

Goals during Adolescence and their Relationship with Antisocial Behavior

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In recent years, psychological research has emphasized the role of goals in adolescent development and, particularly, in the development of socially adapted lifestyles. Along those lines, the present study, analyzing data collected from a sample of 488 participants, explores: a) The structure of adolescent goals and their importance for young people, b) The relationship between adolescent goals and antisocial behavior and c) The role of gender in this relationship. The results show that adolescent goals are structured according to 6 factors: Social Recognition, Emancipation, Education, Physical-Athletic, Antisocial and Interpersonal-Familial. Educational and emancipative goals appear to be most important for young people. In addition, it has been found that there are significant correlations between certain types of goals and adolescent antisocial behavior, as well as significant gender differences. The data reflect the need to incorporate motivational dimensions into explanatory models of adolescent behavioral problems.

Keywords: adolescence, goals, antisocial behavior.

En los últimos años, la investigación ha enfatizado el papel que las metas desempeñan en el desarrollo adolescente y, particularmente, en el desarrollo de estilos de vida socialmente adaptados. Dentro del estudio de la conducta antisocial, cada vez se reclama una mayor atención a los aspectos motivacionales implicados en su génesis y mantenimiento. En esta línea, el presente estudio, partiendo de los datos recogidos en una muestra de 488 participantes, analizó: a) la estructura de las metas adolescentes y la importancia que los jóvenes conceden a distintos tipos de metas; b) la relación entre metas adolescentes y conducta antisocial; c) el papel del género en la relación metas-conducta antisocial. Los resultados muestran como las metas adolescentes presentan una estructura definida en 6 factores: Reconocimiento Social, Emancipativas, Educativas, Físico-Deportivas, Antisociales e Interpersonales-Familiares. Las metas educativas y las emancipativas aparecen como las más importantes para los jóvenes. Se constata la existencia de relaciones significativas entre determinados tipos de metas y la conducta antisocial adolescente, así como diferencias significativas en función del género. Los datos avalan la importancia de incorporar las dimensiones motivacionales dentro de los modelos explicativos de los problemas de conducta adolescente.

Palabras clave: adolescencia, metas, conducta antisocial.

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Adolescence is recognized as a vitally important stage of development that confronts individuals with substantial change in many spheres of life (Little, 2004; Luengo, Romero, Gómez-Fraguela, Garra & Lence, 1999). These changes are challenging to young people, and for that reason adolescence tends to involve behaviors that surpass the limits of what is socially acceptable. Such behaviors fall under the label of antisocial behavior (Rutter, Guiller & Hagell, 2000).

It has been confirmed that during this stage, a considerable increase in this type of behavior occurs (Mirón & Otero-López, 2005; Rutter et al., 2000) that does not only include committing crimes (e.g. theft), but also incorporates a whole host of behaviors considered in society to be antinormative (e.g., smoking cigarettes or prank calling people on the phone) (Rutter et al., 2000). Furthermore, several theories and research studies have attempted to deepen our understanding of the phenomenon of adolescent antisocial behavior. This research has focused on identifying factors that either favors its onset or development, or that protect some people more than others from becoming implicated in it. Although the factors studied in this area have been numerous (Sobral, Romero, Luengo & Marzoa, 2000), there has been little attention paid to the motivational dimension of antisocial behavior. This interest in the motivation and intentionality that people bring to their own behavior has grown in recent decades within the study of personality (Little, Salmela-Aro & Philips, 2007; Romero, Villar, Luengo & Gómez-Fraguela, 2009; Schmuck & Sheldon, 2001), and its relevance to the study of antisocial behavior has been demonstrated by various authors in the last several years (Carroll, Hattie, Durkin & Houghton, 2001; Emler & Reicher, 1995).

The study of goals is relevant to analyzing the motivational dimensions of behavior due to its role in impulse and in determining human behavior. This subject has been studied extensively, especially since the 1980's (Pervin, 1989). A goal may be defined as that which an individual strives to accomplish or that which allows one to reduce the discrepancy between the situation they are in, and the situation in which they desire to be (Locke & Latham, 1990). The majority of educational and developmental theorists agree in affirming that adolescence is a period of great importance to personal goal formation since the important processes of identity formation and consolidation of developed social values occur. Important decisions are made about educational opportunities, planning for the future and several other processes take place that are enormously important during this stage and that have critical long-term implications (Carroll, Houghton, Hattie & Durkin, 2001).

