Transphobia and gender bashing in adolescence and emerging adulthood: The role of individual differences and psychosocial variables

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Abstract

Although research in recent years has revealed widespread discrimination against transgender people, few studies have addressed the attitudes of those who discriminate. In fact, although studies report that bullying is very common in adolescence, little is known about the attitudes of adolescents towards transgender people. This study aimed to determine the roles of social reputation, family socialisation, the big five personality traits and aggressiveness in transphobia and gender bashing among adolescents. The sample consisted of 479 students (50.1% boys) aged 14-19 (M = 15.04; SD = 1.06). The results revealed that transphobia and gender bashing were significantly related to the study variables. Specifically, the results showed that transphobia is largely predicted by variables of the type related to affect and personality, while gender bashing is largely related to variables of a social and reputational nature. Similarly, differences were found between genders, with boys having significantly higher scores than girls for transphobia and gender bashing, as well as specificity of predictors. The implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords: transphobia, gender bashing, adolescents, social reputation, family disapproval, Big Five, aggressiveness.

Introduction

Sexual identity is the perception people have about themselves in relation to their bodies, and is constructed from an assessment of their own physical and biological characteristics (Ferguson et al., 1981). It consists of three aspects (Hales, 2008). The first of these is sexual orientation, which is defined as sexual attraction to other people, giving rise to homosexuality, heterosexuality, bisexuality and others (e.g. asexuality, and pansexuality). The second is gender expression, which refers to how individuals manifest gender through behaviour and appearance, and can be expressed as masculine, feminine, androgynous, etc. These expressions are based on social and cultural factors, and, as such, can change depending on the culture in which a person lives. And lastly, gender identity is defined as a person's subjective perception of their gender. People whose biological sex coincides with the social and cultural categories of man or woman (gender) are referred to as 'cisgender' (Aultman, 2014), while people whose gender or gender expression differs from what is socially expected because of their biological sex are referred to as 'transgender' or 'trans'. This study uses the latter term because we consider it to be inclusive.

In the last decade, the word trans has been used to describe a wide range of identities for individuals whose appearance and characteristics are perceived as gendered in a way that does not correlate with biological or normative sex (e.g. transsexual, transgender, non-binary gender). Although recognition of transgender rights is on the rise, at least 26 countries around the world have laws that criminalise people whose gender identity or gender expression is perceived to be in conflict with their birth sex (The Human Dignity Trust, 2020). In a study on perceived discrimination, James et al. (2016) reported that half of the transgender people they surveyed reported feeling discriminated against and bullied in the previous year,

including physical or sexual attacks motivated by their gender identity or expression (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2013). Another factor to consider is that transgender people are often more visible than other sexual minorities (Hill & Willoughby, 2005), and, as such, may be exposed to greater discrimination, which can have a negative impact on their health (Bradford et al., 2013) and social sphere (Rankin & Beemyn, 2012). Hill's (2002) study on a transgender population concluded that three key constructs can be used to conceptualise hatred against transgender people: transphobia, genderism and gender bashing. Transphobia is the hatred, fear or dislike of those who differ from traditional expectations of gender identity. Genderism is a doctrine that reinforces the negative assessment of individuals who are non-conformist or who show inconsistency between sex and gender. Lastly, gender bashing refers to aggression, harassment and/or bullying of people who do not conform to gender norms.

As noted above, people who are victims of transphobia are more likely to present psychopathological problems such as depression, anxiety, feelings of helplessness and somatic complaints (e.g. Puckett et al., 2020). Among adolescents, the relationship between being the victim of bullying and depression is even stronger when the victim is transgender (e.g., Slatch et al., 2018)). Previous studies also show that adolescents who have suffered from transphobia exhibit high rates of truancy and isolation, as well as poorer academic performance (Greytak et al., 2009), and substance abuse (Aromin, 2016), among other problems. This list of consequences of transphobia underscores the vulnerability of this group during this stage of their lives. For this reason, it is important to identify the characteristics of students who manifest transphobia so that preventive interventions can be designed to reduce their negative attitudes or bullying behaviours against trans students. Therefore, the current study

focuses on identifying the characteristics of the students who manifest transphobia and gender bashing behaviour.

