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Reclaiming Power in Violence Prevention Programming: A Participatory Action Research Movement for the Empowerment, Agency, and Well-being of Young Mothers in Colombia

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Reclaiming Power in Violence Prevention Programming: A Participatory Action Research Movement for the Empowerment, Agency, and Well-being of Young Mothers in Colombia

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by

Laura Liévano Karim

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Reclaiming Power in Violence Prevention Programming:
A Participatory Action Research Movement for Empowerment, Agency, and Well-being of Young Mothers in Colombia

by

Laura Liévano Karim
Doctor of Philosophy in Social Welfare
University of California, Los Angeles, 2023
Professor Amy Elizabeth Ritterbusch, Chair

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a well-documented public health issue and human rights violation. Power asymmetries in social relationships place women and girls at higher risk of certain forms of violence, including intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and violence perpetrated by family members. It is now common to see scholarship and global development reports advocating for gender equality and equity to address VAWG in multiple contexts worldwide. All these calls to action underscore that to achieve appropriate and effective interventions to end VAWG, there is a need to understand and intervene in the underlying factors that have been consistently associated with its perpetration and normalization worldwide.

The study explored, through a youth-driven participatory action research (YPAR) analytical lens, the power relations of young mothers in Colombia with their parents, intimate partners, extended family members, and others, to conceptualize power within these relationships. Through theory building on power-centered needs and violence prevention program design, the two Colombian research collectives who implemented this YPAR initiative carried out the following activities: 1) characterized the context of oppression and domination for young mothers in Cartagena and Medellín; 2) characterized six power-centered needs experienced by young mothers and their interrelation with violent experiences; and 3) designed two youth-driven violence prevention interventions that addressed the identified power-centered needs.

We strived to be particularly cognizant of the pattern (identified in our collected data) that, for young women in the global South, a renegotiation of power—while necessary to prevent violence in the long term—can result in an *ipso facto* incidence of violence or in heightening the risk of short-term violence and victimization of the individual that attempts the renegotiation. Thus, we ventured to design violence prevention programming that procures safe renegotiations of power.

The theoretical framework that drove this study was decolonial feminism (Lugones, 2010) and multidimensional empowerment (Drydyk, 2013). In the global social work scholarship realm, there is a growing recognition of the need to address colonialism in the field. This decolonial feminist YPAR initiative, which resulted in the conceptualization of power-centered needs as a key analytical lens to understand the role of power in violence prevention work, is a step toward the decolonization of social work scholarship.

The dissertation of Laura Liévano Karim is approved.

Todd M. Franke

Paula A. Tavrow

Ian W. Holloway

Amy Elizabeth Ritterbusch, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2023

To all powerful girls and women living in a space of resistance and to all those who in their life work to prevent violence.

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Biographical Sketch

Laura Liévano-Karim is a Fulbright fellow and Ph.D. Candidate in the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs in the Department of Social Welfare. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada (2013) and a Master of Public Policy degree from Universidad de Los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia (2016). Before joining the Ph.D. program at the Department of Social Welfare, she worked as a researcher on diverse quantitative and qualitative projects, addressing multiple social justice dilemmas in Colombia. Laura also worked as a lecturer at Universidad de Los Andes, teaching the undergraduate Qualitative Methods for Public Affairs course. During her time as a Ph.D. student at UCLA, Laura worked as a student researcher at the UCLA Pritzker Center for Strengthening Children and Families. At the UCLA Pritzker Center, she supported research initiatives seeking to understand how domestic violence and the child welfare system intersect in the United States and how to reduce racial disproportionality within the child welfare system in the United States, among other research initiatives led by the Center. Laura's research focuses on (1) the prevention of violence against girls and young women in the global South and (2) how participatory research can support girl-driven violence prevention policymaking and programming.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Reclaiming Power in Violence Prevention Program Design: A Youth Participatory Action Research Movement for Empowerment, Agency, and Well-being of Young Mothers in Colombia

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a well-documented public health issue and human rights violation (García-Moreno & Amin, 2019; Heise et al., 1994; Krantz & García-Moreno, 2005; Mossa et al., 2010). Within social relations, unequal power dynamics are at the center of the perpetration of violence (Jewkes, 2002; Kandiyoti, 1988). Power dynamics in gender relations place women and girls at higher risk of certain forms of violence, including intimate partner violence (IPV; Antai, 2011; Haylock et al., 2016), sexual violence (Tenkorang, 2018; Vyas & Jansen, 2018), and violence perpetrated by their mothers-in-law (Jewkes et al., 2019; Kandiyoti, 1988). These types of violence disproportionally affect girls and women, which has profound implications on their health and well-being (Decker et al., 2014; Ellsberg et al., 2008; Grose et al., 2021). Rooted in power asymmetries, VAWG is a significant barrier to women's and girls 'social and economic development (Mossa et al., 2010). Violence affects women and girls 'health, well-being, productivity, development, and ability to support their children and families.

Due to its high prevalence worldwide and severe, sometimes long-lasting consequences for survivors and their families, preventing violence has become a priority on the global development agenda (United Nations 2015a; 2015b), which has triggered an increase in research on VAWG (García-Moreno & Watts, 2011) and violence prevention strategies (Arango et al., 2014). This increase has come hand in hand with the rise in interventions and policies worldwide that seek to address VAWG (Ellsberg et al., 2015). Yet, despite a wide variety of efforts to

prevent violence, violence remains steadfast in the reality of women and girls worldwide (García-Moreno et al., 2013; Hillis et al., 2016; VACS Colombia, 2019).

The role of power in the victimization and perpetration of violence has been previously explored in the academic literature (Antai, 2011; Blanc, 2001; Haylock et al., 2016; Mondal & Paul, 2021; Vyas & Jansen, 2018). In the context of VAWG, power is often defined as a hierarchical societal structure where women and girls are subordinate (within the broader structural oppressions of patriarchy) to men due to rigid gender norms (e.g., Mondal & Paul, 2021; Schuler et al., 2011). Similarly, VAWG is often conceptualized as resulting from men wanting to assert their power over women (e.g., Antai, 2011). Moreover, power inequities between individuals in sexual relationships have been theorized to be manifested as VAWG or the threat of violence (Blanc, 2001). Thus, gender inequality against cisgender and transgender women is a critical underlying driver for VAWG.

Given the association between unequal power social relations and violence, it is now common to see scholarship and global development reports advocating for "gender equality and equity," "enhancing women's autonomy," and "challenging social norms that create imbalances of power" to address VAWG in multiple contexts worldwide (for some examples see: Antai, 2011; Haylock et al., 2016; ICPD, 1994; Schuler et al., 2011; United Nations 2015a; 2015b). All these calls to action underscore that to achieve appropriate and effective interventions to end VAWG, there is a need to understand and intervene in factors that have been consistently associated with its perpetration and normalization worldwide. One such factor, in this case, is the issue of power differentials in social relations. However, despite decades of research on violence prevention and intervention, minimal scholarship has centered on analyzing power asymmetries in social relations, specifically gender relations, *with* young women in the global South, to

identify how to conceptualize power asymmetries in relationships and build power through violence prevention programming (Arango et al., 2014; Ellsberg et al., 2008). Through youth-driven research techniques, this study aims to conceptualize how these power dynamics within young women's intimate relationships and broader social networks can be renegotiated. Nonetheless, we attempt to be particularly cognizant of the pattern (identified in our collected data) that for young women in the global South, a renegotiation of power, while necessary to prevent violence in the long term, can result in an *ipso facto* incidence of violence or in heightening the risk of violence and victimization of the individual that attempts this renegotiation. Thus, we ventured to design, through youth-driven participatory action techniques, violence prevention programming that procures safe renegotiations of power, cognizant of the risk of short-term violence and actively attempting to minimize it.

A Collective Response to the Current Scenario: A Decolonial Youth Participatory Action Research-driven Initiative in Colombia, South America

In response to this current scenario, the purpose of this study was twofold. First, the study explored young mothers' power relations with parents, extended family members, friends, and intimate partners, among others, to conceptualize power within these relationships through a youth-driven analytical lens. This aim was guided by Foucault's (1982) conception of relational power and considers there are multiple power relations at play during specific life events and situations. This resulted in the definition and identification of the typology of power-centered needs.[1] Emerging from key youth-driven findings in this study, a power-centered need refers to a need that arises from a situation or event of inflicted power or control in which the impacted

[1] The typology of power-centered needs is a fundamental contribution of this study presented as one the findings of this YPAR initiative and thoroughly discussed throughout this dissertation.

individual requires a reconfiguration of power relations to achieve well-being. The research questions included in this study, related to this purpose, are:

1) What are the experiences of violence, threats of violence, or oppression among young mothers in Cartagena and Medellín over their life course?
2) What are the power-centered needs of young mothers who experience or are at risk of experiencing violence in Cartagena and Medellín?

The second aim of this study was to develop, within a youth participatory action research-driven (YPAR-driven) initiative, violence prevention strategies that underscored renegotiating power within relationships as a way to address the power-centered needs of young mothers in Colombia. This purpose was motivated by Foucault's notion of power that suggests small or local resistance against entrenched power relations may, with time, form a system of collective changes in relations that would ultimately lead to young mothers not experiencing violence (Foucault, 1982). Related to this second purpose, we answered the third research question of this study:

3) Can power-centered needs be addressed in the youth-driven participatory design of context-specific prevention of violence interventions in Cartagena and Medellín?

The third and last research question led us to identify how different aspects of youth-driven, data-based violence prevention interventions may empower young mothers by addressing their power-centered needs in an attempt to prevent violence from occurring.

To achieve both research aims and answer our research questions, we employed a qualitative methodology aligned with a decolonial feminist YPAR-driven framework in two research sites in Colombia (Cahill, 2007a; Lugones, 2010). The YPAR team who implemented this initiative was composed of five women, four who are mothers and aged between 20 to 25

years old, who are referred to as the 'youth researchers' and one university-affiliated researcher, who acted as the collective research facilitator as defined by Cahill (2007a). The YPAR team formed two independent research collectives, each working on a different research site (i.e., Cartagena and Medellín) and was the project's driving force.

This YPAR initiative builds upon the decolonial feminist framework defined by philosopher María Lugones as we aim to center and uplift the voices of young Colombian women in the urban margins and gain collective power in the global South through their participation in transformative research (Lugones, 2007; 2010). Moreover, the decolonial feminist framework provided us with a theoretical platform that values women of color's resistance to oppression and their collective power to change their social reality (Lugones, 2010). In addition, given our aims and research focus on power relations, this initiative required a praxis-oriented methodology that challenged traditional forms of knowledge production (often located away and outside of local communities) and power relations underpinning the research process (Cahill, 2007b; Mirra et al., 2016). Through this participatory approach to knowledge production, we engaged with the communities most impacted by the social justice dilemma at hand, in this case, young mothers in Colombia, who also represent communities historically excluded from the academy. In addition, a youth-driven framework holds a commitment to not only critically reflect on one's reality but seek to change it, and part of our transformative efforts aligned with the principles and praxis of decolonial thought as applied to violence prevention scholarship and programming (Cahill, 2007a; Lugones, 2010; Mirra et al., 2016).

This YPAR initiative was a collaborative effort with Fundación Juanfe, a Colombian non-governmental organization (NGO) that has been dedicated to reducing poverty among low-income young mothers in Cartagena (for over two decades) and Medellín (since 2020). Juanfe

NGO has been implementing an intervention model called Model 360°, designed to enhance and support its beneficiaries' physical and mental health and promote their financial independence through vocational training and job placement. All of Juanfe's beneficiaries are adolescent mothers who have given birth to a single child between the ages of 13 to 19 years old. Regarding adolescent pregnancies in Colombia, it is important to acknowledge that while Colombia permits induced abortion until the twenty-fourth week of pregnancy (i.e., it is not considered a crime[2]), it still carries a significant social stigma, much like in many other Latin American countries. In addition, as a result of structural obstacles hindering access to safe abortion, for most of Juanfe's beneficiaries, this is not a viable alternative.

Overall, Juanfe NGO aims to eradicate poverty and advance gender equality. While violence prevention is not a specific aim of Model 360°, it has been identified that many of Juanfe's beneficiaries have experienced violence. A data collection process in 2019 identified that 58% of Juanfe's beneficiaries reported having experienced physical, psychological, or sexual violence or a combination of these before the age of 18 years (Harker et al., 2022). As a result, the organization's leadership has expressed a growing interest in developing and implementing actions that address violence prevention specifically for their beneficiaries, their broader communities, and other cities in Colombia beyond their programmatic reach. Aligned with this call to action from a service provision agency, our YPAR began to take shape based on this community-based need for violence prevention protocols and their desire to exercise agency against violence within their relationships and social context.

[2] An induced abortion after 24 weeks of pregnancy is allowed by the Constitutional Court of Colombia under three circumstances: a physician certified that the life or health of the pregnant person is threatened, a physician certifies that the fetus has an abnormality incompatible with life, or the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest that has been reported. Otherwise, it is still considered a criminal offense with a sentence of up to 54 months in prison for both patient and doctor.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is an act of aggression, power, and/or control that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women (United Nations, 1993). VAWG includes threats of violence, coercion, and arbitrary deprivation of liberty. It can take many forms, including physical violence, such as hitting, slapping, punching, pushing, and the use of weapons to physically harm; emotional abuse, such as humiliation, controlling behaviors, insults, and threats; sexual violence, including child sexual abuse, intimate partner violence (IPV) and non-partner sexual assault (United Nations, 1993). Female genital mutilation/cutting, forced marriage, and economic abuse are other forms of VAWG (United Nations, 1993). While both women and men can be survivors of violence, women are more likely to be physically assaulted by someone they know, and women are at a much greater risk of being sexually harassed, assaulted, or exploited in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood (Arango et al., 2014; VACS Colombia, 2019).

VAWG is a global phenomenon that has been historically hidden and condoned. Children (i.e., girls and boys under the age of 18) around the world experience violence in various contexts, such as their houses and schools, and from different perpetrators, including caregivers, peers, strangers, and intimate partners (Hillis et al., 2016; Mossa et al., 2010; VACS Colombia, 2019). In low- and middle-income countries, over half of all girls and boys ages 2 to 17 years old (approximately one billion children) experience violence each year (Hillis et al., 2016). In Colombia, the data from the Violence Against Children and Youth Survey (2019) indicated that girls before the age of 18 experience high rates of physical (27%) and sexual violence (15%; VACS, 2019).

Moreover, a systematic review and analysis of global datasets and published literature from countries in Latin America and the Caribbean identified physical violence to be reported against children at very young ages, including 50% to 60% of boys and girls aged two and three years (Devries et al., 2019). In addition, the systematic review also identified widespread IPV, ranging from 13% to 18% among girls aged 15 to 19 years (Devries et al., 2019). A review of 35 studies on adolescent dating violence identified its prevalence to range from 70.7% in Egypt to 27.7% in the United States (Taquette & Monteiro, 2019). Moreover, this review of studies identified that violence within the family or community is related to adolescent dating violence among young people between the ages of 11 to 18 years (Taquette & Monteiro, 2019).

Worldwide, approximately 35% of women, or one in every three women, have experienced physical or sexual violence or both from an intimate partner or sexual violence from a non-partner in their lifetime (García-Moreno et al., 2013). In Colombia, the most recent estimates from the Demographic and Health Survey (ENDS, for its acronym in Spanish, 2015) indicate that the most common type of IPV experienced by women is psychological violence, followed by physical, economic, and sexual violence. Psychological violence, including threats, humiliating comments, and emotional harassment perpetrated by an intimate partner, has been or is currently being experienced by over 64% of women (ENDS, 2015). The rates of physical, economic, and sexual violence against women by their former or current intimate partners are 31.9%, 31.1%, and 7.6%, respectively (ENDS, 2015). Additionally, 9.7% of women reported having experienced physical violence, including being pushed, slapped, and kicked during pregnancy (ENDS, 2015). Their former intimate partner mostly perpetrated physical violence during pregnancy (54.5%; ENDS, 2015).

VAWG by mothers-in-law and siblings-in-law is a recognized problem in countries where after marriage, women move to live with their mother-in-law or their husband's parent's home (Chan et al., 2009; Jewkes et al., 2019; Kandiyoti, 1988; Raj et al., 2006). However, it has been given little attention in research (Jewkes et al., 2019). Existing literature identified that among Afghan women aged 18 to 48 years, 14% of them have experienced physical violence perpetrated by their mother-in-law (Jewkes et al., 2019). Likewise, a mixed-methods study in India identified pregnant or post-partum women who experience physical abuse and other forms of abuse, such as food denial and forced domestic labor by in-laws (Raj et al., 2011). Moreover, pregnant and postpartum women who experienced violence from their husbands were more likely to experience abuse from their in-laws (Raj et al., 2011). In addition, a study in Hong Kong examining conflicts with parents-in-law among Chinese pregnant women identified that 6.7% of them reported conflict in the past year, and in-law conflict was associated with an increased likelihood of IPV (Chan et al., 2009). Thus, the association between violence or abuse perpetrated by in-laws and IPV has been identified in both directions; that is, violence by in-laws increases the likelihood of IPV and vice versa (Chan et al., 2009; Raj et al., 2011). In Colombia, 5 to 19% of married women have been identified as living with their mother-in-law, a trend that has recently increased (Bietsch et al., 2021).

Consequences of Violence Against Girls and Women

Experiences of violence have significant long-lasting physical and mental health consequences for girls and women (Ellsberg et al., 2008; Grose et al., 2021; Jewkes et al., 2019). For survivors, these range from minor physical injuries to life-altering consequences on their health, wellbeing, development, and even death (Ellsberg et al., 2008; Grose et al., 2021; Taquette & Monteiro, 2019). Ellsberg and colleagues (2008), in a multi-site study that included

19,568 women from 10 different countries, found an association for all but one site (Samoa) between violence (physical and sexual violence perpetrated by a former or current male partner) and poor self-reported health. In addition, Ellsberg and colleagues (2008) found that in all 10 sites included in their study (Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Japan, Namibia, Peru, Samoa, Serbia, Thailand, and Tanzania), emotional distress and suicidal thoughts and attempts were higher for women who had experienced physical and/or sexual violence than for their non-abused counterparts. In Peru, one of the two Latin American countries included in the study (with Brazil), Ellsberg and colleagues (2008) identified that 55% of women whom a partner had physically abused were ever injured. This was the highest prevalence of ever-injured women among the 15 sites of the ten countries included in the study. Additionally, in Peru, almost half of the ever-injured women reported that they had lost consciousness after the violent incident (Ellsberg et al., 2008). Lastly, a study in Afghanistan identified exposure to violence perpetrated by mothers-in-law and siblings-in-law as associated with suicidal thoughts and disability (Jewkes et al., 2019).

Girl survivors of violence can experience negative mental and physical health consequences and social impacts that may persist throughout their lifetime (Annor et al., 2020; Lai et al., 2020). Examples include substance abuse, mental distress, suicidal ideation, high-risk sexual behaviors, and self-harm behaviors (Annor et al., 2020; Lai et al., 2020). Furthermore, studies have found experiences of violence during childhood to be associated with the future perpetration of violence, resulting in the intergenerational transmission of violence (VanderEnde et al., 2016). Similarly, a cross-sectional multi-site study conducted with adolescents aged 15 to 19 years from China, India, Nigeria, South Africa, and the United States found that past-year physical or sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner was associated with poor sexual

and reproductive, mental, and self-reported health (Decker et al., 2014). Specific to South Africa, Decker and colleagues (2014) found associations between having experienced non-partner sexual violence with greater alcohol abuse, risky sexual activities, depressive symptoms, and suicide ideation. Moreover, adolescent dating violence has also been associated with anxiety, low self-esteem, and unprotected sexual intercourse (Taquette & Monteiro, 2019).

Experiences of violence have multiple consequences for women and girls' sexual and reproductive health (SRH). During adolescence and young adulthood (approximately ages 10 to 24), these consequences include genital injury, increased risk of HIV transmission, and unsafe abortion (Ellsberg et al., 2008; Grose et al., 2021). Violent experiences such as unwanted sexual advances from adult males, coercive sexual relations, and unequal gender power relationships have been identified as determinants of teenage pregnancy in sub-Saharan Africa (Yakubu & Salisu, 2018). In addition, a review by Grose and colleagues (2021) on SRH outcomes of VAWG in countries in the global South identified evidence indicating IPV to be associated with lower power in sexual relationships and both IPV and non-partner sexual violence to be related to more refusal of unwanted sexual behaviors and more condom negotiation.

Moreover, Grace and colleagues (2020) identified among a sample of self-identified Latina women between the ages of 15 to 45 living in the United States an association between IPV and lower pregnancy planning through reproductive coercion (defined as behaviors that restrict reproductive autonomy), resulting in a greater chance of pregnancy. In Colombia, using nationally representative data from the Demographic and Health Survey, Gomez (2011) found sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner to be associated with unintended pregnancy. Pinzón-Rondón and colleagues (2018) identified sexual violence perpetrated by any person independent of the relationship with the survivor to be associated with a higher likelihood of

teenage pregnancy (i.e., between the ages of 15 to 19 years) as well as a significant relationship between physical violence perpetrated by parents and adolescent pregnancy.

Violence Against Women and Girls and Power Relations

The role of power relations in the perpetration of VAWG has been a focus of increased research attention in the academic literature. It is commonly accepted in the academic literature that asymmetries of power in social relationships are an underlying factor for VAWG (Gammage et al., 2015; Haylock et al., 2016; Jewkes, 2002; Mondal & Paul, 2021). A recent study in Nigeria identified controlling behavior from a male partner/husband to be associated with physical and sexual IPV (Antai, 2011). Likewise, a study in India identified that a husband's highly controlling behavior is associated with a fourfold increase in the likelihood of violence against their female partner (Mondal & Paul, 2021). Additionally, one study in Haiti identified controlling behavior associated with the perpetration of intimate partner sexual violence (Gage & Hutchinson, 2006). Moreover, tolerant attitudes toward violence against women and, more specifically, wife-beating (considered an indicator of women's low social value within a society, thus, the extent to which males dominate as having more power) have been associated with a higher likelihood of violence (Antai, 2011; Mondal & Paul, 2021; Vyas & Jansen, 2018). Related, a study in Vietnam found that women justify IPV against women more often than men, and having children was associated with justifying wife-hitting among women but not men (Krause et al., 2016). In addition, it is important to note that the perceived social, economic, and physical power of perpetrators of violence over the survivors has been identified to negatively influence support-seeking for survivors (Schuler et al., 2016). Therefore, responses to violence are rejected on the ground that these are unlikely to succeed or result in the intensification of abuse (Schuler et al., 2016). However, a more nuanced understanding of power as an underlying

factor of violence in countries in the global South and specifically in Latin America remains limited.

Studies exploring power within intimate relationships tend to identify women with more autonomy as having more power within the relationship (Antai, 2011; Gammage et al., 2015; Gage & Hutchinson, 2006; Mondal & Paul, 2021). Similarly, women enrolled in the workforce or with higher earnings than their male partners are described to be in more gender-equal relationships and therefore have more autonomy (Kabeer, 2016). Moreover, having more power (independent of how this is defined) is seen (in certain instances) and is expected to be a protective factor against violence (Gammage et al., 2015; Haylock et al., 2016; Kabeer, 2016). However, there have been mixed findings on whether more women's autonomy or higher earnings (which symbolizes more power) either increase or decrease the likelihood of violence, which indicates this relationship to be mediated by contextual factors, including social norms, gender dynamics, and patriarchal structural dimensions and policies (Gammage et al., 2015; Kabeer, 2016; Schuler et al., 2011). Studies have identified more decision-making power and a woman in a relationship having a job to reduce IPV risk in India and Tanzania, respectively (Mondal y Paul, 2021; Vyas & Jansen, 2018). Similarly, Tenkorang (2018) identified family planning decision-making autonomy (defined as a woman's ability to make decisions about her reproductive and sexual health) in a sample of Ghanaian women to be associated with a lower likelihood of sexual, physical, economic, and psychological IPV. It is important to note that the transformative potential of women's gains in power, for example, due to entering the labor force, are nuanced and for instance, may be due to their ability to control the proceeds of their own labor rather than participation in the labor force *per se* (Kabeer, 2016).

On the other hand, there have been studies that found women's decision-making autonomy and higher earnings compared to male partners to increase the likelihood of intimate partner sexual violence in Haiti and Nigeria, respectively (Antai, 2011; Gage & Hutchinson, 2006). Similarly, experiences of domestic violence appear to be resistant to changes in women's economic position within the household (Kabeer, 2016). This issue has been overlooked in the literature, and it has important implications for violence prevention programming because it underscores that improving women's employment options (which can be very helpful in enhancing their well-being) may also be accompanied by more violence perpetrated against them. In addition, it also indicates that higher earnings do not directly translate into enhanced well-being and autonomous decision-making (Kabeer, 2016).

Although minimally examined compared to studies on power and IPV, VAWG by mothers-in-law has been described as an expression of power, where mothers-in-law perpetrate violence against their daughters-in-law to ensure that they control them (Kandiyoti, 1988). Violence by mothers-in-law situates them in a dominant social position compared to their daughters-in-law (Kandiyoti, 1988). A study on domestic violence against South Asian immigrant women in the United States identified from in-depth interviews with survivors of IPV that in-laws perpetrated different forms of abuse against them (Raj et al., 2006). Although this study was not directly examining the role of power on violence perpetrated by in-laws against women the types of abuse women experienced may uncover unequal power within these relationships (i.e., daughter-in-law and her in-laws). For example, participants described in-laws isolated them from other family members and did not allow them to spend their time as wanted (Raj et al., 2006). Additionally, in-laws prevented them from having economic autonomy by managing their money and controlling purchases (Raj et al., 2006). This form of violence is often

recognized in certain cultures, such as South Asian (i.e., people of Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Indian, Maldivian, Nepali, Pakistani, or Sri Lankan ancestry) and among women who cohabitate with their in-laws (Jewkes et al., 2019). The lack of research examining power relations with in-laws and VAWG may be a global North bias, given that living with the mother-in-law or moving into the husband's parents' house is more common in global South geographical areas such as North Africa and South and East Asia (Bietsch et al., 2021; Jewkes et al., 2019; Raj et al., 2006).

Even though there are varying definitions of power in relationships, one unifying thread across these is the sense that power in relationships is relative and that different cultures and communities confer power on individuals by defining the values and meanings associated with roles, for example, gender roles; that power involves inequity in access to resources, such as money and education; and that power relates to both a sense of personal control (e.g., autonomous decision-making) and to the ability to influence the behaviors of others. Thus, power is commonly explored as a form of control rooted within patriarchal social structures that harms women and perpetuates men having superior rights, privileges, and authority in societies and, therefore, within relationships. For example, controlling behaviors in a study in Nigeria were defined as threats and emotional abuse motivated by wanting to maintain control over the female partner (Antai, 2011). Similarly, Mondal and Paul (2021), in their study in India, defined the controlling behavior of the husband using a dichotomous variable determined by six items which included "whether the husband/partner tries to limit her contact with family," "whether the husband/partner doesn't trust her with money" and "whether the husband/partner insists on knowing where she is." These ways of exploring power emerge from feminist theory, the resource perspective, specifically the social exchange theory variant, and to a lesser degree, evolutionary theory (Gage & Hutchinson, 2006). Hence, research on power in relationships tends

to rely on global North framings of power. While this adds to the understanding of power relations and VAWG, it may also be biased or generate inadequate responses to violence outside these contexts in the global North.

Violence Prevention and Power

Programming on violence includes strategies that seek to prevent and respond to violence, differentiated as primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention (Arango et al., 2014; Ellsberg et al., 2015). These forms of intervention are critical and complement each other. Primary prevention interventions focus on strategies and policies designed to influence the underlying determinants of violence to prevent violence from occurring before it starts. It tends to be at the community or group level (Arango et al., 2014). Examples include awareness-raising and community mobilization (Arango et al., 2014; Ellsberg et al., 2015; Minckas et al., 2020). On the other hand, secondary and tertiary prevention interventions generally work at the individual level. They are strategies designed to improve services or address the consequences and harm caused by experiencing violence (Arango et al., 2014). These include providing services for survivors of violence, such as acute care for health problems, long-term mental health, support with needs such as housing and employment, and reduced impunity for perpetrators of violence (Arango et al., 2014).

During the past 25 years, there has been an increase in research on violence prevention and recognition of the importance of changing norms, attitudes, and behaviors that cause and perpetuate VAWG (Ellsberg et al., 2015; Haylock et al., 2016; Schuler et al., 2011; 2016). This increase in research has come hand in hand with an increase in the quantity and breadth of interventions and policies worldwide that seek to address VAWG (Ellsberg et al., 2015). These interventions occur in diverse settings, including health care and justice systems (Arango et al.,

2014; Ellsberg et al., 2015). However, despite increased attention to VAWG prevention, research has come disproportionately from the global North countries (Arango et al., 2014; Ellsberg et al., 2015; Grose et al., 2021). Thus, existing research may perpetuate biases and lack of relevance to countries in the global South.

Even though the current evidence base on violence prevention is highly skewed toward populations in high-income countries in the global North, this research offers promising results to inform interventions in middle and low-income countries (Arango et al., 2014; Ellsberg et al., 2015). Some of these promising interventions address social norms regarding gender dynamics and the acceptability and normalization of violence as underlying risk factors for violence (Arango et al., 2014; Schuler et al., 2011). Thus, acknowledging how VAWG is embedded in social contexts and how because of this, intervening requires strategies that challenge the value systems, norms, and social environments that normalize violence (Jewkes, 2002; Schuler et al., 2016). Specifically, in the global South, discrete community-based interventions have been developed to challenge social norms that accept or condone acts of VAWG. For instance, *Abriendo Oportunidades* in Guatemala supports indigenous girls who face discrimination based on their gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity by offering them educational opportunities and life skills training to prevent them from leaving school, marrying early, and having children at a young age (Population Council, 2020).

Given the recognition that prevention strategies require challenging value systems, social norms, and social environments that normalize violence, community participation in violence prevention research and programming has attracted widespread attention in recent years from both researchers and practitioners (Bovarnick et al., 2018; Heise, 2011; Minckas et al., 2020; Schuler et al., 2011). Furthermore, Ellsberg and colleagues' (2015) review on violence

prevention highlighted how effective interventions in low- and middle-income countries are commonly participatory. For example, the training package *Stepping Stones* used in Uganda and South Africa is an example of such participatory violence prevention intervention. It was designed to address the prevention of HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa by fostering communication and relationship skills and enabling individuals and communities to find solutions to threats related to HIV and AIDS (Jewkes & Morrell, 2012; Wallace, 2006). Another example is the *Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS and Gender Equity* (IMAGE) in South Africa, which combines a microfinance initiative where women beneficiaries receive loans to develop small businesses and attend ten sessions of participatory gender and HIV training (Knight et al., 2020). The IMAGE initiative that has now, in 2023, been expanded to Tanzania and Peru has enabled partner violence to be reduced even among poor women (Pronyk et al., 2006).

Moreover, given the effective role survivors can play in designing, adapting, and implementing violence prevention and response interventions, currently, there are intervention initiatives led by survivors. For example, SASA! in Uganda is a participatory intervention addressing the gendered power imbalances and social norms perpetuating violence against women and HIV risk-related behaviors (Raising Voices, 2022). SASA! is also seen as evidence of the value of investing in social change interventions at the community level (Abramsky et al., 2014). Likewise, the Tostan community empowerment program approach based on the human rights approach has been identified as effective in bringing about desired changes for the specific communities where it unfolds and is an example of community-based intervention (Diop et al., 2004). Participatory and community-based programming appears to be a way to move forward in violence prevention (Abramsky et al., 2014; Minckas et al., 2020). These approaches emphasize

self-representation to promote well-being and increase communities' sense of ownership over the interventions, which may partly be a reason for some promising results. However, not all participatory interventions that seek to achieve community mobilization led to sustainable social change, evidence remains scarce on what works, and developing participatory strategies to prevent VAWG is still challenging (Campbell, 2014; Minckas et al., 2020).

Despite substantial literature examining the association between power dynamics in relationships and violence, this study area remains limited in several ways. First, most research explaining the association between power relations and VAWG is derived from studies focused on adult intimate relationships and IPV (Antai, 2011; Gage and Hutchinson, 2006; Jewkes & Morrell, 2012; Mondal & Paul, 2021; Tenkorang, 2018; Vyas & Jansen, 2018). Literature exploring power dynamics among young couples' relationships is scarce, yet VAWG is prevalent within these couples (Taquette & Monteiro, 2019). In addition, studies investigating the associations between power relations within other social relationships, such as young mothers and their father- or mother-in-law and VAWG, are scarce (Jewkes et al., 2019; Raj et al., 2006). Moreover, very little is known about how power relations between intimate partners and other family violence associated with VAWG intersect at the household level. In settings where young mothers live with their extended family, conceptualizing girls' and women's risk and exposure to violence only in terms of violence perpetrated by their intimate partners may be inadequate, given that it may reduce the situation's complexity. This study will contribute to filling these absences by exploring power relations and VAWG among different social and intimate relationships young mothers have.

Second, literature on power relations as a factor associated with VAWG comes mainly from the global North and thus may be biased on global North framings of power and violence.

Yet, power and violence are both complex, context-specific, and nuanced phenomena. This study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of power relations and VAWG by taking place within specific contexts in the global South. Related, prevention of violence programming must be context-specific, and communities should identify VAWG as their struggle to be motivated to act or developed strategies may have no effect at all (Minckas et al., 2020; Jewkes, 2002; Schuler et al., 2016). Thus, this study will contribute to violence prevention programming by seeking to develop strategies with young mothers to prevent violence against them and other young mothers in specific contexts in Colombia. Lastly, participatory research and programming on violence and prevention have been identified as informative, meaningful, and effective, yet these fields are just emerging (Bovarnick et al., 2018; Ellsberg et al., 2015). This decolonial feminist YPAR-driven initiative can contribute to expanding this approach to research on violence prevention against young mothers by working with them and ensuring women and girls remain front and center in finding solutions to end VAWG.

Chapter 3: Theoretical and Analytical Framework

This YPAR-driven initiative aligned with a critical social theory paradigm as a way of understanding and valuing knowledge. Within this paradigm, the principal theory that guided this qualitative research was decolonial feminism, as defined by María Lugones (2007; 2010). Therefore, this project's purpose placed power relations at the center of social analyses and contended that power and knowledge are related, as theorized by Michel Foucault. That is, power dictates the terms of knowledge (what is known, what can be known, and what cannot be known), and knowledge is an exercise of power (Foucault, 1982). Moreover, a critical paradigm stresses the importance of socially constructed meaning and challenges situations taken for granted as “truth,”; especially when these tend to represent the experiences of those who possess

more societal power while downplaying or ignoring the marginalized "other" (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Critical theorists introduce socially just ways of knowing, learning, and researching. Therefore, the study was guided by a decolonial feminist framework, considered the most ethical approach to researching violence against girls and young women in the global South. Through this lens, the realities of women in the global South were theorized based on their own worldviews and voices, providing a way for them to reclaim their realities and work together toward change. To address power relations and violence prevention in this project, the research team believed it was essential to challenge the underlying assumptions held by dominant groups about the lives of marginalized individuals. Decolonial feminism does not seek to provide an account of the oppression of women. Instead, it provides materials to enable them to express their voices and use the power of collective action to reflect on and act about their social reality "…without succumbing to it" (Lugones, 2010, p. 747). Therefore, this study uplifted the voices of young women and centered their power by engaging them in knowledge production to be used for change in their lives and communities.

Along with the decolonial feminism framework, a participatory approach was a necessary component of this study because it allowed us to engage in non-invasive data collection methods, challenge structures of domination, address power inequities and transform dominant ways of knowing and producing knowledge (Cahill, 2007a; Kesby, 2005). Knowledge production is often located away from and outside local communities; however, a participatory approach seeks to achieve the opposite by engaging with the people most impacted by the social justice dilemmas (Mirra et al., 2016). Therefore, this way of knowing, learning, and researching reconsiders the research's why, how, and who. In addition, participatory research is committed to influencing or delivering tangible benefits and changes for those involved as individuals or communities (Mirra

et al., 2016). A participatory approach aims to describe reality and change it, understanding that people hold deep and rich knowledge about their lives and experiences.

