RESEARCH ARTICLES

Violence Received, Exerted and Perceived Questionnaire Revised Version (VREP-R): Psychometric Properties in Cuban University Students

Cuestionario Violencia Recibida, Ejercida y Percibida, versión revisada (VREP-R): propiedades psicométricas en universitarios cubanos

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Summary

The availability of adequate instruments that measure dating violence is essential in Cuba to strengthen the evidence and support preventive actions with effective diagnoses. The objective of the research was to analyze psychometric properties of the Revised Received, Exerted, and Perceived Violence Questionnaire (VREP-R) in its Cuban version. An instrumental design study, specifically psychometric, was carried out with the participation of 356 students aged 18 to 24 from the University of Medical Sciences of Cienfuegos. In the confirmatory factor analysis of the scale, the adjusted model showed an excellent fit index, with an RMSEA of .050. Furthermore, the CFI indicated a good fit, obtaining a value of .969. The instrument was reduced to 22 items, preserving the five original factors, which explained 65.684% of the accumulated variation. The scale is confirmed multidimensional, with indicators appropriately related to its dimensions. Adequate reliability values were obtained through internal consistency (α =.94 and ω =.90). The temporal stability of the measure was assessed using Spearman's assessment between measurements at two different times. A substantial evaluation was found between the measurements at the first and second moments; statistics ranged between .50. and .95. It is concluded that the VREP-R is a brief, adequate, easy-to-apply measurement instrument that meets the psychometric requirements, being reliable and valid to measure dating violence received, exercised and perceived, aspect non-existent until now in Cuba.

Keywords: VREP-R questionnaire; Violence received, exercised and perceived; Couple relationships; Psychometric properties; Instrumental study.

Resumen

La disponibilidad de instrumentos adecuados que midan la violencia en el noviazgo es esencial en Cuba para fortalecer la evidencia y respaldar acciones preventivas con diagnósticos efectivos. La investigación tuvo como objetivo analizar propiedades psicométricas del Cuestionario de Violencia Recibida, Ejercida, Percibida Revisado (VREP-R) en su versión cubana. Se realizó un estudio de diseño instrumental, específicamente psicométrico, con la participación de 356 estudiantes de 18 a 24 años de la Universidad de Ciencias Médicas de Cienfuegos. En el análisis factorial confirmatorio de la escala, el modelo ajustado, mostró un índice de ajuste excelente, con un RMSEA de .050. Además, el CFI indicó un buen ajuste, obteniéndose un valor de .969. El instrumento se redujo a 22 ítems, conservando los cinco factores originales, que explicaron el 65.684% de la varianza acumulada. La escala se confirmó multidimensional, con indicadores apropiadamente relacionados con sus dimensiones. Se obtuvieron valores adecuados de confiabilidad por consistencia interna (α =.94 y ω =.90). La estabilidad temporal de la medida se evaluó mediante la correlación de Spearman entre las mediciones en dos momentos diferentes. Se encontró una correlación sustancial entre las mediciones en el primer y segundo momento; los estadísticos oscilaron entre .50. y .95. Se concluye que el VREP-R es un instrumento de medida breve, adecuado, de fácil aplicación, que cumple con los requerimientos psicométricos, siendo fiable y válido para medir la violencia en el noviazgo recibida, ejercida y percibida; aspecto inexistente hasta ahora en Cuba.

Palabras claves: Cuestionario VREP-R; Violencia recibida, ejercida y percibida; Relaciones de pareja; Propiedades psicométricas; Estudio instrumental.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence and youth are crucial stages in which the first dating relationships are established and building relational styles are built, more or less functional and/or healthy that can last over time and be repeated in future affective bonds. However, young people relationships often have deficiencies and insufficient preparation to deal constructively with their own demands. This can lead to the emergence of signs of dysfunctionality and abusive relationships at this stage, characterized by violent practices involving social and individual aspects (Javier-Juárez et al., 2023; Muñoz et al., 2020).

Scientific and academic literature has highlighted the high prevalence of violence in adolescent and young people relationships. The World Health Organization (WHO) warns that 27% of women aged between 15 and 49 in the world have experienced violence in their dating relationships (WHO, 2021). Pioneering studies by Straus (2004) have reported worrying figures, indicating a prevalence of up to 29% of physical violence with rates of violence committed in similar proportions by both sexes.

A systematic review of studies on the prevalence of dating violence (physical, psychological, and sexual) committed and suffered in adolescents and young people conducted by Rubio-Garay et al. (2017) points out that the data show wide variations. Reports of physical violence committed show ranges of variation between 3.8% and 41.9%, and violence suffered between 0.4% and 57.3%. Psychological violence committed ranges between 4.2% and 97%, and psychological violence suffered between 8.5% and 95.5%. Sexual violence committed ranges between 1.2% and 58.8%, and sexual violence suffered between 0.1% and 64.6%.

Research conducted in several countries in the region of Latin America (Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and El Salvador) shows the prevalence of violence in young people relationships, recording that respondents of both sexes, aged between 20 and 25, are aware of cases of violence suffered by their female friends in the last year (Ruiz & Garrido, 2018).