Several studies in adolescents and young people have shown that the social context may facilitate the development of prejudices, especially the peer group context (Miklikowska et al., 2019). Adolescents may be vulnerable to peer pressure because of their need to fit in and achieve a social reputation within the group, which facilitates the development of these prejudices. In fact, social reputation is an important factor in this stage of development. Reputation is a continuous process of perception and assessment of the individual by the reference group, which determines the degree of integration or rejection and affects self-perception, and self-evaluation (Ruiz et al., 2012). In other words, it refers to the set of judgments that a community makes about the personal qualities of some of its members (Emler, 1990). Carroll et al. (1999) differentiates between two concepts related to social reputation in adolescence and emerging adulthood: a) perceived reputation (perception about how others see you) and, b) perceived ideal reputation (how a person would like to be seen). In adolescence, reputation can be achieved through transgressive behaviours that are rewarded in terms of social status among their peers (Gini, 2006), which may explain the relationship that has been found between social reputation and aggressive behaviour (Buelga et al., 2008). For this reason, it is likely that social reputation in adolescence is also related to transphobia and gender bashing, because for some adolescents showing negative attitudes and behaviours towards this vulnerable group can be perceived as a way of achieving social reputation within the peer group. However, as far as we know, there are no studies on this issue.

Besides the peer group, family is part of the social context that may facilitate the development of prejudices (e.g., Dueñas et al., 2020). However, few studies have

focused on the relationship between family socialization styles, and transphobia or gender bashing. Family socialization consists of a set of strategies that parents use to influence their children and instil in them a set of values and cultural norms that guide their social behaviour. These values and norms include consideration for other people (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). The concept is closely related to parental styles, and some authors have even used the two terms as synonyms. Depending on the combination between demandingness (the extent of parents' control over their children's behavior) and responsiveness (the degree to which parents are sensitive to their children's emotional and developmental needs), there are four typologies of parental styles: authoritative parents (with high coercion and high affect), neglectful parents (with low coercion and low affect), indulgent parents (with low coercion and high affect), and authoritarian parents (with high coercion and low affect) (e.g., Maccoby and Martin, 1983). Apparently, family relationships based on affection and communication are related to lower levels of violent behaviour and higher levels of prosocial behaviours in children and adolescents, while family relationships based on coercive strategies are related to greater violence (Ibabe, 2015). Moreover, a family socialization style characterized by reprobation is linked to hostile and benevolent sexism in adolescents (Dueñas et al., 2020). Therefore, it makes sense to assume that family socialization styles may also be related to the development of other kinds of prejudice, such as transphobia and gender bashing in adolescence.

  According to Duckitt (1992), the development of prejudices does not depend only on the social context, because not all people who share the same social context have the same kind of attitudes towards other groups of people. For this reason, individual differences, such as personality traits, may also play an important role in the development of prejudices. In fact, within the framework of the Big Five personality

traits, several studies show that agreeableness and openness to experience are predictors of generalised prejudices (e.g., Ekehammar and Akrami, 2003; Akrami et al., 2011). More specifically, individuals with lower levels of agreeableness and openness to experience tend to show more prejudices against other groups of people. As far as we know, no previous studies specifically focus on the relationship between the Big Five personality traits and transphobia and gender bashing in adolescents, although a study in adults shows that openness to experience is a predictor of transphobia in this developmental stage (Loo, 2015).

