







# Violence risk and emotional dependency in adulthood: a systematic mapping

## *Riesgo de violencia y dependencia emocional en adultos: un mapeo sistemático*

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### Abstract

The main objective of this systematic mapping research was to identify scientific publications on violence and emotional dependence in the last two years. The methodology used consisted of a search for documents in the following databases: Web of Science, Scopus through the search “risk\* of violence\* AND emotion\* depend\*”, and for Scielo and The Reference “Violence Emotional dependence”. Where 19 research studies were found, which comprise articles, master’s theses and doctoral dissertations. It was found that most of the research has been conducted in Latin America, especially in Peru, where the Emotional Dependence Questionnaire (CDE) of Lemos and Londoño and the Emotional Dependence Inventory (IDE) have been used, with regard to the violence variable, different types of instruments are used. It could be detected that in a large part of the explorations there is a close connection between violence and emotional dependence, producing problems in the integral health of the person. It should be emphasized that none of the research belongs to quartile level one, which would lead to the conclusion that it would be beneficial to carry out innovative research on this topic in order to optimize future studies on couple relationships.

**Keywords:** Violence, gender violence, emotional dependence, couple, systematic mapping.

### Resumen

La presente investigación de mapeo sistemático tuvo como objetivo principal identificar las publicaciones científicas que hay sobre violencia y dependencia emocional en los últimos dos años. La metodología utilizada consistió en una búsqueda de documentos en las siguientes bases de datos: Web of Science, Scopus a través de la búsqueda “risk\* of violence\* AND emotion\* dependen\*”, y para Scielo y La Referencia “Violencia Dependencia emocional”. Donde se encontraron 19 estudios de investigación, los cuales conforman artículos, tesis de maestría y doctorados. Se halló que la mayoría de investigaciones se han realizado en Latinoamérica, especialmente en Perú en los cuales se ha empleado mayormente el Cuestionario de Dependencia Emocional (CDE) de Lemos y Londoño, el Inventario de Dependencia Emocional (IDE), con relación a la variable de violencia se utilizan indistintos tipos de instrumentos. Se pudo detectar que en una gran parte de las exploraciones hay una conexión cercana entre violencia y dependencia emocional, produciendo problemas en la salud integral de la persona. Cabe recalcar que ninguna de las investigaciones pertenece al cuartil nivel uno, lo que llevaría a la conclusión que sería beneficioso llevar a cabo investigaciones innovadoras sobre esta temática a fin de optimizar futuros estudios en relaciones de pareja.

**Palabras clave:** Violencia, violencia de género, dependencia emocional, pareja, mapeo sistemático.

## INTRODUCTION

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) (2021) reports that one-third of women between the ages of 15 and 49 years report being victims of physical and sexual abuse by a partner, which could have repercussions on the victim's general well-being and increase the risk of contracting venereal diseases. Also, 30% of women in the Americas reported physical and sexual abuse by an intimate partner, and 11% reported sexual abuse by someone other than their partner.

The United Nations (UN) (2021) reports that almost 736 million women are abused by their intimate partners or third parties. The data show that the problem has not diminished in the course of the last 10 years and is known to have worsened during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Russell (2008) defines femicide as a cruel form of violence against women; it is a crime perpetrated by men persuaded by a lack of respect, hatred, satisfaction, or supposed authority over them. Likewise, femicide is a harmful mode of gender abuse that has been harming hundreds of women and girls annually in Latin America and the Caribbean; 4091 women were victims of femicide in 26 nations (17 in Latin America and 9 in the Caribbean) in 2020. There was a decrease of 10.6% in 2019, where 4576 cases were reported according to the reports of the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean in which these figures are reported (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2021a).

