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Victimisation and School Violence. The Role of the Motivation of Revenge, Avoidance, and Benevolence in Adolescents☆

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study is to explore the relation among school victimisation and school violence, taking into account the motivations of revenge, avoidance, and benevolence. The sample includes 671 adolescents of both sexes, between 10 and 16 years old, attending primary and secondary school. The structural equation model, calculated with EQS software, show that victimisation is directly and indirectly related to school violence through revenge motivation. Victimisation is also related to avoidance and benevolence motivations, although these are not associated with school violence. Multigroup analysis indicates statistically significant differences between boys and girls in the relation between victimisation and benevolence. Finally, results and their implications are discussed in order to design interventions focused on aggressive victims.

Victimización y violencia escolar: el rol de la motivación de venganza, evitación y benevolencia en adolescentes

Palabras clave:
Victimización
Violencia escolar
Motivaciones transgresoras
Adolescentes

RESUMEN

El objetivo del presente estudio es explorar el vínculo entre la victimización escolar y la violencia escolar, teniendo en cuenta la motivación de venganza, la evitación y la benevolencia. La muestra está constituida por 671 adolescentes de ambos sexos de edades comprendidas entre 10 y 16 años escolarizados en seis centros públicos de Educación Primaria y Secundaria. Se calcula un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales con el programa EQS. Los resultados muestran que la victimización se relaciona en sentido positivo con la violencia escolar de manera directa e indirecta, a través de la motivación de venganza. También, la victimización se relaciona con las motivaciones de evitación y benevolencia, aunque estas no se asocian con la violencia escolar. El análisis multigrupo indica diferencias estadísticamente significativas entre chicos y chicas en la relación entre victimización y benevolencia. Finalmente, se discuten los resultados y sus posibles implicaciones con el fin de diseñar intervenciones centradas en las víctimas-agresoras.

Introduction

School violence and *peer victimisation* is a social problem that raises growing concern within education on account of negative effects on students (Crespo, Romero, Martínez-Ferrer, & Musitu, 2017; Garaigordobil, 2017; Ortega-Barón, Buelga, Cava, & Torralba, 2017) on families (Jiménez & Estévez, 2017) and on the school climate (Valdés-Cuervo, Martínez-Ferrer, & Carlos-Martínez, 2018). Recent studies have concluded that the majority of students use violence as a reaction to a previous situation of *victimisation* (Goldbach, Sterzing, & Stuart, 2018; Kollerová, Janošová, & Říčan, 2015). This present study analyses the relationship between *peer*

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victimisation and *school violence*, taking account their links with other related variables.

Peer victimisation is described as the negative experience of being the object of physical, verbal or psychological aggression perpetrated by other students with the intention of causing harm (Graham, 2006; Martínez-Ferrer, Moreno, & Musitu, 2018). In relation to *school violence*, this paper utilises the classification of violence proposed by Card, Stucky, Sawalani, and Little (2008) who make a dual distinction in relation to peer violence, pertaining to its form – overt vs. relational – and its function – reactive vs. proactive. Overt violence refers to behaviours that imply direct confrontation with others with the intention of causing harm (e.g., hitting or threatening), whereas relational violence is defined as an act intended to cause harm within the friendship circle of another person or in their membership of a social group (e.g., social exclusion or rumour spreading).

The most widely studied factors in the field of *violence* and *peer victimisation* include loneliness (Povedano, Cava, Monreal, Varela, & Musitu, 2015), symptoms of depression (Mestre, Vidal, & García, 2017), socio-economic status (Pouwels, Lansu, & Cillessen, 2017) and family communication (Cerezo, Ruiz-Esteban, Sánchez Lacasa, Gonzalo, & Julián, 2018). However, recent studies have highlighted the importance of motivational variables to explain the links between *violence* and *peer victimisation* (Barcaccia, Schneider, Pallini, & Baiocco, 2017; Wal, Karremans, & Cillessen, 2016; Watson, Rapee, & Todorov, 2016). This present study also incorporates *revenge, avoidance and benevolence motivations*.

