government (2020), with a sample of 8923 preschool, primary and secondary schools and 183 Multiple Attention Centers, 70.5% of these institutions perceived an adequate school environment that promotes inclusive and peaceful coexistence, as well as the application of values such as respect, trust and cooperation, which increases the willingness of students to learn. However, 30% of the respondents considered the school environment as not very favorable. Therefore, it was suggested that the educational community should remain committed to strengthening values, skills and attitudes that contribute to a better coexistence.

As can be observed, the percentages reported by this study, referring to the positive and negative perception of school climate, are consistent with the data on the prevalence of bullying and school violence reported in the research cited above. This is a fact in favor of the thesis put forward in the Philosophy for Peace that, despite the undeniable existence of violence in today's societies, we should not lose sight of the fact that peaceful coexistence is a reality that should be highlighted and adequately focused, so that the capacities that human beings have developed to make peace can be recognized in it, since these are precisely the condition under which violence can be understood (Martínez, 2009).

For this paper it is very important not to forget this approach at any time: although the phenomenon of violence is addressed, it should always be understood from a negative or privative concept, as a denial or interruption of the peaceful coexistence that actually exists in many other aspects of the relationships among the members of a school community (Luna *et al.*, 2021).

The present study was aimed at describing the ways in which the phenomenon of school violence occurs in the context considered, identifying the most frequent violent and disruptive behaviors carried out by adolescent students against their peers, teachers and the school, as well as the most recurrent victimization situations.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in the study were 436 students belonging to a public high school in the metropolitan area of Guadalajara, Jalisco, aged 15 to 19 years ($M = 16.67$; $SD = 1.01$), covering the six semester grades of this educational level in the Mexican system. The sampling was non-probabilistic and intentional. Table 1 shows the breakdown of the sample of participants by gender.

Table 1.*Participants by gender, age and school grade*

	Women n (%)	Men n (%)	Total n (%)
Grade			
First year (semesters 1 and 2)	97 (22.2)	100 (22.9)	197 (45.2)
Second year (semesters 3 and 4)	66 (15.1)	71 (16.3)	137 (31.4)
Third year (semesters 5 and 6)	61 (14.0)	41 (9.4)	102 (23.4)
Age			
15 and 16 years	100 (22.9)	96 (22.0)	196 (45.5)
17 to 19 years	124 (28.4)	116 (26.6)	240 (55.0)
Total	224 (51.4)	212 (48.6)	436 (100.0)

Note. Percentages with respect to the total

Instrument

As part of a broader investigation of interpersonal conflict management strategies in adolescents, participants completed a series of psychometric assessments. Given the purpose of the present analysis, only the results corresponding to the School Violence Scale are presented in this report. This instrument was originally created according to Estévez (2005) by the Lisis Group of the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Valencia. The questionnaire is composed of 19 items differentiated into: Violent or disruptive behavior (items 1 to 13), and Victimization (items 14 to 19). In the present study a reliability analysis was performed, resulting in Cronbach's alphas .93 and .80, respectively. Each item refers to a behavior performed or suffered by the participant; for example, I have stolen objects from my classmates or from the school (item 2), or Some classmate stole something from me (item 16), with a Likert format from Never (= 1) to Always (= 5), and having the alternative of answering: I prefer not to talk about it (= 0).

In order to fulfill the objective of the present study, the Violent or disruptive behavior scale was divided into three subscales considering the object towards which it was oriented: Against classmates (items 2, 5, 6, 9, 12 and 13), Against teachers (items 3, 4, 7, 10 and 11), and against the school (items 1, 2 and 8). Item 2 was placed within two scales (first and third) because it refers to peers, but also to the institution (I have stolen objects from my classmates or from the school). A Cronbach's alpha of .85, .86 and .61 was found for each of these subscales, respectively.

