


## Original Article

# Perceived violence, sociomoral attitudes and behaviours in school contexts

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### ABSTRACT

Identifying what factors modulate personality development during childhood and adolescence is an interesting topic for scientific community. This research study aimed to: 1) analyze the influence of educational level, school context (rural or urban) and existence of one culture or more on students' personal and social responsibility, sportspersonship, school violence and disruptive behaviours in Physical Education classes; and 2) examine the relationship between these dependent variables in a sample of 734 students aged 11 to 17. For this purpose, data collection was done combining Personal and Social Responsibility questionnaire, Quotidian School Violence questionnaire, Multidimensional Sportsmanship Orientations Scale and Observation checklist of Conducts that Alter the Cohabitation during Physical Education Lessons. The results showed a higher development of values and less prevalence of school violence among primary education pupils, students in schools in rural contexts and Spanish-only classes. Moreover, there was a negative correlation between a) sportspersonship and personal and social responsibility levels and b) school violence and disruptive behaviours in Physical Education classes. **Key words:** SCHOOL COHABITATION, IMMIGRANT STUDENTS, EDUCATION IN VALUES, ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOUR.

#### Cite this article as:

Gómez Mármol, A., Sánchez-Alcaraz Martínez, B., Valero Valenzuela, A., & De la Cruz Sánchez, E. (2018). Perceived violence, sociomoral attitudes and behaviours in school contexts. *Journal of Human Sport and Exercise*, 13(1), 138-148. doi:<https://doi.org/10.14198/jhse.2018.131.14>

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Submitted for publication November 2016

Accepted for publication October 2017

Published January 2018

JOURNAL OF HUMAN SPORT & EXERCISE ISSN 1988-5202

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doi:[10.14198/jhse.2018.131.14](https://doi.org/10.14198/jhse.2018.131.14)

## INTRODUCTION

The school context is living a period in which disruptive behaviours developed by students are more frequent every time (Aparecida et al., 2016; Sampasa-Kanyinga et al., 2014; Shao et al., 2014). They are young people who usually lack of an adequate development of their personal and social skills and competences that are necessary to get on with success in our society (Jouriles et al., 2016; Sundaram, 2016; Turagabeci et al., 2008). In this way, the amount of years of compulsory school attendance and the ages covered, ease that schools are considered as ideal environments where we must work to improve the cohabitation (Escartí et al., 2011; Cabezas and Monge, 2013).

Since a few years ago, as Devís-Devís et al. (2010) and Rodríguez (2007) remarked, the increasing social concern about school cohabitation has supposed a notable rise of studies on that subject. Thus, we can find theoretical reflections (Avilés and Alonso, 2011; Ballenato, 2008; Gómez, 2011) and the implementation of teaching models and formative programs orientated to the improvement of cohabitation (Barker and Forneris, 2012; Jiménez et al., 2010; Pascual et al., 2011) especially in physical education lessons (Watson et al., 2003; Van Deventer, 2012; 2015).

There are many variables which may have an impact on school atmosphere such as sportspersonship, suffered and observed violence by students, personal and social responsibility or misbehaviours in school contexts (Gordon, 2011; Sánchez-Alcaraz, Gómez-Mármol et al., 2014). Besides, studies have demonstrated how educational levels or school environment may have an effect on violence, sportspersonship or personal and social responsibility (Holt and Neely, 2011). In particular, secondary students from rural environments showed worse behaviours at school (Fernández-Baenal et al., 2011; Sánchez-Alcaraz et al., 2013).

Different methodologies have been used to assess student interactions at school, for instance: questionnaires (Gómez-Mármol et al., 2014; Li et al., 2008; Pérez, 2007; Wright et al., 2010), interviews (Caballero, 2010; Herrera and Lorenzo, 2011; Vergara et al., 2011) or direct observation (Escartí et al., 2006; López and Frutos, 2011). On the other side, although authors as Thomas and Nelson (2007) recommend the combination of distinct methodologies, because of their partial make up for the limitations of each one, this type of research is not very frequent; nonetheless, under this double methodology, there are some researches about school cohabitation as Hellison and Wright (2003) who combined direct observation with questionnaires, Beaudoin (2012), Fabricatore (2011) and Saavedra (2004) who combined direct observation with interviews or Díaz and Pantoja (2010) and Rodríguez (2007) who combined questionnaires and interviews.

