



Youth And Sexuality: An Approach to their Representations, Experiences and Practices

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Abstract: This work analyzes the social representations, experiences and practices on sexuality of young university students from southern Mexico, specifically from the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Autonomous University of Chiapas, to interpret their production of meanings and the changes in the traditions of sexuality as a generational group. The study was carried out through a qualitative methodological strategy and an in-depth interview was applied to 34 volunteer participating undergraduate students. The research reveals a distinction between men and women in their meanings of sexuality, where men associate it especially with the sexual act and women with a romantic ethos. Likewise, women show a more open, flexible and tolerant posture towards the diversity of sexual orientations. There is a predominance of family cultural contexts with traditional, conservative representations of sexuality, where there is a strong influence of sexist beliefs, valuations and norms derived from Christian religious dogma. Women express a conservative stance on abortion, while the majority of men have a positive and pro-abortion opinion. The first sexual experiences of most of the young university students were characterized as having been frustrating, painful, in some cases violent, misinformed and high risk. They consider that formal school has provided them with valuable elements for their knowledge about sexuality but it is still insufficient, so it is necessary to strengthen a policy of sexual education in the youth of Mexico.

Keywords: Sexuality, youth, social representations, experiences and practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

This text raises the study of social representations about the sexuality of university students, their experiences and sexual practices, to interpret the senses, experiences and changes in the traditions of sexuality in this generational group. The undergraduate university students of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Autonomous University of Chiapas, Mexico, are taken as a case study.

Analyzing the sexuality of young people from the study of social representations is pertinent because they are constituted by knowledge, beliefs, norms, evaluations and feelings, which guide sexual behaviors or practices.

Human sexuality can be understood as a dimension of the personality expressed at the individual level and in relation to other people, in which emotional, sexual, eroticism and reproduction aspects are interrelated (Vargas and Araya, 2013), hence it refers to a biological reproductive, ethical-moral and socio-affective dimension and in this last dimension the present research is focused, which implies the affective and emotional bonds constituted in the interaction with other people and which provides specific characteristics to the expression of human sexuality, where psychological and sociocultural factors are integrated.

Studying sexuality in terms of its socio-affective dimension (psychological-sociocultural) is central to understanding the diversity of expressions of the affective and emotional life of people's sexuality, as well as "the importance of building family spaces of democratic coexistence that favor the exercise of rights and duties around the exercise of sexuality" (Vargas and Araya, 2013, p.3).

The importance that the proposals of sexual practices are analyzed within the normative values, allows suggesting strategies that can favor the means of prevention and protection for young people, as well as the possibility of generating partial transformations in the thinking and cultural change about the sexuality and reproduction that generate violence and sexual harassment.

It is important to consider that throughout the history of different social generations, various sexual and loving ethics and practices have been established. The bodily experience and sexual practices have a cultural meaning, not only do they represent a biological issue, but they constitute a complex experience that develops repeatedly in daily life and is intrinsically related to reproductive and sexual health, as well as to culture. and sexual rights. (Machado, 2003).

2. YOUTH AND SEXUALITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

Throughout human history, sexual behaviors have been delineated by key, nuclear, classical institutions such as the Church, the State, the School and the family that have shaped powerful discourses that constitute social subjectivities, valuations and social norms in this regard. (Silva, Méndez and Barrientos, 2015).

According to Machado (2003), the Western youth generation expressed a break with the instituted system, especially young people in Europe, through the student movements of May 68 and the movements against the Colonial War. These expressions of collective action marked a generational change, which also translates into transformations in the way of valuing and acting regarding, not only their society, politics and economy, but also their sexuality.

Starting in the 70s, some societies in Europe presented sociocultural changes such as those related to transformations in traditions, especially those that have to do with sexuality and love relationships. For Machado (2003), the relevant sociocultural change in the youth sector to generate the transformation of traditional values and attitudes has to do mainly with the consequences of the effects of this period that implied changes in access and increased schooling of young people, as well as the functioning of the labor market. Likewise, we can add the importance of migrations from rural to urban spaces, a process that breaks with traditional socialization references and can generate uncertainties in identity references, especially of young people.

Currently, the importance of the mass communication media is central in its influence on the configuration of social representations of young people. The media influence the configuration of senses in young people, especially in the diversity of media products, powerful representations and practices about sexuality are disclosed, generating new values and beliefs to regulate sexual behaviors or practices. Likewise, a relevant factor that is linked is the incorporation of women into the labor field, which is why they tend to leave their homes and an important space is given to messages from the media, which constitute new teaching models, in particularly aimed at children, adolescents and young people.

This process of cultural change is a conflictive process by itself, consider Martínez and Solís (2009), where symbolic structures are debated between the new and the old, and it is especially the young who “represent the possibility of breaking with the traditional schemes that bind men and women to castrating relationships, marked by an inequality that is no longer harmonious”(p.160).

Throughout history, a sexist, macho society has prevailed, where mainly women have had to obey men on reproductive decisions, up to the point of denying their right to decide about their bodies. This is linked to the enjoyment of sexuality, to the decision to use a contraceptive method in the sexual act, to the decision to get pregnant, to abort, to the contagion and / or development of sexually transmitted diseases, to the norms and evaluations of sexual experiences, among other aspects. Hence, sexuality is linked to sexual rights, reproductive and sexual health, and culture.

If we address the issue of sexuality and health, it is important to consider that the beginning of sexual relations at an early age and without due protection exposes to sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies that can alter the life project of young adolescent girls . According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2019a), worldwide, in 2017 there were approximately 25 million unsafe abortions per year.

