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UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE(IES) TO ENSURE EQUALITY

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Abstract: Violence is an inherent part of being human since it has been present throughout history and continues to be. The presence of different types of violence in different cultures and/or societies reveals the inequalities between the people who make them up. Knowing the different types of violence helps to understand its origin, which, in turn, will enable us to prevent its appearance or be able to manage it once it is unleashed. Men have had a very close relationship with violence practically throughout the world throughout history. So much so that the author Jeff Hearn refers to violence as "reference point for the production of boys and men" (1998, p.7). Understanding this relationship would help us deconstruct it and distance the conception and construction of masculinities from the negative influences of violence(ies), thus guaranteeing a more conducive climate for dialogue and conflict resolution without resorting to it (s). To do this, it is necessary to analyze different protective or risk factors that influence the learning of different violent behaviors. Understanding the construction of hegemonic masculinity, as well as its reaffirmation through violence supported by heteropatriarchal structures, is the first step in the construction of new masculinities in order to guarantee equality among all the people who make up an increasingly global.

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

In order to talk about equal rights and opportunities for all people, we first need to analyze one of the first distinctions that we find in today's society, this corresponds to gender. Historically, there has always been a segregation between the roles of women and men, regardless of their social, ethnic, racial or economic class. Today, an increasingly global society understands that segregation by sex, whether in household chores, at school or in the workplace, is an unfounded injustice that only serves to guarantee the superiority of one group over the rest. On too many occasions some type of violence is resorted to to guarantee said superiority. In order to better understand this process of guaranteeing hegemony and be able to prevent it or even deconstruct it, the violence(ies) will be analyzed.

Gender studies had an origin linked to the feminist movement in the sixties and seventies of the 20th century. Like the feminist movement, gender studies seek equity among all the people who make up a society, trying to achieve (real) equality of rights and opportunities between men and women through their studies. Gender studies are necessarily an interdisciplinary field in order to cover all aspects that influence the construction, perception and definition of what it is to "be" a man or a woman. Something that is not easy since each gender identity is a social construction associated with a specific cultural, historical, economic and/or social context. In the 1980s, many studies tried, unsuccessfully, to give a universal definition of what it means to "be a man." In the words of Catharine R. Stimpson, "the more anthropologists, sociologists, and historians explore the meanings of being 'a man,' the more inconsistent, contradictory, and varied they become" (1987, p. i). Historically, each culture or society has had particular demands for the individuals that made it up and has adapted to the environment in which it has existed, adopting it to endure. However, in today's world, which, thanks to technological and scientific, cultural, rights, etc. advances, has advanced in pursuit of equality, the gender division of tasks and/or behaviors, without taking into account individual aptitudes and/ or circumstances, is an obsolete idea.

In view of the fact that the role of culture is fundamental within the constitution of gender identity, it is necessary to emphasize

that different cultures have different demands for men and women, therefore the definitions of masculinity(s) and those of femininity(s), change depending on the context. Masculinity studies have been dedicated to analyzing the social formation of individuals' gender identity, since both men and women learn the roles of each gender through social interaction (Goldner et al., 2013[1997], p. 581). So much so, that theorist Michael Kimmel states: "men and women are different because we are taught to be different" (2011, p. 3). It does not seem easy to give a universal definition of what it means to be a man or woman, given that it depends on various factors, such as class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, educational level, etc. Despite these differences, the pattern that prevails in the vast majority of cultures is segregation by biological sexes (Gilmore, 1990). Therefore, some aspects of masculinity seem to be shared by many men belonging to different cultures and, among them, the use of violence and hierarchy stands out (Gilmore, 1990), thus confirming Hearn's idea about violence as : "reference point for the production of boys and men" (1998, p. 7).

Even living in an increasingly global society, what it means to be a man or woman is understood differently in different cultures or parts of the world, since people of different races, cultures, ethnicities, sexes, beliefs, religions coexist., etc. However, individuals are treated and educated similarly, at least in the early stages of their lives, according to their biological gender rather than according to their personal abilities and aptitudes, "one's biology is given a cultural meaning that constrains who one is, this is a gendered identity" (Neff van Aertselaer, 2008, p. 320). Due to different awareness campaigns about gender equality and opportunities, segregation by sex is gradually disappearing. However, it is still present due to different socially rooted ideas that young generations must change in pursuit of a society in which no one is discriminated against because of their sex and/or gender.

