Social Representations Of Violence In Educational Contexts

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to understand the social representations of violence in two educational institutions in different contexts in north-eastern Colombia. It is theoretically based on Moscovici and Jodelet's theory of representations, under the epistemological assumptions of qualitative research. The population consisted of children from each participating educational institution. The semi-structured in-depth interview was used as a tool to collect the data, which were then analysed using Atlas Ti software, making use of open coding, which generated the creation of categories based on the similarity of the concept supported by the constant comparative method. The theoretical structure was constructed with Normalisation of school violence as a form of social interaction in school as a central category and conceptual categories such as: school violence as a form of normal interaction between peers in the school context, control mechanisms that normalise violent behaviour, behaviour of the perpetrator, behaviour of the victim, dehumanisation of the other. The review of the existing literature together with the current regulations was contrasted with the information obtained in the interviews, which allowed the realization of approximations of the causes of school violence at the individual, family and school level.

Introduction

Over the years, there has been growing concern about the increase in violent actions involving children and adolescents in the school context. Minors are the protagonists of violent episodes, where the law of the strongest prevails. School violence is a silent but not topical problem, which has raised the alarm about a phenomenon of great public and social magnitude that is widely covered in the media. As in all of society, violence is also present in schools (Ortega & Mora-Merchán, 2000; Debarbieux & Blaya, 2001) and unleashes serious problems, by making a brief analysis of the main manifestations of violence in the school context (Trucco & Hinostroza, 2017; Ayala-Carrillo, 2015).

To evidence the crisis that occurs within schools is to recognise that what happens in a relatively closed space such as the school, mostly closed to the entry of external agents, is subject to the scrutiny and intervention of the social body as a whole (Del Tronco & Madrigal, 2016).

Addressing the issue of school violence a few years ago was unthinkable; today it is possible thanks to a broad collective awareness of the need to prevent and address violence in private spheres that are closed to external critical opinion (Ortega, 2008); studying school violence implies taking into account the context in which it takes place, "the social relations that occur within schools, as well as the institutional framework that contains them and that in one way or another favours, prevents, punishes or promotes them" (Ortega, 2008, p. 20).

In view of the growing awareness of this issue and understanding the institutional formative approach oriented towards citizen and social development assumed by the school, this paper aims to interpret the social representations of school violence in two educational contexts, one urban and the other rural in the Department of Norte Santander.

The study is based on the definition that Moscovici (as cited in Arias & Molano, 2010) makes of social representations, understanding these as the way in which social subjects apprehend the events of daily life, the characteristics of their environment, the information that circulates in it, whose contents would be manifested through the operation of generative and functional processes socially characterised. On the other hand, Jodelet (2016) defines social representation as "spontaneous", naïve knowledge that is usually called common sense knowledge or natural thinking as opposed to scientific thinking. In this way, social representations form cognitive systems in which it is possible to identify stereotypes, opinions, beliefs, values and norms that usually have a positive or negative attitudinal orientation in behavioural and individual codes, guided by practices that define the collective consciousness.

The following UNICEF (2011, as cited in D'Angelo & Fernández, 2016) definition of school violence is recognised as a concept of school violence:

> School violence is that which takes place within the framework of the bonds of the educational community and in the exercise of the roles of those who make it up: parents, students, teachers, administrators. It refers to those episodes that do not originate in the bonds or practices of the school itself, but which take place in the educational institution. And it is framed by mechanisms that aim to promote the violation of human rights. (p. 9)

Violence in all its forms has crossed all types of scenarios, including families, civil society and even classrooms, where new violent acts are recorded every day. Based on the above definition of violence by UNICEF (2011, as cited in D'Angelo & Fernández, 2016), violence is analysed in three large population groups: a) Type 1, peer violence: violence between students; b) Type 2, violence perpetrated by students against teaching or administrative staff; c) Type 3, violence perpetrated by teaching staff against students, teachers and administrative staff.

