

Sexual Identity: Configurations of meaning from active and prescriptive discourses of academics.

Identidad Sexual: Configuraciones de significado desde discursos activos y prescriptivos del cuerpo académico.

Identidade sexual: Configurações de significado a partir de discursos ativos e prescritivos do corpo académico.

性向认同：从教育机构主动性及规范性言语的角度对其意义进行设置

الهوية الجنسية: تكوينات المعنى من الخطابات النشطة والتعليمية للهيئة الأكاديمية

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Abstract

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. From an integrative approach, 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 with a hermeneutic phenomenological design, focusing on the lived experiences of the subjects. The work was divided into two stages, the first in interviews, the second in a documentary analysis. Within the active discourses, the academics staff configure their sexual identity as a gender self-concept and maintain a relationship of tension between the personal and work worlds. From the prescriptive discourses, the sexual identity of the subjects is understood from their gender self-concept, in which the roles and functions assumed by them are evaluated according to their efficiency, leaving underhand the self-esteem or authenticity of the subjects. In conclusion, sexual identity is manifested as a gender self-concept. That is to say, the subjects' evaluation of themselves is based on their self-esteem, self-efficiency, and authenticity.

Keywords: Identity, Social Inclusion, Diversity, Gender, University, High Education

Resumen

El concepto de identidad sexual es un constructo que se ha ido instalando en las comunidades como una forma de comprender a la diversidad. Se compone de la identidad de género, rol de género, sexo biológico y orientación sexual. Desde un enfoque integrador, el objetivo de la investigación se centró en develar en la experiencia académica las configuraciones de significado en discursos prescriptivos y activos respecto a la identidad sexual en una institución de educación superior que forma educadores desde las perspectivas de inclusión y diversidad. El estudio se sustentó en un enfoque interpretativo – cualitativo con un diseño fenomenológico hermenéutico, centrándose en las experiencias vividas de los sujetos. El trabajo se dividió en dos etapas, la primera en la toma de entrevistas, la segunda en un análisis documental. Dentro de los discursos activos del cuerpo académico se configura su identidad sexual como un autoconcepto de género y mantienen una relación de tensión entre el mundo personal y laboral. Desde los discursos prescriptivos se comprende a la identidad sexual de los sujetos desde su autoconcepto de género, en el que los roles y funciones asumidos por los mismos, son evaluados de acuerdo con su eficiencia, dejando solapadamente la autoestima o la autenticidad de los sujetos. En conclusión, la identidad sexual es manifestada como un autoconcepto de género. Es decir, la valoración que hacen los sujetos sobre sí mismos se basa en su autoestima, autoeficiencia y autenticidad.

Palabras clave: Identidad, Inclusión Social, Diversidad, Género, Educación Superior

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Resumo

O conceito de identidade sexual é uma construção que se foi instalando nas comunidades como forma de compreender a diversidade. Compõe-se pela identidade de gênero, papel de gênero, sexo biológico e orientação sexual. A partir de uma abordagem integradora, o objetivo da investigação centrou-se em revelar, na experiência acadêmica, as configurações de significado em discursos prescritivos e ativos em relação à identidade sexual numa instituição de ensino superior que forma educadores pelas perspetivas de inclusão e diversidade. O estudo baseou-se numa abordagem interpretativa – qualitativa com uma conceção fenomenológica hermenêutica, centrando-se nas experiências vividas pelos sujeitos. O trabalho foi dividido em duas fases, a primeira das quais consistiu em entrevistas e a segunda numa análise documental. Nos discursos ativos do corpo académico, a sua identidade sexual configura-se como um autoconceito de gênero e mantém uma relação de tensão entre o mundo pessoal e o profissional. A partir dos discursos prescritivos, a identidade sexual dos sujeitos é entendida a partir do seu autoconceito de gênero, em que os papéis e as funções por eles assumidos são avaliados de acordo com a sua eficiência, deixando subentendida a autoestima ou a autenticidade dos sujeitos. Como conclusão, a identidade sexual manifesta-se como um autoconceito de gênero. Por outras palavras, a avaliação que os sujeitos fazem de si próprios baseia-se na sua autoestima, autoeficiência e autenticidade.