Pregnancy in young adolescents, according to the WHO (2019b) constitutes one of the main factors that contribute to maternal and infant mortality and to the cycle of disease and poverty. According to data provided by the WHO (2019b), 11 out of every 100 births in the world are to young women between the ages of 15 and 19, and the vast majority (95%) of these cases are in low- and middle-income countries. Likewise, complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the second leading cause of death for young women of this age, worldwide. Each year, approximately 3 million young people undergo unsafe abortions, and babies born to teenage mothers face a significantly higher risk of dying than those born to women aged 20-24.

As regards sexually transmitted infections (STIs), they have serious effects on people's sexual and reproductive health; The WHO (2019b) points out in this regard that, around the world every day, more than one million people contract an STI. The WHO estimates that in 2016, there were about 376 million new infections from any of these four STIs: chlamydia (127 million), gonorrhea (87 million), syphilis (6.3 million) and trichomoniasis (156 million). The number of people with genital HSV infection (herpes) exceeds 500 million, and there are more than 300 million women infected with HPV, the leading cause of cervical cancer. About 240 million people have chronic hepatitis B. Both genital herpes and hepatitis B can be prevented by vaccination.

In the case of Mexico, according to data from the National Survey of Demographic Dynamics ENADID 2018, from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) (2018), in 2018 it was recorded that the median age at the beginning of sexual life of women is at 17.5 years; likewise, the general average of women at the national level, who declared that they did not use any contraceptive method in the first relationship is 59.4% and in what corresponds to young women between 15 and 24 years old, it is 41%.

Among the main reasons expressed by women between the ages of 15 and 49 who did not use contraceptive methods in their first relationship are: it stands out that approximately one third, 28.4%, indicated that this was due to not planning to have sexual intercourse; 24.3% did not use them due to the desire to get pregnant; 24.1% did not use them because they did not know the contraceptive methods; 11.0% because they were confident not to get pregnant and 10.9% expressed another reason.

The advances in contraceptive methods have changed the way of seeing sexuality as a means of procreation of children, the information that exists to know them through reproductive and sexual health are increasingly easy to access and obtain, for sexual and reproductive safety and even for the protection of sexual diseases. (Huerta, 2018).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The data presented in this article derive from qualitative research that made it possible to recover the experiences and meanings of young university students about their sexuality. The sample consisted of 34 university volunteer participants: 17 women and 17 men, undergraduate students from the UNACH Faculty of Social Sciences (Sociology, Economics, History, Social Anthropology). An in-depth interview was applied to recover and reconstruct the speeches of the participants about their meanings and experiences of their sexuality that allowed reconstructing the subjectivity of the research participants through the reconstruction / interpretation of their own experiences; The interview guide was structured by the following categories of analysis: general data of the university students, experiences of sexuality, sexual and reproductive health.

4. THE SOCIAL ANALYSIS OF SEXUALITY FROM SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS

Society, according to Berger and Luckmann (1999), exists as both objective and subjective reality, which must be addressed in order to achieve an adequate theoretical understanding of it; In this sense, the social construction of reality refers to the system of meanings of a society, constituted by the knowledge of common sense:

It is about primary, pre-theoretical knowledge: the sum total that 'everyone knows' about a social world, a set of maxims, morals, bits of proverbial wisdom, values, beliefs, myths, etc. [...] provides the rules of institutionally appropriate behavior [...] Defines and constructs the 'roles' to be played in the context of institutions... controls and anticipates all these behaviors... said knowledge is socially objectified as [...] a body of generally valid truths about the reality [...] This is the knowledge that is learned in the course of socialization and that mediates the internalization within the individual consciousness of the objectified structures of the social world. (Berger and Luckmann, 1999, p.89).

The symbolic universes function, according to Berger and Luckmann (1999), as frames of reference where the entire human experience takes place: "the symbolic universe is conceived as the matrix of all socially objectified and subjectively real meanings; the entire historical society and the biography of an individual are seen as events that occur within that universe" (p.125).

Addressing symbolic universes in this sense refers us to the phenomenon of social representations and especially the analysis of sexuality from the theory of social representations, enables us to understand

it holistically as a psychosocial phenomenon and representations by constituting cognitive systems, express stereotypes, opinions, beliefs, values and norms that guide the actions of the subjects, guide, interpret and justify the behavior. (Martell, Ibarra, Contreras and Camacho, 2018).

Moscovici (cited by Palacios, 2009) considers representations as a type of reality expressed in signs, as an element in a chain reaction of perceptions, opinions, notions and they even live organized in a given sequence, so our way of thinking and what we think depends on such representations. For Moscovici, the specific characteristic of social representations is that they “embody ideas” in collective experiences and interactions, and must be taken up as a means in relation to the individual or the group. The representations are imposed on us with a special and irresistible force (prescriptive role), which is constituted by a combination of a structure (present before we begin to think) and a tradition, which stipulates what we should think. (Palacios, 2009).

Each person, from birth is a sexed being, a quality that will mark a series of activities during his life and in his participation in different social spheres. According to the sex of each person, behaviors, interpretations and meanings correspond. It is precisely through the symbolic logic of each society that sexuality acquires meanings: “the sexual in individuals is not limited to a parameter that is only biological, physical or of nature in general; it is also about a personal and social way of moving and being within that sexed body. This social construction of sexuality does not stop at any time or place, it is constant and daily”. (Martínez and Solís, 2009, p. 154).

From these approaches, sexuality is a sociocultural and historical construction of beliefs, relationships and identities about the body of the subjects, which is part of a cultural context made up of significant practices shared by a group of people, which are not exactly homogeneous. (Martínez and Solís, 2009).

According to the WHO (2006), human sexuality is defined as a central aspect of the human being throughout his life. It encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy, reproduction, and sexual orientation. It is experienced and expressed through thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors, practices, and interpersonal roles and relationships. Sexuality can include all these dimensions, however, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical, religious, and spiritual factors.