Several studies have tried to identify which goals are the most important during adolescence. Research

has suggested the following goals are the most common: different educational and career goals (Massey, Gebhardt & Garefski, 2008), interpersonal goals (Knox, Funk, Elliott & Bush, 2000; Wentzel & Wigfield, 1998), identity and self-expression goals (Emler & Reicher, 1995; Stein, Roeser & Markus, 1998), freedom and autonomy goals (Goudas, Biddle & Fox, 1994), and goals related to one's appearance and sports (Castillo, Balaguer & Duda, 2002). However, in studies of adolescent goals, between-subjects differences have been documented. In fact, some studies have demonstrated that some young people pursue goals linked to antisocial activities (Carroll, 1995; Carroll, Durkin, Hattie, & Houghton, 1997). For some, this occurs for the simple reason that they want to experience stimulating situations. For others, however, antisocial behaviors are necessary to achieving other goals such as establishing and maintaining a certain identity (Carroll, Hattie et al., 2001; Emler & Reicher, 1995) or to immediately obtaining material goods (Carroll, 1995).

The importance of studying goals as they relate to antisocial behavior has been highlighted in the work of certain authors (Carroll et al., 1997; Carroll, Hattie et al., 2001), who defend the idea that motivational aspects are central to explaining adolescent antisocial behavior. This is apparent in the model proposed by Carroll, Houghton et al. (2001), which posits that adolescent antisocial behavior consists of a series of intentional actions whose ultimate purpose is to establish and maintain a particular identity. Behavior is organized by establishing goals that justify and lend meaning to the reputation one pursues for him or herself. Toward the purpose of analyzing the differences between the goals adolescents pursue, the Importance of Goals Scale (Carroll et al., 1997) was developed, in which eight goal types were described: Educational, Professional, Interpersonal, Self-expression, Social Recognition, Freedom-Autonomy, Physical and Antisocial. They have conducted a comparison study of young delinquents, young people at risk of becoming delinquent and young people not at risk, and recorded the importance subjects gave to different types of goals. They found that non-delinquent young people grant the most importance to educational and interpersonal goals while delinquents and those at-risk of becoming delinquent attribute the most importance to antisocial and freedom-autonomy goals.

Despite the importance of goals to contemporary psychology (Little et al., 2007; Schmuck & Sheldon, 2001) and evidence that suggests they play a role in the advent of adolescent antisocial behavior (Carroll, 1995; Carroll et al., 1997), scarcely any studies have been conducted outside of white, Anglo-Saxon communities. One exception was a study conducted by Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga, Ugarte & Lumbreras (2003) in which they attempted to validate an Adolescent Goals Questionnaire (AGQ) in Spanish (CMA) based on the Carroll et al. (1997) Importance of Goals Scale.

It was found that the questionnaire's 79 items could be grouped into six factors (Social Recognition, Interpersonal, Athletic, Emancipative, Educational and Sociopolitical) and a personal commitment scale was included in order to try and assess the level of commitment young people show to achieving their goals. Comparisons of the data by gender revealed significant differences, showing that women are more invested in educational and interpersonal goals, while men emphasize social recognition, athletic, emancipative and sociopolitical goals. Age also turned out to be an important factor for adolescent goal orientation, reflecting a trend that with age, there is a decrease in the importance attributed to social recognition, athletic and educational goals.

Based on the findings described above and bearing in mind, first, the importance of adolescent goals and second, their relevance to understanding antisocial behavior, this study is grounded on the following objectives: a) To analyze how adolescent goals are structured and which goals are most important to young people; b) To examine the relationship between adolescent goals and antisocial behavior; and c) Given that it has been suggested that gender is a relevant factor in the study of goals during adolescence, to examine to what extent adolescent goals and their relationship with antisocial behavior vary as a function of gender.

Methods

Sample

The sample consisted of 488 adolescents attending high school at 4 public schools in Galicia, Spain. Of the 488 participants, 233 were boys (47.8%) and 254 were girls (52.2%). They either lived in the city centre (19.8%), in a neighbourhood on the outskirts of the city (14.6%), in a small town (52.9%), or in a rural area (12.8%). They ranged in age from 12 to 18 years old, with a mean age of 14.84 years old ($SD = 1.29$).

Variables and Instruments

Adolescent goals were evaluated using Carroll et al.'s Importance of Goals Scale (1997), which is not often used in Spain but whose reliability and validity have been analyzed in various studies. On the scale, subjects report what importance they attribute to a group of goals by responding to 62 items translated from the original scale (e.g., "It is important to me... To be a good student," "To cheat and steal to get what I want"). The responses are in a Likert-type format with six alternative answers ranging from Extremely important to Extremely unimportant. The initial factor analysis of the scale (Carroll et al., 1997) allowed us to identify 8 goal types: Educational,

Professional, Interpersonal, Self-expressive, Social Recognition, Freedom-Autonomy, Physical and Antisocial, with coefficients of reliability fluctuating between .62 and .84. Also note that, in prior studies, data have shown its predictive validity of the external behavioral criteria for social adaptation and mal-adaptation (Carroll et al., 1997; Carroll, Hattie et al., 2001).