The ECLAC Gender Equality Observatory (2021b) states that in Latin America, there are high figures for femicide, specifically in Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and El Salvador. Seven other countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Nicaragua) reported 2019 a decrease in these cases; however, Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Panama reported a growth compared to the previous year. On the other hand, in the Caribbean, 4 out of 9 countries (Grenada et al. and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago) reported a growth in the statistics between 2019 and 2020; it should be considered that the figures are not as high as other countries due to the smaller population in those countries. Analyzing the ages of females who are victims of

femicide, the data attached in 18 countries show that it is concurrent at any stage of life. The total number of cases is highest in the 30-44 age group (344 women in 2020). Likewise, adolescents and young women between 15 and 29 years of age are in the second category with the highest incidence of femicide, with 335 affected in 2020.

On the other hand, violence and emotional dependence are strongly linked to each other, given that personality formation is constituted during the childhood phase and is influenced by family bonding. However, if any index of abuse is perceived within the parental bond, it could happen that in the future, the person presents characteristics of an emotional dependent, such as low self-esteem, self-contempt, high levels of docility, unconscious attachment to the partner and irrational beliefs (Donoso et al., 2021).

Castelló (2005) mentions that emotional dependence is the excessive need of an emotional nature that an individual feels towards his/her partner since it consists of a series of notorious and asymmetrical behaviors, such as extreme docility, obedience, compulsive idealizations about the partner, intense afflictions and fear of being abandoned, the counterproductive effect of which is that it generates an intermittent discomfort in the affected person since the most important thing for this person is the partner. Likewise, Amor and Echeburúa (2010) refer from this perspective that the person presents signs or anxious-depressive symptoms, inconveniences, or carelessness when performing certain daily activities or perhaps aspirations that have to do with the person's future, which could generate more severe problems such as post-traumatic stress symptoms and dysfunctional cognitive schemes (Buesa & Calvete, 2013).

Castelló (2005) replies that this problem is an event that has been increasing over time and will soon increase in magnitude. In addition, it is important to be able to detect it in time and, therefore, specify the behaviors that are visible in any context, such as being docile, vulnerable, yielding to everything, and easily dominated.

Some studies state that, during home confinement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, aggressive behavior in the home increased, reinforcing the various triggers of violence. The triggering factors were the extensive family confinement, the low attention to these issues in health centers, as

well as in the aid establishments and safe houses (shelters) that served to help the person legally, generating an environment of privilege and immunization of the aggressor (Medina-Gamero & Regalado-Chamorro, 2021). Being in the place where violence is suffered and being close to the person who produces it has as an immediate result the increase of abuse and injustice of the aggressor, as a consequence of 3 components that describe it: the structural element, which places in the figure of the man the reference of the determinations and the need to maintain forced control under his rules; the confinement, as a result of material impediment to get out of it and impart uninhibitedly, and the direct authority that violence applies over the woman (Lorente-Acosta, 2020).

Finally, in order to determine the risk of violence, it is important to know the factors that are related to it, given that it has been seen that it can be effectively prevented and managed (Hawkins et al., 2000; Quinsey et al., 2006). Those influencing factors are varied and complex, including personal, family, social, economic, and cultural (Arias et al., 2019).

Looking at these studies and taking into account the figures surrounding the issue of violence worldwide and how it is associated with emotional dependence, the following question was posed: What are the main findings regarding violence and emotional dependence in adults?

The present systematic mapping research has as its main objective to identify research on violence and emotional dependence and its characteristics in the last two years.

## METHOD

With respect to the methodological criteria of Petersen et al. (2008), this article presents the results of a systematic mapping determining the bibliographic use of such concepts in higher education.

Developing a sequence of phases for the development of the present study considering the determination and guidelines implemented for its production in order to guarantee a quality review work (Alexander, 2020; De la Serna-Tuya et al., 2018). There are vital stages in conducting a study of this condition: 1) establishing research questions, 2) locating the scientific product, 3) eliminating the scientific product, 4) establishing and adjusting a bibliographic background base, and 5) investigating the information (De las Heras et al., 2018; López et al., 2015; Pérez & Vladimirovna, 2017; Ramírez & García, 2018). For this reason, Table 1 shows the research questions to answer the stated objective.

