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Article

Validation of the Explanations of Adolescent-to-Parent Violence Scale

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Abstract

Background: Adolescent-to-parent violence (APV) is a social problem that is seldom addressed from a psychosocial level of analysis. This work aims to fill this gap by developing the Escala de Explicaciones de la Violencia Filioparental (EEVFP), an instrument to measure APV explanations given spontaneously by ordinary people. **Method:** The sample was composed of 763 men and women aged 15 to 79, with and without offspring. **Results:** Using a cross-validation procedure based on factorial analysis, the scale's underlying structure that best fit the data included six factors: Poor Parenting, Inadequate Environment, Emotional Reaction, Adolescence, and Evil/Madness. Evidence on the relationship between EEVFP and the Revised Scale of Causal Dimensions was also provided, as well as on differences in explanations due to gender and having children. **Conclusions:** The results provide sufficient evidence of reliability and validity to consider EEVFP a useful tool in APV research exploring the relationship between APV explanations and subsequent behavior. This research may be helpful in training practitioners and in designing intervention strategies that avoid blaming parents and increase support from their surroundings.

Keywords: Adolescent-to-parent violence; causal explanations; attributions; Revised Scale of Causal Dimensions; gender differences.

Resumen

Validación de la Escala de Explicaciones de la Violencia Filioparental. **Antecedentes:** la violencia filioparental (VFP) es un problema social que no suele abordarse desde un nivel de análisis psicosocial. Este trabajo pretende paliar esta carencia desarrollando la Escala de Explicaciones de la Violencia Filioparental (EEVFP), un instrumento que mide las explicaciones espontáneas sobre la VFP. **Método:** la muestra estuvo formada por 763 hombres y mujeres de entre 15 y 79 años, con y sin hijos. **Resultados:** siguiendo un procedimiento de validación cruzada para análisis factorial, la estructura de la escala que mejor se ajustó a los datos incluyó seis factores: Parentalidad Inadecuada, Entorno Inadecuado, Reacción Emocional, Adolescencia y Maldad/Locura. Se aportaron evidencias de la relación entre la EEVFP y la Revised Scale of Causal Dimensions, así como de las diferencias en las explicaciones en función del género y de tener hijos. **Conclusiones:** los resultados proporcionan suficientes evidencias de fiabilidad y validez para considerar la EEVFP un instrumento útil en la investigación que explore la relación entre las explicaciones de la VFP y la conducta posterior. Este conocimiento podría ser valioso en la formación de los profesionales y en el diseño de estrategias de intervención que eviten la culpabilización de los padres y aumenten el apoyo que reciben de su entorno.

Palabras clave: violencia filioparental; explicaciones causales; atribuciones; Revised Scale of Causal Dimensions; diferencias de género.

Adolescent-to-parent violence (APV) has increased in social and scientific visibility in recent years. Spain's Attorney General's Office reflected in its 2020 report that a 16.07% increase from 2016 to 2019 in judicial APV cases is "disheartening" (Fiscalía General del Estado, 2020, p. 938). The media has also echoed the problem contributing to greater social alarm (Calvete & Pereira, 2019). Families with APV cases need early intervention by judicial, mental health and/or social services. In order to do that, professionals are turning to specific APV programs because generic interventions for conduct disorders have not proven to be effective (see Ibabe et al., 2018, 2019).

Even though it is clear that APV is a social problem, it has mainly been approached from an individual or an interpersonal level of analysis. Research objectives have commonly been the identification of risk factors among victims, aggressors, or their families that indicate why some adolescents are more likely to perpetrate APV than others (Del-Hoyo et al., 2020; Loinaz & Sousa, 2020). However, the few studies from a psychosocial level of analysis show that adolescents' behavior and parents' emotional reactions arise in a cultural context where parents are always blamed, and APV is seen as a result of parenting failure. These social beliefs are interiorized by APV aggressors and victims, and by practitioners (Holt, 2016; Holt & Retford, 2013).

As legal and moral guardians of those who abuse them, parents blame themselves when feeling conflicting emotions toward their children, which often makes them remain silent out of shame and guilt (Williams et al., 2016). When they finally ask for help, they feel that their painful experiences are not understood, not even by the practitioners to whom they turn (Holt, 2011a). The institutional response to APV victim is also conditioned by these social beliefs that blame victims, specifically mothers, ignoring the social nature of APV (Burck et al., 2019). Knowing social beliefs about APV, especially attributional processes of victim-blaming, is therefore

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relevant for researchers who focus, not only on the effectiveness of clinical intervention, but also on prevention through social awareness and informal social control (Gracia et al., 2009). Despite its value, research on the attributional processes that lead to APV victims' lack of social support, like those cited above, has been scarce, exploratory, small-scale, and qualitative (Holt, 2016).