According to recent research conducted with samples of Panamanian adolescents, 61.6% reported having experienced emotional violence at least once, 7.9% physical violence, and 21.0% sexual violence, while, in males, emotional violence was detected in 73.4%, physical violence in 24.1% and sexual violence in 28.9% (Gabster et al., 2023). In this regard, Rojas-Solís and Romero-Méndez (2022) reported a prevalence of bidirectional violence of 68.7% in Mexican adolescents.

A study conducted in Cuba to determine the prevalence of psychological and physical violence in heterosexual couple relationships has found a higher proportion than the average for the general population. Psychological violence in 63% of university graduates is the most experienced (López et al., 2015). In agreement with these results, another research developed with university students in the Cienfuegos province of this country reveals that the most prevalent type of violence is psychological violence in 62.5% of the sample studied (Ramos-Rangel et al., 2021).

Although emphasis has been placed on the victimization of young females and its devastating consequences for the lives of the victims (Spencer et al., 2020), recent research shows the existence of different patterns of violence in dating relationships during adolescence and youth (Rojas-Solís & Romero-Méndez, 2022). These studies reveal that the youth population can have both victim and perpetrator roles and that violence can manifest itself in different forms. Some researchers suggest the pattern of bidirectional violence, of which its high prevalence is mentioned, as a distinctive characteristic of relationship violence at these ages (Rojas-Solís & Romero-Méndez, 2022; Fernández-Fuertes et al., 2019; Rubio-Garay et al., 2017). In addition, the violence received or exerted can be of one or several types, i.e., multiform violence (Théorêt et al., 2021).

One of the most relevant aspects of violence in young couples is its bidirectional nature, in which reciprocity between perpetration and victimization is observed (Fernández-González et al., 2017). However, despite the bidirectionality, the physical and psychological consequences are often much wider when women are victims of violence (Wincentak et al., 2017).

A systematic review of the patterns of violence in adolescent dating relationships conducted by Javier-Juárez et al. (2023) identified that one of the most frequent patterns of violence was multiform violence (34%), indicating victimization or perpetration of physical, psychological, verbal, and sexual violence.

Another fact that makes the situation presented in the preceding paragraphs worse is the fact that several studies have reported that a large proportion of adolescents and young people do not usually perceive when they are in a violent dating relationship (Cortés et al., 2014; Riesgo et al., 2019). Violent behaviors seem to be normalized, naturalized, and legitimized in the dating relationship they establish, a worrisome situation (Luévano, 2021).

Violence in adolescent and young people dating relationships is a relevant problem due to its negative consequences and because it can establish negative relationship patterns over time (Fernández-González et al., 2017). The detection of the problem, the identification of risk factors, and intervention depend significantly on the availability of appropriate assessment instruments.

Literature reviews conducted by Yanez-Peñúñuri et al. (2019) and Exner-Cortens et al. (2016) show that Conflict in Adolescent Dating Relationships Inventory - CADRI (Wolfe et al., 2001), Dating Violence Questionnaire - CUVINO (Rodriguez et al., 2010), and The Conflict Tactics Scale - CTS (Straus, 1979) are the most noteworthy instruments in the field to assess violence in adolescent and young people dating relationships.

The CADRI (Wolfe et al., 2001) validated in Canada with adolescents aged 14 to 19 measures the violence committed and suffered (physical, sexual, threats, relational, verbal, and abuse) and has items focused on positive behaviors in conflict resolution. To use it, the respondent should be aged between 14 and 19 and have had a relationship in the last 12 months, and if the respondent does not have any relationship when applying, the respondent should respond considering the longest relationship in that last year.

As pointed out by Urbiola et al. (2020), these criteria become a limitation because of the characteristics of relationships at these ages, which are often of short duration, and also limit those subjects who have not had any relationships in the last 12 months.

On the other hand, the criteria that the study subjects used to consider their relationship as dating are unknown because the instrument does not request it, and although it takes into account a relevant aspect in these stages, which is the bi-directionality of violence, it does not consider another one which is its normalization by not exploring the perceptions of violence that adolescents and young people have of these behaviors (Urbiola, 2014).

The CUVINO, developed in Spain, has 43 items and identifies violent behaviors in the adolescents and young people dating relationships in the emotional punishment, coercion, detachment, physical, gender, humiliation, instrumental, and sexual dimensions. This instrument obtains information on the level of perceived discomfort caused by these behaviors and the particularities of the conflicting situation.

We agree with Urbiola (2014) in suggesting that a fundamental aspect of this instrument is to specify the duration of the relationship (shortening the duration of the relationship to at least one month) and the delimitation of what the respondent considers to be a boyfriend/girlfriend or partner. We also agree with these authors regarding the difficulty of its use to know the perceptions that this population has of violence and the extent to which they believe they have engaged in these behaviors (Urbiola et al., 2020).