Palavras-chave: Identidade, Inclusão Social, Diversidade, Gênero, Ensino Superior

摘要

性向认同概念是一个为了更好地理解多元化而逐渐在社区里搭建的建构，包含性别认同、性别角色、生理性别和性取向这几方面。该研究从综合的角度，在培养包容和多元教育者的高等教育机构里，对性向认同主动性及规范性言语的设置进行阐释。研究在解释性和定性方法的基础上加入现象学和诠释学设计，集中于研究主体的亲身经历。该研究包含两个过程：第一为采访记录；第二为文献分析。在教育机构的主动性言语中，性向认同被设置为性别的自我概念，在个人及工作间保持着紧张的关系。在规范性言语中，从性别自我概念理解主体的性向认同，主体所扮演的角色和承担的作用是根据主体的效率来进行评估的，没有考虑到他们的自尊和本真。总结来说，性向认同是性别自我概念的显示。也就是说主体对自身的评价是建立在自尊、自我效率和本真的基础上的。

关键词: 身份认同、社会融入、多元性、性别、高等教育

ملخص

مفهوم الهوية الجنسية هو بناء تم تثبيته في المجتمعات كطريقة لفهم التنوع. وهي تتكون من الهوية الجنسية، والدور الجنساني، والجنس البيولوجي، والتوجه الجنسي. من نهج تكاملي، ركز هدف البحث على الكشف في التجربة الأكاديمية عن تكوينات المعنى في الخطابات التوجيهية والفعالة فيما يتعلق بالهوية الجنسية في مؤسسة التعليم العالي التي تدرّب المعلمين من وجهات النظر الشمولية والتنوع. استندت الدراسة إلى مقارنة تفسيرية نوعية مع تصميم ظاهري تأويلي مع التركيز على التجارب الحية للموضوعات. استندت الدراسة إلى نهج تفسيرية نوعية مع تصميم ظاهري تأويلي، مع التركيز على التجارب الحية للموضوعات. تم تقسيم العمل إلى مرحلتين، الأولى في المقابلات، والثانية في التحليل الوثائقي. في الخطابات الإرشادية، يُفهم الهوية الجنسية للموضوعات من مفهوم الذات الجندي، حيث يتم تقييم الأنوار والوظائف التي يضطلعون بها وفقاً لكفاءتهم، تاركين سراً تقدير الذات أو أصالة الموضوعات. في الختام، تتجلى الهوية الجنسية كمفهوم ذاتي للجنس. أي أن التقييم الذي يقوم به الأشخاص لأنفسهم يعتمد على تقديرهم لذاتهم وكفاءتهم الذاتية ومصداقيتهم.

الكلمات الدالة: لهوية، الاندماج الاجتماعي، التنوع، جندرة، التعليم العالي

Introduction

In Chile, Law 21,120 (Ministry of Justice, 2018) recognizes and protects the right to gender identity. Education centers have become spaces not only for teaching, but also for recognition of diversity. It is understood that the dualistic concepts of sex/gender are in an inalienable relationship between the sex assigned at birth and its corresponding gender.

A study done by Figueroa and Tasker (2019) concluded that participants conceived homosexuality and an undesirable development in individuals, establishing that social constructions perceive normality within the principles of heterosexuality. Sexual identity includes the way that individuals think about and understand themselves. The concept is made up of gender identity, gender role, biological sex and sexual orientation. The

discourses on sexual identity are expressed actively, understood as the way we refer to things (Belausteguigoitia et al., 2022) and prescriptively, established in the normative instruments that regulate a group of individuals' linguistic behaviors (Arnoux, 2021).

The purpose of this study is to unveil in the academic experience the configurations of meaning in prescriptive and active discourses on sexual identity in a higher-educational institution that trains teachers from perspectives of inclusion and diversity.

The research design consists of a hermeneutic phenomenological study, as the objective is to reveal the way that the academic body forms its definition of sexual identity, taking into consideration that the human being is not something that simply is, but rather a construction of what it aspires to be. Based on this, the study centers on experience as a way of understanding the conception of the world.

Three stages have been defined. First, semi-structured interviews will be held to gather experiential material. Second, the prescriptive discourses documented in the institutional management tools will be analyzed. Finally, the configurations of meaning will be interpreted in the third stage, using categories of active and prescriptive discourse.

This study emerges as a reflexive and introspective process regarding who we are and how we became who we are and has been established as a way to question personal and collective conceptions in order to build scientific knowledge. An inquiry process lacking in assumptions will be prepared, as we aspire to have an objective approximation of the experiences without elements that may presuppose or steer the study.