Statistical analysis

In order to achieve the proposed objective, an analysis of frequencies and percentages of the School Violence Scale will be carried out, considering all its items and subscales. For the interpretation of these prevalence percentages, it was considered convenient to divide them into two levels. First, adding the responses to Almost never and Sometimes, a percentage of participants who would admit to having carried out violent or disruptive acts occasionally

(occasional school violence) will be obtained. Secondly, adding the responses corresponding to the Frequently and Always options will result in a percentage of students who admit to having carried out violent or disruptive behaviors repeatedly (repeated or recurrent school violence). In addition to the above, the four aforementioned columns (Almost never, Sometimes, Frequently and Always) were added to obtain a percentage of general prevalence. This last percentage will represent the set of students who have exercised acts of violence or disruption at least once against a classmate (general school violence or general prevalence). A similar procedure will be used to obtain percentages of occasional, repeated and general prevalence in the case of the Victimization scale.

The SPSS v. 21 statistical software was used for all analyses.

Procedure

Communication was established with the selected school, obtaining its authorization in accordance with its internal processes. The questionnaires were administered by the researchers, assisted by a teacher previously trained in the objectives and methodology of the study. Within each selected classroom, students were invited to answer the questionnaire freely and anonymously. They were allowed to choose to discontinue their participation at any time, on a completely voluntary basis. It was explained to them that their answers would receive strictly confidential processing, and that they would not be subject to individual evaluation but that statistics would be obtained for scientific purposes. They were made to understand that there were no right or wrong answers, and were urged to use sincerity in answering.

Ethical aspects

This study was conducted following the guidelines of the codes of ethics of the Mexican Society of Psychology (2010) and the American Psychological Association (2017), especially regarding voluntary participation, anonymity, exclusive use of information for scientific purposes, and confidentiality.

RESULTS

Prevalence of violent or disruptive behavior

Before moving on to the prevalence analysis, it is worth mentioning that 97.25% of the participants responded to the School Violence Scale, since there were only 12 who left the 19 items blank. As can be seen in the data tables that follow, there will be certain variations by item in the response percentages, since some of the students who did answer the instrument nevertheless left some boxes blank. For this reason, the following tables show the valid percentages, i.e., the proportion of students who responded to each of the items that will be shown.

a) Violent or disruptive conduct against classmates

Table 2 shows the frequencies and percentages of responses related to violent or disruptive behavior directed against classmates, as well as the corresponding averages (arithmetic mean). As can be seen, an average of 422 students responded to the items on this scale. Of these, almost three quarters (73.2%) said that they had never engaged in any violent or disruptive behavior against their classmates, while 1.4% responded that they preferred not to talk about it. The students who reported having engaged in violent acts were divided into three categories: occasional, recurrent and general. 21.1% admitted to having assaulted occasionally, and 4.5% did so repeatedly, resulting in a general prevalence of 25.6% who engaged in violence at least once. Among the specific behaviors, 8.8% acknowledged having insulted classmates on a recurrent basis (item 9), 39.9% occasionally, and 48.7% on average in general. As for physical aggression (item 6), 4.7% of the students admitted having done it frequently, about 28.1% occasionally, and 32.8% at least once. It can be seen that the percentages for occasional violence differ considerably from those for recurrent violence.

Table 2.

Frequencies and percentages of violent or disruptive behavior directed at classmates

Ítems	N	1	2	3	4	5	0
2. I have stolen items from my classmates or from the school.	423	356 (84.2%)	32 (7.6%)	18 (4.3%)	11 (2.6%)	2 (0.5%)	4 (0.9%)
5. I have caused a classmate to make a mistake on homework or assignments on purpose.	423	315 (74.5%)	53 (12.5%)	30 (7.1%)	10 (2.4%)	7 (1.7%)	8 (1.9%)
6. I have assaulted and hit classmates at school.	423	295 (69.7%)	63 (14.9%)	36 (8.5%)	14 (3.3%)	6 (1.4%)	9 (2.1%)
9. I have insulted classmates.	421	211 (50.1%)	85 (20.2%)	83 (19.7%)	25 (5.9%)	12 (2.9%)	5 (1.2%)
12. I have torn my classmates' notes and work.	422	357 (84.6%)	33 (7.8%)	17 (4.0%)	5 (1.2%)	5 (1.2%)	5 (1.2%)
13. I have provoked conflicts among my classmates	420	319 (76.0%)	53 (12.6%)	30 (7.1%)	7 (1.7%)	7 (1.7%)	4 (1.0%)
Frequency and average percentages	422.00	308.83 (73.2%)	53.17 (12.6%)	35.67 (8.5%)	12.00 (2.9%)	6.50 (1.6%)	5.83 (1.4%)