Within the study of school violence, it is important to highlight its dimensions, which have been classified for this study based on the document "Validación de instrumento para medir violencia escolar" by et al. (2016):

- Physical violence: refers to any direct harm towards any member of the educational community and the aggression is produced by an actor or group of the school system in the school space. Some forms of physical violence are the following: threatening, assaulting, hitting with or without weapons, indirect jokes that encourage victimisation.
- Psychological violence: these are those attacks that range from verbal harassment to social exclusion or isolation of another person. These tend to be offences, mocking nicknames, humiliation, exclusion from participating in games, among others.
- Mixed violence: this type of violence is a mixture of physical and psychological violence. Within this type of violence, threats and constant harassment with physical or sexual aggression stand out, with the aim of intimidating, forcing and harassing.

As Díaz-Aguado (2005) rightly defines it:

> School violence has been referred to by the English term bullying, derived from "bull", which is characterised by: 1) it usually includes behaviours of different nature (teasing, threats, intimidation, physical aggression, systematic isolation, insults);2) it tends to

originate problems that are repeated and prolonged over a certain period of time; 3) it is usually provoked by a pupil (the bully), generally supported in a group, against a victim who is defenceless, who cannot by himself get out of this situation; 4) and it is maintained due to the ignorance or passivity of the people who surround the aggressors and the victims without intervening directly. (p. 549)

In turn, school violence has several levels which depend on the severity and frequency of the event:

- Intensity: these are events that are characterised by the severity of the violent act, where the more serious the violence, the greater the intensity. The intensity of the violent act can go beyond school rules and even go beyond civil laws, such as, for example: carrying weapons, gang fights, and others.
- Frequency: Within school violence, it is important to define the frequency of violent acts. According to this criterion, it is possible to define whether the violence is of an occasional or frequent character.

Finally, the focus of this study is on peer violence, where the following roles are involved: victim, perpetrator and bystander. Interest in this problem is growing every day, given the consequences for the actors involved in school violence. According to the document "Validación de instrumento para medir violencia escolar" by Varela et al. (2016), children and adolescents who are victims often suffer from problems such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, tendency to use drugs, psychosomatic disorders, total avoidance of school and social relationships, suicidal ideation and even actual suicide. While perpetrators can become chronic offenders and in the long run generate serious social maladjustment.

The study published by Contreras (2013) indicates that in Colombia one out of five students has been a victim of bullying (p. 102). In the same line of argument, several researches have made the following revelations on the issue of school violence: at national level, three out of five victims of bullying or school violence in Colombia think about suicide and one out of three attempt it.

On the other hand, what happened in a school in Palmira (Valle del Cauca) where a boy was playing with a knife and when he threw it, he wounded a classmate, an incident which fortunately did not leave any fatalities. Another violent act in an educational institution that shocked the country was also recorded in the city of Cali, when a sixth grade student died when he received a sharp weapon wound, apparently a scissors at the level of the heart, at the hands of another seventh grade student.

School violence within educational centres has left lamentable homicide figures in the country; one of these events occurred when a student threw himself from the fourth floor of the Champagnat School in the city of Bogotá in 2012, overwhelmed by the mockery of his classmates, according to his relatives. Between January and May 2012, 64 young people had committed suicide, and in many of these cases school violence was involved, reports De la Torre (2012).

For example, other sources state that by 2018 almost half of the children had witnessed discrimination against others. Thirty-five per cent of them reported being victims and 22 per cent reported identifying themselves as perpetrators. It also revealed that more than half of fifth grade students, including girls, are indifferent to mistreatment, and even have fun watching mistreatment among peers (Agencia Pandi, 2014).

The Ministry of National Education in its bulletin Educación con Calidad (Education with Quality) reports that the capital of Norte de Santander has the highest rate of school violence, 32%, according to the Fundación Resplandecer para Vivir (Funresvi). It is clear that in the school situations emerge that are part of the social dynamics such as friendship, loyalty, companionship, among others; without ignoring factors that can perhaps be stimulants of school violence such as competitiveness for the valuation of academic performance.