Likewise, the National Council to Prevent Discrimination (CONAPRED, 2016) defines human sexuality as a central aspect of people present throughout their lives and includes sex, identities and gender roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is lived and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors, practices and roles, as well as in interpersonal relationships; hence the interest in addressing the analysis of sexuality from social representations understood as this symbolic universe made up of beliefs, knowledge, values, norms and customs, guiding practices. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always lived or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, and religious factors.

For the achievement of sexually healthier societies, the WHO (2006) indicates that it is necessary to attend and educate human sexuality for which the recognition, exercise and respect of sexual rights is relevant, such as: The right to sexual freedom; to the sexual autonomy, integrity and security of the body; to sexual privacy; to sexual equity; to sexual pleasure; to emotional sexual expression; to free sexual association; to making reproductive, free and responsible decisions; to information based on scientific knowledge; to comprehensive sexual education and the right to sexual health care.

Sexuality, from a sociological perspective, is understood as a cultural construct that goes beyond the notion of genitality, determined by bodily exchange, it is usually closely linked to a conception of destiny for reproduction, as well as to the constitution of femininity. And masculinity, “in a context of pleasant and joyful experiences in the relationship with others determined by an exchange of sensations, emotions and plans”. (Escallón, 2000, cited by Suárez, Mendivil and Vega, 2004, p. 52).

Machado (2003) argues in this sense that although sexuality is lived bodily, bodies and their practices have a cultural meaning. Sexual and love life is guided by norms “prescribed and proscribed by various spaces, times, modes and rites” (p.528).

With relationship the theoretical approach to sexuality from a sociological perspective, Machado (2003) considers that although the sociology of the family has developed contributions on premarital relationships, the choice of a spouse, the functioning of families, divorce, reconstruction. However, little research has been done on the most intimate aspects of private life, such as love life and sexuality, except for what Foucault has approached with a “repressive” and “utilitarian” perspective. (Machado, 2003, p.27).

However, within the theoretical reflections elaborated on sexuality in the field of Sociology, the contributions made by Marcuse, Foucault and Giddens can be considered. In this regard, in the analysis of the different theoretical contributions from Sociology, the changes in sexual, love and erotic behaviors in recent decades are addressed.

Marcuse is considered one of the leading figures in the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. In his work "Eros and civilization", according to Damián (2014), part of the thesis supported by Freud that civilization needs a rigid restriction of the "pleasure principle" (although he ends up rethinking this) and based on the possibilities of A civilization that has come to maturity, Marcuse argues that its existence depends on the gradual elimination of the aspects that repress the instinctual tendencies of man, the strengthening of rival instincts and the liberation of the constructive power of Eros. In this case, Marcuse considers that Western cultures have achieved certain conditions for the emergence of a non-repressive civilization, and points out the sociological and psychological tendencies that operate in this direction.

Marcuse (1953/1981) in his work "Eros and Civilization" considers answering whether it is possible to achieve the study of a non-repressive civilization taking into consideration Freud's position that this is not possible. From Freud's position, Marcuse tells us, the history of man is the history of his repression exerted by culture, which restricts his social and biological existence and his instincts (which, left free, would be the destruction of all types of human association) But such restriction is the essential precondition of progress. Eros comprises all sexual instincts as well as those forces sublimated in their instinctual origin but have been diverted to the service of culture; in such a way that uncontrolled Eros is destructive, fatal: "Its destructive forces come from the fact that it aspires to a satisfaction that culture cannot allow: gratification as such, as an end in itself, at any time", from Hence, these instincts must be diverted, constrained and it is here when civilization begins, when “the comprehensive satisfaction of needs is effectively abandoned” (Marcuse, 1953/1981, p.27). The human being is such and not animal, precisely because of the influence of external reality; the pleasure principle is replaced by the reality principle, generating "the great traumatic event in the development of man" (p.30) and civilization is the benchmark in the fight against freedom that represents the absence of repression and these The demands of the pleasure principle will remain subsumed in the unconscious, emerging from time to time affecting reality.

Marcuse explains that according to Freud's approaches, only the history of the instinctual dynamics of the subjects and the vicissitudes of the two basic instincts reveals the full depth of the oppression that civilization imposes on human beings.

With regard to the approaches elaborated by Giddens on sexuality in modern societies and the transformations that have taken place in intimate life, in his work “The transformation of intimacy. Sexuality, love and eroticism in modern societies” (1992) she states that sexuality is related to love, eroticism and human relationships in general. He analyzes the contributions of Foucault, Marcuse and Freud although he does not share these approaches and considers that Foucault overestimates the notion of control, understanding that the invention of sexuality also implied changes of another nature. This disciplinary position does not allow the understanding of sexuality in modern societies and it is necessary to incorporate other categories such as "love". Although he considers the concepts of biopower, biopolitics or anatomopolitics pertinent; For the understanding of the "appearance of love" in modern societies, these concepts are not operative.

Giddens (1992) considers that women have undergone relevant changes by proposing the relationship of sexual and emotional equality, since it confronts the pre-existing forms of power relations between the various established sexed roles. Likewise, she argues that the ideals of romantic love, a precursor of the "pure relationship", have had a greater influence, for a long time, in the relationships of women than in those of men; This ethos of romantic love impacts women in two ways: on the one hand, it has

“placed women in their place”, the house and, on the other, romantic love, which can be seen as an active and radical commitment against machismo. modern society. Romantic love raises the perspective that it is possible to establish a lasting emotional bond with the other on the basis of qualities inherent to this same bond.

The emotional history of modern societies, Giddens (1992) tells us, has pending aspects to be revealed and this history refers to men's sexual aspirations, which have been separated from their public personalities. The sexual control of women by men expresses a relaxation in modern societies and reveals the compulsive nature of male sexuality, which in turn also generates the growth of male violence against women.