Taking into account the great influence that different types of violence exert on society and cultures, we must stop to analyze them. Therefore, it is interesting to return to Johan Galtung's idea of the triangle of violence. For Galtung, three types of violence continually occur in all societies: cultural, structural and direct. The three are closely related and one can appear as a result of the action of one of the other two. In most cases it is direct violence that appears as a consequence of cultural and/or structural violence. For Galtung, cultural violence is defined as: "empirical or potential legitimation of violence" (1996, p. 209). That is, this type of violence is identified with every violent ritual that some young people go through in order to achieve a higher status. We can find many examples in the book of: ``Manhood in the making: ``Cultural concepts of masculinity`` of David Guilmore, for example, the young Masai, Rendille, Jie or Samburu have to undergo circumcision without showing weakness (1990, p. 24, 143) or the young Amhara boys have to undergo a brutal ritual of whippings that boys have to endure without faltering (1990, p. 24-25). As terrible as such rituals are, they are not the worst badge of cultural violence. Since, this type of violence is the most deeply rooted and linked to culture, and is reflected in racial, ethnic and/or gender stereotypes; As on many occasions, it is seen in certain norms specific to a specific culture. It is not pleasant to admit it, but cultural violence is instilled from the moment the individual is born and becomes part of him imperceptibly. Thus fulfilling Galtung's statement about the perception of cultural violence, "cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, even feel, right - or at least not wrong" (1990, p. 291). On many occasions, different social norms

or the unequal distribution of goods are explained and accepted due to the cultural norms of a society, and this constitutes the clearest example of the power and invisibility of cultural violence. Secondly, we analyze the structural violence that corresponds to inequality between individuals, "inequality, above all in the distribution of power" (Galtung, 1969, p. 175). To identify this type of violence we have to look at social, racial, economic, educational inequalities, etc. existing between the different individuals of society. Likewise, the existence of discrimination and the existing attitude within society towards said discrimination must be studied. These examples are clear attempts to maintain a pre-existing hierarchy, thus reminding us of Connell's idea of hegemonic masculinity: "hegemonic masculinity is always constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as relation to women" (1987, p. 183). And finally, direct violence can be of different types, "verbal and physical, and violence harming the body, mind or spirit. All combinations leave behind traumas that may carry violence over time" (Galtung, 1996, p. 31). Direct violence is the easiest to detect since it can include all those violent acts that contain the direct or indirect interaction of the opposing individuals (fights, insults, gossip, insults, etc.). This differentiates it from cultural and structural violence, which goes beyond being perceived on most occasions and requires careful analysis to be identified, as represented in Illustration 1.
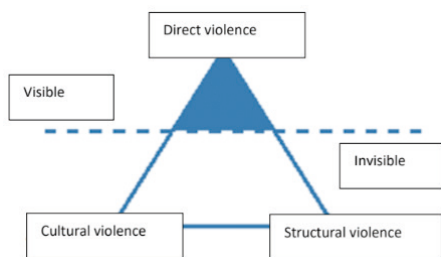

Illustration 1: The triangle of violence according to Galtung

Direct violence is the easiest to detect, and is usually the result of the effects of cultural and/or structural violence(ies) on individuals who are dissatisfied with what is pre-established. Like any social phenomenon, violence(ies) is complex and its manifestations have many different motives, manifestations and objectives to achieve, whether they are easy to distinguish or not.