**Table 1**

*Research questions*

Ask	Type of response sought
Q1 Which database does the article come from?	Web of Science, Scopus, Scielo and The Reference.
Q2 What is the name of the journal?	Name of the journal.
Q3 Repository / Quartile (level) of the journal?	Level of the journal.
Q4 How many times is the research cited?	Number of times the research has been cited.
Q5 What country is the article from?	Country of origin of the article.
Q6 What are the instruments applied in the research?	Instruments applied for each variable.
Q7 What was the result of the research?	Results of the research.

## SEARCH AND PROCEDURE

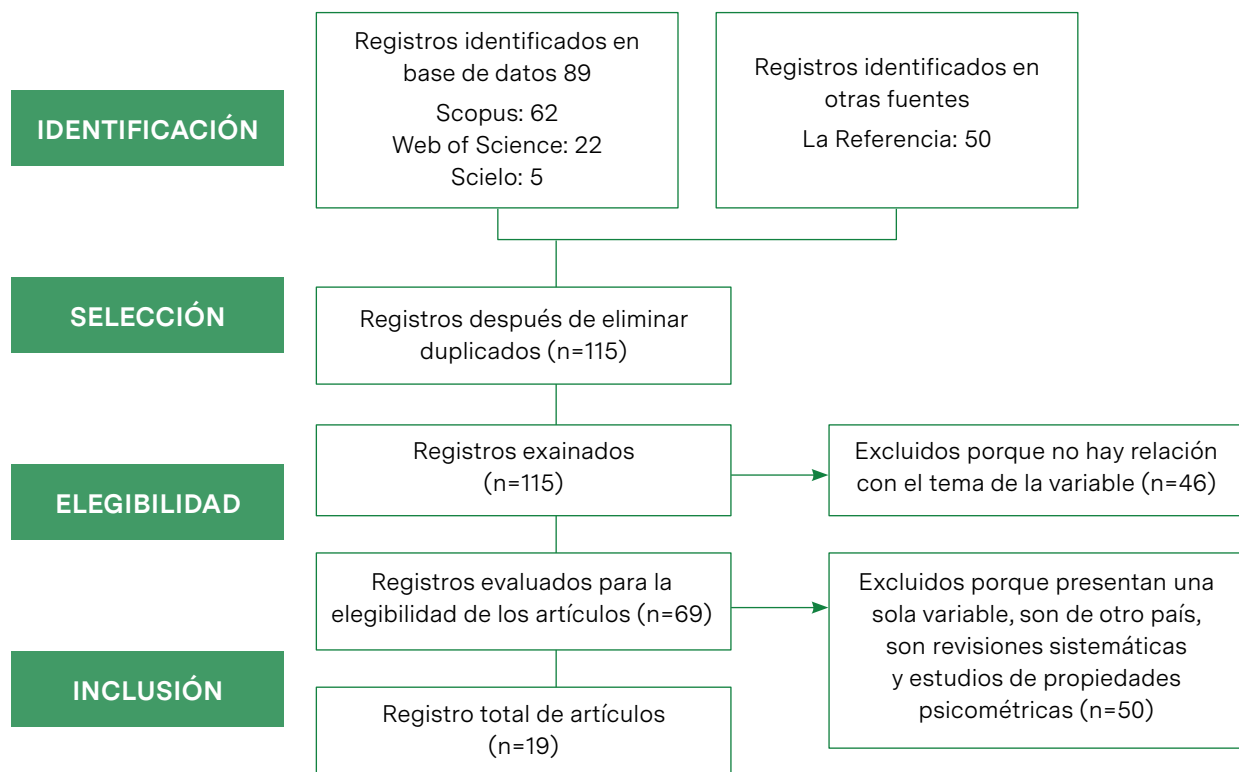
The execution of the review study was carried out by searching for scientific evidence in the international article databases Web of Science and Scopus, both of which are online platforms and are the two main databases that contain bibliographic references worldwide. As for national, it was done through Scielo, which is a multidisciplinary repository to store, preserve, and disseminate information on research articles; finally, La Referencia was consulted, which provides the location of scientific diffusions in the Latin region, where there are articles and master's and doctoral theses from universities in 8 countries that constitute this network.

As for the search procedure, it was developed as follows: first, the Boolean "TITLE-ABS-KEY(risk\* of violence\*) AND (emotion\* depend\*)" was used in Scopus, Web of Science. In Scielo and The Reference, we used: "Violence Emotional dependence." Secondly, we searched for recent

information for at most 2 years; the search was from 2020 to 2022. As a third step, repeated research that was found in the database of the selected pages was eliminated, and, finally, those studies that needed to be in accordance with the research were eliminated.

After the manual selection of research to be considered in this review study, the PRISMA (2020) methodology was applied with the aim of deducing in a more accessible way the amount of research that has been reached according to the year of publication. A total of 139 articles were found using the corresponding Boolean on the 4 pages, then the exclusion criteria were established: those that were repeated, research with only one variable, no concordance with the research topic, and psychometric studies. Finally, 19 studies met the established requirements. The complete information of all the downloaded research, as well as the final database that remained after the selection of the studies according to the proposed objective, can be found in the following link [10.5281/zenodo.7265771](https://zenodo.org/record/7265771)

**Figure 1**  
*Flowchart for the selection of admissible investigations*



Nota. Adaptado de "PRISMA 2020 explanation and elaboration: updated guidance and exemplars for reporting systematic reviews" (p. 19), por Page et al., 2021, The BMJ, 372, (160).

## RESULTS

**Table 2**

*What is the name of the magazine?*

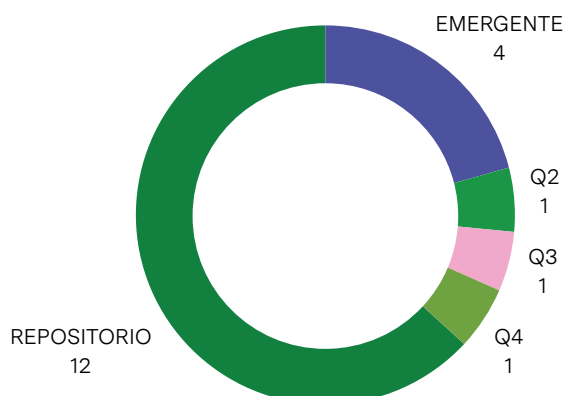
AUTHOR	TITLE	NAME
Denegri et al. (2022)	Gender violence, emotional dependence and its incidence on self-esteem in mothers of students	Social Science Journal
Momeñe et al. (2022)	Emotional dependence on the aggressor partner and its relationship to social anxiety, fear of negative evaluation and dysfunctional perfectionism	Behavioral Psychology/ Psicología Conductual - Revista de investigación en Psicología
Damonti y Leache (2021)	Factors impeding withdrawal from a violent relationship: variations based on integration and social exclusion.	Social Work Notebooks
Aiquipa-Tello y Canción-Suárez (2020)	Women survivors of intimate partner violence: psychological factors and processes involved in the decision to stay in or leave the relationship.	Advances in Latin American Psychology
Patsi Humérez.. y Requena Gonzalez (2020)	Relationship between maladaptive schemas and emotional dependence in women in situations of intimate partner violence.	Journal of Psychological Research
Bogarín et al. (2021)	Emotional dependence and cognitive distortions in women victims of spousal violence.	Journal of the scientific society of Paraguay
Concha (2020)	Emotional dependence and coping to stress in women victims of intimate partner violence, Chimbote, Peru.	SCIENDO

Table 2 shows the journals included in the systematic mapping work. They are published in Spain, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia and Paraguay.

## Level at which the consulted magazine is found

**Figure 2**

*Level of the magazine*



As shown in Figure 2, 19 research studies were found within the period 2020-2022, which are located in the different repositories mentioned above. Three articles were found in different quartile levels and four in emerging. Twelve master's and doctoral theses were also found, which were obtained through the repository La Referencia.

## Number of times the research has been cited

**Table 3**

*How many times is the research cited?*

AUTHOR	TITLE	N° SUBPOENAS
Aiquipa-Tello y Canción-Suárez (2020)	Women survivors of intimate partner violence: psychological factors and processes involved in the decision to stay in or leave the relationship.	36
Patsi Humérez.. y Requena Gonzalez (2020).	Relationship between maladaptive schemas and emotional dependence in women in situations of intimate partner violence.	17
Concha (2020)	Emotional dependence and coping to stress in women victims of intimate partner violence, Chimbote, Peru.	3
Momeñe et al. (2022)	Dependencia emocional de la pareja agresora y su relación con la ansiedad social, el miedo a la evaluación negativa y el perfeccionismo disfuncional.	1
Beraún y Poma (2020)	Emotional dependence as a risk factor for family violence, a public health problem	1
Denegri (2021)	Intimate partner violence, emotional dependence and self-esteem in mothers of students of an educational institution in the northern cone, 2021	1

Mori (2021)	Attitudes of violence against women, emotional dependence and self-esteem in patients of a Health Institute, Lima-Cercado, 2020.	1
Salazar (2020)	Emotional dependence and its relationship with depression and anxiety in women victims of violence in a forensic medical institute, Nuevo Chimbote-2019	1

Table 3 shows that the research by Aiquipa-Tello and Canción-Suárez (2020) had the highest citation followed by the study by Patsi Humérez and Requena Gonzalez (2020).

**Level at which the consulted magazine is found**

**Figure 3**

*Country of origin of the research*



Following the manual selection of the research sample to be covered in this review, Figure 3 has been prepared to show more visually the number of studies that have been obtained in

each country. These results show that in the last two years, little research has been carried out on these study variables. It should be noted that most of the studies obtained were in Peru.

## Measuring instruments for each study variable

**Table 4**

*Instruments applied*

VIOLENCE VARIABLE	EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCE VARIABLE	OTHER INSTRUMENT
Gender violence - adaptation of Castro.	Emotional Dependence Questionnaire (EDQ).	Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory.
Inventory of Violence against women.	Emotional Dependence Inventory (EDI).	Revised Conflict Resolution Tactics Scale. Conflict Resolution Tactics Scale.
Adolescent Dating Relationship Violence Inventory (CADRI).	Emotional Dependence Test (ACCA).	Young's Schematic Questionnaire.
Inventory of types of gender-based violence by Tintaya.		Automatic Thoughts Inventory IPA.
Adolescent Dating Relationship Violence Inventory (CADRI). Wolfe /Wekerle.		Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire TNNS-24.
Personalized interview with 14 core questions that explore factors of emotional dependence connected to intimate partner violence relationships.		Socioeconomic evaluation form that allowed for the analysis of risk factors for domestic violence.
Rázuri gender violence perception questionnaire.		Carver,Scheier, and Weintraub's Stress Coping Modes Questionnaire.
Scale of Attitudes towards Violence against Women in the couple relationship.		Beck Inventory II.
Instrument to measure domestic violence, developed by the researcher himself.		
Test of Attitudes to violence in the couple relationship.		
Psychological Violence Questionnaire.		



Of the instruments used in the different investigations, a diversity of these could be found, the most outstanding being the Emotional Dependence Questionnaire (CDE) of Lemos and Londoño (8) and the Emotional Dependence Inventory of Aiquipa (7). Regarding the

instruments used for the evaluation of violence, it can be observed that different instruments are used, one of them being an interview. However, Wolfe and Wekerle's Adolescent Dating Violence Inventory (CADRI) is the instrument that has been used on two occasions.

## Analysis of the results found in each study

**Table 5**

*Research results*

AUTHOR (YEAR)	TÍTULO	RESULTADOS
Denegri et al. (2022)	Gender violence, emotional dependence and its impact on self-esteem in mothers of students.	A significant relationship was found
Damonti y Leache (2021)	Factors that make it difficult to leave a violent relationship. Variations according to the situation of social integration and exclusion.	A significant relationship was found
Aiquipa-Tello y Canción-Suárez (2020)	Women survivors of intimate partner violence: factors and psychological processes involved in the decision to stay or leave the relationship.	A significant relationship was found
Patsi Humérez y Requena Gonzalez (2020)	Relationship between maladaptive schemas and emotional dependence in women in situations of intimate partner violence.	A significant relationship was found
Bogarín et al. (2021)	Emotional dependence and cognitive distortions in women victims of spousal violence.	A significant relationship was found
Pacherre (2021)	Emotional dependence and dating violence in young women from Trujillo.	A significant relationship was found
Saldaña (2020)	Emotional dependence and violence in dating relationships in university students -Trujillo.	A significant relationship was found
Niño (2021)	Emotional intelligence and emotional dependence according to the condition of violence in mothers of a health center - Chiclayo.	A significant relationship was found
Díaz (2020)	Intimate partner violence and emotional dependence in students of a private university in Trujillo.	A significant relationship was found
Mendiola (2022)	Emotional dependence and intimate partner violence in users of the Vista Alegre district hospital, Trujillo.	A significant relationship was found

Concha (2020)	Emotional dependence and ways of coping with stress in women victims of intimate partner violence, Chimbote.	No significant relationship was found
Beraún y Poma (2020)	Emotional dependence as a risk factor in family violence, a public health problem.	A significant relationship was found
Denegri (2021)	Intimate partner violence, emotional dependence and self-esteem in mothers of students of an educational institution of the northern cone.	A significant relationship was found
Mori (2021)	Attitudes of violence against women, emotional dependence and self-esteem in patients of a Health Institute, Lima-Cercado.	A significant relationship was found
Rivera (2021)	Emotional dependence as an influential factor in victims of domestic violence, women between 25 and 45 years old, district of Ayacucho.	A significant relationship was found
Urbano (2021)	Emotional dependence, attitudes towards intimate partner violence and self-esteem in students of a private university.	A significant relationship was found
Salazar (2020)	Emotional dependence and its relationship with depression and anxiety in women victims of violence in a forensic institute, Nuevo Chimbote.	A significant relationship was found
Pizarro (2022)	Emotional dependence in women victims of psychological intimate partner violence attended at the women's emergency center police station October 09-Maynas Province, Department of Loreto.	A significant relationship was found

Regarding the results found in the 19 studies, it was reported that 95% of the cases indicate a significant relationship between the variables, while only one study mentions not having found such a relationship.

## DISCUSSION

The methodology used in the present study was systematic mapping with the intention of learning about the most recent research on the risk of violence and emotional dependence given that, according to various authors (Castelló, 2005; Donoso et al., 2021), emotional dependence is a common characteristic found in people who are victims of violence.

Following the steps for a systematic mapping

according to Petersen et al. (2008) and the PRISMA methodology (Page et al., 2021), it was possible to answer the different questions posed in Table 1. Initially, it was decided to use only scientific articles; however, due to the limited information found in the different databases used (Scopus, Web of Science, and Scielo), it was decided to consult the database La Referencia to include master's and doctoral theses on this topic, taking into consideration that, according to Page et al. (2020), the use of this type of research is allowed. Figure 2 shows that a total of 7 articles and 12 theses were accepted; most of the articles are in emerging journals, and only some are in a quartile, which denotes the quality of this type of study and that more attention should be paid to it.