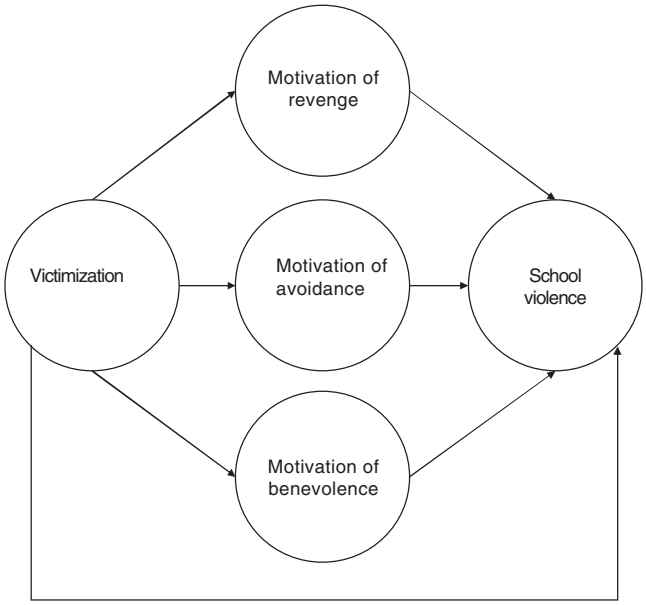

Figure 1. Theoretical model proposed.

Revenge, avoidance and benevolence motivation

McCullough, Pargament, and Thorensen (2001) consider that, when faced with an episode of victimisation, three types of *motivations* might emerge: *revenge, avoidance and benevolence. Revenge motivation* (RM) alludes to seeking out revenge for an aggression perceived to be intentional, with the aim of causing harm. This type of response can be explained by a lack of conflict resolution skills, which adolescents experience when they are the object of violent behaviour, in the family context or within their friendship network (Hui, Tsang, & Law, 2011). Being a victim may, on occasion, generate an increase in periods of rumination and anger after conflict (Beltrán-Morillas, Valor-Segura, & Expósito, 2015; Kivivuori, Savolainen, & Aaltonen, 2016; Leon & Gilda, 2017) and, consequently, increase the likelihood of becoming involved in violent behaviour towards peers (Gerlsma & Lugtmeyer, 2018).

However, faced with an episode of *violence*, other *victims* might choose to keep their distance from their aggressor. Although *avoidance motivation* (AM) seems to decrease the likelihood of becoming involved in violent behaviours, it can also constitute a risk factor, since this type of motivation often masks profound frustration (Watson, Rapee, & Todorov, 2017). Furthermore, strategies of avoidance can hinder the resolution of conflicts and aggravate situations of *school violence* (Watson et al., 2016).

Finally, *benevolence motivation* (BM) is defined as the reduction of negative thoughts and feelings towards the aggressor, which can even be accompanied by positive affect (Wade, Hoyt, Kidwell, & Worthington, 2014). This motivation increases the likelihood of successfully resolving a conflict and re-establishing previous interpersonal relations (Watson et al., 2016). However, some authors question BM, since it is not entirely without risk. The positive re-evaluation of negative emotions towards the aggressor and the possibility of re-establishing relations seem to increase the psychological unease of the victims and their fear of being victimised once again (Watson et al., 2017).

Regarding differences by gender, there is no clear consensus between researchers. In general, boys display greater RM than girls (Elshout, Nelissen, Van Beest, Elsout, & Van Dijk, 2017). However, no statistically significant differences have been seen between boys and girls with regard to AM (Chiaramello, Sastre, & Mullet, 2008; Flanagan, Vanden Hoek, Ranter, & Reich, 2012). These differences may well be explained, partly at least, by the greater involvement of boys in violent behaviours towards peers, as aggressor or victim (Povedano, Hendry, Ramos, & Varela, 2011).