Note: N = number of students who responded to the corresponding item. The numbers to the left of the statements in the first column correspond to the item number on the School Violence Scale (Estévez, 2005). 1=Never, 2=Almost never, 3=Sometimes, 4=Frequently, 5=Always, 0=I prefer not to talk.

b) Violent or disruptive behavior against teachers

Table 3 shows the frequencies and response percentages of the items corresponding to violent or disruptive behavior directed against teachers, as well as the averages (arithmetic mean) of these items in the lower row of the table. On average, 421 students responded to these items. Of these, 74.7% stated that they had not engaged in such behaviors, and 1.3% preferred not

to comment. 19.2% did so occasionally and 4.8% repeatedly, resulting in a general prevalence of 24%. The most common behavior was insulting or cheating teachers, with 24.8% of occasional responses and 4.5% recurrent, totaling 29.3%. In general, it can be seen that the percentages of repeated violence were significantly lower, indicating that, although a quarter of the students have manifested some act of violence towards teachers, the majority are occasional.

Table 3.

Frequencies and percentages of violent or disruptive behavior directed against teachers.

Ítems	N	1	2	3	4	5	0
3. I have purposely insulted or deceived the teachers.	423	293 (69.3%)	63 (14.9%)	42 (9.9%)	11 (2.6%)	8 (1.9%)	6 (1.4%)
4. I have damaged teachers' cars.	415	373 (89.9%)	16 (3.9%)	9 (2.2%)	7 (1.7%)	5 (1.2%)	5 (1.2%)
7. I have annoyed or bothered the teacher in class.	421	307 (72.9%)	59 (14.0%)	30 (7.1%)	15 (3.6%)	6 (1.4%)	4 (1.0%)
10. I have provoked conflicts and problems in class.	423	293 (69.3%)	58 (13.7%)	39 (9.2%)	13 (3.1%)	12 (2.8%)	8 (1.9%)
11. I have responded aggressively to my teachers.	423	305 (72.1%)	57 (13.5%)	33 (7.8%)	16 (3.8%)	7 (1.7%)	5 (1.2%)
Frequencies and average percentages	421.00	314.20 (74.7%)	50.60 (12.0%)	30.60 (7.2%)	12.40 (3.0%)	7.60 (1.8%)	5.60 (1.3%)

Note: N = number of students who responded to the corresponding item. The numbers to the left of the statements in the first column correspond to the item number on the School Violence Scale (Estévez, 2005). 1=Never, 2=Almost never, 3=Sometimes, 4=Frequently, 5=Always, 0=I prefer not to talk.

c) Violent or disruptive behavior against the school

Continuing with the analysis, Table 4 presents the frequencies and response percentages of the items corresponding to violent or disruptive behavior directed against the school, as well as the averages (arithmetic mean) of such items in the last row. On average, almost 423 students responded, of which more than 80% indicated that they had never engaged in violent or disruptive

behavior against the school, while 1.3% preferred not to comment. Among the students who did report such behaviors, 13.8% did so occasionally and 2.7% repeatedly, resulting in a prevalence of 16.5%. The most common behavior was painting or damaging campus walls, with 20.8% occasionally and 2.3% repeatedly, for a total of 23.1%. Again, there is a considerable difference between the percentages of occasional and recurrent violence.

Table 4.

