

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND COPING STRATEGIES: PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF THE RESOCIALIZATION PROCESS IN COLOMBIA

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ABSTRACT

The objective was to identify coping strategies, risk and protective factors in adolescents who are finishing their sanction at the Valle del Lili Youth Training Center. The study with a qualitative and descriptive-cross-sectional approach used the semi-structured interview as an instrument, having as a selection criterion a minimum compliance of 80% of the sanction and an age range between 14 and 17 years. It was found that both adolescents came from single-parent families by separation, raised by the mother from a permissive authority with a lack of norms and rules, allowing freedom in activities and social ties.

Keywords: Adolescence, Delinquency, Coping Strategies, Protective Factors, Risk Factors

INTRODUCTION

Crime is a worldwide phenomenon that has hit the Latin American region hard throughout history. To respond to this global phenomenon, different explanatory models have been created around the factors that make an individual a criminal; among the most important are biological, family and social factors (Groningen, 2019). The evaluation of this problem both in the Colombian context and worldwide has revealed worrying rates regarding the involvement of adolescents in crime. For the World Health Organization (2016), juvenile delinquency is considered a global public health problem, indicating that 43% of homicides in the world each year are by young people between the ages of 10-29. This strong global impact of the young population on the phenomenon of crime has led to the structuring of an educational process within prison institutions that seeks to repair the damage both to the victim and the perpetrator. These restoration processes set an objective of preparing the adolescent for his life in society in an autonomous way and detached from criminal practices. For this autonomous life that the adolescent prepares, he must have capacities that allow him to face the demands and adversities to which he will be exposed, in order to reduce possible damages that bring him closer to violence again. Thus, on these actors, and their subsequent decision-making in autonomous life, the multiple risk factors take an important role that, given the lack of strategies to face them and elements that protect the individual from this damage, will result in an adolescent more prone to criminal act.

Although the purpose of the criminal liability system for adolescents is to repair the damage through a pedagogical method, much has been questioned regarding its resocializing purpose and the direct impact on the individual. This criticism is a reflection of reality itself, since a large percentage of adolescents end up in a repetition of the criminal act, apparently showing a fragile and inefficient institutional process with important flaws in the implemented model.

A resocialization process that, in addition to making it possible to comply with a sanction and due legal process, allows the development of skills and capacities in the adolescent for an autonomous life, will be able to influence the probability of recidivism, since the individual will have strategies to face factors that fulfil the purpose of violation of the phenomenon. The

objective of the study was to identify whether adolescents who are finishing their sanction at the Valle del Lili Youth Training Center in the city of Cali have coping strategies for autonomous life in society to which they are close. The semi-structured interview was used as an instrument in two adolescents close to discharge. The first participant had completed 31 months, which corresponds to 86% of the penalty for the crime of aggravated homicide in a degree of attempt in a heterogeneous competition with the crime of qualified theft and the second participant had 30 months of compliance for 84% of the Penalty for the crime of extortion with circumstances of punitive aggravation.

Juvenile Crime: Risk and Protective Factors

Latin America and the Caribbean have 8% of the global population and have a homicide rate four times higher than the international average; this represents more than 30% of homicides in the world. In 2015, of the 50 cities with the highest homicide rates, 47 were in Latin America and the Caribbean (Inter-American Development Bank, 2016).

In 2012, almost half a million people (437,000) lost their lives as a result of intentional homicides around the world. More than a third of these (36%) took place in the American continent, 31% in Africa, 28% in Asia, while Europe (5%) and Oceania (0.3%) had the lowest homicide rates in the world. regional. (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2013)

While the global homicide rate in 2013 was 6.2 per 100,000 inhabitants, in South Africa and Central America it is above 24 victims per 100,000 inhabitants. It is followed by South America, Central Africa and the Caribbean, where there are between 16 and 23 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. Of this population, those who are most at risk are young people, since most homicides in the world are concentrated between 15 and 29 years of age; and in South and Central America this same age group exceeds the global average rate more than four times (UNODC, 2013).

