Five Independents Variables Affecting Bullying: Neighborhood, Family, School, Gender-Age and Mass Media

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It is probably true to say that bullying is the psychosocial phenomenon which has attracted the most attention in academic circles over the last ten years. It affects approximately three to five percent of adolescents from twelve to eighteen years of age worldwide to a serious degree and up to twenty percent of this population to a lesser degree. The long and short term effects of bullying are considered to be extremely damaging. The importance of this phenomenon is that it may give rise to low self-esteem, anomie, depression, isolation, psychosomatic symptoms, failure at school and in extreme cases, it may result in suicide and future incidences of bullying in the workplace and within the home. As the number and the seriousness of incidents increases, many parents worry that the problem is spiralling out of control. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of publications on bullying, with an emphasis on how, when and where it occurs, but not on the factors which cause it. This meta-analysis studies the influence of five social environmental variables: neighborhood, family, school, gender-age and the mass media, considered on both an individual and interactional level, as their effects are often augmented when two or more variables are examined together. The concept "bullying" encompasses both individual and collective aggression and individual and collective victimization.

Keywords: Individual Bullying; Collective Bullying; Neighborhood; Family; School; Age-Gender; Mass Media

Introduction

Bullying can be defined as a form of low-intensity violence which occurs in schools and which may be labelled as a subtype of the aggression aimed at proving that the victim is weaker than the aggressor; the act of transgression is intentional and takes place at regular intervals over time (Baldry & Farrington, 2005) and includes hitting and teasing, as well as more passive forms such exclusion from conversation and play (OECD, 2009). This phenomenon, identified in the 1960s in Sweden, is a source of enormous distress for victims and their families and may give rise to failure at school, anomie and low self-esteem. In extreme cases, it may result in suicide and future incidences of bullying in the workplace and within the home (Nicholson, 2007). As the number and seriousness of incidents increases, many parents worry that the problem is spiralling out of control. They are demanding that schools and policymakers do something and in response, governments and educational authorities are devising new ways to tackle the problem: giving children strategies to avoid being picked on, and giving teachers more training to deal with the perpetrators. To make a difference, however, authorities must first understand why bullying is burgeoning now. This is not easy, since its worst forms occur during the early teen years, just when most youths stop talking to their elders in their struggle to construct their own identity. Long-term exposure to bullying has been mentioned as a contributing factor in many of the tragic school shootings that

have occurred in several countries (Pernille et al., 2009). Children with emotional/behavioral conditions are more likely to have poor academic performance, to repeat a grade in school, face school suspension or expulsion, develop behavioral problems in adulthood, and are less likely to engage in social activities outside of school (Sing & Ghandour, 2012). An awareness of the effects of the variables or social factors which have a bearing on bullying is essential when considering preventive measures to be adopted in order to alleviate the problem for both the aggressor and the victim. Bowles et al. (2009) maintain that the broader social-environmental context including school, neighborhood and family context may also bear influences on children's risk of being involved in bullying from the age of 5 and 7. As regards adolescents and young adults, we propose including another two variables, possibly combining both, in the study due the environments in which adolescents evolved.

Influence of Neighborhood

The association of socioeconomic status or social class (as measured by geographical district) and violence has been long-standing and controversial. As a result of differences in violence levels among neighborhoods in every city in the world, delinquency theories have established a rating of municipal districts. The crime rates in each neighborhood or district can be predicted by its ranking within the stratified city. Nearly 9

million people in the United States live in "extreme-poverty" neighborhoods in which at least 40% of residents have incomes below the federal poverty threshold, which for 2011 stood at about $23,000 for a family of four (Ludwing et al., 2012).

According to 2007 National Survey of Children's Health (N = 62,804) based on serious behavioral problems related to neighborhood, household income, demographic, and behavioral characteristics" (US children aged 6 - 17 years), the 6% of children in neighborhoods with the least favorable social conditions experienced serious behavioral problems, compared with 2.0% of children in the most favorable neighborhoods. Moreover, less favorable neighborhood conditions were associated with higher behavioral problems index scores; a mean behavioral problems index difference of 8.6 was observed between the least and most favorable neighborhood conditions (107.5 vs. 98.9). Children in areas with the least favorable social conditions had 3.1 times higher unadjusted odds of serious behavioral problems than children in neighborhoods with the most favorable conditions; children in neighborhoods with perceived safety concerns, garbage/litter in streets/sidewalks, poor/dilapidated housing, and vandalism had 1.9, 2.4, 2.6, and 2.0 times higher unadjusted odds of serious behavioral problems than children in neighborhoods without these unfavorable social conditions, respectively (Singh & Ghandour, 2012: p. 160). According the 2012 National Survey of Children's Health, the 13.4% of children is never or sometimes safe in his community, the 3.7% of children live in neighborhood that don't contain parks, recreation centers, sidewalks or libraries and the 11.6% lives in neighborhood containing broken windows or graffiti. Theory posits that neighborhoods structural factors, such as poverty, residential instability, single parenthood, and ethnic heterogeneity, are of prime importance in explaining behaviour through their ability to thwart or promote neighborhood organization (formal and informal institutions), which maintains adolescent order.

