

Characterization of Gender-Based and Domestic Violence in Boyacá (Colombia), 2019 and 2020

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Gender-based violence refers to actions or behaviors arising from inequitable power relations based on gender, where masculinity is overvalued, and femininity is undervalued.

Objective: To describe the prevalence and characteristics of gender-based and domestic violence cases reported in the department of Boyacá during 2019 and 2020.

Material and Methods: A retrospective descriptive study was conducted. A secondary analysis was performed based on cases of domestic and gender-based violence reported in the Sivigila application. A sample of 3,494 cases was selected for 2019, and 3,133 cases for 2020.

Results: Females were most affected, accounting for 79.5% of cases in 2019 and 81% in 2020. Physical violence was reported in 68.1% of cases in 2019 and 66.8% in 2020. The most affected age group was adults, with 36.5% in 2019 and 37.4% in 2020. The perpetrators were predominantly male (80.3%). Neglect and abandonment predominantly affected females, accounting for 51.1% of these cases

Conclusions: Victims of gender-based and domestic violence are primarily women, the perpetrators are mostly men, and most of them live with the victim.

Keywords: violence; domestic violence; gender-based violence.

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Caracterización de la violencia de género e intrafamiliar en Boyacá (Colombia), 2019 y 2020

RESUMEN

Introducción: Las acciones o comportamientos que surgen de las relaciones de poder inequitativas, que se basan en el género, que sobrevaloran lo masculino y subvaloran lo femenino se conoce como violencia de género.

Objetivo: Describir la prevalencia y características de los casos de violencia género e intrafamiliar, reportados en el departamento de Boyacá durante el 2019 y el 2020.

Material y métodos: Estudio descriptivo retrospectivo. Se realizó un análisis secundario a partir de los casos de violencia intrafamiliar y de género notificados en el aplicativo Sivigila. Para 2019 se seleccionó una muestra de 3494 caso, y para 2020, una de 3133 casos.

Resultados: El sexo femenino presentó la mayor afectación, con un 79,5 % (2019) y un 81 % (2020). Para los años en mención, la violencia física reportó un 68,1 % (2019) y un 66,8 % (2020). El porcentaje más evidente se presentó en la adultez, con un 36,5 % (2019) y un 37,4 % (2020). Los agresores corresponden al sexo masculino (80,3 %). La naturaleza de la violencia por negligencia y abandono representa al sexo femenino en un 51,1 %.

Conclusiones: Las víctimas de violencia de género e intrafamiliar son mujeres, los agresores son hombres y la mayoría conviven con la víctima.

Palabras clave: violencia; violencia doméstica; violencia de género.

Caracterização da violência de gênero e intrafamiliar em Boyacá (Colômbia), 2019 e 2020.

RESUMO

Introdução: As ações ou comportamentos que surgem das relações de poder desiguais, baseadas no gênero, que supervalorizam o masculino e subvalorizam o feminino são conhecidas como violência de gênero.

Objetivo: Descrever a prevalência e as características dos casos de violência de gênero e intrafamiliar, reportados no departamento de Boyacá durante 2019 e 2020.

Material e métodos: Estudo descritivo retrospectivo. Foi realizada uma análise secundária a partir dos casos de violência intrafamiliar e de gênero notificados no aplicativo Sivigila. Para 2019, foi selecionada uma amostra de 3.494 casos, e para 2020, uma de 3.133 casos.

Resultados: O sexo feminino apresentou a maior afetação, com 79,5% (2019) e 81% (2020). Para os anos mencionados, a violência física registrou 68,1% (2019) e 66,8% (2020). O percentual mais evidente ocorreu na idade adulta, com 36,5% (2019) e 37,4% (2020). Os agressores pertencem ao sexo masculino (80,3%). A natureza da violência por negligência e abandono representa o sexo feminino em 51,1%.

Conclusões: As vítimas de violência de gênero e intrafamiliar são mulheres, os agressores são homens e a maioria convive com a vítima.

Palavras-chave: violência; violência doméstica; violência de gênero.

