

SEXUAL IDENTITY: A REFLEXIVE APPROACH TO THE VOICES OF THE ACADEMIC STAFF.

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Resume. The concept of sexual identity is a construct that has been installed in communities as a way of understanding diversity. It is composed of gender identity, gender role, biological sex, and sexual orientation. The objective of the research focused on unveiling in the academic experience the configurations of meaning in prescriptive and active discourses regarding sexual identity in a higher education institution that trains educators from the perspectives of inclusion and diversity. The study was based on an interpretative-qualitative approach based on a hermeneutic phenomenological method. In the first stage, interviews were conducted with male and female academics. The second stage focused on a documentary analysis of institutional management instruments. Within the active and prescriptive discourses, the academics configure their sexual identity with the gender self-concept and maintain a relationship of tension between the personal and working world. In which the roles and functions assumed by them are evaluated according to their efficacy, leaving underhandedly the self-esteem or the authenticity of the subjects.

Key word: Sexual Identity, Inclusion, Diversity, Gener, University

1 Introduction

Sexual identity is the way in which subjects think and feel about themselves constructed from the relationships established between gender identity, gender role, biological sex, and sexual orientation.

The research focused on revealing in the academic experience the configurations of meaning in prescriptive and active discourses regarding sexual identity in a higher education institution that trains educators.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 New discourses of Sexual Identity

The conceptualization of Sexual Identity is observed from different theories. A compilation is presented from different currents such as psychoanalysis, sexual identity, social learning, social constructionism, social role of gender and identity to have an eclectic vision of the phenomenon.

In relation to the above, the visions of masculinity and femininity are mediated by identification processes, that is, by the way in which different subjects are linked by one vision or the other. These approaches start from the characteristics of sexual dimorphism (sex) in human beings that determine male or female, the evolution of these representations is understood as the concept of gender (Meler, 2008).

The sex - gender relationship is deepened from what is proposed by Castellanos - Cruz et al. (2017) from the terms of: gender identity as the way in which the subjects understand themselves, sexual orientation corresponds to the physical, emotional attraction manifested by the subjects for people of different or same sex and/or gender. Gender role is the masculine or feminine behaviors that are expressed in social contexts and biological sex the physiological characteristics specific to each species (Bardi et al., 2005; Killerman, 2017).

The behaviors associated with the masculine and the feminine are conceived as symbolic sexual differences (Lacan, 2010), so these are the ones that determine the gender gap. The interactions manifested between subjects contribute to the processes of construction of sexual identity through a first approach by observation and secondly by imitation. Berger and Luckmann (2003) reaffirm this position by pointing out that it is produced by a dialectical relationship between the subject and society.

These assignments assumed by the subjects in their dialectical relationship with society establish a gender self-concept, which is linked to the concepts of self-esteem, self-efficiency (García - Leiva, 2005) and authenticity (Stets and Burke, 2014). In which the subjects evaluate or assess their performance against the roles and functions established by society.

3 Methods

The research was developed from an interpretive - qualitative approach (Sandín, 2003) with a phenomenological - hermeneutic design as it focused on the subjects' lived experiences (Flick, 2015; Packer, 2013; van Manen, 2003).

The first stage sought to access the experience of the cases through semi-structured interviews. The second analyzed the institutional management documents as a way to understand the prescriptive discourses of the participants (Flores, 2009; Packer, 2013). The analysis was carried out with QDA Lite software version 2.0.9.

The sample consisted of 10 academics belonging to the faculty of education. The selection was carried out by selective sampling (Vasilachis, 2006) with equal gender representation.

4 Results

Based on the findings found in the active and prescriptive discourses, a scheme is presented (See Figure 1) that incorporates the categories and subcategories as a way of understanding the configuration of the academics' meanings.

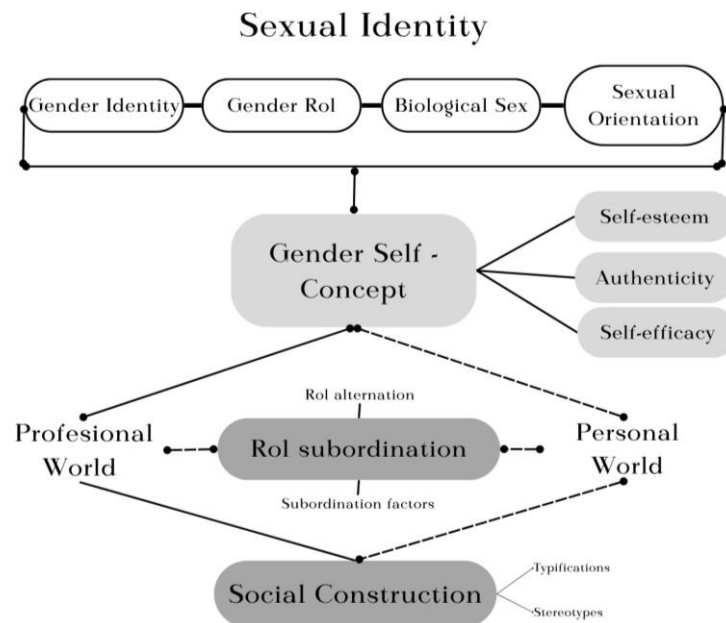


Fig. 1. Configuraciones de Significado de la Identidad Sexual¹

5 Discussion

The expression of Sexual Identity (Castellanos - Cruz et al. 2017; Killerman, 2017) from active and prescriptive discourses is manifested as an expression of gender self-concept (García - Leiva, 2005; Stets and Burke, 2014).

According to Berger and Luckmann (2003) the dialectic relationship with society establishes roles and functions in the subjects, in this sense, the participants manifest tensions between the responsibilities of the working world and those emanating from the personal.

From the above, Sexual identity (Castellanos and Swaab, 2017) becomes a profound element. As a component that we do not let see, that becomes our intimacy. A personal space, which for Lacan (2010) is the space where subjects take value from language, in

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other words, it is the point where we meet ourselves in a personal and reflective dialogue. It is here where sexual identity is transformed, and the transformative experience emerges.

6 Conclusions

The configuration of sexual identity is manifested as a gender self-concept. That is to say, the subjects recognize in themselves self-esteem, self-efficacy, and authenticity. Although there is an understanding of the components, the participants express it as a unified concept articulated to their own experiences. This is constantly reconstructed through social interactions, which produces dynamics within the educational spaces in which the formative experience is re-signified by an experience of subjectivation.

7 Limitations and Future Research

The limitations were centered on the selection of the participants, since they were from the same institution. For future research, it is planned to consider a sample of different teachers from different educational levels and to incorporate the voice of the students.

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