In this way, the aim of the present study is, firstly, to quantify the school violence and assess the educational values development of personal and social responsibility and sportsmanship in a sample of young students as well as their behaviour during Physical Education lessons and its association with the stage of education, the type of environment of the educative centre and the origin of the students. Secondly, this study aims to value the correlation between violence, the aforementioned values development and the behaviours during Physical Education lessons under the initial hypothesis that those groups with lower levels of values development and whose environment are less violent, will have a better behaviour. And, thirdly, it tries to determine the best regression variable of behaviours during Physical Education lessons.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### **Participants**

In this research, the sample was made up by 734 students (344 were students of primary education and 390 were students of secondary education) whose ages vary from 11 to 17 years old ( $M = 13.73$ ;  $SD = 1.77$ ) who studied in 16 educative centres (8 schools and 8 high schools) from the Region of Murcia (Spain). It is a cross-sectional and correlational research whose sample method was non-probabilistic and by convenience (Thomas and Nelson, 2007) due to the difficult access to participants.

### **Measures**

*Personal and Social Responsibility.* The Spanish version of Personal and Social Responsibility Questionnaire (Li et al., 2008) translated by Escartí et al. (2011) was used to assess the personal and social responsibility levels. This questionnaire has 14 items grouped in four levels: respect the others (e.g. "I respect my teachers"), participation and effort (e.g. "I try hard even if I do not like the activity"), autonomy (e.g. "I set goals") and help and leadership (e.g. "I encourage others") which made up two dimensions (personal responsibility and social responsibility) with the next introductory sentence: "During the last few days...". The answers were filled out in a Likert scale with 6 options, from (1) *totally agree* to (6) *totally disagree*. The internal consistency index (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) was .68 for personal responsibility and .84 for social responsibility.

*School violence.* The Daily School Violence Questionnaire, that was validated in Spanish by Fernández-Baenal et al. (2011) from the Canadian version called California School Climate and Safety Survey designed by Rossenblatt and Furlong (1997), was used to assess the school violence. It is made up by 14 items that create two dimensions: suffered violence (e.g. "they have stolen me any object" and observed violence (e.g. "the students use drugs"), with eight and six items respectively. It has an introductory sentence that affirms: "Answer if in this school year, in your classroom, any of the following situations happened". The answers were gathered in a Likert scale with 5 points: from (1) *never* to (5) *always*. The internal consistency index (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) was .84 for both dimensions.

*Sportsmanship.* The Multidimensional Sportsmanship Orientations Scale translated into Spanish by Martín-Albo et al. (2006) from the English version validated by Vallerand et al. (1997), was used to assess the sportsmanship development. It has the next introductory sentence: "Among the next statements, which ones do you think that should be part of sportsmanship?" before 25 items that form five dimensions: commitment (e.g. "important to be at all practices"), social conventions (e.g. "shake hands with opp.'s coach"), rules and officials (e.g. "obey the official"), opponent (e.g. "help opp. after a fall") and negative approach (e.g. "make excuses for poor play"). The answers were filled out in a Likert scale with 5 options: from (1) *no* to (5) *yes*. The obtained Cronbach's  $\alpha$  index were .53 for commitment, .80 for social conventions, .69 for rules and officials, .61 for opponent and .63 for negative approach.

*Behaviour in Physical Education lessons.* The Observation checklist of Conducts that Alter the Cohabitation during Physical Education Lessons was designed and validated by Sánchez-Alcaraz, Valero et al. (2014) in a sample of students aged between 11 and 17 years old, in order to assess the behaviour in Physical Education lessons. This scale has eight items grouped into two dimensions: violent conducts (four items, e.g. "Physical aggression") and indiscipline conducts (four items, e.g. "Do not follow teacher's indications").

### **Analysis**

The statistic data treatment was carried out with SPSS 21.0. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and  $\chi^2$  tests were used to assess the normality of the data distribution. U Mann Whitney was used to determine the influence of the

stage of education, the environment type (whether the school is in a city with more than 100.000 inhabitants, which is called “urban” or not, which is called “rural”) and the multiculturalism of classes (a class is considered multicultural if there is, at least, one immigrant among the classmates) on studied variables (personal and social responsibility, school violence and sportsmanship) and, moreover, multinomial logistic regression for behaviour in Physical Education lessons. Spearman’s ranks have been studied to know the correlation between the studied variables as well as simple lineal regression to assess the predictor capacity of each variable for the behaviour in Physical Education lessons.

