

# Protective Factors for the Development of Psycho-pathological Symptoms in Young Victims of Community Violence

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## ABSTRACT:

### INTRODUCTION

Vjg" Yqtnf" Jgcnvj" Qticpk|cvkqp" fgŁpgu" xkqngpeg" \*Y JQ." 2002) as: The deliberate use of physical force or power, whether in a threatening or effective manner, against oneself, other persons, a group, or a community, which causes or is likely to cause injury, death, psychological damage, developmental disorders, or deprivation.

In this regard, despite the fact that data are scarce since vjg" swcpvk{" cpf" swcnkv{" qh" kphqt o cvkqp" ku" fgŁekgpv" yqtnfykfg." it is estimated that 1.6 million people died violently in the year 4222." o quvn{" {qwpi" rgqrng" dgvyggp" 37" cpf" 46" {gctu" qnf" \*Mtwi." Mercy, Dahlberg, & Zwi, 2002, WHO, 2002). Although the 2012 tcvgu" qh" xkqngpeg" ujyq" c" 38 " " ftqr" yqtnfykfg" \*Y JQ." 4236+." kv" is still considered a serious public health problem. For its part, Latin America has historically been a continent prone to violence; the alarming thing about this violence is not only its nature and different manifestations, but that the phenomenon is so widespread kv" ecppqv" dg" kipqtgf" \*K o dwuj." Okuug." (" Ecttk>p." 4233+0" Ceeqtfkpi" vjg" Yqtnf" Dcpmou" fcvc" \*Yqtnf" Dcpm." 4232+." dgikppkpi" kp" 3; :2." Latin America has experienced a 50 percent increase in homicide

rates, being the same as the WHOs report with young people between the ages of 15 and 24 years old being the main victims.

Cu" ecp" dg" uggp." vjg" o quv" rtgekug" Łiwtgu" cpf" vq" uq o g" gzvpgv" easier to gather are those that correspond to violence that result in fgcvju=" j qy gxt. vjku" Łiwtg" qpn{ "tg Łgevu" c" u o cmn" rctv" qh" vjg" r tqdng o." since for every mortal victim many more are injured, permanently disabled, or mentally impaired. Also, behind these there are other jki jgt" Łiwtgu" vjcv" eqttgurqpf" vq" qvjgt" v{ rgu" qh" xkqngpeg" vjcv" o c{ " be reported to the authorities, as well as others that go unreported and make up the so-called Dark Figure.

Due to the above and in an effort to make the numbers on xkqngpeg" o qtg" rtgekug." Hqtig." Tqugpdgti." (" Ogte{ \*3; ;7+ " rtrqruqg" three general categories:

30" Ugnh/kp Łkevgf" xkqngpeg<" kpenwfgu" uwkekfcn" dgjcxkqt" cpf" ugnh/ harm.

2. Collective violence: it is subdivided into social violence \*Ocuu" xkqngpeg." vgttqtku o" cpf" eqnngvkvxg" cev" qh" jcvtgf." rqnkvkccn" xkqngpeg" \*y ctu+ " cpf" geppq o ke" xkqngpeg" \*I tqwr" cwcem" hqt" geppq o ke" rtqŁv+0

3. Interpersonal violence: it has two subcategories. First, family or partner violence, which is usually, but not always, in the home.

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Secondly, community violence refers to that which occurs between people who are not related and who may or may not be known and usually happens outside the home.

UrgekŁecm{"eq o o wpkv{"xkqngpegkpenwfguzrquwtg"vqŁtgct o u." knives, drugs and encompasses all types of crime such as assault, tcr.g."tqddgt{"mkfpcr rkp i" c p f" j q o k e f g" \*Mgppgf{" (" Egdcmqu." 2014), although it may be a by-product of different circumstances, it is characterized by developing in the environments closest to the people who suffer from it. In this sense, and because of the processes of socialization and independence of adolescence, young people tend to spend more time outside the home and more time on the street, which is why they are more frequently exposed to community violence, thus repeatedly becoming victims of it.

Victimization research has shown that different situations \*Ceekfgpu." pcwctn" ecvcvtqrjgu" c p f" e t k o g+ " n g c f" v q" x c t k q w u" victimization processes which include all those conditions, ukvwckvqu." hcevqtu" qt" ektew o uvcpegu" \*Geqpq o k e." r q n k v k e c n." u q e k c n." psychological and biological) that cause an interruption in the nkxgu"qh" rgqrng" c p f" i k x g" t k u g" v q" u w h h g t k p i" \*Rgctuq." 4229+0" V j g u g" processes not only affect direct victims, their effects also extend to h c o k n k g u." h t k g p f u" c p f" v j g" e q o o w p k v {" \*Rcncckq." 4223+0" Ceeqtfkpi" v q" G e j g d w t Ā c" \*4226+ v j g" h q m n y k p i" v {" r g u" q h" x k e v k o u" o c {" d g" c h h g e v g f <

1. Direct physical or primary affected victims: they are the people directly affected by the aggression or the traumatic event.
2. Secondary or indirect victims: those persons traumatized by physical and social-cultural conditions after the violence, who have been direct witnesses of the aggression and have not been personally affected; in this category relatives and persons close to the primary victims are included.
3. Indirect or contextually affected victims: those persons traumatized by physical and social-cultural conditions after the violence, who have indirectly witnessed the aggression, without being personally affected; this category includes persons who have been psychologically affected by the seriousness of the incident, without any loss or direct threat.