The association between bullying and living in a socially disorganized neighborhood can be explained by the fact that no measures are taken to protect young people from such neighborhoods when they are attacked. The Chicago school offers a possible explanation for this phenomenon: the underclass residents of marginal districts must affront numerous problems of inadequate health and income, and therefore lack the means and interest to involve themselves in solving the problems common to their neighborhoods. They do not feel identified with either town planning or street safety, as they are indifferent to the potential market value of their dwellings. The absence of lower middle-class or working class residents is determinant; if these socioeconomic groups formed part of the neighborhood their presence and everyday behaviour would restrain the deterioration of neighbourly relations caused by the most disadvantaged. As Wilson (1993) stated there exists a clear association between residential instability and violence in neighborhoods at the bottom of the list. As these areas further deteriorate, the pernicious effects multiply, producing increases in all the classic features of social marginalisation. The lifestyle models presented to young deprived people are homogeneous as regards the most important exclusion variables: high rates of unemployment, dependence on the state, low rates of home ownership, drugs and alcohol abuse, single mothers, lack of parental control of children and school dropout, social passivity when faced within juvenile violence.

One classical hypothesis of the neighborhood effects on young people is based on the premise that teenagers who live in affluent neighborhood get into less trouble with the law than teenager than who live in poor neighborhood. In a seminal study, Jencks and Mayer (1990) established that children who grow up in a good area are more likely than who grow up in a bad area to work hard in school, stay out of trouble and go to college, due to three mechanisms: peer influences, indigenous adult influences, and outside adult influences. Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn (2000) highlight neighborhood problems (poverty, protective factors, and neighborhood affluence) as a mechanism through which so-called risk factors, operate on young violence. Also, the growing recognition that it is not just single risk or protective factors but the accumulation of such factors that is likely to result in negative or positive child and family outcomes applied to family and neighborhood-level analyses. The districts effects are more common for neighborhood socioeconomic than ethnic heterogeneity or residential stability across all of the outcomes, and more consistent neighborhood effects are reported in the national samples as compared with the city- and region-based studies. The potential mechanisms through which districts may influence youth are: 1) Institutional resources; the quality of learning, social activities, child care, schools, medical facilities, and employment opportunities present in the community; 2) Parental characteristics (mental health, irritability, coping skills, efficacy, and physical health), support networks available to parents, parental behavior (responsivity/warmth, harshness/control, and supervision/monitoring); 3) Collective efficacy; the extent to which community level formal and informal institutions exist to supervise and monitor the behavior of residents, particularly youths' activities (deviant and antisocial peergroup behavior) and the presence of physical risk (violence and victimization and harmful substances) to residents, especially youth.

The most recent and successful explanation of how neighbourhood disorganization could affect the level of bullying is the theory of collective efficacy (Sampson et al., 2002; Sampson, 2012). This is defined as the ability of residents to reach agreement on shared values in order to maintain effective social controls. Consequently, social and organizational characteristics explain inter-district variations in rates of violence; these cannot be solely attributed to the aggregated demographic characteristics of their inhabitants. Collective efficacy produces the type of formal social control which would ensure the possibility of living in safe and well ordered surroundings, free of interpersonal violence and of the presence of police. It also gives rise to informal social control or the differential ability to obtain the allocation of public resources for the community in order to repair façades, maintain pavements provide police controls, and so on. A set of problems stem from deficiencies in municipal districts, characterised by a negative social atmosphere, absence of social capital based on collective efficacy and of vigilance to intervene in community problems, to assist young people in need and promote a high level of social interaction in the community. The severe economic disadvantages of deprived municipal districts and the low level of social cohesion therein are associated with lower cognitive and behavioural abilities of youths who live there, independently of their family characteristics or their personality. The positive association between a lack of social control and anti-social behavioural problems significantly increases in those municipal districts with limited social capital.

One of the most determinant variable of bullying could be

impulsivity or lack of selfcontrol. According Zimmerman (2010), using data from the Project of Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods, the effects of impulsivity are amplified in neighborhoods with higher levels of socioeconomic status and collective efficacy, and lower levels of criminogenic behavior settings and moral/legal cynicism. Impulsive youth tend to live in lower SES neighborhoods ($-.12^{***}$) and neighborhoods with higher levels of criminogenic settings ($.06^*$) and moral/legal cynicism ($.09^{**}$). Impulsivity significantly predicts violent and property offending in neighborhoods with high levels of collective efficacy, and low levels of delinquent behavior settings and moral/legal cynicism. Conversely, impulsivity is generally not predictive of crime in neighborhoods with low or middle levels of collective efficacy, or middle or high levels of criminogenic settings and moral/legal cynicism. The effect of impulsivity is indistinguishable between low and middle collective efficacy neighborhoods, and between areas with middle and high levels of criminogenic settings and moral/legal cynicism (not shown). For property crime, although the slope of impulsivity is only significant in areas with high levels of collective efficacy and low levels of criminal settings and moral/legal cynicism, two of the three interactions are not significant. Thus, only criminogenic behavior settings moderate the effect of impulsivity on property offending. Multilevel logistic models revealed that the effect of impulsivity was only significant in areas with high levels of collective efficacy and low levels of criminal behavior settings and moral/legal cynicism.