School violence has become a phenomenon of shocking expressions based on discrimination with discrimination, social exclusion and mockery, generating the urgent need to understand the meanings of this phenomenon for passive and active actors, its manifestations, its causes and its consequences for them.

The relevance of this problem has been of such magnitude that programmes for the prevention of school violence have been implemented, such as the one entitled "Peace Classrooms", published by the Inter-American Journal for Education and Democracy in 2017 (Ramos et al., 2017), whose initiative was to promote school coexistence in countries with high rates of violence, including Colombia, by strengthening citizenship skills in emotional and cognitive aspects with the aim of promoting constructive actions to address situations such as conflict and school violence.

In addition, the pedagogical approach to competencies favours learning through the creation of opportunities for practice rather than through discourse, i.e. learning by doing, which is more likely to be translated into everyday actions (Chaux et al., 2008).

The Aulas en Paz programme is one of these programmes, which sought to be an effective and rigorous model in the development of citizenship competencies for coexistence. Another

interesting project aimed at preventing this problem is entitled "La Violencia Escolar un Tema Pendiente" (School Violence, a Pending Issue). This proposal of the Chilean government was aimed at the importance of working with the entire educational community to reduce violence within schools, and emphasises that school coexistence is a determining factor in strengthening learning processes and interpersonal relationships (Chaux & Velásquez, s.f.). In this sense, it is stated that:

> With a better school climate, there are better conditions for motivation and for the whole school community to be involved in educational tasks, there is more collaboration and respect and therefore more meaningful learning. (Bryk y Schneider, 2002, p. 7)

At the constitutional level, Law 1620 (2013) has been implemented, which creates the National System of School Coexistence and training for the exercise of Human Rights, Education for Sexuality, Prevention and Mitigation of School Violence. To this extent, each educational centre must work to generate assertive guidelines that mitigate school violence.

Despite the many efforts to reduce this scourge, there are no known figures on progress in these issues, and on the contrary, the different media continue to report violent acts in schools. In the face of this bleak outlook, several questions arise that guided this research, such as: What are the social representations of school violence of students in a rural and an urban school in the department of Norte de Santander? Are there differences between the causes of violence according to the context of the educational institution?

Methodology

The present research is comprehensive and uses qualitative methodology in the processes of collecting, processing and analysing the information and is based on the Theory of Social Representations of Moscovici and Denisse Jodelet, with a process approach. The contents analysed are constructed from texts of in-depth interviews which were subsequently grouped into families of codes and finally the process of abstraction of an inductive nature was carried out with the methodological support of Grounded Theory. The tool used for data analysis was the Atlas.ti programme.

The selection of the sample was based on the selection of schools, one for the urban area and the other for the rural area, with the following inclusion criteria: a) certified schools registered with the municipal and departmental education secretariat; b) similarity in socio-economic level; c) similarity in educational coverage; d) similarity in the educational offer; and, e) interest on the part of the directors of each institution to participate in the study.

The students proposed for the study are seventh graders between the ages of 11 and 14 years old. According to the study by Palomero and Fernández (2001), the highest level of incidence of school violence among peers occurs in this age range. The total sample consisted of 14 students, seven from urban areas and seven from rural areas.

The tool used to obtain information was the in-depth interview, which basically sought to create a pleasant atmosphere to initiate an empathetic conversation, guided by the interviewer, in which information was obtained that gave an account of the social representations of the interviewee on the subject of school violence. The duration of each in-depth interview ranged between forty and fifty minutes. The central thematic axes of the interview were based on the concept of school violence, characteristics of school violence, characteristics of the victims, perpetrators, spectators and the definition of the role that each of the interviewees plays in school violence (victim, perpetrator or spectator).