Another of the most widely used instruments to assess violence in adolescent and young people dating relationships is the modified version of the Conflicts Tactics Scale (M-CTS), initially developed by Straus in 1979. This instrument detects verbal and physical violent behaviors in the relationship, using 36 items, distributed in 18 items for the perpetrator and an equal number for the victim. Four factors are identified: argumentation, psychological/verbal aggression, mild physical aggression, and severe physical aggression (Muñoz-Rivas et al., 2007). In this sense, it is a valuable instrument, but it does not detect sexual violence that may occur in these relationships.

One of the instruments that the authors of the VREP took into account for its design was the scale of Female Perception of Psychological Violence in Heterosexual Young People Dating Relationships, VEC (Cantera et al., 2009). There are two versions, one female and one male, depending on the sex of the person to whom the scale is applied. Both versions consist of 25 items that collect behaviors of psychological violence against women in relationships (Jimeno & Cantero, 2020).

As pointed out by Urbiola et al. (2020), although the scale explores the perception that adolescents and young people have of the violent behaviors experienced in their dating relationships, as well as the normalization of psychological violence, it does not allow to know the experience of these behaviors and does not explore males, which is a research bias, given the reports of patterns of bidirectional aggression in these populations (Javier-Juárez et al., 2023; Rojas-Solís & Romero-Méndez, 2022).

It is essential to have appropriate instruments to assess violence in adolescent and young people couples that include both males and females and take into account the perception that those involved have of the phenomenon to understand the nature of the aggressive acts. To solve part of this diagnostic limitation, Urbiola et al. (2020) designed and validated in the Spanish population an instrument that is better suited to the specific characteristics of dating violence in the adolescent-young people population: the Violence Received, Exerted, and Perceived (VREP) questionnaire in adolescent and young people dating relationships. This instrument measures both the violence received and exerted, as well as their perception, in dating relationships and also includes all types of couples.

After a thorough review of the measurement instruments and the existing literature on the classification of violence and the particularities associated with dating violence, the authors considered one of the most widely recognized classifications for the design of the questionnaire. This classification divides violence into three main categories: physical violence, psychological violence, and sexual violence (Bosch & Ferrer, 2003).

Physical violence was considered as any non-accidental act that causes or may cause bodily harm. Psychological violence was considered as any intentional act that causes devaluation or suffering. It included humiliation, social isolation, the need to exert control, jealousy, and possessiveness. Sexual violence is referred to any sexual act, the attempt to consummate a sexual act, or unwanted sexual advances against the victim's will.

In elaborating it, the authors incorporated specific elements of great relevance in the study and measurement of dating violence. This includes giving greater emphasis to Psychological Violence, given its frequent presence as the form of violence most exerted and received. The lower severity associated with this type of violence in comparison with adult couples was also considered. In addition, the high percentage of mutual, crossed, or bidirectional aggressions was addressed as a common pattern of aggressions (Urbiola et al., 2020).

The VREP questionnaire is a Spanish self-report instrument that explores physical, psychological, and sexual aggressions both received and exerted in dating relationships. It also explores the perceptions that adolescents and young people have of these types of violence.

It is noteworthy that this instrument examines victimization and perpetration, a key aspect to explore in this age group, given the number of research reports that indicate the high percentages of cases where violence in adolescent and young people dating relationships is bidirectional (Rojas-Solís & Romero-Méndez, 2022; Rubio-Garay et al., 2017).

The pilot study and the validation study of the instrument provided adequate reliability values, thus supporting the use of the instrument to make individual predictions about the experience of violence in the dating relationship. Thus, the VREP becomes a tool that would allow for discrimination tasks (Urbiola, 2014). This fact, which gives it undeniable value, has been used in subsequent studies in Colombia (Álvarez, 2019; Jaramillo et al., 2016) and Spain (Urbiola, 2016).

A limitation is the use of instruments that have not been previously tested or whose psychometric properties are not reported, constituting a threat to the internal validity of the research conducted, even if they state objectives and methodologies consistent with them. It is necessary to have valid and reliable instruments to facilitate the study of the problem in all its magnitude and specificity.

In the Cuban context, there are no validation studies of the VREP, in addition to a low number of published research on dating violence. Although the original version of the VREP is practical and reliable (Urbiola et al., 2020), the authors of this study considered it appropriate to make adaptations to the original instrument to ensure greater brevity in its application and obtain more data related to the participants' perception of the phenomenon under study. Some items of the subscales were eliminated in this adapted version of the questionnaire for greater concision.

In this context, the Cuban version of the Violence Received, Exerted, and Perceived Questionnaire revised (VREP-R) is viewed as a fundamental tool to detect and assess violence among young couples in the Cuban context.

Based on the information previously presented, this study aims to determine the psychometric properties of the VREP-R questionnaire in a specific sample of university students in Cuba.

The study focuses on validating the new version of the questionnaire (VREP-R) designed specifically for a Cuban sample. Aspects such as factorial structure, internal consistency, and temporal stability were evaluated in the analysis. The validation of the VREP-R is crucial since it seeks to accurately measure dating violence among university students. This validation process will contribute significantly to improving the understanding of and approach to this problem in the Cuban context, providing more effective tools for the prevention and addressing of situations of dating violence.