Brännströn (2012), in Sweden, found that for just over 50 per cent of young people from areas type 5 (Very poor/almost exclusively visible minorities) had been in receipt of financial benefit at least once compared with 16 percent of their counterparts in areas type 0 (Well-off/predominantly Swedish-born population). Their average number of months on benefit was also higher: just over 21 months compared with just fewer than 13. The likelihood of receiving benefit was more than five times greater (OR[a] 5.47) for young people from type 5 neighbourhoods than for the reference category, while—given recipiency—those from type 5 neighborhoods did so for approximately 68 per cent more months (IRR[a] 1.68) than their counterparts from well-off and predominantly Swedish-born populated areas The risk of having been sentenced for a crime was, for example, twice as high for young people from type 5 neighborhoods than for the reference category. A similar pattern was revealed for number of offences, with young people from type 5 neighborhoods accounting for approximately 66 per cent more offences than their peers from affluent and homogeneously Swedish residential areas.

Influence of the Family

The family is a social institution of key importance for understanding bullying because it transmits norms and values, moulds sufficient abilities to confront new and conflictive situations, teaches blind conduct of how to behave when the parents are absent, shows how to restrain impulses and rewards or punishes positive or negative actions. It also establishes what conduct is socially reprehensible; it innately regulates basic behavior with regard to life and to others (Peterson & Bush, 2013). Family socialisation is also crucial in order to understand the paths youths tread throughout the course of their lives, how effectively in fact they adopt to extra-family surroundings and

how they deal with the most important transitions, a challenge which requires a certain age or maturity to perform successfully. The multiplicity of factors makes it extremely difficult to establish the influence of the family in the causation of violent behaviour by their children. Especially important factors which may lead to unleashing interpersonal aggressiveness through bullying during adolescence are the parents, siblings, relatives, the family's income level and family's educational level. The family climate in which children grow up in, therefore, a basic element in the ethiology of behaviour at school; youths learn to observe adult behaviour and how parents use physical and psychological punishment as a way of dominating and controlling their children. Once this method has been interiorized, they will employ it in relations with their schoolmates.

The wide variety of family structures must be considered when establishing the relation between family and bullying. Fragile family has become increasingly prevalent in recent years. These include children living with their married biological parents; children living with married stepparents; single-mother families in which the mother was unmarried when the child was born and is not cohabiting with a partner at the time of the study. The other is families composed of a cohabiting couple where the mother was not married when the child was born, but is now cohabitating with a partner. The partner may either be the child's biological parent or may, at least partially, have taken on the parental role. No distinction is made between families sharing households with extended family members or with other families or friends, and those who are not. Neither is a distinction made between single mothers involved in a dating relationship and those that are not. Fathers with high levels of risk may passively withdraw from being involved with their children. These men may have too many problems of their own to become involved with their young child. There is also evidence that fathers with high levels of risk also experience more parenting stress, which tends to be negatively related to father engagement with children Fathers may have a difficult time recovering from the negative effects of their risk as the child grows older because they have not been able to form early bonds with the child or because their relationship with the mother was poor (Waldfogel et al., 2010). In general, adolescent who live in two parents households are less likely to have ever used cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana likely to engage in delinquent acts, are less likely to fight, and more likely to do well in school (Menasco, 2012).

Furthermore, within the most common variety, the nuclear family, the effects on bullying could be complex. The relation among their members is different as regard the number of siblings, whether they are male or female, the position occupied in the family, age differences between family members, whether the siblings are older or younger, how great the difference in age is (McHale et al., 2012). When the number of children increases this automatically brings about a transformation of behaviour control and changes the method used to implant rules. Furthermore, the distancing between siblings involves differences in family behaviour: a greater gap between births produces a better climate for the family as a whole, since with the possibility of dedicating more attention to each child, less dependence exists, and thus the style of discipline can be more relaxed. There may also be increased collaboration between siblings, since moments of tension caused by competing for the same resources do not exist. Siblings serve as companions, confidants, and role models in childhood and adolescence and

as sources of support throughout adulthood. In early adulthood, empirical work has suggested a distancing in the sibling relationship, with decreases in contact and proximity. Sibling research has indicated two additional aspects that have to be considered when relationships between siblings are assessed: relative birth order, namely whether the sibling is younger or older, and gender of the sibling. Older siblings inherit some positions of authority, support and responsibility, and children are more satisfied and to quarrel less with older siblings than with younger siblings. Siblings especially older ones provide each other with models of deviant behavior and serve as gatekeeper to delinquent peers and risky activities. While wide-ranging sibling tension is predictive of diverse poor adjustment effects in the adolescent and early adult phases, ineffective parenting may condition the frequency and developmental impact of such tension (Bank et al., 2004). Coercive interaction styles learned in the context of sibling conflict extend to aggression with peers and antisocial behaviors. In addition to providing a setting for practicing coercive behaviors, reinforcing antisocial behaviors such as deviant talk, and colluding to undermine parental authority, siblings (especially older ones) provide each other with models of deviant behavior and serve as gatekeepers to delinquent peers and risky activities. When the children of the family are all males, the possibilities of bullying in the home and outside the home increase, in comparison to cases in which only one girl or more girls form the family nucleus; whatever the case, the presence of females among siblings causes conflicts and aggressions to reduce.

