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Stereotypes and social representations of men that frame social imaginaries in gender violence against women

Los estereotipos y representaciones sociales del hombre que enmarcan los imaginarios sociales en la violencia de género contra la mujer

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Abstract

A reflection of the man from the mistreatment behaviors manifested in the woman due to alcohol, jealousy, economic dependency and parenting patterns. This study seeks to describe the aggressive stereotypes of men in the Municipality of Soacha, Comuna 4, Altos de Cazucá, with the historical-hermeneutical approach of descriptive study; data collection was carried out through 6 in-depth interviews and non-participant observation of two women victims of abuse.

Therefore, the research proposes a profile of the abusive man according to the behaviors and typologies exposed, trying to group these men based on their personal characteristics and styles of violence. Consequently, it is necessary to delve into this social problem and learn beyond a stereotype or common image of the abusive person.

Resumen

Una reflexión del hombre a partir de conductas de maltrato manifestadas en la mujer por causa del alcohol, los celos, la dependencia económica y pautas de crianza. En este estudio se busca describir los estereotipos agresivos del hombre en el Municipio de Soacha, Comuna 4, Altos de Cazucá, a través de la utilización del enfoque histórico-hermenéutico de estudio descriptivo; la recolección de datos se realizó a través de 6 entrevistas a profundidad y observación no participante a dos mujeres víctimas de maltrato. Por lo tanto, la investigación plantea un perfil del hombre maltratador de acuerdo a los comportamientos y tipologías expuestas, tratando de agrupar a estos hombres a partir de sus características personales y estilos de violencia. En consecuencia, es necesario profundizar en esta problemática social y conocer más allá de un estereotipo o imagen común de la persona maltratadora.

Palabras clave/ Keywords

Behavior, male, mistreatment, stereotypes.

Comportamiento, hombre, maltrato, estereotipos.

Introduction

This document proposes a reflection on men in the contemporary family scenario that allows us to visualize how stereotypes and social representations have been modified in relation to their roles and the role of socialization processes that frame social imaginaries in gender violence. In this framework, it is important to start by stating that according to the World Health Organization, the mistreatment of women is a major public health problem, a situation that poses in contemporary societies to face problems of psychological, sexual,

physical and verbal nature that generate abuse and gender inequality (Gómez, Ganga & Paillalef, 2017).

Thus, 3 out of every 10 women worldwide have been victims of physical and/or sexual violence by men, most of which occurs in the family setting (Osborne, 2008). Spousal violence has become one of the most serious problems in today's society, adopting complex typologies such as psychological, sexual, verbal and physical abuse, to the point of causing homicide in the couple.

The man who is associated with the mistreatment of women, includes different forms of psychological mistreatment from intimidation, deprivation of freedom and rights to his partner. Therefore, habitual abuse or mistreatment could be considered as a pattern of behavior. Thus, violence against women is a harmful behavior that has been entrenched throughout history, in the midst of a macho society, creating inequality and violent behavior. In Colombia, the regulatory framework in relation to domestic violence through Law 599 of 2000, states that the person who physically or psychologically mistreats any member of the family nucleus, incurs a crime, raising the interest of the State in providing elements to protect the rights of women against domestic abuse (Callejas, León & Montero, 2013).

However, in Bogota there are a large number of cases of intimate partner violence, where the man has been the main aggressor, presenting in 2019 a total of 11,947 cases of violence at the national level according to the National Reference Center on violence, figures of this being 66.14%, with a rate of 5,854 in an age range of 30 to 50 years. In the municipality of Soacha according to the Mayor's Office in 2018, prevention and awareness actions have been developed highlighting the importance of not allowing or tolerating any type of aggression or mistreatment towards women.

Based on the above, the following reflection arises: What are the stereotypes and social representations of men in relation to gender violence against women? This raises the need and relevance of describing and analyzing the most frequent male behaviors that can enhance aggression against women, such as alcoholism, jealousy, economic dependence and parenting patterns.

Similarly, it is important to show in this research the typologies that complement men's behaviors related to violence against women such as lack of control over anger, difficulties in expressing emotions,

cognitive distortions, deficits in communication and problem-solving skills and low self-esteem (Loinaz, Echeburúa & Ullate, 2012).

This type of violence is a material or symbolic attack that affects freedom and dignity and produces short-, medium- and long-term effects on the physical, moral and psychological integrity of women (Gines, 2012). Similarly, it is very important to note that any type of gender-based violence represents the use of power to limit and repress the other (Gallardo & Gallardo, 2019).

Finally, violence against women and men's behavior determine that the worst aspect of abuse is not the violence itself but the mental torture and living in fear and terror (Rojas et al., 2019). Therefore, the research makes a profile of the male abuser according to the behaviors and typologies exposed, trying to group from personal characteristics and styles of violence. Consequently, it is necessary for the social sciences to delve deeper into this social problem and to know more than a stereotype or common image of men as abusive agents.

Materials and Methods

For this research it was necessary to use the historical-hermeneutic approach, this allows an approach to the stereotypes and social representations of men's aggressive behaviors in gender violence, this approach allowed understanding and interpreting these social representations in a specific context (Hidalgo & Cruz, 2015). On the other hand, this study is descriptive, it consists of getting to know the predominant behaviors and attitudes of men through the exact description of the women interviewed (Britto & Marcon, 2019).

Thus, the modality according to the research was life history, where two stories were collected and each of them with three sessions, since, whose main object is the analysis and transcription that the researcher performs as a result of the stories of a person about his or her life or specific moments of it (Galeano, 2018).

On the other hand, the research procedure included 5 accounts and 6 documents extracted from third parties, i.e., accounts and contributions made by other people on the stereotype of men in the Life Histories (Fernández, 2015). With this modality, we come to understand the cause and effect of men's violence against women.

Its cognitive purpose will be descriptive, since it allows us to find more specific aspects of how men living in commune 4 of Soacha exercise violence against their partner or spouse. Given this, for the data collection we made use of intermediaries, and thus we were able to reach the president of the Junta de Acción Comunal (Community Action Board); who coordinated and facilitated the approach with these two women social leaders, who wanted to share their life story since they were victims of abuse within marriage, and they are 44 and 47 years old.

Therefore, two in-depth interviews and non-participant observation of women were carried out, and two inhabitants of commune 4 of Altos de Cazucá in Soacha, Cundinamarca were selected.

Results

Men's behavior changes under the effects of massive alcohol consumption, they tend to have violent behaviors and the relationship they have with their partner becomes unstable, destroys health and ends up completely changing the way of thinking and behavior of a person. This, concludes that alcoholism is one of the biggest problems that usually occur in men and mostly is a trigger for gender violence (Sanchez & Mendez, 2015).

Therefore, the accounts affirm that the pattern of characteristics that predict which role is assumed by whom is associated with having suffered high levels of violence during childhood and that become repetitive in the constitution of a family (Fiestas, Rojas, Gushiken & Gozzer, 2012). This result is associated with alcohol consumption, low academic level and low income (Sánchez & Méndez, 2015).

On the other hand, it is evident that women's economic dependence is a factor of greater vulnerability, since men, by providing economic support, influence women's domination, accentuating inequality and imbalance in decision-making. In other words, in the women's accounts, men exercise control over financial resources (Anaconda, 2009).

In addition, there is a stereotype of men in the face of economic violence in marriage expressing that there are different kinds of aggressions that are not easy to perceive, since they are framed within social scenarios where, traditionally, men have had greater control

over women. In these cases, some men use their economic power to control their partner, to the point of supervising and limiting the decisions that she can make both in personal matters and in household matters (San segundo & Codina, 2019).

For this reason, the economic violence evidenced in the two accounts is characterized as acts of force or power exercised by the man against the woman, as it violates her rights. This was manifested in acts that limited, controlled or prevented the management of income within the household, highlighting the social representations against the figure of authority of the man and submission of the woman (López, 2017).