Of the 20 countries with the highest homicide rates in the world, 17 are in the Central American, South American and Caribbean regions. In this list, Colombia complies with 4% of homicides worldwide and is ranked 16th with a total of 10,200 homicides for the year 2017. This figure represents a rate of 22 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (Igarapé Institute, 2018). In Colombia, with the implementation of the Criminal Responsibility System for Adolescents (SRPA) from 2007 to 2014, 172,530 adolescents have been admitted, of which 29,644 correspond to the year 2014. Of this total, 152,499 belong to the male population, meaning 84.4 %, while 20,031 female adolescents meet 11.6% (Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar, 2015). Although from the legal framework an adolescent is understood as any person between 12 and 18 years of age (Law 1098, 2006), the SRPA applies only to “persons who are between fourteen (14) and eighteen (18) years at the time of committing the punishable act” (Law 1098, 2006).

By 2011, 17.5% of the country's population corresponded to adolescents between 14 and 17 years of age. According to the Child Welfare Observatory of the ICBF (2013), between 2010 and 2012 there was an average growth of income to the SRPA of 13.8%, motivated by punishable behaviors such as: Trafficking, manufacturing or possession of narcotics; theft in all its forms; personal injuries; and manufacture, trafficking, possession or possession of firearms, parts or ammunition. (Ministry of Justice and Law, 2015)

These statistics show the alarming problems that the Colombian country is going through and, increasingly, show the failure of the policies designed to deal with crime. With insufficient resocialization programs, low opportunities to access them, and a lack of personnel and instruments that are necessary for the process that prepares them for their return to freedom, as a result, they leave an individual vulnerable to recidivism of the criminal act (Hernández, 2017). The high rates of adolescents linked to the SRPA and the high rates of violence in the country reflect both an ineffective re-socialization process and a lack of adaptive capacities in the individual to overcome the present risks. This condition puts the person in a vulnerable state

since they lack the capacities to prevent, resist and overcome an impact that compromises the being in all its aspects (Araujo, 2015).

Unfavorable socioeconomic conditions, a violent social context, idleness, poor education, skepticism about the future -among other factors- decisively contribute to the fact that a significant part of young people are more vulnerable to violence and crime, being simultaneously rapists and victims. (Constantino, 2019)

This highlights interrelated components that put the adolescent at stake in the face of the criminal phenomenon, such as the process of re-socialization, the context, the risks, the vulnerability and the capacities that the individual has.

In the causal analysis of juvenile delinquency, risk factors can increase the adolescent's likelihood of delinquency; while protective factors can decrease the probability of this (Schmidt, Bliesener & Van Der Meer, 2019). An important part of the studies carried out on risk factors for delinquency in adolescents has focused on the relationship that may exist between the use of psychoactive substances and criminal behavior. These investigations determine that adolescents who consume psychoactive substances have a greater probability of engaging in criminal acts (Chavarriaga & Segura, 2015; Staff et al., 2020; Vega & Zumárraga, 2019). Substance use seen as one of the main factors that facilitates crime can be motivated by pressure generated by a social group or the context in which it operates. In this way, crime becomes for the adolescent, a source of access for drugs, which shows a direct relationship between substance use and crime (Salazar et al., 2011).

Another factor associated with crime is the family context, which allows an understanding of the origin of those criminal behaviors since crucial situations or problems in the adolescent's life can occur in the family, which has related to upbringing, parental control and the relationship between parents and adolescent with criminal behaviors (Shek & Zhu, 2019). The family is an important factor of influence on the adolescent and his behavior, in this way, difficulties in the family context such as in parenting, norms and the relationship with parents, can adversely result in inappropriate behaviors in the adolescent (Markova & Nikitskaya, 2017).

