

**Published in:**

Sánchez-Teruel, D., Cobos, E.F., Peñaherrera, M. (2011). Violencia sexual entre compañeros y en parejas adolescentes. En M<sup>a</sup> L. Sanchiz, M. Martí e I. Cremades (2011) (Edit). *Orientación e intervención educativa: retos para los orientadores del siglo XXI* (pp. 729-738). Valencia. Tirant lo Blanch (Margins serie).

## **SEXUAL VIOLENCE BETWEEN PARTNERS AND TEENAGER COUPLES**

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### **SUMMARY:**

Some current investigations show us that our schools are not the loved and peaceful place that we believe; we find particular issues as violence between partners or teenager couples that can show social behaviours, which our children and youth are constantly living during their development in some way or another. And also, they can reflect the start of an interactive maladaptive frame, a frame of control – submission that later is carried in a natural way in personal relationships when people are adults. In fact, it is important to set out actions that modify or transform these frames, which we find in the interactions among adolescents, directly acting on the development of adaptative skills that produce multipliers effects in several aspects: school, family, partners, couple and consequently, building a better society for people.

**Key words:** Adolescents, bullying, sexual violence, control – submission.

The cases of mistreatment among students are not sporadic and they occur almost every day. It is shown in several projects at international and national levels. (AA.VV. 2007; the Ombudsman -DPA, 2009; OMS, 2003). It is set out how to explain why children use this type of activities, which in childish and youth frameworks can cause violent behaviours as common ways of social interaction. (Cerezo, 2008; Cerezo and Ato, 2010).

The results of scientific studies which have been done for this cause show that, during the years at school, all students have been in contact with the violence among mates, as victims or aggressors, and spectators, which is the most frequent situation. (Cerezo and Ato, 2010).

This specific way of mistreatment, between students and children that belong to the same space, is internationally known as *bullying* (Cerezo, 2008; Cerezo and Ato, 2010).

Violence is a problem that faces all members of society. The studies about the issue of the mistreatment among the youth show that the problem affects more vulnerable groups of students such as: young people who show difficulties in learning; Girls, in general, and boys or girls who belong to or look to belong to what is called sexual minorities (homosexuals, bisexuals or transsexuals) (Avilés, 2009; Blaya, Debarbieux and Lucas, 2007).

In Spain, the youth institute did an analysis about violence (Díaz-Aguado, Martínez and Martín, 2004) that shows the most frequent rates of suffered violence, particularly the following: Exclusion that is, ignoring somebody or speaking in unrespectful ways. (45-43%). Verbal violence that is insulting, ridiculing (37-30%). Actions against the property consisting of hiding, breaking, stealing (34-11%) and the physical or sexual aggressions: hitting, rubs and sexual assaults (27%).

The Ombudsman's report (Cerezo, 2008; DPA, 2009), establishes that the aggressiveness is full of incidents that occur almost every day in more than the fifty percent of the schools. More than the half of students confirm to know the different forms of mistreatment, that is to say, the mistreatment among people is the issue that has had more complaints in 2008. Among them, the verbal aggression is the most frequent way, the 55,8% of the cases with nicknames and insults, etc. The threats with 22, 7%, and the exclusion with the 22,5%. But also, they are found other forms of aggression, although with less frequency, different forms of direct aggression represent the 14,2%, the indirect physical aggressions as the theft is the 10,5%, the sexual assault is the 1,3% (AA.VV. 2007; Cerezo, 2008; DPA, 2009).

More recent investigations (Cerezo and Ato, 2010; García and Talaya, 2010) say that the effect of rates is relatively reaching static levels from the 22% to the 26% and it is extended from the Primary Education. The fulfilled investigations about random with

students in primary and secondary schools show that sometimes it is the 50% of them. To depend on the specific circumstances of the group and the educative stage those appear from the primary education. (Cerezo, 2008; Ortega, Ortega-Rivera and Sánchez, 2008).

The bullying can have several ways (Cerezo, 2008; Cerezo and Ato, 2010) among them the physical, the verbal, the indirect or social and the cyberbullying. In all of them, the consequences affect all the implied people, but specially the injured person. This person shows absenteeism and psychological disorders (Martorell, González, Rasal and Estellés, 2009). The aggressor reinforces his/her bullying behaviour and adjustment problems, frequently this person establishes contact with other people who are in similar situations, it is started in the juvenile delinquency, school absenteeism and drugs consume (Cerezo, 2008).