Taking into account that there are few studies on the relationship between social reputation, family socialisation, the big five personality traits and aggressiveness with the manifestation of transphobia and gender bashing in adolescents and emerging adulthood, the main aim of this study is to determine the role these variables play in these kinds of attitudes and behaviours against trans people in this developmental stage. More specifically, this study aims to determine which of these variables best predict transphobia and gender bashing. According to Duckitt (1992), prejudices are a complex phenomena that depend on both context-related and individual variables, so in order to achieve a more global understanding of transphobia and gender bashing, the study includes both sources of variables. Taking into account the previous studies mentioned above, we expect to find that higher scores of both perceived and ideal non-conformist social reputation (e.g. being viewed as a bad person) will translate to higher levels of transphobia and gender bashing. This hypothesis is supported by a widely replicated study by Carroll et al. (1999) (e.g., Carroll et al., 2003; Buelga et al., 2008), in which offending and at-risk adolescents (not offenders, but involved in harmful activities) perceived themselves as having non-conformist reputations and expected that others (ideal reputation) viewed them in the same way. In terms of the family socialisation

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system, we expect transphobia and gender bashing to be related to a negative perception of family socialisation styles, especially with the style based on reprobation, since a dysfunctional family system can lead to the appearance of many maladaptive behaviours in children (Martínez et al., 2013). More specifically, we hypothesized that the perception of family disapproval facilitates the development of discriminatory attitudes and the rejection of other groups perceived as different as a way to compensate for the inferiority and insecurity generated by the rejection they suffer at home. In other words, by rejecting vulnerable groups, they feel that they are better than other kinds of people even though they are disapproved of by their own family. In fact, a study conducted with a Spanish sample found close relationships between a reprobation family socialisation style and different types of sexism (Dueñas et al., 2020). In terms of personality, and on the basis of the studies mentioned above, we expect both agreeableness and openness to experience to correlate negatively with transphobia and gender bashing. Similarly, we expect to find that transphobia and gender bashing are related to neuroticism, since this trait is associated with greater emotional instability and insecurity and with greater physical and verbal aggressiveness (Del Barrio et al., 2001; Tur et al., 2004). Furthermore, we have also included the variable aggressiveness in this study because we hypothesised that transphobia and gender bashing are also related with this personality trait, since aggressiveness has been associated with increased antisocial behaviour (Mestre et al., 2010). In terms of differences between genders, as previous studies have shown (e.g., Worthen, 2016; Nagoshi et al., 2008), we expect boys to exhibit more transphobia and gender bashing behaviour than girls, and to be more prone to physical aggressiveness (Nagoshi et al., 2008).

Method

Participants

A total of 479 participants, from five secondary schools in Catalonia (Spain), took part in this study. Of these, 49.9% self-identified as girls and 50.1% as boys. Although the question regarding their gender was asked in an inclusive manner, no participants identified as transgender. The age of the participants ranged between 14 and 19 ($M = 15.04$; $SD = 1.06$). More specifically, 38.8% were 14 years old, 32.2% were 15 years old, 20.0% were 16 years old, 7.3% were 17 years old, 1.7% were 18 years old, 0.6% were 19 years old. A total of 94.1% of the participants stated that they live in an urban environment and 5.9% in a rural environment.

Instruments

The Genderism and Transphobia Scale (Hill & Willoughby, 2005), validated in the Spanish population by Carrera et al. (2014), was used to assess the attitudes of adolescents towards transgender people. The scale is composed of 12 items, with a Likert response format ranging from 1 ('strongly agree') to 7, ('strongly disagree'). It assesses two factors: a) transphobia, referring to fear, hatred, lack of acceptance or discomfort towards transgender people; and b) gender bashing, referring to bullying and/or aggression towards people who do not conform to gender norms. All of the items exhibit good discriminatory power, and their reliability ($\alpha = .83$ for transphobia/genderism and $\alpha = .80$ for gender bashing) and validity are sufficient.