Attribution theories state that people's reaction to a negative event depends on how they explain it (Malle, 2021). According to Weiner (2018), causal explanations influence behavior by means of three dimensions: locus of causality, stability, and controllability. The Revised Scale of Causal Dimensions (CDSII-R) (McAuley et al., 1992) classifies any explanation following these dimensions. In general terms, attributing people's suffering to a cause under their control generates negative emotional reactions such as anger, discomfort, and resentment, which are negatively related to helping behavior (Weiner, 2018). This relationship between attribution, emotion, and behavior has been found, among others, in the domain of poor people (Osborne & Weiner, 2015) and intimate partner violence against women (IPVAW; Gracia & Lila, 2015). So far, there are two instruments that include measures of attributional processes related to APV: The Child to Parent Aggression Questionnaire-Revised (CPAQ-R; Calvete & Orue, 2016) and the Child-to-parent Violence Questionnaire (CPV-Q; Contreras et al., 2019). The CPAQ-R measures, in addition to the frequency with which different forms of physical and psychological aggression against parents occur, the reasons given by the aggressors to justify their behavior. The CPAQ-R groups these reasons in three factors: instrumental, emotional, and defensive. The CPV-Q has the same structure but classifies alleged motives only into instrumental and reactive.

Both tools adopt an individual level of analysis, since adolescents are asked for the reasons that led them to abuse their parents, always from their own point of view and after reporting specific APV behaviors carried out in the previous year. These reasons are justifications and excuses like those given spontaneously by people when their behavior is reproved and, therefore, do not necessarily reflect social beliefs about APV (Malle, 2021). People have different motivations in explaining their behavior when they act and when they observe others acting. To excuse or justify our own behavior, we attribute it to external and unspecific causes, rather than to internal causes (actor observer bias; Jones et al., 1972) to safeguard the positive image we have of ourselves (Maruna & Mann, 2006). When it comes other people's behavior, internal attributions predominate over external ones (fundamental attribution error; Ross, 1977). Therefore, it is reasonable to think that observers' explanations will be a better reflection of beliefs and social norms related to the behavior under consideration than the actors' themselves (Malle, 2021).

There is still no instrument to measure APV explanations given by the general population. To bridge this gap, research on attributional processes related to IPVAW cited above may be used as a starting point, given the parallelism already established between these types of violence (e.g., Holt, 2016). From a gender perspective, APV could be considered a part of a broader pattern of violence against women because the victim is mostly the mother, as shown in community (e.g., Calvete et al., 2014), clinical (Nock & Kazdin, 2002) and judicial samples (Walsh & Krienert, 2007). Furthermore, it has been found that offspring who perpetrate APV tend to be more aggressive towards the mother than towards the father when the former has been an IPVAW victim (Ulman & Straus, 2003), especially if the adolescent is a boy (Ibabe et al., 2013). Other similarities between APV and IPVAW previously addressed are poly-victimization suffered by the victim (a combination of different forms of abuse: psychological, physical, economic, ...); physical and psychological consequences experienced both in the short and long term; victim-blaming in their close environment; and ways in which victims describe their situation. Both IPVAW and APV victims compare their experience to "walking on eggshells" and "living with Jekyll and Hyde" (Holt, 2016).

The research portraying APV as a consequence of power imbalance linked to gender is generally qualitative (Holt, 2016), whereas quantitative research has mainly conceptualized APV as a response to family conflict, regardless of the motives behind it or of its impact (e.g., Hernández et al., 2020). Qualitative research has provided a more contextualized approach, resulting in lower prevalence rates, and greater numbers of cases in which sons perpetrate APV compared to daughters (Condry & Miles, 2014; Walsh & Krienert, 2007). In addition, if quantitative research on APV considers situations in which it occurs and the dynamics from which it results, prevalence rates and gender symmetry may also be lower. An alternative way to investigate this issue may be by focusing APV research on attributional processes, which have been particularly fruitful in IPVAW research, especially for psychosocial intervention in victim support (Gracia et al., 2009, 2018). To determine the prevalence of attributions, their relationships with other psychosocial constructs and behaviors, and whether interventions can prevent or change them, it is necessary to develop an instrument to measure them.

The main objective of this study is therefore to develop a scale to measure causal explanations of APV, as well as to obtain evidence of reliability and validity to support its use in different research contexts. To do so, instruments used to study victim-blaming attributions in the field of the IPVAW are used as starting point, such as the Acceptability of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women Scale (Martín-Fernández et al., 2018), the Partner Violence Acceptability Movie Task (Gracia et al., 2015), and particularly, the Willingness to Intervene in Cases of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women Scale (Gracia et al., 2018).

Method

Participants

A total of 763 people between the ages of 15 and 79 (M = 29; SD = 12.68) participated in this study. In the sample, 74.3% were women, and 27.9% had offspring; 61.7% of the parents had children between the ages of 13 and 25. The educational levels were primary studies (1.6%), compulsory education (4.1%), mid-level professional training (5.1%), high school level (41.1%), and university studies (48.1%).

The sample was divided into two randomized groups of similar characteristics for exploratory and confirmatory statistical analyses, as shown in Table 1.