Frequencies and percentages of violent or disruptive behavior directed against the school

Ítems	N	1	2	3	4	5	0
1. I have painted or damaged the walls of the school/ institute.	423	316 (74.7%)	42 (9.9%)	46 (10.9%)	6 (1.4%)	4 (0.9%)	9 (2.1%)
2. I have stolen items from my classmates or from the school.	423	356 (84.2%)	32 (7.6%)	18 (4.3%)	11 (2.6%)	2 (0.5%)	4 (0.9%)
8. I have broken the glass in the windows of the school/ institute.	422	371 (87.9%)	21 (5.0%)	15(3.6%)	6 (1.4%)	5 (1.2%)	4 (0.9%)
Frequencies and average percentages	422.67	347.67 (82.3%)	31.67 (7.5%)	26.33 (6.3%)	7.67 (1.8%)	3.67 (0.9%)	5.67 (1.3%)

Note: N = number of students who responded to the corresponding item. The numbers to the left of the statements in the first column correspond to the item number on the School Violence Scale (Estévez, 2005). 1=Never, 2=Almost never, 3=Sometimes, 4=Frequently, 5=Always, 0=I prefer not to talk.

d) Violent or disruptive behavior in general

Once the prevalence percentages have been presented by dividing the items of the Violent or Disruptive Behavior scale into the three aforementioned groups (against classmates, against teachers and against the school), it is worth considering next the prevalence in general, i.e., averaging all 13 indicators. In this regard, Table 6 presents the arithmetic mean of the frequencies and percentages of the participants'

responses to the 13 items of violent or disruptive behavior. Out of 422 students, 75% indicated that they had not engaged in violent or disruptive behavior, whereas 1.4% preferred not to comment. Adding all levels together, 23.7% of the students reported having carried out violent or disruptive acts at least once. This confirms the trend of a significant difference between the percentages of recurrent and occasional violence.

Table 5.

Frequencies and average percentages of violent or disruptive behavior

	N	1	2	3	4	5	0
Frequencies and average percentages	421.69	316.23 (75.0%)	48.85 (11.6%)	32.92 (7.8%)	11.23 (2.7%)	6.62 (1.6%)	5.85 (1.4%)

Note. N = average number of students who responded to the 13 items of the School Violence Scale related to violent or disruptive behavior. The average valid percentage is shown in relation to N. / 1=Never, 2=Almost never, 3=Sometimes, 4=Frequently, 5=Always, 0=I prefer not to talk.

Prevalence of victimization

With regard to victimization, Table 6 shows the percentages and frequency of response of the participants in each of the items of this scale. The most common cause was being looked at with a dirty look: 14.9% suffered it repeatedly and 40.9%

occasionally, affecting a total of 55.8% of the student body in general. Averaging the six indicators of victimization, 60.6% of the students indicated not having been victimized, while 30% experienced it occasionally and 7.6% repeatedly, resulting in an overall prevalence of 37.6%.

Table 6.

Frequencies and percentages of victimization

Ítems	N	1	2	3	4	5	0
14. Someone at school/institute gave me a dirty look.	421	179 (42.5%)	80 (19.0%)	92 (21.9%)	46 (10.9%)	17 (4.0%)	7 (1.7%)
15. A classmate insulted me or hit me.	419	258 (61.6%)	82 (19.6%)	51 (12.2%)	15 (3.6%)	5 (1.2%)	8 (1.9%)
16. A classmate stole something from me.	420	241 (57.4%)	73 (17.4%)	63 (15.0%)	28 (6.7%)	10 (2.4%)	5 (1.2%)
17. They made fun of me in class or hurt me.	421	255 (60.6%)	84 (20.0%)	50 (11.9%)	18 (4.3%)	3 (0.7%)	11 (2.6%)
18. Someone at school messed with my family.	420	329 (78.3%)	40 (9.5%)	21 (5.0%)	16 (3.8%)	5 (1.2%)	9 (2.1%)
19. Someone at school blamed me for something I did not do.	423	267 (63.1%)	62 (14.7%)	58 (13.7%)	22 (5.2%)	6 (1.4%)	8 (1.9%)
Frequencies and average percentages	422.67	347.67 (82.3%)	31.67 (7.5%)	26.33 (6.3%)	7.67 (1.8%)	3.67 (0.9%)	5.67 (1.3%)

Note: N = average number of students who responded to the six items related to victimization. The numbers to the left of the statements in the first column correspond to the item number on the School Violence Scale (Estévez, 2005). 1=Never, 2=Almost never, 3=Sometimes, 4=Frequently, 5=Always, 0=I prefer not to talk.