It is evident, in the accounts that jealousy in men is caused as a painful consequence of frustration, a passion lived in anguish, anger, spite, a suffering engendered and exasperated by the image of a rival (Santiago & de Pedro, 2019). It can be said that they are a feeling that men do not control due to the pain of frustration or excessive concern about infidelity, thus causing an emotional disturbance that leads to the development of behaviors such as monitoring and controlling everything the partner does.

It is evident in the stories that men have followed a macho lineage, where they are the ones who impose the rules in the home, have power and dominion, and expect women to submit to their orders, and if they do not, they become suspects of infidelity. According to the study made in the Community Responses to Domestic Violence against Women, machismo is one of the main causes of violence against women, as pointed out by leaders of grassroots organizations and women who participate in organizations (Oblitas, Cáceres & Pacheco, 2007).

In this way, in the stories it is evident that jealousy is a psychological alteration that promotes strong reactions in men (Echeburúa, Amor & De Corral, 2009), to illustrate the victims said how these reactions were by their partner and as for anger, this emotion is usually accompanied by certain physical gestures, such as frowning, clenching teeth, feeling hot, clenching fists or swelling the jugular vein (Valiente, 2002).

It is evident that men who exercise violence against women throughout their lives have lived with people with violent behavior, were abused as children and witnessed violence from their father towards their mother (De Vargas, Ropero, Amar & Amarís, 2003). Undoubtedly, it could be said that men are not victims just because they witness violence between their parents in childhood, but because they live in

violence, they are victims of psychological violence, sometimes also physical, and that they grow up believing that violence is a normal relationship pattern between adults (Riquelme, Cánovas, Orellana & Saéz, 2019).

Therefore, the intergenerational transmission of violence in men is based on manifestations that are repeated from one generation to the next, this idea is related to the theory of social learning where abusers come from abusive families and through modeling have learned it (Caiza, 2020). On the other hand, studies conducted with families that present problems of violence show a predominance of authoritarian family structures, in which the distribution of power follows the parameters dictated by cultural stereotypes (De Vargas, Ropero, Amar, & Amarís, 2003).

In other words, the stories reveal a hierarchical structure in which the man predominates over his wife and children, giving him the power to abuse. Likewise, the man tends to vent his anger specifically on the person he perceives as more vulnerable and in a social and family environment where it is easier to hide what has happened.

This raises a reflection on how violent men are not usually mentally ill, but present significant psychological deficits that are susceptible to treatment, it is a learned behavior on the part of the abuser. Therefore, prevention of future victims also makes psychological treatment of the aggressor advisable (Arias, Arce, & Vilaríño, 2013).

It is for this reason that the relationship between cultural factors and gender violence, there is empirical evidence that when correlating variables such as race, color and culture, it has been found that men who have the belief about the cultural right or acceptance as a normal behavior of subordination of women to men (Cavanaugh and Gelles, 2005), Gamboa et al, (2016), are more convinced of their right to be abusive or mistreating, and therefore, legitimize violence as lack of respect, rebelliousness of the woman or inability to attend to it; as is the case of African Americans and Latinos.

The violent man can be anyone, regardless of his socioeconomic position, race, level of education or whether he lives in rural or urban areas; male violence transcends any social condition, because it is a problem of inequality in the exercise of power between men and women (Solórzano, 2002). Furthermore, violence, as such, is the weapon par excellence of patriarchy, neither religion, nor education, nor laws, nor customs or any other mechanism would have achieved

the historical submission of women, if all this had not been reinforced with violence, a coercive device, whose objective is to oppress and control women (Varela, 2014).

The more violent a man is, the more admirable he assumes himself to be and the more manly he will feel within the generic codes (Ramírez, 2002).

Spousal violence is more exercised by men against women, but it is not only about behaviors that denote that women in society demand in a macho way to remain in her role as caregiver and organizer of the home (Haydar, Hamodi, Salazar, Rodríguez & Jiménez, 2019). In addition, she must be efficient in everything if she decides to reconcile work, motherhood, family, she has to be impeccable and full of health and of course, that she is the best sexual lover (Castañeda, 2019).