## RESULTS

First of all, the descriptive data for the study variables by educational level, environment type and multicultural classes are presented (Table 1). Furthermore, through U-Mann Whitney statistical test, it was analysed if the differences between the two categories of each socio-demographic variable were significant.

Table 1. Sample characteristics and differences according to educational level, environment type and multicultural classes for the responsibility, violence and sportspersonship.

	Educational level				Environment type				Multicultural classes			
	Primary	Secondary	X <sup>2</sup>	p	Rural	Urban	X <sup>2</sup>	p	Únique	Several	X <sup>2</sup>	p
<b>Responsibility</b>												
Personal	35.76 ± 6.07	34.47 ± 5.48	- 4.457	.00 0	35.20 ± 5.98	34.71 ± 5.20	- 1.826	.06 8	35.33 ± 6.88	35.04 ± 5.64	- 1.176	.24 0
Social	36.90 ± 6.39	36.30 ± 4.43	- 4.873	.00 0	36.77 ± 5.55	36.02 ± 5.07	- 2.513	.01 2	36.90 ± 7.49	36.54 ± 5.10	- 2.784	.00 5
<b>Violence</b>												
Suffered	13.78 ± 6.23	11.28 ± 3.81	- 5.524	.00 0	12.22 ± 5.01	13.17 ± 5.84	- 2.045	.04 1	12.22 ± 5.62	12.48 ± 5.19	- 0.826	.40 9
Observed	13.28 ± 5.57	14.00 ± 5.57	- 1.831	.06 7	13.35 ± 5.55	14.64 ± 5.57	- 2.826	.00 5	13.07 ± 6.50	13.75 ± 5.44	- 1.670	.09 5
<b>Sportspersonship</b>												
Practice commitment	22.14 ± 3.13	22.03 ± 2.96	- 1.184	.23 6	22.25 ± 3.00	21.58 ± 3.09	- 2.872	.00 4	23.09 ± 2.32	21.95 ± 3.10	- 3.739	.00 0
Social conventions	22.00 ± 4.11	21.59 ± 4.10	- 2.006	.04 5	21.93 ± 4.04	21.32 ± 4.30	- 1.473	.14 1	22.04 ± 3.97	21.74 ± 4.13	- 0.468	.64 0
Respect rules and officials	22.16 ± 3.70	21.47 ± 3.32	- 4.236	.00 0	21.90 ± 3.53	21.48 ± 3.47	- 1.661	.97 0	22.31 ± 3.99	21.72 ± 3.44	- 2.758	.00 6
Respect opponent	14.59 ± 3.90	13.14 ± 4.02	- 4.917	.00 0	13.83 ± 4.02	13.81 ± 4.06	- 0.204	.83 9	14.34 ± 4.07	13.75 ± 4.02	- 1.381	.16 7
Negative approach	11.97 ± 5.20	11.68 ± 4.67	- 0.389	.69 7	11.35 ± 4.70	13.24 ± 5.31	- 4.248	.00 0	11.57 ± 4.76	11.85 ± 4.95	- 0.357	.72 1

This table shows the high influence of educational level on the studied variables. Thus, secondary students report significantly lower values than the primary ones in personal (-4 %) and social responsibility (-2 %), suffered violence (-18 %) categories, and within sportspersonship, are also differences in social conventions (-2 %), respect for rules, referees or officials (-3 %) and the opponent (-10 %). Looking at the environment type, the results for rural subjects indicate higher values in social responsibility (2 %), and practice commitment categories (3 %), while they have lower values in suffered (-6 %) and observed violence (-9 %), and negative approach (-14 %). Concerning multi-cultural classes, there were classrooms with several

cultures which obtain a lower degree of development on some factors: lower values for social responsibility (-1 %), commitment to practice (-5 %) and respect for the rules and referees (-3 %).

Then, the influence of socio-demographic variables on the physical education participant behaviour in classes is studied through H-Kruskal Wallis test (Table 2).

Table 2. Sample characteristics and differences according to educational level, environment type and multicultural classes for disruptive behaviours.