After the in-depth interviews were completed, they were transcribed and analysed using Atlas Ti software. The data provided by the interviews were classified through open coding by establishing categories based on the similarity of the concept, the Constant Comparative Method allowed the search for similarities and differences to obtain the dimensions of each category that was being formed. To determine the validity and reliability of the research, Urbina and Ovalle (2016) refer to the importance of reviewing the procedures for collecting information and the analysis techniques used, as well as the validation and variation of the context. Within this process, the role of the interviewer plays a fundamental role; for this research it consisted of moderating and motivating the participants, without this meaning that he/she takes part in the process to cut or redirect the collection of data.

For this process it was of great relevance to unveil the meanings of the experiences of each of the students in terms of school violence. Taking into account:

The post-positivist epistemic paradigm underpinning research using qualitative methodology considers that a study will have a high level of validity if the results reflect a complete, clear and representative image of the reality studied (Urbina & Ovalle, 2016).

Results

The results obtained during the development of the research are presented below. These results are made up of the substantive codes obtained initially, the conceptual codes, the central conceptual category, and finally the conceptual maps that helped to consolidate the theoretical model.

Substantive codes. From the open coding process, the following families of substantive codes were initially found:

- Manifestations of school violence: verbal offences, physical and psychological abuse, teasing, name-calling, defensive response to aggression, indifference to violence, presence of violence in everyday life, gender-discriminatory causes of violence.
- Ways of repressing and controlling violent behaviour within schools: punishment for misbehaviour, exercise of school discipline and rules, disciplinary sanction of aggression, fear of disciplinary sanction, lack of effective intervention.
- Qualities of perpetrators: behaviours that attract group attention, mass support, interpersonal conflicts, annoying others as a distraction, intentional behaviour, manifestation of superiority, has not been a perpetrator.
- Qualities of the victims: asymmetrical relationships, perception of helplessness, inferiority, subjection to the aggressor, fear of reprisals, feeling of fear.
- Perception of violence: negative consequences, intention to respond to aggression, violence does not differentiate between genders.

Conceptual codes, central category and processes. The conceptual codes arise from the substantive codes, which have undergone a process of reduction and integration, in order to subsequently arrive at the central category or "in vivo" code and identify the complexity of the situation studied from the statements of the interviewees. Five conceptual categories were identified within this research. Violence as a form of normal interaction between peers in the school context, Impositive control mechanisms that normalise behaviour in school, behaviours that grant privileges, prestige and status, behaviours that privilege the perpetrators and the dehumanisation of the other as a consequence of the exercise of violence, which are fundamental for the understanding of the phenomenon studied. These results are shown below:

Table 1. Substantive codes, conceptual codes, core category and process.

Substantive codes	Macro categories	Conceptual category	Central category
Verbal offences Physical and psychological abuse Teasing, name-calling Defensive response to aggression	Manifestations of violence	Violence as a normal form of peer interaction in the school context	THE NORMALISATION OF VIOLENCE AS A FORM OF SOCIAL

Indifference to violence Presence of violence in everyday life Gender-discriminatory causes of violence			INTERACTION IN SCHOOLS
Punishment for misbehaviour Exercise of discipline and school rules Disciplinary sanction of aggression Fear of disciplinary sanction Lack of effective intervention	Ways of suppressing and controlling violent behaviour in schools	Impositive control mechanisms that normalise behaviour in school	
Behaviours that attract the attention of the group Mass support Interpersonal conflicts Disturbing others as a distraction Intentional behaviour Manifestation of superiority Has not been a perpetrator Asymmetrical relationships Perception of helplessness Inferiority status Submission to the aggressor Fear of reprisals	Qualities of offenders	Victim behaviours that confer privilege, prestige and status	THE NORMALISATION OF VIOLENCE AS A FORM OF SOCIAL INTERACTION AT SCHOOL
Negative consequences Intention to respond to aggression	Perception of violence	The dehumanisation of the other as a	

Violence does not differentiate between genders	result of the exercise of violence

Theoretical structure. The analysis carried out with the conceptual process allowed the elaboration of the theoretical structure, for this process the conceptual maps were indispensable, which are omitted in this report, but their interpretations are included:

- Overview of the theoretical structure. It offers an overview of the phenomenon of school violence that begins with the normalisation of violence as a form of social interaction at school, touching on aspects such as violence as a normal form of interaction between peers in the school context, imposing control mechanisms that normalise behaviour at school, behaviours that grant privileges, prestige and status, victims' behaviours, and finally the dehumanisation of the other as a consequence of the exercise of violence.
- Violence as a form of normal peer interaction in the school context. The objective and subjective factors that intervene in the school context, favouring school violence as a form of peer interaction, are observed.
- Impositive control mechanisms that normalise behaviour at school. These are being associated with repressions and impositions of the system that promote changes rather than transformations of the imaginary.
- Catalysts of school violence. In the study of school violence among peers, it has been observed that the perpetrators opt for a series of behaviours that allow them to project themselves as people with privileges and status; these behaviours are aimed at disregarding the dignity of fellow students.
- Victims' behaviour. The behaviour of victims of school violence ranges from social isolation to difficulty in communicating what is happening to them, and these behaviours end up making them more insecure and vulnerable.
- The dehumanisation of the other. An interesting aspect of the research was the connotation that the dehumanisation of the other has for active and passive perpetrators of school violence; the perception of others as inferior beings deserving of reprehensible acts makes dehumanisation a problem of social order, of collective interest.

Analysis and interpretation

The analysis of the information was carried out through the Constant Comparative Method of the Grounded Theory that aims to consolidate the inductive theory, which is directly related to the interpretative analysis of individual experiences. In this way, we proceeded to

understand the social representations of school violence in students from a rural and an urban educational institution in the Department of Norte de Santander.

Rural Sector. Knowledge of school violence at the rural level is related to actions ranging from hitting and pushing to name-calling; these actions sometimes take the form of games and are basically practised by children at break time. In the case of girls, the propagation of gossip or rumours of possible pregnancies or boyfriends, without ruling out physical violence, stands out.

The interviewees recognise the presence of school violence within the school. They affirm that the causes that originate violence are associated with physical differences and the perception of undesirable aptitudes (dumb, they are left behind by others), submission or submissiveness, according to the interviewees, is used by the perpetrator to seek recognition from the masses; the strength of the perpetrator is in the group that observes the violent event and supports it with laughter, which spreads the actions without any kind of limits. It is clear that being quiet, sensitive, fragile and weak is an attraction for the perpetrators, who almost always have the opposite aptitudes to those of the victims, for example, they are bigger than the victims and presume superiority in front of the group.

It is worth noting that for an outbreak of school violence to start, it is not necessary for the parties to know each other beforehand; it is enough for differences to arise at first sight in the school environment. As one of the interviewees says: "A classmate started to bother me when I started to miss school due to illness, so much so that I did not return to school and I preferred to miss that year so as not to meet him".

The predominant characteristics that the interviewees point out for perpetrators range from taking advantage of being taller or physically stronger, to making jokes in order to mock and ridicule their classmates, sometimes with the aim of ingratiating themselves with a group or showing their superiority; another of the characteristics that stand out for perpetrators is associated with disrespect for school authorities because they do not respect teachers or the school rules regarding school coexistence. Several interviewees added that students who spread violence do not pay attention in class, which leads to poor academic performance in most of them.

One of the characteristics identified for the victims is associated with good academic performance, despite not participating much in class; on the other hand, one of the possible curtains in which the victims of school violence hide is to try to ignore the context, trying to ignore the mockery and even beatings to which they are subjected and for fear of repeating the event or reprisals, they do not dare to denounce school violence.

A fact that reflects the seriousness of this phenomenon is that most of the interviewees report having witnessed violent acts in the educational context. These acts are basically associated with physical actions (hitting, pushing, head-butting, which is defined as blows to the head and actions such as pressing on the neck of their classmates) and psychological actions (teasing, strong jokes about some physical aspect of the person, nicknames, spreading gossip, etc.).