In the case of Mexico, the so-called interpersonal violence related to crime has increased in the last 15 years with the consequent increase in victims. In this regard the National Institute qh" Uvcvkuveu" c p f" I g q i t e r j {" \*K P G I k." 4238+ k p f k e c v g u" v j c v" k p" 4238" 34.2% of households in the country had at least one crime victim, 4604" o k n k q p" r g q r n g" y g t g" e t k o g" x k e v k o u" v j c v" t g r t g u g p v" 4 : . 9 : : " victims per every 100,000 inhabitants. With regard to the Dark Hkiwtg." kv" k p f k e c v g u" v j c v" k v" k u" k p" v j g" q t f g t" q h" ; 508 ' . ' y j k e j" u w i i g u v" the enormous magnitude of the problem.

Given its high incidence, community violence in Mexico today has been considered a daily occurrence, a routine event that one has learned to live with and that only impacts when one is a direct victim or when its magnitude and severity causes visible damage. That this phenomenon has a double incidence has been left out, individually as it affects the quality of life and collectively for its k p l w g p e g" k p" v j g" f g x g n q r o g p v" q h" v j g" e q o o w p k v {" 0" V j k u" k u" d g e c w u g" people who have been direct victims transmit their experiences to others, which widely generalizes fear due to the vicarious elaboration of this feeling that leads the community to recognize

themselves as potential victims and therefore become indirect or contextual victims.

While it is true that for most people, experiencing a criminal experience has several consequences that are linked to anxiety, causing physical or psychological harm to children and adolescents, such an experience is very harmful as it affects their way of thinking, feeling and acting. In particular, exposure to community violence in {qwp i" r g q r n g" j c u" d g e q o g" c" u k i p k Ł e c p v" r w d n k e" j g c n v j" r t q d n g o" i k x g p" the negative consequences on the various aspects of adolescent development and adjustment. Among behavioral, emotional, c p f" c e c f g o k e" e q t t g n c v g u." q p g" e c p" Ł p f" c p z k v g {" . " f g r t g u u k q p." j g c n v j" problems, disruptive and violent behavior, alcohol and drug abuse, u e j q q n" c d u g p v g g k u o." c p f" c e c f g o k e" h c k n w t g" \*E q q n g {" / U v t k e m m c p." S w k n n g." I t h Ł p." U w w c t v." D t c f u j c y" (" H w t t / J q n f g p." 4233+ E q t y k p" (" M g g u j k p." 4233+0

In general, it has been found that the perceived exposure to eq o o w p k v {" x k q n g p e g" k u" u k i p k Ł e c p v {" c u u q e k c v g f" y k v j" o g p v c n" j g c n v j" r t q d n g o u" \* I q n f o c p / O g m n q t." O c t i g t k u q p / \ k n m q." C m n g p." (" E g t f c." 4238+0" UrgekŁecm{" . c o q p i" v j g" o c k p" p g i c v k x g" e q p u g s w g p e g u" c t g" g z v g t p c n k | k p i" d g j c x k q t u" \*H n g m o c p." F t w t {" . V c { n q t." (" V j g c m n." 4238+ Pérez, Sánchez, Martínez, Colon, & Morales, 2016), consisting of aggressive and antisocial behaviors, alcohol and substance abuse as an ineffective way of coping with an intolerable situation. Likewise, there are internalizing behaviors among which are symptoms of depression in which there is evidence that are directly related to victimization in childhood and is related to depressive symptoms and secondary victimization with symptoms of post-traumatic u v t g u u" \* I q n f p g t." I t q u u." T k e j c t f u." (" T c i u f c n g." 4237+0" Q p" v j g" q v j g" hand, indirect victimization during adolescence is related to the presence of depressive symptoms in teenagers and young adults, while direct victimization does not predict symptoms of depression k p" c f q n e g e g p v u" d w v" k v" f q g u" k p" c f w n v u" \*E j g p." E q t x q." N g g." (" J c j o." 4239+0" k p" c f f k v k q p" v q" v j g" c d q x g." v j g {" " u w h h g t" h t q o" n c e m" q h" g p g t i {"





package version 21.0. Firstly, descriptive analyses were performed to show the behavior of direct and indirect victimization variables, global symptom severity index, life purpose, noetic goals and resilience. A moderation analysis was also carried out to explore whether the purpose of life, the search for noetic goals, and pathological symptomatology. Finally, a linear stepwise regression was performed to estimate the weight and direction of independent severity index) in young victims of community violence.