In spite of the relevance of the variables described previously, very little research has analysed the role played by these motivations in the relationship between peer victimisation and school violence. Most research conducted in this field has focused on the psychological and social consequences of these motivations (Watson et al., 2017). In these studies, RM is associated with a greater likelihood of participating in risk behaviours (Elshout et al., 2017; Kivivuori et al., 2016), whereas AM and BM in the short term seem to be motivations that contribute to resolving the conflict, but they might generate negative emotions in the victim (Sang et al., 2018; Watson et al., 2017). However, empirical evidence about the role played by transgressive motivations in the relationship between peer victimisation and school violence is fairly inconclusive. The aim of this paper is to analyse the relationship between *peer victimisation* and *school violence* among adolescents, considering the possible mediating role of RM, AM, and BM. It also explores the moderator effect of gender. On the basis of these research aims, the following hypotheses have been formulated, expressed in the theoretical model proposed (see Figure 1): (H1) *Victimisation* is directly and positively related with *school violence*; (H2) *Victimisation* and *school violence* are indirectly related, through their relationships with *RM, AM and BM* (mediator effect); and, (H3) Gender and educational stage are expected to exert a moderating effect on these relationships.

This model should help to improve understanding of relations between the roles of victim and aggressor, bearing in mind the motivations that underlie a violent episode in adolescents. Incorporating the motivational dimension in the explanation of these behaviours is extremely useful when designing prevention programmes to improve school life.

Method

Participants

This present study focuses on teenagers aged 10 to 16, living in the Spanish province of Cordoba (n = 58,679). Random cluster sampling is used, in which the primary sampling unit is the geographical area – rural (74%) and urban (26%) – and the secondary unit is the ownership structure of the school – public (75%) and private/grant-maintained (25%). Sample size, with an error of ±4%, a confidence interval of 95% and $p = q = .5$, is estimated on 594 adolescents. The sample is made up of 671 adolescents of both genders (M = 13.04, SD = 1.80), including 49.3% girls. These students are in Primary Education (years 5 and 6) and Compulsory Secondary Education (known as ESO in Spain) at six schools, four publics and four private/grant-maintained, in the province of Cordoba (Andalusia).

The average of the missing data obtained is 2.1% and never more than 5% for an individual measure. Therefore, estimations are accurate in relation to the expected values in the population (Graham, 2009). Missing values by scales and sub-scales are imputed using the regression procedure. Furthermore, the criterion defined by Hair, Hult, Rindfe, and Sarstedt (2016) for the treatment of atypical values is followed. A multivariate atypical value is identified in the probability associated with a Mahalanobis distance of .001 or less (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Previous statistics analysis according to the location of the school and its public or private ownership with the variables studied yielded not significant differences, therefore they were not included in further analyses.

Instruments

Peer victimisation

The *Peer Victimisation* scale (Mynard & Joseph, 2000, adapted into Spanish by Martínez-Ferrer et al., 2018) consists of 25 items that assess how often adolescents have experienced situations of peer victimisation at school in the past year, with response options ranging from 1 (never) to 4 (always). It encompasses three dimensions: *relational victimisation* (e.g., "Another child has told other people my secrets"), Ω = .91, α = .90, FC = .88; *physical victimisation* (e.g., "Another child has beaten me up"), Ω = .80, α = .71, FC = .74; and *verbal victimisation* (e.g., "Another child has insulted me"), Ω = .86, α = .84, FC = .81. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) shows a good fit of the model to the data SBχ^2 = 313.56, df = 17, p < .001, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .04 (.036, .050).

School violence

The *School Aggression Scale* (Little, Henrich, Jones, & Hawley, 2003, adapted into Spanish by Martínez-Ferrer et al., 2018) is made up of 30 items that evaluate the adolescent's participation in violent behaviours towards peers over the past year with a response range from 1 (never) to 4 (always). It encompasses six dimensions: *pure overt violence* (e.g., "I am a person who hits, kicks, and punches others"), Ω = .83, α = .74, FC = .76; *reactive overt violence* (e.g., "When someone threatens me, I threaten them too"), Ω = .82, α = .76, FC = .75; *proactive overt violence* (e.g., "I hit, kick or punch to get what I want"), Ω = .84, α = .78, FC = .78; *pure relational violence* (e.g., "I am a person who tells their friends not to hang around or go out with others"), Ω = .80, α = .75, FC = .74; *reactive relational violence* (e.g., "If someone hurts or harms me, I don't let that person be part of my group of friends"), Ω = .82, α = .77, FC = .77; and *proactive relational violence* (e.g., "To get what I want, I tell my friends not to hang around or go out with others"), Ω = .80, α = .73, FC = .75. CFA shows a good fit of the model to the data SBχ^2 = 527.54, df = 24, p < .001, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .03 (.023, .030).