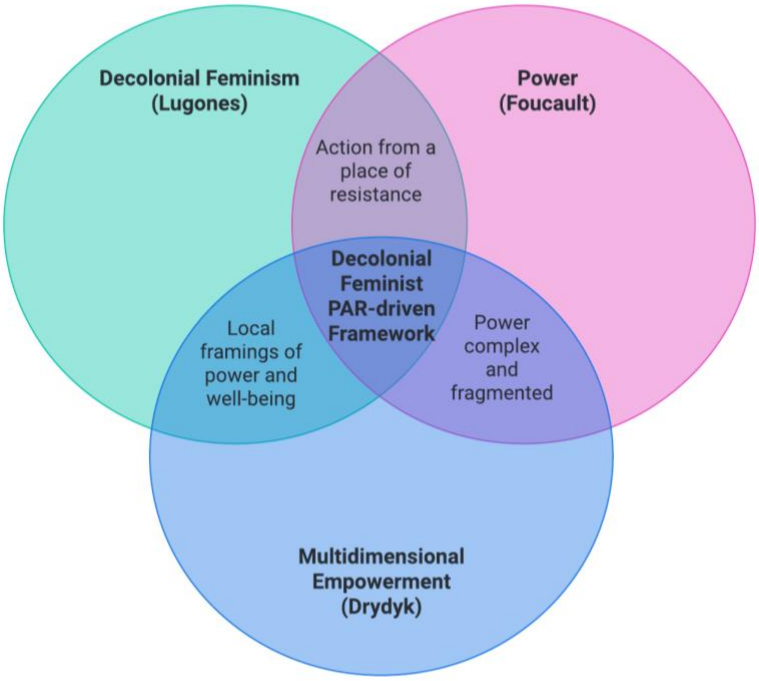
There are various forms of participation for communities to mobilize to change the social realities that negatively impact them (Campbell, 2014; Minckas et al., 2020). In this study, we adopted one of such ways of participation, drawing from Paulo Freire's work (1970; 1973) developed in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s. For Freire (1973), challenging adverse social realities starts through a collective understanding of social conditions that create disadvantage and ends in what he called "critical conscientiousness," which is what inspires individuals and communities to act to change these adverse social realities. To achieve "critical conscientiousness," individuals go through a process through which they develop a critical understanding of the issue at hand. At the start of the process, individuals lack awareness of the social issue undermining their well-being (i.e., intransitive thought), then move towards developing critical thinking and critical transitivity, thinking holistically and critically about one's reality and recognizing the power of collective action to change social realities and enhance their well-being, respectively, to finally reach "critical conscientiousness" (Freire, 1970; 1973). In this YPAR initiative, critical consciousness building was fundamental for youth researchers as they became aware of social structures that negatively affect their social realities and recognized themselves as able to bring about change through their actions. Specifically, this was achieved by leading the design of the YPAR-driven prevention of violence interventions, which they did as part of this initiative. This insight aligns with a similar action research initiative held in Vietnam, where participants' perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors on violence and violence intervention changed after a collaborative gender-based violence (GBV) intervention took place (Schuler et al., 2011). For instance, prior to the first phase of the

collaborative intervention, it was often assumed that if a woman was beaten, she must have deserved it. Similarly, GBV was often unacknowledged by community members, although it was not necessarily a secret. While after the first phase of the intervention took place, community members reported that they had both the right and the obligation to intervene in GBV cases and establish support systems for GBV survivors, indicating critical consciousness from participants (Schuler et al., 2011). Moreover, women survivors of GBV who participated in the collaborative intervention were, after its first phase, able to recognize GBV, identify it as wrong, and recognize gender inequality as an underlying cause for it (Schuler et al., 2011).

As our analytical framework to explore power relations, we used the conceptual definition of multidimensional empowerment proposed by philosopher Jay Drydyk (2013). Within this analytical framework, Drydyk defines empowerment as a transformative process for individuals, gender relations, other social relations, or power (Drydyk, 2013). Defining empowerment as a transformative process aligned with decolonial feminism because it challenges power asymmetries in gender and other social relations and identifies pathways toward individual and collective change. Additionally, this analytical framework aligned with our YPAR-driven framework, given that collaborative research is concerned with challenging unspoken power relations within the research process and has been identified as empowering (Drydyk et al., 2019; Kesby, 2005). Figure 1 displays a diagram of the pillars that generated this study's theoretical and analytical framework.

Figure 1

The Theoretical and Analytical Framework: Decolonial Feminist YPAR-driven Framework



On Decolonial Feminism

María Lugones, an Argentinian philosopher and sociologist, expanded the concepts and arguments of the 'Coloniality of Power' theory, developed by Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano by adding to its theorization the concept of gender, specifically gender arrangements institutionalized as tools to enable colonialism and contemporarily used "to destroy peoples, cosmologies, and communities" (Lugones, 2007, p.186). Lugones (2007) argued that gender is a colonial introduction depicting beings in relation as profoundly different. In developing the modern/colonial gender system concept, Lugones also engaged with the work done mostly, but not exclusively, by global South and women of color feminists, emphasizing the idea and logic of intersectionality (Lugones, 2007). Specifically, Lugones engaged with intersectionality as an

analytic framework contributing to the understanding of the intersections between gender, class, sexuality, and racial oppressions that enabled the recognition of the "exclusion of nonwhite women from liberatory struggles in the name of women" (Lugones, 2007, p.189). If 'race 'and 'gender 'are conceptualized as separate categories, it is difficult to make people who are oppressed in terms of both categories visible. However, according to Lugones (2007), what feminists of color revealed in terms of domination and victimization after exposing the intersection of race, gender, class, and sexuality is not enough to theorize global power for two reasons. First, it does not recognize the complicity of men "with the violent domination of women of color" (Lugones, 2007, p.188). Secondly, the logic of intersectionality maintains race and gender as separate categories that can intersect, and according to Lugones "it is only when we perceive gender and race as intermeshed or fused that we actually see women of color" (2007, p.193).

Aníbal Quijano's coloniality of power theory argues that European colonialism in Latin America during the 16th century imposed hierarchical racial, social, and political classifications that gave rise to "the deepest and most enduring expression of colonial domination" (Quijano, 2001, p.1). This historical theory of social classification introduces the idea of 'race 'as a pivotal turn in humanity where human relations start being established in biological terms, naturalizing understandings of inferiority and superiority (Quijano, 2000). Moreover, it highlights that European colonialism created new social and geo-cultural identities that have pervaded all areas of social existence, constituting a system of power and social domination within relations (Quijano, 2000). Among these new geo-cultural identities are, for example, "America" and "Europe" and "European," "Indian," and African as new "racial" identities.

Quijano (2001) understands all power to be relational and structured by domination, exploitation, and conflict as social actors fight over control of "the four basic areas of human existence: sex, labor, collective authority and subjectivity/intersubjectivity, their resources and products" (p.1). However, according to Lugones (2007), Quijano's reasoning naturalizes gender by not discussing it as an imposition from colonialism. This, in turn, simplifies gender arrangements as either heterosexual or patriarchal; that is, on a hierarchical binary that rests on male supremacy and becomes a barrier for women of color liberatory struggles. Given this, in addition to understandings that race, gender, class, and sexuality cannot be seen as arrangements by categories and are impossible to understand apart from each other, Lugones expanded the theory of coloniality of power by exposing the colonial/modern gender system through the theory of decoloniality of gender (Lugones, 2007).

Therefore, the coloniality of gender is the lens used by Lugones (2007; 2010) to analyze the hierarchical, dichotomous, and categorical logic that places and understands women of color as inferior and oppressed in terms of power, gender, and race. Thus, the coloniality of gender can be seen as a framework to better understand the oppression of women "through the combined processes of racialization, colonization, capitalist exploitation, and heterosexualism" (Lugones, 2010, p.747). While on the other hand, decolonial feminism is the possibility of overcoming these oppressions by resisting and working against the coloniality of gender (Lugones, 2010).

Decolonial feminism is a lens that seeks to theorize about social organizations by opposing hierarchical dichotomies and categorical logic (Lugones, 2010). Moreover, decolonial feminism seeks to offer methodologies to work with and learn from people who have been subjugated by 'colonial difference' (Lugones, 2010). The colonial difference is a space of living intersectionality where the coloniality of power (including the coloniality of gender) is enacted

and therefore experienced (Lugones, 2010). It is also a space where resistance to the coloniality of power exists. People, specifically women of color, build a decolonial coalition based on multiple understandings of oppression (Lugones, 2010). Taken together, decolonial feminism represents a way of theorizing in a way that subaltern and historically silenced women can resist and overcome intersecting systems of oppression (Lugones, 2010).

For purposes of examining the role of power within and between groups of people in violence prevention program design through the employment of a decolonial feminist analytical lens as per Lugones (2010), we contend that what is commonly referred to or understood as gender-based power differentials do not exist as a separate entity to race-, wealth-, or age-based differentials. Thus, the many oppressions experienced by women of color operate within the logic of power and cannot be separated as categorical entities (Lugones, 2010).

Analytical Framework: Multidimensional Empowerment

Drydyk (2013) defines empowerment as a process and an end that depends on changes in three dimensions: agency, well-being freedom, and power. As a process, in the context of this study, it involved reversing the powerlessness and domination that was identified to subject girls and young women to situations of violence (i.e., gains in power); as an end, it involved not only expanding choices (i.e., expansion of agency) but becoming freer to shape one's life for the better (i.e., enhancement of well-being). Furthermore, Drydyk (2013) argues that these three aspects of empowerment are independent, and none are reducible to either one or both others. "Agency expansion is central, but how these choices expand well-being freedom is another important dimension, and how expanded choice results from gains in power is another" (Drydyk et al. 2019, p. 208).

Moreover, it is essential to highlight that Drydyk (2013) defines power in relations in terms of choice. For example, a power relation between two people (A and B) exists if the scope of choices individual A has is limited or determined by the choices made by individual B. In this case, individual A is asymmetrically vulnerable in relation to individual B. Power relations exist between individuals, as in the example, between groups and within groups. This representation of power in terms of choice was fundamental as an analytical consideration in our study because it highlighted how and when power asymmetries exist between people, thus, when relationships are not reciprocal.

The definition of agency offered by Drydyk's (2013) conceptualization of multidimensional empowerment aligns with that by Kabeer (2008) in that both include enhancement of agency as an aspect that leads to empowerment. In addition, Kabeer's (2008) conceptualization includes a cognitive dimension described as a "sense of agency" (p. 20), which describes women's agency as including the meanings and motivations that they bring to their actions, which aligns with the dimension of well-being freedom in Drydyk's (2013) conceptualization of multidimensional empowerment. It is important to note that we briefly mention Kabeer's work, given her prominence in the field of women's empowerment however, for this study, we adhere to Drydyk's multidimensional empowerment conceptualization.

Relational Power

In this study, we defined power in relations as conceptualized by philosopher Michel Foucault (1982). Thus, power is a way of acting (a process) that limits the possibilities of action of other people (Foucault, 1982). According to Foucault (1982), other power considerations include: first, to study or analyze power, the starting point should be from the space of resistance. Therefore, we should question the dynamics of power from the point of view of the people who

are resisting exploitation, domination, or subjection. These are the three major types of struggles Foucault describes (1) exploitation (defined as being separated from what one produces); (2) domination (e.g., social, ethnic, or professional, among others); and (3) subjection which makes a person submissive to others (questions their status and their right to be different; Escobar, 1984; Foucault, 1982). Second, power is complex, there are multiple forms of power, and it is not simply a hierarchical one-way force. Power relations are inherent to other social relations, including economic, sexual, familial, and knowledge. Power relations result from unbalances in the other type of social relations and are, at the same time, the basis for these to be shaped. Lastly, power is specific among individuals, groups, and contexts where and against whom it is exercised (Foucault, 1982).

We used Foucault's conceptualization of power to align with both decolonial feminism and multidimensional empowerment. Regarding decolonial feminism, both frameworks locate the center of the analysis as the place of struggle. In decolonial feminism, this is defined as the colonial difference (Lugones, 2010), while in Foucault's theory, "it consists of taking the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point" (Foucault, 1982, p.780). This is one of the reasons our study employed a qualitative methodology that centered on young women's voices, experiences, knowledge, and perspectives at the heart of the community-driven struggle for survival and prevention work against violence. It is important to highlight that this starting point for the analysis is not necessarily a conflict-related or violent experience; it is a theoretical space where relations of power unfold. On the other hand, multidimensional empowerment, precisely its dimension of power, aligns with Foucault's definition of power in at least two ways. First, as described by Drydyk (2013), power is always articulated as a relation between people or between or within groups or organizations, as does Foucault (1982). Second,

for Drydyk (2013) as for Foucault (1982), a gain in power or exercising power, as they respectively refer to the action, implies a choice that could be made by person/group/organization A that constricted the choices of the person/group/organization B.

Ultimately, the theoretical framework that drove this study to reclaim power in violence prevention programming in the global South was decolonial feminism (Lugones, 2010) and multidimensional empowerment (Drydyk, 2013). This was done by implementing a YPAR-driven initiative that challenged the assumptions held by dominant groups in Colombian society and provided resources for women to catalyze the power of collective action to change their social reality.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The research team who developed and implemented this YPAR initiative comprises five members, four young mothers recruited as youth researchers, and a university-affiliated researcher. The youth researchers[3] are Clara Ávila Rivera, Geraldine Carmona Arriola, Leidy González Henao, and Manuela Londoño Acevedo. More information on the members of the team and how they were recruited can be found in Appendix A. Embedded throughout the project, the university-affiliated researcher held seven participatory training workshops on research methods and research ethics, referred to in this document as the 'Becoming Researchers' Training Sessions (detailed in Appendix B).

Research Design and Youth-driven Qualitative Data Collection Methods

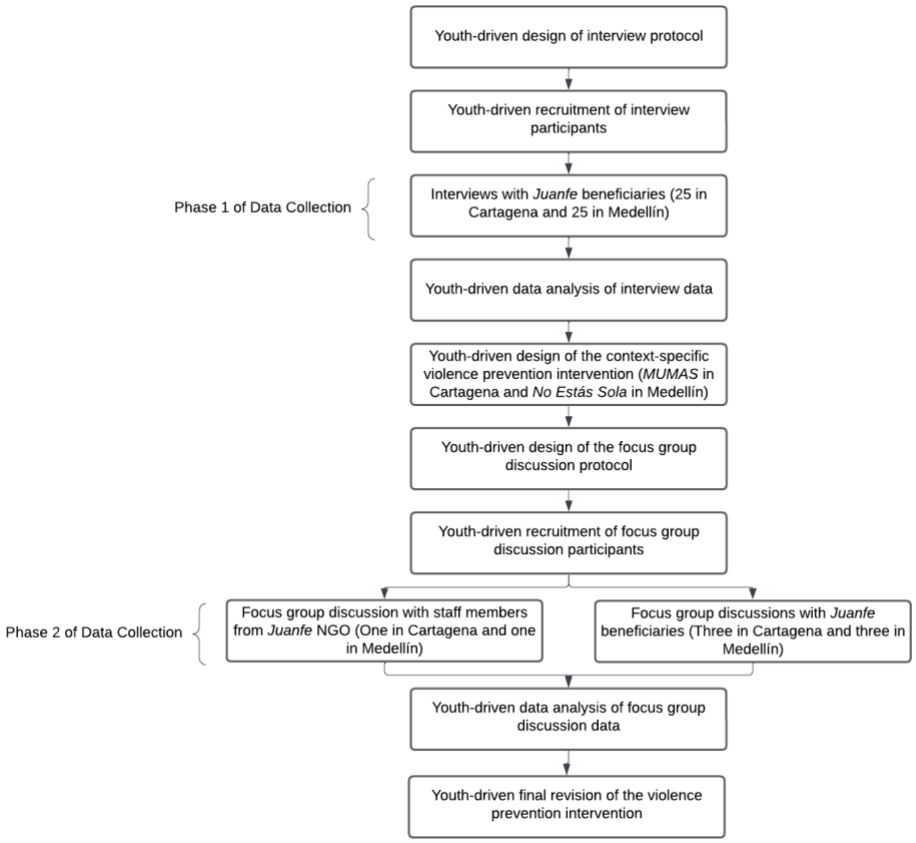
This study, conducted at two research sites in Cartagena and Medellín, used qualitative data collection methods, which included gathering and analyzing data obtained from semi-

[3] The four youth researchers who engaged in this YPAR-driven initiative chose to appear in dissemination materials with their full names.

structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The methodological design is depicted in Figure 2. All data collection activities and analysis were done in Spanish, which all research team members and participants speak.

Figure 2

Overview of the YPAR-driven Methodological Design



Note. The YPAR-driven methodological design depicted occurred simultaneously as two different processes in both study sites, resulting in two distinct youth-driven violence prevention intervention protocols.

The research study had two data collection phases; the first phase consisted of 50 semi-structured interviews, and the second one of eight FGDs (as seen in Figure 2). The study's first

qualitative data collection phase was the semi-structured interviews with 25 mothers in Cartagena and 25 in Medellín. The design of the interview instrument was youth-driven and took place separately with youth researchers from each of the two NGO sites. This means the youth researchers took the lead on what and how to include in the interview protocol. The interview protocol focused on better understanding power relations concerning violence. Specifically, the interviews aimed to explore power dynamics between young mothers and their guardians, siblings, partners, and extended family members, among others. The university-affiliated researcher conducted the interviews instead of the youth researchers to prevent participants from feeling uncomfortable talking about what could be sensitive topics with other young women from the same community who may know them and their family and friends. The findings from the interviews were analyzed and used by youth researchers to develop a violence prevention intervention protocol to be implemented in each of the two NGO sites.

The study's second data collection phase included gathering perspectives and feedback on the proposed intervention activities from the staff at Juanfe NGO and beneficiaries from both sites who were invited to participate in FGDs. The objectives of the FGDs were to explore how stakeholders (i.e., staff members and beneficiaries) explain and identify the contribution of the proposed intervention protocols and explore recommendations for change. The findings obtained from FGD data analysis were used to incorporate participants' suggested changes to the proposed intervention activities. One FGD protocol was designed by the YPAR team, which was used in both cities for all FGDs. We did eight FGDs, four in each city, three with Juanfe beneficiaries moderated by the youth researchers, and one with staff members as participants, moderated by the university-based researcher.

All interviews and FGDs were designed to last for approximately one hour. These data collection activities were audio-recorded after consent from participants and transcribed first by using a transcription software called Trint and then by a team of nine Spanish-speaking undergraduate students. Student transcribers were compensated for their work by receiving 35,000 COP for each interview audio recording transcribed and 45,000 COP for each FGD audio recording transcribed. Transcribers signed confidentiality agreements prior to starting their work.

Youth-driven Recruitment Processes, Data Collection, and Data Analysis

Youth-driven Design of Research Protocols

The YPAR team developed all data collection protocols. This collective work draws from the local knowledge and expertise of youth researchers. The assumption underlying this participatory design of research instruments is that youth researchers hold the knowledge of their experiences and problems. If enabled with a space of reflection with the technical and financial support needed, they can build a collective response and turn it into action (Mirra et al., 2016). Therefore, these working sessions aimed to enable a space for youth researchers to express their voices, build their critical consciousness, and use the power of collective action to reflect on and act concerning their social reality.

Designing the research instruments required remote and in-person meetings and workshops. These sessions provided youth researchers with tools and information to design the instruments and the space and time to work on them. There were two times throughout the project when the research collective focused on developing research instruments, namely, designing the interview and FGD protocols. Designing the data collection protocols (regardless of whether it was the interview or the FGDs protocol), the YPAR team followed three steps (each with one or more sessions, which varied as needed or desired by youth researchers). These

steps were, first, the participatory theory-based training sessions referred to as the 'Becoming Researchers' training sessions on the topics of interviews and FGDs; secondly, group work sessions to brainstorm potential protocol questions; and lastly, sessions to pilot the implementation of the protocols.

Youth-driven Recruitment of Participants

The youth researchers drove the recruitment of participants[4] for both data collection phases, the interviews and the FGDs. The youth researchers in each research site conducted recruitment collaboratively using direct recruitment and referrals (Delgado, 2006; Patton, 2002). This section first describes youth-driven participant recruitment for the interviews and then for the FGDs.

Participant Recruitment for Interviews. The YPAR team recruited 25 Juanfe beneficiaries, recently enrolled in the NGO, per the research site, to participate in the interviews. The rationale behind this methodological choice is that these young mothers (who have recently been affiliated with the NGO) have had little access to services provided by the NGO. Thus, they are less likely to be influenced by social desirability bias when participating in the interviews, given less predisposition as to what is supposedly expected from them to say. The inclusion criteria for interview participants were that they had to be NGO beneficiaries between the ages of 16 to 21 years old. Given their status as beneficiaries of the NGO, all recruited interview participants were low-income primiparous young mothers with only one child born between 13 to 19 years old. Having experienced violence was not used as an inclusion criterion. Therefore,

[4] In this study, when we refer to "participants," we are talking about people who will be either interviewed during the first data collection phase of the research project or participate in a focus group discussion during its second phase. Therefore, a 'participant' role differs from that of young researchers who are co-researchers in each research collective.

some participants had never experienced violence perpetrated against them. This methodological choice was made because of various reasons. First, to avoid stigma related to being a survivor of violence for Juanfe's beneficiaries who participated in the study. Second, it aimed to capture the voices and perceptions of young mothers who have experienced violence but do not define it as such. Third, it enabled us to collect data from participants who have not experienced violence, which was informative given our focus on power dynamics and violence prevention.

Direct interview recruitment was done exclusively by youth researchers in the two research sites. After obtaining staff permission, the youth researchers from each site went to the classrooms where the eligible young mothers took classes and presented the project, inviting them to participate in the interviews. Next, after describing the project's purpose and what it entailed to be an interview participant, the youth researchers handed a sign-up form for young mothers interested in participating in the interviews to write their names and contact information. Lastly, youth researchers called prospective participants (using the contact information from the sign-up sheet) to schedule the interviews. Regarding referrals, when additional participants were needed, recruited participants were asked to mention the project to other eligible individuals they thought may be interested in participating (i.e., a relationship-based snowball sampling referral strategy; Patton, 2015).

The recruitment process for the FGDs participants who were NGO beneficiaries was the same as with the interviews. It began with direct recruitment and, when needed, used direct referrals. Hence, youth researchers attended classrooms where eligible participants were, presented the project, and invited them to participate in the FGDs. Additionally, after completing each FGD, the moderator asked participants if they knew of other eligible beneficiaries who would like to participate in a FGD (Patton, 2015). It is important to note that the Juanfe

beneficiaries recruited to participate in the interviews differed from those recruited for the FGDs. The latter group included beneficiaries who had spent more time at the NGO.

On the other hand, to recruit staff members for the FGDs, an email was sent to all staff members describing the project and inviting them to participate in the FGDs. The eligibility criterion for staff members was that they had to be direct service providers for young mothers at the NGO. Thus, for example, no administrative staff was invited to participate. The eligibility criteria for interview and FGD participants can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Eligibility Criteria for Participants

Participant Type	Inclusion Criteria
Interview participants	Is from the most recent cohort enrolled in Juanfe NGO and between 16 to 21 years old.
Focus group discussion participants (Juanfe NGO beneficiaries)	Must be enrolled in Juanfe NGO and between 16 to 21 years old.
Focus group discussion participants (Juanfe NGO staff members)	Has direct contact as a provider for Juanfe's beneficiaries.

Qualitative Sample

The participants in the study were beneficiaries and staff members of the NGO's sites. The qualitative sample comprised 90 participants: 25 young mothers in Medellín and 25 young mothers in Cartagena who participated in semi-structured interviews about power dynamics in their lives; 15 young mothers from each city who participated in six focus group discussions (FGDs) about the youth-driven intervention design; and 10 staff members from Juanfe NGO (four from Cartagena and six from Medellín, who participated in two additional FGDs about the same topic.

Juanfe's beneficiaries are low-income primiparous mothers between the ages of 16 and 21; they all have only one child and have finished ninth grade. These common characteristics among Juanfe's beneficiaries are due to Juanfe NGO's institutional eligibility criteria to become a Juanfe beneficiary. Although not required as an eligibility criterion, many of Juanfe's beneficiaries are violence survivors (Harker et al., 2022). On the other hand, staff members included social workers, nurses, teachers, project managers, and psychologists, who work as service providers for the beneficiaries at the NGO.

Collaborative Data Analysis

Collaborative data analyses were done for the interview and the FGD data. These qualitative data analyses done by the YPAR team encompassed: designing a codebook, collaborative manual coding of one to three transcripts, adjustments to the codebook, solo coding of transcripts by the university-affiliated researcher, and collective analytic reflection. It is important to note that prior to working on the data analysis, we held the 'Becoming Researchers' participatory training session on qualitative data analysis (see Appendix B).

Designing the Codebooks. One codebook was collaboratively designed with youth researchers to code interview data and another to code FGD data. The codebook to code interview data included 33 main codes and 16 subcodes. The codebook to code FGD data contained four main codes and two subcodes. Both codebooks followed the same structure, including the name of the code, a definition for the code, guidelines on when the code should be used, guidelines on when the code should not be used, and an example from the data that represented the code (Saldaña, 2013). The YPAR team designed the codebooks at two different times during the project. First, after the interviews were done and, secondly, after the FGDs had taken place. To design the codebook for the interview data, we used de-identified transcripts

(i.e., interview and FGD transcripts were stripped of any personal identifying information of the participants, such as their names, the names of their partners, children, and the housing complexes where they live).

The codebook to code the interview data was piloted at both research sites. We manually coded three transcripts to pilot it, first in Cartagena and then in Medellín. Manual coding entailed printing three copies of the same transcript and individually labeling the excerpts coded in the codes defined in the codebook. Then the YPAR team discussed each member's individual choices and adjusted the codebook accordingly to the discussion held. This allowed us to revise the codebook definitions and identify whether new codes needed to be included or if some should be deleted or merged with others. After finalizing this activity, we revised the adjusted codebook, which was the one used by the university-affiliated researcher to code the 50 interview transcripts using Dedoose software. The process of designing the codebook to code the FGD data was the same: we collaboratively designed a codebook, piloted it by doing manual coding, adjusted the codebook, and then, the adjusted codebook was used by the university-affiliated researcher to code the eight FGD transcripts using Dedoose software.

Solo Coding. The university-affiliated researcher consulted with youth researchers throughout the solo coding process to check and validate coding-related decisions. She also wrote analytic memos to reflect on emergent patterns, categories, themes, and possible links and overlaps among these (Saldaña, 2013).

Youth-Driven Analytic Reflection. After coding the interview data, the research collectives met multiple times in person and over Zoom to discuss the findings. Youth researchers picked a code to revise in-depth, and we discussed the excerpts included. These meetings were the foundation of the collaborative working sessions for designing the youth-

driven context-specific violence prevention interventions. On the other hand, we also held analytic reflection meetings after coding the FGD data. During these sessions, we discussed all the suggested changes offered by participants, discussed the feasibility of including these, and discussed how these related to the proposed interventions and to the interview data previously analyzed.

Ethical Considerations

This YPAR initiative followed the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice initially outlined in The Belmont Report (1981; Yuko & Fisher, 2015). These principles were embodied by obtaining verbal consent before participation, allowing participants to skip questions they were uncomfortable answering, and keeping their identifiable information private. Moreover, this study received ethical approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA: IRB#22-001331). The IRB approval obtained from UCLA was sufficient for Juanfe NGO and the entire study, and no further IRB review was required from any institution in Colombia.

Chapter 5: Young Mothers' Gendered Contexts of Oppression in the Global South

This chapter, which marks the beginning of the results identified from this YPAR initiative, includes the answer to the research question: What are the experiences of violence, threats of violence, or oppression among young mothers in Cartagena and Medellín over their life course? Consequently, here, we include the descriptions of the experiences of violence and oppression experienced by young mothers in Cartagena and Medellín that were identified to mainly occur within four types of relationships young mothers have with guardians, siblings, partners, and extended family members. The descriptions of these experiences characterize the

space of resistance[5], where the YPAR process took place by opening a window to the world of the gendered contexts of oppression[6], where young mothers live, overcome injustices, and fight for their rights and well-being. Confidentiality is maintained throughout this document, where only pseudonyms are utilized.

The Demographic Characteristics of Youth Participants

In this section, we display in Table 2 and Table 3 some descriptive statistics of the young mothers (N=50) who participated in the interviews at each of the two research sites. All young mothers had achieved a minimum educational level of 9th grade (not depicted) to be accepted as beneficiaries at the NGO.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Participants, Their Partners, and Their Children

Characteristic	Cartagena (n = 25)		Medellín (n = 25)		Total interview participants (*N* = 50)	
	Mean (Std. Dev.)	Range	Mean (Std. Dev.)	Range	Mean (Std. Dev.)	Range
Current age of participant, years	18.3 (0.8)	17 – 19	18.5 (1.3)	16 – 21	18.4 (1.0)	16 – 21
Age of participant at childbirth[a], years	16.8 (1.4)	14 – 19	16.5 (1.6)	14 – 20	16.2 (1.5)	14 – 20
Age of biological father at childbirth[b], years	21.4 (4.4)	16 – 36	22.5 (4.0)	17 – 32	22.0 (4.2)	16 – 36

[5] According to Foucault (1982), the 'space of resistance' should be the starting point to study or analyze power. In this study, this conceptual space is represented by the perspectives and experiences of young mothers in Cartagena and Medellín (i.e., the research sites) who engaged in this YPAR initiative as either youth researchers or research participants. These young mothers are the community resisting exploitation, domination, or subjection in a specific context in the global South.

[6] Through the employment of a decolonial feminist analytical lens as per Lugones (2010), we contend that what is commonly referred to or understood as gender-based power differentials do not exist as a separate entity to race-, wealth-, or age-based differentials. Thus, the many oppressions experienced by women of color operate within the logic of power and cannot be separated as categorical entities.

Characteristic	Cartagena (n = 25)		Medellín (n = 25)		Total interview participants (*N* = 50)	
	Mean (Std. Dev.)	Range	Mean (Std. Dev.)	Range	Mean (Std. Dev.)	Range
The difference in age of mother and father at time of birth	4.5 (4.1)	0 – 18	6.0 (4.0)	0 – 13	5.3 (4.1)	0 – 18
Current age of child, years	1.3 (0.6)	0.5 – 3	1.8 (1.2)	0.3 – 5	1.6 (1.0)	0.3 – 5

Note. *N* = 50 (*n* = 25 in each research site, Cartagena and Medellín).

[a] Reflects the age of the participant at the time she had her child.

[b] Age of the father was unknown in three cases from Cartagena and three cases from Medellín. Therefore, descriptive statistics about the age of the child's biological fathers were calculated, omitting these six data points.

Table 3

Descriptive Data on Age, Relationship Status, and Living Arrangements of the Participants

Pseudonym	City [a]	Participant age at the time of research (years)	Age at childbirth [b] (years)	Age of father at childbirth [c] (years)	Intimate relationship prior to pregnancy [d]	Intimate relationship at the time of research [e]	Lives with father of the child [f]	Father participation [g]	Father financial support [h]	Lived with parents in law [i]
Ángela	C	19	18	18	X				X	X
Carmen	C	18	17	18	X	X	X	X		
Carolina	C	19	17	20	X	X	X	X	X	X
Catalina	C	17	14		X					
Cecilia	C	18	17	22	X					
Cristina	C	19	17	18	X			X	X	
Daniela	C	17	17		X					X
Diana	C	19	19	26	X	X	X	X	X	
Inés	C	19	16	16	X					
Juanita	C	17	16	27	X	X	X	X	X	
Julia	C	18	17	20	X	X	X	X	X	X
Juliana	C	18	16	16	X	X	X	X	X	
Lina	C	19	17	22	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lorena	C	19	18		X	X	X		X	X
Luciana	C	18	16	20	X			X	X	
Maira	C	19	19	22	X			X	X	
Marcela	C	19	18	25	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mariana	C	19	19	22	X	X	X	X	X	
Marta	C	19	18	36	X	X	X	X	X	X
Natalia	C	17	15	18	X					
Paola	C	19	18	22	X	X	X	X	X	X

Pseudonym	City [a]	Participant age at the time of research (years)	Age at childbirth [b] (years)	Age of father at childbirth [c] (years)	Intimate relationship prior to pregnancy [d]	Intimate relationship at the time of research [e]	Lives with father of the child [f]	Father participation [g]	Father financial support [h]	Lived with parents in law [i]
Sandra	C	18	15	18	X					X
Sara	C	17	15	22	X	X		X	X	
Valeria	C	18	15	20	X					
Yvette	C	19	17	23	X				X	X
Amelia	M	18	16	29	X	X			X	
Belen	M	18	16	26	X					
Camila	M	20	18		X					
Catalina	M	21	17	22	X	X	X	X	X	
Daniela	M	18	18	20	X	X		X	X	X
Diana	M	19	17	17	X	X	X	X	X	
Francisca	M	18	14	20	X					
Gabriela	M	19	16	17	X	X	X		X	
Ines	M	19	16	20	X	X		X	X	
Juliana	M	19	18	19	X	X		X		
Laura	M	20	19	21	X	X	X	X	X	
Leidy	M	16	14	23		X			X	
Lina	M	17	16	18						
Luisa	M	18	16	20	X	X		X		
Manuela	M	18	18	26	X	X	X	X	X	
Maria	M	19	18	26	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mariana	M	20	15	20	X					
Natalia	M	17	15	23	X				X	
Paola	M	20	20	32						
Sandra	M	16	15							
Sofia	M	19	17	19	X					

Pseudonym	City [a]	Participant age at the time of research (years)	Age at childbirth [b] (years)	Age of father at childbirth [c] (years)	Intimate relationship prior to pregnancy [d]	Intimate relationship at the time of research [e]	Lives with father of the child [f]	Father participation [g]	Father financial support [h]	Lived with parents in law [i]
Susana	M	17	14	26					X	
Tatiana	M	19	16							
Vanesa	M	18	16	26	X	X	X	X	X	
Victoria	M	19	17	25	X					
					88%	52%	38%	50%	60%	26%

Notes. The X mark in the table refers to an affirmative answer (yes).

[a] C = Cartagena and M = Medellín. [b] Age of participant at the time of giving birth. [c] Approximate age of the child's biological father at the time of childbirth as reported by the participant. There are six unknown data points. [d] The participant and the child's biological father were in an intimate/romantic relationship prior to the pregnancy. [e] At the time of the research, the participants and the child's biological father were in an intimate/romantic relationship. [f] The participant at the time of the research was living with the biological father of the child. [g] The child's biological father spends time caring for and raising his child. Has an active role as a father for the child. [h] The child's biological father contributes economically to the financial needs of raising his child. [i] The participant had, previous to the research, lived with her parents-in-law or, at the time of the research, was living with her parents-in-law. Parents-in-law are the guardians of the child's biological father. It is important to note that all participants lived with their children at the time of the research, independent of who they were living with.

Concerning the demographic characteristics of the young mothers who participated in the interviews, it is important to note that, first, in both cities and for all participants, the child's biological father was the same age or older (none of the children's biological fathers we have data from were younger than the young mother). Second, at the time of the research, 11 young mothers from Cartagena lived with their parents-in-law compared to two in Medellín. Third, all young mothers in Cartagena reported being in a relationship with the biological father of their child at the time of birth. While on the other hand, 19 young mothers from Medellín reported being in a relationship with the biological father of their child at the time of birth. The six young mothers from Medellín who did not report being in a relationship with the biological father of the child at the time of birth reported their pregnancies were due to either sexual assault/rape (n=2), coerced sex (n=1), casual sex with an acquaintance or friend (n=2), or incorrectly assuming they were in a relationship with a man who denied it (n=1). One of the young mothers who became pregnant after having casual sex with a friend developed and maintained (at the time of the research) an intimate relationship with her friend after he became the child's biological father. Third, all young mothers lived with their children.

Lastly, it is important to note that all intimate or romantic relationships mentioned by the young mothers were heterosexual relationships. Therefore, the word boyfriend or partner is used interchangeably throughout the document and always refers to a male. In addition, young mothers, most frequently in Cartagena but also some in Medellín, refer to their boyfriends as their husbands after their child has been born, since they moved in together, or both. However, none of the young mothers who participated in the study, either in Cartagena or Medellín, are legally married to their partners; this is the case even when they refer to their partners as their "husbands."

Power Dynamics and Oppression of Young Mothers in Cartagena and Medellín

The YPAR team devised the codebook and its definitions to code and analyze the qualitative data-resulting in a youth-driven global South-based analytical lens. The experiences of violence and oppression described in this chapter were identified to arise from situations of powerlessness that resulted in many young mothers feeling worthless and disempowered, facing situations where they cannot actively make decisions to shape their own lives to support their well-being. Taking into consideration this youth-driven and power-based definition of violence, we refer to the experiences described in this chapter (that characterize the contexts of gendered oppression young mothers navigate in the global South) as situations of powerlessness, abuse, control, and/or violence. Therefore, the interpretation of violence or oppression described throughout this chapter comes from the youth researchers who participated in this YPAR initiative.