METHOD

Design

An instrumental design study (Ato et al., 2013; Montero & León, 2007), specifically psychometric (Alarcón, 2013), was carried out to analyze the psychometric properties of the VREP-R Questionnaire in a sample of university students in the city of Cienfuegos, Cuba.

Participants

The sample was composed of 356 university students from the Medicine degree program at the Universidad de Ciencias Médicas de Cienfuegos. The study included 68.8% females and 37.4% males, aged between 18 and 24 (M = 20.09, SD = 1.145). The sampling used was non-probabilistic.

A pilot study was conducted with 74 participants (Ramos et al., 2022). Forty participants took the test-retest, and the final 22-item VREP-R version was applied to 242 participants. The

inclusion criteria were as follows: being a student from the first three years of the Medicine degree program, voluntary participation, and having had at least one relationship of at least one month.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the socio-demographic and identifying variables of the samples studied for the pilot study, test-retest, and application of the final Cuban revised version (VERP-R).

Table 1.

Socio-demographic and identifying variables of the samples studied (n=356)

By sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	231	64,9
Male	125	35,1
By age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18	17	4.8
19	60	16.9
20	168	47.2
21	72	20.2
22	25	7.0
23	10	2.8
24	4	1.1
By origin	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Urban	280	78.7
Rural	76	21.3
Year of study		
First	79	22.2
Second	122	34.3
Third	155	43.5
By length of time in the relationship	Frequency	Percentage (%)
One to three months	93	26.1
Four to six months	68	19.1
Seven to nine months	28	7.9
Ten to twelve months	23	6.5
One to two years	88	24.7
Three to four years	51	14.3
Five to six years	5	1.4

Instruments

VREP-R Questionnaire

This revised Cuban version of the VREP aims to measure dating violence, taking into account violence received, exerted, and the perception of violence. It is a self-report instrument that contains 22 situations of violence in different degrees, in which the informant must indicate whether he/she has received, exerted, or considers them to be violent, taking into account the perpetrator or receiver of violence. The situations are grouped into five scales of violence: physical violence (VF), psychological violence humiliation-coercion (VPHC), psychological violence control-jealousy

(VPCC), social psychological violence (VPSOC), and sexual violence (VSEX), in its three aspects: Received (VREC), Exerted (VEJERC) and Perceived (VP) for both members.

The questionnaire uses Likert scales with six response options for reporting violence exerted or received (0 = never, 1 = once, 2 = 2 to 5 times, 3 = 6 to 10 times, 4 = 11 to 15 times, and 5 = more than 15 times). It has five options for the perception of violence: not violent, not very violent, somewhat violent, quite violent, and very violent.

Socio-demographic and identification data form.

This form was used to obtain information on the sex, age, origin, degree program, year of study, and length of time in the current dating relationship of the participants.

Procedure

Permission was obtained from the authors of the original version of the VREP for its adaptation and use in the doctoral research with the topic "Afrontamiento constructivo a la violencia en el noviazgo en estudiantes de medicina" ("Constructive coping with dating violence in medicine students.") The original 28-item version of the VREP was submitted to linguistic and cultural validation and content validity using the Group Consensus Method with 11 experts (4 Science PhD holders, 7 MSc degree holders). Two group work sessions were held with the experts to ensure the relevance and validity of the revised instrument.

A pilot study was conducted with a sample of 74 participants to test the functioning of the instrument and the understanding of the instructions and questions. The study included 70.2% females and 29.7% males aged between 18 and 24 (M= 20.12, SD= 0.810). After adjusting the pilot study, the revised instrument was validated in a sample of 242 medicine students.

The instrument was applied twice to 40 students who gave their consent, with one month (31 days) between the first and second applications. This procedure made it possible to determine the temporal stability of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was applied in class groups to all the students who gave their consent to prevent any type of discrimination against those who had not been in a relationship. Confidentiality and ethics in data collection were guaranteed. The participants were informed about the objectives of the research and the academic use of their data, ensuring their anonymity and privacy. The study was approved by the Scientific Council of the Department of Medical Sciences of Cienfuegos and the Ethics Committee of the institution (Agreement No. 38). The study was conducted following the ethical criteria set forth in the Declaration of Helsinki of the World Medical Association (WMA, 2013).

Data was collected in paper. In administering the questionnaires, the principal researcher remained in the classroom with the students until the questionnaires were completed, and the students were thanked for their participation. For the control of external variables, adequate environmental conditions were taken into account for the administration of the instrument. Care was

taken to ensure the correct application of the questionnaire in each study, following the instructions established in its design. The Microsoft Excel 2016 program was initially used to clean the data according to the established criteria.

Data analysis

The socio-demographic and identifying variables of the participants (relative frequencies and summary measures) were descriptively and statistically analyzed.

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) technique was applied to determine the goodness of fit of the factor structure of the VREP-R using structural equation models with AMOS software (version 24).

A CFA was carried out because there is a previous structure of the questionnaire that has already been applied and serves as a reference (Urbiola et al., 2020). Following this assumption, an Exploratory Factor Analysis is not applied (Hair et al., 1999; Hidalgo et al., 2023; López-Aguado & Gutiérrez-Provecho, 2019).