Revenge, avoidance and benevolence motivation

The *Transgressive Motivations* scale (TRIM-18) (McCullough & Hoyt, 2002, adapted into Spanish by Guzmán, Tapia, Tejada, & Valenzuela, 2014), consists of 18 items with four response options ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 4 (completely agree) that evaluate three dimensions that refer to the potential responses of teenagers when they are victimised: RM (e.g., "I wish something bad would happen to him or her"), Ω = .87, α = .86, FC = .82; AM (e.g., "I'm avoiding him or her"), Ω = .88, α = .86, FC = .84; and, BM (e.g., "I've got past my pain and resentment towards him or her"), Ω = .83, α = .84, FC = .78, over the past year. The psychometric properties of the scale are adequate. CFA shows an acceptable fit to the data SBχ^2 = 220.74, df = 13, p < .001, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .04 (.033, .052).

Procedure

Once the schools granted permission for the research to be conducted, and active informed consent had been obtained from the families, the battery of instruments was administered over two different sessions, each lasting approximately 45 minutes, during class time. The study has been approved by the Ethics Committee of Universidad Pablo Olavide. Furthermore, the study fulfils the ethical criteria required for research involving human subjects, and respects the fundamental principles included in the Helsinki Declaration.

Data analysis

Firstly, CFA was carried out using the EQS 6.0 programme (Bentler, 1995) to examine construct validity evidence of the scales. To estimate the reliability of the construct scores, compound reliability (CR), McDonald's Ω coefficient, and Cronbach's α coefficient were calculated for each dimension. Secondly, compound reliability and McDonald's Ω were examined. Compound reliability values over .60 and McDonald's Ω values over .70 are considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2016). Thirdly, correlation analysis was conducted to analyse the relationships between the variables studied, and Student's t tests were applied to detect differences according to gender. Fourthly, a structural equations model was calculated in order to confirm the hypothetical model, using the EQS 6.0 programme (Bentler, 1995). The maximum likelihood model was applied, using robust estimators (Mardia coefficient = 136.05; normalised estimator = 96.13). CFI, IFI and NNFI indexes were considered acceptable with values equal to or higher than .95, and RMSEA values equal to or less than .08 were also considered acceptable (Batista & Coenders, 2000; Hair et al., 2016). Finally, multi-group analysis was conducted of the relationships between the model parameters to explore the moderating effect of gender and educational stage.

Results

Table 1 presents the mean values, standard deviations, correlations between the variables studied and the values of the t test according to gender. Significant relationships are observed in the variables studied. Statistically significant differences were also obtained between girls and boys in the variables, and so these variables were incorporated into subsequent analyses.

Table 2 show the latent variables included in the model, their respective indicators, standard error and associated probability for each indicator in the corresponding latent variable.

A structural equations model was calculated. The model offers an adequate fit to the data S-B χ^2 = 101.85, df = 40, p < .001, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .05 (.036, .060). The percentage of variance associated with school violence is 22.5%; hence it can be considered an effect size of the statistical significance of the estimated model.