INTRODUCTION

Gender-based violence refers to any action or behavior that arises from asymmetrical power relations, which overvalue what is associated with masculinity and undervalue what is related to femininity (1). It is a public health issue due to the severe physical, mental, and emotional harm suffered by the victims; the severity and magnitude with which it occurs; and because it is preventable. Addressing gender-based violence comprehensively is essential, as it allows for its prevention, provides care to victims, and ensures access to justice, thereby advancing the transformation of inequitable relationships and making the guarantee and restoration of victims' rights a reality (2).

Comprehensive and timely care is necessary, from the perspective of gender rights and differentiated approaches. This approach enables quality interventions focused on respect and dignity for the victims. Due to the global health crisis that began in December 2019, it became evident that confinement circumstances exacerbated the risk factors for gender-based violence, both at individual and social levels. Additionally, it became clear that reporting such violence was difficult, leading to the consideration that cases were underreported (3).

Gender-based violence is a prioritized health issue for two main reasons: first, because of the severe impact on the well-being, physical and emotional health of victims, their families, and society in general, as well as the loss of healthy years of life; second, because of its magnitude. It is estimated that 35% of women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, or sexual violence by someone other than their partner (these figures do not include sexual harassment) at some point in their lives (4).

However, some studies in Colombia have reported that up to 70% of women have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner during their lives, leading to high rates of depression and an increased likelihood of having an abortion or acquiring the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) compared to those who have not experienced such violence (4). In 2019, Colombia's National Public Health Surveillance System (Sivigila) reported 118,469 suspected cases of gender-based and domestic violence, representing an 8% increase (8,770 cases) compared to 2018, when 109,699 cases were reported. By 2020, 107,365 suspected cases of gender-based and domestic violence had been reported, showing a 9.4% decrease compared to 2019.

The proportion of incidence of reported suspected cases of gender-based violence in Colombia in 2020 was 209.6 cases per 100,000 inhabitants.

In Boyacá, during the same period, the incidence was 225.5 cases per 100,000 inhabitants (4). Additionally, the incidence of gender-based and domestic violence in Boyacá in 2020 was 182 cases per 100,000 inhabitants (5).

This situation raised alarm among all territorial entities of Colombia due to the number of affected individuals, primarily girls, boys, adolescents, young people, and women. Furthermore, it highlights that gender-based violence is a social issue of public interest, rather than merely a psychological problem confined to the private sphere. Therefore, it demands a coordinated response. This research aims to describe the prevalence and characteristics of domestic violence cases to provide an account of the cases reported in Boyacá during 2019 and 2020.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Type

A descriptive, retrospective study was conducted. The cases were analyzed based on variables related to domestic and gender-based violence. The information was collected from the database obtained through the notification process of the public health event in the Sivigila application. This notification occurs by completing Form 875 of the National Institute of Health, which consists of two segments. The first segment refers to the

basic information of the person presenting the case, and the second contains specific details regarding the gender-based violence event. The form must be completed in its entirety by the health professional who identifies the case and then uploaded to the Sivigila application for proper reporting and monitoring of the public health event (6).

Procedures

The data were collected through a formal request that allowed access to the anonymized and consolidated secondary database of cases reported under event code 875 to the territorial entity (Boyacá's Office of Health). The data relevant to the study years were validated. Inclusion criteria considered cases of gender-based and domestic violence reported to Sivigila in Boyacá. Exclusion criteria included cases that occurred and were reported in Boyacá but where the victims were not residents of the department, as well as cases that were not reported to the Sivigila system.

For this analysis, the variables were classified according to the victim, their sociodemographic conditions, the context of the care received, and the nature of the violence experienced. Additionally, the characteristics related to the aggressor and the environment in which the violence occurred were described. After identifying the relevant information, the data were subjected to

descriptive analysis using absolute values (n) and their respective proportions (%). The data were organized into tables created in MS Excel and edited using MS Word software (Office 365).