In addition to this, there is another factor that influences men to be abusive, jealousy, which leads to aggressive behavior, which occurs when faced with the possessive behavior of men (Bascón, Saavedra & Arias, 2013). The reaction produced by jealousy makes men get upset and become violent, which causes them to try to impose their authority and react violently. This factor can be unraveled from a disease produced by alcohol consumption, called Celotipia, strongly associated with alcoholism (Axt, Lagos & Henríquez, 2019).

Similarly, physical violence in gender-based violence validates male identity, as a modeling of it, as an exercise of power, presence, visibility and group reference, respect and as a generator of fear in the other and control of one's own fear (Menú & Segovia, 2019). Similarly, in this type of violence the intimidation and reduction to the victim is supported and enhances the power relationship in favor of the aggressor, directly attacking the physical integrity through, blows, kicks, throwing objects to the body, threatening with weapons and other objects (Vázquez, Hurtado & Baños, 2018).

On the other hand, gender differences in status and power for men, beliefs and behaviors in their relationships are based on an ethic of violation and aggression towards others (Díaz & Arias 2001). Thus, in the hierarchical structure of gender division, individual men maintain the social, cultural, political and economic structure of oppression towards women (Ramírez, 2002).

Therefore, it is believed in society that the female sex is synonymous with weakness, where women can do whatever they want. Then, sexual

violence is a form that involves acts that are considered with greater power over the victim, the woman, who is forced against her will, it is a problem present in all cultures and societies (Hermosa & Polo, 2018). Also, another type of violence refers to economic violence, which is based on controlling the access of the whole family to money, blackmail and control of family income, in order to maintain authority and gain power within the group (Haydar, Hamodi, Salazar, Rodríguez & Jiménez, 2019).

On the other hand, in a couple's relationship, the man is the one who forces the other by means of force, threats, blackmail, bribery, intimidation or any other form that annuls or limits personal will, to have relations or perform unwanted sexual practices. This type of violence triggers emotional and psychological reactions among which are guilt, shame, depression, anxiety and phobias (Rodríguez, Hernández & Tarquino, 2015).

In this sense, it is important to mention certain aspects of the historical patriarchy that has been presented in the inequality of gender, man and woman, there is an explanation of patriarchy as a generic social order of power, whose prototype is the man as an order of male dominance over women (Monge & Navas, 2000).

There is a more subtle violence that is sustained in language and cultural representations which, when naturalized and made invisible, guarantee success insofar as what cannot be seen is not questioned; it is the very impossibility of being identified that sustains its ideological function and symbolic power (Blanco, 2009). This form of violence is very common in society and is exercised by men, but since it is so naturalized that women are inferior to men, it is almost impossible to notice, and in homes it is generalized that women are the housewives and the ones who must take care of their children.

Finally, symbolic violence is instituted through the adhesion that the dominated feels obliged to grant to the dominator (Vázquez & Palumbo, 2019), it is also important to know that sexism is an element present in the symbolic dimension of our culture, firstly, for a historical question, the belief in the hierarchical and antagonistic relationship of the masculine and the feminine is an ideology that has been spread since the first manifestations. (Verdú & Briones, 2016).

Conclusions

In conclusion, after showing the different stereotypes and social representations marked by the culture of men are given by the most common behaviors of abuse against women, it can be seen that in society there is no single cause that diagnoses the violent behavior of men against women, but there are many factors that react in different ways, thus generating different behaviors of abuse associated in the research with alcohol consumption, jealousy, economic dependence and parenting patterns.

Therefore, being under the consumption of alcohol tends to increase dangerous compulsive behaviors, where the highest rate is known through compulsive jealousy, exercising psychological, verbal, sexual and physical abuse. In addition, the man creates a position of superiority over the woman, due to the patterns of upbringing he had in his childhood, believing himself to be the owner of her economic income and commanding over the decision making in her life. Finally, we seek to highlight the image of the male aggressor according to his exposed behaviors, using grouping strategies in relation to his particularities and ways of using violence.

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