The Reputation Enhancement Scale (Carroll et al., 1999) is used to assess the social reputation of adolescents using 15 items, with a response range from 1 ('never'), to 4 ('always'). Participants answer each item twice, as the same items assess both what participants believe others think about their reputation (perceived reputation) made up

of three dimensions: a) nonconforming self-perception of reputation (α = .87) (e.g. My friends think that I break rules), b) conforming self-perception of reputation (α = .59) (e.g. My friends think that I am a good person), and c) reputational self-perception (α = .64) (e.g. My friends think that I am a leader), and what respondents would like others to think about their reputation (perceived ideal reputation), also made up of three dimensions: d) nonconforming ideal of public self-reputation (α = .88) (e.g. I would like my friends to think that I break rules) , e) conforming ideal of public self-reputation (α = .73) (e.g. I would like my friends to think that I am a good person), and f) reputational ideal of public self (α = .68) (e.g. I would like my friends to think that I am a leader).

The Family Socialisation Scale (SOC-30) (Herrero et al., 1991) consists of 30 items and uses a Likert scale with five answer choices ranging from 1 ('completely disagree') to 5 ('completely agree'). The SOC-30 measures children's perception of the socialisation style used by their parents. The scale has four factors: a) support (α = 0.91), which evaluates active assistance provided by parents and emotional support received, perceived as the expression of affection, understanding and acceptance; b) punishment/coercion (α = 0.82), which refers to punitive and coercive socialisation, with special emphasis on physical punishment; c) overprotection/control (α = 0. 73), referring to exaggerated concern on the part of the parents for their children's activities, which gives rise to a feeling of being controlled and restricted autonomy; d) reprobation (α = 0.82), which refers to non-acceptance of adolescents by parents, represented by the use of emotional affection as a tool to influence their children's behaviour.

The Overall Personality Assessment Scale (OPERAS) (Vigil-Colet et al., 2013). It assessed the Big Five personality traits: extraversion ($\rho_{\theta\theta}$ = .86), agreeableness ($\rho_{\theta\theta}$ =

.71), conscientiousness ($\rho_{\theta\theta} = .77$), neuroticism ($\rho_{\theta\theta} = .86$), and openness to experience ($\rho_{\theta\theta} = .81$). It consists of 40 items on a Likert scale with five answer choices ranging from 1 ('completely disagree') to 5 ('completely agree'). The test scores are free of social desirability and acquiescence response biases.

The Indirect–Direct Aggression Questionnaire (I-DAQ) (Ruiz-Pamies et al., 2013) assesses direct aggressiveness (physical and verbal), i.e. the predisposition to manifest physical or verbal attacks carried out openly in front of the victim. It also assesses indirect aggressiveness, i.e. aggressiveness that is not perpetrated directly against the person being attacked, but that consists of social manipulation in which the aggressor acts through people related to the victim by spreading rumours, gossip or inciting the exclusion of the victim. This test yields scores that are free of social desirability and acquiescence biases. It has 27 items, and participants rate each item using a five-point Likert-type scale. The factors measured by the I-DAQ have suitable reliability: physical aggressiveness ($\rho_{\theta\theta} = .83$), verbal aggressiveness ($\rho_{\theta\theta} = .77$) and indirect aggressiveness ($\rho_{\theta\theta} = .78$).

Procedure

This study was conducted in accordance with the recommendations of Spanish Organic Law 15/1999 and the Spanish Data Protection Agency, which regulate the basic right to data protection, and in accordance with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. It was also approved as in accordance with the ethical principles of the Ethics Commission for integrity in research, development and innovation (CEIR) of Rovira I Virgili University. Prior authorisation was received from the schools in question and volunteers were invited to participate. Before beginning the battery of questionnaires,

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participants received a letter of informed consent specifying the ethical implications of the study.

In each of the selected schools, the questionnaires were administered by professional psychologists during school hours in groups of 20–30 participants. The students' right to anonymity and confidentiality of their individual results were guaranteed.