Statistical Analysis

A descriptive analysis was conducted using measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) with MS Excel from Office 365. The main results were reported in percentages, proportions, percentiles, and georeferencing within Boyacá through choropleth maps, categorized by type of violence and discriminated by year and relative numbers. This analysis was based on the population projections of the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) at the departmental and municipal levels for 2019 and 2020.

Ethical Considerations

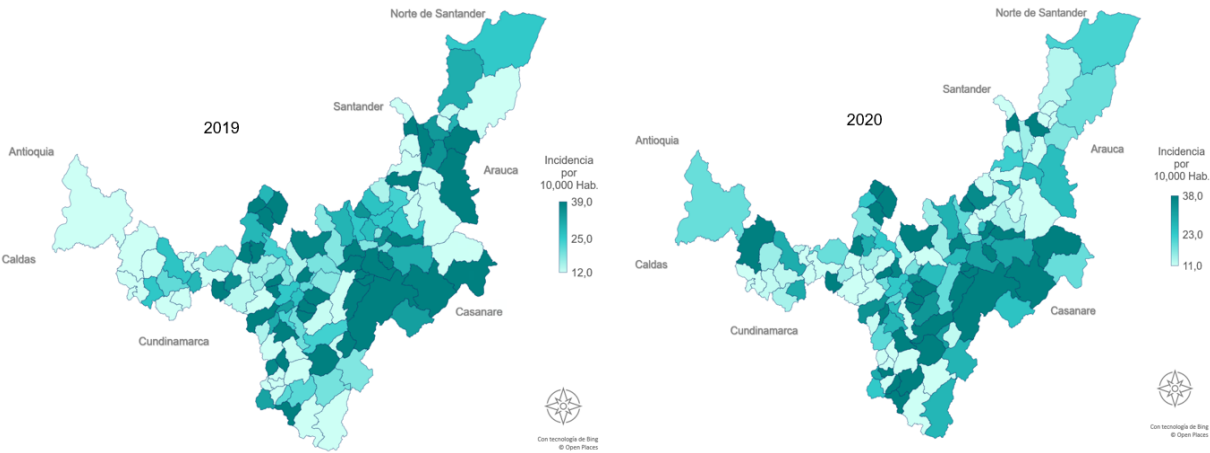
This study did not require approval from any bioethics committee, as it was a risk-free investigation according to Article 11 of Resolution 08430 of 1993, which outlines scientific, technical, and administrative standards for health research. The study posed no risk to the population under study since it was a retrospective descriptive study with no intervention in the biological, physiological, psychological, or social aspects of the participants (7).

RESULTS

The sample analyzed included 3,494 cases for 2019 and 3,133 cases for 2020, which were examined by the authors. The process of reporting suspected cases of gender-based and domestic violence by nature in Boyacá showed a uniform trend in 2019 and 2020. Physical violence accounted for the highest number of reported cases, followed by sexual violence. Notably, there was an increase in reported cases of these types of violence in 2019.

The distribution of gender-based and domestic violence in Boyacá was higher in rural municipalities with populations of less than 20,000 inhabitants. Municipalities such as Santa Sofía, Labranzagrande, Cuitiva, and Ventaquemada had a significantly higher number of cases compared to departmental figures. For both 2019 and 2020, the municipalities of Cuitiva, Labranzagrande, Sora, and Tuta reported an elevated number of cases compared to departmental averages (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Incidence of Gender-Based and Domestic Violence in Boyacá, 2019 and 2020



Source: Database of Event 875 (Sivigila, 2019 and 2020).

In Boyacá, the reporting of suspected cases of gender-based and domestic violence by nature was consistent between 2019 and 2020, with 3,494 and 3,133 cases, respectively. Women were the most affected, with 79.5% of cases in 2019 and 81% in 2020. Regarding the nature of the violence, physical violence accounted for a high percentage: 68.1% in 2019 and 66.8% in 2020. In terms of life stage, a higher percentage of cases were observed in adults, with 36.5% in 2019 and 37.4% in 2020. As for occupation, in 2019, 22.7% of the cases were among students and 17.3% among housewives. In 2020, these percentages increased to 24.8% for students and 36.4% for homemakers.