The structural equation modeling (SEM) method was employed in the CFA to examine the validity of the proposed theoretical model and the relationships among the latent variables (Medrano & Muñoz, 2017). Thus, the CFA was used to confirm the proposed underlying structure, i.e., whether the theoretical model fits the empirical data obtained in the research (Herrero, 2023).

SEM is a flexible method for testing relationships between multiple observable and latent unobservable variables, with different measures to contrast theoretical models with empirical data obtained in an investigation (Chin, 2013).

The goodness of fit was assessed to analyze the validity of the model. The fit indices were reviewed, and absolute fit, incremental fit, and parsimony measures were used (Doral et al., 2018; Escobedo et al., 2016). The five-factor model to which the original version of the instrument fits and its underlying base theory were considered (Urbiola et al., 2020).

Goodness-of-fit indices were used: Absolute fit measures, Chi-square (χ^2), Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA); incremental fit measures, Comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI) and Parsimony fit measures, Parsimony Comparative Fit Index (PCFI), Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI), Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and normed Chi-square.

The Path Diagram of the measurement model of the Questionnaire was made. It was considered that RMSEA values lower than .05 indicate a good fit, and values between .05 and .08 indicate a reasonable fit. CFI, TLI, or NNFI, NFI values greater than or equal to .90 are acceptable, indicating a good model fit. The PCFI and PNFI threshold was set at .5, adequate values above .5. The AIC was used to compare models. In this case, a lower value was considered indicative of a better fit of the modified model compared to model 1. Chi-square with values between equal to or less than three were considered appropriate (Doral et al., 2018).

The reliability analysis considered internal consistency and stability. The reliability of the VREP-R was assessed by internal consistency, calculating Cronbach's Alpha and McDonald's Omega coefficients. To evaluate the temporal stability of the questionnaire, a test-retest was performed with a one-month interval between applications and analyzed using Spearman's correlation coefficient (Ventura-León & Caycho-Rodríguez, 2017).

The behavior of the items retained in each scale was analyzed using summary measures (mean and standard deviation), item distribution (skewness), and item correlation with the scale total (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

RESULTS

Content validation

The criteria of 11 experts who analyzed the relevance and content validity of the original questionnaire were considered to obtain evidence on content validity. As a result of this evaluation, a revised 22-item version was obtained, called "Cuestionario de violencia recibida, ejercida, percibida, versión cubana revisada" ("Violence Received, Exerted and Perceived Questionnaire, revised Cuban version"- VERP-R).

During this validation process, the experts recommended to make modifications to certain items of the original version (items 10, 14, 15, 17, 19, and 22). These adjustments were aimed at improving respondents' understanding and minimizing possible biases in the information collected. In addition, it was linguistically adapted for better understanding by the target population of Cienfuegos.

From the original 28-item version, some items were eliminated (items 9, 18, and 28) and other items were combined to form unique items in the VERP-R (e.g., items 2, 19, and 27 were merged into item 22 in the VERP-R, and items 16 and 25 were combined into item 14 in the VERP-R). The numbering and visual presentation of the instrument were also adjusted. The revised VERP-R items, categorized by dimensions, are as follows: VF: 1, 5, 12, 12, 15, 16; VSEX: 6, 7, 10, 10, 17, 20; VPHC: 3, 9, 18, 21; VPCC: 8, 13, 19, 22; VPSOC: 2, 4, 11, 14.

As a result, all experts agreed that the instrument was suitable for the Cuban context and could be understood by Cuban samples.

Pilot study

A pilot study was carried out using the VERP-R version validated by the experts. The overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient obtained in the pilot was .944, and McDonald's Omega was .875, indicating excellent reliability (Ventura-León & Caycho-Rodríguez, 2017).

Item analysis

As shown in Table 2, items were analyzed to evaluate the behavior of the items retained in each of the five scales of Violence Received (VREC), which, as in the study of the original instrument conducted by Urbiola et al. (2020), were taken as a reference to perform statistical analyses.

Descriptive statistics, such as means (M) and standard deviations (SD), were used to evaluate the variability of the responses and the frequency of response to each item. The items showed mean values ranging from .08 to 1.62, with standard deviations indicating closeness to the mean value. All items showed positive skewness, and the skewness and kurtosis indices mostly fell within the acceptable range of -2 to +2, indicating no serious violations of normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The items of each scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranging from .944 to .946.