The objective of this report is to show the information according to recent researches, which you observe the control – submission frame between partners and in the relationships of teenager couples. The possible origin of violent interactions among adults (mainly gender violence).

## **1. SEXUAL VIOLENCE AMONG ADOLESCENTS:**

After making an intensive review of bibliography about this topic, it is shown a reality that several authors point in their investigations. (Cerezo and Ato, 2010; Fernández-Fuertes, Fuertes and Pulido, 2006; Fernández-Fuertes and Fuertes-Martín, 2005; Ortega, Ortega-Rivera and Sánchez, 2008): There is a huge quantity of bibliography destined to the study of sexual violence in adults. (Cáceres and Cáceres, 2006), but there are not so many studies (some Canadian or North American, less about Spanish population) referring to sexual violence between partners or teenager couples (Jackson, Cram and Seymour, 2000; Muñoz, 2006).

The relationships of young people and those of adults are not comparable. (Meras, 2003; Muñoz, 2006, Serrano and Iborra, 2005). However, recently, some authors say that in the new love relationships, teenagers are going to do their first ideas about how a relationship is going to be and how to put up with in the privacy. For them, it is a new situation that they have to investigate and learn to relate. So that, it is important that they live their sexuality in a healthy way in this time, and they learn to respect the rest of people and respect themselves. (Fernández-Fuertes et. al., 2006).

This sexual violence phenomenon starts as a process of making advances in groups of friends or teenagers, that also is misunderstood by couples (victims) and it is based on a process of social constraint called control – submission (from here Control-submission frame) that is produced in the group of mates and it appears to be on the base of this type of relationships (Fernández-Fuertes, Fuertes and Pulido, 2006;

Fernández-Fuertes and Fuertes-Martín, 2005; Ortega, Del Rey and Mora-Merchán, 2001, Ortega, Ortega-Rivera and Sánchez, 2008).

The control–submission frame that is produced in the school and youth violence is reproduced in content and sexual character among partners (groups of mates) and in teenager couples relationships (Ortega, Ortega-Rivera and Sánchez, 2008).

Moreover, sexual violence affects more vulnerable groups (women and young people who belong to or appear to belong to sexual minorities), the frame of social constraint of the domineering against the submissive person might also be applied to young people with the same sex, so we understand that might be produced a relevant present difference between couples or relationships in young people with different sex (contacts or heterosexual relationships) and the relationships or teenager couples with the same sex (contacts or homosexual relationships).

## **2. SEXUAL VIOLENCE BETWEEN PARTNERS AND TEENAGER COUPLES:**

The information, which is very conspicuous, is offered in some investigations about the huge quantity of cases that are detected about sexual violence between partners and young couples (Cerezo, 2008; Cerezo and Ato, 2010; Fernández-Fuertes, Fuertes and Pulido, 2006; Fernández-Fuertes and Fuertes-Martín, 2005; Ortega, Del Rey and Mora-Merchán, 2001; Ortega, Ortega-Rivera and Sánchez, 2008) and it is still surprising that nowadays, in 2010, there are few solutions or programmes whose objective is to act about these factors. As exception to the rule, we point out some specific ones about the school anti- violence (Ortega and Del Rey, 2001) and other about emotional intelligence in classes (Sánchez-Teruel, 2009).

The related news with sexual violence in schools between partners and adolescents couples (internet, personal blogs, paper, audiovisual means of communication, etc) are importantly abundant and, the worst is that the most of children are between nine and sixteen years old. In fact, offered information by some investigations is relevant (Ortega, Ortega-Rivera and Sánchez, 2008), which through a descriptive methodology they analyse 420 boys, 182 boys, (43, 3%) and 238 girls (56, 7%), the age average was 16,28 years old. The results, according to some authors, show that:

- Sexual violence through the control – submission frame between partners and adolescents couples is related.
- The aggression between partners and couples tell us that boys are more aggressive that girls, in both cases (partners and couples).
- Sexual violence is more frequent in common couples and mixed groups than in serious couple relationships, in both sexes. This could be considered as a different aspect with

the sexual violence among adults, we believe that the so-called violent attitudes are produced depending on the emotional relationship in the couple. (Ortega, Ortega-Rivera and Sánchez, 2008).