The percentage of victims with a heterosexual orientation was 96.4% in 2019 and 96.8% in 2020. Similarly, the predominant gender identity was female, with 79.9% in 2019 and 81.3% in 2020. The area of residence where domestic violence acts were most common was the municipal capital, accounting for 56.6% of cases in 2019 and 56.3% in 2020. The population group most affected was pregnant women, with 4.2% in 2019 and 3.3% in 2020. As part of the comprehensive care process for victims, reporting to authorities occurred in 36.1% of cases for both years (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1. Characterization of Gender-Based and Domestic Violence: Victim Background (Boyacá, 2019)

Variable	Physical Violence	Psychological Violence	Neglect and Abandonment	Sexual Violence	All Types of Violence
Gender	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Female	1,931 (81.1)	208 (82.2)	148 (51.1)	493 (86.4)	2,780 (79.5)
Male	450 (18.8)	45 (17.7)	142 (48.9)	77 (13.5)	714 (20.4)
Life Stage	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Early childhood	68 (2.8)	4 (1.5)	136 (46.8)	60 (10.5)	268 (7.6)
Childhood	109 (4.5)	19 (7.5)	44 (15.1)	125 (21.9)	297 (8.5)
Adolescence	229 (9.6)	30 (11.8)	31 (10.6)	230 (40.3)	520 (14.8)
Youth	778 (32.6)	48 (18.9)	14 (4.8)	100 (17.5)	940 (26.9)
Adulthood	1,096 (46)	123 (48.6)	13 (4.4)	45 (7.8)	1,277 (36.5)
Elderly	101 (4.2)	29 (11.4)	52 (17.9)	10 (1.7)	192 (5.4)
Victim Occupation	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Household (homemaker)	488 (20.4)	78 (30.8)	12 (4.1)	17 (2.9)	595 (17.3)
Student	357 (14.9)	41 (16.2)	65 (22.4)	333 (58.4)	796 (22.7)
Not applicable	559 (23.4)	42 (16.6)	132 (45.5)	123 (21.5)	856 (24.4)
Other occupations	977 (41)	92 (36.3)	81 (27.9)	97 (17)	1,247 (35.6)
Sexual Orientation	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Heterosexual	2,307 (96.8)	244 (96.4)	273 (94.1)	545 (95.6)	3,369 (96.4)
Bisexual	35 (1.4)	4 (1.5)	5 (1.7)	8 (1.4)	52 (1.4)
Asexual	14 (0.5)	3 (1.1)	11 (3.7)	8 (1.4)	36 (1)
Homosexual	22 (0.9)	2 (0.7)	1 (0.3)	9 (1.5)	34 (0.9)
Other	3 (0.1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (0.1)
Gender Identity	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Female	1,940 (81.4)	211 (83.3)	146 (50.3)	497 (87.1)	2,794 (79.9)
Male	439 (18.4)	41 (16.2)	143 (49.3)	73 (12.8)	696 (19.9)
Transgender	2 (0.2)	1 (0.3)	1 (0.3)	0 (0)	4 (0.2)
Area of Residence	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Municipal capital	1,379 (57.9)	135 (53.3)	105 (36.2)	361 (63.3)	1,980 (56.6)
Village	204 (8.5)	15 (5.9)	14 (4.8)	49 (8.5)	282 (8)
Rural area	798 (33.5)	103 (40.7)	171 (58.9)	160 (28)	1,232 (35.2)
Ethnic Background	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Indigenous	5 (0.2)	0 (0)	17 (5.8)	5 (0.8)	27 (0.7)
Rom, gypsy	9 (0.3)	1 (0.3)	1 (0.3)	4 (0.7)	15 (0.4)
Raizal	5 (0.2)	0 (0)	1 (0.3)	0 (0)	6 (0.1)
Palenquero	0 (0)	1 (0.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.03)
Black, mulatto	6 (0.2)	1 (0.3)	1 (0.3)	0 (0)	8 (0.2)
Other	2,356 (98.9)	250 (98.8)	270 (93.1)	561 (98.4)	3,437 (98.3)
Population Group	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Disabled	7 (0.2)	5 (1.9)	7 (2.3)	17 (2.8)	36 (1)
Displaced	2 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (0.5)	5 (0.1)