In order to better understand the complex phenomenon that is violence, we must analyze it in greater depth, identify and define it in the most exhaustive way possible. However, as with gender definitions, this task is not easy since the concept of violence or violence is highly subjective and shaped by different cultural influences. Identifying acts as violent or not lies with the person in charge of reporting the event, since, "at an individual level, what counts as violence is highly subjective and personalized" (Burman et al., 2003, p. 75). This subjective nature makes violence difficult to define and understand since it denotes a wide range of acts and/or consequences (Burman et al., 2003, p. 73). We can say that there are many different types of violence that are carried out within specific contexts, against specific victims and are used to achieve specific goals (Schmidt & Schröder, 2001, p. 6). Since 1996, violence has been identified as the greatest problem and risk to public health. In 2002 the World Health Organization published a report in which we found a very complete definition of violence:

> The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation (Krug *et al.,* 2002, p. 5)

This definition allows violence to be understood not only as an act of physical aggression, but also as an instrument of persuasion through the threat of the use of

physical violence directed at specific people or groups. Intimidation by an individual or group towards others is considered violence, since it is understood as an ultimatum towards the victims to do something that may or may not result in their own benefit. Within this conception of "violence" the wide range of actions that are identified as violent acts is evident, and to facilitate the identification of each of them, illustration 2 is provided below:

In the previous diagram we can see the wide range of actions and victims that we can find in a violent act, but we must not forget that these can appear intermingled, since they are not mutually exclusive. In fact, it is common for many types of violence to appear at the same time in an act of violence, thus making its identification and prevention more difficult.

METHODOLOGY

Both the study of gender and the study of violence require the analysis of variables of different types. Therefore, the methodology used is interdisciplinary, in order to be able to cover all the protective or risk factors that may occur. Like any social behavior, the use of different types of violence is learned as Bandura indicates.

> A person can acquire, retain, and possess the capabilities for skillful execution of modeled behavior, but the learning may rarely be activated into overt performance if it is negatively sanctioned or otherwise unfavorably received. (1977, p. 8)

The home and family usually constitute the settings in which the first contact of new individuals with society occurs. The attitudes and actions of adults serve as an example for the formation of behaviors for new individuals. Normally, this process occurs before infants are able to evaluate, accept or reject such behaviors as valid. The intergenerational transmission of violence must be understood as a process, in most cases unintentional, during which the most innocent observe and may learn violent behaviors as valid forms of social interaction, if they are not rejected by them. To this end, different factors that influence said learning have been analyzed.

Violent acts that occur within the home are the main risk factor for inequality, regardless of the victim, since, "violence against women and violence against children share some common risk factors, root causes, and harmful outcomes, and they often co-occur in the same households" (Levtov et al., 2015, p. 189). Therefore, the prevention of inequality and violence(ies) must begin at home. This leads us to talk about physical punishment or the threat of using it with the little ones, in too many cases this is the first contact that the little ones have with violence(ies), the problem is that many adults are unaware of its consequences. negative consequences:

> The widespread acceptability of physical punishment to rear children creates a situation where a conflict-prone institution serves as a training ground to teach children that it is acceptable: (1) to hit people you love; (2) for powerful people to hit less powerful people; (3) to use hitting to achieve some end or goal; and (4) to hit as an end in itself. (Gelles, 2017, p. 133- 134)

The next risk factor corresponds to the acceptance of violence in any of its forms in a society. If a society accepts violence(ies), the individuals who are growing up in it will unconsciously acquire those values and will not hesitate to use it in their lives, regardless of their gender, in order to guarantee their position and/or purposes.

> Gender norms and dynamics are also a factor, particularly the view that boys need to be raised to be physically tough, while girls are fragile, compliant, and/or subordinate to boys and men. (Levtov et al., 2015, p. 200)