Table 2.
Descriptive statistics of the items of the violence received scales

Scale	Item	M	SD	Skew	K	Alpha
VF	1. My boyfriend/girlfriend has deliberately pushed me.	.43	.909	1.596	1.683	.946
	5. My boyfriend/girlfriend has kicked me to hurt me.	.08	.423	1.347	2.913	.946
	12. My boyfriend/girlfriend has pinched me to hurt me.	.45	1.030	1.946	1.993	.944
	15. My boyfriend/girlfriend has deliberately bitten me or pulled my hair.	.79	1.324	1.801	1.530	.945
	16. My boyfriend/girlfriend has slapped me.	.39	.60	1.564	1.925	.946
VSEX	6. My boyfriend/girlfriend has tried to have sex very insistently and annoyingly but has not used physical violence.	.64	1.214	1.237	1.657	.946
	7. My boyfriend/girlfriend has forced me to kiss him/her, even though I did not feel like it.	.52	1.082	1.470	1.193	.946
	10. Whenever I do not want to have sex, my boyfriend/girlfriend tells me that I do not care about him/her.	.74	1.222	1.917	1.407	.946
	17. My boyfriend/girlfriend forces me to touch him/her sexually, even though I do not feel like it.	.22	.624	1.823	1.763	.946
	20. My boyfriend/girlfriend has forced me to have sex (any type: oral, penetration...) when I did not feel like it.	.27	.642	1.860	1.930	.946
VPHC	3. My boyfriend/girlfriend tells me to dress differently and change my hairstyle... and criticizes me.	.28	.969	1.753	1.791	.945
	9. My boyfriend/girlfriend has insulted me when he/she gets mad with me or other people.	1.13	1.338	1.054	0.460	.946

Table 2.

Descriptive statistics of the items of the violence received scales (continued)

Scale	Item	M	SD	Skew	K	Alpha
VPHC	18. My boyfriend/girlfriend has made me believe that I was worthless.	.30	.758	1.588	1.482	.946
	21. My boyfriend/girlfriend has blamed me for causing the violence I have suffered.	.31	.849	1.624	1.944	.945
VCPCC	8. My boyfriend/girlfriend has searched through my belongings without my permission.	1.38	1.587	1.003	0.046	.946
	13. My boyfriend/girlfriend wants to know at all times where I am and with whom.	1.62	1.698	.847	0.222	.947
	19. My boyfriend/girlfriend watches my calls, messages, emails, etc., without my permission to know what I am doing when I am not with him/her.	1.13	1.587	1.395	0.833	.946
	22. My boyfriend/girlfriend gets jealous and accuses me of flirting with other people when I talk to her.	1.21	1.496	1.413	1.109	.946
VPSOC	2. I have lost my friends because my boyfriend/girlfriend did not like them and told me not to be with them.	.28	.652	1.729	1.979	.946
	4. My boyfriend/girlfriend does not let me see my friends.	.27	.744	1.537	1.994	.946
	11. My boyfriend/girlfriend imposes who we should or not hang out with.	.43	.937	1.821	1.944	.946
	14. My boyfriend/girlfriend insults my family and/or my friends in front of them or behind their backs.	.26	.736	1.077	1.603	.946

Note. Mean: M; Standard Deviation: SD; Skewness: Skew; Kurtosis: K; Alpha: the value of the reliability coefficient if the item is removed.

Reliability analysis - Internal consistency

The VERP-R showed excellent internal consistency, as indicated by a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .946 for the overall test and coefficients ranging from .795 to .841 for each subscale (VF, VSEX, VPHC, VPCC, and VPSOC). When removed, no item showed a considerable change in reliability, indicating that all items were adequate for their respective scales.

The McDonald Omega coefficient (ω) was .907, indicating high reliability and agreement with the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient results. The specific Omega values for each scale were also satisfactory, ranging between .718 and .843, suggesting good reliability for each scale (Ventura-León & Caycho-Rodríguez, 2017).

Temporal stability

To evaluate temporal stability, a Spearman test-retest correlation was made for the nature of the variables, resulting, in all cases, that there are strong and statistically significant correlations in a significant number. The statistics ranged from .500 to .950. These values indicate that the measures were stable over time and that the participants' responses were consistent.

Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3.

Results of the test –retest correlation

Scales	Test –Retest
Physical violence received	.802
Physical violence exerted	.808
Physical violence received perceived	.940
Physical violence exerted perceived	.800
Social psychological violence received	.813
Social psychological violence exerted	.758
Social psychological violence received perceived	.915
Social psychological violence exerted perceived	.705
Violence humiliation coercion received	.768
Violence humiliation coercion exerted	.871
Violence humiliation coercion received perceived	.776
Violence humiliation coercion exerted perceived	.500
Psychological violence control jealousy received	.835
Psychological violence control jealousy exerted	.512
Psychological violence control jealousy received perceived	.779
Psychological violence control jealousy exerted perceived	.632
Sexual violence received	.909
Sexual violence exerted	.911
Sexual violence received perceived	.950
Sexual violence exerted perceived	.827

Note. *p $< 0,95$

Construct validity

Based on internal structure, the construct validity was assessed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). A CFA was performed, taking as a reference the Model 3 of the VREP validation study, composed of five dimensions of violence: VPSOC, VPHC, VPCC, VF, and VSEX in independent scales of each type of violence described (Urbiola, 2014).

The CFA confirmed the multidimensional model, with five factors representing the scales: VPSOC, VPHC, VPCC, VPCC, VF, and VSEX. The cumulative percentage of variance explained by these five factors was 65.684%.

The graphical representation of the structure of the five-factor model (path diagram) was obtained, where the observable variables and the latent variables are represented: VF, VSEX, VPHC, VPCC, and VPSOC (see Figure 1).