Variable	Physical Violence	Psychological Violence	Neglect and Abandonment	Sexual Violence	All Types of Violence
Migrant	27 (1.1)	0 (0)	5 (1.7)	16 (2.6)	48 (1.3)
Incarcerated	1 (0.05)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.05)
Pregnant	81 (3.3)	17 (6.5)	10 (3.4)	43 (7.2)	151 (4.2)
Homeless	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
ICBF child population	1 (0)	2 (0.7)	0 (0)	4 (0.6)	7 (0.1)
Community mothers	2 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.1)	3 (0)
Demobilized	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.3)	0 (0)	1 (0.05)
Psychiatric centers	4 (0.1)	0 (0)	1 (0.3)	3 (0.5)	8 (0.2)
Victims of armed conflict	55 (2.2)	29 (11.1)	2 (0.6)	6 (1)	92 (2.5)
Other population groups	2,237 (92.5)	208 (79.6)	266 (91)	503 (84.3)	3,214 (90.1)
Comprehensive Health Care	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
HIV/STI prophylaxis				98 (5.4)	98 (1.6)
Hepatitis B prophylaxis				101 (5.6)	101 (1.7)
Other prophylaxis				100 (5.5)	100 (1.6)
Emergency contraception				77 (4.2)	77 (1.3)
VTP				105 (5.8)	105 (1.7)
Mental health	1,054 (30.7)	182 (45.7)	62 (20.8)	441 (24.5)	1,739 (29.3)
Referral to protection	907 (26.4)	101 (25.3)	107 (36)	346 (19.2)	1,461 (24.6)
Report to authorities	1,469 (42.8)	115 (28.8)	128 (43)	428 (23.8)	2,140 (36.1)
Forensic evidence	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	100 (5.6)	100 (1.7)

VTP: voluntary termination of pregnancy; STI: sexually transmitted infection; ICBF: Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar;
n: number of cases; %: proportion of cases
Source: Database of Event 875 (Sivigila, 2019).

Table 2. Characterization of Gender-Based and Domestic Violence: Victim Background (Boyacá, 2020)

Variable	Physical Violence	Psychological Violence	Neglect and Abandonment	Sexual Violence	All Types of Violence
Gender	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Female	1,705 (81.4)	270 (88.5)	99 (47.4)	468 (89.3)	2,542 (81.1)
Male	390 (18.6)	35 (11.5)	110 (52.6)	56 (10.7)	591 (18.9)
Life Stage	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Early childhood	42 (2.0)	12 (3.9)	86 (41.1)	54 (10.3)	194 (6.2)
Childhood	93 (4.4)	21 (6.9)	28 (13.4)	112 (21.4)	254 (8.1)
Adolescence	193 (9.2)	28 (9.2)	29 (13.9)	229 (43.7)	479 (15.3)