Traditionally the sexual experience of men and women has been attached to a rigidly dual model: men need sexual experience for their physical health, while women must preserve their virtuosity (women's rejection of sexual temptation, which has been reinforced by various institutional protections). In modern societies, most people enter marriage with a wealth of sexual experiences and knowledge; Most men agree that women are sexually willing and women expect to give and receive sexual pleasure, considered key to a successful marriage. (Giddens, 1992).

Sexuality in contemporary societies has become open and accessible to the possibility of developing different lifestyles; It is something that people have and no longer a natural condition that an individual accepts as a pre-established matter: “sexual functions are a malleable feature of personal identity, a point of first connection between the body, self-identity and norms social”(Giddens, 1992, p.24).

Giddens exposes that, from Freud's position, modern institutions exercise increasing repression to obtain the benefits they offer; civilization implies discipline and control of the internal mechanisms of the subjects so that it achieves its effectiveness. This same position was shared by Foucault in his early writings, who assumed that modern social life was limited by the disciplinary power exercised by institutions, organizations, to produce docile, controlled and regulated subjects in their activities, as well as the inability to act under the impulses of the wish.

For Foucault, indicates Giddens (1992), sexuality is a social construction that acts in fields of power and not only are biological impulses that are released or not; likewise, he considers that the only active forces are power, speech and the body. According to Giddens, Foucault, while making contributions on the social origins of sexuality, does not address the connections between sexuality and romantic love, a phenomenon closely linked to changes in the family.

Giddens exposes that in the nineteenth century, marriage, for most groups, expressed changes since its formation came to be based on different considerations of economic value judgments and the notions and ideals of romantic love were rooted mainly in bourgeois groups and they spread throughout the social order, transforming it: “it was a factor tending to separate the marital tie from other kinship ties and to give them a special resignification. Husbands and wives began to be seen as collaborators in an emotional joint venture”(p.34).

The “house” was reconfigured, now it would be a space for emotional support, contrary to its traditional instrumental work character; The contraction of family size also brought great changes on sexuality with birth control, largely detaching it from the demands of reproduction, the basis of the sexual revolution, which according to Giddens (1992) involves two basic elements : “One is the revolution in female sexual autonomy... Its consequences for male sexuality are profound, that is why it can be said that it is largely an unfinished revolution. The second element is the flowering of homosexuality, male and female. Homosexuals of both sexes have established a new sexual base that far surpasses the most orthodox from the sexual point of view ”(p.36). However, homosexuals still face deep-seated prejudices and violence, their struggles for emancipation, Giddens tells us, “encounter perhaps deeper resistance such as those that continue to obstruct access to economic and social equality” (p.40).

These processes are related to the libertarian sexual movement proclaimed by the social movements of the sixties of the twentieth century, which generated very deep and irreversible changes and which came to reorganize social life.

Giddens assumes the relationship of sexuality with power, raised by Foucault, and exposes it as a phenomenon, as an institutional reflexivity in constant dynamism; He points out that it is institutional because sexuality is a central element that structures social activity today; sexuality is reflective because it penetrates into social life and transforms it, by being part of the action frames adopted by subjects and groups. He considers that in modern societies there is an expansion of this institutional reflexivity derived from the increase in the mobility of societies, which has led to the elimination of traditional aspects of society: "The increasing geographical mobility, the mass media and a great accumulation of diverse factors have eradicated traditional elements of social life that had resisted for a long time –or had adapted to modernity "(Giddens, 1992, p.36). These changes in institutional reflexivity have also accelerated with the increase in knowledge or informed knowledge about the practices of sexuality.

Regarding sexuality, romantic love and marriage, Giddens tells us that in pre-modern Europe, marriages in most cases were performed by contract, not precisely established by mutual sexual attraction, but mainly by economic factors; in poor couples' marriages, this was a means of organizing farm labor, and the hard work involved in marriage hardly led to sexual passion and other sex-related practices of physical affection. In the wealthy, aristocratic and powerful classes, a certain sexual freedom was expressed that sought independent sexual pleasure, which was not related to marriage linked to sexual reproduction and routine work. In Europe as well as in other aristocracies, a difference was established between the "chaste" sexuality of marriage and the eroticism or passionate nature of extramarital affairs.

The ideals of love were closely related to the values of Christianity. Giddens (1992) expresses that at the end of the 18th century the romantic love that assumed the ideals of Christianity and some aspects of passionate love was noted, likewise, it expressed its relationship with freedom and self-realization, "affections and ties, the element sublime of love, they tend to predominate over sexual ardor [...] Love breaks with sexuality at the same time, which includes it "(p.45); Virtue will no longer be associated only with innocence but will also refer to a "special" person and romantic, sublime love will tend to be separated from erotic sexual compulsions; that is, romantic love will assume the idea, according to Giddens, of "novel / romance."

In modern times, especially from the 19th century, when the man / father is positioned as the center of the industrial production system that implies the separation of the work center from the home, the power of the man will weaken in the face of the reconfiguration of the woman who will increase its influence at home, given the decrease in the number of children and their education, this will lead to an idealization of the maternal figure, Giddens will tell us: the modern idea of "motherhood" was constituted, which also influenced some widespread values of romantic love; the wife / mother image associates motherhood with femininity that will contribute to sustaining the conceptions of female sexuality.

The age expressed a complex romantic love; However, the congruence between it and the sexual relationship was frustrated, as it was associated with marriage "forever" and motherhood; Hence, the division of labor between the sexes was marked, the man was assigned paid work and the woman the house, the husband's domain and female sexuality was tied to marriage, while the man assumed the freedom to have the sexual pleasure outside of marriage.