	Disruptive conducts						X <sup>2</sup>	p
	Nothing or little disruptive		Some disruptive		Very disruptive			
	Rank	M ± SD	Rank	M ± SD	Rank	M ± SD		
Educational level								
Primary	18 - 46	35.72 ± 9.04	47 - 64	54.27 ± 5.27	67 - 69	67.96 ± 0.78	97.107	.000
Secondary	30 - 46	35.13 ± 3.06	47 - 66	54.53 ± 6.79	67 - 96	79.16 ± 10.93		
Environment								
Rural	18 - 46	35.54 ± 7.74	47 - 63	55.46 ± 5.07	64 - 95	75.84 ± 10.10	125.743	.000
Urban			47 - 64	51.52 ± 7.57	65 - 96	76.86 ± 11.28		
Multicultural classes								
Unique	18 - 30	24.00 ± 6.10	25 - 52	52.00 ± 0.00	53 - 68	68.00 ± 0.00	1.182	.554
Several	18 - 46	37.31 ± 6.31	47 - 64	54.76 ± 6.44	65 - 96	77.24 ± 10.82		

Significant differences are observed in relation to the educational level, being primary education groups that have less disruptive behaviour (only 20% of the classes are very disruptive compared to 51% of secondary educational groups). With regards to the type of environment in which the school is located, those located in rural contexts have a better behaviour (lower limit of disruptive behaviour in urban centres is 47 per Physical Education lesson, belonging 65% of the centres to a very disruptive class group). Finally, with regards to the multicultural class, although the disruptive behaviour frequency is higher in those with more than one culture, the differences did not reach statistical significance.

On the other hand, relationship between dependent variables was studied by Spearman ranks test, finding significant associations (Table 3).

Table 3. Correlations between sportpersonship, responsibility, violence and Physical Education behaviours.

	Practice Commit.	Social conven.	Rules respect	Opponent respect	Negative Perspec.	Personal Resp.	Social Resp.	Suffered Violence	Observed Violence	Violent Behav.	Indiscipline Behav.
Practice commitment	-										
Social conventions	.260**	-									
Rules respect	.245**	.401**	-								
Opponent respect	.223**	.311**	.330**	-							

	Practice Commit.	Social conven.	Rules respect	Opponent respect	Negative Perspec.	Personal Resp.	Social Resp.	Suffered Violence	Observed Violence	Violent Behav.	Indiscipline Behav.
Negative approach	.011	.177**	.156**	-.065	-						
Personal Resp.	.334**	.286**	.239**	.157**	.078*	-					
Social Resp.	.244**	.280**	.331**	.244**	.111**	.475**	-				
Suffered violence	-.048	-.098**	-.093*	.013	-.127**	-.042	-.167**	-			
Observed violence	-.028	-.103**	-.098**	-.080*	-.080*	-.054	-.196**	.436**	-		
Violent behaviours	-.013	.606	-.031	.828	-.001	-.010	.034	.100**	.063	-	
Indiscipline behaviours	-.063	-.091*	-.113**	-.079*	-.139*	-.084*	-.089*	.027	.149**	.500**	-

\*\*Correlation is significant at level .01 (bilateral).

\*Correlation is significant at level .05 (bilateral).

There is a positive relationship among the own sportpersonship dimensions and personal and social responsibility, which in turn, also correlates positively with each other. In addition, higher levels of social convention, rules respect, opponent respect and negative approach dimensions are associated with lower suffered and observed violence (except in opponent respect and suffered violence) and indiscipline behaviours, not being any relation with violence behaviour. In terms of personal and social responsibility, both have a negative correlation with indiscipline behaviours, while for the two violence dimensions, if interrelated, only suffered violence is correlated with violence behaviours, just as only observed violence correlates with indiscipline behaviours. Eventually with regards to this correlational analysis it was also found that the highest frequency of violent behaviours is accompanied by an increase in frequency of indiscipline and antisocial behaviours.

Similarly it has studied the simple linear regression to determine to what extent sportpersonship, social and personal responsibility, suffered and observed violence are able to predict violence and antisocial and indiscipline behaviours. Results show that none of the variables is able to predict statistically significant violence behaviour, however, indiscipline and antisocial behaviours can be predicted by social conventions ( $F = 6.178$ ;  $p = .013$ ), rules respect ( $F = 7.601$ ;  $p = .006$ ), opponent respect ( $F = 6.338$ ;  $p = .012$ ), negative approach ( $F = 11.806$ ;  $p = .001$ ) and observed violence ( $F = 17.371$ ;  $p = .000$ ). It notes in this regard that these variables are able to predict from 7% to 22% of antisocial behaviour cases, being observed violence the strongest predictor.