Variable	Physical Violence	Psychological Violence	Neglect and Abandonment	Sexual Violence	All Types of Violence
Youth	692 (33.0)	63 (20.7)	9 (4.3)	81 (15.5)	845 (27.0)
Adulthood	974 (46.5)	150 (49.2)	7 (3.3)	42 (8.0)	1,173 (37.4)
Elderly	101 (4.8)	31 (10.2)	50 (23.9)	6 (1.1)	188 (6.0)
Victim Occupation	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Household (homemaker)	889 (42.4)	152 (49.8)	33 (15.8)	66 (12.6)	1,140 (36.4)
Student	352 (16.8)	53 (17.4)	48 (23.0)	323 (61.6)	776 (24.8)
Not applicable	203 (9.7)	29 (9.5)	100 (47.8)	89 (17.0)	421 (13.4)
Other occupations	651 (31.1)	71 (23.3)	28 (13.4)	46 (8.8)	796 (25.4)
Sexual Orientation	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Heterosexual	2,039 (97.3)	292 (95.7)	203 (97.1)	499 (95.2)	3,033 (96.8)
Bisexual	26 (1.2)	7 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	9 (1.7)	42 (1.3)
Asexual	14 (0.7)	3 (1.0)	5 (2.4)	9 (1.7)	31 (1.0)
Homosexual	16 (0.8)	3 (1.0)	1 (0.5)	7 (1.3)	27 (0.9)
Other	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Gender Identity	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Female	1,712 (81.7)	266 (87.2)	101 (48.3)	468 (89.3)	2,547 (81.3)
Male	382 (18.2)	39 (12.8)	108 (51.7)	54 (10.3)	583 (18.6)
Transgender	1 (0.05)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.4)	3 (0.1)
Area of Residence	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Municipal capital	1,189 (56.8)	149 (48.9)	105 (50.2)	321 (61.3)	1,764 (56.30)
Village	183 (8.7)	29 (9.5)	12 (5.7)	49 (9.4)	273 (8.71)
Rural area	723 (34.5)	127 (41.6)	92 (44.0)	154 (29.4)	1,096 (34.98)
Ethnic Background	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Indigenous	8 (0.4)	0 (0.0)	8 (3.8)	5 (1.0)	21 (0.7)
Rom, gypsy	5 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.5)	3 (0.6)	9 (0.3)
Raizal	3 (0.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)	4 (0.1)
Palenquero	1 (0.05)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.05)
Black, mulatto	2 (0.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (0.6)	5 (0.2)
Other	2,076 (99.1)	305 (100)	200 (95.7)	512 (97.7)	3,093 (98.7)
Population Group	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Disabled	14 (0.7)	3 (1.0)	12 (5.4)	11 (2.1)	40 (1.2)
Displaced	3 (0.1)	1 (0.3)	2 (0.9)	0 (0.0)	6 (0.2)
Migrant	35 (1.6)	1 (0.3)	6 (2.7)	12 (2.2)	54 (1.6)
Incarcerated	2 (0.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)	3 (0.1)
Pregnant	57 (2.7)	10 (3.2)	7 (3.2)	35 (6.5)	109 (3.3)
Homeless	1 (0.05)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.03)
ICBF child population	3 (0.1)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	8 (1.5)	11 (0.3)
Community mothers	4 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.2)	5 (0.2)
Demobilized	1 (0.05)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.03)
Psychiatric centers	2 (0.1)	1 (0.3)	0 (0.0)	3 (0.6)	6 (0.2)

Variable	Physical Violence	Psychological Violence	Neglect and Abandonment	Sexual Violence	All Types of Violence
Victims of armed conflict	14 (0.7)	23 (7.4)	3 (1.4)	3 (0.6)	43 (1.3)
Other population groups	2,007 (93.7)	271 (87.4)	191 (86.4)	462 (86.2)	3,031 (91.6)
Comprehensive Health Care	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
HIV/STI prophylaxis				81 (4.8)	81 (1.4)
Hepatitis B prophylaxis				75 (4.4)	75 (1.3)
Other prophylaxis				75 (4.4)	75 (1.3)
Emergency contraception				57 (3.4)	67 (1.2)
VTP				102 (6.0)	102 (1.8)
Mental health	1,072 (32.5)	215 (40.9)	74 (27.9)	438 (25.9)	1,799 (31.1)
Referral to protection	858 (26.0)	130 (24.7)	81 (30.6)	358 (21.2)	1,427 (24.7)
Report to authorities	1,364 (41.4)	181 (34.4)	110 (41.5)	433 (25.6)	2,088 (36.1)
Forensic evidence	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	71 (4.2)	71 (1.2)

VTP: voluntary termination of pregnancy; STI: sexually transmitted infection; ICBF: Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar;
n: number of cases; %: proportion of cases
Source: Database of Event 875 (Sivigila, 2019).