DISCUSSION

The objective of this research, as explained, was to describe the ways in which the phenomenon of school violence is presented in the context considered, identifying the most frequent violent and disruptive behaviors carried out by high school students against their classmates, their teachers and the school, as well as the most recurrent victimization situations. For this purpose, an analysis of frequencies and percentages of the participants' responses to the School Violence Scale was carried out.

As mentioned, 97.25% of the participants in the study responded to the School Violence Scale, since there were only 12 who left the 19 items blank. This is a high response rate, considering that it is a sensitive issue for students to report, on the one hand, the behaviors of violence and disruption that they themselves have carried out, as well as, on the other hand, the experiences of victimization to which they have been subjected. In this context, the high response rate obtained could mean that the adolescents probably perceived an atmosphere of trust during the application of the instrument. Thus, it is confirmed that elements such as anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation and the exclusively scientific use of the information could be not only aspects that contribute to the ethical dimension of the research work, but also issues of relevance at the methodological level, particularly in the work with adolescents.

With regard to the prevalence of violent or disruptive behavior directed against classmates, the results of the present study indicated in summary that: a) almost three quarters (73.2%) of the students who responded to the instrument reported never having engaged in any violent or disruptive behavior against their classmates; b) one in five adolescents (21.1%) reported having carried out violent or disruptive acts occasionally, and c) less than five percent (4.5%) reported having engaged in violent or disruptive behavior against classmates on a repeated basis. Overall, a quarter (25.6%) responded that they had been violent or disruptive at least once against a classmate.

In relation to these findings, it is worth recalling the comments on some investigations in which, in order to measure bullying, students are asked to answer if they have exercised or suffered certain

behaviors of aggression among peers, without considering information related to whether these acts have been directed towards the same victim, or if they have been carried out repeatedly, or if they have occurred in conditions that put the person in a state of defenselessness, so that, in reality, the data reported by such studies would correspond to what has been referred to here as school violence in general and, in some cases, even to occasional school violence. In this context, it is clear that the findings of the present study are generally congruent with those reported in other research on bullying and school violence, both nationally and internationally, to which reference was made. For example, in the aforementioned study conducted by the OECD (2020), Mexico presented a prevalence of 23.1% (an average level with respect to the other members of that organization). In turn, according to what is reported in review and meta-analysis studies, such as those cited by Vega-Cauich (2019) and Garaigordobil et al. (2019), in Mexico there would be a prevalence close to 19% and between 8.2% and 31.3%, respectively, depending on the aggressors' point of view. Therefore, the data found in the present study would be congruent with the idea that approximately one out of every four or five students reports having exercised some action of violent or disruptive behavior against their adolescent classmates at least once.

In addition to the above, although the participants' responses indicate that about a quarter report having committed some act of violence or disruption against their classmates, there is nevertheless a large difference between the percentages of occasional and repeated violence. In the latter case, such percentages are notably lower.

In relation to the latter, it is worth mentioning that, as mentioned above, there are also studies in which the presence of repeated school violence against peers has been considered as an indicator of bullying. In the present study we consider that such information could only constitute an indication of the latter form of behavior. This is due to the fact that in order to have a precise measure of bullying, in congruence with its concept, it would be necessary to generate additional information regarding other elements such as that it occurs under conditions of asymmetry of power and that it is exercised repeatedly by a subject or group of subjects towards the same victim. In

this context, the prevalence of 4.5% of repeated violent or disruptive behavior found in this study could only be interpreted as an indication of the possible existence of bullying, although it is not possible to affirm this, given the aforementioned methodological limitation. In any case, this would be a low percentage of prevalence, although no less important or significant for that reason.

In conclusion, most of the students report not having carried out any violent or disruptive behavior against their classmates, and among the students who admit to having carried out acts of this type, the vast majority do so occasionally, and only a small percentage confess to having done so on repeated occasions.

With respect to violent or disruptive behavior towards teachers, in summary, the following results were found: a) almost three quarters (74.7%) said they had never engaged in any behavior of this type; b) 19.2% reported having done so occasionally; c) 4.8% repeatedly; and d) 24% responded that they had engaged in acts of violence or disruption at least once against a teacher. As can be seen, the participants' responses indicate that about a quarter of them have engaged in some act of violence or disruption towards teachers. This result is congruent with the study by Khoury-Kassabri *et al.* (2009), conducted with Jewish and Arab students from 7th to 11th grade in Israel, in which it was found that one in five students reported having performed acts of violence against teachers.