Another situation that could generate or prevent bullying is the effect on the family of prolonged and unforeseen economic difficulties, caused by a conjunctural crisis which affects a country's economy, a region or a locality. This has been denominated as "the family stress or the tension model. Three examples are the influence on the family of industrial reconversion, the fall in agricultural prices (Conger, R. D. & Conger, K. J., 2002) and 2007-2009 economic recession (Menasco, 2012). When the family has to face problems of low salaries, loss of employment or economic ruin, an unpleasant domestic atmosphere is consequently produced. This may manifest itself in children's behaviour, since they are subjected to unfamiliar and stressful situations. In the face of such adversities, the family may find itself unable to take responsibility for basic shopping, adequate food or the health care one or more of them requires. Economic pressures increase emotional stress between spouses over time, which in turn causes a substantial increase in matrimonial conflict, often followed by a proposal for separation or divorce. Children's behaviour, in turn, is a function of the coping mechanism they have developed to deal with caregiver's emotional distress. Youths of whom both parents are unemployed is associated with children's bullying behavior through its relation with low educational level, single parenthood, and disadvantaged school neighborhoods (Jansen, 2012). Couples with weaker social skill, are at greater risk of conflict escalating to the point of violence, especially during times of stress. Parental stress is linked to more punitive and less emotionally supportive parenting and to low-income children's internalizing and externalizing problems and tends to co-occur with other aspects of well-being ((Brophy-Herb et al., 2013). Despite this, the repercussions of family tension upon children may decline significantly if parents manage to avoid emotional exhaustion, do not get involved in serious levels of parental conflict, maintain marital support and do not neglect their obligations as

parents and remain faithful to their styles of child-rearing. The position of older siblings may also be an influence and even determinant, since if warmth and support are present in inter-sibling relations, economic difficulties do not inevitably lead to antisocial conduct. Adolescents may find an additional umbrella for shelter there, but if the reaction of the older siblings is negative, due to alcohol or drug abuse, the influence on the adolescent in question will be sharper.

Influence of the School Institution

In the majority of Western countries schooling is compulsory for youths up to a certain age. Attending school is therefore obligatory until youths have fulfilled the educational objectives which society has designed via its laws. National education systems regulate school socialization establishing different rights and obligations for students. This allows schools, within certain limits, to design the disciplinary codes known as the school regulations. A school which functions well with a predisposition towards learning and standing out among others has been identified as a factor which discourages violence. In contrast, academic failure, idleness and the imposition of rules have been explanatory factors of aggressiveness. School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. School climate is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and learning necessary for a productive, contributive, and satisfying life in a democratic society. This climate includes norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, and physically safe (Cohen et al., 2009) and affect the satisfaction, efficacy, and commitment of teachers and thus the academic engagement and achievement of students (Cohen et al., 2009).

Atmosphere in the school may affect the levels of violence within schools, because both the formal and informal atmosphere-hidden curriculum-perceived by adolescents in their schools fundamentally influences their behaviour. Contentment with school is one of the principal aspects of pupils' quality of life; it affects psychological wellbeing, involvement at school, truancy rates, premature school leaving and behavioural problems (Raskauskasa et al., 2010). School violence affects a high percentage of the visible and invisible norms of the groups which exist inside the school. Any youth who departs from the formal or informal generalised consensus will be rejected; thus, the groups' behaviour is fundamental for the young member and constitutes a basic protective umbrella to ensure his or her physical and psychological safety. However, as secondary school coincides with a period of far-reaching physiological-hormonal changes, various transitions take place which shatter the existing climate of group norms. Firstly, group leadership and the status of domination must be restated or reoriented, depending on pupils' age. Secondly, secondary school is a transition period which is opposed to stable norms. This stage of life generates tension and frustration which may lead to an increase in rebellious attitudes. The nature of school life is naturally affected by the district and community (local, state, and national) that it operates within. Elementary school in affluent neighborhoods get better teacher than those in poor neighborhoods and this affects how much students learn. Not yet considered, however, are compositional differences due to the fact that some high

schools serve a larger number of students with a history of disruptive behavior. For example, the prevalence of behavioural problems is higher in underprivileged areas, and the fact that teachers have a greater tendency to negatively perceive the social climate in schools located in these areas has shown that students from underprivileged backgrounds are often evaluated more negatively and disciplined more frequently by teachers. This phenomenon of contamination is well known but is not necessarily taken into account in studies of school climate and classroom behavior problems. Moreover, exposure to violence in a larger school environment may reduce the quality of teaching, disrupt classroom discipline, and limit teachers' availability to students before and after the school day (LeBlanc et al., 2007).