The presence of risk factors and the lack of protective factors are determining elements in the life of the individual; reflecting behaviors, decisions, thoughts and beliefs in the face of the phenomena they face. This exposure to risk factors increases the probability of obtaining an adverse result or related to a problem such as the criminal act. Risk factors in antisocial behaviors can increase the probability of appearance or maintenance of the behavior (Ezpeleta, 2005). Contrary to this, protective factors are "those characteristics that a person possesses, whose presence is indicative of a greater probability of a more adequate human development and a reduction in the risks of suffering preventable damage" (Burak, 2001). These factors then fulfil the function of counteracting adverse effects or vulnerability, allowing the human being to function appropriately in different circumstances and contexts that arise throughout life.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) (1998) establish the following in terms of protective factors:

They can be distinguished between external and internal. The external ones refer to environmental conditions that act to reduce the probability of damage: extended family, support from a significant adult, or social and work integration. Inmates refer to attributes of the person: esteem, security and self-confidence, ease of communication, empathy. (p. 14)

For PAHO (1997), protective factors do not correspond only to positive characteristics; an unpleasant or dangerous event can become a protective factor. These factors execute their effects adaptively, since they are faced with especially risky situations that seek to modify a response in search of well-being. Therefore, risk factors can also constitute individual qualities or characteristics of the person.

Burak (2001) draws a parallel between broad spectrum protective factors and broad spectrum risk factors. In the former are: family with good interpersonal communication, high self-esteem in the person, an elaborate and strongly internalized life project, internal locus of control, elaborated sense of life, belonging and permanence in the formal educational system

and a high level of resilience. On the other hand, risk factors include: family with poor ties between its members, presence of intrafamily violence, low self-esteem in the person, belonging to a group with risky behaviors, school dropout, weak life project, locus of control external and a low level of resilience.

Among the predictors of antisocial behavior and delinquency variables of the family context, the school environment and the involvement with antisocial peer groups are associated. The relationship with personality characteristics is also very marked, especially in impulsivity factors and the search for sensations. On the contrary, in terms of personal protective factors against antisocial behavior, there is self-esteem and empathy. This demonstrates the need for a comprehensive analysis of the individual, carried out in conjunction with the psychobiological and sociocognitive with the contextual at the micro and macro level (Sobral, Romero, Luengo & Marzoa, 2000).

The individual, in order to reduce the damage that a situation can generate and for the sake of well-being, makes a cognitive and behavioral effort in use of their personal, social and affective resources to adapt to the situation, this is called coping. This cognitive effort implies a reevaluation and production of strategies for adaptation and problem solving, in order to improve their situation (Saleh, 2015). These coping strategies used by the individual in a demanding situation aim at the management and control of both the situation and the effects that may arise from it (Gismero et al., 2012; López & López, 2015). Having effective coping strategies in the face of situations presented in different contexts (family, institutions, peer group) is an important indicator of greater socio-emotional adaptation (Morales & Trianes, 2010; Amai, 2020).

Lazarus & Folkman (1986) define coping strategies as “constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts, which are developed to handle external and/or internal demands that are evaluated as surplus or overflowing of the individual's resources” (p. 164). They also propose two directions of coping strategies, focused on emotion and focused on the problem. The first is aimed at reducing emotional disturbance because in the evaluation of the problem it is impossible to modify or solve, we find avoidance, minimization, distancing, selective attention, positive comparisons and the extraction of positive values from negative events. In coping focused on the problem, the individual evaluates and perceives the threatening conditions as susceptible to change, here a process of definition of the problem and a search for a solution are carried out. Emotion-centered strategies seek emotional regulation by modifying discomfort and managing those emotional states produced by the situation valued as overwhelming; while problem-centered strategies seek problem solving through the management of internal or environmental demands that interfere in the person-environment relationship (Lazarus & Folkman, 1986).

METHODOLOGY

The present study aimed to identify coping strategies for autonomous life in adolescents who are finishing the sanction at the Valle del Lili Youth Training Center. For which, the risk factors that lead to criminal behavior and the protective factors present in adolescents were also determined. Taking this into account, the following research question was posed: do adolescents who are ad-ported to freedom have coping strategies for autonomous life in society?

The research had a qualitative approach of a descriptive-transversal nature, which sought to collect data at a certain moment, giving way to the subjective experiences of the participants and giving greater value to discourse and life history. Qualitative research allows the construction of knowledge from singularity through communication as an instrument of access to subjectivity, the latter being the main path towards theoretical construction (González, 2006).