Table 1
Mean, Pearson correlations, standard deviations, and *t* Student

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Relational victimisation	1											
2	Overt physical victimisation	.53**	1										
3	Overt verbal victimisation	.77**	.66**	1									
4	Overt pure violence	.31**	.29**	.35**	1								
5	Overt reactive violence	.14**	.26**	.20**	.54**	1							
6	Overt instrumental violence	.17**	.24**	.20**	.54**	.43**	1						
7	Relational pure violence	.27**	.16**	.23**	.39**	.30**	.42**	1					
8	Relational reactive violence	.28**	.16**	.23**	.29**	.39**	.20**	.47**	1				
9	Relational instrumental violence	.24**	.16**	.20**	.31**	.26**	.47**	.52**	.37**	1			
10	Motivation of revenge	.12**	.17**	.14**	.20**	.41**	.16**	.18**	.31**	.17**	1		
11	Motivation of avoidance	.21**	.15**	.21**	.09*	.09*	−.01	.15**	.35**	.07	.39**	1	
12	Motivation of benevolence	−.01	−.01	.00	−.03	−.09*	.01	−.03	−14**	.03	−.23**	−.38**	1
Total	*M*	1.56	1.27	1.67	1.35	1.50	1.11	1.25	1.59	1.13	1.60	2.08	2.17
	SD	(.48)	(.34)	(.50)	(.32)	(.51)	(.22)	(.27)	(.44)	(.26)	(.61)	(.72)	(.74)
Boys	*M*	1.52	1.35	1.72	1.40	1.66	1.15	1.25	1.60	1.14	1.72	1.99	2.14
	SD	(.49)	(.37)	(.48)	(.36)	(.60)	(.27)	(.29)	(.46)	(.28)	(.65)	(.67)	(.73)
Girls	*M*	1.59	1.20	1.62	1.31	1.32	1.07	1.25	1.58	1.13	1.47	2.17	2.19
	SD	(.50)	(.29)	(.51)	(.28)	(.34)	(.15)	(.26)	(.43)	(.25)	(.54)	(.74)	(.74)
Boys/Girls	*t*	−1.6	5.4***	2.5**	3.7***	9.1***	4.7	.2	.3	.3***	5.2***	−3.3**	−.8

Note.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.
*** $p < .001$.

Table 2
Factorial saturations, standard error and associated probability

Variables	Factor loadings General model
Peer victimisation	
Relacional	1[a]
Overt physical	.60*** (.05)
Overt verbal	1.25*** (.07)
School violence	
Overt pure violence	1.21*** (.12)
Overt reactive violence	1[a]
Overt instrumental violence	.59*** (.08)
Relational pure violence	.53*** (.08)
Relational reactive violence	.53*** (.08)
Relational instrumental violence	.41*** (.08)
Transgressive motivations	
Revenge	.14* (.06)
Avoidance	.20*** (.04)
Benevolence	.20*** (.04)

Note. Robust statistics. Standard errors in brackets.
[a] Fixed in 1 during estimation.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .01$.
*** $p < .001$.

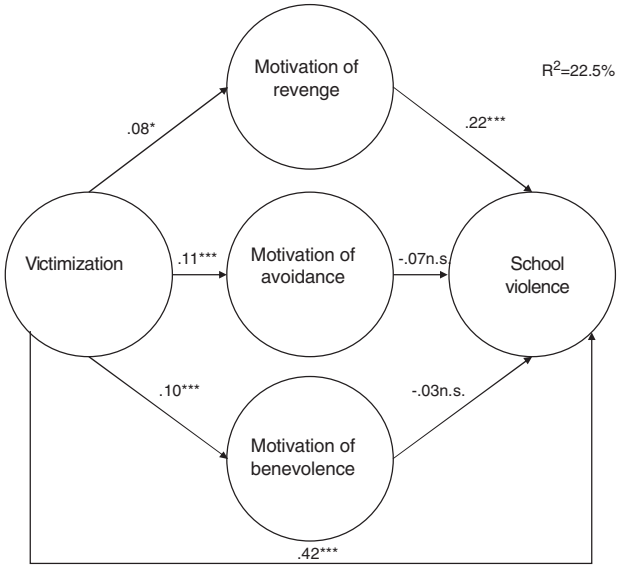

Figure 2. Final structural model with relation coefficients and statistical significance.

The results indicate that *peer victimisation* is directly and positively related with *school violence* (β = .42, $p < .001$), with RM (β = .08, $p < .05$), AM (β = .11, $p < .001$) and BM (β = .10, $p < .001$) (Figure 2). RM is also directly and positively related with *school violence* (β = .22, $p < .001$). No statistically significant relationships have been found between AM and RM related with *school violence*. Regarding indirect relationships or mediating effects, the results show that *peer victimisation* is positively related with school violence through RM (β = .01, IC [.00–.03], $p < .001$) (Table 3).