**Table 1.**

Mean and standard deviation of direct and indirect victimization rates

	M	SD
Direct victimization	2.49	2.40
Indirect victimization	7.10	4.77

**Table 2.**

Mean, standard deviation and T scores of the nine dimensions of symptoms and the overall severity index

	M	SD	T Punctuation
Somatization	0.175	0.6675	50
Obsessions-Compulsions	0.186	0.6979	35
Interpersonal Sensitivity	0.167	0.6601	50
Depression	0.177	0.6838	35
Anxiety	0.160	0.6193	35
Hostility	0.165	0.7198	50
Phobic Anxiety	0.142	0.5703	50
Paranoid Ideas	0.163	0.6553	50
Psychoticism	0.147	0.5862	50
Global Severity Index	1.67	0.5726	80

## RESULTS

Table 1 shows the descriptive results of primary and secondary victimization; as shown, the participants were primarily secondary victims with a high exposure index and secondarily they were

Table 2 shows the T-scores of the nine dimensions of symptomatology, the T-scores of obsession-compulsion, depression, anxiety indicate that participants do not show symptoms in these dimensions, while the T scores of somatization-interpersonal sensitivity, hostility, phobic anxiety, paranoid ideation and psychoticism indicate a slight affectation. In spite of the above, the T-score of the global severity index indicates the presence of a high degree of psychological distress which severity index indicates that participants show some degree of psychological distress.

Table 3 shows the means and standard deviation of the Life Purpose, Noetic Targets and Resilience variables, which are in the range considered adequate.

Moderate positive correlations were obtained between direct and indirect exposure to violence and total psychological

**Table 3.**

Mean and standard deviation of Life Purpose, Noetic Goals and Resilience of young victims of community violence

	M	SD
Purpose of life	78.13	1.25
Noetic goals	25.54	4.99
Resilience	18.01	2.68

**Table 4.**

Relationship between victimization, protective factors and psychopathological symptoms

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Direct victimization	---													
2. Indirect victimization	0.460**	---												
3. Purpose of life	-0.017*	-0.015*	---											
4. Noetic goals	-0.066*	-0.140**	-0.004**	---										
5. Resilience	0.081**	0.116**	-0.076**	-0.076**	---									
6. Somatization	0.181**	0.156**	-0.155**	-0.127**	-0.253**	---								
7. Obsessions-Compulsions	0.183**	0.205**	-0.262**	-0.143**	-0.292**	0.752**	---							
8. Interpersonal Sensitivity	0.146**	0.159**	-0.283**	-0.139**	-0.282**	0.679**	0.803**	---						
9. Depression	0.149**	0.161**	-0.302**	-0.137**	-0.298**	0.740**	0.825**	0.839**	---					
10. Anxiety	0.171**	0.168**	-0.234**	-0.152**	-0.279**	0.806**	0.787**	0.767**	0.817**	---				
11. Fear- Hostility	0.186**	0.150**	-0.256**	-0.108**	-0.223**	0.678**	0.685**	0.668**	0.739**	0.736**	---			
12. Phobic Anxiety	0.136**	0.119**	-0.192**	-0.125**	-0.210**	0.628**	0.625**	0.667**	0.630**	0.699**	0.525**	---		
13. Paranoid Ideas	0.153**	0.183**	-0.224**	-0.121**	-0.274**	0.628**	0.742**	0.798**	0.745**	0.724**	0.671**	0.606**	---	
14. Psychoticism	0.142**	0.132**	-0.273**	-0.121**	-0.264**	0.694**	0.777**	0.820**	0.808**	0.812**	0.718**	0.667**	0.771**	---
15. Global Severity Index	0.288**	0.286**	-0.279**	-0.249**	-0.306**	0.858**	0.900**	0.894**	0.924**	0.915**	0.813**	0.749**	0.835**	0.900**

\*p<0.01; \*\*p<0.001

u{ orvqocvqni {" \*204: : ." r?223=" 204:8." r?223+0" Nkmgykug." moderate negative correlations were found among life purpose, noetic goals, resilience, and total psychological symptomatology \*/2049; ." r?223=" /2046; ." r?223=" /5238." r?223+ "\*"ugg"Vcdng"6+0

A multiple regression analysis was carried out to determine if the purpose of life, the search for noetic goals, and resilience diminish the relationship between total victimization and total psychological symptomatology. It was found that there is no multicollinearity among the variables; the residuals are normally distributed and fq"pqv"eqttgncg" ykvj" rtgfkevqt"xctkcdngu0"C"uvcvkuvecn {"uki pl&ecpv"



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García-Alandete, J., Gallego-Pérez, J.F. & Pérez-Delgado,  
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Effects of Peer and Parental Support on the Relationship  
between Vicarious Victimization and Substance Use.