Data analysis

The normality of the data was analysed by means of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Because the results showed normal distribution in the sample ($p < .05$), a parametric analysis was chosen. Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS Statistics version 26.0. A Student's t-test was performed to examine differences by gender in transphobia and gender bashing, and Cohen's d was applied to obtain the effect size, which was categorised according to the following criteria: $0.2 < d < 0.5 =$ small; $0.5 < d < 0.8 =$ medium; and $d > 0.8 =$ large (Cohen, 1988). The degree of association with the rest of the variables for transphobia and gender bashing was also analysed using Pearson's correlation coefficient, for the general sample and separated by gender. We applied Fisher's z transformation to estimate whether the correlations of boys and girls differed significantly from each other. Lastly, multiple regression analysis was performed using the stepwise method to determine the predictive value of the dimensions of social reputation, family socialisation, the big five and aggressiveness in transphobia and gender bashing for the general sample as well as for the boys sample and the girls sample.

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for the general sample, and for the boys and girls samples separately. It shows that boys scored significantly higher than girls in transphobia (t (405) = -5.17, $p < .001$, $d = 0.48$) and gender bashing (t (386) = -4.09, $p < .001$, $d = 0.37$). Age was not significantly correlated to transphobia ($r = -.002$, $p > .05$) or gender bashing ($r = .034$, $p > .05$).

Table 1.

Differences between genders for transphobia/genderism and gender bashing

Scale	General sample (N=479) Mean (SD)	Boys (n=240) Mean (SD)	Girls (n=239) Mean (SD)	t	p	d
Transphobia/genderism	9.20 (6.00)	10.60 (6.90)	7.82 (4.53)	-5.17	$< .001$	.48
Gender bashing	7.52 (3.90)	8.24 (4.66)	6.81 (2.78)	-4.09	$< .001$	.37

Correlations between transphobia and gender bashing variables with the remaining study variables are presented in Table 2 for the general sample as well as separated by boys and girls.

Firstly, in the general sample, transphobia was positively and significantly related to the variables of the social reputation scale for conforming self-perception of reputation ($r = .14$, $p < .01$), nonconforming self-perception of reputation ($r = .16$, $p < .01$), reputational ideal of public self ($r = .17$, $p < .001$), and reputational self-perception ($r = .16$, $p < .01$). In terms of personality, neuroticism was positively and significantly related ($r = .10$, $p < .05$) to transphobia and negatively and significantly related to openness to experience ($r = -.19$, $p < .001$).

For boys, the scales for conforming self-perception of reputation ($r = .23$, $p < .01$), reputational self-perception ($r = .22$, $p < .001$), conforming ideal of public self-

reputation ($r = .19$, $p < .01$) and reputational ideal of public self ($r = .27$, $p < .001$) were positively and significantly related to transphobia, with significantly higher correlations than girls in the last two ($z = 2.41$, $p < .05$; $z = 2.24$, $p < .05$). It should be noted that boys were the only ones who had a significant correlation between the scale of family socialisation and transphobia, specifically, family socialisation of support ($r = -.15$, $p < .05$). Personality variables in boys had a positive and significant relationship with transphobia in neuroticism ($r = .14$, $p < .05$) and conscientiousness ($r = .18$, $p < .01$), with significant differences compared to girls, ($z = 1.96$, $p < .05$; $z = 1.97$, $p < .05$). For girls, only the openness to experience personality variable showed a negative and significant correlation with transphobia ($r = .13$, $p < .05$).

Secondly, in the general sample, gender bashing was positively and significantly related to the social reputation scale variables for nonconforming ideal of public self-reputation ($r = .16$, $p < .01$), conforming self-perception of reputation ($r = .10$, $p < .05$), nonconforming self-perception of reputation ($r = .19$, $p < .001$), reputational ideal of public self ($r = .09$, $p < .05$), and reputational self-perception ($r = .22$, $p < .001$). For family socialisation and aggressiveness, the only variables that were positively and significantly related to gender bashing were family socialisation of reprobation (r = .11, $p < .05$) and physical aggressiveness ($r = .15$, $p < .01$).