In order to evaluate young people's involvement in antisocial behavior, an adaptation questionnaire in Spanish was administered, the Antisocial Behavior Questionnaire (Luengo, Otero, Romero, Gómez-Fraguela & Tavares-Filho, 1999). This scale has been employed in multiple studies that have demonstrated its validity as a self-report measure of antisocial behavior (Luengo et al., 1999; Romero, Luengo & Sobral, 2001; Romero, Gómez-Fraguela, Luengo & Sobral, 2003). The version of the scale used in the present study is composed of 28 items, of which 17 correspond to the original instrument (e.g., "Stealing things from people while they work"), while 11 were taken from the Adapted Self-Report Delinquency Scale (Carroll, Durkin, Houghton & Hattie, 1996) (e.g., "Prank calling people on the phone"). In addition, a control item was included ("Flying on a plane without a ticket") in order to detect response biases, which are prevalent in studies of antisocial behavior among young people (see Rutter et al., 2000). Due to the meager probability of being able to carry out said control behavior, an affirmative response on this item would invalidate the subject's answers on the rest of the questionnaire. The participants were also asked to report the frequency with which they have, in the last year, been implicated in certain behaviors, on a 4-point scale ranging from Many times: more than 10 to Never. When a factor analysis of the questionnaire was performed in a previous study (López, 2008), it was found to be composed of four factors: Group Antinormative Behavior ($\alpha = .89$) (e.g., "Hanging out in a rambunctious mob or causing disturbances"); Drug Consumption ($\alpha = .79$) (e.g., "Smoking cigarettes"); Theft ($\alpha = .69$) (e.g., "Taking money or other objects from gumball machines, telephones, etc.") and Aggression ($\alpha = .59$) (e.g., "Beating someone up in a fight"). In light of the relationship discovered between those factors, with correlations ranging from .29 to .59, all significant ($p < .001$), a scale of General Antisocial Behavior ($\alpha = .89$) was also created to combine items from all the antisocial behavior scales.

The questionnaires were administered at school, according to the schools' schedules and without the teachers' presence, with the prior consent of school administrators and a turned-in, written parental consent form. The participation of the young subjects was completely voluntary, the objectives of the study were made clear to them and conditions of anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed.

Table 1

Results of the factor analysis and the reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha coefficient) of the Importance of Goals Scale. Only coefficients greater than .40 are presented

	Social Rec.	Emanc.	Educat.	Physical/ Athletic	Antisoc.	Interp./ Familial
Being attractive to others	.74					
Being attractive in the clothes I wear	.72					
Having a perfect body	.70					
Wearing the latest in clothes and accessories	.66					
Having a lot of power	.65					
Buying anything I want	.63					
Having enough money	.59					
Being considered a hero	.57					
Always being right	.57					
Being the centre of attention	.55					
Being happy with my job		.70				
Having equal rights		.65				
Being able to learn a trade		.63				
Finding a job		.59				
Doing everything the best that I can		.58				
Being able to support myself		.58				
Having a job of my choice		.57				
Being very competent at my job		.56				
Being sincere and honest		.53				
Becoming a productive member of society		.52				
Having a good time		.50				
Being able to do whatever I want		.50				
Being happy with myself		.48				
Being respected		.48				
Passing my exams			.82			
Being a good student			.80			
Passing all my classes			.77			
Learning new and interesting things at school			.74			
Finishing my homework on time			.70			
Having grades good enough to go to college			.71			
Learning as much as I can			.67			
Being on a sports team				.83		
Being a good athlete				.82		
Playing for my country/state's main sports team				.76		
Being better than others at sports				.67		
Being in good shape and healthy				.46		
Cheating and stealing to get what I want					.73	
Deceiving others					.66	
Having money for drugs					.65	
Breaking the law					.67	
Having children						.74
Getting married						.73
Being a good parent						.54
Listening to others						.52
Helping others						.50
Explained variance (%)	11.91	11.49	8.51	6.40	5.70	5.67
Reliability (Chronbach's alpha coefficient)	.87	.85	.88	.76	.74	.77

Results

Analysis of the Structure and Reliability of the Importance of Goals Scale

First, a principal components factor analysis was performed, using Varimax rotation. To determine how many factors should be retained, Cattell's scree-test was applied. The scales' reliability was determined by a Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Table 1 presents the 6 factors extracted from the analysis that, together, explain 49.68% of the total variance. The first factor includes items such as "Being attractive to others" or "Being considered a hero," which refer to having achieved recognition and positive value to others. This factor, called Social Recognition because of the content of the items that comprise it, accounted for 11.91% of variance, and has a reliability of .87.

The second factor extracted refers to participants' desire to achieve goals such as "Finding a job" or "Being able to survive on my own," that facilitate finding and carrying out a gratifying job that also allows one a certain level of autonomy and independence. For these reasons, it has been called Emancipative. This factor has a reliability of .85 and it explained 11.49% of the variance.