Instruments

The Explanations about Adolescent-to-parent Violence Scale (EEVFP: *Escala de Explicaciones de la Violencia Filioparental*) was developed and tested in this study. An initial pool of 57 possible explanations about why adolescents might be violent towards their

parents were obtained from quantitative and qualitative research on APV, online parents' forums and support groups, and research on victim-blaming in cases of IPVAW. The ideas expressed anonymously by parents in Internet forums were used because these online communities provide them with social support, by encouraging them to share concerns, advice, and recommendations about parenting (Holt, 2011b). This source therefore reflects the popular view of the problem, providing information on how parents from a broad social and cultural context explain APV. Research on victim-blaming explanations in IPVAW research was also considered (Gracia & Lila, 2015; Martín-Fernández et al., 2018), given the similarities between this type of violence and APV, as stated above.

A group of five tenured faculty members with proven expertise in Social Psychology evaluated the initial pool of items, following Polit and Beck (2006)'s recommendations to enhance content validity. They were asked to answer, on a 6-point Likert-type scale (0 = bad measure to 5 = very good measure), to what extent, regardless of whether they agree or disagree, each item was a good way to measure explanations on why a son/daughter is violent towards their parent. Considering their agreement on the appropriateness of each item to be included in the scale, as well as their suggestions on the wording, 40 items were selected for subsequent analyses. These items were applied to the participants asking them to indicate their degree of agreement with each on a 6-point Likert-type scale (0 = completely disagree to 5 = completely agree).

The Revised Scale of Causal Dimensions (CDSII-R; McAuley et al., 1992) is composed of 12 items that assess participants' beliefs about the cause of APV. In this study, we used the Spanish version by Rodríguez and Caro (2007). Participants were asked whether "APV is caused by" factors that are external/internal (locus of causality), unstable/stable (stability), uncontrollable/controllable by the person (personal control), and uncontrollable/controllable by others (external control). Each causal dimension was assessed by three items that participants rated on a 10-point semantic differential scale, with anchors representing extremes of the dimension. Items were averaged after calculating internal Cronbach's Alpha that were: .64, .68, .79, and .70.

Procedure

The questionnaire was accessed online by an internet link, which was distributed by university students using the snowball sampling technique. Students were asked to find participants of both genders and different age ranges in their immediate surroundings and in social networks. Participants voluntarily completed the survey after being informed that the research topic was on conflicts between parents and their offspring. Anonymity and confidentiality of their responses were assured and, before accessing the questionnaire items, participants gave their informed consent. Items' presentation order was randomized to control the carry-over effect. This procedure was previously approved by the Ethics Committee of the Universidad de La Laguna.

Table 1
Sample Distribution According to Factor Analysis Type, Gender, and Offspring

Offspring	Exploratory factor analysis (n = 381, M_{age} = 31, SD_{age} = 12.2)		Confirmatory factor analysis (n = 382, M_{age} = 26.7, SD_{age} = 12.7)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
With offspring	20	86	19	71
Without offspring	91	184	85	207

Data Analysis

After a descriptive analysis of the items, we followed a cross-validation procedure to establish the factorial structure of the EEVFP, carrying out an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with half of the sample and a subsequent confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with the other half. Parallel analysis was performed to determine the number of factors to be extracted in the EFA, which was conducted on the first subsample using maximum likelihood extraction method and oblique rotation (Oblimin). The model fit was assessed considered as acceptable with Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) values of 0.90-0.95 and root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) values ≤ 0.06. The latent structure of the scale was replicated performing an CFA with the second subsample using the extraction method of diagonally weighted least squares. The model fit was deemed acceptable by considering, in addition to TLI and RMSEA values, comparative fit index (CFI) values ≥ 0.95 and standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) values ≤ 0.06. To identify specific areas of mismatch in the model, the modification index (MI) statistics and their respective expected parameter change (EPC) were used. The measurement invariance of the scale between participants with and without offspring was analyzed evaluating several invariance models through multi-group confirmatory factor analyses using the diagonally weighted least squares method with the total sample. Models of configural, metric, scalar, and strict/error invariance were estimated comparing each of them with the observed structure in each group. Fit indices were chi-square, CFI, TLI, RMSEA, SRMR, and goodness-of-fit index (GFI).

Correlation between participants' scores in the EEVFP factors and the CDSII-R variables were calculated as evidence of concurrent validity. Finally, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was carried out using the six factors of the EEVFP as dependent variables, and (1) gender, and (2) whether participants had offspring or not as independent variables. As statistical assumptions underlying the lineal model were not fully met, parameters were estimated using the resampling method bootstrapping simple and permutational under the simulation of 1000 samples. Bootstrap bias-corrected accelerated method was used as a corrective method. The estimation of the MANOVA was made with the Pillai's Trace and effect sizes with Partial Eta Squared. For univariate inter-subject tests, robust tests of equality of means were calculated using Welch's *F* when variances were heterogeneous. Statistical analyses were carried out with JASP software (Version 14.0) and IBM SPSS 26.0 statistical package for Windows.

Results

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The descriptive statistics, reflected in Table 2, showed that item values of skewness and kurtosis remained within the range

(−1.5, 1.5) except for Item 2, which was eliminated for subsequent analyses. Means were around 2 and standard deviations around 1, meaning that participants tended to select low-intermediate response categories. High internal consistency was obtained for the scale (Cronbach's Alpha = .92), which did not improve when eliminating items. Correlations between the total and item scores ranged between .26 and .60.