The information gathering was carried out at the Valle del Lili Youth Training Center in the city of Cali, Colombia. The qualitative interview was used, understood as the instrument for the representation of reality based on the individual's relationship and its context (Brinkmann, 2016). Information was collected on age, type of crime and its respective time of punishment,

education, composition and family relationship, consumption of psychoactive substances, sociocultural context, peer group, factors that had an impact on criminal behavior (risk and protection) and motivations in decision-making. Two male subjects were interviewed who were intentionally selected, taking as selection criteria age (between 14 and 17 years old) and the time of completion of the sanction (who had fulfilled a minimum of 80% of the sanction).

In the first moment of the interview, a relationship of trust and comfort was established with the adolescent in order to avoid feelings of displeasure or conditions that could distort the results. Subsequently, the questions were asked to obtain the information corresponding to the evaluation categories: What did you do before entering the Training Center and what do you currently do? What is the reason for your confinement? At what age did you start committing crimes? What do you think led you to do it? Have you consumed any psychoactive substance? Did substance use influence decision-making? Who makes up the family and what are the relationships between family members like? What authority figures do they have in the family, and what norms or rules did they have? What tools do you think the process at the Training Center has given you to resolve conflicts? How did you consider that you previously resolved conflict situations and how do you do it now? In conflict situations, what do you think can determine what you will do (peers, authority figures, context, emotions)? The questions, when asked in an open way, allowed the naturalness and spontaneity in the speech from the adolescent's own frame of reference and the subjective one.

RESULTS

The 16 and 17-year-old study participants were sanctioned for a period of 36 months at the Valle del Lili Youth Training Center. The first participant has completed 31 months, which corresponds to 86% of the penalty for the crime of aggravated homicide in a degree of attempt in a heterogeneous competition with the crime of qualified theft. The second participant has served 30 months for 84% of the penalty for the crime of extortion with circumstances of punitive aggravation. Both adolescents came from single-parent families by separation, being raised by the mother from a permissive authority with a lack of norms and rules, allowing freedom in the activities of adolescents, of which most of the time they spent with their peer groups. This freedom in decision-making without apparent parental supervision was a space for risky activities and criminal behavior.

"I was loitering, smoking, stealing, killing, basically looking for trouble. My mom was the authority in the house, she made the rules. For example, the entrance to the house was at 10 o'clock at night, but I almost never entered at the time that she told me, then she understood that I did not follow her orders. When I did not enter, I spent it with my colleagues, doing inappropriate things, such as consumption.

"Drugs and gangs was what I did all the time, although that made me feel despised, I felt empty. People wouldn't come up to me because they thought I was going to do something to them. My mom didn't set rules for me, I did whatever I wanted, I used to consume, I was with my friends as long as I wanted.

Risk activities in adolescents began at 12 and 13 years of age, strongly influenced by the context and relationships established with vulnerable peer groups. Also, both adolescents had traumatic experiences that triggered negative emotions that were decisive in making decisions about crime. On the other hand, the use of psychoactive substances was identified by one participant as a trigger for criminal behavior.

"At the age of 12 I started using; the companions damaged my mind, they told me to do things that I did not want to do, even though you make the decisions. I liked to study, but bad influences and the environment make him a bad person; like the desire for money. Also, something important that happened was that my brother was injured in 2010, he wanted to kill the one who did that to him, he wanted revenge, all those things influence one to do bad things. " The resentment and the desire to avenge what they did to my brother led me to what I did. Also

protecting my sector from being stolen. On the street I used marijuana, seeds, currently I use marijuana, I think it does not affect the decisions I make”.

“I started using when I was 13 years old. At 13 I was already related to people who kill and do things like that. The death of my brother, the context in which I grew up led me to crime. They killed my brother when I was 11 years old. One of the things that motivated me to all that violence was the death of my brother, knowing who he was and not being able to do anything, also the consumption that makes one look for problems”.