In the present study, it is also noteworthy that there is a large difference between the percentages of occasional and recurrent violence towards teachers, the latter being visibly lower. This finding coincides with the work of Domínguez *et al.* (2013) conducted in Spain with adolescents aged 12 to 17 years, where a prevalence of 76.4% was found for mild behaviors (never, rarely), 17.7% moderate (sometimes) and 16% severe (always).

Currently, there are few studies on student violence against teachers. However, this aspect has gradually received more attention as its relationship with teacher discomfort is being recognized (Abril, 2020). According to Gómez (2014), these actions can be understood as a power strategy used by students to diminish the teacher's authority and gain acceptance among their peers. In his research conducted with secondary school teachers in Colima, Mexico, they reported a significant increase in this type

of violence in recent years. A similar finding was obtained by Pérez *et al.* (2022) when interviewing teachers and students in secondary schools in Jalisco, Mexico. Carmona *et al.* (2020) conducted a study in five high schools in the State of Mexico with adolescents aged 15 to 19 years. The most frequent disruptive behaviors were getting up for no reason (99.1%), talking in class (98.2%), interrupting the class with jokes and comments (81.3%), laughing while the teacher explained (80.2%), intentionally making the teacher angry (47.8%) and playing during class (19.2%). According to the authors, such actions seek to test the teacher's limits and attract his or her attention, although they are not considered violence unless they are recurrent. On the other hand, the same study found 47.6% of verbal and physical aggressions against teachers.

While all of the above draws attention to the violent and disruptive behavior of students towards teachers, one aspect that was not considered in the present study was the aggressive behaviors that teachers may exercise against students. For example, in a study in Turkey, almost 55% of students reported having been exposed to emotional and/or physical violence by teachers, while 83% of teachers reported having used physical or emotional violence or both against students (Kiziltepe *et al.*, 2020). According to Bourou and Papageorgiou (2023), a strict but fair application of coexistence rules is associated with a decrease in misbehavior, which in turn has an impact on reducing situations of school violence. This could have a positive impact on the prevention of violence in both directions: from teachers to students, and vice versa.

It is well known that one of the main concerns of teachers related to their work is the adequate management of coexistence within the classroom. In this regard, several authors have drawn attention to the need to move towards new models of school discipline that transcend the authoritarian paradigm of the traditional school. As Schmill (2008) explains, although disciplinary problems are often the result of inadequate didactics, it is also true that many others originate in emotional and relational elements that condition the interaction of teachers with their students. These are the elements that the teacher must be able to handle adequately in order to make classroom discipline an instrument for the formation of values of peaceful coexistence and human development. In this regard, Loughlin (1972) already pointed out the need to promo-

te efficient communication systems in the interaction of teachers with their groups in order to establish an authentic pedagogical relationship between educator and student. Interesting and constructive proposals for school discipline management such as Curwin & Mendler's Three-Dimensional Discipline (2003) or Schmill's Intelligent Discipline (2008) could provide elements to promote transformations in this sense. It should also be considered that these approaches can be adequately integrated with the conception of conflict management as proposed in recent studies (Luna *et al.*, 2021).

The results regarding violent or disruptive behavior towards the school, in summary, showed that: a) more than 80% said they had never engaged in this type of behavior; b) 13.8% said they had done so occasionally; c) 2.7% repeatedly; and, d) 16.5% said they had committed acts of violence or disruption against the school at least once. This result contrasts with that obtained in a study carried out in high schools in the State of Mexico where 94% of students accepted having caused damage to school facilities such as desks, chairs, laboratories, bathrooms and benches (Carmona *et al.*, 2020). According to interviews conducted in the same study, the adolescents stated that they engaged in this type of behavior out of boredom or to express an idea. According to the authors, the students' lack of identity with respect to the institution, as well as their frustration with academic issues and dissatisfaction within the school, could generate anger expressed through vandalism. In the present study, it is worth noting that the most prevalent behavior was that of painting or damaging the school walls. Almost one-fifth of the participants (20.8%) admitted to having done it occasionally, 2.3% repeatedly, and 23.1% in total. In relation to this behavior, it should be kept in mind that, although the behavior of painting or damaging school walls may not necessarily be directed against the institutional authority (some adolescents scratch the walls only in order to express themselves or leave a sign of their own, for example), it should not be ruled out that some do it as an act of violence or disruption (for example, to express disagreement against the institutional authority or against the school itself). In any case, it is important to consider the conceptualization of violent or disruptive behavior, since the existence of different perceptions among individuals and, particularly, among adolescents and adults, will generate discrepancies regarding the signifi-