The idea that man has to be big, strong, tenacious, etc. It is deeply rooted in different
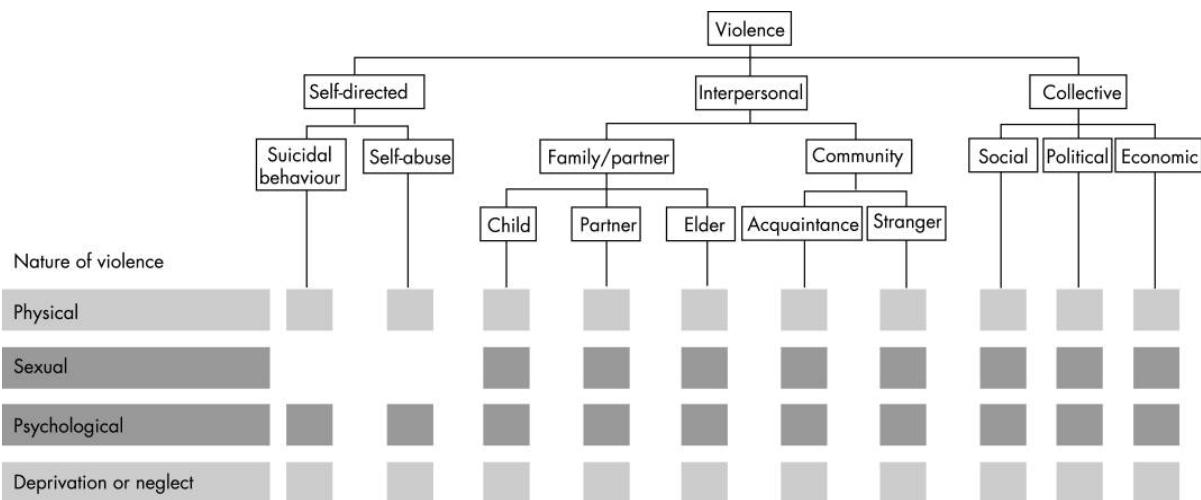
Violence

Self-directed — Suicidal behaviour | Self-abuse

Interpersonal — Family/partner — Child | Partner | Elder — Community — Acquaintance | Stranger

Collective — Social | Political | Economic

Nature of violence

Physical

Sexual

Psychological

Deprivation or neglect

Illustration 2. Typology of violence (Krug *et al.,* 2002, p. 7)

societies due to the historical importance of the figure of the warrior; we can find many examples in the work of Gilmore (1990). For this reason, this classic conception of masculinity is understood as a risk factor, since it would push men towards the use of violence to reaffirm their superior social position. Continuing with this idea we arrive at the next risk factor that corresponds to the idea of not being able to meet expectations, which can lead many men to the idea of using violence to assert themselves. Young individuals can learn two things from these situations: boys can learn that it is okay to use violence to achieve their goals, and girls can learn that it is okay to be the victims (Band-Winterstein and Eisikovits, 2014, p. 23). Therefore, personal history is another risk factor given that individuals tend to repeat behaviors to which they have been previously exposed and have accepted as valid, "the childhoods of men who batter are the training ground for adult abusive acts" (Nason-Clark and Fisher-Townsend, 2015, p. 33). Leading us to consider the next risk factor that corresponds to social isolation, this factor has two aspects. The first is the inability to integrate into a society, something that produces stress and discomfort, which often precede violence(ies). And, on the other hand, the confrontations would occur with those closest to them, who in turn would have no one to turn to (Band-Winterstein and Eisikovits, 2014, p. 90). Therefore, an adequate social structure could prevent violent events within the different households that comprise it, thus constituting a protective factor.

The educational level must be taken into account, but it can be considered a risk or protective factor. Since the levels of violence tend to reduce the higher it is. While adults with a low educational level tend to be more likely to use violence with or in front of their children to assert their position (United Nations Children's Fund, 2014, p. 155). Similarly, the family economy is a common source of frustration and dispute between the different components of the family or community. Such disputes can lead to violent confrontations. Since the use of violence is more common in low-income households than those with medium or high income (Gelles, 2017, p. 65). Therefore, purchasing power may be another bidirectional factor regarding the use of violence to assert superior status.

Next, we can name depression and/or antisocial disorder as risk factors since people who suffer from them can develop violent and/or discriminatory behaviors (Gelles, 2017, p. 63). Both psychological illnesses can

be treated in order to prevent the appearance of their symptoms and improve the situation of patients and the people around them. Similarly, alcohol and/or drug abuse must also be considered a risk factor since they modify the behaviors of individuals, and they may develop violent and/or discriminatory behaviors (Renzetti and Edleson, 2008, p. 451).