For boys, the variables of nonconforming ideal of public self-reputation ($r = .15$, $p < .05$), conforming self-perception of reputation ($r = .19$, $p < .01$), and reputational self-perception ($r = .14$, $p < .01$), reputation social conforming ideal of public self-reputation ($r = .14$, $p < .05$), nonconforming self-perception of reputation ($r = .17$, $p < .01$) and reputational ideal of public self ($r = .17$, $p < .01$) significantly and positively correlated with gender bashing, with the latter three showing correlations significantly higher than girls' group ($z = 2.62$, $p < .01$; $z = 2.20$, $p < .05$; $z = 1.97$, $p < .05$).Similarly,

physical aggressiveness ($r = .17$, $p < .05$) was positively and significantly related to gender bashing.

Lastly, in the girls group only two variables showed significant scores related to gender bashing: nonconforming self-perception of reputation ($r = .13$, $p < .05$) and family socialisation of reprobation ($r = .13$, $p < .05$)

Table 2.

Pearson's correlations for transphobia/gender bashing and social reputation, family socialisation, aggressiveness and personality dimensions for the general and boys' and girls' sample

Scale	Transphobia/genderism			Gender bashing		
	General sample	Boys	Girls	General sample	Boys	Girls
Conforming ideal of public self-reputation	.07	.19**	-.03	.03	.14*	-.10
Nonconforming ideal of public self-reputation	.08	.05	.02	.16**	.15*	.09
Conforming self-perception of reputation	.14**	.23**	.07	.10*	.19**	-.01
Nonconforming self-perception of reputation	.16**	.10	.12	.19***	.17**	.13*
Reputational ideal of public self	.17***	.27***	.07	.09*	.17**	-.01
Reputational self-perception	.16**	.22***	.07	.12*	.14*	.06
Family socialization of support	-.06	-.15*	.00	.03	-.03	.08
Family socialization of punishment/coercion	.00	-.12	.01	.07	-.02	.09
Family socialization of overprotection/control	-.01	.03	.02	-.09	-.03	-.12
Family socialization of reprobation	.08	-.01	.12	.11*	.05	.13*
Agreeableness	.03	.03	.00	.00	.09	.00
Extraversion	.00	.07	-.10	-.04	.01	-.11
Neuroticism	.10*	.14*	-.04	-.02	.00	-.12
Openness to experience	-.19***	.13	-.13*	-.06	.02	-.02
Conscientiousness	.05	.18**	.00	-.03	.07	-.11
Physical aggressiveness	.09	-.04	.10	.15**	.17*	.00
Verbal aggressiveness	.06	.04	.11	.08	.10	.04
Indirect aggressiveness	.07	-.02	.06	-.02	-.10	-.03

**$p < .01$ *$p < .05$ ***$p < .001$

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Next, stepwise regression analyses were performed on the general sample and with each gender separately. All the subscales of social reputation, family socialisation, the big five personality traits and aggressiveness were specified in the SPSS program as possible predictors of transphobia. The same predictors were specified for gender bashing. Tables 3 and 4 show the significant predictors in these stepwise regression analyses. More specifically, table 3 shows the results for transphobia and table 4 for gender bashing.

For predicting transphobia, openness to experience, reputational ideal of public self, conscientiousness, physical aggressiveness and extraversion accounted for 10.8% of variance in the general sample ($F_{(5, 401)} = 10.66$, $p < .001$). For boys, reputational ideal of public self, openness to experience and conscientiousness accounted for 12.7% of transphobia variance ($F_{(3, 283)} = 10.82$, $p < .001$). However, in the girls sample, none of the subscales in the study helped to explain transphobia.

Table 3
Multiple regression to predict transphobia by social reputation, family socialisation, personality and aggressiveness for the general and boys sample

	Scales	R^2a	β	t	p
General sample	Openness to experience	.04	-.25	-4.94	< .001
	Reputational ideal of public self	.08	.22	4.12	< .001
	Conscientiousness	.09	.17	2.96	< .01
	Physical aggressiveness	.10	.13	2.48	< .05
	Extraversion	.11	-.10	-1.97	< .05
Boys	Reputational ideal of public self	.08	.23	3.13	< .01
	Openness to experience	.11	-.21	-3.08	< .01
	Conscientiousness	.13	.18	2.32	< .05