Regarding the characteristics of the perpetrator during the years under study, it was found that 80.3% of the cases involved a male aggressor. Neglect and abandonment had the highest percentage among the female population, with 68.7%. Additionally, 56.0% of the victims lived with the aggressor, and in 46.9% of cases, the violence was committed by the intimate partner within the family setting. In non-family settings, “others” accounted for 23.2% of perpetrators, while acquaintances without close relations were responsible for 22.5% of the violence. In 74.6% of cases, the incidents occurred in the victim’s home, making the household the primary setting for violence, representing 73.8% of the reported cases in both 2019 and 2020 (Table 3).

DISCUSSION

Domestic violence can be defined as any action involving physical, psychological, or sexual abuse carried out by a family member against a woman or other members of the family unit. It also includes any action or omission by family members, whether by affinity, blood, or affiliation, that transforms relationships into acts of aggression, causing physical, psychological, sexual, economic, or social harm to one or more of the members (8).

Table 3. Characterization of Gender-Based and Domestic Violence: Perpetrator Background and Violence Setting (Boyacá, 2019 and 2020)

Variable	Physical Violence	Psychological Violence	Neglect and Abandonment	Sexual Violence	Total Violence
Gender of Perpetrator	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Male	3,674 (82.1)	476 (85.3)	144 (28.8)	1,032 (94.3)	5,326 (80.3)
Female	797 (17.8)	81 (14.5)	343 (68.7)	51 (4.6)	1,272 (19.1)
Intersex	3 (0.1)	1 (0.1)	7 (1.4)	10 (0.9)	21 (0.3)
Other	2 (0.04)	0 (0)	5 (1)	1 (0.1)	8 (0.1)
Living with Perpetrator	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Yes	2,716 (60.6)	386 (69.1)	380 (76.1)	231 (21.1)	3,713 (56)
No	1,760 (39.3)	172 (30.8)	119 (23.8)	863 (78.8)	2,914 (43.9)
Family Perpetrator	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Intimate partner	2,097 (54.8)	256 (50.4)	14 (3)	131 (25)	2,498 (46.9)
Family member	684 (17.8)	83 (16.3)	118 (25.3)	257 (49.2)	1,142 (21.4)
Ex-partner	578 (15.1)	85 (16.7)	3 (0.6)	43 (8.2)	709 (13.3)
Father	231 (6)	51 (10)	190 (40.7)	38 (7.2)	510 (9.5)
Mother	233 (6)	32 (6.3)	141 (30.2)	53 (10.1)	459 (8.6)
Non-Family Perpetrator	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Other	137 (20.9)	15 (29.4)	16 (48.4)	136 (23.7)	304 (23.2)
Acquaintance (no close relation)	172 (26.3)	5 (9.8)	1 (3)	117 (20.4)	295 (22.5)
Stranger	102 (15.6)	4 (7.8)	1 (3)	123 (21.5)	230 (17.5)
Neighbor	114 (17.4)	4 (7.8)	5 (15.1)	82 (14.3)	205 (15.6)
Friend	49 (7.5)	4 (7.8)	6 (18.1)	79 (13.8)	138 (10.5)
Classmate	32 (4.9)	2 (3.9)	0 (0)	14 (2.4)	48 (3.6)
Teacher	6 (0.9)	5 (9.8)	1 (3)	8 (1.3)	20 (1.5)
Coworker	16 (2.4)	4 (7.8)	0 (0)	5 (0.8)	25 (1.9)
Boss	13 (1.9)	7 (13.7)	3 (9)	6 (1)	29 (2.2)
Public servant	11 (1.6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.1)	12 (0.9)
Priest/Pastor	1 (0.1)	1 (1.9)	0 (0)	1 (0.1)	3 (0.2)
Incident Setting	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Home	3,335 (74.5)	472 (84.5)	394 (78.9)	745 (68)	4,946 (74.6)
Public road	775 (17.3)	31 (5.5)	24 (4.8)	78 (7.1)	908 (13.7)
Other	58 (1.2)	22 (3.9)	46 (9.2)	149 (13.6)	275 (4.1)
Commercial/Service areas (shops, malls, etc.)	94 (2.1)	8 (1.4)	5 (1)	37 (3.3)	144 (2.1)
Other open spaces (forests, pastures, etc.)	57 (1.2)	4 (0.7)	0 (0)	45 (4.1)	106 (1.5)
Schools	66 (1.4)	10 (1.7)	2 (0.4)	19 (1.7)	97 (1.4)
Workplace	46 (1)	7 (1.2)	0 (0)	6 (0.5)	59 (0.8)
Leisure venues (with alcohol sales)	30 (0.6)	3 (0.5)	1 (0.2)	12 (1)	46 (0.6)
Healthcare centers	3 (0.1)	0 (0)	27 (5.4)	3 (0.2)	33 (0.4)
Sports/Recreational areas	12 (0.2)	1 (0.1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	13 (0.1)