Although a wealth of studies examine the influence of neighbourhood on individuals, few of them analyse the role of institutions in these environments. Benbenishty and Astor (2005) found that school climate factors explain a significant proportion of the variance in academic level at secondary school; this ranges between 14% and 32%. Schools which have dedicated teachers who use consistent rules for the avoidance of violence and active participation in these rules (in the form of decision-making) with a positive relationship between teachers and pupils nevertheless displayed significant ratios of bullying. Akiba et al. (2002), in an international study undertaken in 37 nations, concluded that violence at school should be considered independently from the general violence in a country. Although pupils may live in violent families, municipal districts or even nations, this may be negatively correlated with the violence which takes place specifically at school, since external factors may not, in the final analysis, be as influential as previously thought. Sentse et al. (2007) note that similarities in behaviour produces social acceptance and dissimilarities in the dyadic processes lead to rejection from the peer group. Youths form groups on the basis of a similar cognition of which acts are acceptable and which are not. Thus, those who deviate from this uniformity will be rejected by the other group members, who find such behaviour irritable or unacceptable. Whether as an active instigator or victim, bullying could even be a good way of making new friends (Holt & Espelage, 2007).

School typology has an important influence on student behaviour and affects the overall indices of behavioural disturbance. Although young people vary greatly, depending on their cognitive and behavioural characteristics, in some schools there is a general tendency in the pupils as a whole to behave either appropriately or disturbingly otherwise. The factors which affect school climate include the geographical or residential area of the school, polluted, noisy or marginal atmospheres, the architecture of the building areas with little or no vigilance different ownership types private, state, grant-aided/independent/semi-private. Other factors are the different types of orientation-agnostic, religious, the criteria for discipline supervision in the classroom, the playground and the dining rooms, the selection entrance criteria for pupils with the possibility of entry quotas, the types of management, the involvement of parents in School Councils and the daily activity of the school and the age of the institution. One influence is that of environment, as shown above, since school factors affect pupils' behaviour much more strongly than more violent activities out-of-school. Normally, the type of admission procedure open or selective has been used as a powerful predictor, as some schools admit a higher proportion of children with behavioural problems. Consequently, inter-school differences in violence or antisocial behaviour indices are simply a result of differences in admission policies. Each school is embedded in a larger environment that shapes its internal organization which in turn directly affects teachers and students. More precisely, external characteristics such as type of students, number of students, and parental involvement influence the work environment, authority, and social organization of the school. Virtanem et al. (2007) found that the working conditions in Finnish schools located in the lowest socioeconomic neighborhoods, compared to schools located in high-status areas, affected the physical and mental health of teachers -reflected in alcohol abuse, strong possibilities of mental disorders, less implication in school activities and lower efficiency in their teaching tasks.

Influence of Gender and Age

One indisputable fact that emerges from a statistical study of violence is that gender is the strongest discriminatory variable. The majority of crimes are committed by men. The ratio of men to women in prison is 1:4, and in school the percentage of male students who have been expelled or are at risk of being expelled is considerably higher than that of female students. In the case of bullying, it has clearly been demonstrated that its frequency is more or less equally divided between boys and girls, but the same cannot be said when it comes to types of bullying, as the bullying boys engage in tends to be physical and external while girls' bullying tends to be more relational and hidden, which means that the latter is often not detected or sanctioned because its effects are less visible. Furthermore, at these ages it is not common to find cases where boys are bullying girls and even less so cases where girls are bullying boys. Due to hormonal changes at the puberty stage, the number of adolescents involved in romantic relationships increases in accordance with age and sexual maturity and this may give rise to changes in aggressive behavior leading to different types of bullying, including sexual aggression with the objective of gaining power and prestige within the group. (Cunningham et al., 2010). Two important paradigms explain this difference in the behavior of males and females: sexual selection and role theory. Both of these stress that variations may be produced depending on the social context which can accentuate or diminish the effects of either.

According to the evolutionary and sexual selection theory, gender difference as regards use of violence has been explained by both physiological characteristics of the hormones and by evolutionary factors. Adolescence is the period in which both of these issues appear abruptly and, due to this, the reproductive capacity of the female takes on an important role. This model explains aggression in terms of costs and benefits imposed by the natural selection. Differences in the use of physical violence between boys and girls is explained by the role which the reproduction process has assigned to the female, who understands that a violent confrontation on a physical level could put at risk her possibilities of reproducing and caring for her offspring. As a result girls turn to another type of relational and psychological confrontation in order to minimize these risks. For boys the cost of physical confrontation in terms of endangering their reproductive capacity is lower and lies in the injuries produced by the conflict, taking into account that those with fewer resources must initiate a more violent confrontation and expose themselves to a greater risk.

Sexual selection in terms of differences in aggression according to sex brings into play neuro mechanisms involving variables such as risk-taking, lack of inhibitions and fear of physical injury. Exhibition of strength for boys aims to demonstrate capacity to support and defend offspring, fertility and genetic inheritance. Besides, the lower cost that reproduction implies for males as opposed to females means that the former tend to be more aggressive and less selective when choosing their partners (Geary, 2010). For Volk et al. (2012) bullying for boys means exhibiting primary traits such as physical strength, dominance, material resources as well as seconddary traits such as physical attractiveness. These evolutionary traits advertise a boy's future ability to provide and protect for a mate, as well as to provide her with good genes. Adolescent girls can also use indirect bullying tactics such as social exclusion or rumors to compete over potential sexual partners by not only damaging others' reputations, but by attempting to socially limit competitors' access to potential partners. Having high social status is likely to enable adolescent girls to bully more effectively using indirect or relational means, as it puts them in a position to exert social control, as powerful individuals, and as members of popular groups. Thus, bullying for adolescent boys may be a means of increasing in-group power and cohesiveness. Research has shown that boys are in fact more likely than girls to engage in solidarity in the face of conflict.