Before entering the Training Center, the adolescents lived in a vulnerable sector of the city of Cali characterized by high levels of insecurity and violence. Potrero Grande is a neighborhood in the Aguablanca District that is located in the east of the city in which a low socioeconomic stratum predominates. This vulnerable sector in which adolescents lived exposed them to almost inevitable risks, this context taking great relevance in decision-making in the face of criminal behavior.

“I lived with my mother in Potrero Grande in the Aguablanca District, there the situation is complicated by the invisible borders, that's why I had to take care of my sector, so that those of the other did not get into stealing, it was a war of sectors it was them or us ”.

“I lived in Potrero Grande, there are many problems there, especially because of the shootings, I kept on the street corners smoking or hurting others, my mother told me not to go out, but I did whatever I wanted”.

The adolescent upon entering the Youth Training Center for the crimes committed undergoes an educational process that encourages the development of skills for life in society. This educational process includes psycho-pedagogical interventions for the construction of an autonomous life project, social reparation, school integration, transformation of reality, repair of damage, coexistence in society, development of work skills, cultural activities and prevention of risk situations, orientation, and training.

“The fact of having arrived at the institution and paying for 36 months makes me think about never going back to the same thing. My mentality has changed, I have matured, I already know what is good and what is bad. The institution has helped me to solve my problems, listening more than anything, with dialogue, avoiding and thinking before doing things, ignoring. Before I was looking for problems and problems were looking for me. Before he solved problems with aggression, now with dialogue especially. For example, now when I have a problem, or when I am angry, I think about my mother, I sit there, alone, I think about her and that calms me down, it helps me to solve or feel better. Now I am aware that by listening I could avoid more than one problem”.

“Well, here they have helped me a lot to think before acting. It is better to work things out when you think first. Also, to change my thoughts in the face of problems; they have helped me to communicate better, because when i arrived, i hardly spoke. Before i did not think about problems, now my thinking has changed, my character is different. Now i think before acting. Before entering the institution, I was very impulsive, very quarrelsome. Now you know what you are doing; also, to avoid or to move away to be able to think how to solve the problems”.

It was found that the emotional state determines to a certain extent the behavior or response of the adolescent in the face of conflictive situations. There is also a strong influence of other people (friends, family, authorities) on the decisions of the adolescent.

“How I feel more than anything else is what influences me. My state of mind determines my response to problems, such as resentment or hatred. Also thinking about my mom helps me calm down and solve my problems. Within the institution, the situations of inequality or injustice with the classmates on the part of the educators alter me”.

“Before the drug had a lot of influence, they made me do things I didn't want to, like looking for trouble or things like that. Before, i also let myself be carried away by my emotions and my cousins or partners”.

DISCUSSION

The present study sought to approach the questions raised about the autonomous life of the adolescent after the sanction has been served. At the time the adolescent leaves the prison, they will be exposed again to social problems associated with crime such as poverty, the use of psychoactive substances, the vulnerable social context of which they are part, dysfunctional families, gangs or group of peers related to crime, among others. This crucial moment connects with the question of the present study about whether adolescents who are on the verge of their freedom have strategies for an autonomous life detached from crime. Given the almost inevitable exposure to the aforementioned risks, it should be noted that these strategies must allow the individual to face these demands in order to lessen their damage and make them capable of leading an autonomous life in harmony with society.

In Latin America, there is an economic crisis that results in the constitution of socially vulnerable groups, due to the fact that they present isolation from the economic benefits vital for an adequate quality of life (Moratilla & Taracena, 2012). The residence of adolescents in vulnerable sectors denotes a direct influence on lifestyle. Potrero Grande is located within the Aguablanca District, an area that is recognized as one of the sectors most affected and involved in crime. The circumstances given within this context are identified by adolescents as a risk since these social factors are interrelated with crime and substance use, such as invisible borders and gangs. The invisible borders are imaginary limits drawn by the armed groups to delimit the territory of their domain or power, in this way it is established who can cross the limits, the consequence of crossing for the person who is prohibited is death. This identifies the vulnerable context as one of the main risk factors in making decisions about crime and the use of psychoactive substances.