Figura 1.

Path Diagram of the measurement model of the Violence Received, Exerted, and Perceived Questionnaire reduced version (VREP-R) in a Cuban sample
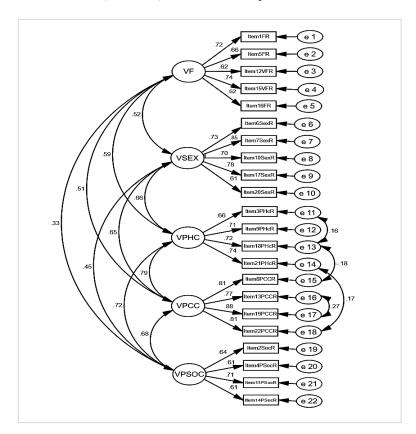

Table 4 presents the results of the calculated goodness-of-fit indices as part of the confirmatory factor analysis. Although significant differences were found between the observed data matrix and the one estimated by the model, as well as values below .90 in parsimony fit measures such as PCFI and PNFI, it was decided to accept the model taking into account the favorable results of other measures analyzed. For example, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) obtained an appropriate value of .50, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was .969, and the Turker Lewis Index or Non-Normed Fit Index (TLI or NNFI) was .956, indicating that they are appropriate measures. Additionally, , the AIC (Akaike Information Criterion) showed lower values in the revised model than in the original model, and the normed Chi-Square showed values less than 3 (2.209). Although the measure of goodness of fit may be affected by the sample size, the results show that the model fits the data satisfactorily.

Likewise, the results obtained validate that the instrument analyzed reproduces the structure of the original instrument of a five-factor model, with the items being behavioral manifestations of each factor. These results are consistent with those reported by the authors of the original instrument in validating it with the Spanish population.

Table 4.

Goodness-of-fit index

Model	Absolute fit measures		Incremental fit measures				Parsimony fit measures		
	χ^2	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	NFI	PCFI	PNFI	AIC	normed χ^2
Model 1	.000	.066	.939	.918	.913	.795	.778	728.201	2.393
Revised model	.000	.050	.969	.956	.963	.779	.763	510.159	2.209

DISCUSSION

Questionnaires that measure dating violence are usually based on theoretical models and conceptualizations aimed at reliably and objectively assessing a theoretical construct by observing behaviors and types of relationships. It is crucial to keep in mind that violence in adolescent and young people dating relationships may have distinguishing aspects compared to violence in adult relationships, which should be considered in the design of these specific instruments for this population (Urbiola et al., 2020).

Dating violence is a frequent reality among adolescents and young adults. However, the validated instruments that provide information on this type of violence are scarce. It is essential to ensure that previously tested instruments with well-analyzed psychometric properties are used to guarantee the internal validity of the studies (Yanez-Peñúñuri et al., 2019).

The VREP questionnaire was selected for this research because of its focus on the particularities of dating violence in adolescents and young people. The authors relied on a recognized classification of violence, giving more emphasis to psychological violence since it is the most common in this age group. In addition, they emphasized that violence in these relationships is of lesser severity than that in adult couples. The VREP-R also makes it possible to analyze young people's perceptions of violent behaviors according to the gender of the aggressor or receiver (Urbiola et al., 2020).

This research aimed to analyze the psychometric properties of a revised version of the VREP-R in a sample of Cuban university students. This questionnaire measures violence in dating relationships, including received, exerted, and perceived violence. The VREP-R is based on the original version of the VREP (Urbiola et al., 2020), with adjustments to adapt it to the specific context of this population.

The VREP-R questionnaire uses plain and clear language that is appropriate for the Cuban population. This aspect is relevant if we take into account the lack of standardized instruments in

the territory, especially in the province of Cienfuegos, for samples of young university students. It becomes a methodological resource to evaluate dating violence.

Its construction considered the particularities of violence in adolescent and young people dating relationships, highlighting psychological violence as the most received and exerted in this age group (Muñoz et al., 2020; Ramos-Rangel et al., 2021; Rojas-Solís & Romero-Méndez, 2022). The results of content validation, confirmatory factor analysis, and reliability support the use of the VREP-R as a valid and reliable tool to measure violence in intimate relationships among Cuban university students (Doral et al., 2018; Meneses et al., 2013; Medrano & Muñoz, 2017).

The VREP-R questionnaire was revised and validated thoroughly, taking into account the psychometric properties and the adaptation to the specific context of young university students in the province of Cienfuegos. The revised version of the questionnaire reduced the number of items and was adjusted to evaluate the perception of violent behaviors according to the gender of the receiver or perpetrator, enriching the understanding of violence in these relationships.

The content validation and the face validity evidence provided by the group consensus supported the adequacy of the items to measure the construct of interest. The confirmatory factor analysis showed that the questionnaire is multidimensional, composed of five factors, coinciding with the original version of the instrument (Urbiola et al., 2020). In this case, the distribution was of two scales with five items and the other scales with four items. Each scale was composed of several items related to different aspects of violence in a relationship. In terms of interpretation, the values of the items in each scale can provide information on the prevalence of violence in each dimension.