The third factor groups items that assess adolescents' academic and educational aspirations according to how much importance they attribute to goals such as "Being a good student" or "Learning new and interesting things in school;" thus, this factor is called Educational. It explained 8.51% of the variance and possesses the greatest internal consistency, with a reliability of .88.

Fourth is a factor that evaluates the importance of goals related to athletic activities and to being in physically good shape. It includes items such as "Being good at sports" or "Being in good shape and healthy." This factor, called Physical/athletic, has a reliability of .76 and accounted for 6.40% of the variance.

The fifth factor refers to participants' interest in taking part in antinormative activities and situations (e.g., "Cheating and stealing to get what I want," "Having money for drugs"); thus, it has been labeled Antisocial. This factor has a reliability index of .74 and accounts for 5.70% of the variance.

The last factor includes items such as "Having kids" and "Helping others." It reflects the importance attributed to goals surrounding one's relationships with others and the prospect of creating a family someday. It is called Interpersonal/familial and it explains 5.67% of the variance and has a reliability index of .77.

Descriptive Analyses and the Gender Comparison

Next, a descriptive analysis was performed in order to determine what goals are most important to adolescents,

and in what types of antisocial behaviors they most frequently engage. A gender comparison was also done using independent samples t-tests. Given the participants' wide age range (12-18 years old), in addition, an analysis was done of the correlation between age and the variables being analyzed.

The results displayed in Table 2 show that the goals to which adolescents attribute the most importance are emancipative, followed by educational and interpersonal/familial. On the other hand, the least important goals were found to be those related to antisocial behavior. The same results were obtained when the group of boys and the group of girls were considered separately.

The gender comparison yielded significant differences between boys and girls for social recognition goals ($d = .45$), which were more important to boys, as were the physical/athletic goals ($d = .83$) and antisocial goals ($d = .51$). As for the girls, they placed greater importance on educational goals ($d = -.50$) and interpersonal/familial goals ($d = -.17$). Lastly, the table allows us to confirm the existence of a significant, negative correlation between participants' age and educational and physical/athletic goals. Nevertheless, participants' age was positively correlated, though not as strongly, with antisocial goals.

Regarding antisocial behavior (see Table 2), it has been observed that the type of antisocial behavior in which adolescents most often take part is in consuming drugs, while they least often participate in aggressive behaviors. This pattern of results occurred in both boys and girls. The gender comparison also illustrates that, except for drug consumption, there were significant differences between boys and girls for all other variables, such the boys more often participate in antisocial behavior than the girls. Furthermore, the table reflects that there is a significant, positive and strong correlation between age and drug consumption, as well as correlations of less intensity of age with general antisocial behavior, theft and aggression.

Correlations between Adolescent Goals and Antisocial Behavior

A partial correlation analysis was performed between adolescent goals and antisocial behavior. A standard procedure was employed to measure the association between two variables while the effect of one or more additional variables is controlled or adjusted. In this case, the effect of age was controlled, since it has appeared to be associated with certain dimensions of goals and antisocial behavior in previous analyses. Next, to determine the extent to which goals may allow us to predict antisocial behavior on the whole, regression analyses were done using as predictors the goal types found in the correlation analysis to be significantly correlated with antisocial behavior. Once again, the effect of age was controlled and entered in the first step of the equation, following the recommendations of Cohen & Cohen (1983).

Table 2
Descriptive statistics of the importance of goals and antisocial behavior variables, compared by gender, and correlations with age

	Total Sample		Boys		Girls		<i>t</i> (Comparison boys/girls)	Sig.	Correlation with age
	<i>M</i>	<i>Sx</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Sx</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Sx</i>			
Goals									
Social Recog.	3.06	1.05	3.30	1.11	2.84	.95	4.85 (<i>df</i> = 457.55)	.00	-.02
Emancipative	5.21	.60	5.17	.66	5.24	.55	- 1.30 (<i>df</i> = 455.27)	.20	.02
Educational	4.72	.98	4.47	1.12	4.95	.77	- 5.47 (<i>df</i> = 406.04)	.00	-.22***
Physical/Athletic	3.39	1.53	4.00	1.72	2.82	1.06	8.97 (<i>df</i> = 380.20)	.00	-.13**
Antisocial	1.36	.78	1.56	.98	1.17	.48	5.33 (<i>df</i> = 329.76)	.00	.10*
Interp/Familial	4.25	1.04	4.16	1.17	4.34	.90	- 1.93 (<i>df</i> = 435.92)	.05	-.02
Antisocial Behavior									
General antisocial behavior	1.39	.47	1.52	.59	1.27	.28	5.92 (<i>df</i> = 326.44)	.00	.21***
Group antinormative behavior	1.44	.54	1.60	.64	1.30	.38	6.06 (<i>df</i> = 372.25)	.00	.07
Drug consumption	1.78	.90	1.85	.96	1.73	.84	1.47 (<i>df</i> = 462.81)	.14	.48***
Theft	1.20	.63	1.31	.85	1.11	.27	3.45 (<i>df</i> = 275.92)	.00	.12**
Aggression	1.18	.49	1.32	.66	1.06	.15	5.79 (<i>df</i> = 254.59)	.00	.11*