ce of this type of behavior as violent or disruptive, and therefore aspects concerning the context of its occurrence should always be considered for more precise attention (Luna *et al.*, 2021). Finally, it should be noted again that the responses of the participants in this issue also indicate a tendency to differentiate clearly between the percentages of occasional and recurrent prevalence.

Contribution to knowledge

In the context of the large number of studies on bullying that have been developed in recent years, this research provides elements for a broader understanding of school violence, approaching the phenomenon from a more global and comprehensive perspective. Thanks to this approach it was possible to differentiate, on the one hand, three modalities of violent or disruptive behavior depending on whether it was directed against classmates, teachers or the school. and, on the other hand, three different levels: occasional, repeated or recurrent. The analysis of the results showed that the clearest differences are found between the latter two levels in the three modalities examined, which leads to the idea that we may be dealing with two different types of violence, which may have specific characteristics in terms of their causes and dynamics within schools. This finding constitutes an important contribution to think about new research that could be aimed at explaining and understanding common and divergent aspects of both phenomena, as well as to design strategies for the prevention, regulation and attention to school violence, considering the possible different nature of the phenomenon when it occurs occasionally or recurrently.

Limitations

Among the limitations of the present study is its descriptive nature, so that for future research it is recommended to further analyze the relationship between violent and disruptive behavior and other relevant variables such as gender or the socioemotional skills of the students, in order to understand in more detail, the factors that may contribute to its emergence and development. Another limitation is that violent and disruptive behavior were studied aggregated within the same category, which is why it is recommended for future work to analyze more precisely the possible distinction and differentiated operationalization of these two forms of behavior, to the extent that this is possible according to the research context. Finally, the present study considered

the violence exercised by students towards their peers, their teachers and the school, but it is still necessary to consider other manifestations such as the violence exercised by teachers towards students, or that in which other members of the school community (management, administrative personnel and family members, among others) could be involved, in addition to that which could take place through electronic media, which should be taken into account for future research.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this research show a clear trend in the prevalence of violent and disruptive behaviors in the school setting, revealing that occasional manifestations of violence are considerably more frequent than recurrent ones. In this sense, participants showed a greater inclination towards occasional violent behaviors directed towards classmates, teachers and the school, while recurrent violence was limited. This difference in frequency suggests that there may be two types of violence with distinct causes and dynamics, an area of interest that future research should explore to better understand the factors that influence each type of violent behavior.

This study contributes to the literature by broadening the understanding of the phenomenon of school violence in adolescents, approaching it from a more global and differentiated perspective than bullying. The possibility of identifying specificities in occasional and recurrent violence highlights the need for intervention and prevention approaches adjusted to each type of behavior, considering the contexts in which they occur and the possible differences in their causes.

For future research, it is recommended to deepen the analysis of related variables, such as gender or socioemotional skills, and also to consider other manifestations of violence, including those that could involve other members of the school community or the use of electronic media. Finally, a comprehensive and differentiated approach to school violence can provide a solid basis for improving educational and intervention policies, promoting safer and more appropriate environments for the academic and social development of students.

Contribution of the authors:

Alejandro César Antonio Luna Bernal: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Research, Methodology, Validation, Visualization, Writing - original draft, revision and editing.

Ana Cecilia Valencia Aguirre: Conceptualization, Research, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing - original draft, revision and editing.

José María Nava Preciado: Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Research, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing - original draft, revision and editing.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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