Finally, multi-group analysis was carried out to analyse the moderator effect of gender and educational stage. The effects of *peer victimisation*, RM, AM, and BM on *school violence* were estimated. The model was restricted as a function of gender (girls and boys) and educational stage (primary and secondary). The model offers an adequate fit to the data for gender, S-B $\chi^2_{89} = 171.97$, $p < .001$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .05, 95% C.I. = (.041, .064) and educational stage, S-B $\chi^2_{89} = 150.94$, $p < .001$, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .05, 95% C.I. = (.033, .058). The Lagrange Multiplier reveals that four parameters are significantly different between boys and girls: and one parameter is significantly different between primary and secondary education. With regard to gender, the differences found were as follows: (1) the physical overt victimisation and *peer victimisation* path is greater among boys than among girls (β = .74, $p < .001$; β = .65, $p < .001$); (2) the reactive relational violence and *school violence* path is greater among girls than among boys (β = .26, $p < .001$; β = .42, $p < .001$); (3) the pure relational violence and *school violence* path is greater among girls than among boys (β = .40, $p < .001$; β = .56, $p < .001$); and (4) the *peer victimisation* and BM path is greater among boys than among girls (β = .14, $p < .05$; β = .10, $p < .001$). Finally, with regard to educational stage, the *school victimisation* and BM path is statistically significant in the secondary group (β = .15; $p < .001$), but not in the primary group (β = −.09; *n.s.*).

The final model with the constrictions lifted shows a better fit to the data for the variables gender, S-B $\chi^2_{85} = 137.7865$, $p < .001$, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .043, 95% C.I. = (.029, .056) and educational stage,

Table 3
Indirect effect, direct and total effects of the total model

	β	Standard Error (s)	*p*	C.I. 95% LCL	UCL
Indirect effect					
Victimisation → RM → School violence	.02	.01	<.05	.00	.04
Victimisation → AM → School violence	−.01	.01	n.s.	−.03	.01
Victimisation → BM → School violence	−.00	.01	n.s.	−.02	.01
Direct effects					
Victimisation → School violence	.42	.04	<.001	.35	.49
Total effects					
Victimisation → School violence	.43	.04	<.001	.35	.50

Note. Total effects is the sum of the direct effect of victimisation to school violence and its indirect or mediating effects. AM: Motivation of Avoidance, BM: Motivation of Benevolence, RM: Motivation of Revenge.
$^{*}p < .05$.
$^{**}p < .01$.
$^{***}p < .001$.
n.s.: non significant.

S-B $\chi^2_{88} = 142.82$, $p < .001$, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .042, 95% C.I. = (.028, .055). The Likelihood Ratio (LR) test shows that the lifting of these restrictions statistically improves the fit of the model for the variables gender, ΔS-B $\chi^2 = 56.89$, Δd.f. = 10, $p > .05$ and educational stage, ΔS-B $\chi^2 = 17.50$, Δd.f. = 13, $p > .05$. The LR test is not statistically significant when additional restrictions are lifted.

Discussion

The general aim of this paper is to analyse the role played by RM, AM and BM in the relationship between *peer victimisation* and *school violence*. Furthermore, it explores the moderating effect of gender and educational stage on these relationships. The findings indicate that there is a direct and positive relationship between victimisation and school violence, thus confirming the first hypothesis. These results are convergent with the findings obtained in previous studies that indicate that an important proportion of victimised students use violent behaviours in response to this situation of victimisation (Goldbach et al., 2018; Kochel, Ladd, Bagwell, & Yabko, 2015). From a theoretical perspective, the conceptualisation of the roles of aggressor and victim as exclusive forms of involvement in dynamics of violence has important limitations, since, as observed in the findings obtained here, both roles tend to be expressed conjointly. Longitudinal studies have consistently shown that aggressor teenagers have suffered previous experiences of *victimisation*, although not necessarily at the hands of their peers (Martínez-Ferrer & Sattin, 2017; Sentse, Kretschmer, & Salmivalli, 2015). Further evaluation of these expressions of *violence* and *victimisation* in multiple contexts would provide a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between these two roles, and the underlying explanatory mechanisms (Garaigordobil & Martínez-Valderrey, 2016; Gómez-Ortiz, Romera-Félix, & Ortega-Ruiz, 2017; Zych, Beltrán-Catalán, Ortega-Ruiz, & Llorent, 2018).