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

Table 3
Correlations between adolescent goals and antisocial behavior for the total sample, controlling the effect of age

	General antisocial behavior	Group antinormative behavior	Drug consumption	Theft	Aggression
Social Recog.	.37***	.39***	.17***	.25***	.28***
Emancipative	-.05	-.06	-.02	-.01	-.06
Educational	-.25***	-.26***	-.22***	-.04	-.17***
Physical/Athletic	.13**	.15***	-.09	.13**	.20***
Antisocial	.60***	.55***	.34***	.48***	.37***
Interp/Familial	-.17***	-.18***	-.08	-.14**	-.08

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

Table 3 illustrates that the importance attributed to social recognition is significantly correlated with all scales of antisocial behavior, this relationship being the most intense for group antinormative behavior and general antisocial behavior. Also, educational goals were found to be significantly and inversely correlated with all of the antisocial behaviors except for theft. Next, physical/

athletic goals showed a moderately strong, significant correlation with all scales of antisocial behavior except for drug consumption. In addition, the importance granted to antisocial goals is significantly correlated with all scales of antisocial behavior analyzed. It has the highest correlation of the analyses, especially with general antisocial behavior and group antinormative behavior. Finally, interpersonal/

Table 4

Results of the total sample regression analysis to predict adolescent antisocial behavior from goals, controlling the effect of age

	General antisocial behavior	Group antinormative behavior	Drug Consumption	Theft	Aggression
Age	.14***	.01	.43***	.09*	.08
Social Recog. Emancipative	.16***	.20***	.04	.04	.10*
Educational	-.12**	-.14***	-.14***		-.11**
Antisocial	.50***	.44***	.27***	.47***	.29***
Physical/Athletic	.02	.02		.08*	.13**
Interp/Familial	.01	-.01		-.02	
R^2	.42	.36	.34	.25	.19
Corrected R^2	.41	.35	.33	.24	.18

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

Note. The variables found to be significant in the correlation analysis were included in this regression.

Table 5

Correlations between adolescent goals and antisocial behavior, by gender, and controlling the effect of age

	General antisocial behavior		Group antinormative behavior		Drug Consumption		Theft		Aggression	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Social Recog.	.37***	.34***	.39***	.32***	.17**	.21***	.27***	.25***	.29***	.24***
Emancipative	-.06	.04	-.08	.04	-.06	.05	.00	.06	-.05	.01
Educational	-.23***	-.14*	-.26***	-.10	-.25***	-.19**	-.01	.02	-.12	-.20***
Physical/Ath.	.04	.08	.02	.13*	-.07	-.10	.08	.15*	.11	.22***
Antisocial	.64***	.32***	.62***	.23***	.42***	.27***	.51***	.22***	.35***	.21**
Interp/Familial	-.17**	-.11	-.20**	-.07	-.10	.03	-.13*	-.09	-.05	-.11

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

familial goals were significantly, negatively correlated with general antisocial behavior, group antinormative behavior and theft. Emancipative goals, on the other hand, do not seem to be related at all to greater or lesser participation in antisocial behavior.

In Table 4, it may be observed that the goals that best predict adolescent antisocial behavior are antisocial goals. Social recognition goals, nevertheless, were also significant in explaining the variance in general antisocial behavior, group antinormative behavior and theft, while athletic goals were significant in explaining aggression and, to a lesser degree, theft. The importance given to educational goals allows one to predict, inversely, adolescent antisocial behavior, excluding drug consumption.

The Role of Gender

We have sought to confirm the importance of gender in the intersecting relationships between adolescent goals and

antisocial behavior. In order to do so, following the procedure proposed by Cohen & Cohen (1983) to test the effects of interaction between predictive variables, a hierarchical regression analysis was performed in which, once again, the effect of age was controlled and entered in the first step of analysis. In the second step, the gender variable was introduced (dummy coding; male = 0, female = 1) and in the third, goal dimensions were entered (centered to avoid the effects of multicollinearity; see Cohen & Cohen, 1983). Last, the multiplicative interaction terms of gender and adolescent goals were introduced. This analysis showed there are significant interactions between gender and certain dimensions of goals. Specifically, significant interactions were observed between antisocial goals and the dimensions general antisocial behavior ($\beta = -.51$; $p < .001$), group antinormative behavior ($\beta = -.45$; $p < .001$), theft ($\beta = -.61$; $p < .001$) and aggression ($\beta = -.36$; $p < .05$). In the case of drug consumption, a significant interaction was observed between gender and social recognition goals ($\beta = .35$; $p < .05$).