In Colombia there has been a notable growth in the consumption of psychoactive substances and delinquency; these two phenomena have especially affected the adolescent population due to their vulnerability. Numerous cases of crime have been found associated with the consumption of psychoactive substances, which has encouraged the relationship study between substance use and its direct relationship with crime or the commission of crime under the influence of psychoactive substances (Habermeyer, 2019; Passow, 2019). It has been shown that there is a directly proportional relationship between drug use and crime, this indicates that the greater the abuse and dependence on drugs, the greater the probability of committing infractions or crimes (Uceda, Navarro & Perez, 2016).

The Colombian Drug Observatory, the Ministry of Justice and Law, the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, with the support of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and the Organization of the American States OAS (2016) established on the school population that the average age of initiation of psychoactive substance use is 13.6 years. SuiCad (2016) determined that the average age of initiation of consumption in adolescents belonging to the criminal responsibility system is 12.5 years, as well as reported the relationship between drug use and the commission of crime. In the present study, the presence of psychoactive substance use was found in both participants, where the age of onset was 12 and 13 years, demonstrating the problem around the early age at which consumption began. Although criminal acts and substance use occurred in both adolescents, in participant #1 on the relationship between consumption and crime, he denies the possibility that substance use influences criminal behavior. On the other hand, the second participant establishes substance use as a risk factor for crime. In this way, it is understood that, although there is substance use and delinquency together, in cases it is not meant by the offender adolescent as a predisposing one of the other.

The situations that arise in the environment where a person grows up is another important risk factor, since what happens in childhood and adolescence are fundamental bases that help to build the identity of the individual, since it allows the creation of behavior patterns in relation to how he deals with the events that occur in his life, how he relates to other people, among others (Sanz et al., 2009). These significant experiences experienced during upbringing

and maturity, such as traumatic experiences experienced by adolescents, can determine certain behaviors in the individual. The experiences related to the death and the attempt on the life of the brothers were signified by the participants as crucial events that took sides in making decisions regarding the criminal act.

Another factor that plays a relevant role in the adolescent's life is the family and its composition, since it imparts various emotional, cultural, social and identity factors to the adolescent, which allow adaptation to the context. Being a dynamic entity that acts depending on situations, relationships, roles and the context in which it is, the family helps the adolescent to identify his reaction or behavior to situations that arise outside the family environment. The adolescent family is a single-parent family, which is understood as those in which a single parent (mother or father) by death or separation assumes the responsibility of the child, or that, equally the parents are separated, the children live with some of them and obligations related to the children are shared (Puella, Silva & Silva, 2014). A stable and quality relationship with parental figures, but especially with the mother, can operate as a source of protection against violent behaviors (Wilkinson, Lantos, Mcdaniel & Winslow, 2019). The authority figure in adolescents is exercised by the mother, who exercises a hierarchical role, imparting rules and regulations; however, the rules or norms are flexible and there is a lack of limits. This permissive authority is characterized by presenting a low level of control and demands, allowing adolescents to freely perform any behavior with little or no imposition of punishment, excluding them from responsibilities and order, since they do not present structured or clear rules that allow the regulation (Ramírez, 2015).

In the search for identity of the adolescent, the peer group plays an important role, since they are a main source of influence on the behaviors that are had in different situations, these peers significantly influence the development of delinquency in the adolescent (Levey, Garandau, Meeus & Branje, 2019). The relationships that the adolescent establishes with peers who present criminal behaviors and positive attitudes towards these acts, make the adolescent a participant in delinquency, substance use and loss of respect for authority (Salinas et al., 2019). The adolescents linked to their peer group situations that led to the criminal act and the consumption of psychoactive substances. Peers can influence both in a positive way, motivating in academic situations, sports, among others; as negative, accepting and participating in behaviors that generate risk (Gaete, 2015). This indicates that the peer group exerts a determining influence on adolescents through social pressure in order to achieve the desired behavior for them (Scott et al., 2015). The panorama of social risk factors to which adolescents are exposed is broad, in this case, the peer group operates in the study subjects as a threat, having an impact on criminal behavior and the consumption of psychoactive substances.