The youth researchers assert that apart from situations delineated as violence against women and girls by the United Nations (1993[7]), such as physical assault, threats of harm, and sexual assault, instances that induce feelings of powerlessness or despair among young mothers are also deemed violent and/or oppressive. Consequently, it is imperative to prevent such occurrences. Based on this youth-driven interpretation of violence, the present chapter incorporates illustrative accounts shared by interview participants, which are deemed violent or oppressive by the youth researchers even though the perpetrator may not perceive these incidents as such, viewing them instead as disciplinary measures directed towards the young mother.

[7] An act of aggression that results or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women.

The following themes below are grounded in the youth-driven codebook. These themes, described below (in four sub-sections), include 1) power-based asymmetries between young mothers and their guardians, 2) power-based asymmetries between young mothers and their siblings, 3) power-based asymmetries between young mothers and their intimate partners, and 4) power-based asymmetries between young mothers and extended family members. Sub-themes related to the structural dimensions that perpetuate violence against women and girls and motivate violence and the assertion of power over the young mothers are described in the different sections. These include *machismo*[8] in Latin American cultures, age hierarchies, family structure, the socioeconomic context of poverty, and social norms and expectations for young mothers as women, partners, daughters, and caregivers/mothers.

Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and Their Guardians

Participants from both study sites described having experienced feelings of despair and powerlessness when interacting with their parents or guardians.[9] These experiences included situations where there was hitting, slapping, and using weapons to physically harm a young mother, emotional abuse such as humiliation, gaslighting, scapegoating, and verbal abuse such as insults and yelling that emotionally hurt the recipient. Participants reported various motives in their experiences of caregiver-perpetrated oppression and violence. Overall, the YPAR team documented violence veiled as attempts to discipline or punish for misbehavior; we found that guardians perpetrate violence against young mothers who they deem to be a burden in the

[8] *Machismo* is a term that encapsulates patriarchal society, sexism, and heteronormative cultures in Latin America.
[9] It is important to note that the characterization of parent or guardian (words that are used interchangeably in this study) was unique to each participant and thus varies throughout the dataset, e.g., a participant might consider his stepmother a parent, while another participant, despite the presence of her stepmother in her life, might not. The people defined as the guardian for the young mothers are individuals who lived or are currently living with them and whom the young mothers expect to look after their well-being. Most commonly, this connoted the biological mothers of the participant, but in other cases, it includes biological fathers, stepmothers, stepfathers, or grandparents.

household; we identified violent reactions to the young mothers not conforming to gender roles (e.g., violence when young mothers protested being assigned an unfair share of house chores, or violent disapproval of sexual expression and attempts to police the young mother's sexuality), and violent reactions to the announcement of the pregnancies. It should be noted that the aforementioned sub-themes identified when analyzing power asymmetries between young mothers and their guardians often overlap.

Some young mother participants described physical violence as a tool their parents or guardian would use to punish them in situations such as when they arrived home after an agreed time, did not heed the caregiver, or engaged in fights with their siblings. One participant emotionally recounts how her mother would physically punish her if she arrived home past her established curfew.

> Before the pregnancy, I used to love to go out with friends. My mom would always say to me, "If you're going out, you know you have to be here before six." At six o'clock sharp, it would already count as being late. Sometimes I would get home at twenty past six, and she would scold me. She would even hit me, claiming that I was already "super late" [participant cries]. (Susana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

Young mothers reported examples of harrowing forms of punishment from their guardians that they remember with anguish and frustration. For instance, Sara (Cartagena, 17 years old) reports:

> I'm claustrophobic because of my stepfather. When he wanted to punish me, he would lock me up in a room alone, with no light, and I will never forgive him for it. (Sara [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

The experience of Lina (Medellín, 17 years old), cited below, is an example of punishment being too severe and an oppressive rejection of autonomy. Lina was seen in the street by her

stepmother wearing a shirt and a skirt that her stepmother did not deem appropriate, and she was publicly humiliated by her caregiver.

> When I was really young, when I would go out, my stepmother would not let me wear a certain piece of clothing. It was a shirt with a skirt. One time I was wearing it in the street, and she caught me. She got extremely angry and grabbed me by the hair right in front of a bunch of people. I think that was too much, doing that in front of all those people. (Lina [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

Participants also described situations where their guardians would exhibit aggression when trying to teach the young mothers lessons or keep them from engaging in behavior deemed undesirable or inappropriate (often related to sex). For example, one young mother shared that her father used to threaten her with physical violence to get her to stay a virgin and surveil her closely. Diana (Medellín, 19 years old) expressed that out of fear of her father's threats, she would avoid expressing or exploring her sexuality against her instinct.

> I didn't lose my virginity because my dad told me he would hang me if I did. With that in mind, I would never ever do anything, even if I had the impulse and desire to do it. […] I traveled to Bogotá, and there I met somebody. My father would always keep a close eye on me, like to keep me from losing my virginity. He would say he would notice if it happened, and if it did, he would tie me up to the house. He would say it to frighten me. (Diana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Some participants described having experienced threats, abuse, and domination from their guardians as punishment for deviating from expected gender roles, such as failing to complete all

household chores[10]. This kind of violence, influenced by rigid gender roles and *machismo*, was perpetrated by both men and women and occurred for participants before and after their transition to motherhood. For example, Gabriela (Medellín, 19 years old) said:

> [Living with my mother] was not so great, I would have to do everything for them [mother and older brother]. I had to have all the housework ready when she got home from work. If I didn't, she would hit me. (Gabriela [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Additionally, in the theme of guardians using threats or physical aggression as a control mechanism, Marta (Cartagena, 19 years old) describes the experience of her father attempting to have excessive control over her, coupled with physical violence to enforce it. She believes this behavior from her father is strongly linked to her being a woman and illustrates an intergenerational cycle of abuse, given that her father had also been abused by her guardians.

> I also suffered violence coming from my dad, who would mistreat me. As I was the only woman [in my childhood home], I would hear a lot of "pull her back here by the hair," "pull her back here by the ear," and "don't let her go out." I would not go out a lot to the street because immediately, they would go to look for me. Sometimes he [father] would mistreat me, he really would really do. He was raised in a rural town, so he would mistreat me as they mistreated him there. (Marta [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Being a provider of shelter implies the power imbalance of the looming threat of being kicked out, which may happen as an attempt to reprimand the young mothers, among other reasons.

[10] Similar narratives will be presented in a latter section of this chapter ("Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and Extended Family Members"), in which a young mother is domestically exploited to the point of requiring hospital care.

Many of the young mother participants recalled stories of being forced to leave the house. Some participants experienced threats by guardians who forced them to leave their homes. For example, Natalia (Cartagena, 17 years old) was forced out of her home after a fight with her father that took place as she was breastfeeding her son. The fight begins with the father taunting or bullying Natalia by dirtying up extra spoons after she had washed the dishes and complaining that the dishes were not done, supposedly because of Natalia's laziness.

> I was breastfeeding my son, and my dad ate something using a spoon. I had already cleaned the dishes, but he said, "Natalia, you haven't cleaned these spoons." I answered that I would clean the spoons as soon as I fed my child and put him to bed. My dad wouldn't have it, he said that I "simply didn't want to help with chores around there." This was all shouted out. He said that I just wanted to have my baby suck on my breast all day. Then they [my paternal grandmother and my father] told me they wanted me to leave the house, this hurt me so much… I said, "Grandma, I don't have anywhere to go," and they told me, "You'll have to find somewhere to go." So, I packed my ragged clothes and went to the house of my baby's father. I didn't go to my mother's house because I did not want to be shouted at. (Natalia [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

As mentioned, some instances of power dynamics with components of threats and domination by parents identified in the data occurred before childbirth for the young mother participants. Illustrating this point, before becoming a mother, Leidy (Medellín, 16 years old) was forced out of her home by her father after arriving home past curfew after being out with her boyfriend.

> It was because I had a partner and was spending time with him, and [my dad] did not like that. One time I got home late, and my dad told me that he didn't want me there anymore, that I should leave. So, I left. (Leidy [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 16 years old)

Tatiana (Medellín, 19 years old; below) was forced out of the house after her ex-partner (also the baby's biological father) broke in at night against her wish. Tatiana's experience highlights different situations of oppression by guardians. She was forced out of her home, not believed in, and intentionally left alone by her guardians with no support network to seek help.

> I broke up with him over text. It was midnight […], and he went to my house. […] He climbed through the window, forcefully grabbed my phone, started saying [that I broke up with him] because I was dating someone else, and made a ton of noise. […] My mother and stepfather woke up, angry because they had to work and because of the spectacle. I said, "he doesn't want to accept that it is over [their relationship]" […] He answered that I was secretly inviting guests to the house, and I kept telling them that was not true and that I had never done drugs, but he said he had seen me smoke weed. […] My mother said that she had no more patience for me and kicked me out of the house. (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interviews, 19 years old)

Tatiana's experience resembles that of Mariana (Medellín, 20 years old) in that their mothers condoned aggression or asserting power and control from their former boyfriends. Although Mariana broke up with her boyfriend, who was physically violent with her, he resisted her decision and proceeded to stalk her. Mariana explicitly asked her mother not to let him in, yet her mother kept allowing him to enter the home. Ultimately, Mariana said to her mother: "Tell me if you want to see me dead, well, I don't know, send me to be killed if you feel like it, but [don't let

him inside anymore], he is going to kill me, he has me in a terrible shape [physically and emotionally speaking]" (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old).

Some young mothers described having experienced aggression or oppression from guardians immediately after they learned about their pregnancy. Here we show Cecilia's (Cartagena, 18 years old) example and three others. "When [my father] heard that I was pregnant […] he said don't come home because if I see you here, I'll hit you. Well, I was pregnant, so I went to my grandma's house…" (Cecilia [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old).

Lina's (Medellín, 17 years old) stepmother was hostile after seeing a positive pregnancy test:

> My stepmother noticed many changes in me. She kept saying she thought I was pregnant. One day she made me find a pregnancy test and made me take it in front of her while she was inside the bathroom, looking at me. Right then, she found out I was pregnant and slapped me in the face. (Lina [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

An additional example of guardians being either physically or emotionally aggressive or asserting power through control and domination of the young mothers after learning about the young mother participant's pregnancies comes from María (Medellín, 19 years old), whose mother insulted her after learning about her pregnancy:

> When I told her [my mother about the pregnancy], she said to me, "This doesn't surprise me! It's because you're a slut! You don't take care of yourself [referring to family planning usage]," and I don't know what else. The pregnancy was not even my fault because I was on birth control, and I was telling her that I was on birth control I was using the birth control shot [and she would say:] "Who would confirm you were using

> that? [referring to the birth control method and insinuating she was lying] this happened because you're a slut". (María [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

The last example from the sub-theme of power dynamics between young mothers and guardians being oppressive by being hostile, combative, or aggressive after learning about the young mothers' pregnancies is Sandra's (Medellín, 16 years old) experience. She was insulted and threatened by her father over the phone. Before this, her father had been completely absent from her life since she was two years old:

> He [the dad] said to me that I was… how can I say it? Well, that I deserved this for running around being "loose." He really tore into me, threatened me, and told me to stay very, very far from where he was because he could find me and hurt me in many ways. (Sandra [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 16 years old)

María (Medellín, 19 years old) and Sandra's (Medellín, 16 years old) stories illustrate troublesome patterns of verbal abuse from guardians or parents who act as if having the right to mistreat them. Young mothers reported attempts to demean or humiliate them or make them feel like a burden or unloved in the household. For instance, Susana (Medellín, 17 years old) described the experience of feeling deeply rejected and unwanted by her mother: "There came a time when my mother said that she had already been trying to get rid of us, and now [because of my pregnancy] she has the additional burden of an extra baby. Obviously, this hurt a lot" (Susana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old).

Verbal abuse often orbited the theme of the young mother being incompetent. Carmen (Cartagena, 18 years old), for example, reported that her mother started screaming insults at her after her child spilled food on himself:

> One day the baby—there was soup, but it was already cold, thank God—and the baby was walking and spilled the soup on himself. Then [my mother] started screaming at me, calling me rotten and a son of a bitch, good for nothing, useless… saying she had been calling my attention to the baby for a while. Right then, my partner came in, and they started fighting. He was telling her that that was no way to speak to me, that she could reprimand me, but not like this. Her answer was that this was the right way to treat someone like me. My partner did not like this, and he grabbed me and took me out of there to his house. (Carmen [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

In conclusion, in this section, we found that the power dynamics within the relationships of young mothers and their guardians incorporate components of oppression and domination and had varied motives that often overlapped. Young mothers shared experiences of guardians using violent means of discipline, punishment, or control over them and resorting to violence or the assertion of power when they did not want to conform to traditional gender roles or express their sexuality in ways that the guardian deems inappropriate. We also saw various examples of violent reactions to the young mother's pregnancy announcement. Ultimately, demonstrating how power asymmetries where the young mother is the least powerful in the relationship result in instances of oppression and domination given the entitlement over the young mothers that their guardians consider they have.

Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and Their Siblings

Power asymmetries within power relationships with siblings was another theme reported by young mothers in both study sites. Seven participants from Medellín and three from Cartagena mentioned constantly having harsh discussions or severe physical fights with their siblings. Some young mothers reported feeling particularly abandoned, helpless, powerless, and

alone after their parents did not protect them against physical violence perpetrated by their siblings and did not reprimand them for being violent or oppressive towards them. One example illustrating this comes from Vanesa (Medellín, 18 years old), who was beaten so hard by her sister that she was admitted to the hospital. She describes with disdain how her parents did not reprimand her sister in any way.

> One of my sisters sent me to the hospital because she kicked me several times. It happened because I scolded her, but she reacted very badly because she is a very rude girl. So, she kicked me, and I was in so much pain that I had to be hospitalized. My partner was really angry [at her]. He was angry because my parents did nothing to her. They didn't hit her or anything. (Vanesa [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Similar to Vanesa's (Medellín, 19 years old) experience of being physically abused by her sister and seeing her sister not get any discipline from their parents given her behavior, Lorena (Cartagena, 19 years old) was bitten in the eye by one of her brothers and felt neglected by her mother. She said: "With my brothers… we would be fighting very often. They even bit me in the eye once. I felt like my mother did nothing for me. So, I left the house, I spent the whole day out" (Lorena [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old).

Feeling neglected or not supported by parents or other siblings after having experienced oppression or violence can lead to a sense of abandonment and betrayal. The young mothers who experience this may feel they are not loved, not protected, and lonely or powerless when overcoming experiences of abuse perpetrated by their siblings. Another example of violence perpetrated by a sibling and lack of parental protection and support comes from Mariana (Medellín, 20 years old). Mariana experienced a very severe incident of physical violence

perpetrated by her brother. Mariana was beaten during the day by her inebriated brother in front of her son and niece (both toddlers). Given that Mariana lost consciousness due to a blow in her head with a shovel, the children who witnessed the situation were the ones who later described to her what had happened.

> [My brother] first beat me up with a stick. When he made me lose consciousness, he beat me up with his fists. He even broke the back rest on my mother's bed, beating my head into it. He beat my head against my mother's closet. Then he grabbed me and choked me, and with his other hand he would hit me on the face. He left me for dead, practically […]. I don't know why he was so angry with me. I was with my son and my niece […]. My brother, it seemed like he had been up all night, or he was drunk, well, I don't know, and he started treating me badly, arguing with me […] and I told him "shut up jerk!" and I turned around and kept minding the children, when suddenly I felt the stick hit my head, and I don't remember much else, because I lost consciousness, I only remember portions of it […]. Think of this, the ones who later told me what had happened exactly were the children. (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

Switching to a different sub-theme identified in the data, we identified examples of oppression or violence perpetrated by siblings related to or motivated by jealousy and/or discomfort about the pregnancy. Inés (Medellín, 19 years old) shared how her older sister would attempt to physically harm her because she felt Inés's pregnancy was robbing her of attention.

> When I got pregnant, [my older sister] was very jealous because she already had a child, and now all attention was focused on me. She would try to trip me up and push me down flights of stairs and things like that. (Inés [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

An additional example of siblings feeling discomfort given their sister's pregnancy comes from Natalia's brother, who would ignore his nephew and mistreat him, resulting in physical violence that left Natalia with injuries on her face. Natalia reports that she thinks her brother has very negative feelings towards her and her son.

> My brother does not love my son and never has. He didn't want him to come to life… it has reached a point where we hit each other; that's why I had a bruised face, and as I'm not strong enough to hit him hard, what I did was hit him on his back. I started hitting and hitting him, making him get a headache, but I had a bruised face for a whole week. We reached this point because he does not love my child, and he does not love me. (Natalia [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

In conclusion, oppression or violence perpetrated by siblings was a theme reported by young mothers in both Medellín and Cartagena. Some of the young mothers felt neglected and alone when their parents did not protect them from physical violence or reprimand their siblings for their violent behavior. Youth researchers believe that the lack of support from guardians when the aggressor was a man is related to gender norms that entitle men to assert power over women in the form of violence. Oppression from siblings is often made to have a more severe emotional impact on the young mothers when accompanied by neglect or lack of support from their guardians. The data also revealed that discomfort about the pregnancy was another sub-theme contributing to siblings' violence. In such cases, siblings would attempt to harm their pregnant sisters or mistreat their newborn nephews/nieces.

Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and Their Partners

Some of the young mothers' partners, whether the child's biological father or a current dating partner, asserted their power by perpetrating violence against the young mothers or

mistreating them. From the mothers' perspectives, their motives included wanting to exert control over them and jealousy. Some mothers also described the use of alcohol or drugs as a cause for the violent behaviors of their partners against them. As this section is our longest section on power dynamics within the relationships of young mothers, we divided this section into two sub-themes, separating oppression that included components of physical domination and violence with components more in the realm of emotional abuse and violence. It is important to note that some young mother participants reported having experienced sexual violence by their partners. These experiences of violence are presented as embedded throughout the two sub-themes of physical and emotional oppression and domination. We did not include a separate section for asserting power through sexual violence, given that the research design did not address this theme.[11]

Physical Violence or Oppression by Partners. Mothers from both cities often reported experiencing intimate partner violence. The YPAR team documented violence motivated by jealousy, mutual violence between the young mothers and their partners, violence stemming from a dissatisfaction with the young mothers not conforming to gender roles, violence or oppression whilst denying paternity (i.e., violence as a reaction to being told about the baby), violence or aggressions in public and threats or violent reaction perceived as impulsive and unfounded violence for the young mother and whose motive is enigmatic or undecipherable. We

[11] Important to note that this we expect to be the case because the principal focus of this dissertation was to contextualize the gender oppression young mothers experience in the research sites to describe the setting where power-centered needs unfold for young mothers. Therefore, our youth-driven interview data collection protocol was focused on asking about power dynamics within interpersonal relationships rather than explicitly asking about experiences of violence throughout the life course. However, this should not be assumed to indicate young mothers do not or have not experienced sexual violence in their lives. As a point of reference, on prevalence of violence against young mothers beneficiaries at Juanfe NGO in Cartagena please see the study by Harker and colleagues (2022) who implemented the Violence Against Children and Youth Survey in the NGO site of Cartagena and identified that 17% of young mothers reported having experienced sexual violence before the age of 18 years old (https://imagina.uniandes.edu.co/repositorio/violencia-contra-madres-adolescentes-vulnerables-en-colombia-una-aplicacion-de-la-vacs-en-un-contexto-de-adversidad-extrema/).

also highlight some examples of violence occurring during pregnancy, which the young mothers found particularly scary or upsetting.

Various participants reported that their partners expressed or acted in jealous ways. This type of behavior was often accompanied by threats of physical harm (beating or stabbing were common threats), and sometimes the situation escalated to physical violence. In this report by Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old), we see that she was often threatened with violence and eventually assaulted physically.

> […] many of us do not denounce because we're scared, because we all know that a man—there are men that will tell you, "You leave me, and I will kill you" or "You get away from me, and I will kill you" […] My daughter's father […] would say, "If I see you on some balcony or something, I will stab you, and I will stab whomever you are with," I would answer that I did not like or accept that he said things like that, and one time he hit me […]. He hit me many times. He would hurt me with words, he despised me, the tipping point for me was that [we fought about another woman calling his phone], and while he was grabbing me really hard, I grabbed a pan, and I hit him, and I kicked him and blood came out, and he was coming to draw blood from me too, so I started shouting, and his brother came in and pulled him away from me […] (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Ángela (Cartagena, 19 years old) also describes a situation of aggression stemming from jealousy: "Well, [sometimes] there were discussions but with punches, it was because my ex-partner would be jealous about me and his brother, which sucked. So, he would hit me" (Angela [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old).

Similar to Sandra's (Cartagena, 18 years old) experience of being threatened by her ex-partner if she ever left him, Francisca (Medellín, 18 years old) describes threats of being stabbed if she is ever seen with somebody else, and Francisca was actually stabbed in the head "a couple of months" before the interview, noting how some of the young mother's partners would deal with their jealousy by threatening and physically assaulting them. It is of note that Francisca's father asked Francisca to leave that relationship as he was also scared for his own safety:

> […] It's better to be away from him because once he stabbed me in the head. […] I left to avoid trouble because my dad said that he was harming me again, and who knows, he might even harm him too because he used to threaten me. He threatened me because sometimes I chat a bit with another man because I felt lonely, we're not in a relationship [with the man] or anything, but I get lonely, and sometimes we get ice cream. […] So, my partner sees this, and I get threatened: "If I see you with him, I will hurt you". (Francisca [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

At the time of the interviews, none of the participants who described having experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by the biological fathers of their children remained in a relationship with them. However, most mentioned having experienced violence for prolonged periods before breaking up with their boyfriends. For example, Francisca (Medellín, 18 years old), from the quote above, said that a few days after the head stabbing had occurred, she was once again romantically involved with the abuser; and Mariana (Medellín, 20 years old), was in a violent relationship for two years before she decided it had become untenable for her and found a way to leave the relationship.

> [I said to myself] I can't handle this anymore; I'm going to end up murdered by him. I don't care how much it hurts him; he can kill himself if he wants, but that's better than

> my son being left without a mother. I said this to his mother, and she answered that it was true. However, I can't say I had support as in someone having said to me, "You have to leave him; he is not doing any good to you"—no [I did not receive that kind of support]. So, I stayed [in a relationship]. (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

Some young mothers resorted to responding with aggression towards their partners' violent and oppressive behavior. This was the case of Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old), who hit her ex-partner with a pan[12]. Some reasons why young mothers reacted violently include being fearful of what else could have happened to them or to reclaim power in their relationships and seeking to be respected by their partners. Thus, there are some instances of mutual violence. However, when the young mothers participated in mutual violence, they usually had to run away for safety soon after that, describing their partners as scarily angry, as we can see in the report by Daniela (Cartagena, 17 years old) below. It is also of note in this report that Daniela that for lack of finding shelter anywhere else, she had to come back to this living arrangement with her oppressive partner.

> Any reason was enough for him to want to hit me, "I will slap you", he would say, for the smallest reasons. […] One time I had to run to my childhood home because he hit me in the head with his knuckles, and I hit him back hard on his arm, and he got offended. He kicked me, and I grabbed his hand—I was scared because I had already hit him, so I left for my mother's house. Be that as it may, I had to go back [to live with him] at his house. (Daniela [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

[12] Sandra's excerpt showing how she mentioned hitting her partner with a pan while he was being physically abusive toward her is included at the start of the chapter.

As another example of mutual violence, Natalia (Cartagena, 17 years old) describes constant violent fights with her former partner. In this case, Natalia was feeling angry with her partner, which motivated her to want to physically hurt him.

> So, we would fight, we would start fighting like: "You said this or that," and I grabbed a broomstick, and I would break it by hitting him, I would grab whatever I saw, and I would throw it at him, and he sometimes would come hit me. One time he slapped my face, and it filled me with anger, and I threw a showcase at him; that's what our fights were like. (Natalia [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

Some mothers reported that their partners were oppressive and aggressive towards them while they attempted to deny fatherhood. Denial of paternity left the young mother feeling powerless and exclusively responsible for raising the child. This was what happened to Tatiana (Medellín, 19 years old). Noteworthy, Tatiana's mother-in-law at the time knew about the abuse, yet, she blamed Tatiana for it and, because of that, would not try protecting or supporting her in any way.

> I told the father [about the pregnancy], and he said, "What? How could it be mine?" And I said, "I'm only with you all the time"– "NO!" [he would answer]. And that was the first time he hit me during the pregnancy, he hit me against a closet it broke my head open. […] His mother never helped me with this because she said I made his son very angry, that I had the habit to make him get crazy angry. (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Sometimes (as is also shown in the section on power dynamics between young mother participants and their extended family members), this denial of paternity was supported by the partner's family, as we see in this report by Valeria (Cartagena, 18 years old):

> [My ex] would argue with me. I mean, one day he even hit me, and his mother came into the room with a stick and hit him [so he would stop]. She defended me because while she agreed that the baby supposedly was not his, she said that was no reason to be hitting me. (Valeria [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

In the previous example, we found that the young mother's partner did not hold back his violent acts even though they were people in the house who would eventually notice them. We documented other reports of oppression and violence in front of other people, or even in public spaces perpetrated by partners. Moreover, while some acts of violence were able to be linked to jealousy or an attempt to deny paternity, some young mothers reported violence whose motivation was enigmatic to them. They saw their partner impulsively burst into violent acts in improbable, surprising, or what seemed like arbitrary moments. The following report by Mariana (Medellín, 20 years old) exemplifies two sub-themes identified from the voices of participants, first, an act of physical violence or oppression with unclear motivation, and secondly, an act of violence in public:

> […] After we broke up, he also sent me—he practically sent me to the hospital. We broke up completely, and two years after that, I went to give my baby a Christmas gift at his [paternal] grandfather's house. I came down to give him a gift, everything was normal, and that man came [the ex-partner], and in the middle of the street, he pounded me to a pulp. It was horrifying! He even broke my nose. I spent Christmas and New Year's Eve with a bruised nose. (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

Some young mothers referred to drugs and alcohol as explanations for the aggressive actions of their partners. For example, Catalina (Cartagena, 17 years old) shared that when her ex-partner

(also her daughter's biological father) used drugs, he would become more violent, particularly in response to their baby's cries.

> He would do drugs at night, which was usually the reason [for the physical violence]. When the baby girl would cry, as often newborns cry at like two or three in the morning, the baby girl would cry at two in the morning, and he would be on drugs, and he would hit me. (Catalina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

Participants expressed being particularly offended or scared when they were victims of physical violence or threats and acts of oppression whilst being pregnant. In the following examples we will see some young mothers describing this type of situation. Catalina (Cartagena, 17 years old), whose excerpt we just included to exemplify how some young mothers attributed the use of drugs or alcohol as causes for violence, mentioned having experienced physical and sexual violence from her partner throughout their relationship and during her pregnancy: "I immigrated to Colombia while pregnant, and even while pregnant he was aggressive with me, he would hit me on the legs or slap me" (Catalina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old). Mariana (Medellín, 20 years old), who also experienced violence from her partner during their relationship, experienced such severe violence from her partner during her pregnancy that she mentioned she nearly had a miscarriage as a consequence of the violence.

> As we were getting to know each other, everything was normal, but then he started being very impulsive, very rude, and obsessed about everything… he would hit me if I said yes, or if I said no, he would hit me if I was angry, or if I were laughing, if I did this or if I didn't do this, he would hit me for whatever reason. During pregnancy, he hit me so hard that he threw me down some stairs, and I almost lost my child. (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

Even though oppressive behaviors through sexual violence from partners were mentioned more seldom than physical violence, it was still reported. For instance, Sofía (Medellín, 19 years old) reports that her former partner commonly forced her, through physical violence, to have sexual relationships when she did not want to. Thus, experiencing both physical and sexual violence perpetrated by her ex-partner.

> [Referring to her relationship with her child's biological father:] Well, it was horrible because my ex-boyfriend would call me a bitch, and I would say, "If I am a bitch, it's because you are one also, and I'm learning it from you." And he had the bad habit of forcing me to have sex with him when I didn't want to, he would bite me and scratch me, he would pull my hair or things like that. (Sofía [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Catalina (Cartagena, 17 years old) reports that her previous partner (the baby's biological father) sexually abused her, but she had no place to go as "she has no family" (being an immigrant and alone in Colombia). "He used to rape me, and that is violence; when a woman does not want to have sex with you, and you force her to do it, that is rape" (Catalina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old).

Thus, summarizing the section on oppression through physical force, aggression, or violence perpetrated by partners observed during our research, we presented various types of oppressive behaviors with physical violence components and the identified motives behind these behaviors. Overall, the YPAR team identified some motives for oppression or violence against the young mothers (often overlapping) to be: jealousy-motivated oppression, oppressive behaviors triggered by the denial of paternity, violence perpetrated in front of other people, and mutual violence between young mothers and their partners (where the young mothers had to run

for safety after the confrontations), impulsive violence with unclear motives, and instances of violence during pregnancy that left the young mothers feeling frightened or distressed; less often, but still present, we documented reports of sexual violence.

Emotional Violence or Oppression by Partners. Young mothers who participated in the interviews also experienced various forms of emotional aggression or violence as oppression from their partners. They were insulted, controlled and surveilled, manipulated, abandoned, and threatened with physical violence (many participants expressed fear of being killed).

To begin with, we will show some excerpts of young mothers discussing the threats of physical violence. Many of the examples shown in the previous section (on Physical Violence or Oppression by Partners) included some discussion of how these young mother's survivors of physical violence would also often receive threats of violence (see Sandra's and Francisca's excerpts above, in particular), and sometimes these were habitual threats lasting for years. We consider that aspect of those examples to be emotional or psychological oppression, but we will not include them again here. Threats of violence happen for various reasons. For example, Paola (Medellín, 20 years old) would be threatened with violence (directed both towards her and her family members) because the child's biological father wanted custody of the child.

> We're even thinking about involving the attorney general because it is not the only time we've been threatened. […] When I was pregnant, he would send me pictures of a weapon. He would say like: "If it becomes necessary… I would kill your father for my child." And he would show me a weapon. So I told my mother: "No, I'm really sorry, but I'll have to start a process with the attorney general because I'm scared for my and my son's lives." So now I can't go out calmly because I might run into him out there, ugh. (Paola [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

Another example of emotional oppression in the form of a threat comes from Tatiana's (Medellín, 19 years old) experience who was threatened by her son's biological father two days after giving birth:

> When the kid was born, [his father] visited our house the next day after I arrived from the hospital. And he came threatening me with a gun. At that point in time I didn't know it was a toy gun, I didn't know toy guns could mimic the sound of guns. And he made the sound, and I was outside with my baby, getting some sun, and with my younger brother, and he said to me: "I only spare you because you're with these children." And I was like "oh no". My blood was cold from fright. (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Catalina (Cartagena, 17 years old) also received threats and threatening pictures of weapons, this time as a reaction because she decided to leave her partner for all the violence she was experiencing: "Look at this [participant shows interviewer a picture], this is me with bruised ears and legs—and he has a machete and then, look at this picture [participant shows the interviewer a second picture], he sent me this after I left and he threatened me. This is him with a gun" (Catalina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old). These experiences represent how partners assert their power against young mothers by being emotionally abusive and threatening them.

Moreover, Sofía (Medellín, 19 years old) was locked inside a room with her partner, who "went mad" and started throwing chairs and furniture, barely missing her. She describes thinking, "Okay, this is it; here is where I'll be killed." Eventually, her partner tricked her into going to the kitchen to supposedly talk and calm things down, yet, in the kitchen, he threatened to kill her with a knife saying, "If you are not going to be with me [in a relationship] then you will not be

with anyone else." She says that throughout that day and experience, she kept thinking, "I am going to die."

Similar to Sofía's experience of fearing being killed by her partner after receiving violent threats, Tatiana (Medellín, 19 years old) mentioned having been threatened multiple times before with a knife by her son's biological father and described fearing being killed during fights where he would beat her or stab her. She also mentioned she sometimes tried to defend herself from his battering, but when he grabbed any weapon, such as a knife, she would just try to calm down and stop fighting back as she was scared he might kill her.

> With the baby's father. When I was going to tell him about the pregnancy, I really doubted if I should tell him or not because I was like, "No, he will hit me again. He will hit me again if I tell him I'm pregnant, won't he?" I was very frightened about telling him, for fear of how violently he might react, because sometimes, when we were alone in the house, he would threaten me with a knife. So, I didn't know if his reaction would be to stab me or to hit me badly. But, yeah, I did tell because what else was I going to do? At that moment, he got angry, and he hit me against a closet, I thought he was going to kill me or something like that because I had always been very scared of him. I mean, I would defend myself, but whenever he grabbed something sharp, at that moment, I would be too scared, I would try to calm down because I was so scared. I have always been very scared of him. (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Other young mothers described instances where they were mistreated or insulted by their partners who felt entitled to do so and sometimes were even supported by other extended family members. One example illustrating this point is Mariana's (Medellín, 20 years old) experience,

she describes how the father of her child mistreated her with possessiveness, jealousy, and insults.

> No—him—I am sure he has some kind of problem, he has to have problems because seriously he is like… let's say, if I looked at a woman for a moment, he would call me a lesbian, and more. If I supposedly looked at a man for a moment, I was a whore. [He would be like this] about everything. If I were watching a TV show, [he would say] "Oh, now you're in love with this guy in the TV show," and that would then turn into conflict. Anything and everything… if I listened to music: "Oh, you're in love with the singer," and that started a new conflict. It was literally caused by anything. I was like, "Oh no, what did I get myself into." (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

Some participants described experiences of verbal abuse. Among these experiences was Sofía (Medellín, 19 years old), whose account of emotional abuse from her ex-boyfriend describes the hurtful comments he would make about her worth and appearance.

> I don't even like to talk about him [the ex-partner] […] Physically, he didn't hurt me, but mentally, psychologically, in those ways, he really mistreated me. He would tell me that nobody was ever going to love me, that he was with me out of pity, that I was really ugly, and I don't know what else… I say words hurt more than punches, I will always believe that, I say that for me, words are what really leave you scarred. (Sofía [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Likewise, when in arguments with their partners, young mothers recall being called "idiot" (Lorena [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old), "whore" and "bitch" (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old), and "fat," "ugly," and "fucking bitch" (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old), among other insults.

Some of the young mothers also described possessive and controlling partners.[13] Mariana (Medellín, 20 years old) recalls her former partner as an extremely controlling and possessive individual. With regard to control, it is important to note that many young mothers expressed that even though they knew they were in a bad situation, they were too scared to act, call authorities, or ask for help. They described feeling too vulnerable or powerless to do this.

> I know because they have told me—that I can still start a legal process against him [with the police] because he was overage, and I was underage. But I know that for [the police], that would only be one more case of many cases, and they will tell me, "Where is the evidence" and when we broke up, my cellphone was more under his control than mine. He would erase—he would manage absolutely everything. So, me, evidence, like bruises, I don't have it. And I had conversations where he told me, "If you leave me, I will kill [the baby], and I will kill you." And then he would erase all of it. Everything. So now I have nothing, so I know that if I start a [process with the police], it won't go far because I don't have the evidence. (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

Similarly, Paola (Cartagena, 19 years old), who had checked her boyfriend's cell phone, remembers being subjected to gaslighting by him. When she confronted him about some intimate messages she found on his phone, he asked her if she was crazy, trying to make her doubt what she had seen and feel uncertain about the situation.

> One time I found some texts [on his phone], and he would tell me that I was lying, but I had seen them. And he would tell me, "That is a lie," so I would go, "How can you say

[13] We only include one of various examples of this here, as others are described and discussed in Chapter 6: "A Typology of Power-centered Needs" in the section: "Power-Centered Need for Autonomy".

that if I saw them." He would say, "Are you crazy?" That's what he says that I am crazy. (Paola [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Catalina (Cartagena, 17 years), whom we have mentioned previously in this chapter given she, received multiple threats of physical violence and experienced physical abuse at the hands of her ex-partner and biological father of her daughter also experienced emotional violence as a form of sexual harassment and a violation of trust as an attempt from her ex-partner to exert control over her. After asking about her daughter, the biological father's response ignored her question and included a sexually explicit image without her consent. She recounted: "I would ask him about my daughter, and he would answer with a naked picture of himself" (Catalina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old).

Other times, partners became violent, oppressive, or infuriated because of dissatisfaction or frustration with the young mothers not acquiescing to traditional gender roles. Sofía (Medellín, 19 years old) mentioned that her ex-boyfriend expected her to cook for him every day and have dinner ready for him at the time he wanted it, and if she did not fulfill this expectation, he would react aggressively toward her. For some men in both research site contexts, there seemed to be an expectation that their partners had to be subservient to them.