The second gender differences with regard to the use of violence have been explained also by cultural factors characteristics. It better fits the view that physical aggression occurs as an innate pattern of behavior that is subsequently inhibited by social learning, to different extents in boys and girls. Mediators of the sex differences in aggression, such as the greater physical risk-taking and lesser fear of physical danger among males, have been attributed to evolved dispositions or to social roles The most important cultural influence in the socialization of youths is termed hegemonic male chauvinism, in other words, the atavistic, traditional and patriarchal belief in masculine supremacy, based on traditional gender roles and the opinion that male force is an acceptable way of imposing oneself on the rest. This includes the right to view the control of women as a legitimate act and the subtlety with which boys reaffirm their status of male power, when this is under some type of threat, through abuse of power. By contrast, feminine roles have been characterised by a less physical, active, violent and confrontational attitude. Instead, they are more calculated, more cerebral and more affective. A culture reflects the dominant view of men with which the mass media constantly bombard us i.e. they are shown as tough, strong, aggressive, independent, brave, sexually active, relational and intelligent. Girls tend to spend more time at home, under their parents' supervision, while boys spend more time outside of the home and should therefore be more exposed to neighborhood structural and social factors.

The literature is replete with cases which illustrate tribal rivalries among boys at school and which demonstrate that they develop a distinctive style of masculinity in their wars, in which relationships of domination and subordination are established on the basis of the use of physical violence, both legitimate (through sport) and illegitimate (through harassment and bullying). This style of masculinity is founded on the belief in the importance of aggressive and violent acts performed to maintain status, reputation and resources, as a form of self-protection of masculine identity within the group. The problem is that violence has a highly symbolic value for the acquisition of masculine identity, as it is linked, especially in intermediate ages, to the achievement of positions of power and privilege. Given that the positions reached are usually unstable; their maintenance requires great insistence, which obliges boys to dedicate greater effort and attention. Moreover, considerable evidence exists to support the thesis that violence is a daily occurrence at school, that the majority of violent acts are perpetrated by boys and that they may be classified as violent expressions of certain types of masculinity. Consequently, schools may play an important role in the prevention of violence, although few advances have been made in this field. The fragility of masculinity, especially of hegemonic masculinity, is something that has been repeatedly underlined in analyses of the male gender and is understandable in view of the idea of violence, competetion and triumph as the basis of the affirmation of masculine identity.

For Kenway and Fitzclarence (1997), there exists a nexus between the positions of hegemonic sexist ideology and the use of violence; this nexus may take shape in the four types of masculinity based on social, cultural and institutional models of power: hegemonic, subordinate, complicit and marginal. The first of these is widely used in discussions of masculinity and refers to those forms of domination which attempt to achieve the highest status and exercise of influence and authority on the basis of patriarchy, through many cultural and institutional practices which involve the communications media; they are constructed in the public sphere with regard to women and subordinate masculinities, although this does not imply an all-encompassing process without options and without resistance. Thus, personal and social difficulties often arise from the pressures upon boys to prove their masculinity and conceal their vulnerability. The second form is diametrically opposed to the first and is rejected by the circle of masculine legitimacy, and fits within what may be termed gay masculinity, under constant pressure from the first form. The remaining two forms fit within these two.

Age is also an important factor to be taken into account in bullying because as children get older, the intensity of bullying increases until a peak is reached at around fourteen years of age coinciding with the transition to puberty-adolescence. The transition from infancy to adulthood is characterized by the development of multifaceted learning, acquisitions of skills and knowledge, waxing powers of attention and memory, growing neuronal and other biological capacities, formations and transformations of character and personality, increases and reorganizations in the understanding of self and others, advances in emotional and behavioral regulation, progress in communicating and collaborating with others, and a host of other achievements documented in this edition. Preteen and teenage years is a high anxiety period during which children are seeking a sense of success in social relationships at the same time that they are struggling to find their unique identity (Carney et al., 2011). Theories of the life cycle or, more specifically, the stages of life have been a constant in this field, and reach back to concepts such as adaptation and transformation; their arguments have been widely used as an argument in sociological theory. In accordance with the theory of informal social control graded by age, deviation from the norms is more likely to occur when the ties of the individual to society are weak or broken. Furthermore, it must be remembered that connection with society varies over time, as informal social controls change. In the preadult phase, from adolescence to mid or late twenties, young

people enter into a period of life which is marked by an absence of childhood rules and regulations while not yet assuming the responsibilities associated with adulthood. This implies that romantic relationships during this period tend to be unstable and may involve verbal and physical abuse (Halper-Meekin et al., 2013).

Influence of the Television, Video Games, Internet and Direct Exposure to Violence

The degree to which cinema and TV programs have on effect on the violent behavior of young people has been a subject of debate since 1960's or before. Nevertheless, the debate has re-opened as a result of the incorporation of new and powerful technologies into the lives of present day youth. Hardware includes video games on computers, consoles (Xbox 360, Play-Station, Wii), computers, smartphones (Ipod) and tablets such as Ipads; software includes videogames which first appeared in the late 1980's and early 1990's. These can be bought, borrowed or simply downloaded from the Internet. The most outstanding feature of these games is that they tend to be violent. Over 85% of games contain some violence, and approximately half of video games include serious violent actions. Internet differs from other types of mass media in that it is accessible to all and is less controlled. Apart from viewing its content online, it is interactive so users can participate in activities and express opinions. It is also a media for other types of media as it enables us to download and edit content from other media such as the television, the radio and the cinema. However, it allows for the possibility of creating violent images and can also stimulate aggressive behavior (Anderson, 2012; Bushman et al., 2012; Kirsh, 2011). Different from video games, Internet users usually interact with an object represented by other people in the chat room or online gaming (Donnerstein, 2011). Almost all youths now have online access, and this access may increase opportunities to be exposed to violence. Longitudinal, experimental and cross sectional research on the effects of TV-violence has shown that the amount of viewing TV-violence in childhood predicts young adults' self- and other-reported aggression much more than childhood aggression predicts young adults' TV-violence consumption. Nevertheless, in recent years the media landscape is changing, with new technologies resulting in greater interactivity on smaller, graphically superior, and computationally more powerful devices. Now it is possible to download, view, play, and listen to violent material any time of day or night, often from the privacy of their own rooms, and with little supervision from parents. An explosion in mobile and online media has fueled the increase in media use among young people. Today, 20% of media consumption occurs on mobile devices: cell phones, iPods or handheld video game players. The opportunities for viewing violent content, which was once relegated to more public spaces, have become increasingly private (ISRA, 2012).

The processes that link youth's exposure to violence with subsequent increases in youth's aggressive behaviors can produce either immediate and transient short term changes in behavior or more delayed but enduring long-term changes. Short-term effects result from the activation of existing knowledge structures, which include numerous types of schemata and scripts. The human mind is seen as an associative network in which ideas are partially activated, or primed, by stimuli they are associated with (Huesmann & Kirwil, 2007; Huesmann,

2007; Anderson et al., 2010). Short-term increases in youth's aggressive behaviour following the observation of violence are the consequence of three processes: priming of already existing cognition or script for behaviour; immediate mimicking (imitation) of observed behaviour; changes in emotional arousal and misatribution of that arousal (excitation transfer). The results of on experiment demonstrated that playing a violent video game, even for just 20 min, can cause people to become less physiologically aroused by real violence (Carnagey et al., 2007). Barlett et al., (2009) indicated that those who played a violent video game had a significant increase in aggressive feelings, aggressive thoughts, physiological arousal, and overt aggressive behavior over baseline compared with those who played a non-violent game. The time delay analyses revealed the short-term increases in aggressive thoughts and aggressive feelings last less than 4 min, whereas heart rate after violent video game play may last more than 4 but less than 9 min. Analysis of the delay conditions showed that the effect on aggression of playing a violent video game lasted between 5 and 10 min. Accord Bluemke et al. (2010), even brief playing of violent computer games causes increases in aggressive cognitive structures. On the other hand, playing peaceful games reduces aggressive cognitive structures.

Long-term effects are those that accrue from repeated exposure over a relatively long period of time, such as months or years. Long-term effects mainly result from relatively permanent changes in beliefs, expectations, scripts, attitudes, and other related person factors that are brought about by repeated exposure to video game violence (Anderson et al., 2010). Three long-term processes seem to be most important for the socialization of the young. Observational learning of behavioral scripts, world schemas, and normative beliefs; activation and desensitization of emotional processes, and didactic learning processes (Dubow et al., 2007). The more time young people spend watching violent programmes, the less emotional response they develop when faced with violent stimuli and the less empathy they show towards victims in the real world. Desensitization can be broadly defined as the reduction or elimination of cognitive, emotional, physiological, and ultimately behavioral responses to a stimulus. Desensitization is a process involving changes in emotional responsiveness (ISRA, 2011). Also, it refers to the gradual reduction in responsiveness to an arousal-eliciting stimulus as a function of repeated exposure. In the context of media violence, desensitization more specifically describes a process by which initial arousal responses to violent stimuli are reduced, thereby changing an individual's present internal state. Krahé et al. (2013) findings suggested that the more individuals habitually used violent media contents, the less physiological reactivity they showed to a violent film clip presented to them in a laboratory setting. According to Huesmann (2007), longitudinal real-world studies that have shown correlations over time from childhood viewing of media violence to later adolescent and adult aggressive behavior the early habitual exposure to media violence in middle-childhood predicts increased aggressiveness 1 year, 3 years, 10 years, 15 years, and 22 years later in adulthood, even controlling for early aggressiveness many people who are exposed to media violence never commit violent behavior, "violent media, then, are not sufficient to cause violent behavior".