Table 6

Results of the regression analysis, by gender, to predict adolescent antisocial behavior from goals, controlling the effect of age

	General antisocial behavior		Group antinormative behavior		Drug Consumption		Theft		Aggression	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Age	.18**	.12*	.05	-.05	.47***	.38***	.12*	.01	.11	.06
Social Recog.	.12*	.28***	.15**	.27***	-.01	.14*	.06	.21***	.18**	.13*
Emancipative										
Educational	-.10*	-.12*	-.15**		-.16**	-.15**				-.23***
Antisocial	.56***	.22***	.52***	.15*	.32***	.18**	.51***	.17**	.28***	.13*
Phys/Athletic				.02				.06		.19**
Interp/Famil	-.06	-.06					.04			
R ²	.45	.22	.42	.12	.41	.29	.28	.09	.22	.15
Corrected R ²	.44	.20	.41	.11	.40	.28	.27	.08	.21	.14

Once the existence of significant interactions between gender and goals had been tested, we explored the role of gender in greater depth, so new analyses of correlation and regression were performed by gender. In both analyses, the effect of age was controlled so as to moderate its effect on the analyses of correlation between the study's variables.

Table 5 presents the results of the correlation analyses between different goals and antisocial behavior and suggests that, for both boys and girls, social recognition goals are significantly correlated, and positively, with every scale of antisocial behavior. Educational goals present, once again, negative correlations with antisocial behavior. For the boys, these correlations present with general antisocial behavior, group antinormative behavior and drug consumption while for girls, the correlations, though not as strong, occur for general antisocial behavior, drug consumption and aggressive behavior. As for physical/athletic goals, only for girls there were significant correlations, and of low intensity, for group antinormative behavior and theft, and a moderately strong correlation with aggression. Antisocial goals appear for both groups to be significantly correlated with all scales of antisocial behavior, with even stronger correlations in the case of the boys. Lastly, regarding interpersonal/familial goals, it has been established that for boys, there is a significant, negative correlation with group antinormative behavior, general antisocial behavior and theft. For girls, on the other hand, no relevant correlation has been established between this type of goal and the scales of antisocial behavior. The importance attributed to emancipative goals does not appear to be related to

a greater or lesser measure of any type of antisocial behavior where gender is concerned, as was the case for the sample as a whole.

The results of the regression analysis presented in Table 6 show that, once again, antisocial goals are the best predictor of adolescent antisocial behavior. Social recognition goals also constitute a good predictor, especially for girls. Similarly, athletic goals turned out to be a significant predictor of aggression for girls. In addition, educational goals are negatively correlated with general antisocial behavior and drug consumption for both genders. They are also negatively correlated with group antinormative behavior for boys and with drugs for girls.

Discussion

The present study has attempted to analyze how goals are structured during adolescence, to determine how goals are related to antisocial behavior, and to analyze how both of these may differ as a function of gender.

From the Importance of Goals Scale, we obtained six factors that were categorized in the following way: Social Recognition, which describes young people's need to project a self-image and especially to be valued by a peer group and, consequently, acquire a reputation (Carroll, Hattie et al., 2001; Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga et al., 2003); Emancipative, which refers to participants' desire to find a good job and perform it adequately, in this way achieving freedom and autonomy as one's own person; Educational, which captures young people's perceptions

about academic success (Castillo, Balaguer & Duda, 2001); Physical/Athletic, in which one's interest lies in physical exercise and athletic competition (Castillo et al., 2002); Antisocial, which refers to young people's desire to be involved in antinormative behavior; and Interpersonal/familial, in which relationships with others and the prospect of creating a family in the future are valued. The factor analysis explained 49.68% of the total variance. The fact that it explained approximately half of the total variance probably has to do with the large number of items included on the questionnaire and the fact that items were grouped into a limited number of factors in order to clarify the structure of adolescent goals.

These results are very similar to the findings of Carroll et al. (1997) about the Importance of Goals Scale, from which eight factors were extracted: Reputation, Physical, Freedom, Self-expression, Delinquency, Educational, Professional and Interpersonal. The Reputation and Self-expression goals could be grouped here into the Social Recognition factor, while Freedom and Professional goals could be combined into the Emancipative factor. This categorization of adolescent goals is also very similar to that of Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga et al. (2003), who upon validating the Adolescent Goals Questionnaire (AGQ), in Spanish, the CMA, derived six different factors: Social Recognition, Interpersonal, Athletic, Emancipative, Educational and Sociopolitical, although that model did not include an Antisocial factor, while the present study did not include a Sociopolitical factor.