On the other hand, more than half of the interviewees identify themselves as victims of school violence, of which the highest rate in terms of type of violence endured was verbal violence followed by physical violence, it is worth noting that these actions include both genders. None of the interviewees identified themselves as perpetrators, despite the fact that they reported that they carry out unwelcome actions against their classmates; the perception of perpetrators seems to be far from the intention of the acts they carry out.

The frequency with which they may incite violent acts towards a partner is subject to the motivation of the perpetrator. This motivation can be personal, group or contextual. For girls, witnessing physical or verbal violence generates feelings associated with fear, sadness and helplessness. In contrast to boys, who report not having any feelings when observing situations of this kind; on the contrary, boys support this type of act by encouraging those who are beating each other not to leave each other's side.

Some of the consequences of witnessing an act of school violence are associated with constant teasing or psychological violence towards the loser by bystanders; this type of violence is not only suffered by those who observed the act, but also by peers who hear about it through comments. These taunts are sometimes the beginning of nicknames that can last throughout the school years, not to mention the emotional consequences of these actions. The feelings experienced by the victims as a result of repression and subjugation are defined as feelings of fear, impotence, anger, sadness, the desire not to return to school and hatred towards the perpetrators and towards themselves, these feelings are experienced during their stay at school and sometimes even outside of school.

The perception of disciplinary consequences for perpetrators by the victims is defined as inconsequential, since some of them reoffend despite the disciplinary measures imposed by the school. These measures range from being summoned in coordination with the parents to sign an agreement, and repeated non-compliance results in conditional enrolment, which leads to expulsion from the school. It should be noted that before reaching this point, internal resources have been exhausted, ranging from the intervention of two mediators, who are two classmates chosen by their classmates for their qualities in the appropriate management of

conflicts and whose function is to intervene in a timely manner in any situation of school violence.

The issue of mediators is being implemented and some report that they go to the teacher who intervenes on some occasions as sometimes complaints go unnoticed. The perception of school violence is apparently assumed to be normal behaviour and those interviewed who have been involved in this type of action say that they can repeat the behaviour at any time, despite the educational sanctions that this may generate.

The perpetrators report that after a violent event, the teachers intervene with talks during the school training for all the students, contrary to the intervention of the classmates, which is null, since those involved report that they only participate in two ways: the first seeking to make fun of the loser and the second ignoring what happened.

The interviewees who identify themselves as victims indicate that they are clear about the school's care routes for victims of school violence in order to report a violent incident. It is worth noting that the most commonly used option is to omit this step due to a lack of credibility in the process with the perpetrators who are reported, as they believe that despite the actions implemented by the school, they will never change; on the contrary, they may increase the levels of violence towards the complainants.

In the face of school violence, defensive action by perpetrators is rare, and when it does occur, some people in the group show solidarity by supporting the retaliatory actions. Family mediation was not mentioned in any case in this sector. It stands out that for both genders verbal and physical violence is practised in almost similar levels of proportionality, since girls are linked to various episodes of physical violence against other women.

Urban Sector. School violence was defined in the urban sector as actions aimed at doing harm, which can be physical or psychological, against a classmate who is stigmatised as inferior. Another perception of school violence shows that it is the set of acts that I would not like to be done to me, the basic reason for school violence to start is the lack of tolerance among peers. The main forms of school violence for males are blows (fists), kicks, blows behind the ears, and for females, rumours, scorn and social isolation, without ignoring the use of physical violence for females, such as scratching. At the urban level, adolescents clearly define school violence and refer to being aware of its presence in the educational institution, the possible causes of violence for most of those interviewed are the following:

> "People who think they are better than others, and believe they can do whatever they want to others"

"People with possible problems at home"
"People who take advantage of those who are small or defenceless"

The perception of the perpetrator is defined as someone who believes he is more than others and seeks to impose his will with actions that only aim to humiliate and mistreat others to make the group laugh and gain acceptance; to achieve subjugation they take advantage of physical attributes such as stature among others. Among those interviewed, one case stands out where it is indicated that psychological school violence began for no particular reason.