The adequacy of data for factorial analysis was ensured by checking that Bartlett's sphericity test was statistically significant ($\chi^2(741) = 6402.20$, $p < .001$) and KMO = .91. An EFA was carried out with the initial 40-item pool, using maximum likelihood extraction method and Oblimin rotation. Although the multivariate normality assumption was not fulfilled, the variable skewness and kurtosis coefficients were in the range of a normal distribution, allowing the use of this method in EFA. Items 11, 14, 15, 26, 27, 28, 32, 38, and 39 were removed because of loadings < .35, as well as item 19, as it presented a double loading. A parallel analysis, to determine the number of factors to be extracted, and an EFA were carried out with the remaining 29 items. The adequacy of data for factorial analysis was confirmed by checking that Bartlett's sphericity test was statistically significant ($\chi^2(247) = 401.01$, $p < .001$) and KMO = .90. The model's fit indices indicated a very good model fit (TLI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.043, 90% CI [.03, .05]).

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of the EEVFP Items

	M	SD	Skewness (SE = 0.12)	Kurtosis (SE = 0.24)	$r_{item-test}$
1. They are a bad person	1.5	1.5	0.65	–0.55	.29
2. It is in their blood	0.7	1.2	1.79	2.41	.31
3. They are violent to everyone	1.9	1.5	0.37	–0.80	.41
4. They have a mental disorder	2.1	1.6	0.16	–1.07	.45
5. They enjoy others's suffering	1.8	1.5	0.31	–0.93	.35
6. They do not feel loved	2.8	1.5	–0.40	–0.76	.59
7. They feel frustrated	3.3	1.4	–0.67	–0.18	.42
8. They are dominated by anger	3.1	1.6	–0.55	–0.75	.45
9. It is a way to show that they are suffering	2.7	1.5	–0.23	–0.85	.43
10. They want more freedom and autonomy	2.2	1.6	0.07	–0.97	.42
11. They are unaware of the damage they cause	2.8	1.6	–0.32	–1.01	.27
12. They question any authority like all teenagers	2.1	1.6	0.19	–1.16	.40
13. They express the rebelliousness typical of their age in that way	1.6	1.5	0.60	–0.68	.36
14. Today's society does not value respect for parents	2.7	1.8	–0.21	–1.28	.33
15. Today's society has normalized the use of violence	2.5	1.7	–0.07	–1.24	.32
16. They are defending themselves from being hurt at home	2	1.5	0.18	–1.01	.45
17. They are defending another person(s) at home	1.9	1.4	0.11	–0.94	.42
18. They experienced some trauma in childhood	2.7	1.5	–0.30	–0.81	.59
19. Their parents are very controlling	1.8	1.4	0.31	–0.78	.57
20. Their parents has not given them the time they need	2.6	1.5	–0.20	–0.92	.57
21. Their parents have never set limits for them	3.1	1.5	–0.61	–0.58	.46
22. They had not had discipline at home	2.8	1.6	–0.32	–0.95	.44
23. Their parents have never accepted them as they are	2	1.5	0.14	–0.87	.58
24. Their parents did not teach them values	2.4	1.6	–0.01	–1.14	.49
25. They have not had a good parental model	2.4	1.6	–0.09	–1.09	.48
26. They have not had a loving and supportive mother	1.8	1.5	0.36	–0.84	.56
27. They have not been slapped by parents when needed	1.6	1.8	0.75	–0.86	.26
28. Their mother works and is never at home	1.5	1.4	0.49	–0.71	.52
29. They behave as they have been taught in their family	2.4	1.6	–0.06	–1.00	.51
30. They have been a victim of domestic violence	2.8	1.6	–0.43	–0.77	.58
31. They live in a stressful family situation	3	1.5	–0.55	–0.45	.58
32. There are financial problems at home	1.7	1.4	0.40	–0.76	.54
33. They live in a violent neighborhood	2.1	1.5	0.11	–1.00	.62
34. They are part of a street gang	2.1	1.6	0.13	–1.03	.56
35. They have learned it on TV	1.5	1.4	0.66	–0.59	.40
36. They have learned it on videogames	1.2	1.4	0.96	–0.01	.32
37. They use drugs and/or alcohol	2.6	1.6	–0.13	–1.07	.50
38. They have seen a lot of violence at school	1.9	1.5	0.33	–0.82	.54
39. They are a victim of bullying	2.2	1.5	–0.08	–0.92	.55
40. They have bad companies	2.8	1.5	–0.37	–0.69	.55

Note: $n = 381$ (Exploratory factor analysis subsample)

Items were grouped into six factors that explained 50% of the variance. The first factor, Defense, explained 10.1% of the variance and included items that attributed the cause of the APV to an adolescent's defensive response, such as "They are defending another person at home". The second factor, Poor Parenting, explained 9.9% of the variance and grouped items referring to APV as a result of inadequate parenting, such as "Their parents did not transmit values to them". The third factor, Inadequate Environment, explained 9.3% of the variance and grouped items that attributed the cause of APV to an unfavorable or inadequate environment, such as "They are involved in a street gang" (.74). The fourth factor, Emotional Reaction, explained 8.4% of the variance and included items such as "They feel frustrated". The fifth factor, Evil/Madness, explained 6% of the variance and included items that attributed APV to inherent negative and stable personality traits of the perpetrator, such as "They enjoy the suffering of others". Finally, the sixth factor, Adolescence, explained 5.8% of the variance and grouped items alluding to the developmental transition in which adolescents try to express their emerging identity, such as "They express in this way the rebelliousness typical of their age". Table 3 displays item loadings on each factor.