> [My ex-partner] wanted me to be cooking for him every day, and I would say, "No, Mr., I don't cook Saturday… or Sunday," [and he] would get really angry. I would then cook for him, and then he wouldn't eat, or he would say there was no juice and that he needed juice… he said I was 'good for nothing,' and he would grab me hard and shake me. (Sofía [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Tatiana (Medellín, 19 years old), Valeria (Cartagena, 18 years old), and Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) are among the participants who shared experiences of having the biological father of

their children deny their paternal relation to the baby. For example, Tatiana explains that her ex-partner would say he did not believe their son was his and would physically and emotionally abuse her, assuming she was lying.

> I was living with the baby's father during that time, but, no, he was not the best. That's when I started being mistreated by him. When I told him I was pregnant, he didn't believe it was his. Even though I was living with him, we would say that it was not his. After a while, when I was already like five or six months [into the pregnancy], I couldn't put up with being beaten up by him and being mistreated all the time, receiving hits to my stomach, while he said it wasn't his. (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Valeria (Cartagena, 18 years old), too, faced a similar situation to Tatiana (Medellín, 19 years old) during her pregnancy, where her daughter's biological father would insinuate she was lying about his paternity. Although her daughter bears the last name of her biological father, he currently has no custody over her.

> Well, with the girl's biological father, we had some misunderstandings. When we separated—right from the start of the pregnancy, he started denying the girl. He said he was not the father, that "how could it be possible?" He said this, but the date lined up with him, and he was the only partner I was with at the time. (Valeria [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Sandra, who used to live with her daughter's biological father, also faced denial from him. He told her that she should find a father for her daughter as he was not it. Sandra, who is no longer in an intimate relationship with him, recalls the painful experience of him denying their child and

even falsely claiming to others that they had not been sexually involved, which was deeply hurtful to her.

> And he would say that the girl was not his, that I should go and look for a dad for my child, lots of things like that. And he would go around saying—look, I lost my virginity to him and he would go around saying that that was not true. That was something that at the time it was brutal. (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Denial of paternity from the children's biological fathers was a painful and humiliating experience for the young mothers. It was also a situation where there would feel helpless, thus, carrying negative consequences for their emotional well-being. Youth researchers who experienced similar situations as the ones described by participants mentioned that denial of paternity is so hurtful and has (in some cases) such devastating consequences that this is why it was included in the codebook as a form of emotional violence.

Lastly, some participants shared experiences of partners abandoning their relationships and their children. For example, Belén (Medellín, 18 years old) had an argument with her former partner, who left and never returned: "I told him I did not want to see him again ever in my life, and he never came back, he never worried [about the baby or me], his child never interested him" (Belén [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old).

Participants describe the impacts of this emotional violence, noting experiences such as crying about how their partners treated them or regretting being in those relationships. For instance, Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) lived with her partner for one year and considered cohabiting with him to be the worst decision she had ever made. She also described living with him as very sad and lonely.

> And I lived for about a year with him, but it was by far the worst decision I would ever take because it was very sad to live with him. With him, I lived in rejection and solitude. My pregnancy was very depressive. (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Overall, the subthemes of threats of physical violence, verbal abuse, abandonment, and manipulating behaviors included in this section were all examples of emotionally or psychologically oppressive experiences young mothers recall having had at the hands of their intimate partners. In different ways, partners' psychological or emotional violence or aggression aimed to control young mothers by making them feel insufficient, invaluable, and dependent. Many young mother participants expressed fear of being killed by emotionally abusive partners. In certain instances, the participants' fear of death comes from the belief that they have that men in these specific contexts are entitled to do what they want, even if this includes killing them. Men in heterosexual relationships are perceived as generally more powerful when compared to women in both research sites. These experiences had negative consequences on the self-worth and well-being of young mothers, leaving them feeling lonely, sad, helpless, and with no alternatives to justice or support.

Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and Extended Family Members

With regard to power dynamics within the relationship between young mothers and members of their extended family, the most common perpetrators of violence or oppression were their parents-in-law. It is important to note that some young mother participants live or have lived with their parents-in-law, often also coexisting with their brothers- and sisters-in-law, which is part of a pattern seen in certain contexts in the global South where families often coexist with multiple family members. Specifically, of the 25 participants in Cartagena, 11 had

previously or were living with their extended family at the time of the research. In Medellin, there are fewer, with only two young mothers reporting having lived with their extended family in the past or at the time of research. Therefore, multiple living arrangements characterize the context where oppression unfolds in the lives of young mothers. In this section, the data also revealed oppressive power against young mothers exerted by grandparents and aunts or uncles through physical or emotional domination and abuse.

Violence or Oppression by Parents-in-law. Being the most common in this category, we begin with the reports of oppression perpetrated specifically by parents-in-law (brothers- and sisters-in-law show up in the dataset but much less often). The reports are presented here through three sub-themes (although various examples fit in more than one): in the first, young mothers cohabitating with their in-laws are perceived as burdens, assigned disproportionate shares of domestic responsibilities, and are generally not recognized for their contributions to home care. These experiences included mistreatment, disrespect, and bullying, thereby exposing instances of emotional oppression experienced by young mothers. At least in one case, these types of experiences generated such fatigue that hospital care was necessary. The second demonstration of oppressive behaviors with components of threats and domination describes parents-in-law who react negatively to displays of affection between the young mothers and their partners, thus isolating the young mothers and sometimes making explicit attempts to separate the couple; lastly, young mothers who were living with their parents-in-law or extended family members reported that their extended family members would take action to make them alienated, expressing, through acts of varied severity, how unwelcome they were at the house. We will also show that parents-in-law, as well as other community members, would often attempt to defame

and dishonor the young mothers because of their unplanned pregnancies and/or because of alleged incompetence as mothers.

For the first sub-theme, on young mothers perceived as a burden and being assigned disproportionate shares of domestic responsibilities while not being recognized for their contributions to home care, we see an example of a young mother, Yvette (Cartagena, 19 years old), being bullied through being assigned an excess of domestic responsibilities, while pregnant, and receiving no recognition for her attempts at contribution. The fatigue from the overburdening builds up so much that she is sent to the hospital. In this quote, it is relevant that the complaints about Yvette's alleged lack of cooperation with house chores would be directed to Yvette's partner, which we identified as an attempt to generate conflict within the couple.

> Sometimes I had to be taken for emergency care during my pregnancy because I was so tired of doing so much housework. […] [My mother-in-law would tell my partner] that I did no housework, that she was the one that was doing chores all day, that she was cooking, and that she was washing clothes. […] When he was sent for military service, that's when they started whispering in his ear. He would call me, scold me, and shout at me that I had to do more chores, that I couldn't stay all day in my room, that I should be cooking, and this and that. […] He wouldn't believe me that [his mother's claims] were not true. (Yvette [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Also fitting in the first and second sub-themes, the experience of Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) serves as an example of bullying by overburdening and includes attempts from the mother-in-law to separate the couple, as well as negative reactions whenever her son (i.e., Sandra's partner) shows affection or tries to care for Sandra.

> From week number one [living with my in-laws], I was the one who had to do the cooking, and I was the one who had to clean the restrooms, I was the one who had to do literally everything. All all all of it. I would wake up at six in the morning to make breakfast, and I was the last one to get to sleep because I had to clean a load of dishes. […] One time, I was intoxicated, and my partner was helping me, [and my mother-in-law said to him:] "Why are you cooking and cleaning so late? Why doesn't your woman get up and do her chores?" And my partner answered: "Mom, she is sick, she is feeling off." [So, she said]: "No, I don't care about that. For fuck's sake, now it looks like you're the housemaid" and things like that. I mean, there were so many examples, she would see that my partner would treat me kindly, and then she looked like she wanted him to treat me badly or hit me. (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

The data illuminated several instances of explicit attempts by mothers-in-law to generate conflict between the young mother and her partner, thus isolating the young mothers both socially and emotionally. In the following excerpt, Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) describes her mother-in-law provoking her partner to question her loyalty to him, attempting to invoke doubt as to whether the young mother is honest about her whereabouts and explicitly asking the young mother if she has been unfaithful.

> [My mother-in-law would say to my partner]: "Oh, Alberto, your woman gets up and goes to her mother's house; what does she do there, study? Are you sure she studies? Are you sure she really is going to study on Saturdays, as she claims?" Once even she [mother-in-law] asked me: "Have you never been unfaithful to Alberto?" (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Sandra further explains that her mother-in-law would express frustration about her son being loyal to Sandra and not to her. Sandra continues to impersonate her mother-in-law: “In my time, a husband, a son, would listen to their mothers and not to their wives. Instead, here in my house, I’m fucked” (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old). Moreover, Sandra shared that her partner would modify his behavior toward her when her mother-in-law was present: “He was talking to me respectfully, then he saw his mother was coming, and he shouted, ‘holy shit, you’re useless, you can’t even lock a door! ’I was surprised because he had never talked to me this way” (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old). While in the theme of mothers-in-law casting doubt over the young mother’s loyalty to their partners, Daniela (Medellín, 18 years old) reports that this was a constant occurrence for her because her mother-in-law would judge her based on her clothing and ask her “are you going out dressed like that to show off your body?” (Daniela [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old).

Another example in our second sub-theme (demonstration of oppression, generally through emotional violence in the form of verbal abuse, after a show of affection between young mothers and their partners) comes from one participant named Inés (Medellín, 19 years old). Inés describes how she experienced verbal abuse from her mother-in-law and that her mother-in-law laments that Inés is allegedly alienating her from her son.

> I think [my mother-in-law] feels a lot of jealousy, so, for example, if he [partner] hugs me, then she pushes him away, she’s like that. She a jealous mother. So, we have had a lot of friction. […] [My partner] did not visit her house very often, and she would say “it’s that annoying girl, she doesn’t let you come here.” (Inés [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

As well as being overburdened by domestic responsibilities and having their partners bullied away from them, young mothers found difficulty coexisting with their extended family members and were made to feel generally unwelcome in other ways through oppressive acts by their parents-in-law as attempts to generate alienation and isolate them. Paola (Cartagena, 19 years old) recalls being passive-aggressively driven away from common spaces by her mother-in-law.

> I would turn on the television, and then my partners' mother, my mother-in-law, would turn it off. So, I now I can't do anything, I go into my room, as I don't own the TV, I have to go to my room, and I stay in my room with my son and that's it. (Paola [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Similar to Paola's (Cartagena, 19 years old) experience of subduing to the power her mother-in-law has as the owner of the house where she lives, Yvette (Cartagena, 19 years old), describes being forced by her parents-in-law to reject support (in the form of donated clothing) for her baby. These examples illustrate how neither Paola nor Yvette perceived they had any other alternatives other than subdue to their in-law's wishes. This feeling of powerlessness was a common experience identified when exploring the power dynamics of the relationships young mothers had with their extended family members, in particular, when occupying the same physical spaces.

> It made it hard for me also that people would want to gift me clothes for my baby, and [my parents-in-law] would say they would not accept that. They did not want second-hand clothes, but I did want them because one has to be grateful to someone to have them continue being generous. What I did, when I was already ready to burst, was go back to my [childhood] house to escape from so many complications, so many problems. (Yvette [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Continuing the sub-theme of oppression as alienation of the young mothers, some young mothers experienced attempts at defamation. For example, Ángela (Cartagena, 19 years old), who was living with her parents-in-law, was constantly introduced to new house guests in terms that were offensive and disrespectful to her.

> Yeah, [my mother-in-law and her partner] did let me into their home, but they would badmouth me so much. I mean, anybody would visit the house and that lady [mother-in-law] would say "she is here for this and that" referring to the [unplanned] pregnancy and that I did not have anywhere else to go [presumably highlighting lack of money]. I did not like that, I did not enjoy that. (Angela [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Some young mothers experienced being directly insulted by their mothers-in-law, who sometimes, given their positions in the family structure (or their role as guardians or providers), felt entitled to assert their power in the form of emotional or physical oppression against the young mothers. For example, Gabriela (Medellín, 19 years old), who fears that her mother-in-law could be physically violent toward her, mentioned that her mother-in-law would refer to her with derogatory terms. She said: "[My mother-in-law] was very impulsive, she is very impulsive, and I would be scared she would hit me. She kept saying to me that I robbed her of her child and would call me a slut, when she was angry" (Gabriela [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old).

Overall, regarding oppression perpetrated by parents-in-law, we identified that most of the control and abuse experienced by the young mother participants was perpetrated by their mothers-in-law who were emotionally or psychologically oppressive against them. There were instances of parents-in-law yelling, insulting, criticizing, and intimidating young mothers who

were living with them. There were also examples of mothers-in-law blaming the participants for things they have not done or lying about them, for instance, when saying they were not helping with the house chores. Oppression in the form of threats, insults, and manipulation perpetrated by parents-in-law isolated some of the young mother participants. Specifically, in those cases, mothers-in-law actively aimed to alienate their sons (the young mother's partners) from the young mothers or impede their sons from showing affection towards their partners. In addition, incidents of oppression by parents-in-law sometimes sparked additional oppression or violence perpetrated against young mothers by their partners. It is important to note that oppression within relationships, specifically in the form of emotional abuse, is nuance and can take many subtle forms and therefore is sometimes hard to identify. Thus, some of the testimonies of young mothers who mentioned they did not feel comfortable living in the same house as their extended family members may result from chronic oppressive instances perpetrated against them, which were not necessarily described as such during the interviews.

Violence or Oppression by Other Family Members or Acquaintances. Now we continue with the theme of power dynamics within young mothers' relationships with other extended family members, not including parents-in-law or acquaintances. The type of relationship varies throughout the examples, and it includes neighbors, school peers, or intimate partners of family members. Oppressive behaviors in this category generally fell into two sub-themes: first, young mothers being told that they have no future prospects, and secondly, young mothers being verbally abused (either directly or in attempts of defamation) for a perceived transgression of accepted codes of sexual conduct (e.g., being called a "slut" or having her loyalty to her partner constantly questioned).

We begin by illustrating, with some examples, the experience of psychological oppression related to the professional or educational aspirations of the young mothers, who would often be bullied about "having ruined their lives" due to their motherhood. Carmen (Cartagena, 18 years old) reports that "everybody" in her neighborhood would be bullying her about how she now has no future: "A lot of people from the neighborhood would be saying to me 'shit, you ruined your life 'or 'now you have nothing else to do except being stuck there and have more children'" (Carmen [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old). This situation is considered emotional or psychological oppression because it involves people demeaning and belittling Carmen. The comments she received may undermine her confidence and self-worth and make her feel, that as she is being told, she has ruined her life.

Similar to Carmen's (Cartagena, 18 years old) experience, where neighbors tell her she has no prospects other than having more children, Diana (Medellín, 19 years old) recalls being bullied by her father's girlfriend for wanting to study, noting in both instances young mother participants are being belittled and shamed into believing they can no longer hold educational aspirations. During the interview, Diana said:

> Because when you're a teenage mom, you get mistreated, like it happened with my stepmother. She was angry with my father [and she told him] that she refused to take care of my child, and my dad answered "but she is going to study" [and my stepmother said] "So now she is thinking about studying, now that she has a crying brat? Now you're going to study? Why didn't you study when you could?" So I think that she is being very mean, because even if we have kids, like, that doesn't mean we can't study. (Diana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Other participants described experiencing a similar phenomenon when members of their extended family or community members told them that they had no future because of their motherhood. One mother describes an aunt telling her, "Ah, you ruined your life [for having had a child]" (Juanita [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old); while another participant described various family members saying, "What is this? You had no reason to get pregnant… Now there is no way to progress, now you're stuck in your house" (Mariana [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old).

Continuing the theme of oppression in the form of verbal abuse against young mothers by acquaintances, many of the young mothers who participated in the interviews described being insulted. For instance, they were being called "sluts", either directly, as "*zorra*," "*cachondita*," or "*perrita suelta*," or indirectly, by calling their clothing inappropriate or raising doubts as to whether they are unfaithfully looking for other sexual partners. These experiences of verbal abuse orbit a perceived transgression of societal sexual conduct codes. For instance, Carmen (Cartagena, 18 years old) remembers that while she was pregnant, her father's girlfriend would harass her. Carmen said: "When I was just recently pregnant, my dad's girlfriend texted me saying a bunch of stuff, saying I was a slut, that I didn't even know who the father of the child was, and things like that" (Carmen [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old).

Another example of emotional oppression by a family member comes from Tatiana's (Medellín, 19 years old) experience, who describes being emotionally hurt by the incident. Her experience of mistreatment perpetrated by her aunt is related to her role as a mother and a criticism of her appearance.

> And after I had the child, one time I tried to wear a short shirt, and my aunt told me that I wasn't supposed to wear that anymore—after having kids, you can't wear that anymore.

> "What are you thinking? That you're still young?" [she would say]. And I would say "well, I am actually still young" and it was not necessary to make me feel so bad. She forced me to change clothes and everything, in front a family reunion […] I felt bad, I went and I changed. (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

In the previous examples, we found foul or damaging language directed toward the young mother participants. Now, we will turn to see examples where young mothers saw themselves being defamed, which might lead to social isolation. Illustrating this point, during the interview, Natalia (Cartagena, 17 years old) mentioned how neighbors and other acquaintances she would see in the streets of her neighborhood would verbally abuse her due to a defamation campaign her former partner had carried out.

> [The baby's father] began writing to all the young men around where I lived, and he was telling them that I wanted to have sex with them and things like that. It reached a point where I would go out, and people would point at me and say, "look, there goes the…" – please forgive me for the word– "… there goes the slut", "look, there goes the loose whore", "she wrote to me that she wanted me" […] (Natalia [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

Participants also mentioned oppression towards them in the form of disrespectful speech directed towards their baby or general rejection of the infant. These instances were likely due to perpetrators wanting to create emotional distress for the young mother participants, which sometimes resulted in the young mothers feeling powerless and helpless. One example of this is Gabriela's (Medellín, 19 years old) experience. She mentioned how her son would be called a "son of a slut" by her sister-in-law and believes this comes from jealousy.

> My sister-in-law once called my baby a "son of a slut". My newborn baby. Because my mother-in-law was paying more attention to my baby than to [my sisters-in-law], she and her mother have never had a strong bond. So, she mistreated my baby… then I told her that when she became a mother, she would feel how painful that was. (Gabriela [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Furthermore, many young mothers reported having people doubt or attempt to deny the paternity of the proclaimed father of the baby, causing them emotional harm and distress. Just one example is Belén (Medellín, 18 years old), who mentioned that her partner's family never accepted the baby as hers because his skin color appeared different from his family's. In this case, by denying the paternity of the child's biological father and rejecting the baby based on his skin color, Belén's family-in-law is also rejecting the validity of her relationship with her partner.

> [With respect to my relationship with the father's baby], we were dating for less than a month, and I got pregnant, and that's it… my family is black, only one of my sisters and I are white. [My partner's family] said that if the baby "came out black," then it wasn't my partner's baby. He denied the baby, his family denied the baby, […] I received no support. (Belén [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Denying paternity puts the young mother in a tough situation because of the lack of support and because being accused of paternity fraud is serious slander. We also saw other examples of attempts to defame young mothers. For example, Yvette's (Cartagena, 19 years old) family-in-law tried to spread rumors concerning her supposed negligence regarding the baby's hygiene. (To better understand Yvette's situation, one should also refer to the example at the beginning of this section where Yvette is accused of neglecting house chores despite her efforts.) It is noteworthy

that this situation may also be a form of gaslighting where Yvette's in-laws may be aiming to manipulate her into questioning whether how she perceives her daughter is true or not. During the interview, Yvette recounted: "I always keep my daughter very clean […] even though I'm studying, I keep her very clean, very pretty, but here [my family-in-law] claims the opposite, that I keep her very untidy, that she is lice-ridden, and this and that…" (Yvette [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old).

There were incidents of emotional oppression where the young mothers were falsely accused of causing damage, making them feel upset. An example of blaming and scapegoating comes from Yvette (Cartagena, 19 years old), who, as previously mentioned, was subjected to false accusations about her daughter's hygiene. We include this example of scapegoating to display another type of incident where young mothers experienced oppression perpetrated against them, leaving them feeling hurt, sad, or, as Yvette said, "crying."

> I also had a problem with one of his cousins, because his motor bike fell to the floor and a mirror was broken. I was locked in in my room and there was a cat, but the cat kind of tripped over, I don't know, and the bike fell. He said it was my fault, […]. And that became a huge conflict, and I cried. I was feeling bad because I was being blamed, even though I hadn't even left my room. (Yvette [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Continuing with this theme, young mothers who participated in the interviews described their experience of being excluded, gossiped about, criticized, and insulted by people they did not necessarily know. Manuela (Medellín, 18 years old) attributed this to her identity as a young mother. Manuela said: "Being a young mother, you get isolated, everybody gossips about it, you

get criticized very often, and insulted too" (Manuela [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old).

Overall, in the section on the power dynamics within the relationships with extended family members or acquaintances, we documented that young mothers were sometimes oppressed by them, given their lack of power within the relationship. In particular, we identified how mothers-in-law were common oppressors against the young mothers. We found bullying by overburdening young mothers with chores, even causing fatigue to levels requiring hospital care; mothers-in-law not allowing demonstrations of affection or care between the young mothers and their partners, and even quite explicit attempts to separate the young couple, further isolating and alienating the young mothers; family-in-law creating quite hostile home environments for young mothers attempting to coexist with them; and direct verbal abuse and slander coming for other community members. Overall, young mothers were verbally abused, manipulated, gaslighted, blamed, and shamed by members of their extended family and, in some instances, by acquaintances like school peers and neighbors.

This chapter characterized the contexts of oppression in the global South, establishing the context for the next two chapters of results, where we include the typology of power-centered needs experienced by young mothers and the description of the youth-driven violence prevention interventions that address power-centered needs. Throughout the chapter, we described instances where young mothers from both research sites experienced oppression in various forms, including but not limited to experiences of physical, emotional, and sexual violence. The forms of oppression that were found were generated by the power differentials across the domains of gender, age, socioeconomic status, and social status within the relationships young mothers have with their guardians, siblings, partners, and extended family members. The oppressive behaviors

perpetrated against young mothers left them feeling despair, frustration, and sadness, generating a sense of worthlessness and helplessness in them. Accordingly, even though young mothers were not necessarily (in some instances) experiencing severe or overt violence but oppression and domination in different forms, they were still disempowered to the extent that they could not shape their lives to promote their well-being or may be experiencing a heightened vulnerability to violence.

Chapter 6: A Typology of Power-centered Needs

This chapter of results provides an empirically-driven characterization of the six power-centered needs identified in the experiences of young mothers in Cartagena and Medellín. This characterization is in response to the second research question: What are the power-centered needs of young mothers who experience or are at risk of experiencing violence in Cartagena and Medellín? The six power-centered needs that were identified are 1) voice, 2) emotional wellness, 3) mobility, 4) closeness, 5) aspiration, and 6) autonomy, and comprise the typology of power-centered needs coined in this YPAR initiative, which is one of the principal contributions of this study.

Emerging from key youth-driven findings in this study, a power-centered need refers to a need that arises from a situation or event of inflicted power or control in which the impacted individual requires a reconfiguration of power relations to achieve well-being. Well-being, as defined by the YPAR team based on the data from study participants, is understood here as an ease that comes from being able to make decisions (even when there are power asymmetries within one's relationships) that lead to one's empowerment. Consequently, power-centered needs are closely related to situations where a person feels they have limited will, choice, or power given the control exerted by another person with more power in that specific context.

According to emergent themes from the participatory and thematic analysis process, power-centered needs are interrelated and can be bluntly confronted (i.e., when the least powerful person experiencing the power-centered need attempts to meet this need). Therefore, this chapter also explores and describes these interrelations and discusses the outcomes identified as young women satisfied (usually temporarily) their power-centered needs. Based on the coding process described in the methods chapter, this chapter grounds its findings in the voices of 50 young women who participated in the interviews held as part of the data collection phases of this YPAR initiative, whose characteristics have been previously described in Chapter 5 (see Tables 2 and 3).

The Typology of Power-centered Needs of Young Mothers in Cartagena and Medellín

The following section describes the power-centered needs of young mothers who experience or may experience violence in Cartagena and Medellín. It starts with an illustration (with the use of excerpts) of each of the power-centered needs (i.e., voice, emotion, mobility, closeness, aspiration, and autonomy), followed by a section on the interrelations between the power-centered needs and finishes with the outcomes that were identified as young mothers bluntly confronted their power-centered needs attempting to fulfill them.

Power-centered Need for Voice

The power-centered need for voice represents a circumstance where individuals cannot express their opinions, feelings, or perspectives. The participants described instances where they had limited verbal communication to express feelings, thoughts, or views while interacting with their boyfriends, mothers, and mothers-in-law. This power-centered need is activated by young mothers who, given their powerlessness within certain relationships and past experiences with friends or family members, cannot express themselves because of fear of being judged, yelled at,

or belittled. The power dynamics at play create the need for the person with the less power, in this case, the young mother, who in the specific situation is the only one experiencing the power-centered need for voice.

Participants described situations where they felt they could not say what they were thinking or experiencing because they feared others' reactions. For example, Tatiana (Medellín, 19 years old), while living with her child's biological father, constantly felt afraid and apprehensive of his violent behavior towards her. This made her unsure whether to inform him about her pregnancy when she became aware.

> With the baby's father. When I was going to tell him about the pregnancy, I really doubted if I should tell him or not because I was like, "No, he will hit me again. He will hit me again if I tell him I'm pregnant, won't he?" I was very frightened about telling him, for fear of how violently he might react, because sometimes, when we were alone in the house, he would threaten me with a knife. So, I didn't know if his reaction would be to stab me or to hit me badly. But, yeah, I did tell because what else was I going to do? At that moment, he got angry, and he hit me against a closet, I thought he was going to kill me or something like that because I had always been very scared of him. I mean, I would defend myself, but whenever he grabbed something sharp, at that moment, I would be too scared, I would try to calm down because I was so scared. I have always been very scared of him.[14] (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Laura (Medellín, 20 years old) experienced a similar situation of fearing others' reactions regarding her mother's reaction upon learning about her pregnancy. During the interview, Laura

[14] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Emotional Violence or Oppression by Partners" in Chapter 5: Young Mothers Gendered Context of Oppression in the Global South.

said: When I found out I was pregnant, I was scared about telling my mother, because she is always judging me. “Oh no, why did you do that? If you knew that would happen” (Laura [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old).

In addition to exemplifying the power-centered need for voice, this example highlights asymmetries in relational power acting hand-in-hand with social hierarchies, in this case, a mother having more power in the family system than the daughter. Laura’s fear of communicating with her mother was not unique among the participants. Another example comes from Sofía (Medellín, 19 years old), who, when asked about recalling situations where she was fearful of expressing what she was feeling or thinking, said: “Yes, always […] talking to my mother… or saying something to [my ex-partner] also. It’s also a problem” (Sofía [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old). Sofía expressed that it would often cause conflict to share with her mother or former partner, which resembles an experience by Francisca (Medellín, 18 years old), who described sometimes regretting she had communicated something to her boyfriend given his reaction to her.

> With the baby’s father, if was I going to say something—maybe something that—if he didn’t like it, then I’d be left there like “Ah, why did I say this? Now look at what I caused”. It happened very often with him. (Francisca [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Moreover, the power-centered need for voice was also identified in the experience described by Lina (Medellín, 17 years old). Lina, who gave birth almost two years ago, has refrained from expressing her desire to go out because she worries her stepmother might perceive her as a “bad” and irresponsible mother who abandons her child to have fun and enjoy herself. Lina is in a limiting situation because of fear of being judged.

> I don't go out anymore like I used to, because of the child. Yea, because I think that if I go out and leave my child [at home], [my stepmother] will say "she likes going out [too much]." Yea, she will say that I like going out too much and that I am an irresponsible mother because I'm leaving my child to go out to the city. (Lina [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

In the data analysis, the power-centered need for voice was also identified through how participants talked about the absence of that need. Many young mothers reported feeling a sense of well-being after being able to talk about their situation or their feelings. Some young mothers reported feeling relief after being able to communicate their needs. Therefore, as mentioned by young mothers in the interviews, expressing oneself by sharing feelings, experiences, perceptions, or opinions enhances one's well-being. The two excerpts below illustrate this point:

> Yea, because, well, when I talk with my peers at Juanfe—. I have a friend here and when I'm going through tough times with lots of problems, I tell her about them and I feel she understands me and then I calm down. She really understands me. (Francisca [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Similar to Francisca (Medellín, 18 years old), who described how she "calms down" after expressing situations she is going through, Tatiana (Medellín, 19 years old) found it beneficial to talk about her.

> Well, I really liked [the interview]. It helped me to open up a bit more. Because most of [what I talked about here], I don't tell it to anybody. One of my classroom peers knows, but other than that, almost nobody. My mom does not know that I lived through so many moments of fear with him [the baby's father]. (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

In conclusion, the power-centered need for voice refers to a situation where individuals lack the ability to express their opinions, feelings, or perspectives due to power dynamics at play. Young mothers were identified to have experienced this power-centered need, as they are often in situations where they have less power than the other person in the relationship. Fear of being judged, yelled at or belittled often prevents these mothers from expressing themselves, activating this needs. This need is exemplified in situations where participants reported feeling fearful of communicating with their partners or family members, fearing their reactions. The power-centered need for voice was also identified through how participants talked about the absence of that need, with many young mothers feeling relief when they could express themselves freely. The fact that expression can help regulate emotions shows the strong relationship between the power-centered need for voice and the power-centered need for emotion, discussed below.

Power-centered Need for Emotional Wellness

The power-centered need for emotional wellness encompasses a situation where an individual cannot cope with emotions such as fear and sadness as they would like to. Consequently, young mothers were in situations where they could not process or handle their emotions in a way that would benefit their well-being. For example, a young mother might be pressured into isolation when manifesting signs of sadness or anger.

This power-centered need often manifests as a need to express emotions that are met with disapproval, indifference, or verbal abuse. In this way, the power-centered need for emotional wellness is closely connected to the power-centered need for voice. Many young mothers reported that they tend to "keep their emotions to themselves," either because of a lack of a trustworthy support network, shame for their feelings, or feeling like a burden to others. Sometimes no explanation was given, but the behavior of "keeping it all in" was still reported.

Therefore, many young mothers are forced to cope with their emotions in isolation. For instance, Sandra (Medellín, 16 years old) said, "It's when they all go to sleep that I start crying" (Sandra [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 16 years old) and recalls never expressing her emotions to anybody.

Participants described situations where they were verbally abused after attempting to cope with difficult emotions by talking to someone and how given this, they found other ways to cope with the emotions being experienced. For example, Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) expressed being often verbally abused after attempting to express her sadness to her mother and therefore opting to give herself "motivational talks." This example shows a young mother scared into trying to cope with her emotions in isolation in a way that might be insufficient.

> At my house, it's like… if you're sad [they'll say], "Oh, aren't you stupid!" So, whenever I'm feeling sad, it's better if I just cry alone. Then I give myself a motivational talk, and after that [I'll say]: "Mom, I was feeling this and that." If I tell her when I'm already feeling better, then if she tells me I'm stupid, well, then I don't need a motivational talk. (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Tatiana experienced a similar situation where she expressed having sometimes been verbally abused when attempting to reach her mother for advice, and therefore, she currently opts to distance herself from others and cry when coping with difficult emotions/situations.

> Usually, when I'm going through [difficult] stuff, I move away from other people, and I start crying about the things I went through. But, let's say, "help," no. Never, ever, ever have I looked for help, properly speaking. Sometimes I say something to my mom, and sometimes she will give me advice, and sometimes she will say, "That happened to you

> because you're dumb." I go, "Oh." (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

It is important to note that although "keeping it all in" or crying alone after being discouraged from talking about their emotions with others or being called oversensitive and weak may be a less effective coping strategy than seeking support or engaging in self-care. However, this is also a form of strength and power young mothers display having given their situations. It shows how they can find ways to cope with their emotions even when they lack power within their relationships. Yet, this is not to be confused with fulfilling their power-centered need, which will require a renegotiation of power within their relationships and the possibility to cope with their emotion as they would like or prefer.

Sometimes verbal language about their emotions is not even necessary to generate a dispute. For example, one young mother, Ángela (Cartagena, 19 years old), tends to be quiet and withdrawn when feeling sad, and her mother reacts with anger when she perceives this is happening. Thus, the young mother is reprimanded in her attempt to cope with her emotions by taking a break from social interaction.

> When I get sad, I'm very quiet. I stay away. I don't talk [to my mother]. And it isn't [my mother's] fault, but yeah, when one is sad, one doesn't speak to anybody. So, she takes it badly and gets angry. (Ángela [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Another young mother is called lazy by her brothers when attempting to regulate her emotions by watching television or playing with her son.

> I really lose it when I'm sad. Like, I really can't handle any more, my body hurts, sometimes I can't even stand up because my knees can't handle it. So then I simply lie down and watch TV with my son, or play with him in my room. But then my brother's

> get angry because they think I'm doing nothing and that I am lazy. (Susana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

Given that the partners or family members are unwilling to provide emotional support for young mothers, thus, limiting their options to cope with their emotions or to validate their feelings, many participants mentioned coping with their emotions in isolation. For example, Inés (Cartagena, 19 years old) said, "I stay in my room alone and cry if I have to cry, I talk to myself about myself, I think through stuff, I change, and I go out as if nothing happened" (Inés [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19). Like Inés's experience of coping with her emotions alone, Marta (Cartagena, 19 years old) describes crying, singing, and listening to music alone in the bathroom, as she no longer feels close to her partner.

> I mean, when I'm sad like that—see, it's that the closeness between us has gone way, we are more divided. So, what I do now is that I go to my bathroom, I go into the shower, I listen to music, and there I cry or sing or dance, and that's how I relax. But I don't really tell him much because I don't want to… Like he also has his problems, and I don't want to burden him anymore. (Marta [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

The previous excerpt shows Marta expressing that she does not want to burden her partner with her feelings. This was commonly reported in other participants. For instance, Susana (Medellín, 17 years old) said: "To tell the truth, I try to solve [my problems] by myself because I have never felt comfortable enough with somebody else to ask for help. Like, each person already has their own problems" (Susana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old). Moreover, Francisca (Medellín, 16 years old) mentioned, "That's why [not wanting to burden others] I don't tell anybody about what's going on with me, I try to keep it all in, even if I know it'll hurt me, but I don't tell anybody" (Francisca [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old).

In conclusion, the power-centered need for emotional wellness refers to situations where young mothers cannot cope with their emotions as they desire because of a variety of reasons, such as a lack of a support network that is willing to listen to them as a way of support, feeling shame for their feelings, or feeling like a burden to others. Therefore, many young mothers recalled coping in isolation with their emotions.

Power-centered Need for Mobility

The power-centered need for mobility was identified to occur frequently among the young mothers who participated in the interviews. This power-centered need was described by participants as generated by boyfriends, mothers, grandmothers, and mothers-in-law, among others. As a power-centered need, mobility describes a situation where an individual cannot move freely between locations. This indicates that one may not be able to leave the house to physically interact with people (e.g., dancing, dining out, etc.) or relocate to be alone if that is what is desired.

Young mothers were limited or prevented from moving freely between locations by the people in their lives who had more power to the extent that decisions made by the most powerful in the relationship would impact the possibility of the young mothers (the least powerful in the relationships) to leave their houses to do something they would like. Ángela's (Cartagena, 19 years old) experience exemplifies how the power-centered need for mobility can be generated by a decision or choice by the most powerful person in the relationship, limiting her possibility to leave the house and spend time with friends.

> I practically work all weekends, so I have no time to go out. Sometimes my girlfriends invite me to go out someplace, and I say, "Mom, could you take care of [my baby]." [And she answers:] "No, I'll take care of her if you're working or studying, but to be with

> your friends? No." So yeah. And my daughter can't stay with anybody that isn't my mom at night, so I can't go out. (Ángela [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

For some participants, the transition to motherhood creates the power-centered need for mobility. For example, Juliana (Medellín, 19 years old), who is in an intimate relationship with her daughter's biological father, said he drastically changed after she became a mother. She states that he started limiting her freedom to leave the house. "My partner, ever since the baby was born, he doesn't like for me to go out. So, I just stay locked in, which gives me much anxiety" (Juliana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old). The experience shared by Juliana during the interview is an example of the power-centered need for mobility because she is in a situation where given her partner has power over her, he can limit her possibilities to move freely from one place to another. Juliana must renegotiate power within her relationship to fulfill her power-centered need for mobility.

Similar to Juliana's experience of being limited to freely leave the house when desired after childbirth, Cristina (Cartagena, 19 years old) experienced the power-centered need for mobility when she was in an intimate relationship with the biological father of her child. The biological father of Cristina's child would prevent Cristina from moving freely between locations; specifically, he would limit her possibility to go out partying by sabotaging her social activity, stating they would not be going to the event.

> I like going to parties. I really, really like it. But that's it, when I had the baby, I knew I had to stop that to a point because there was a baby. So, when the baby grew up, my mom would stay a lot with him, and he would also stay with my partner's parents. So, I would say to my partner, "it's not a bad thing if we go out when the baby is with your parents." And he would say, "no, no, no, no you are—we are not going out. No." And sometimes

> that would make me feel like, "Augh!" But yeah... When I was with him, I used to say, "I have to accept whatever he says. If he says no, then no, it is." Because I felt that if I went out, I was disrespecting him. (Cristina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Daniela (Cartagena, 17 years old) had a similar experience to Cristina's, where her ex-boyfriend prohibited her from leaving the house to spend time with friends. Both of these examples (i.e., Daniela, Cartagena, 17 years old, and Cristina, Cartagena, 19 years old) display how power dynamics in relation to *machismo*[15] culture play a role in the lives of the young mothers. Daniela (Cartagena, 17 years old) reports that her mother would side with the boyfriend's judgment about whether Daniela should go out or not: "My ex-partner was difficult. He thought he could act like if he were my dad. If he said no, then I couldn't go. And if my mother found out that he had said no, then she wouldn't let me go" (Daniela [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old). In this example, the power-centered need for mobility was provoked by Daniela's partner at the time, who also is the biological father of her son and her mother. The fact that Daniela's mother sided with Daniela's former partner highlights a complex power dynamic that can be driven by gender roles, social norms, or other power relationships working in tandem, resulting in the young mother being the person with the least power in the situation.

Current partners were also described as individuals who could provoke a power-centered need for mobility. When Manuela (Medellín, 18 years old) gets invited to go out with her friends, she is not allowed to because her current partner disapproves. The fact that disapproval by Manuela's partner results in her being limited to doing what she would like to highlight how his power in the relationship generated the power-centered need for mobility.

[15] *Machismo* is a term that encapsulates patriarchal society, sexism, and heteronormative cultures in Latin America.

> Well, because [my partner] is that type of person that… if he invites me to go out, then we can go out, but if I'm going out with my girlfriends, he does not like it. He says, "Why don't you invite them home?" […] He says it's about safety, but I think it's jealousy. (Manuela [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

It is important to highlight that the power-centered need for mobility seeks to describe something different from forced imprisonment, such as kidnapping, tying up someone with a rope, or locking up someone in a room. The latter category represents violent situations, which can be but are not always preceded by the power-centered need for mobility. For example, when Sofía (Medellín, 19 years old) was locked in a room by her ex-boyfriend (as well as threatened with a knife, among other violent acts, as can be seen in the complete excerpt in the section "Bluntly Confronting a Power-centered Need" later in this chapter) because he did not want her to go out that night, she experienced violence. During the interview, Sofía said: "[My ex-partner] grabbed my hand and closed the door and locked it, and I thought, 'I'm going to be killed right here'" (Sofía [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old).

In conclusion, the power-centered need for mobility was identified to be generated by the decisions of the most powerful person in the relationship with the young mothers who could limit her possibilities to move from one place to another. Limiting the young mother participants' possibilities to physically relocate was found to also be related to having the power to approve or disapprove of her decision, sabotaging her plans and *machismo*. In addition, in some cases, the power-centered need for mobility was identified to occur after transitioning to the role of mother.

Power-centered Need for Closeness

Closeness as a power-centered need pertains to situations where an individual is unable to establish or nurture a close relationship with someone or a group of people, they desire due to

another person who limits or impedes their possibility of spending time with the person they want to build a relationship with by using threats, manipulation or intimidation. Some reasons partners or guardians limit young mothers' possibilities for closeness with others include showing off their possessiveness or control over the young mothers, jealousy of the young mother spending or wanting to spend time with someone else and wanting the young mother to abide by gender norms (e.g., mothers should not go but rather stay home caring for their children). For example, Valeria (Cartagena, 18 years old) describes the power-centered need for closeness with friends when she describes her boyfriend's possessiveness.

> Most of all, I like to go out and chat with my friends because I've been friends with some of them from kindergarten and all the way up until we graduated [from school]. And now [my current partner] does not let me go out. I mean, he lets me go out but only sometimes. [Other times] he says "no," he says that out of my friends […] only one of them has a baby—and she, she acts like she doesn't have one, I mean she is very free—and so [he says] "you want to be like her" and other things. And I say, "Oh, love, you're not going to let me out? I really like to go out and have fun," and he says, "I said no! No!" But I sneak out and go [participant laughs]. (Valeria [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

While Valeria demonstrates her power by surreptitiously fulfilling her need for closeness, other participants reported that such power dynamics resulted in an isolating experience and losing contact with friends. For example, Susana (Medellín, 17 years old) expressed that she is now distant from all her friends because her father would not allow her to see them: "I isolated from everybody because my dad always said like "Oh, not those people, those people are a bad

influence" and things like that, so I stopped going out with my friends" (Susana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old).

Similar to Susana's experience of feeling disconnected from her friends, Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) shared how her power-centered need for closeness was provoked by her partner's jealousy generating ruptures in Sandra's relationships with her social network of friends. In this example, Sandra's current boyfriend generates the power-centered need for closeness for Sandra by blocking his friends on Facebook and sabotaging their visits to her.

> I prefer having male friends [to female friends], I feel better with them, and [my current partner] has blocked my friends from Facebook, and if they ever visit his house, he may not say it out loud, but he gets angry instantly. He does not say anything, but you can see it on his face, and my friends say, "Girl aren't we causing trouble for you?" And I'm frustrated because they used to be the kind of friends that would help me out with my daughter. (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

In conclusion, the power-centered need for closeness refers to situations where individuals are unable to establish or nurture close relationships due to another person's limiting behavior. Partners or guardians (who are the most powerful compared to the young mothers who relate to them) use threats, manipulation, or intimidation to restrict young mothers' possibilities for closeness with others. This behavior can stem from possessiveness, control, jealousy, or adherence to gender norms. While some individuals, like Valeria (Cartagena, 18 years old), find ways to fulfill their need for closeness, others like Susana (Medellín, 17 years old) and Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old), experience isolation and disconnect from their friends. Such power dynamics that generate the power-centered need for closeness can have negative consequences on individuals' social support networks and overall well-being.

Power-centered Need for Aspiration

The power-centered need for aspiration arises from a circumstance where young mothers cannot envision a desired future or a way to achieve it. It is a power-centered need, given that the power dynamics surrounding the young mothers (within their relationships) are what generate this need. The person with the most power in the relationship, which can be a partner, caregiver, or parent-in-law, among others, may have a major say in the young mother's decisions about her future, such as the role she must have in the household or what career paths to pursue, if any. This influence can create the power-centered need for aspiration by making it challenging for the young mother to envision a plan aligning with her goals and desires. Therefore, young mothers with a power-centered need for aspiration face challenges that can make it difficult for them to feel motivated, make decisions, and plan for the future. For example, a guardian or partner who is the breadwinner within the relationship with the young mother may limit the young mother's possibility of investing in education or starting a business. Similarly, parents-in-law or other family members can make it challenging for a young mother to feel motivated to aspire and work towards her goals by making her believe she would not be able to achieve what she wants or does not have the capacity to do it. These challenges emerge from having the least amount of power in specific relationships and circumstances.

One of the most common situations where young mothers were identified as experiencing the power-centered need for aspiration was when the young mother was prevented from pursuing an education (e.g., enrolling in Juanfe NGO) after giving birth to her child. While many of the mothers who mentioned having this experience were already enrolled in an educational program at Juanfe NGO, thus satisfying that need, this discrepancy may indicate that the power-centered need for aspiration is more common among other young mothers outside educational institutions.

From the participants' perspectives, the family members who suggested the mothers should set aside any educational ambitions were motivated by gender roles and expectations for the mothers. For instance, for Manuela (Medellín, 18 years old), her mother-in-law, was the enforcer of this logic following her transition to motherhood.

> I used to [have a good relationship with my parents-in-law], but not anymore, because my mother-in-law, when she found out I was going to study, she called me and told me that she did not agree with that, she said I was supposed to stay home and take care of my daughter and my husband, more than anything else. (Manuela [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Similar to Manuela's experience of having a mother-in-law who believes she should abide by social norms of motherhood and quit any educational aspirations, Daniela (Medellín, 18 years old), described how her stepfather was also influenced by social norms, specifically gender norms, and generated a power-centered need for aspiration for Daniela.

> Well, there was a stepfather, a man who lived with my mother for a couple of months and used to take care of everything around the house. […] He said that women couldn't study because women had to stay home caring for the children, and they [the men] would be working and things like that. (Daniela, [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

In many instances, young mothers reported experiencing the power-centered need for aspiration not only related to studying (high school or obtaining a technical degree) but also to professional aspirations such as working at a certain workplace or as a specific type of professional (e.g., lawyer, medical doctor, or criminologist). After giving birth to their children, members of their families and social networks would tell them that from then on; they should exclusively focus on

raising their children and their partners' well-being. These conversations with others with more power than the young mother generated the power-centered need for aspiration.

For example, some family members perceived the young mothers to have already made a mistake by having a child, thus having a responsibility to manage exclusively. Paola (Medellín, 20 years old) perceives this as extremely selfish on their part, noting that "sometimes they are very selfish with that thing about 'if you have a child now you can't be anything more than that, you can't be anybody, you can only work for you child'" (Paola [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old). Yet, how Paola describes these family members demonstrates that, at the current moment, Paola is not experiencing the power-centered need for aspiration. She seems to not subscribe to the narrative that after giving birth to a child as a young mother, she only has the possibility to focus on raising her child.

In conclusion, the power-centered need for aspiration is faced by young mothers who struggle to envision a desired future or a way to achieve it due to power dynamics in their relationships, where they have the least power. The influence of others with more power, such as partners, parents or guardians, or family members, can limit their possibilities and make it difficult for them to feel motivated, make decisions, and plan for the future. This challenge often emerges from gender roles and expectations, making it harder for young mothers to pursue educational and professional aspirations.

Power-centered Need for Autonomy

The power-centered need for autonomy describes situations where a young mother's privacy is constrained or transgressed, or she cannot make choices to enhance her well-being (i.e., where someone else limits or dismisses her possibility to choose for herself). This situation results from power asymmetries in relationships where the young mother is, under specific

contexts, the person with the least power. In these contexts, those who hold most of the relational power can dismiss the young mother's right to privacy by demanding access to her phone and surveilling her whereabouts. Similarly, partners, parents-in-law, or guardians, among others, when having more power than the young mother, can dismiss her autonomous decision-making by questioning the validity of her choices, exerting pressure for her to make certain choices (she does not necessarily want or will not enhance her well-being), or threatening to hurt her or kick her out of the house if she does not abide by what the powerful person wants her to do.

The power-centered need for autonomy was identified in situations where young mothers had no or limited control over their phones, including the applications they used, whom they talked to, and the friends they accepted on social media platforms like Facebook. For instance, the experience of Mariana (Medellín, 20 years old), who recalls having no control over her cell phone, illustrates this point. She even jokes, saying, "My cellphone was more his than mine."

> My ex-partner checked my phone all the time. My cellphone was more his than mine. He blocked apps, he erased things. If I took a picture he did not like, I would have to erase it—he insisted so much. And if I didn't, it would become a huge fight. (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

An additional example comes from Sofía's (Medellín, 19 years old) experience. She recalls that her ex-boyfriend, also her son's biological father, asked her to delete the WhatsApp texting application from her phone in the interest of their relationship.

> One time he made me erase WhatsApp. I like back now, and I think, "I was so dumb for erasing it." […] He wanted me to erase it because [he said] I had a lot of male contacts in there, and I did it, supposedly to keep the relationship well. Then the next day, I installed it again, and I said, "No sir, you're not going to manipulate me. Am I a toy of yours? Or

> why are you manipulating me? It's unbelievable what you're saying. If you want somebody to manipulate, go manipulate yourself, fool." (Sofía [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Although Sofía's (Medellín, 19 years old) experience illustrates the power-centered need for autonomy being generated by her ex-boyfriend, it also demonstrates her power as she fulfills her need for autonomy after realizing her ex-boyfriend was trying to manipulate her and that she can decide to have the WhatsApp texting application on her phone. Similarly, Francisca (Medellín, 18 years old; below), who, like Sofía, had the power-centered need for autonomy, demonstrated her power by fulfilling her power-centered need the best she could, even if this resulted in the powerful person becoming furious.

> I would put a password on my phone, and [he said] that I had to give him that password because he had to know whom I was speaking with. But sometimes I would [ask for his phone] and he would say no, so [I would say] "If you don't give me your phone, I can also not give you mine," and he would get angry, and I thought "tough luck, you're not going to boss me around." (Francisca [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Both young mothers' experiences (Sofía's and Francisca's) illustrate how power dynamics in the relationships with their ex-boyfriends resulted in their boyfriends trying to constrain their possibility to keep certain aspects of their life private and how they gained power back to be able to fulfill their power-centered needs. The power imbalance is also clear in that the women are asked to fulfill certain requests (deleting the messenger application or allowing access to the contents of their phone, respectively), but an analogous concession is not expected of the men in the relationship (e.g., Francisca's boyfriend gets angry if she asks to see his phone even though he asked her for the same thing). A later section in this chapter explores with more depth the

empirically driven implications identified for young mothers who attempted to fulfill their power-centered needs by bluntly confronting[16] them.

Some participants talked about encountering issues related to how they were dressed, including opposition from family members based on their appearance or dress. These participants shared that they did not understand why family members would oppose their choices, such as what to wear or with whom to spend time. They expressed that they know how to make their own choices, especially when these choices are relevant to their well-being. For example, Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) described how her grandmother does not let her wear shorts or dresses that could be considered "too short."

> I used to really like wearing short clothes, and my grandmother would say, "Look at those clothes!" Crudely [she would say], "You look like a whore" or things like that. But what if I feel good wearing that? […] When I'm going out to see friends, then [she says], "What are they going to say? They're all your boyfriend?" And she uses the word again: "a whore, a whore!" (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

It is important to highlight that this is a situation where Sandra is experiencing the power-centered need for autonomy, and as a result, she experiences emotional abuse from her grandmother. Therefore, Sandra's experience illustrates how a power-centered need and a violent experience intersect, a theme identified through the data analysis that will be elaborated on in later sections of this chapter.

[16] Bluntly confronting a power-centered need is a conceptual term which will be described in detail later in this chapter.

Jealous, controlling, and possessive partners are, for some mothers, the persons who create the power-centered need for autonomy. This was the case for Lorena (Cartagena, 19 years old), whose partner aims to decide what she is allowed to wear.

> Sometimes [my partner] is way too jealous, so I don't like that. He is too jealous and goes like, "You're not going to wear that." And I, sometimes, I say, "Let's talk, I don't like that [reactions]." "If you met me like this, you have to let me stay like this." And "I know right from wrong," and that's it. But sometimes he gets like that, sometimes he can be possessive. (Lorena [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

For some participants, the transition to motherhood is what creates the power-centered need for autonomy. The experiences of Tatiana (Medellín, 19 years old), who was told that now that she has a child, she needs to be dressed "like a mother," and Juliana (Medellín, 19 years old), who expressed that after she had her daughter, her partner's attitude toward her changed illustrate this point. Tatiana said:

> And after I had the child, one time I tried to wear a short shirt, and my aunt told me that I wasn't supposed to wear that anymore—after having kids, you can't wear that anymore. "What are you thinking? That you're still young?" [she would say]. And I would say, "Well, I am actually still young," and it was not necessary to make me feel so bad. She forced me to change clothes and everything in front of a family reunion […] I felt bad, I went, and I changed.[17] (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

And Juliana said:

[17] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and their Extended Family Members" in Chapter 5: "Young Mothers Gendered Context of Oppression in the Global South".

> He [should try to be] less toxic because as soon as he sees me, he starts checking my phone, I go out, and he calls me every five minutes. It has to be a video call so he can see who's with me. Before [having our child], he didn't do that. (Juliana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

In certain social and familial contexts, the biological fathers of the young mothers' children have more power than the young mothers. This was identified to sometimes be due to gender and social norms were the man is assumed to be in control and the woman is expected to have a more subservient social position within these contexts. As a result of these power dynamics, the children's biological fathers create the power-centered need for autonomy for the young mothers under the justification that the young mother belongs to them and, therefore, the young mothers have to ask for their permission to make certain decisions or report their whereabouts to them, among others. For instance, Sofía (Medellín, 19 years old) reflects that her former partner (also her son's biological father) had complete control over her life and manipulated her as he pleased.

> My son's father, he manipulated my life however he wanted. He would check on who I was with, […] and as he had access to my Facebook, that was always an issue. […] [One day he said:] "where are you going, who are you with, and why are you with him?" And things like that, and I said "I'm here with my mamma [maternal grandmother], relax dude" [and he said:] "Listen up! You have to ask me for permission!" And I was speechless. (Sofía [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

An additional example of a controlling or possessive man comes from Paola's (Medellín, 20 years old) experiences. She recalls that while she was pregnant, the biological father of her child wanted to "control [her] life."

> Every day the baby's father would say: "How are you? How is the baby?" Well, I would answer, "good" and he, "how's the baby?" It got to be very tiring, not even because of the pregnancy but because he wanted to control my life. He didn't want to me to go out with guys because, well—I said to him "look, I have a relationship, and that person supports me and accepts that I'm pregnant with somebody else's child. He doesn't care about my son, he cares about me." [And the baby's father] would text back "where are you?" And I said, "with my boyfriend." But he acted like I was his property, he would say "the thing is, you are my woman," and he still says so. […] "The thing is, you are my woman, because legally you are my woman" so it got very tiring. [I told my parents the situation was getting out of hand] because he wanted to control my life, how can I put it? I would have to tell him if I was showering, if I was in the restroom, if I was lying down, if I was sitting… (Paola [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

Paola's (Medellín, 20 years old) experience illustrates the power-centered need for autonomy because she is describing a situation where she cannot make choices she would like to have. For instance, going out with her boyfriend. In addition, Paola's decisions are being dismissed by the biological father of their child, who, as perceived by Paola, sees her as "his property."

Many young mothers described feeling trapped, stressed, or frustrated when experiencing the power-centered need for autonomy, which in some situations led to strained relationships and conflicts, feelings of anger, and helplessness. For instance, Belén's (Medellín, 18 years old) ex-partner, who used to surveil her whereabouts, made her feel threatened, frustrated, and angry.

> My ex-partner was very possessive when […] I went out for exercise he would go and look for me and would start a conflict. Nearing the end of our relationship, he wanted to hit me in front of everybody, and I was a month pregnant, and I got so angry I was

> shaking. I punched him and everything, and I told him I didn't want to see him ever again in my life, and he never came back, he never worried, and he was not interested in the kid. (Belén [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

The experiences told by Belén (Medellín, 18 years old) and some of the other young mothers and the feelings and emotions that arise can have negative impacts on their overall well-being and make them feel as though they are not being heard or valued in the relationship or that their opinions and desires do not matter. These exemplify some of the consequences the power-centered need for autonomy may have in the lives of young mothers. Similar to Belén's experiences of feeling controlled and helpless, Susana (Medellín, 17 years old) describes how she was powerless in her relationships with her mother and sister, who dismissed her desires of wanting to be in a relationship with the biological father of her child, noting that her experience of the power-centered need for autonomy led to frustration and sadness.

> Immediately I told my sister, she called the baby's father and insulted me and we went for a pregnancy test. Well, he said he wanted to be my boyfriend but I… well, I mean, it's not that I didn't want to [be her girlfriend] but there was a lot of pressure form my mom and my sister who would be saying "you are stupid for letting that guy get you pregnant." So, well, obviously I told him I did not want a relationship with him, but that wasn't true, I did want it. (Susana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

In conclusion, the power-centered need for autonomy is a situation where young mothers experience constraints on their privacy and decision-making abilities, resulting from power asymmetries in their relationships. Those with more power, such as partners, parents-in-law, or guardians, can dismiss the young mother's right to privacy and autonomous decision-making. These situations can leave young mothers feeling trapped, stressed, and frustrated, leading to

strained relationships and negatively impacting their overall well-being (as it was identified to lead to feelings of anger, helplessness, and sadness). Examples of young mothers experiencing the power-centered need for autonomy include being under surveillance, having their choices questioned or dismissed, or feeling controlled and helpless.

Experiencing power-centered needs has an impact on young mothers' experiences. It may leave them unable to express their feelings and perceptions, cope with their emotions, and move freely from one place to another. Young mothers who experience power-centered needs can also find themselves in situations where they have difficulties nurturing and building interpersonal relationships, aspiring to live a fulfilled life, and having privacy and the possibility to make personal decisions about important issues for them. Noteworthy, experiencing power-centered needs was identified to (in certain instances) raise feelings of anger, frustration, sadness, and helplessness. Moreover, experiencing power-centered needs shapes young mothers' relationships by weakening trust within relationships, fostering misunderstandings among the people in the relationships, and sometimes breaking these.

The Interrelations Between Power-centered Needs

Power-centered needs were identified as interrelated, often occurring simultaneously, shaping young mothers' experiences and relationships. In this section, we will show examples of these interrelations.

Power-centered needs occur simultaneously when in the same situation based on the specific power dynamic, a young mother can be identified to experience more than one need. This power dynamic can involve more than one person at the same time generating the specific power-centered needs experienced by the young mother. In other words, in the same situation, two (or more) powerful people (compared to the young mother) may generate a different power-

centered need for her. For instance, a mother-in-law generates the power-centered need for closeness in the young mother by saying that while she is living in her household, she cannot go and visit her mother and her partner, generating the power-centered need for autonomy by requesting immediate access to her phone to check whether the young mother has been visiting or communicating with her mother.

We identified young mothers who experienced simultaneous power-centered needs generated by the same person. For instance, Paola (Cartagena, 19 years old) and Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) experienced both the power-centered needs for mobility and closeness generated by their partner. Notably, they both fulfilled their power-centered needs for closeness and mobility by asserting their power in their intimate relationships. First, we illustrate Paola's case. Paola (Cartagena, 19 years old) mentioned that her current partner, her son's biological father, sometimes would tell her she was not allowed to visit her mother. Even though Paola usually leaves the house and does as she wants, in these circumstances, Paola is experiencing both the power-centered need for mobility (given she is not allowed to leave her house to go to visit her mother as she wants) as well as the power-centered need for closeness because she is not being able to spend time with her mother.

> Well, sometimes [my partner] does not allow me to go to my mom's house, but the thing is I am more stubborn than he is. I say "you can't boss me around. The only person who could was my mother because she gave birth to me and was sustaining me [economically]. But you? You're not my boss, and I'm going [to my mom's house]." (Paola [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Secondly, Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) described how her boyfriend does not allow her to leave the house to visit her cousins under the justification that a woman cannot do the same things as a man does.

> [My boyfriend] is good to me, but he does [sometimes say things like]: "Sandra, you're going out? I don't want you to be with your [female] cousins" because "they're this or that" [or he says] "you are a woman who, you know, you're not really dedicated to your partner" so we clash a lot. He says "I'm allowed to do this because I am a man, but you can't do the same" and I think very differently from that. I say: "I'm allowed to do the same things a man is." And he says "If I go out with my friends, I can stay out as late as I want, but YOU can't because you are the lady." And I say "no, this is a relationship and I can go out and stay as late as I want with my friends" or things like that. (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

In addition to interacting with closeness, the power-centered need for voice is also commonly seen in conjunction with the power-centered need for mobility. In fact, all three (the power-centered needs for mobility, closeness, and voice) are commonly experienced at once, as in the case of Tatiana (Medellín, 19 years old), who recalls a situation where she was experiencing them simultaneously. Tatiana's mother is very strict and does not let her leave the house to meet with friends that invite Tatiana to spend time with them, thus leaving Tatiana experiencing power-centered needs for mobility and closeness. Moreover, Tatiana describes that not being allowed to go out to see her friends makes her feel very stressed while at the house and that she does not share this with her mother, thus illustrating her power-centered need for voice.

> [My mother] does not like for me to go out. Every time I tell her I'm going out, she does not like it. There's always some problem like "don't forget you have a child, you have to

> be responsible." I barely go out ever. Very sporadically, I ask for permission to go out, and I ask my little sister to help me taking care of my son, and I won't take long. Because sometimes I feel very stressed inside the house, I want to be with friends. I study on the weekend and they invite me out, and every time I have to say no because I know it's going to be the same problem as always, so I don't even say anything about it anymore [to my mother]. (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Some of the experiences described by the young mothers who participated in the interviews exemplify circumstances where the power-centered need for autonomy occurred simultaneously with the power-centered need for mobility. For example, Inés (Cartagena, 19 years old) who's former partner (also the biological father of her son) would constantly be surveilling her Facebook account (generating her power-centered need for autonomy) and prohibiting her from leaving the house (thus activating her power-centered need for mobility), resulting in her feeling concerned for her well-being.

> [My ex-partner] gifted me a cell phone, which is the one I have now, but he basically used it more than me—checking on my Facebook. He wouldn't stop checking! I mean… Also, if I, like, I was going to the corner store, he didn't want me to go, not even there. He wouldn't let me leave the house. […] At that point it got scary. (Inés [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Another example of power-centered needs occurring in tandem comes from Natalia's (Cartagena, 17 years old) experience with her paternal grandmother. Natalia mentioned how her grandmother would not let her girlfriends visit her, creating a power-centered need for closeness. Natalia was also not allowed to go out to the house's balcony (i.e., power-centered need for mobility), and if she were going to go to an appointment, her grandmother would pick what she

could wear or not (i.e., power-centered need for autonomy). Similarly, if she were allowed to leave the house and had "permission" to be outside the house until a certain hour, a few minutes past the hour, her grandmother would go and look for her (i.e., power-centered need for autonomy).

> My friends couldn't visit me, I couldn't go into the balcony, [my paternal grandmother] would buy me clothes, but I could not wear them, because if I was going for a date it had to be with a long dress and shoes. If I was going to a party, he wouldn't let me. Like, at about seven, or a quarter past seven, at night, he would already go there looking for me. (Natalia [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

In conclusion, we identified power-centered needs co-occurring in the young mother participant's experiences. The power-centered needs in the examples included were, in some instances, created by the same person and, in other instances, by multiple people.

Bluntly Confronting a Power-centered Need

In this study, we have defined a power-centered need as a situation in which a young mother finds it challenging to fulfill a need relevant to her well-being because of power asymmetries in her relationships. We also identified that young mothers desire to satisfy these power-centered needs and attempt to do it additionally, we found that these attempts by young mothers sometimes carried the risk of violence (which will be described and exemplified later in this chapter). We refer to young mothers' attempts to address their power-centered needs as bluntly confronting them. Therefore, bluntly confronting is the conceptual term that we use to describe situations (as identified from the data) where young mothers take overt or covert action to try to satisfy a power-centered need without either being aware of the risk of violence this may entail and, therefore, not taking action to minimize this risk or being aware of the risk but not

taking any action to minimize it. This section illustrates (by describing and including examples from the data) how bluntly confronting power-centered needs can lead to various outcomes, including creating a new power-centered need, negative emotions for the young mother, long-term changes in their relationships, a heightened vulnerability for the young mother to experience violence, or violence, abuse, and oppression. In addition, in this section, we also describe and include examples of the different covert ways to bluntly confront power-centered needs that young mothers use such that the person generating the power-centered need is not aware the young mother is confronting it and the overt ways used (where after identifying the need, the young mother confronts it in a way that it is evident for the person generating the need).

When young mothers bluntly confronted a power-centered need, it sometimes resulted in them experiencing a new one. One example of this is Lina (Medellín, 17 years old), who satisfied a power-centered need for mobility but, in doing so, was saddled with a power-centered need for autonomy.

> My stepmother was very critical of me about that. Because I really liked skirts, so she said I looked very strange […] that you could see my underwear. She was like that; she was very exaggerated on that point […] [my stepmother] would say, "If you don't change, you're not going out." So, I had to change. […] It made me angry because, well if I like to dress like that, why is she forbidding it? (Lina [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

The experience of Lina (Medellín, 17 years old) also uncovers how confronting a power-centered need can result in experiencing negative emotions, given that Lina mentioned feeling anger against the control her stepmother had over her. Francisca (Medellín, 18 years old) experienced a

similar phenomenon, in that after satisfying a power-centered need for voice, she was left experiencing anxiety and regret about having shared her opinion.

> With the baby's father, if was I going to say something—maybe something that—if he didn't like it, then I'd be left there like, "Augh, why did I say this? Now look at what I caused". It happened very often with him.[18] (Francisca [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Given that satisfying a power-centered need may result in negative feelings and uncovering different or additional power-centered needs, some mothers would decide to confront their power-centered needs without the knowledge of those who are provoking those needs. For example, Manuela (Medellín, 18 years old) fulfills her power-centered needs for mobility and closeness without letting her partner know what she is doing.

> When I have a problem with [my partner], I speak with my sister, and she gives me advice. But he does not like that I talk to her […] because she says I shouldn't discuss our private things with her. I tell him that I'm going to stop doing it, but I still do it. (Manuela [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Valeria (Cartagena, 18 years old) also satisfies her power-centered needs for mobility and closeness without letting her partner know. Her current boyfriend does not let Valeria leave the house to go out with her girlfriends, but Valeria bluntly confronts her power-centered need for mobility by "escaping" from him to spend time with her girlfriends.

> Most of all, I like to go out and chat with my friends because I've been friends with some of them from kindergarten and all the way up until we graduated [from school]. And now [my current partner] does not let me go out. I mean, he lets me go out but only

[18] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Power-centered Need for Voice" in this chapter.

> sometimes. [Other times] he says "no," he says that out of my friends […] only one of them has a baby—and she, she acts like she doesn't have one, I mean she is very free—and so [he says] "you want to be like her" and other things. And I say, "Oh, love, you're not going to let me out? I really like to go out and have fun," and he says, "I said no! No!" But I sneak out and go [participant laughs].[19] (Valeria [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Satisfying power-centered needs can also come with ruptures or changes in relationships. For example, Manuela (Medellín, 18 years old) had a good relationship with her parents-in-law, which drastically changed after she went back to study, fulfilling her power-centered need for aspiration.

> I used to [have a good relationship with my parents-in-law], but not anymore, because my mother-in-law, when she found out I was going to study, she called me and told me that she did not agree with that, she said I was supposed to stay home and take care of my daughter and my husband, more than anything else.[20] (Manuela [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Similar to Manuela's (Medellín, 18 years old) experience of having a change in her relationship with her parents-in-law after fulfilling her power-centered need for aspiration, Inés (Cartagena, 19 years old) describes how to fulfill her power-centered needs for autonomy and mobility she ended up breaking up with her partner at the time (also her son's biological father).

[19] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Power-centered Need for Closeness" in this Chapter.
[20] Please note parts of this excerpt were previously included in the section "Power-centered Need for Aspiration" in this chapter.

> [My ex-partner] gifted me a cell phone, which is the one I have now, but he basically used it more than me—checking on my Facebook. He wouldn't stop checking! I mean… Also, if I, like, I was going to the corner store, he didn't want me to go, not even there. He wouldn't let me leave the house. […] At that point, it got scary.[21] (Inés [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

For young mothers, bluntly confronting a power-centered need can result in discussions and fights with the person they renegotiate their power with. In most cases, this was with their partners. However, these experiences also happened with other family members, such as in the case of Lina (Medellín, 17 years old), who recalls having multiple fights with her stepmother to satisfy her power-centered need for mobility.

> If I want to stay out until late, I can't. She [my stepmother] is the one who makes the rules. We're also Christian, so […] she makes the rules, and the religion prohibits things [too]. Like, for example, wearing costumes, going to parties, or worse things. […] When I used to really like going out, I would get very angry, and we have had many fights. (Lina [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

Additional examples of bluntly confronting a power-centered need resulting in interpersonal conflict come from Belén (Medellín, 18 years old) and Sara (Cartagena, 17 years old). When seeking to satisfy different power-centered needs, these young mothers found themselves in arguments with their partners. Belén, who describes herself as a strong-willed and tenacious woman, recalls constantly fighting with her son's biological father about her clothing as she bluntly confronted her power-centered need for autonomy.

[21] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Interrelations Between Power-centered Needs" in this chapter.

> When I went out with [my ex-boyfriend], he didn't like it if I used short clothing or low cuts […] [He didn't like it] if I went out. But I didn't do as he said […] I would go, and then we would fight. We never had a good relationship because I'm not the kind of person you can forbid from doing what they want. (Belén [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Sara (Cartagena, 17 years old), currently in a long-distance relationship with her daughter's biological father, shared that when she and her partner were living in the same city, they were always fighting because she would not allow him to "control" her.

> We would fight so much […] my boyfriend says he isn't, but he is very controlling. The thing is, I don't let him control me; he is not going to control me. He used to control my cell phone, he wanted to control everything… Why would I do what he said if he wasn't even my boyfriend? Why would I do what he says? No sir! And he would say, "I'm not just your friend." (Sara [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

Similarly, even if there was no fight, the fact that a young mother satisfied her power-centered needs could contribute to her partner expressing anger and resentment. This was the case with Sofía (Medellín, 19 years old), who recalls how angry her former partner would become after she fulfilled her power-centered needs for voice and autonomy.

> [My ex-partner] wanted me to be cooking for him every day, and I would say, "No Mr., I don't cook Saturday… or Sunday," [and he] would get really angry. I would then cook for him, and then he wouldn't eat, or he would say there was no juice and that he needed

> juice… he said I was 'good for nothing,' and he would grab me hard and shake me.[22] (Sofía (Medellín), semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Similar to Sofía's experience of confronting a power-centered need that resulted in her partner being angry at her, Francisca (Medellín, 18 years old) recalls that she would password-protect her phone, so her former partner did not have access to it. She refused to give him her password, fulfilling her power-centered need for autonomy but resulting in anger from her partner.

> I would put a password on my phone, and [he said] that I had to give him that password because he had to know whom I was speaking with. But sometimes I would [ask for his phone] and he would say no, so [I would say] "If you don't give me your phone, I can also not give you mine," and he would get angry, and I thought "tough luck, you're not going to boss me around."[23] (Francisca [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old)

Moreover, Similar to the experiences of Sofía and Francisca, of having their partners experience anger after they satisfied a power-centered need, Inés (Cartagena, 19 years old) recalls an instance when, after bluntly confronting her power-centered need for mobility by leaving the house, her partner at the time got so angry that he slammed a door in the house so hard that he broke it. Having partners who are angry with them may result in young mothers being at a heightened risk for violence.

> Once, his stepfather told me to go help at their corner store, they sold food, and I helped them. So, I said, "Okay," I wanted to do him that favor. So, my baby's father [said to

[22] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and their Partners" in Chapter 5: Young Mothers Gendered Context of Oppression in the Global South.
[23] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Power-centered Needs for Autonomy" in this chapter.

> me], “You’re not going to the corner store, you are not going!” like that, but very loud, shouting. [I said] “Yes, I am going,” and I went. So, when I came back, his mother was crying and very angry because [my baby’s father] had thrown the door and hit it so hard that it broke. She asked me why I put up with so much from him. (Inés [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Bluntly confronting power-centered needs covertly may heighten the vulnerability of young mothers to experience violence. An experience described by Sofía (Medellín, 19 years old) exemplifies how trying to satisfy a power-centered need covertly resulted in a heated argument and dangerous situations where she experienced emotional and physical violence from her former partner. She recounted a story from New Year’s Eve when she wanted to spend time with her family, but her partner at the time did not agree with that decision. Sofía describes surreptitiously making plans to see her family after her partner had gone to sleep:

> I saw that supposedly [my ex-boyfriend] was sleeping, so I turned on my cellphone, and I wrote to my mother, “I’m coming down” and he saw the message and, oh god, he grabbed my phone and “whack!” he crashed it into the wall, and [he said] “I already told you we were going to sleep.” And so, I told him, “But I’m not sleepy.” And that made him so angry, that—the bed is very heavy—and he lifted the bed like nothing, and I thought, “oh god, this guy is going to hit me.” He was [like crazy] and started hitting himself. He supposedly fainted […] I acted like I didn’t care and I opened the door, and I was going to go, and he said “come here,” and I went, “didn’t you faint?” Then he said, “love, don’t go,” and I said, “get dressed so that we can go a little while to your mother’s house, I don’t want to stay here [in the house] right in the middle of [holiday season].” And he said, “ugh, you only like nightlife,” and I said, “what, I don’t even go out ever.”

> "Come on, let's go out for a little while, even if it's only to eat or something." And he says, "No no no no" and I was like, "Love, let's go. Let's go." I begged until I was tired, and I thought, "ok, I'm leaving." [As I was leaving] he grabbed my hand and closed the door, and locked it, and I thought, "I'm going to be killed right here." He grabbed a chair and broke it, and he started hitting the wall, but like, I was against the wall, and he started hitting around me, and I was like, "no!" Obviously, he was thinking about hitting me but, like, regretting it. Eventually, I threw myself to the floor and crouched there and made myself into a ball, and I was so scared I started crying. Then he said, "Sofi, come here to the kitchen, and let's talk." So, I went to the kitchen, and he said, "Listen, if you're not mine, you won't be anybody's," and I was there thinking, "Oh, I'm going to die.[24]" (Sofía[25] [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

It is noteworthy that for some young mothers, the awareness of the consequences (including the risk of violence) that bluntly confronting a power-centered need may bring is enough justification to not engage in power renegotiations in the relationship. This was the case for Cristina (Cartagena, 19 years old), who described having had a power-centered need for autonomy when in a relationship with her now ex-boyfriend (also the father of her son) but opted, at the time, not to bluntly confront this need for fear it would end the relationship.

> We made the mistake of, like, if I went somewhere and he hadn't said "yes, you can go"—because he didn't understand that he was not my dad, he was simply my partner and I shouldn't need to ask for permission, I should just say where I am going, which are very different things, and he didn't understand that. So, I used to think like "no, if I go,

[24] Please note parts of this excerpt were previously included in the section "Power-centered Need for Mobility" in this chapter.
[25] Sofía is currently safe and no longer in the abusive relationship described in this excerpt.

this or that will happen, and then we will break up" so I just preferred to not do it. (Cristina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

In conclusion, the experiences of young mothers reveal how bluntly confronting power-centered needs can have significant consequences for their well-being and relationships. Young mothers used covert and overt means to bluntly confront their power-centered needs as attempts to renegotiate power within their relationships and satisfy these needs. Overall, we found that for young mothers in Cartagena and Medellín, bluntly confronting a power-centered need can lead to various outcomes, such as creating a new power-centered need, negative emotions, long-term changes in relationships, or a heightened vulnerability to violence. The experiences of young mothers uncovered the complexities of relational power and the challenges that may arise when bluntly confronting power-centered needs.

The Interrelation Between Violence and Power-centered Needs

In this chapter, we describe and include examples of how young mothers' experiences of violence and/or oppression (as described in Chapter 5) were identified to interact with their power-centered needs. Overall, we found young mothers described situations where they were experiencing a power-centered need that preceded or coincided with a violent or oppressive experience. Most often, when the power-centered need preceded violence, it was due to the young mother bluntly confronting her power-centered needs. In other instances, the interaction between power-centered needs and violence was due to their presence in a young mother's life without fulfillment, sometimes resulting in chronic violence or prolonged dependence on abusers.

While most of the young mothers' experiences that exemplify how power-centered needs intersect with violence or oppression are specifically about physical violence, power-centered

needs were identified to also intersect with other types of violence or oppression, such as emotional violence or oppression. Illustrating this point, Diana (Medellín, 19 years old) recalls being bullied by her father's girlfriend because she wanted to pursue an education despite having had a baby. Being pressured into giving up her educational goals is an example of Diana experiencing the power-centered need for aspiration, and this pressure is being delivered as bullying.

> Because when you're a teenage mom, you get mistreated, like it happened with my stepmother. She was angry with my father [and she told him] that she refused to take care of my child, and my dad answered "but she is going to study" [and my stepmother said] "So now she is thinking about studying, now that she has a crying brat? Now you're going to study? Why didn't you study when you could?" So I think that she is being very mean, because even if we have kids, like, that doesn't mean we can't study.[26] (Diana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

When a power-centered need precedes violence or oppression, what we are referring to, as it was identified from the data, is that a situation that represents a power-centered need has been occurring (this can be for a prolonged period of time) or occurred before the violent/oppressive incident. The young mother recognizes the power-centered need and seeks to bluntly confront it, which in most situations was the link between the power-centered need occurring before the violence/oppression took place. One example of how a power-centered need precedes violence comes from Tatiana's (Medellín, 19 years old) experiences. Tatiana is experiencing the power-centered need for voice, feeling fearful of talking to the biological father of her child (who has

[26] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and their Extended Family" in Chapter 5: Young Mothers Gendered Context of Oppression in the Global South.

previously been physically and emotionally violent against her), and after confronting this need, the child's biological father reacted by physically abusing her. Tatiana expresses having feared for her life at this moment.

> With the baby's father. When I was going to tell him about the pregnancy, I really doubted if I should tell him or not because I was like, "No, he will hit me again. He will hit me again if I tell him I'm pregnant, won't he?" I was very frightened about telling him, for fear of how violently he might react, because sometimes, when we were alone in the house, he would threaten me with a knife. So, I didn't know if his reaction would be to stab me or to hit me badly. But, yeah, I did tell because what else was I going to do? At that moment, he got angry, and he hit me against a closet, I thought he was going to kill me or something like that because I had always been very scared of him. I mean, I would defend myself, but whenever he grabbed something sharp, at that moment, I would be too scared, I would try to calm down because I was so scared. I have always been very scared of him.[27] (Tatiana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

Moreover, Marta (Cartagena, 19 years old) experienced a power-centered need that preceded emotionally oppressive interactions. She remembers being prohibited by her father from leaving the house, highlighting a power-centered need for mobility, and being brought back into the house to be mistreated by him. In this example, Marta recognizes the power-centered need for mobility and bluntly confronts it by leaving the house. The attempt she made to confront the power-centered need she was experiencing was the link between experiencing the power-centered need for mobility and being emotionally abused by her father.

[27] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the sections "Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and Their Partners" in Chapter 5: Young Mothers Gendered Context of Oppression in the Global South and in the section "Power-centered Need for Voice" in this chapter.

> I also suffered violence coming from my dad, who would mistreat me. As I was the only woman [in my childhood home], I would hear a lot of "pull her back here by the hair," "pull her back here by the ear," and "don't let her go out." I would not go out a lot to the street because immediately, they would go to look for me. Sometimes he [father] would mistreat me, he would really do. He was raised in a rural town, so he would mistreat me as they mistreated him there.[28] (Marta [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

The prolonged presence of power-centered needs resulted in chronic violence, oppression, or dependence on abusers. These situations occurred when young mothers recognized their power-centered needs but were hesitant to confront them or did not identify any way to do it. Mariana's (Medellín, 20 years old) experience illustrates this point. Mariana had been experiencing for a prolonged period the power-centered need for closeness, and after not identifying a way to confront it, she found herself involved in a long-lasting abusive relationship with her son's biological father.

> [I said to myself] I can't handle this anymore; I'm going to end up murdered by him. I don't care how much it hurts him; he can kill himself if he wants, but that's better than my son being left without a mother. I said this to his mother, and she answered that it was true. However, I can't say I had support as someone saying to me, "You have to leave him; he is not doing any good to you"—no [I did not receive that kind of support]. So, I stayed [in a relationship].[29] (Mariana [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old)

[28] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and Their Guardians" in Chapter 5: Young Mothers Gendered Context of Oppression in the Global South.

[29] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and Their Partners" in Chapter 5: Young Mothers Gendered Context of Oppression in the Global South.

Ángela's (Cartagena, 19 years old) experience is another example of how the prolonged presence of a power-centered need interacts with violence. Angela, who was physically and emotionally abused by her former partner, was living in a situation where she was experiencing the power-centered needs for closeness and voice. She described not having any close connection with anyone to talk to after situations where she was abused by her former boyfriend and feeling distressed. Ángela recognizes the power-centered needs she is experiencing, but she does not see any way to eradicate these, which is what results in her going back into a relationship with her physically abusive partner.

> Well, [sometimes] there were discussions but with punches, it was because my ex-partner would be jealous about me and his brother, which sucked. So, he would hit me. I don't know, afterwards, it seemed like he felt bad or something, and he would come and talk to me, and as I had nobody else to vent with or something, I would just to talk to him and that's it.[30] (Ángela, [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

In conclusion, young mothers' power-centered needs intersect with violent or oppressive experiences by preceding these or co-occurring with them. Bluntly confronting a power-centered need and their prolonged presence were circumstances identified in different instances to be experienced by young mothers that resulted in violence or oppression perpetrated against them. While physical violence was the most common form of violence identified to intersect with power-centered needs experienced by young mothers, psychological abuse, bullying, and mistreatment were also identified as the intersection of power-centered needs and violence or oppression.

[30] Please note this excerpt was previously included in the section "Power Dynamics Between Young Mother Participants and Their Partners" in Chapter 5: Young Mothers Gendered Context of Oppression in the Global South.

Chapter 7: Addressing Power-centered Needs in Program Design

In this chapter, we answer the following research question: Can power-centered needs be addressed by the youth-driven participatory design of context-specific violence prevention interventions in Cartagena and Medellín? First, we provide a brief overview of the violence prevention intervention protocols, *MUMAS*[31] in Cartagena and *No Estás Sola*[32] in Medellín, that were collaboratively designed in each research site. A detailed description of the youth-driven intervention protocols can be found in appendices C and D. Second, we delve into how the intervention design led by the youth researchers addresses the power-centered needs of young mothers characterized in Chapter 6. It is important to note that the empirical purpose of this research phase was to complete the data-driven design, not implement these interventions.

Brief Overview of the Youth-driven, Data-driven Violence Prevention Intervention Design

There were two different youth-driven, data-driven violence prevention protocols since each was based on data from the interviews for the specific city, and the research collectives designed the interventions separately. The process to achieve the finalized versions of the two intervention protocols, *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola*, involved a youth-driven process where a preliminary version of the intervention protocols was presented during FGDs, where participants were asked about their thoughts on these.

Eight focus group discussions (FGDs), four in Cartagena and four in Medellín, were conducted. During the FGDs, the moderator presented the preliminary version of the violence prevention intervention protocol and facilitated a dialogue on its feasibility and suggestions for adjustment. The total number of FGD participants in this YPAR initiative is 40 people (30 were

[31] *MUMAS*, is an acronym in Spanish that means Women and Mothers (i.e., in Spanish, Mujeres y Madres).
[32] The English translation of the name 'No Estás Sola' is You are Not Alone.

young mothers and 10 were staff members[33]). The young mothers' (n=30) ages ranged between 16 and 20, and they had all been enrolled in the NGO for at least six months. The staff members (n=10) comprised nine females and one male and had roles that included project managers, psychologists, teachers, nurses, and social workers. The staff members who participated in the FGDs had worked at the NGO for varying lengths, with tenures ranging from less than a month to eight years. The six FGDs that had young mothers as participants were moderated by the youth researchers, while the university-affiliated researcher moderated the two FGDs with staff members (one per research site).

Participants' changes and recommendations regarding the proposed preliminary form of the intervention designs were incorporated into the final versions of both youth-driven violence prevention intervention protocols *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola*, presented below.

'MUMAS'

The intervention designed by the Cartagena research collective, *MUMAS*, is a program to prevent violence against young mothers and reduce the risk of revictimization. The program is designed to be implemented at Juanfe NGO in Cartagena, Colombia. It comprises a 90-minute awareness workshop and group training sessions organized into six modules. The modules cover topics such as violence and its consequences, conflict resolution, support networks and available resources, bystander interventions, conscious parenting, and economic independence. The program is designed to be led by experts on violence prevention alongside financial advisors. Embedded throughout the modules are hands-on activities that engage the beneficiaries, as well as mindfulness and reflexive activities that seek to provide outlets for young mothers to engage

[33] These focus group discussions were conducted with the intention of receiving feedback from the institutional perspective about the feasibility of the youth-driven intervention content.

with their feelings, heal, forgive, enhance their self-esteem, reflect on their past experiences, and set personal development goals, among other activities. A detailed description on the program design can be seen in Appendix C.

'No Estás Sola'

No Estás Sola is an intervention program designed by the research collective in Medellín to prevent violence against young mothers who have never experienced it and to reduce revictimization for survivors. The program has three phases: group training sessions, violence screenings, and one-on-one advocacy and support sessions. The group training sessions are offered to all incoming Juanfe beneficiaries and arranged into four modules: violence against women, healthy relationships, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and conscious parenting. The screening process then aims to identify young mothers who are currently or were previously experiencing violence through an individual written survey. The young mothers will then have the possibility to enroll in the third and last phase of the program, which is also open to former Juanfe beneficiaries currently experiencing violence. This phase includes one-on-one advocacy and support sessions and optional home visits by a violence prevention advocate, who will contribute towards solving pressing issues regarding the young mother's current situation, depending on her needs or risk of harm. For example, the violence prevention advocate may facilitate access to emergency-related services, medical care services for treatment for injuries, sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment, and mental health care, including counseling and therapy. A detailed description of the program design can be seen in Appendix D.

Addressing Power-centered Needs Through a Youth-driven Violence Prevention Intervention

This section describes how the youth-driven violence prevention intervention protocol design, *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola*, address power-centered needs[34] by offering young mothers strategies and tools to renegotiate power in their relationships, thus allowing them to safely fulfill power-centered needs relevant to their well-being. As with the term bluntly confronting introduced in Chapter 6, **safely fulfilling a power-centered need** is a conceptual term that refers to the renegotiation of power within relationships in order to eradicate or safely fulfill a power-centered need. In addition, this term entails that the person attempting to satisfy the power-centered need is not only aware of the risk of violence these may have but is also actively taking action to minimize the risk of violence from occurring.

Addressing the Power-centered Need for Voice

The power-centered need for voice describes situations where young mothers cannot express their opinions, perspectives, or feelings. Addressing the power-centered need for voice means that the young mother can start sharing her opinions, perspectives, and feelings with people she previously could not. One young mother highlighted the importance of achieving the eradication of the power-centered need, noting that expressing one's emotions is necessary to heal and vent.

> I would say it is very important to express the things we feel so that we can heal our wounds or heal from all of that that we're going through. Because, well, we express what

[34] It is important to note that all power-centered needs except the power-centered need for mobility were identified to be addressed by the youth-driven intervention designs. Therefore, there is not a subsection on the power-centered need for mobility.

> we feel, and we unload ourselves. (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Medellín], 16 to 20 years old)

There are components in both interventions that highlight the importance of expression and describe strategies young mothers can use to secure a voice within their relationships, often specifically with partners and parents-in-law. For example, both programs include individual skill-building sessions on assertive communication that offer information and techniques for young mothers to express their points of view clearly and respectfully. Additionally, both programs propose to construct spaces specifically to welcome young mothers to express their perspectives and feelings. In other words, they create spaces where young mothers are not experiencing a power-centered need for voice, with the intention, among others, of bringing awareness to different situations where they may be experiencing such power-centered need.

Satisfying the power-centered need for voice by expressing the need for help can prevent further victimization of young mothers living in violent situations or at risk of experiencing violence. In *MUMAS,* the awareness workshop aims to reinforce the importance of coming forward and seeking support when needed, encouraging the expression of feelings or experiences young mothers may encounter. The booklet distributed during this introductory workshop includes language that young mothers can use to invite their partners or guardians to some of the group training sessions, and thus, will offer guidelines on how to say something that can be challenging or even dangerous to express, as it implies a renegotiation of power relations.

Satisfying the power-centered need for voice can also be achieved through having open conversations with friends or family members about one's experiences, points of view, or feelings. Therefore, the third module of *MUMAS,* which includes sessions on building support networks, enabling a space for young mothers to identify their social support networks of friends

and family members, may be indirectly addressing this power-centered need by allowing young mothers to realize there are people they can talk to when looking for advice or feeling isolated, among others.

The power-centered need for voice is also addressed in *MUMAS* as it invites partners and guardians to participate in the awareness workshop, which by including information on the consequences of violence, may result in abusive partners or guardians reflecting on their poor or oppressive treatment of the young mothers, including situations where they do not allow them a secure space to speak. Partners and guardians are also invited to group training sessions to learn assertive communication techniques, which are expected to improve communication between them and the young mothers. This same dynamic is present in the *No Estás Sola* program and thus similarly offers these benefits.

No Estás Sola also invites participants to address their power-centered need for voice in various ways. The screening phase of the program (phase 2) addresses the power-centered need for voice by using an individual survey tool for mothers to feel more comfortable describing any violence-related experiences they may encounter; often, young mothers expressed that they do not want to be sharing this information in spaces where they might feel like a burden, or they might feel their reputation tarnished, thus this screening phase attempts to keep these reservations in mind and open an appropriate channel for communication.

The third phase of *No Estás Sola* (one-on-one support and optional home visits) addresses the power-centered need for voice in various ways. In the design of the third phase of *No Estás Sola,* the violence prevention advocates who facilitate the one-on-one sessions are external to the NGO. This, by their own report, helps young mothers feel more comfortable talking about situations they are encountering and need support with rather than speaking to

someone with whom they interact daily in a different capacity. Additionally, the optional home visits offer training sessions on individual skill-building (e.g., conflict resolution, assertive communication, and emotional regulation) to family members or people who live in the same household as the young mother surviving violence, thus improving communication between members of the household. Improvements in communication come hand-in-hand with enabling the young mother to express her opinions, feelings, and perspectives, thus safely fulfilling her power-centered need for voice.

In conclusion, addressing the power-centered need for voice is critical to supporting young mothers living in situations where they cannot express themselves openly and safely. The youth-driven intervention protocols, *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* offer various components that address this power-centered need, including individual skill-building sessions on assertive communication, creating safe spaces for expression, and encouraging open conversations with friends and family members. In addition, by inviting partners and guardians to participate in the awareness and training sessions, these interventions also address the power-centered need for voice by giving partners and guardians tools that can help to improve communication between them and the young mothers and enable young mothers to express their opinions, feelings, and perspectives safely. By satisfying this power-centered need for voice, young mothers can feel empowered to express their opinions, experiences, and feelings, ultimately improving their overall well-being.

Addressing the Power-centered Need for Aspiration

The power-centered need for aspiration refers to a circumstance where an individual cannot envision a desired future or a way to achieve it. This power-centered need is addressed by numerous components of *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola:* the programs are very future-oriented and,

thus, the young mothers are encouraged and accompanied in imagining and designing a future for themselves and, importantly, seeing a worthy future as a real possibility. Addressing the power-centered need for aspiration means that the young mothers can start to envision the possibility of achieving their aspirations and dreams and are not limited to what others think are their only possibilities.

Both programs have the presence of role models, which is expected to positively influence young mothers' ability to envision the possibility of overcoming hardships. Specifically, the role models who will be invited as guest speakers will be women who have had experiences of violence and trajectories where they have overcome these and fulfilled their aspirations. The role models invited as guest speakers will have space to talk to the young mothers during all modules of *MUMAS*. Similarly, the second session of the first module of *No Estás Sola* (the module on violence against women) will offer a space for a survivor guest speaker to share her story of overcoming difficulties and the achievements obtained after the violence she endured.

Participants from the FGDs mentioned how guardians sometimes provoke the power-centered need for aspiration by admonishing them for becoming mothers and posturing that there is no room for other ambitions in their life. Having role models who are also young mothers included in both programs addresses the power-centered need for aspiration by evidencing the opposite: it is possible to accomplish professional and personal aspirations while being a young mother. One FGD participant notes this by saying: “Sometimes our own parents will tell us to just put up with it because that’s how life is because that’s who your partner is, so you just have to put up with it because you just have to” (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Cartagena], 16 to 20 years old).

Given that the focus on conscious parenting speaks to a future-oriented mindset, it related to the power-centered need for aspiration. By seeing the feasibility of childrearing with a more conscious and well-informed approach, young mothers are able to visualize a positive future for themselves and their families. For example, the sessions on nonviolent discipline for misbehavior address the power-centered need for aspiration by offering young mothers strategies for them to enhance their child-caregiver communication and have alternatives to stop being violent against them, allowing them to raise their children in such a way that they can feel they are setting them up for success.

Of course, these young mothers want and deserve a future that is not exclusively focused on the raising of their children, which is why the sections focused on parenting also speak to the impact that cultural and social norms have on childrearing expectations for mothers, including as *machismo* culture and the expectation that women's roles are to be "nothing more" than a child bearer. In this effort to allow them to assess and explore their individuality, *MUMAS* offers sessions on financial independence, and *No Estás Sola* includes support in finding ways for survivors of violence to earn money.

A participant from the FGDs highlighted how partners or family members sometimes provoke the power-centered need for aspiration, which the healthy relationships module addresses. She believes learning about healthy relationships can, for example, guide a person to avoid spending time with someone who invokes this need in them.

> [I think it is important] to have a healthy relationship with our families and our partner. I feel like family members are like the most major aggressors towards us. Like "you got yourself pregnant now you can't leave the house." I feel like I got pushed away from my family so much that year. We were six cousins, I got pregnant, [and I would her a lot of]

> "your cousins already finished school, they're already working, and you aren't, you have to stay home with your husband, you can't study." So, it [is also important] to know to stay away from people that are not contributing good things for your life. (Focus Group Discussion, Participant – Young Mother [Medellín], 16 to 20 years old)

In conclusion, addressing the power-centered need for aspiration is important for young mothers to be in spaces and situations where they can envision a desired future and a way of achieving it. Both interventions address the power-centered need for aspiration, first, by counting on the presence of role models to evidence how it is possible for young mothers to attain their goals and objectives. Secondly, the youth-driven intervention protocols address the power-centered need for aspiration through the conscious parenting modules included in the training sessions of both interventions (*MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola*) that offer tools for young mothers to (if desired) change their parenting practices to become the mothers they aspire to be third, by enhancing awareness of the impact of cultural and social norms on mothers' childrearing expectations and allowing them to explore their individuality. By satisfying this power-centered need for aspiration, young mothers can feel empowered to safely dream and aspire about themselves studying, working, buying houses, and living comfortably and happily with their children and families and realize this is a real possibility for them.

Addressing the Power-centered Need for Emotional Wellness

The power-centered need for emotional wellness refers to a situation where the individual cannot cope with emotions. Thus, to address it, young mothers can learn different strategies to individually cope with emotions given their personalities, interests, and resources. These strategies, which will be covered in the emotion regulation session in both programs, *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola,* include breathing exercises and strategies to name and identify emotions. The

power-centered need for emotion is addressed in both interventions in various components of the group training modules, specifically, those focusing on emotional regulation skill-building and the module on conscious parenting. Addressing the power-centered need for emotional wellness means young mothers are in intimate and social contexts where they can cope with challenging emotions in their preferred ways. This decision of coping with their emotions as desired and considered best by them and for them is not limited by others.

For the *MUMAS* program, a booklet will be handed out during the awareness workshop at the start of the intervention which contains prompts that promote reflexive writing, encouraging young mothers to reflect on and record their realities, which encourages positive modes of coping with difficult emotions. The second session of the module on support networks, which focuses on identifying or actively building a support network, allows young mothers to recognize how communicating their emotions to others might work as a healthy coping mechanism. Additionally, the inclusion of guest speakers to share their experiences and healing trajectories also addresses the power-centered need for emotion by allowing the young mothers to learn how survivors have coped with difficult emotions relating to experiences of violence. This connects to the power-centered need for emotion in two ways: first, this will allow the young mothers to learn tools that proved useful to people with similar experiences, and second, a role model might inspire a hurting young mother to believe that healthy emotional coping is a feasible prospect. One young mother who participated in the FGDs in Cartagena describes how she believes that guest speakers should discuss the emotional component of surviving violence, thus allowing survivors participating in *MUMAS* to feel empowered as they listen to how others coped with emotional hardship.

> I would add this: in programs like these, people who come to talk should be people who experienced violence. Because somebody can't talk about violence if they haven't had the experience, because they don't know how it feels. It is very important that people who come to talk are people who went through that violence, also because it will empower others, because it will show by way of example that as they can open up about what they went through, so can other women. (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Cartagena], 16 to 20 years old)

No Estás Sola addresses the power-centered need for emotion through the emotional regulation sessions that use art-based modalities such as painting, pottery, and dancing as strategies to express emotions, as well as through the guided healing sessions that facilitate spaces for mothers to cope with emotions such as regret and anger. Young mothers in the FGDs suggested having these healing spaces specifically to practice self-compassion, develop a better self-image, and ask for their children's forgiveness for wrongdoings against them.). The excerpts below illustrate first how young mothers proposed the inclusion of healing sessions with their children related to the importance of asking their children for forgiveness if any wrongdoing had occurred. Secondly, these refer to the importance of self-compassion and recognizing one's individual strength to achieve their dreams and aspiration.

> There's something I would change, I would also include special spaces to heal, with our children. A place where we can sit with them, ask for forgiveness. Like, do you know what I am saying? On top on the sessions on parenting, also having a space to talk to them. (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Medellín], 16 to 20 years old)

On the importance of self-compassion and recognizing one's individual strength to achieve their dreams and aspiration a FGD participant shared:

> Experiencing the moment like: "ok, what can I do to get better? I have low self-esteem; how can I fix that?" Re-centering on myself and having that moment to forgive myself. […] Because sometimes we're so hard on ourselves. So, we need the space to forgive ourselves, not only ask our children for forgiveness but also forgive ourselves. (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Medellín], 16 to 20 years old)

The conscious parenting module (which is included in both interventions) also addresses the power-centered need for emotional wellness by exploring the relationship between emotional regulation and parenting by exploring the consequences of harsh parenting or violent punishments that may result from a lack of opportunities to cope with challenging emotions. Young mothers from both cities who participated in the FGDs highlighted how the conscious parenting module would help them avoid, for example, physically punishing their children as a response to emotional dysregulation. In turn, becoming aware of the link between managing challenging emotions and parenting addresses the power-centered need for emotional wellness by enhancing awareness of how critical it could be to cope with difficult emotions when parenting. Illustrating this point, FGD participants from Medellín said, "And the module on parenting is good. Yea, I like it, because, for example, I feel like I take out my emotions on him a lot" (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Medellín], 16 to 20 years old). Another FGD participant answered: "Or we don't know how to reprimand. Like I, in times of anger, I say things I shouldn't say, and I hit where I shouldn't hit. After the time passes, one regrets it, but it's all because I was raised like this" (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Medellín], 16 to 20 years old). Likewise, a FGD participant from Cartagena said:

"When these problems arise in the home, there's many mothers who unload their anger on their kids, so I think it would be good if you added information on how to protect the kids in those situations" (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Cartagena], 16 to 20 years old).

In conclusion, the power-centered need for emotional wellness can be a significant challenge for young mothers who are limited in their desired way to cope with difficult emotions. Both the *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* youth-driven intervention protocols recognize the importance of addressing this need through various strategies and components of the program. These interventions provide opportunities for young mothers to learn emotional regulation skills and develop healthy coping mechanisms through activities such as breathing exercises, art-based modalities, and guided healing sessions. The conscious parenting module in both programs also emphasizes the link between emotional regulation and parenting and provides young mothers with tools to avoid violent punishments resulting from a lack of opportunities to cope with challenging emotions. By addressing the power-centered need for emotional wellness, these interventions empower young mothers to take control of their emotions and develop positive ways of coping that can improve their overall well-being and that of their children. Satisfying this power-centered need means young mothers can cope with challenging emotions in the way they desire.

Addressing the Power-centered Need for Closeness

Closeness, as a power-centered need, pertains to situations where an individual cannot establish or nurture a close relationship with someone or a group of people they desire. All individual skill-building sessions included in *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* address the power-centered need for closeness by introducing young mothers to strategies and tools for conflict

resolution (as well as facilitating access to these tools and information for partners and guardians, which is especially pertinent because these groups are often the ones who generate this power-centered need for the young mother). These components of the programs seek to allow young mothers to nurture healthy relationships. Additionally, the module on conscious parenting addresses the power-centered need for closeness by informing and offering tools for young mothers (and sometimes their partners) to form stronger and healthier bonds with their children, including better child and caregiver communication.

In the *MUMAS* program, the modules on support networks (module 3) and bystander intervention (module 4) seek to address situations where an individual is prevented from or limited in forming connections with others. The module on support networks directly addresses the power-centered need for closeness by highlighting the importance of attachments and peer networks, as well as identifying one's support network and learning how to benefit from it. Incidentally, support networks can increase emotional regulation skills and reduce social isolation, and thus, identifying or building these for young mothers addresses the power-centered need for closeness. The fourth module on bystander intervention addresses closeness by offering young mothers strategies to interrupt or challenge a situation they recognize as unjust or violent, thus generating connections with others as they support and protect them from harm.

Another way the programs address the power-centered need for closeness is simply through the structure's heavy reliance on group settings for the training sessions. Through this context, participants will have spaces and opportunities to develop trusting relationships with other young mothers. One participant refers to the empowerment that comes from being in a community with other young mothers.

> I think that all of us, at some point, all of us as young mothers, have felt rejection. At some point, we have felt very bad because of that, for having been young mothers, but coming here has helped us feel more empowered. So, I think that if we had these workshops [in the *No Estás Sola* intervention], we could feel so much more empowered because of the focus on violence. (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Medellín], 16 to 20 years old)

In conclusion, the *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* programs have been designed to address the power-centered need for closeness among young mothers. The programs introduce various tools and strategies for conflict resolution and conscious parenting, which help young mothers form stronger and healthier bonds with their partners, children, and support networks. The modules on support networks and bystander intervention provide opportunities for participants to identify their support networks, develop emotional regulation skills, and connect with others to challenge unjust situations. Overall, the programs' group settings create a community of young mothers where they can establish trusting relationships and feel empowered. By addressing the power-centered need for closeness, *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* are supporting young mothers thrive in their personal and social lives by making evident how important attachments with others are for one's well-being and generating spaces to experience those benefits.

Addressing the Power-centered Need for Autonomy

Autonomy, as a power-centered need, can be conceptualized through two dimensions: one that refers to a situation where a person's privacy is constrained or their privacy boundaries transgressed, and a second one indicating a situation where an individual cannot freely decide on aspects of their lives relevant to them and their well-being. This project's data illustrated that privacy transgressions were often motivated or emboldened by sociocultural gender norms.

Thus, the sessions in both programs that include discussion on the sociocultural context of *machismo*[35] and gender-based expectations address this need. Examples of this include excessive monitoring by guardians on clothing or activities and whereabouts of only female children or being forced to end most (if not all) of their friendships to focus exclusively on being a mother. Of special importance among these discussions is the presence of reproductive coercion or lack of reproductive freedom and bodily autonomy. Acknowledging these sociocultural realities and discussing other possibilities, as is anticipated in the *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* programs, is thus expected to be a first step towards more autonomous handling of the personal affairs of the young mothers. This young mother, for example, expresses that she believes that education on these topics fosters independence: "I would say that [the proposed intervention] is good because oftentimes, we, as women, let ourselves be maltreated for lack of information, and as we start getting information, we start becoming more empowered and independent" (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Cartagena], 16 to 20 years old).

Another young mother states that if lacking education, one might be coerced into thinking that she has to stay in a relationship with her child's biological father against her desires because of *machismo* expectations that tell her no other option is possible. Incidentally, this also suggests that the presence of empowered survivors of violence as guest speakers, as discussed in the section on the power-centered need for aspiration, also addresses the power-centered need for autonomy by evidencing how role models (invited as guest speakers) have safely satisfied this power-centered need for autonomy and the benefits this has in their lives as autonomous human beings.

[35] *Machismo* is a term that encapsulates patriarchal society, sexism, and heteronormative cultures in Latin America.

> Like when we want to give our opinion on something, and they don't let us, like when they feel that we have to be with our partner, or the father of the baby, because without him we aren't capable, that we won't be able to give a good life to our children. Thinking like that is avoided with more knowledge, and we need to learn more about that. (Focus Group Discussion Participant – Young Mother [Medellín], 16 to 20 years old).

Additionally, the power-centered need for autonomy, as described and identified in this PAR initiative, might be impossible without some degree of economic independence. Various components of each program guide young mothers toward constructing this independence. In *MUMAS*, the session that discusses different types of violence is designed to explore the concept of economic abuse, while all the sessions of module 6 provide education on personal finances and economic independence.

In *No Estás Sola*, the one-on-one sessions and home visits in phase 3 will be facilitated by a violence prevention advocate that, as recommended by FGD participants, will guide the young mother toward financial independence, such as by helping them find a job or develop professional skills.

In conclusion, the *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* intervention protocols recognize the power-centered need for autonomy as a crucial aspect of the well-being of young mothers. Through various components of the programs, both dimensions of the power-centered need for autonomy, which include privacy and decision-making, are addressed. The programs offer education and tools that enable young mothers to handle their personal affairs more autonomously, including recognizing and addressing sociocultural norms that constrain their independence. Moreover, the programs guide young mothers (who would desire this) toward achieving economic independence, which is a critical aspect of autonomy. By addressing the

power-centered need for autonomy, the programs provide young mothers with the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions that positively impact their lives and their children's lives.

MUMAS and *No Estás Sola* intervention protocols address the power-centered needs of young mothers in various aspects of their lives. These interventions recognize the critical importance of satisfying the power-centered needs of young mothers. The programs offer a range of strategies and components that help young mothers develop skills and tools to address renegotiations of power in their relationships, thereby addressing the power-centered needs they are encountering and supporting their overall well-being. The youth-driven intervention protocols promote the creation of safe spaces for expression, encourage open conversations, provide role models, and offer opportunities for conflict resolution, emotional regulation, and conscious parenting. By addressing these power-centered needs, the programs empower young mothers to make informed decisions, establish trusting relationships, and cope positively with challenging emotions, as will be described in detail in the discussion chapter. Ultimately, these interventions aim to support young mothers' thriving in their personal and social lives and to improve their overall well-being.

Chapter 8: Discussion

This participatory study contributes to the field of social welfare scholarship in several ways. First, it identifies a more nuanced and context-specific understanding of power and its assertion in relation to violence through theory-building on power and violence prevention with young mothers. Second, by exploring relationships within young mothers' social and intimate context in the global South, it uncovers ways in which power dynamics in relationships can be translated to violence prevention programming for young mothers in Colombia from a youth-

driven, decolonial feminist framework. Third, this study contributes to the field of YPAR research on violence prevention through a youth-driven design and collection of qualitative data on violence and power relations that ultimately generated knowledge on the topic.

How It All Comes Together: Youth-driven Violence Prevention Program Design that Addresses the Power-centered Needs of Young Mothers in the Global South

This YPAR initiative proposes that the identified power-centered needs and their relationships to violent and oppressive experiences be used as an analytical lens for violence prevention programming in global South contexts. The power-centered needs analytical model offers a possibility to consider power relations when working on violence prevention research. Grounded in a youth-driven research methodology, this analytical model challenges traditional power relations in the research process by destabilizing power asymmetries between youth researchers and the university-affiliated researcher. This section describes the power-centered needs analytical model informed by the data collected within this YPAR initiative. Then, it discusses its implications for theory and programming with a specific focus on the field of social welfare research and practice in the global South.

The YPAR-driven initiative explored how power-centered needs can be addressed by bluntly confronting or attempting to fulfill them safely. It identified in the data the outcomes of bluntly confronting power-centered needs and the prospective outcome of enhancement of well-being after safely fulfilling a power-centered need. In addition, the analytical model incorporates the youth-driven violence prevention interventions (*MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola*) and illustrates how these interventions address the power-centered needs through multidimensional empowerment by generating changes in its three dimensions (expansion of agency, well-being freedom, and gains in power; Drydyk, 2013). This model will be explored by first revisiting the

relationships between **power-centered needs and violence** and subsequently discussing how these needs are addressed by either being **bluntly confronted or safely fulfilled**. The section will then delve into how the two youth-driven violence prevention intervention designs **address power-centered needs through multidimensional empowerment** and how this can both enhance well-being and prevent violence.

Power-centered Needs and Violence

Power-centered needs are situations that arise from powerlessness and a lack of choice, where the person with the least power in the relationship, cannot satisfy the specific power-centered need they have to enhance their well-being. Experiencing power-centered needs shapes young mothers' experiences and relationships. Depending on the power-centered need being experienced, young mothers can find themselves unable to regulate difficult emotions, inhibited from expressing themselves openly and safely, or without the possibility of privacy. They may also experience feelings of anger, frustration, sadness, and helplessness. These power-centered needs also impact their relationships by weakening trust and enabling misunderstandings. With this knowledge, young mothers are motivated to identify how to address and satisfy any of the power-centered needs being experienced.

Depending on the power-centered need at hand, satisfying it enhances well-being in a variety of ways, as identified by the YPAR teams. For example, it may increase one’s control over their life or their sense of independence (autonomy), enable someone to feel validated and heard (voice), facilitate access to resources (mobility), help maintain good mental health (emotional wellness), provide a sense of support and belonging (closeness), or that of purpose and meaning (aspiration).