5. REPRESENTATIONS AND PRACTICES OF SEXUALITY OF YOUNG UNIVERSITY

The Faculty of Social Sciences of the Autonomous University of Chiapas is located in the city of San Cristóbal de las Casas, located in the municipality of the same name, in the V Altos tsotsil-tseltal region of the state of Chiapas, Mexico.

The Faculty of Social Sciences offers four undergraduate study programs: Social Anthropology, Economics, History, and Sociology, as well as one graduate program: Master's in Regional Studies. In the January-June 2021 school year, the Faculty had a school enrollment of 518 undergraduate students, made up of 48% men and 52% women. (Department of School Services, Fac. Of Social Sciences, UNACH, 2021).

The research participants, according to the data provided, are undergraduate students in Social Anthropology, Economics, History and Sociology; They have an average age of 22, a minimum age of 19 and a maximum age of 29; the sample consisted of 52% men and 48% women.

Most of the participants interviewed study a degree in Sociology, 48%, a degree in Economics 30% and the minority of participants, 22%, study a degree in Social Anthropology and History.

The students who participated in the research mostly come from the state of Chiapas, mainly from the municipalities of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Comitán de Domínguez, Unión Juárez, Frontera Comalapa, Ocosingo, Huixtán, Bochil and La Concordia; and others come from federal identities such as Tabasco, Oaxaca, Morelos, Michoacán, and Baja California Sur.

Regarding the languages that the students speak, I can mention that 15% speak an indigenous language apart from Spanish, mainly Tsotsil, Tseltal and Mam; Likewise, 6% stated that in addition to Spanish they speak English.

Regarding the religious affiliation of the participating students, it stands out that the highest proportion, 43%, expressed that they are of the Catholic religion, followed by approximately a quarter mentioned being ascribed to a Protestant religion; Likewise, just over a fifth of the students expressed that they are not affiliated with any religion and a small part indicated that they are attached to Hebraism or are atheists.

It is important to mention that approximately three-quarters of the participating students stated that they live in their family nucleus made up of their parents and siblings, 15% of the students indicated that they live alone, 10% live with other relatives and 3% of the students live with friends.

Regarding the marital status of the participating students, the vast majority, 97%, mentioned that they are single and 3% are widowers.

Regarding the level of schooling of the parents of the participating students, it stands out that there is a minimal part of parents in illiteracy conditions; Likewise, the mothers of the participants express a higher educational level in relation to their fathers, although the proportion of difference is minimal, in the case of studies of complete primary, complete high school and complete bachelor's degree.

Definitions of Sexuality

Most of the young students participating in the research defined sexuality with concepts related only to the body / sex and in relation to sexual orientation; In this regard, the definition expressed by the knowledge with which they associate sexuality are: "the experimentation of the body", "physical intimacy", "sexual pleasure", "what has to do with sexual intercourse", "satisfaction of our physical desires", "actions of intimacy", "tastes and preferences that you feel in yourself", "sexual preferences, tastes and attractions". In this sense, Gerardo's definition of sexuality (personal communication, December 1, 2020) tells us that he understands it as: "something normal in living beings and as the preferences, tastes, attractions of each person according to their sexual preferences like, heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual and among other sexes". The knowledge that constitutes the definitions of sexuality of most of the participating university students expresses a bias around the diversity of aspects that it refers, which according to CONAPRED (2016) not only includes sex, but also identities and gender roles, eroticism, sexual orientation, pleasure and reproduction.

This position is shared mainly by women and it is relevant to mention that only women associate sexuality with sexual intercourse and emotions, as mentioned by Estrella (personal communication, November 29, 2020): "sexuality is being with the loved one and have a relationship with consent without anyone forcing anyone and that is very special. To be together at all times and to trust each other". The information obtained shows differences in sexual and loving behavior between men and women; In this case, it can be interpreted that there is a tendency for women to incorporate the category of "love" with sexual practice, which according to what Giddens (1992) raises is typical of modern societies and especially the ideals of love Romantic have exerted greater influence on women, thereby establishing an emotional bond with the other in their sexual practice.

Likewise, it is the case of women who relate sexuality to the sexual act, which comes from God and is associated with marriage and the affective, as expressed by Yuli (personal communication, November 25, 2020): "Sexuality it is something that God grants between couples, that is to say in marriage and that would be linked to the emotional bond". This shows the active presence of the influence of the religious institution in the representations of sexuality that the university women participating in this research have especially; traditional elements of social life that still resist in time and in the way of representing sexuality and its practices.

Among the research findings, it also highlights that a relevant part of young students have an ambiguous concept of sexuality, when they approach it as "it is to be happy", "physical attraction", as "a term that defines us at birth", "An orientation based on a feeling"; meaning confused with gender identity: "a physical characteristic that distinguishes people as man and woman" (Oswaldo, personal communication, December 8, 2020), "I define sexuality by the biological traits of the individual that characterize it as a man if he has a phallus or a woman if he has a vulva" (Andrei, personal communication, December 10, 2020), "term that defines people when they are born" (Rober, personal communication, December 8, 2020); likewise, they tend to define sexuality with emotions: "They are the set of emotions, that as beings we have, that some of us can even say is what defines us" (Diana, personal communication, December 1, 2020).

It stands out in the research that a minority of young students have a concept of sexuality in a comprehensive, encompassing way, when considering the relationship of aspects such as physical, biological, emotional, affective, psychological, sexual orientation, pleasure and particularly women stand out. in this referential framework, where they assume these positions as mentioned by Fifi (personal communication, November 25, 2020): "it is oriented towards a development within people as well as the changes that the human being has and therefore sexuality encompasses the sex, gender identities and roles, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and sexual orientation "; Likewise, Lizbeth (personal communication, December 1, 2020) expresses that she understands sexuality "between man and woman, as well as the other sexes that exist today, with the characteristics of each individual, such as tastes, attractions, orientation, feelings of each individual according to their preference ".