Table 3
Rotated Factor Matrix From the Exploratory Factor Analysis of the EEVFP Items

Item	Defense	Poor Parenting	Inadequate Enviroment	Emotional Reaction	Evil/Madness	Adolescence
17	.76					
16	.69					
30	.52					
23	.40					
31	.40					
18	.39					
24		.77				
22		.71				
21		.67				
29		.54				
25		.50				
20		.50				
37			.75			
34			.74			
40			.62			
33			.52			
7				.70		
9				.64		
8				.58		
6				.52		
1					.71	
5					.68	
4					.42	
3					.39	
13						.63
36						.50
12						.47
35						.46
10						.44

Note. The extraction method was Maximum Likelihood with an Oblique (oblimin) rotation. Only saturations ≥ .39 are shown in the Table

Correlations between the factors ranged from .09 to .52, being negative only for Defense and Evil/Madness, but close to zero. The highest correlation was between Poor Parenting and Inadequate Environment (r = .52).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The latent structure of the scale was replicated performing an CFA with the second subsample. The extraction method used was diagonally weighted least squares because it gives more robust model fits and more accurate parameter estimation for CFA than the maximum likelihood method when data does not meet the multivariate normality assumption, as in this case. The rotation method was Oblimin. Although chi-square test was statistically significant ($\chi^2(362) = 607.02$, $p < .001$), the remaining indices showed an excellent model fit (CFI = 0.97, TLI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.042, 90% CI [.03, .048], SRMR = 0.066).

The MI indicated that the elimination of item 20, corresponding to the Poor Parenting factor, significantly improved the model's fit due to its loading on the Emotional Reaction factor (ER = 26.83, EPC = 0.59) and Defense factor (ER = 26.13, EPC = 0.67). The MI also indicated that free estimation of the error covariance between item 35 and item 36 would significantly improve the model's fit (MI = 49.83, EPC = 0.93). This is coherent because of the similar wording of both items. The final scale was composed of 28 items (Table 4). After applying these changes, χ^2 was reduced, although it remained statistically significant ($\chi^2(334) = 509.53$, $p < .001$). The rest of the fit indices improved slightly, indicating an excellent fit (CFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.037, 90% CI [.03, .043], SRMR = 0.063).

Estimated parameters for the final model are shown in Table 5. All item loadings were > .38 on their respective factors and were statistically significant ($p < .001$ for all z). Standard errors of all items remained below .05.

Measurement Invariance

Once the scale's latent structure of six factors was established through the cross-validation procedure, EEVFP invariance for people with and without offspring was assessed for the total sample using factor scores. Cronbach's Alpha for the factors was .85, .79, .79, .73, .68, and .72, respectively. Configural, metric, scalar, and strict invariance were analyzed in this order. The indices for all models indicated a very good fit to the data, as shown in Table 6.

The configural model showed the highest fit index, indicating that both groups conceptualize the latent construct in the same way. Each new model was compared with the previous one, starting with the configural model. Changes in the fit indices for each comparison are displayed in Table 7.

Fit indices remain the same as in the previous model in most cases. The chi-square test was statistically significant only when the scalar model was compared to the metric model. These results indicate that participants with and without offspring conceptualized the construct measured by the EEVFP in the same way (configural). They also interpreted the items equally (metric). In both groups the item scores kept the same relationship with the latent variables they measure (scalar) and measurement error was the same (strict).

Concurrent Validity

The entire sample was analyzed to find evidence for concurrent validity, calculating the correlations between EEVFP factor scores and CDSII-R dimensions that are displayed in Table 8.

Tabla 4
Escala de Explicaciones de la Violencia Filioparental (EEVFP) [Explanations of Adolescent-to-parent Scale] (Cortina y Martín, 2021)

A continuación, se te pregunta acerca de posibles explicaciones a la conducta violenta de un hijo hacia su madre/padre. Del 0 al 5, ¿Cuál es tu grado de acuerdo con cada una de ellas? [Bellow, you are asked about possible explanations for a child's violent behavior toward his/her mother/father. On a scale of 0 to 5, how much do you agree with each of them?]