Method

This study was developed from an interpretative-qualitative perspective (Sandín, 2003), as it focused on individuals' experiences. Therefore, a hermeneutic phenomenological design (Flick, 2015; Packer, 2013; van Manen, 2003) was used. In

this sense, the study aimed to reveal the way that the world is experienced from practicing academics' configuration of the meaning of sexual identity.

The study's first stage intended to gain access to case experiences through semi-structured interviews. In the second stage, an approximation was made of the configuration of the meaning of sexual identity from the prescriptive discourses declared in management tools. Finally, the third stage interpreted the configurations of meaning by classifying the cases' prescriptive and active discourses, where it was important to isolate thematic expressions through selective analysis (Packer, 2013; van Manen, 2003).

10 academics from the institution participated in the study. All were members of the Faculty of Education and taught at the undergraduate level. The participants were chosen via selective sampling (Vasilachis, 2006). The authors highlighted the importance of ethical aspects for carrying out this study. In this sense, they followed guidelines provided by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects in Biomedical and Behavioral Research (1989), which were materialized via an informed consent.

Given the nature of the study, the data was collected through content analysis and conversational techniques, specifically, semi-structured interviews, which were based on a script that was adapted to the nature of human conversation. The research interview was selected amongst the conversational techniques, as, according to Flores (2009), its purpose is to obtain information that is relevant to the research objectives.

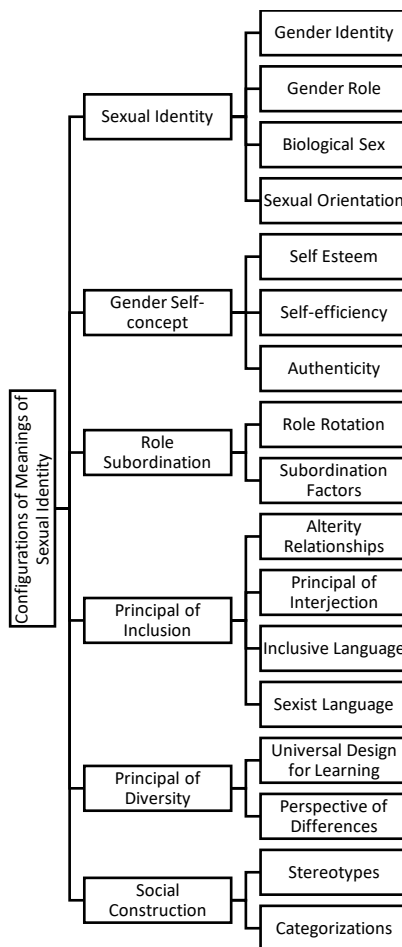
Content analysis was used on institutional management documents. This technique is defined as gathering information that allows for studying the content of a written text, books, documents or even audiovisual material (Flores, 2009).

Once the data was collected, processing and analysis of both the semi-structured interviews and the institutional management tools were done through selective analysis (van Manen,

2003) that focused on the phrase or phrases (codes) that were relevant to the experience. This is possible as the classification is applicable to any strategy of generalization of information (Flick, 2015). The analysis was done using QDA Lite version 2.0.9 software

once the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Emerging categories were established (see Figure 1), which allowed for understanding and delving into the phenomenon and the individuals' experience.

Figure 1. Categories and Subcategories on the meanings of Sexual Identity



Results

Once the necessary data was obtained, the textual citations of the active and prescriptive discourses were compared, analyzing expressions that share the same idea (Vasilachis, 2006). This coding process was organized according to a book on coding. Below, we analyze the categories and subcategories that emerged from the academics' active and prescriptive discourses.

Category 1: Sexual Identity

The sexual identity expressed by the participants integrates the theoretical components the concept is based on. However, in the active discourse there is some confusion regarding a person's sexual identity versus their sexual orientation. Meanwhile, there was no evidence of this category in the prescriptive discourses. It is understood that the elements of gender expression are presented as associated with masculinity and femininity. However,

they are not linked to the sex assigned at birth, rather they are an individual's personal construction. In this sense, the analysis by subcategory demonstrates the following:

Subcategory 1: Gender Identity

The gender identity construction processes begin with the parenting models, which are expressed as a discursive process in a dynamic of construction and deconstruction. According to participant 2 "Identity is a discursive construction through stories. