

Psychological and sociodemographic variables as predictors of intimate partner violence among university students in Metropolitan Lima

Variables psicológicas y sociodemográficas como predictoras de la violencia de pareja en universitarios de Lima Metropolitana

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to determine the psychological and sociodemographic variables that predict intimate partner violence among university students in Metropolitan Lima. The design was empirical, non-experimental, and followed a predictive associative strategy. The sample consisted of 555 students from public and private universities. A sociodemographic data sheet, the Intimate Partner Violence Questionnaire (Soriano, 2006), the Romantic Love Myths Scale by Bonilla-Algovia and Rivas-Rivero (2020), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965), the Emotional Dependence Questionnaire by Lemos and Londoño (2006), and the Forgiveness in Romantic Relationships Scale by Rosales-Sarabia (2014) were used. At the bivariate level, the psychological variables associated with intimate partner violence were emotional dependence, with a medium effect size, as well as resentment, romantic love myths, and self-esteem, with small effect sizes. The sociodemographic variables associated with intimate partner violence were marital status and employment status. At the multivariate level, binary logistic regression analysis revealed that higher emotional dependence and resentment, lower genuine forgiveness and self-esteem, being separated, and working while studying predicted the presence of intimate partner violence among university students, identifying them as risk factors.

Keywords: Intimate partner violence, psychological variables, sociodemographic variables, university students.

Resumen

El objetivo del estudio fue determinar las variables psicológicas y sociodemográficas que predicen la violencia de pareja en universitarios de Lima Metropolitana. El diseño fue empírico, no experimental, de estrategia asociativa predictiva. La muestra estuvo conformada por 555 estudiantes de universidades públicas y privadas. Se usó una ficha de datos sociodemográficos, el Cuestionario de violencia en las relaciones de pareja (Soriano, 2006), la Escala de mitos del amor romántico de Bonilla-Algovia y Rivas-Rivero (2020), la Escala de autoestima de Rosenberg (1965), el Cuestionario de dependencia emocional de Lemos y Londoño (2006) y la Escala del perdón en la relación de pareja de Rosales-Sarabia (2014). A nivel bivariado las variables psicológicas que se asocian con la violencia de pareja son dependencia emocional con un tamaño del efecto mediano, así como el resentimiento, mitos del amor romántico y autoestima con magnitud pequeña. Las variables sociodemográficas que se asocian son estado civil y condición laboral. A nivel multivariado, se utilizó la regresión logística binaria, encontrándose que mayor dependencia emocional y resentimiento, menor perdón genuino y autoestima, el ser separado y trabajar a la vez que estudiar predicen la presencia de violencia de pareja en jóvenes universitarios, constituyéndose como factores de riesgo.

Palabras clave: Violencia de pareja, variables psicológicas, variables sociodemográficas, universitarios.

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INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization (2021), more than a quarter of women between 15 and 49 years old have experienced intimate partner violence at least once in their lifetime. In the Americas, lifetime prevalence is estimated at 25%. In addition, since the beginning of the pandemic, in some countries there has been a five-fold increase in online calls for support in cases of domestic violence (UN Women, 2021). Likewise, in Peru, during 2023, 53.8% of women were victims of psychological, physical or sexual violence by their partner (National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI, from their Spanish initials, 2024).

At an international level, various investigations have reported that the prevalence of intimate partner violence in the university setting ranges from 56% to 86% of the participants (Guerrero *et al.*, 2022; Huerta, 2021; Rosales *et al.*, 2017). In the national context, Zapata (2022) found that 29.5% of female university students reported having been victims of some type of violence by their partners. Similarly, a study conducted on university women with at least one previous intimate partner relationship revealed that 46% had experienced intimate partner violence. In addition, this group presented significantly lower life satisfaction scores compared to those who had not been victims of violence (Ponce-Díaz *et al.*, 2019).

Partner violence refers to mistreatment exercised by one of the partners, who pursues the achievement of a situation of conformity and control over the other (Soriano, 2011). This is repeated, cyclical, conscious and selective, which reveals its seriousness (Ayala-Albites, 2018). A quick review of the literature points to various specific risk factors for its occurrence (Moreno, 1999; Pueyo and Redondo, 2007), configured as a multicausal phenomenon, in which psychological, social, economic, cultural, and contextual factors of the couple itself interact, among others (Ocampo and Amar, 2011; Bosch and Ferrer, 2002).

Among the psychological variables most studied in relation to intimate partner violence are: at the cognitive level, the myths of romantic love; at the emotional level, self-esteem and emotional dependence; and at the behavioral level, the capacity to forgive.

The myths of romantic love are a set of socially shared beliefs about the nature of love that are embodied in specific practices and models of couple relationships (Yela, 2003; Bonilla-Algovia and Rivas-Rivero, 2020). Those who accept and internalize them are more likely to consent to and suffer intimate partner violence because they see relationships as the primary way to give meaning to their lives (Romero-Martínez, 2021). Likewise, the determination to break a violent relationship or seek help may be slowed down or delayed due to the belief that “love can do anything” and that, therefore, it is capable of prevailing over any difficulty, including that the abuser would change (Herrezuelo, 2013). In relation to this, Torrico and Alcoba (2022) found in Bolivian university students beliefs about the acceptance of the link between love and violence, and that “love must be suffered”. In addition, Gómez-Perea and Viejo (2020) found a romantic ideology profile in Spanish adolescents called “love justifies violence”.

Self-esteem, understood as a feeling of appreciation and consideration felt about oneself (Rosenberg, 1965), has shown a broad relationship with intimate partner violence, with this relationship being inverse in different populations. This link has been identified in male and female victims of intimate partner abuse in Medellín (Ocampo, 2015), Mexican indigenous women (Nava-Navarro *et al.*, 2017) Spanish women (Lara-Caba, 2020) and Ecuadorian women (Salazar-Shiguanco and Jaramillo-Zambrano, 2022), among others.

Another variable closely linked to intimate partner violence is emotional dependence, understood as a persistent pattern of unsatisfied affective deficits, which are attempted to be compensated in a dysfunctional manner through other people. It is characterized by a high demand for affection, partner relationships marked by submission and an intense need for the presence of the other. This leads to excessive attachment behaviors and a deep fear of loneliness (Castelló, 2000). This would explain the behavior of victims of violence in justifying infidelities and aggressions, as well as the constant re-engagement with the aggressor (Castello, 2005). Its association with intimate partner violence is widely supported by literature review studies (Hilario-Ramos *et al.*, 2020; Yupanqui-Garcia, 2022). In Peru, this relationship has also been evidenced in women from different places such as Pasco (Aiquipa, 2015), Tarapoto (Campos-Dasilva *et al.*, 2022),

Piura (Franco and Mendoza, 2022), as well as in adolescents from Huancavelica (Gonzales-Castro *et al.*, 2021).

For Rosales-Sarabia and Rivera (2017) forgiveness implies voluntarily abandoning the right to feel resentment, to make negative judgments, or to adopt an indifferent behavior towards the one who treated us unfairly, in addition to generating an affective change that increases positive emotions oriented towards the transgressor. Although it presents a high therapeutic potential, its manifestation may vary depending on the nature of the situation, the relationship and the damage suffered (Montes-Berges and Aranda, 2017). In the case of victims of intimate partner violence, forgetting the abuse and harm tends to occur recurrently, even when the aggressor has not shown repentance or assumed responsibility (Montilla-Jiménez *et al.*, 2011). Thus, forgiveness may be part of the so-called circle of violence (Walker 2004; cited by Vargas-Núñez *et al.*, 2018), in which after the aggression, the aggressor repents, asks for forgiveness, reconciles with the partner, to finally restart the cycle, with forgiveness functioning as a reinforcer of the maintenance of intimate partner violence (Vargas-Núñez *et al.*, 2017).

On the other hand, a widely studied set of variables corresponds to sociodemographic characteristics, including age, marital status, educational level and employment status. In this regard, several studies carried out in Latin American countries and Spain have identified as relevant factors being in middle age, being separated or divorced, belonging to a medium-low or low socioeconomic level, having precarious employment, having a significant difference in educational level with respect to the aggressor, having a low level of schooling, having children, and having experienced a history of violence in the family of origin as well as in previous relationships (Canaval *et al.*, 2007; Alonso and Labrador, 2008; Vives-Cases *et al.*, 2009; González *et al.*, 2014; Arguello *et al.*, 2023; Mamani-Portugal, 2022).

Based on the above, it is clear that intimate partner violence is a complex phenomenon, given its multicausal nature, which requires a comprehensive approach to its study that goes beyond observing its association with another isolated variable, but integrating more variables in interaction, as some authors have already done, either by considering explanatory variables (De

la Villa Moral *et al.*, 2017) or in mediation models (Urbiola *et al.*, 2019). For this reason, this research aims to determine, jointly, the psychological and sociodemographic variables that predict intimate partner violence in university students in Metropolitan Lima.

METHOD

Design

An empirical design study, with a predictive and cross-sectional associative strategy (Ato *et al.*, 2013), as it aims to answer a problem posed by psychology that involves analyzing the functional relationship of variables, specifically, to establish the prediction of a criterion variable (intimate partner violence) based on different predictor variables (psychological and sociodemographic).

Participants

A total of 555 university students, of both sexes, from public and private universities in the city of Lima were evaluated. In this sense, it is observed that women (50.1%) slightly predominate in comparison to men (49.9%). In addition, there is markedly more evidence of young people aged 18 to 29 years (94.8%) compared to adults aged 30 to 59 years (5.2%) -criteria for these age groups established by the technical standard of the Ministry of Health (MINSA, 2016). Regarding marital status the majority of examinees were single (90.6%) and the lowest proportion separated or divorced (0.7%). Finally, the highest proportion had no children (92.3%) and did not work (63.8%). The sample used was non-probabilistic and intentional. The universities were chosen according to their status as public universities (63.4%) with the largest number of students and private universities (36.6%), choosing the most representative universities in Lima. The instruments were applied in person.

Instruments

Sociodemographic data sheet, designed by the researchers in order to determine sociodemographic variables such as sex, age group, marital status, presence of children and employment status.

Questionnaire for the study of violence in intimate partner relationships (Soriano, 2006), version adapted by González-Gijón and Soriano-Díaz (2021) for young couples, whose objective is to evaluate the incidence of violence in couple relationships. The authors define partner violence as various forms of abuse that, carried out by one of the partners, have the purpose of establishing control and compliance of the other. The questionnaire is made up of 20 items grouped into five factors: emotional abuse, physical and psychological abuse, personal devaluation, social and economic control, and sexual abuse. The assessment is given through a Likert scale ranging from never (1) to always (5). In this study, adequate fit indices were found in the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (CFI=.985; TLI=.982; RMSEA=.03; SRMR=.05) and acceptable reliability coefficients (α =.90; ω =.901) (Brown, 2015; Meneses *et al.*, 2013).

Romantic love myths scale of Bonilla-Algovia and Rivas-Rivero (2020), which aims to measure the level of acceptance of romantic love myths. These are conceptualized as the set of socially shared beliefs about the nature of love (Yela, 2003). The scale is unidimensional and consists of 11 items that present a Likert scale from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5). The study found acceptable fit indices according to the CFA (CFI=.935; TLI=.919; RMSEA=.084; SRMR=.081) and adequate reliability coefficients (α =.81; ω =.818).

Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (1965), in its version adapted by Atienza *et al.* (2000), seeks to measure the level of self-esteem, which the original author of the scale defines as the global attitude that a person has regarding his or her worth and importance. In Atienza's version, a unidimensional structure was found for the 10 items that make up the scale, which are evaluated on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). In this study the unidimensional structure yielded adequate fit indices in the CFA (CFI=.959; TLI=.947; RMSEA=.078; SRMR=.077) and adequate reliability coefficients (α =.848; ω =.864).

Emotional dependence questionnaire by Lemos and Londoño (2006), which aims to evaluate the level of emotional dependence understood as a constant pattern of unsatisfied affective needs that are attempted to be compensated in a maladaptive way through other people (Castelló, 2000). The questionnaire presents 23 items,

distributed in six dimensions: separation anxiety, affective expression of the partner, modification of plans, fear of loneliness, borderline expression and attention seeking. The questionnaire presents a 6-point Likert scale ranging from completely false for me (1) to it describes me perfectly (6). For this study the fit indices of the CFA were adequate (CFI=.993; TLI=.991; RMSEA=.031; SRMR=.046) and adequate reliability coefficients (α =.945; ω =.946).

Forgiveness in the couple relationship scale of Rosales-Sarabia (2014), in the version developed by Rosales-Sarabia and Rivera-Aragón (2017), which aims to measure both genuine forgiveness and resentment in the couple relationship. The first is defined as a set of emotions and thoughts that reflect an affective change, characterized by an increase in positive feelings and a reduction in negative affectivity towards the partner after a series of transgressions. The second is defined as the set of emotions, thoughts and behaviors that reflect intense negative affectivity after one or several transgressions committed by the partner (Rosales-Sarabia, 2014). It consists of 11 items, which show a four-point Likert scale (strongly disagree=1; strongly agree=4) and are distributed in two dimensions (genuine forgiveness and resentment). In the research, the fit indices of the CFA were adequate (CFI=.982; TLI=.977; RMSEA=.057; SRMR=.054) and acceptable reliability coefficients for both genuine forgiveness (α =.889; ω =.89) and resentment (α =.70; ω =.706).

Data analysis Methods

For the calculation of statistical power, the sample size, the significance level, the proportion of cases, the number of predictors and their average odds ratio were considered, resulting in a value of 1.00. In determining the psychometric properties of the instruments, confirmatory factor analysis was used to establish the validity of internal structure, being evaluated through the fit indices (CFI, TLI, RMSEA and SRMR). Likewise, reliability was by internal consistency based on the alpha and omega coefficients. For the bivariate inferential analysis, the normality of the variables was previously analyzed with the Shapiro Wilk test, which determined the use of nonparametric tests, Spearman's Rho for correlations, Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis for comparisons with their respective effect sizes of biserial correlation and epsilon squared.

For the multivariate analysis, the use of multiple linear regression was initially considered. However, in the preliminary evaluation, the assumptions of independence (Durbin-Watson = 1.43 < 1.5), homoscedasticity (non-uniform distribution of the residuals) and normality of the residuals (Shapiro-Wilk = 0.957; $p < .001$) were not satisfied. For this reason, it was decided to use the logistic regression, since, like multiple regression, it allows predicting a dependent variable from multiple independent variables, but without requiring the fulfillment of assumptions such as normality or homoscedasticity (Alderete, 2006), being only necessary the fulfillment of non-collinearity (Pérez, 2004). For this purpose, the variable intimate partner violence was dichotomised, with a value of 1 for the presence of intimate partner violence and 0 for its absence. In addition, the assumption of non-collinearity was assessed, finding acceptable values for the variance inflation factor ($VIF < 10$) and tolerance ($> .10$) in all the independent variables to be analysed. Likewise, for each predictor of the model, the odds ratio and its respective confidence interval were reported, as their use is suggested in logistic regression models (Schiaffino et al., 2003; Cerda et al., 2013). Finally, the explanatory power of the model for intimate partner violence was determined using Nagelkerke's R^2 and, for each variable, the odds ratio.

Ethical aspects

The research was approved by the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos through Rectoral Resolution N° 006081-2023-R/UNMSM. For the evaluation of the sample, we coordinated with the universities to obtain the corresponding permissions. All the instruments selected are free to use. Likewise, the application protocol included, in addition to the instruments, the informed consent, in which the objective and nature of the study were explained. The confidential and anonymous nature of the evaluation was emphasized, indicating that the results would not be communicated to third parties and that their use would be limited exclusively to the purposes of this research.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the correlation between intimate partner violence with emotional dependence, genuine forgiveness, resentment, romantic love myths and self-esteem. According to the p -value $< .05$, it can be affirmed that there is a statistically significant and direct relationship between partner violence with emotional dependence, resentment and romantic love myths, but an inverse relationship with self-esteem. Likewise, according to the correlation coefficient (r), a medium effect size is observed in the case of emotional dependence ($< .30$), but small in the other cases (Ellis, 2010).

Table 1
Correlation between intimate partner violence and other variables

		ED	GF	RE	MRL	SE
Intimate partner violence	r	.358	.028	.263	.143	-.285
	p	<.001	.512	<.001	<.001	<.001
	n	555	555	555	555	555

Note: r =Spearman's rho; n =sample; p =significance level; ED=Emotional dependence; GF=Genuine forgiveness; RE=Resentment; MRL=Myths of romantic love; SE=Self-esteem.

Table 2 shows that according to the p -value there are no statistically significant differences ($p > .05$) in intimate partner violence according to sex, age group or presence of children, showing similar levels of victimization with respect to intimate partner violence. On the other hand, in the case

of employment status, there were statistically significant differences ($p < .05$). Thus, according to the median values, those who work are those who present higher levels of intimate partner violence (32) compared to those who do not work (29), this difference having a small effect size ($r_{bis} < .30$) (Ellis, 2010).

Table 2*Comparison of intimate partner violence according to sociodemographic variables*

Group	Intimate partner violence			
	Median	U de Mann Whitney	p	r _{bis}
Man	29	37790	.704	.018
Woman	30			
Young	29	6480	.17	.15
Adult	32			
Not working	29	31589	.027	.112
Working	32			
With children	32	10046	.338	.087
No children	29			

Note: p=significance level; r_{bis}=biserial correlation

Table 3 shows that there are statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in intimate partner violence according to marital status. In this sense, according to the median values, it is the unmarried who present lower levels

of intimate partner violence (29) and it is the separated who have experienced higher levels of intimate partner violence (44.5). On the other hand, according to the ϵ^2 value, the effect size is small ($< .06$) (Ellis, 2010).

Table 3*Comparison of intimate partner violence according to marital status*

	H	Median				p	ϵ^2
		Single	Married	Common-law partner	Separated		
Intimate partner violence	9.64	29	34.5	29.5	44.5	.022	.017

Note: Kruskal Wallis' H=H; p=significance level; ϵ^2 =epsilon squared

With respect to the logistic regression analysis, the overall test of the model presents a p-value $< .05$, indicating that the selected variables can explain intimate partner violence. On the other hand, the Nagelkerke logistic regression coefficient R² indicates that the model composed of the variables predicts the presence of intimate partner violence by 25.8%.

Table 4 shows that the quantitative variables that statistically significantly ($p < .05$) predict the presence of intimate partner violence are more emotional dependence and resentment, as well as less genuine forgiveness and self-esteem. In the case of qualitative predictor variables it was

necessary to form a set of design variables to represent the variable categories, for which the reference cell coding method is used (Hosmer et al., 2013). This involves assigning a reference group for each variable against which the remaining categories are interpreted. In the case of marital status, the reference group is "single" and for employment status it is "not working". Likewise, marital status and employment status are statistically significant ($p < .05$) in predicting the presence of intimate partner violence.

On the other hand, the odds ratio values reflect that the greater the emotional dependence, the greater the probability of experiencing intimate

partnerviolence, the less genuine forgiveness, the 1.061 (1/0.942) times the probability, the greater the resentment, the 1.138 times the probability, the less self-esteem, the 1.094 (1/0.914) times the probability, those who are separated are 41.15 times more likely than those who are single, and those who work while studying are 2.117 times

more likely than those who only study. Therefore, presenting more emotional dependence and resentment, less genuine forgiveness and lower self-esteem, as well as being separated and working while studying are predictors of suffering intimate partner violence, being separated the strongest predictor.

Table 4

Multivariate analysis of predictor variables of intimate partner violence.