It has been demonstrated that the most important goals to young people are emancipative, educational and interpersonal goals, while antisocial goals were of least importance. Those results echo the findings of the many studies that have been conducted about goals up to this point (Massey et al., 2008), such as the findings of Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga et al. (2003), that young people consider interpersonal, educational and in third, emancipative goals as most important. Carroll et al. (1997) also found that among young people's most important goals, interpersonal and educational goals figure, but not professional. According to what Nurmi (2001) proposed, it seems that adolescent goals are structured in our society according to a "cultural prototype" that young people use to establish goal hierarchy as a function of the expectations society holds for them (to finish school, to find a job, to start a family, etc.).

Gender, in this case, plays a crucial role in determining what types of goals are deemed as more or less important. The findings of the present study supports the results of previous studies that girls attribute greater importance to educational (Castillo et al., 2001) and interpersonal (Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga et al., 2003) goals, while boys prioritize social recognition (Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga et al., 2003), physical/athletic (Castillo et al., 2002) and antisocial (Carroll, Hattie et al., 2001) goals. On the

other hand, as far as emancipative goals are concerned, no significant differences have been found according to gender. This supports what Lanz & Rosnati (2002) propose, that differences between men and women on this type of goal are dissipating in contemporary society even though, historically, they have been more closely associated with males (Massey et al., 2008). These differences allow us to again propose that goals are structured according to certain cultural patterns (Nurmi, 2001) in which girls value the academic, interpersonal and familial spheres (Marjoribanks, 2002), and boys focus a great deal of their interest on achieving status and recognition through various activities such as athletic competition and antisocial behavior (Carroll, Houghton et al., 2001). Nevertheless, it seems that these cultural patterns or prototypes have begun to change in recent years, which is supported by the absence of significant gender differences in emancipative goals.

The correlations between the different types of goals and participants' age confirm that the older one is, the less importance is attributed to educational and physical/athletic goals. Meanwhile, antisocial goals actually gain importance with age, following the line of thought that adolescent goals vary as a function of age (Nurmi, 1991; Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga et al., 2003). This is perhaps due to adolescents' changing motivational patterns, which become increasingly involved in recreational activities. These new patterns differ from the traditional models, yet seek acceptance and reconciliation with them via behavior that, in many cases, breaks the established social norms (Carroll, Hattie et al., 2001; Emler & Reicher, 1995).

As for young people's involvement in antisocial behavior, it has been demonstrated that drug consumption is the antisocial behavior in which young people most often participate. This may be due to the fact that the items on the scale include questions about consuming legal drugs (tobacco and alcohol) and cannabis, which present a relatively high prevalence among young people (Delegacion del Gobierno para el Plan Nacional Sobre Drogas, 2008). Also, although they are antinormative for adolescents, these behaviors are not toughly sanctioned within the broader social context, especially in the case of legal drug use. Gender differences were such that boys surpass the girls in all dimensions of antisocial behavior, except for drug consumption (Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter & Silva, 2001), which confirms the results of earlier research that boys participate more in illegal activities than girls (Buelga, Musitu, Murgui & Pons, 2008; Houghton, Carroll, Tan & Hopkins, 2008). On another note, with the exception of group antinormative behavior, whose frequency does not seem to vary as a function of age, it seems that as young people grow older, their involvement in antinormative behavior increases. This may be related to changing attitudes and motivations that are produced as adolescents mature, which provoke one to distance

him or herself from their adult role models and seek their own identity and acceptance from peers, sometimes by participating in behaviors that surpass the limits of what is socially permissible (Carroll, Hattie et al., 2001; Emler & Reicher, 1995).

To elaborate further on the subject of adolescent goals and antisocial behavior, it has been confirmed that all the types of goals analyzed, except for emancipative, are closely related to involvement in antisocial behavior. When adolescents attribute importance to goals that foment social recognition as well as participation in antisocial behavior, strong correlations suggest that they will more often take part in antisocial behavior. Along those lines, granting much importance to physical/athletic goals is associated with higher levels of participation in antisocial behavior, too, except for drug consumption. On the contrary, to attribute a lot of importance to educational goals is correlated with having less involvement in antisocial behavior, except for theft, while interpersonal/familial goals are correlated, also inversely, with participation in group antinormative behavior and theft. Similarly, it has been confirmed that the goals that best predict antisocial behavior during adolescence are those that are related to participation in antisocial behavior, as well as those that provide one with status and recognition among others. However, giving importance to educational goals predicts lower levels of antisocial behavior among young people.

It seems reasonable to infer that participants who attribute more importance to antisocial goals are most often implicated in behaviors of this kind, which has been reported in prior studies (Carroll et al. 1997). In the same way, the least antisocial participants are those that attribute the most importance to conventional goals (e.g., educational goals); this has been widely supported by prior research (Carroll et al., 1997; Knafo, Daniel & Khoury-Kassabri, 2008). With this in mind, it has been proposed that the most antisocial young people possess their own system of values that departs from conventional patterns (Tarry & Emler, 2007), and that may be characterized by hedonistic values with immediate, personal relevance. At the same time, they attribute less importance to interpersonal and macro-social values. All of these aspects of antisocial behavior may have critical long-term implications (Romero, Sobral, Luengo & Marzoa, 2001).