Un hijo es violento con sus padres porque… [A child is violent towards her/his parents because…]

	Completely disagree					**Completely agree**
1. Es una mala persona [S/he is a bad person]	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Porque es violento con todo el mundo [S/he is violent to everyone]	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Tiene un trastorno mental [S/he has a mental disorder]	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Disfruta con el sufrimiento ajeno [S/he enjoys others's suffering]	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. No se siente querido [S/he does not feel loved]	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. Se siente frustrado [S/he feels frustrated]	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. Está dominado por la ira [S/he is dominated by anger]	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. Es su forma de mostrar que está sufriendo [It is a way to show that s/he is suffering]	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. Quiere más libertad y autonomía [S/he wants more freedom and autonomy]	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. Cuestiona cualquier figura de autoridad como todos los adolescentes [S/he questions any authority like all teenagers]	0	1	2	3	4	5
11. Expresa así la rebeldía propia de su edad [S/he expresses the rebelliousness typical of their age in that way]	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. Se está defendiendo para que no le hagan daño en casa [S/he is defending her/himself from being hurt at home]	0	1	2	3	4	5
13. Está defendiendo a otra/s persona/s en casa [S/he is defending another person(s) at home]	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. Vivió algún trauma en la infancia [S/he experienced some trauma in childhood]	0	1	2	3	4	5
15. Sus padres nunca le han puesto límites [Her/his parents have never set limits for her/him]	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. No ha tenido disciplina en casa [S/he has not had discipline at home]	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. Sus padres nunca lo han aceptado como es [His/her parents have never accepted them as s/he is]	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. Sus padres no le transmitieron valores [Her/his parents did not teach her/him values]	0	1	2	3	4	5
19. No ha tenido un buen modelo paterno [S/he has not had a good parental model]	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. Se comporta como le han enseñado en su familia [S/he behaves as s/he has been taught in her/his family]	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. Ha sido víctima de maltrato en el hogar [S/he has been a victim of domestic abuse]	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. Vive en una situación familiar estresante [S/he lives in a stressful family situation]	0	1	2	3	4	5
23. Vive en un barrio en el que hay mucha violencia [S/he lives in a violent neighborhood]	0	1	2	3	4	5
24. Está metido en una pandilla callejera [S/he is part of a street gang]	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. Lo ha aprendido en la TV [S/he has learned it on TV]	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. Lo ha aprendido en los videojuegos [She learned it on videogames]	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Se droga y/o emborracha [S/he uses drugs and/or alcohol]	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. Tiene malas compañías [S/he has bad companies]	0	1	2	3	4	5

The factors Defense, Inadequate Environment, Emotional Reaction, and Adolescence presented a statistically significant negative relationship with Locus of Causality and Personal Control. This indicates that participants who attributed the cause of APV to a defensive response, to an unfavorable or inadequate environment, to an emotional reaction of the child, and to adolescence, also tended to consider that APV is caused by factors external to the child and not controllable by them.

The Evil/Madness factor presented a negative statistically significant correlation with External Control and a positive statistically significant correlation with Stability. In this case, participants who attributed the cause of APV to the adolescent's negative inherent characteristics tended to consider that APV is caused by factors that are stable over time and not externally controllable. The effect sizes for correlations were small, except for those related to the Defense and Emotional Reaction factor (with Personal Control), which were intermediate. The Poor Parenting factor has no statistically significant relation with any of the CDSII-R dimensions.

Discriminant Validity

Finally, to find evidences of discriminant validity, a MANOVA was carried out using the six factors of the EEVFP as dependent variables and (1) having offspring or not having offspring, and (2) gender as independent variables. Comparisons between parents with adolescent and non-adolescent offspring were not considered for this analysis because there were no statistically significant multivariate differences between them (Pillai's trace = .02, $F(6, 206) = 0.71$, $p = .641$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$), nor were there any univariate effects.

A statistically significant multivariate effect was found for the interaction between offspring and gender (Pillai's trace = .02, $F(6, 754) = 2.58$, $p = .017$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$). Pillai's trace was preferred to Wilks's lambda because it is more robust when the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met, as in this case (statistically significant Box M). Inter-subject effects showed that the interaction between offspring and gender was statistically significant for the Emotional reaction factor ($F(1) = 5.04$, $p = .025$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$), showing that women with offspring most frequently attributed the APV cause to an emotional reaction by the child ($M = 8.58$, $SD = 3.21$), while men with offspring were the least frequent in explaining APV by this factor ($M = 6.39$, $SD = 2.65$). Pairwise comparisons portrayed statistically significant differences between women and men with offspring, and between women and men without offspring, as shown in Figure 1.