The values of the goodness-of-fit indices and standardized factor loadings showed an adequate fit of the proposed model and an accurate representation of the relationships among variables. The theoretical structure was confirmed, ratifying the validity of the questionnaire (Riva et al., 2024).

The goodness-of-fit indices indicated that the model fits the data adequately, with a goodness-of-fit index of .000, suggesting a perfect fit (absolute fit measures with a value of .066 for the RMSEA showed an adequate fit). This suggests that the questionnaire can accurately and reliably measure received, exerted, and perceived violence (Escobedo et al., 2016). Additionally, incremental fit measures, such as the CFI (.939), TLI (.918), and NFI (.913), also support the validity of the questionnaire. These values indicate that the proposed model fits the data well and provides an accurate representation of the relationships among variables (Doral et al., 2018; Medrano & Muñoz, 2017).

The measures of parsimony fit, such as PCFI (.795) and PNFI (.778), suggest that the model is parsimonious, i.e., it uses a minimum number of variables to explain the data. This is important since it indicates that the questionnaire is efficient and does not include redundant or unnecessary variables. For chi-square, model 1 obtained a value of 728.201, while the revised model obtained a value of 510.159. Together with the normed chi-square of 2.393 and 2.209, respectively, these values indicate that both models fit the data well. In summary, the results of the confirmatory factor analysis support the validity of the questionnaire (Doral et al., 2018; Medrano & Muñoz, 2017).

For reliability, both Cronbach's Alpha and McDonald's Omega coefficients showed excellent internal consistency of the instrument and its subscales. The internal consistency showed excellent reliability in the overall Alpha. When analyzed, the values by scales were good in four scales and acceptable in one (Ventura-León & Caycho-Rodríguez, 2017). In this sense, the overall Cronbach's Alpha values were similar to those obtained in their validation study by Urbiola et al. (2020). This is due to the high correlations shown by the items of the same scale with each other.

The Omega Coefficient, an alternative method for reliability estimation, was also calculated to have a more accurate measure of reliability. This coefficient was used because, unlike Cronbach's Alpha, it works with factor loadings, a transformation that makes the calculations more stable and does not depend on the number of items. Thus, it reflects the real level of reliability (Ventura-León & Caycho-Rodríguez, 2017). The results obtained showed excellent and good overall values by scales. These results support the reliability and homogeneity of the questionnaire items, reinforcing confidence in its use to measure dating violence (Meneses et al., 2013).

Likewise, test-retest reliability coefficients also indicated good consistency in the responses over time, highlighting the reliability of the questionnaire. The scales of the instrument showed good consistency in the responses over time, according to the test-retest reliability coefficients (Riva et al., 2024). The lowest values were in the scale of Violence humiliation-coercion exerted perceived and psychological violence control-jealousy exerted but with acceptable results.

The VREP is an instrument used in research in Costa Rica and Spain (Álvarez, 2019; Urbiola, 2016; Urbiola, 2014). However, no validation studies of the instrument were found in the revision, except for the research developed by the authors of the questionnaire, aimed at its design and validation (Urbiola et al., 2020; Urbiola, 2014). Thus, this research provides valuable information since it uses proven statistical alternatives to analyze the validity evidence of the revised questionnaire and propose adjustments for Cuban samples.

The VREP-R is presented as a valuable tool to assess violence in the context of Cienfuegos and the young Cuban university population. Its applicability stands out for its brevity and ease of use, with items formulated in clear and understandable language on 22 indicators of violence, especially highlighting psychological violence. It offers practical conceptual tools to identify risk behaviors in relationships. These attributes are especially relevant in contexts such as Cuba, where the availability of standardized instruments for this purpose is limited. Its use will facilitate the design of preventive initiatives tailored to the needs of young people and will contribute to effectively addressing the phenomenon of abuse in these relationships.

The instrument can become a resource to be used to help young people learn to evaluate if there are signs of abuse in their dating relationship, one of the fundamental pillars to confront and avoid the establishment of abuse in the relationship. It is a contribution to have the VREP-R, a technology in the field of psychology.

The revised Cuban version of the Questionnaire of Violence Received, Exerted, and Perceived (VERP-R) showed solid psychometric properties in the Cuban sample, demonstrating content validity, high internal consistency, and good temporal stability. The construct validity was

confirmed by a five-factor structure, supporting the use of the VERP-R as a reliable and valid tool to assess violence in the relationships among Cuban university students.

Although the research has limitations, such as the non-equal intentional sample in terms of the proportion of males and females and the restriction to a specific university population, the results support the usefulness and relevance of the VREP-R. It is suggested to continue refining the instrument by evaluating other validity measures and replicating the study in other samples to strengthen its predictive value.

In conclusion, the VREP-R questionnaire is presented as a valuable, brief, and reliable measurement tool to assess dating violence in Cuban young people and adolescents, psychometrically adequate to account for the construct and its basic dimensions inexistent in Cuba. The results are promising and suggest that the instrument can be effectively used in future research on dating violence. However, it should be kept in mind that the results are based on a specific sample and may require further validation in other contexts.

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