For gender bashing, nonconforming self-perception of reputation, conforming self-perception of reputation, physical aggressiveness, extraversion, reputational ideal of

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public self, nonconforming ideal of public self-reputation, family socialisation of reprobation and overprotection/control accounted for 12.1% of variance in the general sample ($F_{(8, 404)} = 7.97$, $p < .001$). For the boys, reputational ideal of public self, physical aggressiveness, indirect aggressiveness and neuroticism accounted for 13.4% of gender bashing variance ($F_{(4, 205)} = 8.92$, $p < .001$), while for the girls, nonconforming self-perception of reputation, nonconforming ideal of public self-reputation, extraversion, reputational self-perception, conforming ideal of public self-reputation and conforming self-perception of reputation accounted for 11.2% of gender bashing variance ($F_{(6, 198)} = 5.175$, $p < .001$).

Table 4
Multiple regression to predict gender bashing by social reputation, family socialisation, personality and aggressiveness for the general, boys and girls sample

	Scales	R^2a	β	t	p
General sample	Nonconforming self-perception of reputation	.04	.24	3.53	< .001
	Conforming self-perception of reputation	.06	.16	2.80	< .01
	Physical aggressiveness	.08	.14	2.70	< .01
	Extraversion	.09	-.14	-2.88	< .01
	Reputational ideal of public self	.10	.16	2.80	< .01
	Nonconforming ideal of public self-reputation	.10	-.15	-2.29	< .05
	Family socialization of reprobation	.11	.15	2.75	< .01
	Family socialization of overprotection/control	.12	-.10	-2.04	< .05
Boys	Reputational ideal of public self	.06	.29	3.82	< .001
	Physical aggressiveness	.10	.26	3.84	< .001
	Indirect aggressiveness	.12	-.19	-2.62	< .01
	Neuroticism	.13	-.16	-2.14	< .05
Girls	Nonconforming self-perception of reputation	.02	.33	3.45	< .01
	Nonconforming ideal of public self-reputation	.05	-.32	-3.24	< .01
	Extraversion	.06	-.23	-3.06	< .01
	Reputational self-perception	.08	.20	2.33	< .05
	Conforming ideal of public self-reputation	.10	-.33	-2.88	< .01
	Conforming self-perception of reputation	.11	.22	1.97	< .05

Discussion

The objective of this study was to determine the role of social reputation, family socialisation, the big five personality traits and aggressiveness in transphobia and gender bashing in adolescence. We therefore aimed to analyse the extent to which transphobic attitudes or attacks against gender are related to or predictable by individual traits and psychosocial factors, considering that influencing factors may be related not only to personality aspects, but also to social and/or family factors.

Our results reveal that openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, reputational ideal of public self and physical aggressiveness are predictors of transphobia in adolescents, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies (Loo, 2015; Nagoshi et al., 2008). In terms of the big five personality traits, our study revealed that, in addition to openness to experience found in adults (Loo, 2015), conscientiousness and extraversion also contribute to predicting transphobia in adolescents. The results of this study are consistent with similar research using other personality approaches, indicating that common prejudices are significantly related to openness to experience and agreeableness, and, to a lesser extent, to neuroticism, conscientiousness and extraversion (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2003; Akrami et al., 2011). However, our results did reveal a substantial difference, as agreeableness was not a predictor of transphobia in this study. This may be due to the fact that, in our research, agreeableness was integrated into a model with different variables, and that other variables such as aggressiveness may better explain transphobia. Similarly, our results suggest that the reputational ideal of public self is a variable that should be taken into account for transphobia in adolescents. This may be due to the fact that the social reputations of the aggressor and the victim, by way of belonging to certain social groups or categories, may influence violent behaviour or discrimination among adolescents as

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indicated by previous studies, which suggest that reputation is directly related to aggressive behaviour towards others (Buelga et al., 2008). The reputational ideal of public self does in fact correlate positively with social exclusion behaviour (Buelga, Musitu & Murgui, 2009). As such, one would expect that it is also related to transphobia, since the construct establishes a preference in inequality between social groups, a core characteristic of people with a greater ideal social reputation.