Sexual Orientation

Regarding how young students define their sexual orientation and the experiences generated around this definition, the study shows that the vast majority of young people define themselves as heterosexual and the minority expressed having a homosexual, pansexual orientation and asexual.

In the case of the participating men with a homosexual orientation, they declare that they experience it in secret from their family and place of origin, only in the intimate space of their group of friends can they freely express their sexual orientation, as Luis refers (personal communication, November 23, 2020): "I am homosexual, only openly with my social groups of friends within the university but not with my relatives or within the municipality where I am from." These defining experiences of the sexual orientation of the university students express discriminatory societies that place homosexual people in the need to live their sexuality clandestinely or to move away from family contexts, contravening compliance with traditional teachings and established social norms about sexuality. sexuality. (Martínez and Solís, 2009).

The research highlights broader opinions of the participating women regarding their sexual orientation and experiences in this regard, where they manifest greater freedom to explore to define their sexual orientation, as mentioned by Dayana (personal communication, November 8, 2020): "Still I am defining my sexual orientation, because I continue to define my sexual tastes "and Alexia (personal communication, November 29, 2020):" I consider myself heterosexual but I have also had sexual encounters with women. But my greatest attraction and ability to fall in love is towards men".

Family and Sexuality

According to the information provided by the participating young students about the beliefs, evaluations, norms and practices of their families about sexuality, it is important to note that the vast majority of families are attached to a rigid, traditional, conservative, sexist model, secrecy in this regard, as stated by Florecita in her opinions (personal communication, December 1, 2020): "Sexuality [for her family] should be normal, as society has imposed and that does not allow other types of preferences in the family "and Luis (personal communication, November 23, 2020):" Well [for his family] the behavior must be the traditional one; that is to say, macho, since it includes a lot the way of dressing, speaking and acting, and in terms of sexual experiences and mating [sic] it must be with people of the opposite sex".

Likewise, the opinions of the young participants state that traditional positions predominate in their families where it is assumed that men need sexual experience and women must preserve their virtuosity, as mentioned by Alexia (personal communication, November 29, 2020): "The relationship sexual must be heterosexual and a woman must become a virgin to marriage and only have sexual

relations with your partner "and Mónica (personal communication, November 29, 2020): "Sexuality, according to my family, should be towards the same sex, man -Woman and with her guarantee reproduction, but at the same time the sexual act only happens, in my case it changes, I am a woman, it would only happen when I get married, on the other hand, my brothers, there is no problem what they do with the sexual act." .

It should be noted that a minority of young participants consider that their families have a more open and free representation of sexuality and respect for the various sexual orientations, as expressed by Robe (personal communication, December 8, 2020): "[sexuality should be] Open, talk about sexual issues without shame because it is something normal that happens between two people, whether they are of different sex or of the same sex, it is also important to talk about this topic to be informed and not run the risk of a premature pregnancy or contracting a sexual disease ", and it is important to mention that in the families of the participating university students there is a weak tendency towards openness to difference, tolerance and respect for the diversity of sexual orientation, as expressed by Dayana (communication personal, November 8, 2020): "My Family wants it to have a normal definition of what a woman does, but changes and social movements have disrupted no matter how my parents think, they are accepting sexual preferences".

Sexuality and Religión

From the religious dogma professed by young students, the vast majority Catholics and Protestants, sexuality is guided by the commandments of the Bible, it must occur in marriage, it is sexist and heterosexual is assumed as something normal and naturalized to the male relationship. -women, and they consider homosexuality as something abnormal and unpleasant, beliefs that constitute rigid, traditional, conservative representations of sexuality that guide sexist and discriminatory practices; In this regard, there are the following opinions: Jago (personal communication, December 8, 2020): "As I explained in the previous point, in the religion that we profess there should only be a man and a woman, since most of the things that we guide ourselves are in the sacred scriptures, that is, the Bible, and there it mentions that times ago men and women married each other and that was a sin in the eyes of God, for that reason we only follow the commandments and also why see a same-sex partner would be unpleasant "; Yuli (personal communication, November 25, 2020): "Take the principles that God has given, sexuality is for marriage, not in the early age since that is considered a sin called" Fornication "and they will not inherit the kingdom of God "and Dayana (personal communication, November 8, 2020):" The Catholic religion wants me to be quiet, agreeable to my husband and to be a virgin until marriage, for women it is more difficult to have behaviors of sexual desire or feel pleasure . They mark behaviors and point to women more than men".

Influence of the Media on the Sexuality of Young People

Young students, in a relevant part, believe that the media exert a strong influence on the representations and behaviors of the audience, and in particular television has a high sexual content aimed at all audiences, which exert a great influence on the persons. In this sense, Alexia (personal communication, November 29, 2020) considers that the media "largely dictate what can or will be done. In other ways they also influence the desires, aspirations and standards to which the young person yearns to reach "; for Fabrizio (personal communication, November 29, 2020): the media "Influence negatively in several aspects. From my vision of things, the sexuality experienced in the media is fallacious. It is not close to the concrete reality, for example, pornography. One grows up seeing that, out of curiosity, for whatever it is, and believes that sexuality is that, the penetration of a man towards a woman. However, sexuality is not just having sex. Sexuality is a whole field of human exploration of oneself. In many respects, the media tend to confuse young people about how to live their sexuality "; Likewise, Berenice (personal communication, November 27, 2020) considers that the media "have a very strong influence on thoughts and behaviors that make them have certain expectations about sexuality." According to researchers such as Vargas and Barrera (2004), the consumption of these contents influences more sexist attitudes and favors the sexual activity of young people, also influencing relevant aspects such as sexual health, which is why the media have a high social responsibility:

However, contrary to popular belief, young people do not imitate what they see on television directly and immediately (Strasburger, 1995). Television exerts a much more subtle and insidious effect, by providing information that is transformed into the cognitions that young people have about sexuality which, in turn, become guides for action when they face certain situations in their romantic relationships and sexual. (Vargas and Barrera, 2004, pp. 8-9).