In addition, this paper has studied if socio-demographic variables are able to predict violence, antisocial and indiscipline behaviours. All of them are able to predict violence as well as antisocial behaviours; violence behaviour can be predicted by the educational level ( $F = 44.795$ ;  $p = .000$ ), the environment type ( $F = 4.547$ ;  $p = .033$ ) and the multicultural class ( $F = 9.513$ ;  $p = .002$ ) in which the educational level is the strongest predictor, able to explain 24 % of violence behaviour. In the cases of antisocial or indiscipline behaviour, both can be similarly predicted by the educational level ( $F = 142.855$ ;  $p = .000$ ), the environment type ( $F = 134.794$ ;  $p = .000$ ) and the multicultural class ( $F = 22.924$ ;  $p = .000$ ) in which the educational level is the strongest predictor (as for violence behaviour), able to explain 40 % of antisocial behaviour.

## DISCUSSION

The main findings of this research refer to, firstly, the comparison of information obtained through questionnaires with other information through personal observation and, secondly, the study of the ability of sportsmanship, responsibility and violence to predict misconducts among young students.

Although several researches about this matter have also combined quantitative and qualitative methods to gather information (Beaudoin, 2012; Fabbriatore, 2011; Díaz and Pantoja, 2010), it is not common that this combination includes questionnaires and direct observation, even less frequent if it concerns such a great sample (734 participants). In this way (using questionnaires and direct observation), Zazzo (1978) observed a higher integration among partners in those groups who were more engaged in collective activities meanwhile this research has registered a lower frequency of misconducts during Physical Education lessons among those students who have better results in sportsmanship and observed violence (it seems logical that in those groups where students affirm to see less violence, there are less indiscipline or anti-social conducts), that is, results in line with Zazzo's results (1978).

Referring to the relationship among the own variables, diverse studies have found positive relationships between pro-social values (Li et al, 2008; García-Hierro and Cubo, 2009), like this research does with sportsmanship and personal and social responsibility. On the contrary, there is a positive relationship between pernicious variables like violence or misconducts, meanwhile, a higher development of them is associated with lower levels of these pro-social values (Hellison et al., 2000). Furthermore, simple lineal regression shows the ability of sportsmanship to predict anti-social and indiscipline conducts, although the best predictor is the violence observed in the context.

The influence of the stage of education, the type of environment of the educative centre and the multi-cultural classes on responsibility, violence and sportsmanship has been studied as well. In this way, it can be broadly assumed that, in terms of values development, the best results are in primary groups (García-Hierro and Cubo, 2009; Hellison and Walsh, 2002), in rural educative centres (Gómez-Mármol et al., 2014) and made up by only one culture (Li et al., 2008), this is, a higher level of personal and social responsibility and sportsmanship as well as lower levels of observed and suffered violence.

Analogously, H-Kruskal Wallis has confirmed that primary and rural groups have a better behaviour, without significant differences in function of the culture of the class, despite of the classes made up by several cultures tends to present misconducts more often.

Finally, as of the findings reached by this research, the carry out of new researches that implement teaching models specifically orientated to sportsmanship development are suggested, to the extent that it has been demonstrated that improving this value assumes the development of personal and social responsibility as well as less violence and misconducts, especially in multi-cultural secondary groups whose educative centres are in an urban environment, this is, in those groups where a lower level of pro-social values has been found.

## CONCLUSIONS

This research has advances in the knowledge of the current development of sportsmanship, school violence and responsibility in young students and how these values are influenced by determined sociodemographical variables, firstly, and how these values are associated with each other as well as their ability to predict the real behaviour of the adolescents, secondly.

Thus, rural educative centres, who teach primary education and have groups made up by only Spanish students present a higher development of sportsmanship, personal and social responsibility as well as lower levels of observed and suffered violence assessed with questionnaires. Furthermore, they are also the groups with less violent and anti-social conducts registered with direct observation.

Regarding the relationship among the studied variables, the positive relationship among sportsmanship and personal and social responsibility as well as the negative relationship with violence and misconducts is remarked.

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