Our data suggests that transphobia is mostly explained by personality factors, ideal reputation and physical aggressiveness, while gender bashing is related to social reputation, family disapproval, extraversion and physical aggressiveness. In fact, Hill (2002) reports that transphobia is related to fear and emotional distress, while gender bashing is based on fear manifested in acts of violence. Similarly, our data suggests that the disapproval and overprotection/control subscales of family socialisation predict gender bashing. We hypothesized that family disapproval facilitates the rejection of vulnerable groups, and the higher levels of gender bashing found in these adolescents are congruent with the expectations. The results also suggest that teenagers whose families use emotional affection to influence their decisions and behaviour or are less overprotecting and controlling are more likely to engage in gender-based attacks. Although there are few studies that have examined the relationship between these variables, our results are consistent with previous research showing greater family disapproval and less overprotection/control is associated with aggressive behaviour (Espelage et al., 2013; Li et al., 2000) and hostile sexism (Dueñas et al., 2020).

Our results point to the existence of substantial differences between genders in terms of predictors of transphobia and gender bashing. Among boys, the key variables that significantly explain transphobia were social ideal reputation, openness to experience and conscientiousness. None of the variables in the study were predictors of

transphobia in girls, however, indicating a specificity of predictors of transphobia and gender bashing between boys and girls. Studies by Costa and Davies (2012) and Fineran (2002) suggest that transphobia in boys is mediated by a tendency to cling to traditional gender roles, rather than by the rejection of transgender people themselves. In fact, previous studies have found that gender standards are higher for men than for women (Loo, 2015; Auster & Ohm, 2000), which would explain their higher transphobia and gender bashing scores. It seems that when men are compared to people whose gender expression is not what is traditionally expected, it triggers a response of anxiety which may favour transphobia or homophobia (Nagoshi et al., 2008). However, it should be noted that, contrary to the study by Nagoshi et al. (2008), our study shows that aggressiveness in boys does not contribute towards an explanation of transphobia. This is probably due to the fact that negative attitudes towards transgender people that do not reach the level of gender bashing are largely influenced by social reputation and personality variables.

However, our results also show that both physical and indirect aggressiveness is a specific predictor of gender bashing in boys. In accordance with previous studies (Bernat et al., 2001), it seems that hyper-masculinity reflected in aggressiveness is a characteristic of boys, since in girls none of the aggressiveness variables was a predictor of gender bashing.

Practical implications

The results presented here may be useful for designing preventive interventions and active measures to address discrimination. In this regard, it can be inferred that people with less openness to experience, less extraversion and greater awareness will have greater difficulty with active or preventive treatment to combat discrimination against trans people, since personality variables are considered stable and permanent

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traits (Cobb-Clark & Schurer, 2012). Interventions with these individuals should also focus on social reputation, i.e. re-educating them towards a perception of equal reputation through, for example, specific group intervention programmes that promote positive contact with trans people in order to reduce negativity towards that population and associated prejudices (Hodson & Hewstone, 2013). This could be more successful with girls, as the results of the study point to a lesser influence of personality factors and aggressiveness and a greater emphasis on social reputation among girls than boys.

Limitations

This study has some limitations. Specifically, participants were not asked about their sexual orientation, so we compared the results between girls and boys without taking their sexual orientation into account. Knowing the participants' sexual orientation could have served to establish other types of relationships, since sexual orientation, specifically being heterosexual, has been associated with more transphobic attitudes (Warriner et al., 2013). Furthermore, although we asked about gender identity, no participant self-identified as trans, which is another limitation. Future studies are needed that include a group of trans students so that their results can be compared with those of the other students for the different variables assessed in the current study. Finally, the current study was carried out with Spanish high school students, so future studies should be done in other countries and cultures in order to determine whether the same results are found in other contexts.

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