On the other hand, it is observed that there is a higher percentage of research on both variables in the Latin American region, especially in Peru, with 14 studies (Figure 3). These results are in

agreement with what is found in Table 3, where it can be seen that the research by Aiquipa-Tello and Canción-Suárez (2020) is the most cited (36), taking into consideration that it is a Peruvian article. Likewise, the second most cited research (17) is from Bolivia and belongs to Patsi Humérez and Requena Gonzalez (2020).

Regarding the instruments used to measure both variables, it can be seen in Table 4 that for emotional dependence, the Lemos and Londoño Questionnaire (8) is most frequently used, followed by the Emotional Dependence Inventory (EDI) of Aiquipa (7). With regard to the violence variable, the Adolescent Dating Relationship Violence Inventory (CADRI) by Wolfe and Wekerle was used in 2 studies.

Delving into the main results found in the research included for this mapping, 7 studies focused only on the 2 variables proposed (violence and emotional dependence) (Table 5), finding that there is a significant relationship between both variables (Beraún & Poma, 2020; Díaz, 2020; Mendiola, 2022; Pacherre, 2021; Pizarro, 2022; Rivera, 2021; Saldaña, 2020). These results imply that if a person is detected to have emotionally dependent characteristics, then they would be at risk of maintaining a violent relationship, which is extremely worrying given that violence leaves affective and mental well-being sequelae, for example, apprehension, sadness, self-destructive ideas, anxiety or afflictions serious enough to prevent them from carrying out their daily activities (Chafla-Quise & Lara-Machado, 2021). In addition, if the violence is physical, it can range from minor injuries to extreme injuries such as broken bones (Bott et al., 2014). This is why Ramirez (2020) indicates that, in these circumstances, one of the individual psychological factors related to violence is emotional dependence, where this issue is a subject of research within couple relationships.

Table 5 presents the studies that evaluated more variables that could be related to emotional dependence and violence. Four investigations were found that related it to self-esteem, and it could be proved in all cases that there is a significant relationship between the variables (Denegri, 2021; Denegri et al., 2022; Mori, 2021; Urbano, 2021). This relationship is explained by the characteristics of emotional dependence, which are behaviors of submission, docility, and extreme subordination towards the partner, such as fear of being left alone and seeking attention

and affection from the partner all the time (De la Villa Moral et al., 2018). Thus, Gonzalez-Bueso et al. (2018) deduce that emotional dependence is a model of inappropriate behavior characterized by the lack of affection.

Table 5 also found that there is a significant relationship with other variables such as emotional intelligence (Niño, 2021), depression and anxiety (Salazar, 2020), maladaptive schemas (Patsi et al., 2020), and cognitive distortions (Bogarín et al., 2021). As for the population most evaluated, according to previous studies, were women, married or cohabiting mothers (Bogarín et al., 2021; Aiquipa-Tello & Canción-Suárez, 2020; Concha, 2020; Denegri, 2021; Denegri et al., 2022; Mendiola, 2022; Niño, 2021; Patsi et al., 2020; Pizarro, 2022; Rivera, 2021; Salazar, 2020).

## CONCLUSIONS

Consequently, it could be said that emotional dependence and violence generate different psychological and emotional consequences and, therefore, should be addressed and studied in greater depth, especially in order to know the causes that generate them and thus be able to develop promotion programs before the problem arises.

Regarding future lines of research, it is considered necessary to highlight that research related to violence and emotional dependence is old, with 19 studies in the last 2 years. In addition, only one study was in English, so it would be interesting to consider carrying out new research on these variables in other regions and languages in order to make their importance visible in the clinical field.

Some limitations detected in carrying out this systematic mapping were the number of studies found that had to be excluded because they only addressed a single variable and focused on identifying its relationship with mental disorders and the use of psychoactive substances, among others.

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## AUTHORS ROLES

AMAP: Manuscript writing, analysis and interpretation of results.

LCH: Conception of the design, analysis of results and review.

DVC: Conception of the design, analysis of results and review.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare under oath that they have no conflict of interest in the preparation of this article.

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