Because power-centered needs arise from powerlessness, it is evident that a reconfiguration of power relations is also necessary to access well-being. This power restructuring within relationships can take many forms and arises from the desire to satisfy a power-centered need to prioritize well-being. Three forms of power reconfiguration were identified and explored throughout this YPAR initiative: 1) bluntly confronting a power-centered need, 2) a prolonged presence of a power-centered need given a lack of fulfillment, and 3) safely fulfilling a power-centered need. These three ways of renegotiating power within relationships and their connections with violence are discussed below.

Bluntly Confronting a Power-centered Need and its Relationship to Violence

Young mothers who participated in the interviews described instances where they sought to satisfy their power-centered needs by bluntly confronting them. This is differentiated from a safe fulfillment of a power-centered needs, which must comply with two aspects (as discussed later in this chapter): the acknowledgment of the risk of violence and an active attempt at mitigating that risk. Bluntly confronting a power-centered need does not take into consideration either of the components of safe fulfillment. While some young mothers identify the inherent risk of bluntly confronting their power-centered needs, they do not necessarily have the awareness, strategies, or tools (that foster multidimensional empowerment) to minimize the identified risk of violence, thus satisfying only one of the two aspects of safe fulfillment of a power-centered need.

Young mothers used both covert and overt strategies to confront the power-centered needs they were experiencing. Overt confrontation requires renegotiating power in the relationship, most commonly manifesting as a discussion between the parties involved.

Young mothers who address their power-centered needs by bluntly confronting them have previously identified the presence of these needs in their lives. Their desire to meet the need is motivated by attempting to eradicate the discomfort the need creates in their lives and by the desire to make decisions that prioritize their well-being.

Power-centered needs, therefore, precede violence in the sense that they exist, are identified, and are subsequently bluntly confronted, thus resulting in violence. Hence, bluntly confronting the power-centered need may result in a violent outcome or a heightened vulnerability to violence. Other outcomes that may result from bluntly confronting a power-centered need include the generation of new power-centered needs, the generation of difficult emotions, or long-term changes in intimate and social relationships. These consequences are likely to arise due to the shift in power that occurs in most instances when a power-centered need is being fulfilled. This may not be the case in all instances since confronting a power-centered need when done covertly, does not necessarily imply renegotiating power within a relationship.

When a young mother bluntly confronts her power-centered needs (overtly), she attempts to assert her power within the relationship. In this case, young mothers who bluntly confront their power-centered needs are more empowered and autonomous than those who do not. This aligns with literature on violence against women and girls and power relations that identifies women with more autonomy as having more power in their relationships (Antai, 2011; Gage & Hutchinson, 2006; Mondal & Paul, 2021). The identification of this power-centered need motivates the young mother to eradicate this need to enhance her well-being. However, this spike in her empowerment places her at a higher risk for violence. The association of empowerment with violence aligns with studies that have identified how women's decision-making autonomy

compared to male partners increase the likelihood of violence against them (Antai, 2011; Gage & Hutchinson, 2006).

The Prolonged Presence of a Power-centered Need and its Relationship to Violence

The prolonged presence of a power-centered need was also identified in its relationship to violence. In the context of the young mothers in Colombia, the presence of a power-centered need over a sustained period is a result of the recognition of a power-centered need(s) arising with the absence of confrontation, given the awareness that such an act may heighten the vulnerability to violence. In these instances, where young mothers are living with power-centered needs constantly present in their lives, the prolonged presence of a power-centered need may coincide with chronic violence or dependence on abusers. To illustrate this point, the reader might imagine a young mother in an abusive intimate relationship who wants to request money from her abuser to visit her mother. She is, in this case, experiencing the power-centered need for voice (and perhaps also the power-centered needs for closeness, mobility, and emotional wellness). Still, given that she fears bluntly confronting the power-centered need for voice by making this request of her abusive partner, she remains in an abusive relationship where there has been no renegotiation of power. She continues to experience violence at the hands of her partner.

Young mothers experiencing the prolonged presence of power-centered needs are not multidimensionally empowered. They are in situations of powerlessness where they require gains in power in their relationships to reduce asymmetries of vulnerability (Drydyk, 2013). These power differentials are commonly accepted in academic literature as an underlying factor for violence against women (Haylock et al., 2016; Jewkes, 2002; Kabeer, 2016; Mondal & Paul, 2021). When one individual in an intimate, familial, or social relationship has more power, they

can exert control over the other person. As found in this YPAR initiative, the motivations to use this power to gain control may include asserting a sense of superiority, feeling validated, jealousy, or insecurity in the relationship. The same holds true in heterosexual relationships, where power imbalances can lead to situations in which men use violence to exert control over their partners (Gage & Hutchinson, 2006; Mondal & Paul, 2021). In addition, as seen in this study and throughout scholarly literature, gender inequality and patriarchal gender norms also contribute to these power differentials (Blanc, 2001; Jewkes, 2002; Kabeer, 2016; Schuler et al., 2016).

Power-centered needs can also be generated by guardians and parents-in-law who, similar to partners, tend to hold more power in relationships with young mothers given, among others, structural dimensions in the lives of the young mothers such as age hierarchies, family structure and the socioeconomic context of poverty. As with partners, the prolonged presence of power-centered needs generated by either guardians or parents-in-law can result in violence. A similar mechanism creates the dynamic wherein the young mother cannot fulfill her power-centered needs by renegotiating power in her relationships. The lack of power in a relationship, (when defined in terms of choice as does Dyrdyk, 2013), offers an explanation as to why violence can coincide with unfulfilled power-centered needs. Young mothers in these situations are asymmetrically vulnerable compared to the other in the relationship, and thus cannot access the tools to renegotiate their power—a condition necessary to fulfill their power-centered needs and, in certain instances, leave or end abusive relationships with partners, guardians, or parents-in-law. When experiencing power asymmetries, the young mother's scope of choice is limited or determined by the individual in the relationship with the most power.

It is important to note that power differentials between young mothers and their parents-in-law are minimally explored in the literature compared to power differentials within heterosexual couples. This gap in research examining power relations with parents-in-law and violence against women, or in this case, specifically, young mothers, is likely a global North bias, given that living with parents-in-law or moving into a parents' house is more common in global South geographical areas such as North Africa, South and East Asia, and Latin America (Bietsch et al., 2021; Jewkes et al., 2019; Raj et al., 2006). This research initiative, therefore, contributes to the literature base on violence against women by expanding knowledge of power relations with parents-in-law and how this relationship is often one of violence and oppression in the lives of young mothers.

Safely Fulfilling a Power-centered Need and its Relationship to Violence

Given that bluntly confronting a power-centered need as an attempt to fulfill it often results in a violent situation, it is important to identify safe ways for young mothers to fulfill their power-centered needs and enhance their well-being. In this context, safely fulfilling a power-centered need means addressing a power-centered need and, with the acknowledgment that there may be a risk of violence, taking action to minimize that risk. This is distinct from bluntly confronting a power-centered need, wherein the young mother is either not cognizant of the risk of violence the renegotiation of power entails and/or unable to proactively minimize the latent risk of violence.

The two elements in the definition of safe fulfillment of a power-centered need—the acknowledgment and mitigation of the risk of violence—are what shape the outcome toward well-being and violence prevention. Cognizance of the risk of violence enables the young mother to make decisions accordingly, thus proactively minimizing the risk of violence. This mitigation

can be achieved using the skills and tools offered by the two youth-driven violence prevention intervention designs, such as assertive communication and conflict resolution. Moreover, other components of *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* also help minimize the risk of violence when renegotiating power within relationships. These intervention aspects include inviting guardians and partners to attend the group training sessions (including the individual skill-building sessions), teaching breathing techniques and mindful meditation, and providing strategies to achieve financial independence, among others.

Hence, safely satisfying one or more power-centered need(s) can both enhance well-being (due to the eradication of the power-centered need) and prevent violence (by achieving a long-term change in the power dynamics of the relationship). However, while safely satisfying a power-centered need aims to minimize the risk of violence resulting from the renegotiation of power, this is not always a guaranteed outcome.

The power-centered needs analytic model proposes that the safe fulfillment of a power-centered need is done through enacting multidimensional empowerment (Drydyk, 2013) and results in satisfying the power-centered need in the long term, thus subsequently enhancing well-being (and preventing violence from bluntly confronting the power-centered need or given its prolonged presence without fulfillment). In this event, the young mother is empowered by her expansion of agency, well-being freedom, and relational power. Changes in the dimensions of **agency expansion** may result from young mothers learning about violence and its consequences or about sexual and reproductive health, which expands their agency through awareness and, therefore, their possibilities of choice. Changes in **well-being freedom** when young mothers are multidimensionally empowered occur, for instance, when they choose what is right for them, even if this choice is rejected by someone else. This study conceptualizes changes in the

dimension of well-being freedom as also arising when young mothers develop critical consciousness[36] (Freire, 1970; 1973) about the importance of renegotiating power to attain well-being as well as the risks of violence that these renegotiations carry. The third and final dimension, **relational power,** is changed when young mothers challenge their powerlessness, reducing the asymmetries in vulnerability (Drydyk, 2013). They arrive at a situation in which the choices made by others in their intimate and social contexts do not necessarily determine their decisions. The next section delves into what safely fulfilling a power-centered need through multidimensional empowerment entails as it relates to the *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* program design.

Safely Fulfilling a Power-centered Need Through Multidimensional Empowerment

This study found that young mothers want to satisfy their power-centered needs, as it is presumed to enhance their well-being and prevent them from experiencing violence. *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* address power-centered needs by facilitating multidimensional empowerment (Drydyk, 2013), offering opportunities to learn about violence and its consequences, develop critical consciousness through dialogue and individual and collective reflection, and explore strategies and tools that can be used to renegotiate relational power, such as skill-building on conflict resolution, assertive communication, and emotional regulation.

In this section, we explore how the two youth-driven violence prevention intervention protocols address power-centered needs by modifying the dimensions of multidimensional empowerment. This section begins by exploring how the awareness, education, and knowledge facilitated by the design of the interventions has the potential to change the dimension of agency

[36] Critical consciousness refers to an understanding of a social issue that undermines one's well-being and thinking holistically and critically about one's (and others) social reality, thus recognizing the power of collective action to change such reality and enhance well-being (Freire, 1970; 1973).

for young mothers, then discusses the connection between critical consciousness and well-being freedom, and lastly, uncovers how individual skill-building relates to gains in relational power.

Power, multidimensional empowerment, and violence are all complex issues, and despite compartmentalizing the individual components of the interventions that connect with the dimensions of multidimensional empowerment (for organizational purposes), all of this learning, personal growth, introspection, and collective reflection occur in tandem. Moreover, it is fundamental to recapitulate Drydyk's (2013) notion that the three dimensions of empowerment are independent, and none are reducible to either one or both others. This interconnection is created because "agency expansion is central, but how these choices expand well-being freedom is another important dimension, and how expanded choice results from gains in power is another" (Drydyk et al., 2019, p. 208). Hence, as with the aspects of the interventions that bring about changes in the dimensions of empowerment, the dimensions are all interrelated and transforming simultaneously.

Awareness, Education, Knowledge, and Expansion of Agency

This section focuses on the association between the aspects of the two interventions that focus on enhanced awareness and knowledge and the dimension of agency of multidimensional empowerment (Drydyk, 2013). Overall, the aspects of both interventions that were identified to tackle enhance awareness and knowledge include most of the group training sessions, such as the five sessions of Module 1 of the group training session in *MUMAS*[37] and the three sessions of Module 1 of the group training sessions in *No Estás Sola*.[38] These group sessions (among others)

[37] The sessions of Module 1 in the group training sessions of *MUMAS* include topics such as: 1) Violence, 2) Sociocultural elements of violence, 3) Relational power and power dynamics, 4) Types of violence and 5) Consequences of violence. For more details, please see Appendix C.

[38] The sessions of Module 1 in the group training session of *No Estás Sola* include topics such as: 1) The magnitude of violence against women, 2) Warning signs for violence, and 3) Consequences of violence against women. For more details, please see Appendix D.

that focus on offering learning opportunities for the young mothers augment a process of change towards empowerment. Acquiring knowledge on the topics and issues included in the group training sessions expands the agency of young mothers. They may be learning about things they previously did not know, thus expanding their range of possibilities when actively deciding about aspects of their lives. Expansion of agency is about having more choices to make, some of which will presumably offer better opportunities to enhance one's well-being than previous possibilities. However, acquiring this knowledge does not necessarily indicate that the young mother is empowered because, as mentioned, this will require changes in the other two dimensions of multidimensional empowerment: well-being freedom and relational power (Drydyk, 2013).

Critical Consciousness and Well-being Freedom

Active decision-making or autonomous personal involvement in activities brought about (exclusively) by the expansion of agency does not consider the consequences of those decisions or activities in a person's life or well-being. Therefore, at that juncture, it is fundamental to consider well-being freedom: active decision-making brought by agency that results in an outcome that has to do with one's well-being, such as one that is supported by one's own values. As conceptualized by Drydyk (2013), agency is scalar; one person can exercise more agency than another, or a person may exercise more agency in certain contexts than others. To gauge the degree of agency exercised, there should be a consideration of the impact of the decision on well-being freedom. To illustrate how one could gauge the degree of agency related to well-being freedom, one might consider two young mothers exercising their agency towards well-being freedom: one can decide what clothes to wear, and the other has gained control over a major life decision such as childbearing. The latter young mother in the example has greater

agency than the former because her active decision-making has greater well-being freedom. This example is included to demonstrate the scalar properties of the expansion of agency and the interrelations between these two dimensions (agency and well-being freedom) of multidimensional empowerment.

As mentioned in the findings of this YPAR initiative, both youth-driven intervention designs can address power-centered needs through multidimensional empowerment by advancing changes in its three dimensions. Specifically, the intervention designs facilitate changes in the dimension of well-being freedom by promoting critical consciousness. This is achieved through group training sessions that encourage groupthink and individual or collective reflexivity, as well as through opportunities for young mothers to exercise agency and experience the ease that comes with active decision-making. These spaces and processes foster critical consciousness by offering opportunities and tools to reflect on one's reality, such as through art-based emotional regulation strategies (e.g., dancing and pottery), mindfulness meditation, and group discussion where there is respectful dialogue and debate, among others. As a result, critical consciousness may alter one's own values and views, thus cultivating desired outcomes in one's well-being freedom.

To hone in on the relationship between agency and well-being freedom, it is important to note that well-being freedom can be enhanced or achieved (to a certain degree) without necessarily involving active decision-making (from agency expansion). For example, one might be offered nutritious food at the workplace. One may value and want to eat nutritious food to enhance well-being, but perhaps not have been involved in the process of attaining that goal. While well-being is being bolstered, this scenario does not represent empowerment. Empowerment is found when people hold an active role in enhancing their own well-being.

Individual Skill-Building and Gains in Power

As with education, gaining power is also a means of empowerment, which, in this case, results in a reduction of a power asymmetry in dynamics where the young mother holds the least amount of power (Gammage et al., 2015). This dynamic is conceptualized as an asymmetric vulnerability (Drydyk, 2013), wherein the least powerful person experiences a reduction in available choices (i.e., agency) and their ability to achieve well-being (i.e., well-being freedom). Power as a means of empowerment is fostered in the *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* programs through individual skill-building sessions that present techniques and strategies (and spaces to practice them) for conflict resolution, assertive communication, and emotional regulation. These skills can allow young mothers to offset their limited or restricted choices[39], thus challenging the power dynamics in their relationship wherein they might be carrying the role of decision-taker, rather than decision-maker. Hence, if implemented to renegotiate relational power, the skills, opportunities, and strategies proposed in *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* could allow young mothers to safely fulfill a power-centered need relevant to their well-being.

The importance of gaining power within the concept of multidimensional empowerment comes from the idea that, as long as they remain asymmetrically vulnerable in their relationships, an individual is not as empowered as they could be (even if, through agency expansion, they are achieving an enhancement in their well-being). For this reason, multidimensional empowerment—which, just as agency, is scalar, meaning one can be more or less empowered—emerges from changes in the three aforementioned dimensions and is identified when gains in

[39] Choosing in this case is deciding what to do through a specific action. In addition, choices must be attainable (they cannot be choices where the person is unlikely to succeed) and valued by the person (relevant to them and the relationships they care about).

power (i.e., reduction in asymmetric vulnerabilities in relationships) are being used to shape one's life for the better.

Power-centered needs elicit disempowering situations; they can restrict the agency of young mothers, create barriers to their autonomous activity for well-being, and deprive them of power. Therefore, to safely fulfill these needs, it is vital for young mothers to be multidimensionally empowered. This section explored how *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola* address the power-centered needs of young mothers by incorporating program components (e.g., education, critical consciousness, and individual skill building) that initiate changes in the dimensions of multidimensional empowerment (i.e., agency, well-being freedom, and relational power), thereby enabling them to safely fulfill their power-centered needs, which simultaneously enhances their well-being and prevents them from experiencing violence.

What are the Implications of the Power-centered Needs Analytical Lens for Social Welfare?

The experiences of young mothers in this study uncovered the complexities of relational power and the challenges that may arise when either power-centered needs are bluntly confronted or remain present and unfulfilled by young mothers experiencing or at risk of experiencing violence. The manner in which the power-centered need is addressed can have negative or positive consequences. These consequences depend on how the power within the relationship is renegotiated, whether the need has been satisfied, and the degree of empowerment. It is, therefore, important to satisfy power-centered needs safely and in a manner that lasts over the long term. The next section discusses the implications of the power-centered needs analytical lens for theory and practice, with a specific focus on social welfare research and decolonial practice in the global South.

Reimagining Social Welfare Research from the Global South

In the global social work scholarship realm, there is a growing recognition of the need to address white supremacy and colonialism in the field (Asher BlackDeer & Gandarilla Ocampo, 2022; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). In addition, multiple calls for social justice ring from governing bodies such as the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW; Asher BlackDeer & Gandarilla Ocampo, 2022). In fact, social justice appears explicitly as a core value in the Code of Ethics of the NASW (National Association of Social Workers, 2017). Despite this, there is a lack of social welfare research, especially from the global South (which demonstrates the global North-centric focus of the field), that seeks to reverse the logic of colonialism and move toward a more socially just and ethical research process. This decolonial feminist YPAR initiative, which resulted in a conceptualization of power-centered needs to be used for violence prevention work, is a step towards this end.

This YPAR-driven initiative is a step toward a decolonial and socially just research process for several reasons. First, the team grounded the research process on a decolonial epistemological foundation that acknowledges there are multiple realities and not one 'truth' to be identified (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). This was accomplished by incorporating perspectives, through collaboration and dialogue of communities that have been traditionally 'pushed into the margins 'of the research process. This brought the intentional inclusion of diverse *saberes*[40], experiences, and perspectives from the depths of the global South. Second, a research process framed in decoloniality acknowledges and challenges power dynamics which was pragmatically achieved in this initiative by blurring the hierarchical lines of the researcher and the researched,

[40] Ways of knowing in the global South.

the decision-maker and the decision-taker, and the ‘vulnerable’ and the powerful. This generated a more equitable and collective research process.

Additionally, this research initiative promotes social justice through its collaboration with young mothers who have navigated the contexts of oppression and domination characterized in the results section of this study. This YPAR initiative unfolded in these very contexts to understand the needs and priorities of these young mothers from their points of view. By ensuring the research process was relevant to their needs and accessible in their given contexts, the initiative was able to yield meaningful engagement and tangible outcomes. Lastly, this decolonial YPAR initiative seeking to promote social justice in the research process was guided by both institutional and participatory ethical considerations (Cahill, 2007b). Specifically, this approach not only emphasized doing no harm but also underscored the relationships and responsibilities of working within a global South context with young mothers as both researchers and participants. Additionally, this project contributes to the scarcity of YPAR initiatives in the global South driven by youths who speak from themselves against the coloniality of research. The project is committed to producing scholarship that is accountable to the communities involved, thus building reciprocal relationships (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Overall, this decolonial, feminist YPAR initiative was a step towards a decolonized, socially just research ethic that values inclusivity, collaboration, equity, and reciprocity.

Implications for Global Social Work Practice

The presence of power imbalances in social relationships is a significant factor contributing to violence against women and girls. Because of this, identifying and understanding power-centered needs is crucial to effective prevention and intervention strategies in this context. However, minimal scholarship has centered on conceptualizing and eradicating power

asymmetries in social relations—specifically gendered ones— through the identification of ways to build power through violence prevention programming. This project offers global social work research analytical tools to understand power dynamics in adolescent mothers' lives within the global violence prevention field.

This research collective contends that engaging young women in the global South in the direct influence of social welfare service agencies is a decolonial act in itself. Furthermore, this YPAR team contributes a new dimension for service providers to contemplate: the typology of power-centered needs in violence prevention work. In terms of scale, it is not practitioners from the global North imposing their frameworks on the lives of young women in the global South, but rather it is young women themselves who are gaining power and exercising their agency within the field of violence prevention service provision.

This YPAR-driven initiative has significant programmatic implications for Juanfe NGO's service provision for young mothers. First, it provides a way for young mothers to participate in shaping the services they are offered. Second, it identifies plausible ways to prevent violence by addressing their power-centered needs through multidimensional empowerment. It is important to note that, at the time this dissertation is being written, the proposed youth-driven violence prevention interventions, *MUMAS* and *No Estás Sola,* are being used to inform future programming at Juanfe NGO that seeks to prevent violence against young mothers. Finally, this initiative sets a precedent in Colombia, where violence prevention programming specifically focused on young mothers does not exist.

Study Limitations

This YPAR initiative has two methodological limitations pertaining to the research population. First, the research sample could have included diverse gender identities to provide

additional perspectives that facilitate the conceptualization of power-centered needs. Including diverse gender identities within the sample and thus expanding the gendered perspective of power-centered needs would have provided a more nuanced context for the development of the conceptual typology guiding the analytical work of this dissertation. Second, the study recruitment targeted adolescent mothers who were already connected to an institution that aims to support the well-being of children and youth in the community. While this specific research population and corresponding recruitment strategy had important methodological underpinnings, expanding recruitment to reach adolescent mothers beyond the Juanfe NGO in both Cartagena and Medellín could have yielded policy-relevant comparative results in terms of understanding if and how gender-based youth development programming shapes the contours of power-centered needs.

Admittedly, this decolonial, feminist YPAR-driven initiative embodies just one step on a long road toward social justice-oriented research as common practice. This study's focus on young mothers—heterosexual ciswomen—tells just one part of a larger and more complex story. For this reason, this study can serve as one stage of a larger endeavor that collaborates with people of diverse gender identities in multiple contexts in the global South to better understand the conceptualization of power-centered needs. In terms of future research, this YPAR initiative's methodology and research process can be implemented in collaboration with other communities to support the creation of additional youth-driven and context-specific programming initiatives while uplifting decolonial social welfare research from the global South.

Decolonial Feminist YPAR: A Revolutionary Research Paradigm

We used decolonial feminism as the theoretical framework guiding our YPAR-driven initiative. This framework was useful in shaping our ways of doing research in various ways;

first, it insisted on us committing to centering the voices, perspectives, and knowledge of girls and women in Colombia. Decolonial feminism inspired us to consider alternatives to traditional extractivist research with 'marginalized 'or 'at risk' people and communities. It made evident why when researching with people in the global South, there is a need to engage in conversations with them. Moreover, it allowed us to implement our research in a way that allowed young women to become active participants and assert their right to self-determination, hence, why a YPAR-driven framework was needed.

Second, as our project addressed power in the relationships of women living in the global South and in a community where the university-affiliated researcher is not from, it became crucial from a decolonial feminism point of view to address power within the research process. A decolonial feminist-oriented methodology challenges the coloniality of gender by rejecting research processes that facilitate how knowledge about people in the global South is collected, entrenching existing power relations. Therefore, as we used decolonial feminism as a guiding theoretical framework for this YPAR-driven initiative, we renegotiated those power relationships right from the start. For example, the YPAR team established an open structure for participation and transparency in the research process where, when possible, decisions will be made collaboratively. In addition, our project established and maintained respectful, reciprocal relations that produce scholarship accountable to the youth researchers and their communities (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012).

Lastly, it is important to note how it is common to find research in the global South being carried out by people who have been trained and socialized into ways of thinking, defining, and making sense of the known and the unknown elsewhere. Thus, decolonial feminism calls to seek the opposite: research held in the global South that privileges its inhabitants' values, attitudes,

and ideas. Hence, this initiative involved as much leadership and collaboration as possible from the youth researchers. For example, the design of data collection protocols, recruitment processes, and analysis were all youth-driven. Moreover, the violence prevention protocols that resulted as the actionable component of this YPAR initiative were also youth-driven. Through these processes, this project not only centered on youth researchers' voices and self-determination (by enabling a platform for their ideas about the research project to be implemented) but also centered on their ways of thinking, defining, and making sense of data and the power-related stories about survival, well-being, and violence that they and our research participants shared throughout the research process.

Moreover, we believe this research initiative had the power to achieve a decolonial context-specific violence prevention strategy to be implemented in the global South context. However, it is critical to highlight how (among many other ways) our research falls short of being a purely decolonial endeavor. Although we seek to contribute to work on deconstructing the dominant story about communities and people in the global South by theorizing with them, this is not enough to change or extinguish existing power structures and societal inequalities.

Conclusion

This YPAR initiative contributes to the field of social welfare scholarship in several ways. First, it embodies a step toward a decolonial, socially just, and ethical way of doing research in the global South by representing how women in such a geographic context become multipliers of decolonial knowledge. Second, it identified a more nuanced and context-specific understanding of power and its assertion in relation to violence by exploring relationships within young mothers' social and intimate context in the global South. Similarly, it uncovered a youth-driven, decolonial, and feminist framework for conceptualizing power within relationships for

ultimate application in violence prevention for young mothers in Colombia. This is presented as the power-centered need analytical model. Third, this study contributes to the field of YPAR research on violence prevention by enabling a youth-driven design and collection of qualitative data on violence and power relations that resulted in a grounded knowledge production process. This empirical strategy uplifts the principles and praxis of decolonial feminism by considering the role of power throughout the research process. In addition to scholarly contributions, this work had programmatic implications for Juanfe NGO regarding its service provision for young mothers by designing two youth-driven context-specific violence prevention interventions that address the power-centered needs of young mothers, which are presently informing violence prevention programming at each of the NGO sites in Cartagena and Medellín.

A central contribution of our collective work is a step toward furthering the effort to bring *otras*[41] voices and insights into the field of global social work research (Torre, 2009). This YPAR initiative embodied a research paradigm wherein collaboration, learning, and collective research engagement forms strong relational bonds and uplifts communities traditionally excluded from the academy, legitimizing their voices in research spaces. This is a paradigm that is about nurturing empathy, compassion, kindness, and respect while working towards social justice, the betterment of society, and individual and collective well-being. Reciprocal relationships are what, in the end, have the potential to re-write history and what makes decolonial collective inquiry worth it.

[41] Literally interpreted as 'other women', (broadly conceptualized). Torre (2009) employs the term *otras* in Spanish as a form of challenging the domination of the English language in the academy in general and in the field of YPAR in particular.

Appendix A

The Research Team: Multi-city, Youth-driven Research Collective

The research team who developed and implemented this YPAR initiative comprises four young mothers recruited as youth researchers and a university-affiliated researcher.

Recruitment of Youth Researchers

Aligned with a YPAR framework, an essential factor in recruiting the youth researchers who participated in this research initiative was their motivation to connect with and work for the community. Therefore, having experienced violence was not a criterion when recruiting youth researchers. Instead, the principles and praxis of YPAR drove the research collective's building process (Cahill, 2007a; Delgado, 2006). The recruitment process for youth researchers began by disseminating a youth researcher call for young women in Cartagena and Medellín who were former Juanfe beneficiaries. Juanfe staff at the two NGO sites emailed this document to former Juanfe beneficiaries and circulated it via WhatsApp groups. The youth research call was based on Delgado's (2006) advice for building a community of youth researchers. It included a brief description of the research project, the expected duration, the compensation offered, a list of desired characteristics, skills we were looking for in the youth researchers, and some commitments and responsibilities youth researchers had throughout the YPAR-driven initiative. The university-affiliated researcher received resumes from prospective candidates interested in becoming youth researchers and conducted phone interviews to finalize the recruitment process.

The Youth Researchers: Clara, Geraldine, Leidy, and Manuela

Clara and Geraldine were the two researchers from Cartagena, and together with the university-affiliated researcher, we formed the research team working in Cartagena. Leidy and Manuela were the two youth researchers from Medellín who, together with the university-

affiliated researcher, formed the research team in Medellín. All youth researchers were Juanfe beneficiaries, and at the time of the research, they all remained mothers of only one child. The four youth researchers who engaged in this YPAR-driven initiative chose to appear in dissemination materials with their full names. We now include a brief presentation of each of them.

Clara S. Ávila Rivera. Clara, who had her daughter at the age of 19, was 25 years old at the time of the research. She graduated from Juanfe NGO in 2019 with a Professional Technician degree in Hospitality and Tourism. While working as a youth researcher, Clara worked part-time as a waitress and cashier in the late afternoon shift (i.e., 4:00 pm to 11:00 pm) at a restaurant near the research site. Clara was living with her parents, her daughter, her older sister, her sister's partner, and their two sons (Clara's nephews). Clara was in a cordial relationship with her daughter's biological father, who would send her a monthly check to support their daughter's care and would sometimes spend time with their daughter. Clara aspired to pursue an undergraduate degree in Business Administration and to secure employment that would enable her to provide for herself and her daughter and contribute to her family's financial well-being. She also dreamt of being able to buy a house for her daughter to have.

Geraldine Carmona Arriola. At the time of the research, Geraldine was a 23-year-old mother who had her son when she was 17. She graduated from Juanfe NGO in 2019 with a Professional Technician degree in Hospitality and Tourism. While working as a youth researcher, Geraldine was also studying towards a Technologist in Quality Control degree, catering at different hotel events, and managing her online retail store through Instagram and WhatsApp, where she was selling beauty products (such as hand creams and cosmetics) and handbags. When the research was conducted, Geraldine was living in Cartagena with her son and

husband, who is not the child's biological father yet loved and cared for Geraldine's son as if it were his own. They had been living together for over five years. Geraldine had not had any interactions with her son's biological father since he denied his fatherhood when Geraldine was pregnant six years ago. Geraldine aspired to expand her online retail store into a physical store and envisioned hiring staff to support its growth and become a businesswoman.

Leidy V. González Henao. At the time of the research, Leidy was a 20-year-old mother who had her son when she was 15. She graduated from Juanfe NGO in 2021 with a Professional Technician degree in Marketing. While working as a youth researcher, Leidy worked as an hourly employee at an eyewear store. Also, during the project, she was doing a pre-university course to apply to medical school (which in Colombia is an undergraduate degree). She applied for acceptance to medical school, which she regretfully did not get. When the research was conducted, Leidy did not have a relationship with her son's biological father. He left her as soon as he became aware she was pregnant. While pregnant, Leidy entered a relationship with another man who legally adopted her son and had been fulfilling the role of a father. They lived together for almost five years. However, during the project, Leidy recognized he was abusive toward her and ended their relationship. Despite this, he continued acting as a father, providing financial support and expressing deep care for his son. Their son stayed with him after the breakup while Leidy sought a more stable living situation. Leidy aspired to study medicine at the Universidad de Antioquia in Medellín and to find a comfortable place to live with her son.

Manuela Londoño Acevedo. Manuela, at the time of this research, was a 20-year-old mother who had her son when she was 13. She graduated from Juanfe NGO in 2021 with a Professional Technician degree in Business. Manuela graduated with the first cohort of NGO beneficiaries in Juanfe NGO in Medellín. While working as a youth researcher, Manuela was

also studying to attain an undergraduate degree in accounting and helping her mother, a cobbler, repair shoes. Manuela moved out of her house to live with her son's biological father when she was 12 years old, soon after she realized she was pregnant. Manuela lived with her son and his biological father (her partner at the time) until his premature death due to common variable immunodeficiency in 2019. She described her past relationship with her son's biological father as violent and abusive. When the research was conducted, Manuela lived with her parents, two brothers, a sister, and her son. She had been in a relationship she described as healthy and happy for a year. Her boyfriend got along with her son and cared for him. When the research was conducted, they used to spend lots of time together and travel together. Manuela aspired to graduate with a bachelor's degree in accounting (that she was pursuing while working in this YPAR initiative) and find a job where she could earn enough money to give her son financial stability and help support her parents.

Compensation for Youth Researchers

Youth researchers received a monthly compensation of 500.000 COP for participating in the research collective. The compensation was the same for all YPAR team members. They also signed a service contract that we discussed. The contract stipulated that they would receive the payment after handing in the agreed-upon products for the research initiative and that they could leave the team at any time if desired.

Appendix B

'Becoming Researchers' Training Workshops

The YPAR team held training workshops on qualitative research and research ethics throughout the four months of data collection and analysis for the research initiative. These training sessions combined theory and hands-on activities and discussions and were held in a hybrid format, some in-person (in each city) and some online (via Zoom). The interactive and collaborative training sessions sought to engage youth researchers in their learning process and foster a collective spirit. These were also part of the spontaneous process of relationship-building among team members. These sessions were scheduled with youth researchers as we saw fit throughout the project duration. Seven (7) sessions were held, lasting between 30 to 90 minutes, depending on the topic. The 'Becoming Researchers' training sessions were:

1) Welcoming and Introduction to the Research Project
2) Institutional Research Ethics
3) Participant Recruitment
4) Interviews
5) Focus Group Discussions
6) Qualitative Data Analysis
7) Prevention and Intervention of Violence

The theory-based part of these sessions, which used a lecture format, was recorded for youth researchers to return to at any point during the project. In total, there are over 15 hours of recorded video from the theory-based part of the 'Becoming Researchers' training sessions held via Zoom with the research collectives. All sessions had a handout for youth researchers' reference throughout the project and began with a theory-based component that included

discussion questions. The university-affiliated researcher began the sessions by presenting an agenda of what would be covered. She would then cover the content, allowing time for questions or interruptions at any point. All training sessions were held in Spanish. The university-affiliated researcher used multiple sources to design each session. It is important to note that the research collectives met separately because of time conflicts that would not allow time where the five of us were available. Therefore, the university-affiliated researcher held the same training session at different times for each research collective. Usually, the Cartagena research collective would meet in the morning and the Medellín research collective in the afternoon during the same day.

The first training session was a welcoming session that lasted a little over one hour with each research collective. It started with YPAR team members' introductions and continued with a comprehensive description of the research project and a detailed description of the role of youth researchers, including commitments and responsibilities to be held. Some of the discussion questions in this session were about the YPAR team members' interests in being a part of the project.

The second training session was on institutional research ethics (this session was one hour long). The learning objectives for this session were to learn and understand the three basic ethical principles described in the Belmont Report, learn how to implement the principles when working in a research initiative with other people as participants, understand the difference between privacy and confidentiality, and how to help protect participants privacy and help keep participants ’data confidential. This session had quizzes embedded throughout. These quizzes asked questions about the topics covered as part of the workshop's content. For example, some of the questions included in the session were: 1) “According to the Belmont Report, what are the three basic ethical principles upon which the human participants ’protections are based?” 2) “Do

no harm" is part of which of the Belmont Report's ethical principles?" and 3) "How are the concepts of privacy and confidentiality different?" In addition, there were some 'true and false' questions included some examples of these include: "are the statements "informed consent is an ongoing process that starts at recruitment and continues until the end of the study" and "only IRB-approved documents can be used to obtain consent from participants and conduct data collection processes" true or false?"

The third session was on participant recruitment (it was 30 minutes long). The topics covered in this session included: an overview of what is meant by the recruitment of participants, descriptions of who were going to be our participants, what is eligibility criteria, which eligibility criteria we were going to use for recruitment, and how participants can be recruited. The activities for this session were brainstorming sessions on some proposed recruitment strategies for our specific research initiative. Three participant recruitment alternatives and possibly mixing and matching these were discussed in addition to their pros and cons.

The fourth session of the 'Becoming Researchers' training was on the topic of interviews. This session lasted one hour with each of the two research collectives. It began with an overview of interviews as qualitative data collection methods, which included some of the issues researchers need to consider when doing interviews, and what are some of the different types of interviews that could be implemented when doing research, for example, structured and semi-structured interviews. Subsequently, it discussed how to create interview questions and an interview protocol. For example, we discussed what kind of questions should be included, how researchers should organize the questions within the protocol, how long we wanted the protocol to be, what implications the length of the protocol can have on participant engagement, and what words are appropriate to use in the interview questions, among others. Within the topic of

possible types of questions, we discussed categories of interview questions, for instance, the category of questions on experiences and behaviors, knowledge-based questions, values and opinions, and feelings. As part of the activities for this session, we worked on creating questions for all the different categories. We also talked about the importance of open-ended questions in qualitative research. Moreover, during this session, we discussed how the data collection processes, such as the interviews, intersect with recruitment processes and research ethics.