Now we will move on to analyze various protective factors that enhance equality between the various components of a society and, therefore, the prevention of the use of violence. The first would be the education of individuals in various conflict resolution strategies through non-violent means. To do this, the most important thing would be to work with families, teaching them strategies and skills to use with the little ones, thus ensuring the abandonment of violence(ies) (Woollett and Thomson, 2016, p. 1069). Another protective factor would be to break with the archaic idea of the superiority of men over women and children, since it is key to reducing violent acts and inequality(ies) within the home, as well as in social public spheres:

> Violence is not inevitable; it can be prevented. Working with men and fathers to challenge harmful beliefs around men, masculinity, and caregiving offers unique opportunities to concurrently address intimate partner violence and violence against children, as well as to break the intergenerational cycle of violence. (Levtov et al., 2015, p. 191)

Breaking with that classic idea, we must try to conceive the male role model as someone who is sensitive, flexible, understandable, protective, non-violent, etc. Adjectives that, historically, have been used to define motherhood or women, must be converted into necessary qualities and must be introduced into the model of man, for the present 21st century.

After having analyzed various risk and protective factors, we see that violent and discriminatory behaviors are learned. In order to guarantee equality, we must work to reduce the presence of risk factors and enhance protective factors. However, some of these factors are immovable, because they are personal in nature and are part of each person's history. Nowadays, many people have been victims of some type of violence or discrimination throughout their lives, even so, they adopt different strategies to prevent its repetition, since "they do not want to repeat for their own children what they themselves experienced." at a young age" (Nason-Clark and Fisher-Townsend, 2015, p. 33). However, each individual is free to decide if he wants to change or not, but as a society we must illustrate the negative consequences they have for different individuals and those close to them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Often acts of violence are the visible results of the inequalities present in the societies in which they are manifested. But at the same time, those same acts are also used to break or try to maintain said (unequal) social structures. Therefore, we have to work towards a society in which inequality is not accepted and that seeks to ensure that all its components, regardless of their race, nationality, beliefs, sex, gender, etc. have the same rights and opportunities for their optimal personal development. To do this, we must promote a society in which violence(ies) must not be a part in order to guarantee the freedom of choice of each individual according to their personal preferences and aptitudes, without taking into account their race., beliefs, ethnicity, sex, etc. and without them feeling threatened or discriminated against for their personal decisions, this being a clear sign of equality.

We know that new individuals learn the

behavioral norms of the society of which they are part from observation and gender norms are no exception. According to Joseph Pleck, "the individual is programmed to learn a traditional sex role as a part of normal psychological development" (1981, p. 4). In recent decades, society in general has realized this, thanks to different movements and awareness programs, and has been taking steps towards equality. However, many stereotypes, behaviors and/or clichés continue to persist.

and causing many boys and girls to establish a differentiation between things and/or behaviors of women or men. This is part of the normal psychological development process of all individuals since "after the age six, the child sees the world in gender terms" (Kimmel 2011, p. 94). Therefore, working to increase equality will make new individuals internalize this norm and will guarantee that it lasts in the future, thus banishing stereotypes and behaviors contrary to it. As we have seen before, the idea of classical masculinity is contrary to the idea of equality since it is based on the contrast of the ideas of masculine and feminine (Thompson and Pleck, 1987, p. 35). However, we also know that both the idea of masculinity and femininity are social constructions created by human beings in a specific society to respond to a specific situation in circumstances in which they are immersed, therefore, they can and must change. (Kimmel and Aronson, 2004, p. xx) according to the demands of today's world. The idea that men are superior to women is a classical idea that persists in different cultures and is in itself a clear symptom of inequality. By working to change this conception we will guarantee equality, given that "masculinity is what a culture expects of its men" (Craig, 1992, p. 2). As we have seen before, many violent acts are the result of events beyond the control of the participants, but in most cases the participants are usually men (Kimmel, 2004, p. 265), given that violence is a way to reaffirm their masculinity and feel in control, but we must not forget Pleck's words, "most men have very little power over their own lives" (1995, p. 10).

At this point we must clarify that the attitude of each individual regarding violence(ies) and inequality(ies) is as important or even more than the presence of the risk or protective factors explained above. This is because each person can, and must, decide which of the learned behaviors he must or must not adopt in his daily life. This does not mean that society must forget to continue promoting values of rejection of any discriminatory attitude and/or violent behavior.