Among the results of the research, it stands out that for young people the media also guide discriminatory attitudes against homosexual people, as mentioned by Lizbeth (personal communication, December 1, 2020):

[The media] They influence in a good way and at the same time bad, good because we have more at hand information about everything that deals with sexuality and thus we can find out about legalization, such as abortion, marriage and thus have more closeness to resolve doubts and bad because many times it is not given the proper use, since there are many pages to display the body of other people and as well as pornography. But it has also been a means of discrimination and attack on people with different sexual preferences and that has even led many people to have suicidal thoughts or levels of depression and that happens with everyone, because whatever it is, it is still something or an issue. closed and discretion of many people, when it should not be something like that and take this as something normal.

It is important to mention that a significant part of young students consider that the media, although they have these negative aspects, are also positive because they are open to information about sexuality, they provide them with knowledge about contraceptive methods, disease prevention and other aspects of sexuality, and establish the generational change, as Rodrigo puts it (personal communication, November 27, 2020): “[the influence of the media] has increased considerably, due to the current globalization. The foregoing undoubtedly raises new identities in relation to sexuality, which were being repressed. For its part, it establishes an evolution in the conception and acceptance, with the passing of the generations ”.

Influence of Formal Education on the Sexuality of Young People

Young students state that formal education has helped them to know, understand and reflect on sexuality, as well as to experience a freer, responsible and healthier sexuality; Formal education has taught them about sexuality which is not spoken in some families of young people and also, especially women, has freed them from the sexist and controlling religious dogma, as expressed by Alexia (personal communication, November 29, 2020) : “[Formal education] has gradually opened my eyes. By allowing me to know that religion and moral rules pursue objectives of control and submission. I believe that my studies in feminism and gender have allowed me to break with imposed structures and ideologies and have allowed me to live my sexuality more freely and consciously ”.

However, it is necessary to point out that there are traditional, conservative positions of young students who consider that the school has not educated them about sexuality or that the knowledge it has provided them has been very basic focused on reproduction, as expressed by Romero (personal communication, December 1, 2020): “Well, it depends, actually in the education I received in school they only talk about reproduction, but sexuality and the sexual act in humans is not reduced to a reproductive aspect because it has a burden Social. In primary and secondary school they don't talk to you about the condom, or about diseases, but only about reproduction. It is until high school that they talk to you about diseases and condom use, which is too late. Maybe in high school they give you talks, but other institutions rarely. Formal education has little influence, at least for me it was, since most of the doubts I looked for, after having sex and not before”.

Characteristics of the First Sexual Experience and its Implications

In the first experience of the sexual act of the participating university students, a difference is expressed between women and men, since almost all men mentioned having had a first sexual experience, in the case of women, approximately half had not had a relationship sexual. Those who reported having sexual experience, the vast majority indicated that this was a consensual, heterosexual relationship, in some cases it was linked to alcohol intake and young people represent it as "confusing", "uncomfortable", "unsafe", "complicated" , "Clumsy", "unpleasant" and with fear of not having extensive knowledge in this regard and without taking contraceptive protection measures, as Oswaldo comments (personal communication, December 19, 2020): "My first experience was at 12

years old With a neighbor older than me, it was a curious and scary experience, the fear was that of not knowing how to do and have sexual relations, I also did not know how to put on a condom and immediately we did it without any protection, the girl told me he forced things that I was not determined to do. At the end of the act I felt a little strange and afraid that the girl would get pregnant. Likewise, Romero (personal communication, December 1, 2020) shares his experience:

My first experience came in a very unexpected way. I didn't know a woman's body and neither did mine. I did not know how to use a condom and my partner, who was already sexually active, preferred not to use it. She said that you should first penetrate without a condom and before finishing, stop, like this several times until you could no longer, and then use a condom and finish in the condom. This with the intention that she felt more pleasure. Sex was complicated, because she was almost on her period and there was no lubrication, that gave a lot of rose, I did not know if she had a small penis, or why I could not get it, until she helped me with her hand. The ejaculation was very fast, and for her somewhat annoying, despite not using a condom, I did not ejaculate inside her, I was able to get out of her. I did not know about how to hold or squeeze, and then continue. Usually when she masturbated me it was fast, but I didn't know that when I had sex it would be just as fast. He didn't know it bothered him that it ended so quickly and he didn't know what to do next.

In the case of women, very few expressed that their first experience was pleasant and they highlight painful and frustrating experiences as shared by Alexia (personal communication, November 29, 2020):

It was painful and unpleasant. It was with my first boyfriend with whom I had already been in a relationship for almost two years. We were both going to a Christian church and had conflicts over doing so, so mentally we were scared and guilty. We just started kissing and when we started to take off our clothes, my boyfriend took his penis out to insert it. There was no foreplay or fondling to make sure I was lubricated. We didn't use lubricant either which meant it hurt a lot until I couldn't even take it anymore and started crying. There was no adequate accompaniment from my partner, he did not comfort me or say something to me. I remember he just rolled over and fell asleep. It was not at all, the first time that I was waiting.

It is worth mentioning that in some cases of young people whose first sexual experience was heterosexual, this defined them to change their orientation to homosexual, both men and women, as Fifi shares (personal communication, November 25, 2020):

At 18 I got to have my first boyfriend, which I was not sure of the feelings I had towards him; I took a year of girlfriend with him and also with him I lost my virginity. I wasn't sure I wanted to do it but he convinced me, the truth is that I didn't like it, maybe and because it was the first time, but since then I haven't done it again. I did not think that having sex felt so ugly and without desire and desire to be with that person. From that time I began to notice that I liked women, I felt an attraction for them.