where the majority of violent incidents took place at home, regardless of the type of violence (14).

In this study, the life stage most affected by gender-based and domestic violence was adulthood, defined as between the ages of 27 and 59, according to Resolution 3280 of 2018 by the Colombian Ministry of Health and Social Protection (15). Adulthood accounted for 36.5% of cases in 2019 and 37.4% in 2020. These findings align with the study by Orozco Aguancha and colleagues (11), from 2020, in which the affected age group was 25 to 29 years, representing 22.18% of cases (11), and with the 2017 study by Abella and colleagues (16), which analyzed the reasons for withdrawing from domestic violence judicial processes. In that study, the most affected age group was between 25 and 29 years, accounting for 31.0% of cases.

Gender identity is defined as how an individual perceives themselves, based on the social, historical, and cultural construction of what has been defined as masculine, feminine, or a transition between the two (14). In this study, the proportion of female gender identity was 79.9% in 2019 and 81.3% in 2020. This information is consistent with the findings of Morad Haydar and colleagues (17), which indicated that individuals with a female gender identity continue to suffer from violence because they lack the socioeconomic conditions that would allow them to live independently of their abusive partners.

Regarding the location of the victims, the highest proportion was found in the municipal capital, accounting for 56.6% of cases in 2019 and 56.3% in 2020. This finding is similar to that documented by Domínguez-Serrano and colleagues (18) in 2019, where 71.5% of the assaults occurred in the municipal capital. The affected population group of particular concern in this study was pregnant women, representing 4.2% of cases in 2019 and 3.3% in 2020. This information is also documented in the study by Hernández Marín and colleagues (19), which found that 29.7% of pregnant women were victims of domestic violence during the study period. This is alarming, as no form of violence should be inflicted on this population, nor should it be socially accepted.

As part of the comprehensive care process for victims, it was found in this study that cases were reported to the relevant authorities in 36.1% of instances during both years. This finding is consistent with the study by García Balaguera and Méndez Alonso (20) in 2017, where 55.13% of cases had been reported to authorities, such as the Judicial Police, Immediate Response Unit, Technical Investigation Corps, Prosecutor's Office, or the National Police.

CONCLUSIONS

The victims of gender-based and domestic violence in Boyacá are primarily women, including students,

homemakers, and those engaged in other activities, with heterosexual orientation. The predominant form of violence is physical violence. The perpetrators are mainly men, most often the victim's intimate partner. There is a similar proportion between aggressors who live with the victim and those who do not. The violent incidents primarily occurred in the home setting. Nearly half of the cases did not follow the established protocol for attending to victims of gender-based and domestic violence. Therefore, efforts must be made to strengthen the surveillance of this issue, not only as a matter of public health but also as a critical process for fostering social coexistence, under the responsibility of the relevant authorities.

LIMITATIONS

Since this was a cross-sectional study, it did not allow for establishing causal relationships. It is important to conduct further studies to observe the behavior of gender-based and domestic violence in Boyacá.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors of the referenced manuscript declare that there is no potential conflict of interest related to this article.

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