The most accepted explanation used to refute this criticism is the risk and resilience theory which relates, on the one hand, the risks to which young people are subjected, amongst them

exposure to the mass media, and their capacity to remain immune to them. Authors such as Boxer et al. (2008) highlights the cumulative risk of violent media together with exposure to violence in the community, in the family, in the school and peer groups, academic difficulties, psychopatic tendencies or callousness-unemotionality and psychopatology or related emotional problems. Exposure to entertainment media violence is a risk factor for aggressive behavior, but the presence of this single risk factor is not sufficient to cause children to pick up guns and begin shooting. However, with each additional risk factor children have for aggressive behavior, the risk of that child acting violently compounds (Gentile & Sesma, 2003). The importance of this approach is its recognition of the impact on the developmental system of the interaction of multiple risk factors. No single risk factor is responsible, to the same extent, for obstructing development (Anderson et al., 2007). The concept of resilience refers to the capacity to resist environmental risk experiences and to overcome stress or adversity (Rutter, 2006). In line with current thinking regarding resilience, successful outcomes in spite of exposure to stress are thought to be the result of dynamic interactions between the child and the environment. This experience of stress or adversity in some cases leads to a strengthening of resistance to later stress, known as the steeling effect. Also there are protective factor, referring to something that modifies the effects of risk in a positive direction, something that is helpful or beneficial. Resilience occurs as a result of multiple protective factors—genetic, interpersonal, contextual, and societal—that impinge on the child as well as interact with the child to counteract the negative effects of stress. The approach to understanding the multicausality of behavior state that the premise behind a cumulative risk model is simple: the more risks encountered by a child, the greater the likelihood of problematic functioning.

Conclusion

Bullying in adolescents and early young can be explained by five contextual independent variables: neighborhood, family, school, gender-age, and mass media. Neighborhood, social class/municipal district is clearly a very important predictor variable. It must be remembered that neighborhood reflects the social stratification of the city, which implies inequality: a contrast between good infrastructure, town planning, recreation areas and, particularly residents, who are interested in living in well-ordered surroundings, and a lack of all the former characteristics, encountered in more deprived areas. In addition, neighborhood conditions other variables like family and school. Family styles of upbringing are influenced by the neighborhood where each family lives, as when the parents fear that their children will deviate they take measures to guard them and exercise more control over them which makes family life more stressful and parents more authoritarian. Schools located in the most deteriorated areas of cities are under greater pressure from their surroundings; they generally have more defective buildings and worse installations (often due to the lack of support from the municipal districts). Even private schools located in such areas have a much lower level than other private schools in areas of higher per capita income, and thus despite being private are no different in this respect from public schools. It is therefore unsurprising that schools located in the lowest neighbourhoods in social (class) terms suffer more from bullying and a stronger atmosphere of victimisation. Schools located in the most deteriorated areas of cities are under greater pressure from their surroundings; they generally have more defective buildings and worse installations (often due to the lack of support from the municipal districts).

Family atmosphere is a good independent predictive variable. Delinquency during adolescence usually stems firstly from poor family ties, due to defective direct controls, tracking and punishment, and thus the laxer these links the greater is the danger of delinquent behaviour. Normally, this deficiency is structural and depends on family factors, such as unemployment, poor intra-marital relations, arguments, residential mobility or socioeconomic status. Family are also largely responsible for young people's exposure to the mass media because the young members of the family have been socialized in its use within the family and it is the parents who provide it. Nevertheless, the influence of the mass media also begins to diminish at this age.

The school is a very important independent variable because it is the place where bullying happens. Important factors here include the atmosphere created by teachers, the directors, other staff and, in general, the culture of norms and values, which includes punishment imposed by the institution. In general terms, more episodes of bullying occur in public than in private schools. A possible explanation for this is the difference which exists between them in their manner of resolving conflicts and the capacity of each school to select and expel students at any given moment. Private schools combat bullying to a greater degree because the teachers are generally more concerned about the good reputation of the school. Collective bullying is generally detected and when this happens, measures are taken to put an end to it. Hidden curriculum in school is a very important due to the fact that intimidation and violence generates influence among groups of friends, a type of social capital, however minimum this may be. This fact is not recognised in the majority of psycosocial studies where the bullier is characterised as solitary and isolated individual. Collective bullying is important in school probably because those who form part of the aggressor group establish links of collusion through their mutual support and reciprocal relation.

Gender, significantly affects the distinction between manners of bullying. Boys' bullying is different to that of girls, in both quantity and typology, although the two may be equally pernicious. Physical isomorphism means that the two categories of bullying explain their inter-relations and why the mixed variety is uncommon: as females always flee from collective harassment. It also explains the difference in the practice of bullying by boys and girls. Age, however, does not discriminate between groups, probably for various reasons: the age group is extremely compact, in the sense that the abrupt changes caused by the onset of puberty have already begun. At these stages of school life it begins to be much less common to be attacked by an older schoolfellow, and violence continues to diminish with age. Through interaction with others, teenagers learn the values, attitudes, techniques, and motives for violent behaviour. They learn how to commit violent acts; they learn motives, drives, rationalizations, and attitudes. It grows socially easier for individuals to commit violent acts. Their inspiration is the processes of cultural transmission and construction.

The influence of the mass media acquires special importance when the internet is used to explain ciberbullying, but its influence must be analyzed in the context of what has happened in previous settings. Both the frequency of television watching and exposure to violent acts appear to be important. In any case,

this variable can be considered decisive in situations where bullying takes place as a result of its long and short-term effects. An increase in the number of violent videogames on the market and the substitution of television for internet, where parental supervision is difficult, means that the mass media must be given careful attention as according to several authors it is an underlying factor behind recent episodes of violence in the US.

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