Assessment of Sexual Experiences

The vast majority of the young people who said they had had sexual relations positively valued their experiences so far and represent them as "satisfactory", "pleasant", "with love", "with respect", "very good", "unique" and they have learned from them. It is important to note that in the case of young people with homosexual orientation, their experiences are valued as "risky" because their family does not know their orientation and they do not feel in the freedom and security of how their relatives would take it and they tend to live their sexual relations clandestinely.

For male and female students, sexual relations must be consensual and for most of them, preferably that both have a "bond of affection / love and respect", free, because this makes a relationship of more trust and communication because the relationship Sexually they assume it as "something special" as it is linked to love; Likewise, they must be responsible with knowledge of protection methods, in a safe place, with privacy and between people of legal age.

Young people and their knowledge in sexual evaluations are looking for relationships that transmit changes that transform the thought instilled, in the courtships that have had or marked the values with each couple that is part of a social world that express good or bad "teachings", Emotional ties also

mark behaviors that link significant moments in the personal life of each young person and their sexual experience. For some young people their sexual experience has not been in a "complete" way, linking them to "not complete" complacency situations, leaving teachings not to repeat and have "consequences".

Among the research findings, the "care" that university students consider should be highlighted in order not to get a sexual disease or an unplanned pregnancy; It is also part of the evaluations that qualify as satisfactory of responsible and careful experiences when using condoms, respecting the partner, as Gerardo shares with us (personal communication, December 1, 2020): "I value them very well, since I have only been with a person, and that is good for me, although perhaps for society it is not so good, because there are people in the most general men who say that you should have sex with different women, but I think it is ethical and the feelings of each one".

Sexual and Reproductive Health

The total of the participating men and women who expressed having sexual experience stated that they protect themselves from diseases and pregnancies with condoms such as condoms and contraceptive pills, mainly.

Regarding the question that was made to the university students about who decides in their sexual relations the use of contraceptive methods, in the case of women, the majority expressed that the decision is made between the two, as a couple; but a significant part of women indicated that they make the decision to use contraceptive methods in their sexual relations. In the case of men, the vast majority responded that the decision to use contraceptives is made as a couple, but they also go to the doctor for the corresponding check-ups.

About the family planning methods they use, a minority of young people mentioned that they seek methods in agreement with their partner; in the case of women, they know and usually use the menstrual count, the fertile days with the probability of pregnancy, to be cautious; in the case of men, they opt for male condoms.

In relation to the opinion of the young students about abortion, the majority of the men agreed, that it should be approved and be free; They consider it to be a complex issue as it has both positive and negative aspects. Likewise, it stands out that just over half of the women mentioned agreeing with abortion and a relevant part of the students indicated that they did not agree with abortion.

Within the findings of the study, it was identified that just over a third of the young students stated that they had suffered some type of violence by their current or ex-partner: verbal violence, manipulation, blackmail, excessive jealousy, physical, emotional and violence. sexual. A small part of the young people mentioned that they have not yet realized any type of violence they have suffered from their boyfriend or partner.

Likewise, the study gives an account of cases of young students, men and women, who stated that they had been forced to have sexual relations, approximately one fifth, and several cases were abuse suffered in childhood. In other cases, the couple forced them to have relationships through blackmail or threats, showing concern for losing the partner and pleasing, but leaving aside the personal value of the young man.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Among the main findings of this research we can point out that despite the main sociological theories about sexuality in modern societies that realize that it is related to love, eroticism and human relationships in general, the majority of The young university students interviewed from the Faculty of Social Sciences of UNACH express knowledge and meanings about sexuality that are highly biased mainly towards specific aspects of the sexual act and women also stand out in assuming sexuality associated with the emotional, affective, marriage and reproduction: a romantic ethos.

Likewise, regarding their definitions of their sexual orientation, a freer and more open position of women is expressed to have diverse experiences that allow them to define their sexual orientation; However, the study refers to the difficulties of young people to express their homosexuality freely and without stigma.

The representations of the sexuality of the families of the young students are characterized by being traditional, orthodox, attached to religious canons, sexist, rigid and sexuality is a taboo subject; However, there is a weak orientation towards a more accessible, open representation, tolerant of the possibility of the development of different lifestyles around sexuality.

The study accounts for the influence of the Catholic and Protestant religion on the representations of sexuality in the families of young students, characterized by conservative, rigid, sexist valuations, beliefs and norms about sexuality and intolerant to the diversity of orientations sexual.

Young students consider that the media exert a central influence on the representations of sexuality and orientation of their sexual practices, also marking discrimination towards non-heterosexual orientations; However, there is also a tendency for young people to positively represent the media as enablers of information and openness that triggers the generational change in sexuality.

The formal school is an institution considered of great influence for young students in their sexuality; However, education is biased towards reproductive aspects or null about the approach to sexuality in a comprehensive manner.

Likewise, young men are more open and have sexual experience, while women are more restricted to having a sexual relationship because they consider themselves to be very young and not ready for this. It highlights that for the young people who have had a sexual relationship, both men and women, in the majority this experience was characterized by the lack of information and security to make it pleasant. It highlights that women express more frustrating and painful sexual experiences.

With regard to sexual and reproductive health, young people protect themselves with condoms or pills in their current relationships, but the first sexual experience was mainly without any protection to avoid a sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy. It also highlights that both men and women mostly make the protection decision as a couple, but it also highlights the behavior of the women who make the protection decision.

Regarding abortion, the study shows that it is women who express the greatest number of positions against and the majority in favor of abortion are young men.

The research accounts for the presence of violence in relationships of both women and men and experiences of rape are recorded, especially in childhood, both in men and in women.

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