- Sexual violence is more frequent in teenagers with more age than with less age; also they use to be less empathetic, more aggressive with the teachers (Díaz-Aguado et al., 2004).
- Younger boys and girls are the cases which we find more sexual violence.

In the referred investigation (Ortega et al., 2008) and other previous (Fernández-Fuerte and Fuertes-Martín, 2005; Meras, 2003) the authors confirm that youth violence in couple relationships and between the authors conclude that the violence in young people in couple relationships and mates through the transfer of control – submission frame consist of teenagers who are identified with a social model based on the control and the submission of other. This supports a hypothesis which for us it is important and very current and it is that, the sexual violence is transferred from some contexts to other, what makes us think about being aggressor (with partners or couples) in adolescence can be a matter of risk for the adult age (Ortega et al., 2008). In addition, it can perpetuate and establish with more possibility a structural violent system in the couple, so that a lot of teenagers have the double role, aggressor or victim at the same time (Ortega et al., 2008).

All this information shows that the control – submission frame is transferred in several contexts and places, between them in the school or in the family, and as consequence teenagers acquire behaviour processes based on control – submission when personal relationships is the issue.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS AND NEW IDEAS OF INVESTIGATION:**

The sexual violence between partners and young couples is a very complex issue. Recent studies have been presented, which show that the control – submission frame can be a learnt process in the relationships between partners and teenagers couples, an important teenager of the relationships among adults, being heterosexual as well as homosexual.

There are not enough studies at national level in adolescents couples to value the type of carried violence (Lavoie, Robitaille and Hébert, 2000) not even when the control – submission frame is produced as the aggressor applies the so-called frame (the person victimizes) about a person with the same sex or it is applied about a person with different sex. So, a continuous sexual harassment or a constant sexual constraint about partners with the same sex can carry the victim (if he/she belongs to or believe it to a sexual minority, still with more reason) on interpreting these behaviours as part of a feeling that carry him/her on the success, and even on the achievement with consent of asked sexual acts (the first part would be sexual harassment, if the victim accepts)

All in all, those things that have not taken into account can present light changes regarding to the given conclusions related to sex and sexual direction by the authors.

Moreover, people consider important, according to the last words, to analyse separately the sexual violence toward partners and the sexual violence toward adolescents couples, presenting in both studies the sexual direction issue, in case of the victim and that of the aggressor, for that the control – submission frame continues acting between aggressor and victim, even, in the first time of adult age.

Also, this communication can propose several ideas of researching:

- 1) To adapt the more used scales about this topic in Spanish samples with the objective of improving the rates in psychometric quality as well as including a bigger sphere of application of them (González and Santana, 2001; Muñoz-Rivas et al., 2007).
- 2) The analysis of beliefs that are found in the control – submission frame as possible symbols or sexual violence symptoms in teenagers. The analysis of beliefs about love and to show what is supposed to love someone and being loved. To analyse deeply the causes of beliefs that support this type of situations continue invariable with the spending of time (to consider that men must take the initiative in the sexual relationship; to think about the constraint is logic when she has provoked the man; to believe the phenomenon taken refusal, that consists of the belief that women say no if they have a sexual proposal, when truly, they want to say the contrary, among other, etc)
- 3) It is needed to investigate more about the aspects of coexistence that we are offering to children and teenagers (series of television, gossip series, video games, reality shows, films, etc.) and if they are related or not with sexual violence (couples' relationships based on the possession, suspicion, mutual suspects, because of jealousies and the requirement of private property).
- 4) To proceed to the re-design and improvement of all the programmes of school prevention of violence (sexual, of gender, etc) in the childhood and the adolescence, directed to the early attention of some factors, which have shown to be important predictors of the violence in early ages, from a culture without violence to the difference: sexual minorities, handicapped people, etc.

It is relevant to find the interest of knowing deeply this important problem called bullying, and one of its demonstrations, the sexual violence between partners and in adolescent's couples that set out interesting questions

about the personal relationships' starts, and how they can affect personal interactions in adults.

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