The results show low impulse control in adolescents before entering the Training Center. This lack of impulse control or impulsivity made them more prone to criminal acts, which establishes this characteristic as a risk factor for crime. How the individual resolves conflict depends largely on factors related to parenting, cultural contexts, and peer groups. In addition, it is stated by both adolescents that before entering the Training Center they resolved their conflicts through fights and attacks; on the other hand, a relationship between coping strategies with the admission of adolescents to the institution is also identified. The adolescent's experience through the model implemented in the institution managed to modify their habitual ways of solving problems for more adaptive strategies based on dialogue and on the evaluation of the situation before acting.

Coping strategies are divided into two, coping focused on the problem, which is evidenced in both subjects when they state that they are carrying out a cognitive process at the time of the event and thus evaluating solutions. In the same way, the second coping focused on emotion is perceived in the report of the second participant when he refers about the avoidance to the immediate confrontation of the problem, and in the report of participant #1 when he expresses thinking about the mother who causes positive considerations in him in relation to the situation.

Emotional regulation is related to coping strategies focused on emotions, which have the function of reducing the emotional effects produced by stressful situations or problems presented valued as unchangeable. For Thompson (1991) "Emotional regulation can be defined as the intrinsic and extrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating and modifying emotional reactions, especially their intensive and temporary characteristics" (p. 271). On Emotional Regulation (ER) (Specker & Nickerson, 2019) state that "ER behaviors can influence an individual's ability to handle psychological distress" (p. 3).

Taking into account the process carried out by the subjects in the Youth Training Center, the results show the development of new personal capacities such as problem solving and emotional regulation. This operates in the study subjects by means of the control and modification of the emotions that may affect the response to the situation presented, in this way before the emotions related to the problem situations, the subjects choose to appease them to allow a space for dialogue.

CONCLUSION

The objective of the research was to identify coping strategies for autonomous life in adolescent offenders who are ending their sanction for committing a crime. In both adolescents who had completed more than 80% of the sanction, it was found that the institution provided alternatives for conflict resolution through assertive communication strategies and emotional regulation. The process carried out in the Training Center that allowed the development of new skills and in contrast to the theory of Lazarus and Folkman, coping strategies focused on emotion and the problem were identified. Both adolescents use avoidance and distancing as emotion-focused coping strategies, which allow them to gain greater control and regulation over their emotional state. For the coping strategies focused on the problem, it was found that the institution encouraged in them the cognitive evaluation of the problem in order to contemplate alternatives for its solution. These capacities found in the participants demonstrate response alternatives to face an autonomous life, in society and detached from violence. However, this remains an uncertainty, since the risks will remain in the context and what the reality shows is the recurrence of the criminal act. Perhaps, these new capacities formed in the institution are the most valuable instrument that individuals have once they face life and the risks present in it.

This study allowed us to visualize crime as a multi-causal phenomenon, since social, personal and cultural factors play a crucial role in the subject's decision-making regarding the criminal act. These factors can influence for or against the phenomenon, for which both the risk factors that led to criminal behavior and the protective factors present in adolescents were determined. The environment or context in which the individual is immersed is the most significant risk factor for risky practices such as criminal behaviors and the use of psychoactive substances. This indicates a close relationship between the vulnerable social context with crime and substance use. Other factors that also influenced the adolescent in his path to delinquency are the single parent family, the permissive authority and lack of norms, traumatic experiences lived and the peer group. This last factor is associated with the context in its composition of armed groups and gangs where the practices of belonging to it range between the criminal act and the use of substances.

The family is a variable component around crime, since it can be identified as both a protective factor and a risk factor. The results obtained showed that a single-parent family with difficulties in authority or the absence of norms fulfils a risk factor for delinquency for the adolescent. However, the subjects identified that, in the face of adversities, the emotional bond established especially with the mother is used as a coping strategy for emotional regulation.

Although coping strategies were identified in adolescents who are on the verge of freedom with at least 80% of the sanction fulfilled, this would represent that adolescents have the capacities to face external demands present in an autonomous life; however, the risk factors in the life of adolescents are numerous and significant and the rates of criminal recidivism in the world continue to rise.

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