Table 5
Results from the Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the EEVFP

Factor	Item	Factor loading
Defense	16	.69
	17	.58
	18	.73
	23	.65
	30	.75
	31	.77
Poor parenting	21	.62
	22	.68
	24	.74
	25	.58
	29	.66
Inadequate Environment	33	.70
	34	.69
	37	.62
	40	.68
Emotional reaction	6	.81
	7	.62
	8	.45
	9	.60
Evil/Madness	1	.38
	3	.59
	4	.61
	5	.49
Adolescence	10	.58
	12	.65
	13	.55
	35	.58
	36	.53

Note: n = 382 (Confirmatory factor analysis subsample)

Statistically significant multivariate differences were also found for offspring (Pillai's trace = .07, $F(6, 756) = 9.86$, p exact < .001, $\eta_p^2 = .07$), and gender (Pillai's trace = .04, $F(6, 756) = 6.05$, p exact < .001, $\eta_p^2 = .05$). To calculate inter-subject effects for offspring, Welch's homogeneity correction was applied for Defense and Poor Parenting factors because the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not met. The inter-subject effects indicated statistically significant differences between participants with and without offspring for the Defense ($F(1) = 16.25$, p exact < .001, $\eta_p^2 = .02$) and Adolescence ($F(1) = 7.12$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$) factors. Participants with offspring considered more often APV to be the result of adolescence ($M = 5.9$, $SD = 3.4$ vs. $M = 5.2$, $SD = 3.0$), while participants without offspring attributed APV more to a defensive response by the child ($M = 11.2$, $SD = 4.6$ vs. $M = 9.6$, $SD = 5.2$).

Regarding gender, inter-subject effects indicated statistically significant differences with small effect sizes between men and women for the Defense ($F(1) = 5.86$, p exact < .05, $\eta_p^2 = .01$), Emotional Reaction ($F(1) = 23.08$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$), and Adolescence ($F(1) = 6.15$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$) factors. Women attributed, to a greater extent than men, APV to an adolescent's defensive response ($M = 11.02$, $SD = 4.9$ vs. $M = 10.1$, $SD = 4.6$) and emotional reaction ($M = 8.23$, $SD = 3.0$ vs. $M = 7.1$, $SD = 2.8$), as well as to adolescence itself ($M = 5.57$, $SD = 3.2$ vs. $M = 4.9$, $SD = 3.0$).

Finally, correlations between the six factors and the variables age and education level were calculated. The only statistically significant correlation was between Defense and age ($r = -.23$, $p < .001$), with a lower age related to a greater attribution of APV to an adolescent's defensive response. However, given the statistically significant differences in age between participants with and without offspring ($t(295, 691) = 28.99$, $p < .001$), the correlation between Defense and age may be reflecting differences related to having offspring or not, rather than to age.

Discussion

The main contribution of this study is to provide a tool to assess APV explanations and evidence of its validity and reliability to

Table 6
Measurement-Invariance Fit Indices

Model	χ^2(gl)	CFI	TLI	RMSEA		SRMR	GFI
				Value	90% CI		
Configural	1233.85(668)	.969	.965	.047	[.043, .051]	.068	.967
Metric	1303.62(690)	.966	.963	.048	[.044, .052]	.07	.966
Scalar	134.09(712)	.966	.964	.040	[.044, .052]	.069	.985
Strict	1368.80(741)	.966	.965	.047	[.043, .051]	.069	.985

Note: CI = Confidence Interval; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index; RMSEA = Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation; SRMR = Standardized Root-Mean-Square Residual; GFI = Goodness-of-Fit Index

Table 7
Measurement Invariance Model Comparisons, Starting with Configural Model

Model	ΔCFI	ΔRMSEA	ΔGFI	ΔSRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$(Δdf)	p
Metric	−.003	.001	−.001	.002	69.77(22)	7.196
Scalar	0	−.008	.019	−.001	36.47(22)	.027
Strict	0	.007	0	0	28.71(29)	.480

Note: ΔCFI = Change in Comparative Fit Index; ΔRMSEA = Change in Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation; ΔGFI = Change in Goodness-of-Fit Index; ΔSRMR = Change in Standardized Root-Mean-Square Residual; Δ*df* = Change in degrees of freedom

Table 8
Statistically Significant Correlations Between EEVFP and CDSII–R Factors

	Defense	Poor parenting	Inadequate environment	Emotional reaction	Evil/ Madness	Adolescence
Locus of Causality	−.28**		−.14**	−.16**		−.08*
External Control					−.10**	
Personal Control	−.23**		−.10**	−.21**		−.12**
Stability					.16**	

*$p < .05$; **$p < .001$

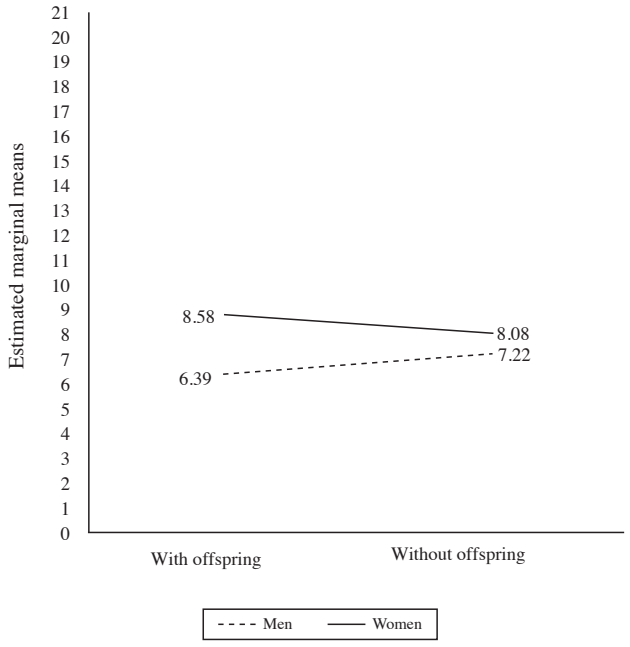

Figure 1. Interaction Between Gender and Offspring for the Emotional Reaction Factor