"I was set up by a classmate who came to school when he saw that I had few friends"

The possible characteristics of the perpetrators are associated with disrespect for teachers and fellow students, and they are also associated with people with little interest in studying and low academic performance. Within this classification, it is noteworthy that the perpetrators are associated with problems of domestic violence.

On the other hand, the victims are characterised by being quiet and do not respond with violence to the perpetrator, the subjugation is carried out in silence without putting up any kind of resistance; school violence takes the form of blows to the head, teasing by the male gender and teasing and practical jokes between men and women without any kind of distinction. In the case of girls, in addition to physical violence, they also use psychological violence by spreading rumours among their classmates.

Witnessing violence at school is something normal for the interviewees, regardless of their gender. The feelings experienced in the face of these events are anger, fear, frustration and the desire to intervene to help the victim, although for fear of reprisals they do not intervene. Faced with these actions, the educational centre calls attention to the perpetrators in the company of their parents, and signs commitment minutes that can lead to the expulsion of the student if the violent actions continue.

For the victims, the measures do not guarantee a decrease in school violence, since some aggressors do not change; as an alternative for prevention, the school gives talks during daily training on school violence and other topics related to interpersonal relationships. The majority of respondents reported having witnessed violence at school, and half of the group of respondents identified themselves as victims of school violence, a lower percentage reported having suffered physical violence and the minority of the sample psychological violence, and none of the respondents identified themselves as aggressors.

Something that is striking is how one interviewee recognises that he carries out violent actions towards his classmates (hitting, shouting and hitting) and indicates that his classmates promote the act and in spite of this he does not identify himself as a perpetrator and even boasts that there is no school violence in the educational centre; later he refers that there is school violence but only in primary school, it is very minor, and not in high school where he is. The perpetrators recognise that they cause harm and say that they do so because the victim instigates it with various actions such as ignoring them, isolating themselves, among others; they allude to their actions as jokes and this is how they pretend that possible victims assume it. For this reason, they do not report feelings of guilt among others.

Those who identify themselves as victims say that they have suffered from verbal to physical violence, and the latter sometimes leads to solidarity from both victims and bystanders who often show solidarity in silence. In this regard, one participant in the study indicated.

> "I move away to prevent him from doing something to me, but the efforts are useless, he always does something to me and in public and that makes me feel ugly, again and again he repeats the same thing with me and with another colleague"

In response to the question "Would you commit an act of violence at school again?", offenders indicated that they are likely to reoffend depending on their motivation; however, there are cases where the family has supported the process of peaceful conflict resolution and the level of violent behaviour tends to decrease as offenders are encouraged with sports club memberships, trips, clothes and others. Another offender, when asked the same question, indicated that his compartment is different at home since he has no one to interact with other than social networks, given that parents work all day and when they are at home they are tired and sleeping.

> "And they refer to how I call my mother to talk nonsense if she is tired, sleeping, so I prefer to chat"

The actions with the best results are carried out with the intervention of the family directly on the perpetrator; these are sometimes carried out at the exit of the school without the managers being aware of the situation and as a result the violent actions in the educational environment cease. The consequences for the victims are innumerable and they add that school violence prevents them from freely developing their personality, as they are always self-conscious in order to avoid being the object of ridicule, with no positive results, and in the face of interventions with little result, they have opted to change schools, which they have defined as "getting their life back".

Conclusions

Social representations of school violence at rural and urban levels show similarities in terms of the normalisation of violence as a form of interaction at school. Interpersonal relationships are based on verbal or psychological mistreatment with insults, rumours, threats and social isolation; and physical mistreatment with beatings and beatings.

For males, in both sectors, school violence is characterised by direct physical and verbal violence, while for females, school violence is more indirect, involving rumours and some forms of social exclusion.

The most frequent settings are usually the playground, corridors and classrooms for both sectors. This phenomenon can have as many reasons as consequences and depends to a large extent on a wide range of options, but at a general level it could be said that this process in schools depends to a large extent on the contexts surrounding the school, such as the neighbourhood, the house, the region and the country.

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