Predictor	Estimator	Standard Error	Z	p	Odds ratio	95% CI of the OR	
						Inferior	Superior
Constant	-1.081	1.245	-0.868	.385	0.339	0.029	3.893
Emotional dependence	0.024	0.007	3.175	.001	1.025	1.009	1.04
Genuine forgiveness	-0.059	0.025	-2.354	.019	0.942	0.896	0.99
Resentment	0.129	0.060	2.130	.033	1.138	1.010	1.282
Myths of romantic love	0.025	0.019	1.261	.207	1.026	0.986	1.067
Self-esteem	-0.089	0.027	-3.27	.001	0.914	0.866	0.965
Gender¹							
Female – Male	-0.097	0.283	-0.342	.732	0.907	0.520	1.583
Age group²							
Adult – Young	-0.427	0.907	-0.470	.638	0.652	0.11	3.863
Marital status³							
Married – Single	-0.060	1.069	-0.057	.955	0.941	0.115	7.66
Cohabitant – Single	-1.066	0.782	-1.362	.173	0.344	0.074	1.596
Separated – Single	3.717	1.584	2.345	.019	41.15	1.842	919.17
Employment status⁴							
Working – Not working	0.750	0.29	2.582	.01	2.117	1.198	3.742
Presence of children⁵							
With children – No children	0.762	0.593	1.286	.198	2.144	0.670	6.858

Note: Z=Z score; p=significance level; OR=Odds ratio; CI=confidence interval; ¹reference group male; ²reference group young; ³reference group single; ⁴reference group not working; ⁵reference group no children

DISCUSSION

When examining the association between psychological variables with intimate partner violence, at a bivariate level of association, a significant and direct relationship was observed with emotional dependence, resentment, romantic love myths, and an inverse relationship

with self-esteem. The effect size is medium for emotional dependence (<.30) and small with the other psychological variables.

At the emotional level, according to Castello (2000), dependence manifests the existence of unsatisfied emotional needs, exaggerated affective need, fear of loneliness, so they cling to their partner, as reported in Peru by Aiquipa (2015), Campos-Dasilva et al. (2022), Franco

and Mendoza (2022), and Gonzales-Castro et al. (2021), despite being partners without a cohabitation bond, it is likely that other variables of the family and psychosocial context reinforce dependence.

The other emotional variable is self-esteem, and its inverse relationship with intimate partner violence shows that it affects the person's self-esteem. This finding is evidence of what Castello (2000) indicated in his theoretical approach to emotional dependence.

The presence of both emotional variables increases tolerance to the abuse received and makes it difficult to end the relationship, as reported by several studies in different populations such as those of Ocampo (2015), Nava-Navarro et al. (2017), Lara-Caba (2020) and Salazar-Shiguano and Jaramillo-Zambrano (2022).

When analyzing the behavioral variable of forgiveness in the couple context, it is observed that genuine forgiveness is not relevant at the bivariate level, but it does acquire significance in the context of the multivariate analysis, in which the multiple relationships with the other predictor variables are considered. It is important to note that forgiveness does not refer to excusing or condoning a transgression, and it is possible for forgiveness to occur without there necessarily being reconciliation (Freedman, 1998). In the context of intimate partner violence, forgiveness can have negative connotations, since it could reinforce power inequalities in abusive relationships and even resemble tolerance of abuse (Lamb, 2002). However, Taylor (2004) refers that forgiveness can also have a self-healing effect favoring emotional well-being, Toussaint et al., (2012), report that people who forgive have fewer physical health problems and become less depressed (Brown, 2003), their quality of sleep improves (Stoia-Carballo et al., 2008), and they have greater life satisfaction (Macaskill, 2012).

In this regard, it should be clarified that genuine forgiveness and resentment are two points within a continuum in which a low score in resentment implies a higher level of forgiveness and vice versa (McCullough & Witvelt, 2002; Fincham & Beach, 2002; McCullough et al., 1998). In this context, genuine forgiveness is assumed to represent the positive and prosocial aspects of forgiveness towards the aggressor and resentment as the negative ones (Rosales-Sarabia et al., 2018).

This supports that the association of intimate partner violence with genuine forgiveness is direct and with resentment is inverse, since in the case of resentment it is highly probable that the violence persists after reconciliation, while in the case of genuine forgiveness it is because the transgressions ceased, resulting in effective emotional reparation.