On a related note, there seems to be a relationship between a high level of involvement in problematic behavior and attributing importance to goals that provide one with prestige and recognition. This supports Emler & Reicher's idea of Reputation Enhancement Theory (1995), in which they propose that antisocial behavior is a deliberate choice on the part of the participant, who wishes to portray a particular image to others. It also agrees with Kaplan's (1984) classic belief that antisocial behavior is

nothing more than a way of compensating for a loss of self-esteem in other spheres of one's life. In this case, antinormative behavior is seen as a way of self-inflation, especially in front of one's peers (Romero, Luengo, Carrillo & Otero-López, 1994). Similarly, recent studies indicate that, although the most antisocial young people have elevated social self-esteem and a positive sense of self-worth that sometimes even borders on narcissistic self-perception (Barry, Frick & Killian, 2003), it turns out to be highly dependent on the validation of a reference group, and can be easily debilitated by that group (Barry, Grafeman, Alder & Pickard, 2007). The findings of Carroll, Hattie et al. (2001) suggest a related idea, that young people at greater risk of becoming delinquent are those who attribute the most importance to goals about how they portray themselves to others, achieving greater social recognition, and improving upon the identity that they go to lengths to defend.

In order to confirm the gender differences observed in the descriptive portion of the study and thus, gender's influence on the relationship between goals and antisocial behavior, a hierarchical regression analysis was performed. It revealed the existence of significant interactions between gender and certain types of adolescent goals. To be specific, significant interactions were observed with antisocial goals and all dimensions of antisocial behavior except for drug consumption, for which the significant interaction was found to be between gender and social recognition goals. These results support what was reported in the descriptive portion of this paper, where it was revealed that boys surpass girls significantly in the importance they award to antisocial goals as well as their implication in different dimensions of antisocial behavior, except for drug consumption, where there were no significant differences found. In light of this, it is fair to say that gender plays an important role in the relationship between the two variables. It would, then, be beneficial to go into greater depth on this relationship, analyzing the differences between boys and girls.

Upon doing so, it was observed that for boys as well as girls, antisocial and social recognition goals were the most closely linked to antisocial behavior. On the other hand, it was confirmed that only for girls was there a relationship between attributing importance to physical/athletic goals and certain dimensions of antisocial behavior, most notably with aggression. This finding allows us to posit that perhaps girls view certain conditions as requisite to participating in antisocial behavior, such as masculine physical characteristics, which would be especially necessary to proving one's physical superiority to others. Also, only for the boys was there a significant, negative correlation between interpersonal/familial goals and general antisocial behavior, group antinormative behavior and theft.

In conclusion, the present study has analyzed the structure of adolescent goals by performing a factor analysis of a questionnaire that assesses the importance of different goals. From that, six goal categories were established that attempt to take into account the full range of young people's interests. Second, it has been confirmed that the goals most important to adolescents are related to the academic and professional spheres and meanwhile, a correlation between certain types of goals and antisocial behavior was observed. Finally, significant gender differences have been documented.

Nevertheless, this study was faced with certain limitations. Among them, bear in mind that we only employed self-report measures, whose use does imply certain limitations (Rutter et al., 2000), although they have shown accuracy in assessing aspects such as antisocial behavior (Mirón & Otero-López, 2005) and adolescent goals (Carroll et al., 1997). This is probably due to their ability to access many and varied aspirations and behaviors to which it would otherwise be very difficult to gain access. Nevertheless, it would be desirable in future research studies to incorporate new evaluation procedures and methods of analysis into the picture, such as a behavioral checklist or analysis of personal narratives, which would allow one to analyze the variables of interest from a new perspective and in greater depth. On another note, we know little about the direction of the correlations analyzed, so it would be privy to further explore them in longitudinal studies in which that could be tested. It would also be of interest to continue exploring the role of identity to the subject in antisocial behavior, whether the desire to exude a certain image or be recognized in a certain way by others could determine people's implication in this type of behavior; it could also influence the process of goal formation.

These results have allowed us to continue along the path laid by prior research, in which focus was placed on motivational aspects of antisocial behavior (Carroll, Hattie et al., 2001; Emler & Reicher, 1995; Moffitt, 2007). The motivations and intentions of young people upon carrying out behavior seem to be a key to understanding antisocial behavior. For this reason, the study of goals can complement classical beliefs about risk factors and protection. By understanding the motivational aspects of antisocial behavior, efficient, fitting interventions could be developed, and one might begin to understand how antisocial behavior may make "sense" within the life of an adolescent.

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