It is not only values that society must promote so that discrimination and violence become extinct, but it must also educate young generations to reject them through different strategies. A possible strategy could be to improve individuals' empathy through values education and asking how they would feel if they were in a situation in which violence or discrimination is present.

Historically, sex segregation has been present in many aspects of daily life and, also, in public spheres based on various social, cultural and/or religious statements specific to each moment (Kimmel, 2004, p. 265). However, today many of them have been discarded as archaic discriminatory fallacies that do not adapt to the reality of the present moment. However, some persist in the social imagination as validated, therefore, we must work on it to raise awareness among the current population that each historical moment was adapted to circumstances different from the current ones and therefore we cannot continue perpetrating certain harmful attitudes.

CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

After having clarified the characteristics of violence and its negative effects on equality, we can conclude that both violence(ies) and discriminatory attitudes are learned behaviors due to different unfavorable factors for the individuals who have suffered them, but Likewise, we can work to alleviate these effects and help unlearn or prevent learning.

> Interpersonal violence is a learned behavior that can be unlearned or not learned in the first place. Violence has multiple and complex underlying factors that include but are not limited to poverty, unemployment, discrimination, substance abuse, educational failure, fragmented families, internalized shame, and felt powerlessness. (Renzetti and Edleson, 2008, p. 543)

If we all became aware of the negative aspects of violence and its transmission to new generations, as is currently being done globally with violence against women, it would not only reduce gender violence but violence in all its forms. This would be a great step towards equality for all individuals, since no one would be a victim of violence(ies) or discrimination due to their personal characteristics and/or circumstances. On too many occasions we have witnessed how individuals or groups of individuals use violence or threaten to use it in order to achieve their own objectives without taking into account the consequences for others. This is a clear example of discrimination and as a modern society that pursues equality we must work to ensure that such acts become less and less frequent, regardless of where they occur.

On the other hand, we have seen that the education of children is a fundamental part of their integration into society, but this process can be frustrating for the adults in charge of doing it. Many times physical punishment or the threat of it is used as the quick and easy way to "educate", however, "children who are exposed to violence are likely to internalize the norms of violence as constituting appropriate behavior in stressful situations" (Nason-Clark and Fisher-Townsend, 2015, p. 24). Therefore, we must prevent the use of punishment against the little ones, providing parents and/or caregivers with different strategies and skills to use with them. Also, we must keep in mind that boys and girls usually witness the discussions that result from living together. If these discussions are resolved through dialogue and understanding, the little ones would be more likely to follow this model. Likewise, we must not forget that individuals who are angry, stressed, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs often do not consider the consequences of their actions (Felson, 2002, p. 56). For this reason, we must also make efforts to make parents aware of their responsibilities when it comes to parenting, since this would define society's conception of the little ones.

We also understand that the attitude of each individual towards discrimination and/or acts of violence is key to reproducing or banishing these patterns. On many occasions, having suffered at the hands of abusive caregivers causes children to develop a very negative conception of the use of violence and/or discrimination within the family, which in turn leads them to reject their child in whole or in part. use regarding the upbringing and education of their own children. However, there are contrary cases, which is why work must continue to banish such behaviors among the little ones.

It is also important to highlight that equal rights and opportunities for the individuals that make up a society guarantee the reduction of violence in it, "violence is less common in social democratic countries than neoliberal ones." (Mansley, 2014, p. 28). Emphasizing equal rights and opportunities for all individuals that make up a society is key

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to its progress. This idea in itself constitutes a limitation since there are individuals or groups that see it as a threat to the position they occupy in society and do not They are willing to lose it. Historically we have many examples of this, we can mention the access to vote of the working classes, the access of women to education and later to the labor market, the eight-hour work day, etc. All these steps towards the equality of all individuals were received as negative by different sectors of society at the time, since they constituted a break with the previous hierarchy and many individuals or groups of individuals saw how their superior status was in danger. We can say that individualism is also a limitation, since very few people are capable of putting the general well-being before their own interests and/or needs. We have seen how new individuals learn the rules of the societies in which they live in order to integrate into them and thus guarantee their survival. Therefore, we must promote a society in which equal rights and opportunities are pursued for all the individuals that comprise it.

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