The fifth session was on focus group discussions (FGDs) as a qualitative data collection method. The theory-based part of this 'Becoming Researchers' training session was one of the longest, lasting over one hour and thirty minutes with each research collective. This session included an introduction to FGDs, a discussion on some of the key aspects and considerations of using FGDs as tool to collect qualitative data, some benefits of doing FGDs in research and some of the challenges these have. In addition, we covered and the FGD conceptual framework described in Fern (2001). It ended with a conversation on FGD as a data collection procedure for our research initiative. The FGDs introduction defined FGDs as group interviews centered on specific topics or issues. Some critical aspects of FGDs mentioned during this workshop include, for example, that there are no rules or set of guidelines on how to design FGDs for a specific research project and that researchers need to make decisions on FGD design based on the objectives of the research project. Among other key aspects, we talked about the number of FGDs that need to be done and how this also depends on the research project purpose and objectives, the number of participants in each FGD, and the role of the moderator.

Additionally, we discussed some of the benefits of conducting FGDs, such as the efficiency of FGDs as tools to collect qualitative data (given that in a relatively short time, we would collect information from multiple people) and how these are a form of social interaction

that allows participants to feel comfortable and enjoy their participation. We also discussed some challenges, including that there needs to be a limit on the number of questions because multiple people answer one question, so these usually have a maximum of 14 questions, that the moderator needs to know how to moderate the conversation effectively, and that we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of the data as researchers.

Also included in the FGD session, we discussed each component of the FGD conceptual framework described by Fern (2001) and how these interact. The components of the FGD conceptual framework discussed include the group composition, the research setting, the moderator, the group cohesion, the four stages of the group process (i.e., social interaction, mirror reaction, condenser phenomenon, and exchange), group process factors (i.e., distractions, social influence, and motivation loss), and the results of the FGD. Lastly, toward this session's end, we discussed designing a FGD protocol specific to our research project.

The sixth 'Becoming Researchers' session lasted one hour and was on qualitative data analysis. This session included four sections with multiple sub-sections. It began with an overview of the qualitative data analysis process, which included ten steps discussed in more detail throughout the workshop. These ten steps discussed were data collection, data recording, data systematization, familiarization with the data, designing a code book, data coding, analytical themes, data abstraction, data interpretation, and data dissemination. The second section of the workshop was on data systematization. It included conversations on why systematizing the data is necessary and what needs to be systematized (i.e., audio recording, fieldwork notes, transcription, distributed incentives, and analytic memos). In addition, we discussed the importance of familiarizing ourselves with the data. Following the third section of the workshop on qualitative data analysis was on coding qualitative data. This section was based on the work

of Saldaña (2013). We discussed what is meant by coding qualitative data, what the purpose is, what a code is, what different types of codes exist, how to get started with coding, how to define codes, what a codebook is, how to create a codebook, and what are some attributes a qualitative coder must have. The fourth and last section was on the abstraction and interpretation of qualitative data (it used information from Glesne, 2016; Ritchie et al., 2014; and Saldaña, 2013). The content of this last section included how to identify qualitative themes from codes and categories, what analytic memos are and why these are helpful, what reflexivity is, how we interpret qualitative themes identified from the data, and how to disseminate the data.

The seventh and last session was on violence prevention and intervention worldwide. This session lasted one hour and thirty minutes with each research collective. It discussed the difference between preventing and intervening in violence, the different scopes to prevent violence, and the different types of strategies used to prevent or intervene in violence, and included multiple examples being implemented worldwide. This last session also discussed findings from peer-review articles on the effectiveness of specific interventions. The interventions described and discussed included advocacy-based interventions, group training, livelihood activities, psychosocial support, batterer interventions, home visitation, cash transfers, and community mobilization. The examples of interventions presented and discussed during this session were from Canada, the United States, South Africa, India, China, Taiwan, and Hawaii.

Appendix C

'MUMAS': Description of the Youth-driven Intervention Designed by the Cartagena YPAR Team

The intervention designed by the Cartagena research collective is *MUMAS*, which is a play on two words in Spanish, *MUjeres* (women) and *MAdreS* (mothers). *MUMAS* is a program that seeks to prevent violence perpetrated against young mothers who have never experienced violence and reduce the risk of revictimization for first-time survivors. It takes into consideration that, very often, the perpetrators of violence, per our data, and in this specific context, are the young mothers' partners, guardians, or parents-in-law. *MUMAS* strives to offer a space for personal development, empowerment, and tools that allow young mothers to become financially independent. It is designed to be implemented at Juanfe NGO in Cartagena and unfold over the course of one year and a half. *MUMAS* is proposed to be led by experts on violence prevention together with financial advisors. The program includes a 90-minute awareness workshop (which would happen during the first semester) and group training sessions (unfolding during the second and third semesters). As FGD participants recommended, *MUMAS* will welcome partner and guardian participation in some of the modules of the group training sessions. *MUMAS* consists of two principal phases described below.

Phase 1: The Awareness Workshop

The awareness workshop is planned to mark the start of the intervention and would be offered to all young mothers enrolled at Juanfe NGO. Lasting 90 minutes, it will be led by three experts on violence prevention with experience working with large groups of people of various ages and educational trajectories. The aim of this workshop is to improve awareness of violence, with a special focus on violence against women and girls among incoming beneficiaries and their

families. Specifically, the content of the workshop will include presentations and discussions on topics such as violence against children; gender-based violence; the different types of violence; and intergenerational transmission of violence; as well as risk and protective factors; the relationship of social, cultural, and gender norms to violence; and the physical, psychological, and reproductive health consequences of violence. The awareness workshop is designed to highlight the magnitude of violence in general, violence against women and girls, and the importance of preventing such violence. Additionally, the awareness workshop is also an opportunity to underscore the importance of coming forward after experiencing violence and seeking support when needed.

As proposed by FGD participants, during the awareness workshop, all *MUMAS* participants would receive a booklet including the group training session schedule and homework activities. This booklet will also include some language on how young mothers can invite their partners or guardians to the group training modules that target those family members. Moreover, the booklet will have some space for reflexive writing, drawing, and prompts on mindfulness that the young mothers can do alone, with a friend or family member, or with their child. These activities aim to be outlets for young mothers to engage with their feelings, heal, forgive, enhance their self-esteem, reflect on their past experiences, or set personal development goals.

Phase 2: The Group Training Sessions

The proposed group training sessions, the second and final phase of *MUMAS*, will occur for one year. These group training sessions are the core of *MUMAS* and are organized into six (6) modules with 22 sessions altogether, displayed in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Overview of the Modules and Group Training Sessions of the Second Phase of MUMAS, Cartagena

Session Number	Title and topic
Module 1: Violence and its consequences (five sessions)	
1	Violence Violence against children, violence against women, and gender-based violence
2	Sociocultural elements of violence Discuss the role social, cultural, and gender norms play in perpetuating violence against children and women in Colombia.
3	Relational power and power-dynamics What are power dynamics, what are asymmetries in power, how is power asserted through control associated with violence
4	Types of violence Discuss the different types of violence including physical, sexual, and psychological violence. Define and discuss other types of violence such as reproductive coercion and academic and economic abuse.
5	The consequences of violence Discuss consequences of violence in the physical and mental health of survivors
Module 2: Individual skill-building (five sessions)	
1	Conflict resolution techniques Focus on conflict resolution techniques to enhance the ability to avoid violent conflict between young mothers and their partners or family members. Discuss ways of findings alternatives for resolving the conflict.
2	Hands-on activities

Conversations and discussions to generate collective reflection on when and why some violent relationships should not be repaired but ended and activities on handling conflict.

3 Assertive communication

Expressing your perspective directly and clearly while respecting others and their perspectives.

4 Emotional regulation strategies

Explores building emotional regulation skills and discusses approaches for coping with emotions.

5 Reflexivity and mindfulness

Activities and exercises.

Module 3: Support network and available resources (three sessions)

1 Peer networks

Discuss the importance of attachments and peer networks.

2 Support networks and available resources

Focused on identifying one's social support networks or actively building one if it is currently absent for the young mother.

3 Resources available

Discussion on available resources for young mothers experiencing violence.

Module 4: Bystander interventions and offering support (two sessions)

1 Bystander interventions

Discuss how to take a stand in a situation recognized as discriminatory, unjust, or violent by interrupting or challenging it.

2 Fundamentals of psychological first aid

Discuss basic strategies to help others who have experienced an extremely distressing event. Includes definition of psychological first aid, its principles, and responsible application.

Module 5: Conscious parenting (three sessions)

1 Emotional regulation and parenting

		Discuss effective caregiver-child communication and its relation to emotional regulation. Introduce topic of non-violent discipline for misbehavior.
2	Alternatives to harsh punishments	Discuss the consequences of harsh parenting practices and violent discipline on children's development and mental health. Explore alternatives to harsh punishments.
3	Non-violent discipline	Discuss non-violent discipline for misbehavior alternatives including positive rule-setting and monitoring.
Module 6: Personal finances and economic independence (four sessions)		
1	Budgeting and saving	Discuss the importance of creating a budget and tracking expenses and offer strategies young mothers can use to save money.
2	Managing debt	Discuss what debt is, what different types of debt exist, and strategies to manage debt.
3	Financial abuse and economic violence	Discuss definitions and warning signs for financial abuse in any kind of relationship.
4	Entrepreneurship and career development	Financial independence and economic empowerment and cover strategies for starting a small business or advancing in a career

Module 1: Violence and its Consequences

Module 1 is focused on violence and its consequences. The content is similar to the awareness workshop but will cover all topics more thoroughly. It will include presentations and discussions in five distinct areas. The first topic covered will be 1) violence against children, violence against women, and gender-based violence. The module will also delve into 2) the role social, cultural, and gender norms play in perpetuating violence against children and women in

Colombia. For example, in Colombia, ingrained gender norms prescribe specific roles and behaviors for women and mothers. These gender norms can contribute to violence when the woman does not conform to them and is viewed as deviant.

Moreover, module 1 will include a session on 3) relational power and power dynamics. One hands-on activity during this session will include reading scenarios of conversations or situations between a young mother and her partner, caregiver, or other family member and identifying the person in the relationship with the most power, as well as understanding the reasons for their power. This activity aims to exemplify asymmetries of power within relationships in a comprehensible manner. 4) Different types of violence will also be discussed during module one. These will include physical, sexual, psychological, and some of the least frequently talked about types of violence, such as reproductive coercion and academic and economic abuse. Lastly, module 1 will include a session on 5) the consequences of violence, focusing on consequences for survivors and their children.

Module 2: Individual Skill-building

Module 2 will focus on individual skill-building and include sessions on conflict resolution, assertive communication, and emotional regulation. This module's first sessions will focus on developing conflict resolution techniques. The teaching of these skills aims to enhance the ability of intervention participants to avoid conflict, particularly violent conflict, between them and their partners or family members by findings alternatives for resolving the conflict. Additionally, there will be conversations and discussions to generate collective reflection on when and why some violent relationships should not be repaired but ended.

Conflicts between young mothers and others are defined as situations where their perspectives and that of others are seen as incompatible, and the response results in harm towards

one or both parties (i.e., violent conflict). The decision to include conflict resolution was based on the data, where many young mothers named that their perpetrators incited violence after an inability to find a resolution to a conflict. Important to note that this skill-building session is designed to be not just for the young mothers but also for their family members, specifically their partners and guardians.

> Yes, I mean, I was rude many times, which is not how I am usually. I am very caring and all that. But during that phase, like, my dad would say "no" and I would answer "I said yes", being very obstinate I would answer back. One time my dad was out of patience about it and he hit me in the street, in front of many people, and it was at that moment that I said "enough." I mean, really have to change and check up on how I am acting because what I am doing is not good. (Cristina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

One reflective activity during these conflict resolution sessions will include asking intervention participants (organized in small groups of approximately six) to describe a recent conflict and explore and discuss how they handled the conflict, whether this is a common strategy they use to handle conflicts, and how they would have preferred to handle it or how they would recommend others handle the same conflict. Some ways young mothers handle conflicts include avoiding or communicating with anger or frustration instead of thinking it through, expressing their point of view, and listening to the other party involved. For example, in the excerpt above, Cristina (Cartagena, 19 years old) describes that she is usually very sweet, but some discussions with her father would make her act "very rudely." Paola (Cartagena, 19 years old) does not practice conflict resolution but instead "avoids" conflicts by isolating: "Well, sometimes I'm feeling short-fused, and he talks wrong to me and I answer back aggressively, but I try to avoid conflict

by letting him speak to himself and I go away" (Paola [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old).

The skill-building sessions on conflict resolution were included because many young mothers expressed their desire to communicate differently within their relationships. Moreover, youth researchers believe it is a skill that can be used in different contexts and could be useful in their lives. However, it is important to caution that we do not want to insinuate that a young mother's lack of conflict resolution skills justifies provoking violence against her. While youth researchers are aware that learning conflict resolution skills may be placing responsibility on the young mothers to avoid their own experiences of violence, risking victim blaming (if experiencing violence after having learned the strategies and skills offered), they believe it is still fundamental to offer because in intimate or social contexts it could be one alternative for them to prevent violence from occurring.

Following the sessions on conflict resolution, module 2 will have one session on assertive communication. These two skills are intertwined; communicating assertively (expressing your perspective directly and clearly while respecting others and their perspectives) can help minimize violent conflict. Partners and guardians will be invited to participate in module 2.

The last sessions of module 2 explore building emotional regulation skills. It was reported that young mothers often attempt to regulate their emotions simply by isolating themselves and "bottling it up" (Sandra, Cartagena, 18 years old), usually because they were rejected when trying to regulate by expressing themselves. For example, Sandra (Cartagena, 18 years old) explains her response to violent conflict: "About that, it also happens in my house, like if you're feeling sad they'll say: "Oh aren't you stupid!" So, when I'm feeling sad, I rather go cry alone" (Sandra [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 18 years old).

In contrast, others found that healthier strategies such as dancing, breathing exercises, or chatting with friends were effective in coping with their emotions. As an example, we have the following excerpt of a young mother using an arts-based strategy to "take a load off her shoulders":

> I take dancing classes, and that always, always unloads me of bad feelings. When I start to feel loaded, I never let it show. Instead, for example, I'll go to the beach, do some therapy on myself, say some things to myself, and that way, I let go and free myself of everything. When I go back home, I'm already feeling better. (Cristina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 19 years old).

The emotional regulation skill-building sessions will cover a variety of approaches that can be implemented by young mothers to regulate their emotions effectively. Different types will be presented and discussed during these so young mothers with different personalities, needs, and resources can seek to adopt the ones that would work best for them. These include breathing exercises; strategies to identify emotions, reduce triggers, practice self-compassion; and mindfulness.

Breathing exercises will be taught to regulate difficult emotions that happen fast, such as anger or frustration. These sessions will also include techniques to notice and name what is being experienced. Youth researchers believe (based on their experiences and what they read from the interview data) that to cope with emotions, it is important to identify what emotion(s) is/are being experienced, which can facilitate sharing them with others, enhancing assertive communication, and preventing violence through emotional regulation. The importance of practicing self-compassion by accepting one's emotions instead of self-criticism (which can have negative mental health consequences) will also be discussed during these sessions. Identifying and reducing triggers is a strategy that will be explained during these sessions so intervention

participants can identify situations that elicit negative emotions and work on modifying these situations (and if possible, reducing their frequency). Lastly, practicing mindfulness will be presented during these sessions as an emotional regulation skill to be used by intervention participants.

Module 3: Support Network and Available Resources

Module 3 focuses on support networks and resources available for young mothers experiencing violence in Cartagena. The first session of this module is on the importance of attachments and peer networks. It will discuss different types of attachments and the benefits of social connections, such as having friends and attending social gatherings. The second session will be focused on identifying one's social support networks or actively building one if it is currently absent for the young mother. Throughout the data, young mothers mentioned feeling lonely and isolated from their social networks. They also reported instances where they did not have supportive people around them with whom to connect or seek guidance. From the youth researchers' perspective, support networks can help increase emotional regulation skills and reduce social isolation, two aspects that can reduce the risk of future harm. Friends and family members can offer advice and emotional support for young mothers at risk of violence or experiencing violence. Building a support network will be introduced as a self-care strategy for young mothers.

The last session of module 3 will be on resources available for young mothers experiencing violence. During this session, young mothers can ask questions about services offered by Juanfe NGO and their purpose, such as psychological or case support services. These can be services they already benefit from but may be skeptical about or services whose function they do not understand. During the second half of the session, young mothers will be introduced

to services offered at the municipal and national levels. These resources will be included in the booklet and will also be presented to participants to explain each institution and the role it plays in violence intervention.

Module 4: Bystander Interventions and Offering Support

Module 4 of the group training sessions explores bystander intervention. It has one session focused on taking a stand in a situation recognized as discriminatory, unjust, or violent by interrupting or challenging it and a second session on the fundamentals of psychological first aid. Some approaches discussed in the first session include direct action, such as telling the person perpetrating the aggression to stop or interrupting the situation to ask the person being discriminated against or mistreated if they are okay. Another alternative would be to distract the aggressor or the person at risk of violence to interrupt the situation. This can be done by starting a conversation with the aggressor so the person at risk of violence can leave or telling the person at risk that you need to speak with them or someone is looking for them so they can get away safely. A third alternative can be to delegate the intervening to someone else by describing what has been witnessed and encouraging them to intervene in the situation. Intervening by becoming an active bystander should be done in a way that does not endanger oneself. This session will include role-play activities to practice becoming an active bystander.

The second session of module 4 will be on psychological first aid. This session aims to give young mothers basic strategies to help others who have experienced an extremely distressing event. It will describe what psychological first aid is, its principles, and responsible application. Youth researcher believe having the possibility to support others enhances their well-being and also motivated them in becoming agents of change in their lives and the lives of others they care about.

Module 5: Conscious Parenting

Module 5 (which was incorporated later on, after the FGD feedback) will be on 'conscious parenting,' a concept defined by youth researchers. This module (which will be open to co-parents of the young mothers) aims to help the young mothers and the co-parent to understand the importance of non-violent discipline and effective caregiver-child communication. This module seeks to address the harsh parenting practices that young mothers reported throughout the interviewing process. The mothers described that contexts they experienced occasionally were conducive to this approach and that they often regretted this aggressive behavior. For example, Catalina explains that when stressed, she often yells at her daughter, which she judges as incorrect.

> I do scold [my daughter] strongly because being a mother and a student, you have a lot of responsibilities in the house, so eventually, the time comes when you're very stressed and can't handle anymore and the kid cries and you shout at him because really—I can't deny it, I really shout at him, and that is bad. So [my partner] corrects my behavior and at that point I calm down and become conscious that even if I am at my limit, I can't unload that on her. (Catalina [Cartagena], semi-structured interview, 17 years old)

Given this commonality in interview participants, this module includes three sessions on the following topics: the relationship between emotional regulation (also discussed in module 2) and parenting; the consequences of harsh parenting practices on children's cognitive, physical, and social development and mental health; and non-violent discipline for misbehavior (including positive rule-setting and monitoring).

Module 6: Personal Finances and Financial Independence

Lastly, module six covers personal finances and financial independence. This module includes four sessions: 1) budgeting and saving, 2) managing debt, 3) financial abuse and economic violence, and 4) entrepreneurship and career development. The first session on budgeting and saving will review the importance of creating a budget and tracking expenses and offer strategies young mothers can use to save money. Examples of this include prioritizing needs over wants, cutting back on unnecessary expenses, building an emergency fund, and finding ways to increase income. The session on managing debt will cover what debt is, what different types of debt exist (for example, credit cards, personal debts, and loans), and strategies to manage debt. The third session on financial abuse and economic violence will cover definitions and warning signs for financial abuse in any kind of relationship. This can include controlling one's money, limiting access to funds, and sabotaging employment opportunities. When reviewing economic violence and coercion, issues such as using financial means to maintain power and control over a person will be explored during this session. Additionally, the ways economic abuse relates to violence against young mothers, specifically sexual violence, will be discussed. One example of this is an abuser controlling financial resources to coerce their partner into engaging in unwanted sexual acts. The last session on entrepreneurship and career development will focus on financial independence and economic empowerment and cover strategies for starting a small business or advancing in a career. This session will also include hands-on workshops on etiquette and protocol, as recommended by youth researchers.

Modules 1 through 5 will be led by either psychologists or social workers who are experts on the issues. These can be staff members from the NGO, the same professionals who held the awareness workshop, or external consultants. Module 6 will be led by financial

planners, headhunters, and experts on etiquette and protocol, as suggested by the youth researchers, who believe in learning how to prepare for job interviews and networking events.

It is important to note that all modules, as recommended by participants in the FGDs, will include survivors of violence as guest speakers. Each guest speaker will share their experiences and healing trajectories and relate these to the specific topics of the module. The group training sessions are designed to be participatory and dynamic. These will, for example, include role-play activities, simulations, art-based activities, and audiovisual components.

The expected results of this intervention include an increase in awareness and knowledge of violence and its consequences, especially for participants of the awareness workshop and modules 1 and 2 of the group training sessions, which would include all young mothers who are beneficiaries at the NGO and their partners and family members. Modules 3, 4, and 6 are only offered for young mothers. A second expected result is reduced revictimization for young mothers who have survived violence through developing preventive behaviors and identifying a support network. Moreover, the group training sessions are expected to enhance young mothers' self-esteem by allowing them to better understand their risk factors and the impacts of violence, including their emotional well-being following a violent experience. Furthermore, the participation of partners and other family members in the awareness workshop and modules 1 and 2 is expected to result in better relational communication due to skill-building on conflict resolution, assertive communication, and emotional regulation. In addition, young mothers are expected to encounter fewer challenges in accessing resources if and when they do experience violence as well as to develop skills to assist others in potentially violent situations through bystander intervention. Another expected result of *MUMAS* is preventing violence against young

mothers' children or violence perpetrated by their partners against young mothers due to misunderstandings or sociocultural norms related to childbearing.

Appendix D

'No Estás Sola': Description of the Youth-Driven Intervention Designed by the Medellín YPAR Team

No Estás Sola, which translates to "You Are Not Alone," is the intervention designed by the research collective in Medellín. This program is a violence prevention intervention that consists of three phases: 1) group training sessions, 2) a screening process to screen for young mothers who are at the time experiencing violence or in need of support in the aftermath of violence, and 3) an individual advocacy phase, which includes one-on-one sessions and optional home visits by a violence prevention advocate. The individual advocacy phase aims to improve access to services and improve short- and long-term outcomes for survivors.

Phase 1: The Group Training Sessions

The proposed group training sessions of *No Estás Sola* will be offered to all incoming Juanfe beneficiaries regardless of whether they have experienced violence and will start concurrently with the Juanfe NGO process. The partners of the beneficiaries will be invited to participate in some of the sessions. These training sessions will be led by professionals external to the NGO (as suggested by FGD participants) knowledgeable on each session's topic. To make these training sessions as engaging as possible, most will include practice or dynamic activities such as role-play, simulations, art-based activities, and audiovisuals. The group training sessions are organized into four (4) modules and 20 sessions, as seen in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Overview of the Modules and Group Training Sessions of the First Phase of No Estás Sola, Medellín

Session Number	Title and topic
Module 1: Violence against women (three sessions)	
1	The magnitude and consequences of violence against women
	Discuss the issue of violence against women, its magnitude and the different types of violence that exist.
2	Warning signs for violence
	Discuss warning signs of violence against women, risk and protective factors.
3	Consequences of violence against women
	Discuss the consequences of violence against women for the physical and mental health of survivors.
Module 2: Healthy relationships (ten sessions)	
1	Conflict resolution (session #1)
	Discuss conflict resolution techniques that enhance the ability of intervention participants to resolve violent conflict with partners or family members.
2	Conflict resolution (session #2)
	Discuss relationships that may need to be ended and strategies on safely ending intimate relationships.
3	Assertive communication (session #1)
	Expressing your perspective directly and clearly while respecting others and their perspectives.
4	Assertive communication (session #2)
	Activities that relate assertive communication and conflict resolution.
5	Emotional regulation (session #1)

Discuss strategies to identify, manage and express emotions.

6 Emotional regulation (session #2)

Explore art-based activities as ways to cope with emotions. These include painting, pottery, or dancing.

7 Emotional regulation (session #3)

Practice proactive strategies (that may be done alone) to cope with emotions such as breathing exercises and mindfulness techniques.

8 Emotional regulation (session #4)

Re-cap the emotional regulation module.

9 Healing after violence (session #1)

Guided space to reflect on forgiving people who have hurt oneself and reflect on forgiving people who have hurt the young mothers.

10 Healing after violence (session #2)

Discuss understanding trauma and its effects and practicing self-care and self-compassion, building a support network, and reclaiming power as ways of healing from violent experiences.

Module 3: Sexual and reproductive health (four sessions)

1 Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)

Discuss definitions and examples of what is reproductive health and sexual health and sexual and reproductive rights.

2 Sociocultural context of SRHR in Colombia

Discuss sociocultural elements of violence including social norms, machismo, cultural and social expectations, gender roles and norms and how these intersect with sexual and reproductive health of young women (and mothers).

3 Sexuality, pleasure, and well-being

Discuss sexuality and pleasure in the framework of sexual health and its intersection with the sociocultural context in Colombia and thereby, violence.

4 Reproductive justice and reproductive coercion.

Discuss definitions, re-cap warning signs and consequences.

Module 4: Conscious parenting (three sessions)		
	1	Positive parenting and non-violent discipline
		Discuss, effective caregiver-child communication, non-violent discipline for misbehavior and alternatives including positive rule-setting and monitoring.
	2	Preventing violence against children
		Hands-on session involving mothers and their children focused on providing children with the knowledge and skills to act if they feel at risk of violence.
	3	Reflection and closure
		Reflection space to ask for forgiveness if young mothers have ever hurt their children.

Module 1: Violence against Women

Module 1 is entitled violence against women and is proposed to include three sessions. The first session includes discussions on the magnitude of the issue of violence against women and girls (VAWG) worldwide, in Latin America, and in Colombia, as well as different types of VAWG including physical, sexual, and psychological. Furthermore, it will present an introduction to the name of the program and its meaning; the name "You Are Not Alone" seeks to indicate that within the Juanfe community, survivors of violence will get the support they need and do not need to heal on their own. The second session of module 1, which will cover warning signs of violence, seeks to prevent violence if the young woman is already in a situation of heightened vulnerability. This session will also offer a space for a guest speaker (e.g., a young mother who has survived and healed from violence) to share her story and any lessons learned from overcoming the experience. The third and last session of module 1 will be on the

consequences of violence. This session will specifically focus on the consequences of violence on sexual and reproductive health. Sessions one and three will be open for partners to attend.

Module 2: Healthy Relationships

Module 2, which covers healthy relationships, is focused on individual skill-building. It is comprised of ten sessions on a number of topics, including conflict resolution (two sessions), assertive communication (two sessions), emotional regulation (four sessions), and healing after violence (two sessions). Partners will be invited to attend the first session on each skill-building topic, excluding healing after violence.

Young mothers in Medellín highlighted how better communication with their partners and learning how to manage conflict would benefit their relationships. During the interviews, Luisa (Medellín, 18 years old) shared that "sometimes we lack communication, and that's why we fight so much. Sometimes I say something to him, and he takes it the wrong way" (Luisa, [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old). Similarly, Francisca (Medellín, 18 years old) highlighted how better communication with her partner would help her have healthier relationships. She shares, "Communicating well would have made the relationship better because he was very sexist, his word would always be that last word" (Francisca, [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 18 years old).[42] The first sessions of module 2 will focus on developing conflict resolution techniques that enhance the ability of intervention participants to resolve conflict, especially violent conflict with their partners or family members (including their guardians, siblings, and parents-in-law) by findings alternative communication strategies.

[42] The YPAR team acknowledges that when young mothers are being silenced by their partners or other family members, it is not necessarily due to a lack of communications skills. In fact, in the gendered context of oppression in which this YPAR initiative unfolded, young mothers being silenced is a daily reality within machista, heteronormative Latin American society. However, as a team we identified their desire to have tools for them to take the power into their own hands and manage these communication aggressions.

Additionally, these sessions will cover tactics to safely terminate intimate relationships. As experienced by some young mothers, ending a relationship with a partner can be challenging and, at times, dangerous. Therefore, the second session on conflict resolution will discuss strategies that can be considered when ending an intimate relationship, especially if the partner has been previously abusive. These steps may include developing a safety plan before having the conversation with her partner and/or choosing a safe time and place to have the conversation. The safety plan would include coordinating a safe place to stay if leaving home, making any necessary arrangements concerning her child, and establishing a signal with friends or family to indicate danger. A safe time and place to have the conversation could, for example, be in a public space or a place with friends or family present.

The following two sessions on assertive communication will focus on learning to express one's perspective clearly and directly while respecting others. These sessions will have activities related to previously covered topics, such as conflict resolution and safely ending a relationship.

The four sessions on emotional regulation skill-building will cover strategies to identify, manage and express emotions. These will include art-based activities such as painting, pottery, or dancing as techniques that could be used for emotional regulation. In the interviews, many young mothers reported regulating their emotions by isolating themselves instead of, for example, sharing what they are feeling with friends or family members. For example, Sandra (Cartagena, 16 years old) shared the following "When they all go to sleep, well, that's when I start crying" and when asked by the interviewer whether she shared or talked about what she is feeling with someone, she said: "No, nothing, with no one" (Sandra, [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 16 years old).

Similar to Sandra's (Medellín, 16 years old) experience of not coping with her emotions by sharing what she is feeling, Diana (Medellín, 19 years old) mentioned she preferred to be left alone when stressed and not speak to her husband.

> When I'm very stressed I don't speak to my husband at all because I would throw it all at him. Before, when I was very angry—me, I have always cut my own skin and things like that, I wouldn't feel pain, I would punch the wall and things like that, my hands wouldn't hurt. I'd just like to see it, the blood, and me cutting, that would take the sad feelings away. (Diana, [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old)

In contrast, others used proactive strategies such as breathing and mindfulness techniques, seeking psychological counseling, or going out with friends. Illustrating this point Victoria (Medellín, 19 years old) said how she uses breathing and grounding techniques: "I breathe deeply, and I try to calm down. I try to focus on where I am standing and go 'yes, let's calm down'" (Victoria, [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 19 years old) and Paola (Medellín, 20 years old) said she looked for psychological counseling "Sometimes, well, here we have a psychologist so I try to speak about all of that with her" (Paola, [Medellín], semi-structured interview, 20 years old).

Focus group discussion participants recommended the two sessions on healing after violence included in this module. These healing sessions intend to offer a guided space where young mothers can reflect on forgiving people who have hurt them and ways of healing from violent experiences. Some topics that will be discussed concerning ways of healing from violent experiences include: understanding trauma and its effects and practicing self-care and self-compassion, building a support network, and reclaiming power. One hands-on activity in this module is developing a self-care plan, which can include aiming for a healthier diet, going for a

morning walk, developing a sleep routine, or practicing gratitude and mindfulness. Some of the tools that will be discussed as options for young mothers to reclaim their power after violent experiences include goal setting to develop a sense of control and direction, self-expression modalities such as writing or art-based modalities, the importance of setting and enforcing healthy boundaries, and self-advocacy for themselves and their children.

Module 3: Sexual and Reproductive Health

The sexual and reproductive health module (module 3) consists of four sessions. The first session will focus on defining terms such as reproductive and sexual health. It will offer examples of each and include information on sexual and reproductive rights. The second session will be about the sociocultural context of sexual and reproductive health in Colombia. This session, which will invite participants' partners to attend, will include discussions, conversations, and activities to learn how sociocultural elements of violence, including social norms, *machismo*, cultural and social expectations, and gender roles and norms, intersect with the sexual and reproductive health of young women (and mothers). The third session in this module will encompass topics such as sexuality, pleasure, and sexual well-being. Lastly, the fourth session will focus on reproductive justice and reproductive coercion.

Module 4: Conscious Parenting

The fourth and last module on conscious parenting focuses on one of the program's objectives: to prevent young mothers from perpetrating violence against their children and thus break cycles of intergenerational violence. This module consists of three sessions. The first is a theory-based session on positive parenting and non-violent strategies to discipline children. The second is a hands-on session involving mothers and their children focused on providing children with the knowledge and skills to act if they feel at risk of violence. For example, children will

practice assertive responses when there is a risk of violence, learn to recognize inappropriate proposals, and differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate touches. The third session of this module, which was recommended during the FGDs, will be a guided healing session for young mothers and their children. During this session, young mothers can ask for forgiveness if they have ever been violent towards their children or reacted aggressively and regretted their actions. This session marks the closure of the group training for the participants who identify as young mothers at Juanfe NGO in Medellín, along with their partners and their children. This concludes the four modules of the first phase of *No Estás Sola*.

Phase 2: The Screening Process to Identify Survivors of Violence

The second phase of the *No Estás Sola* program is the screening process, which will be done through an individual questionnaire handed out to all new beneficiaries at the NGO after the first module of the group training sessions is complete. This questionnaire aims for Juanfe NGO to identify young mothers who are currently experiencing or have recently experienced violence. Both the youth researchers and the FGDs participants agreed it would be easier for young mothers experiencing violence to write about it on a questionnaire than to speak about it. After the screening process, young mothers experiencing or at risk of experiencing violence, given their living arrangements or past experiences, will begin the third and last phase of the *No Estás Sola* program. Additionally, as recommended during the FGDs, former beneficiaries experiencing violence will be offered the option to join the individual advocacy phase of *No Estás Sola* (i.e., phase 3).

Phase 3: One-on-one Advocacy Sessions and Home Visits for Survivors of Violence.

The implementation of the program's third phase (i.e., the one-on-one support sessions and optional home visits) will be done by two to three female professionals hired as violence

prevention advocates. They will not be part of the psychosocial or teaching team at Juanfe, which was recommended in the FGDs because young mothers mentioned not feeling comfortable asking for support or help and sharing private information with people they see daily. Moreover, the role of these professionals will differ from the psychologists offering the beneficiaries mental health counseling and support. Therefore, violence prevention advocates will be hired exclusively to implement *No Estás Sola* and will only oversee this within the NGO.

As part of the one-on-one support sessions, the violence prevention advocates will work with NGO participants who have been screened for violence or former participants who enrolled in this phase of *No Estás Sola* because they are experiencing violence and are seeking help and support. The assigned violence prevention advocate will meet weekly with a young mother in a one-on-one session to help the young mother experiencing violence solve pressing issues regarding her current situation, depending on the risk of harm or needs she has.

The potential services that may be needed by young mothers in the individual advocacy phase include those supporting their physical, emotional, and practical needs. These may include awareness of and access to emergency-related services, medical care services for treatment for injuries, sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment, and mental health care, including counseling and therapy. These may also include legal assistance, such as how to obtain a protective order or legal advice. Lastly, services may encompass financial assistance, such as supporting mothers with safe housing and income assistance, as recommended by FGD participants, who wanted to ensure the violence prevention advocate knows how to quickly connect and support young mothers who need to leave their residences and move to safe homes or domestic violence shelters with their children.

The second part of the last phase of *No Estás Sola* consists of home visits wherein training sessions are offered on individual skill-building toward healthy relationships to cement the learnings from earlier modules. This activity is optional for participants already working with a violence prevention advocate. Skill-building sessions may include conflict resolution techniques, assertive communication strategies, and emotional regulation. The facilitators will also use these visits to monitor progress on desirable outcomes for the young mother who is receiving the services. For instance, these outcomes could be identifying the preferred manner to self-regulate or having been able to enroll in a professional development course to learn specific skills which could be used to earn income (such as doing manicures and pedicures, which was mentioned by some young mothers during the interviews as skills they enjoy practicing). Lastly, *No Estás Sola* includes establishing a 24-hour hotline led by violence prevention advocates, which could be used by young mothers who find themselves in dangerous situations and former beneficiaries who would like to enroll in the individual advocacy component of *No Estás Sola.*

The expected results for *No Estás Sola* include increased awareness and knowledge of VAWG and its consequences for Juanfe NGO beneficiaries and partners, reduced revictimization for survivors of violence (who may be current or former Juanfe NGO beneficiaries) through more preventive behaviors, identification of a stronger support network, higher self-esteem, improved communication with partners and other family members or friends, fewer challenges in accessing resources, and prevention of violence against the children of young mothers.

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