Expanding on resentment, Worthington (2006) points out that in the act of forgiveness there is a change at the affective level, with an immediate decrease in negative emotions towards the aggressor, which gives way to the acceptance of the continuity of the relationship. However, in violent relationships this continuity could imply the subsequent persistence of aggressions in the long term, setting up the cycle of violence once again.

At the cognitive level, the myths of romantic love, its significant association, reveals the presence of beliefs of acceptance of the link between love and violence, which increases the possibility of being victims and what is more serious of naturalizing violence in the relationship (Romero-Martínez, 2021). This will be a barrier when they want to end the relationship or seek help to end it (Herrezuelo, 2013; Bonilla-Algovia and Rivas-Rivero, 2020). The identification of these myths regarding love will contribute to the detection of people with higher vulnerability to experience maltreatment events in their relationship. However, it is also important to clarify that at the multivariate level these myths are no longer significant. This could be explained by the joint presence of emotional variables such as emotional dependence and self-esteem, which also include cognitions close to romantic love myths. However, this assumption would have to be corroborated by further studies.

When reviewing the sociodemographic variables, similar levels of victimization were found. There are no significant differences according to sex (being male or female), age group (being young or adult) and presence of children. In relation to this, UN Women (2021) points out that being young (women aged 15 years or older) makes them more vulnerable to being victims of intimate partner violence (Alonso and Labrador, 2008; Vives-Cases et al., 2009; González et al., 2014; Arguello et al., 2023; Mamani-Portugal, 2022). However, this trend was not reflected in the findings of this study, possibly because the sample is composed of people with college education and are mostly

single (Ackerson *et al.*, 2007; Flake., 2005; Gage & Hutchinson., 2006). In this sense, having higher education could act as a protective factor against intimate partner violence.

In contrast, being separated and working while studying emerge as the most significant risk factors among those analyzed. Although several studies have indicated that single people have higher levels of victimization (Argüello *et al.*, 2023; Rodríguez, 2021), which does not coincide with the findings of this study, this discrepancy could be explained by the influence of university education level as a protective factor. However, another possible explanation suggests that both conditions are associated with dysfunctional family environments and dynamics, which would highlight the influence of the social context in the genesis of intimate partner violence. These findings underscore the importance of integrating more and more individual, sociodemographic and psychosocial variables in predictive models to obtain a more complete and accurate analysis.

Multivariate analysis reveals that people with higher emotional dependence and resentment, lower genuine forgiveness and self-esteem, as well as those who are separated and work while studying, have a higher probability of experiencing intimate partner violence. In other words, these conditions allow predicting the occurrence of this phenomenon. Thus, these results suggest that these variables may act as risk factors, since they favor the permanence of violent and dysfunctional relationships, in addition to generating negative consequences for the physical and emotional health of the victims. It is important to point out the limitations of the study, including the non-probabilistic sampling technique that does not allow the results to be generalized to the reference population. In addition, being a cross-sectional study, it was not possible to control for temporality in the determination of the predictive and dependent variables. This is especially relevant in complex phenomena such as intimate partner violence, where a factor that initially represents a risk, such as low self-esteem, can be further deteriorated as a result of persistent exposure to abuse.

Therefore, it is recommended that other researchers replicate this investigation with larger samples and in populations of different age groups, in order to evaluate the consistency of the results and broaden the scope of the study. In addition, it is recommended to propose studies that eval-

uate other factors associated with victimization in the intimate partner relationship, in order to propose more complex explanatory models with more empirical evidence, integrating other socio-demographic and sociocultural variables.

CONCLUSIONS

The research has been able to identify the psychological and sociodemographic factors that predict relationship victimization in college students. In a bivariate approach, the variables emotional dependence, resentment, romantic love myths and self-esteem, marital status and employment status are associated with relationship victimization. More specifically, from a multivariate approach, more emotional dependence and resentment, less genuine forgiveness and self-esteem, as well as being separated and working while studying are characteristics that together show a good predictive capacity for victimization in the intimate partner relationship, constituting risk factors of importance both at the research and social levels, since they can be considered relevant to include in the design of effective preventive interventions.

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