Regarding the analysis of *transgressive motivations*, the findings of this study highlight that *victimisation* is only related to *school violence* through RM, but not with regard to AM and BM; thus, the hypothesis is only partially confirmed. This result is relevant since it shows that victimised teenagers express violent behaviours as a result of the desire to exact revenge on their aggressor, so they probably assault those who assaulted them. In this regard, the findings of this present study could answer, partly at least, the question of why victimised students respond with violence. Furthermore, in a previous qualitative study, it was found that victims resort to violence "because they cannot take it any more and because they no longer know what to do" (Moral, Suárez, Villarreal, & Musitu, 2014). Hence, violent conduct among victims seems to emerge from their rage and despair; a reactive and impulsive response of the victimised adolescent who does not know how to reverse the situation. However, in contrast to expectations, an indirect relationship is not observed between *victimisation* and *violence* through AM and BM. In other words, *victimisation* is positively linked with AM and BM, but these dimensions are not associated with *violence*. These results indicate that victims tend to avoid responding to these situations and forgive their aggressors, and consequently sidestep any potentially violent situation.

In previous studies, RM and AM have been linked with maladaptive defensive responses (Barcaccia et al., 2017; Watson et al., 2016). With regard to AM, this motivation seems to elicit responses that involve seeking distance from the aggressor, which explains the fact that this motivation is not linked with violence. However, some authors signal that AM behaviours can hinder in the long run the resolution of conflicts and may aggravate situations of *school violence* (Watson et al., 2016). This is very likely to be the case for so-called passive/pure victims who, on account of their family socialisation (Cerezo et al., 2018), or because of their values (Odriozola & Sáez, 2015), do not get involved in violent behaviours and avoid risk situations even though, as observed in recent studies, this decision can lead to psychological unease (Barcaccia et al., 2017), depression (Troop-Gordon, 2017) and loneliness (Bono, McCullough, & Root, 2008).

BM, which, as shown in the results is related with *victimisation* but not with *school violence*, is not without risks for the victim. This motivation involves not only avoiding conflicts but also forgiving the aggressor and forcing themselves to maintain a positive relationship (Wade et al., 2014). However, the positive re-evaluation of negative emotions towards the aggressor can foster fear of re-victimisation (Watson et al., 2017). It would be very interesting in future research to ascertain which groups of victims present the highest levels of these motivations. It would also be interesting to examine whether teenagers who opt to avoid or forgive their aggressor following victimisation show more internalising problems.

Analysis of the moderating effect of gender and educational stage show that, as expected, the relationship between *victimisation* and BM is greater among boys than girls. This difference could be attributable to the gender models among adolescents (Santoro, Martínez-Ferrer, Monreal, & Musitu, 2018), in the sense that, in the case of boys, social interactions with a certain violent component are often framed within the normative model of masculinity, and within this framework, they are justified and, consequently, forgiven (Navarro, Larrañaga, & Yubero, 2013; Stéfano, 2017). This path also differs depending on the educational level, in the sense that this relationship is significant only among secondary school students, probably due to the fact that the analytical capacity

and maturative development of teenagers is greater than that of pre-adolescents. BM implies greater socio-moral development and greater self-regulation (Kholberg, 1969); hence, teenagers also have a greater capacity to evaluate the costs and benefits of forgiveness, and also, during this period, greater importance is given to peer relations (Martínez-Ferrer et al., 2018).

Finally, these results should be interpreted with a certain degree of caution, owing fundamentally to the transversal nature of the data. Although it is not possible to establish causal relationships, future research incorporating the time dimension would allow us to clarify the differences obtained between the groups. Furthermore, the use of self-reporting measures could lead to certain biases and social desirability effects. This limitation could be resolved by incorporating measures from other contexts and informants (e.g., groups of peers, teachers, families, etc.). These findings corroborate the important influences of *transgressor motivations* (TM) on the dynamic of *peer victimisation* and *school violence*. Even though the mediating effect of TM on the relationship between *peer victimisation* and *school violence* is low, we believe that this result offers progress in an area that is still fairly underexplored and of particular importance in terms of intervention and family guidance from schools. Furthermore, in future research, and in prevention and intervention programmes to improve school life, it would be advisable to take account of gender socialisation processes.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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