ensure its suitability for research. Evidence of content validity was obtained by selecting items from multiple sources, reflecting not only popular but also a scientific viewpoint of the problem, and by experts' confirmation of these items adequacy for measuring the construct. Evidence of construct validity is shown by the data fit of the six-factor model, obtained both in exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. The factor that explains the greatest variance, Defense, is consistent with prior studies on the hypothesis of violence bidirectionality that states that adolescents who assault their parents have been victims or witnesses of domestic violence (Ibabe & Bentler, 2016).

The factor Poor Parenting relates to opinions portrayed in mass media on the link between APV and permissive parental styles. However, the evidence available is not enough to support this culture of parental failure and guiltiness (Holt, 2016). Although in some studies APV is related to a permissive style (Calvete et al., 2014), in others it is related to an authoritarian style (Seijo et al., 2020) and in some, no relationship is found (Calvete et al., 2015).

The factor Inappropriate Environment is concordant with research on APV risk factors for violence in general. These explanations refer to having antisocial peers (Loinaz & De-Sousa, 2020), using drugs (Del-Hoyo et al., 2020), and living in a violent neighborhood (Fariña et al., 2008). This factor reflects that public opinion considers drug consumption as a contextual risk factor, instead of personality and/or psychopathological traits, as stated by many practitioners and researchers (Del-Hoyo et al., 2020). Indeed, members of the public believe that any drug consumption begins during adolescence when relationships with peer groups have a great impact on identity development (Antona et al., 2003). For them, consumption is mediated by group pressure (Alvarado et al., 2011), because it has consequences for group acceptance and identity as a group member (Larrosa & Palomo, 2010). The Emotional Reaction factor is also congruent with evidence on the influence of adolescents' deficits in emotional regulation and anger management in the origin and maintenance of APV (Contreras & Cano, 2016), which in turn have been related to a lack of parental warmth (Calvete et al., 2015).

The Evil/Madness factor relates to perpetrators' evil and mental insanity that are used by the media when trying to explain serious crimes (Vasiljevic & Viki, 2013). Criminals are dehumanized by stripping them of emotionality and reasoning ability to explain why they cross moral boundaries, and why they should not be members of society and punished excluding any possibility of reinsertion (e.g., death penalty). Research has related APV to emotional insensitivity (Cortina & Martín, 2020) and lack of empathy (Ibabe et al., 2009), showing also that adolescents serving judicial measures for APV exhibit more depressive symptoms than adolescents who have committed other crimes (Ibabe et al., 2014), and that they have received psychological and psychiatric care more frequently (Ibabe et al., 2009). However, these results apply only to specific cases and none of them is conclusive (Hernández et al., 2020).

The Adolescent factor alludes to a normal developmental transition characterized by questioning authority and rebelling against rules as a way to define personal identity as adults (Oliva et al., 2010). This explanation is supported by evidence that situates the peak of violence in general (Moffitt, 1993) and of APV in particular (Ibabe & Blentler, 2016) in this stage. Most researchers assume that violence against parents by offspring (VAPO) disappears once adolescence is over, although cases of patricide are usually perpetrated by adults and elderly abuse by relatives is a form of VAPO (Holt, 2017). VAPO's nature and directionality in adulthood may be different because the developmental, social, and legal contexts change, but data are scarce for adults, probably due to aggressors' social perception as adolescents (Holt & Shon, 2018). To use EEVFP to explore attributions for VAPO, it would be necessary to modify or to remove items referring to adolescence and to include others applicable to both aggressor's and victim's different life stages.

The main limitation of this study is that results are based on a sample where the proportions of women and men, and participants with and without offspring, are not balanced. Since the sample is large, the statistical analyses have considered group size inequality and have adjusted to control its effect. In addition, even though there are participants with diverse educational levels, the proportions do not correspond to that expected in the general population, as participants with university studies make up almost half of the sample. Therefore, future research should replicate these results with a more balanced sample before reaching definitive conclusions, especially about the nature of the differences between groups. Upcoming studies should also look for participants with different cultural backgrounds because the influence of culture on parent-children relationship (e.g., Soenens & Beyers, 2012).

Despite these limitations, the study contains enough evidence to support EEVFP's use in research addressing the issue of the relationship between APV attributions and behavior. This research would be useful in training practitioners to avoid blaming parents beforehand when they ask for help, and in designing prevention strategies to increase public awareness of this social problem. These strategies would increase the likelihood of victims receiving help from their surroundings by encouraging social involvement in APV detection and control, in line with the approach adopted for intervention in IPVAW (Gracia et al., 2018). APV victims deserve this support, not only for the pain caused by their experience, but also for the double victimization they suffer in a cultural context that blames them for their suffering (Holt, 2016).

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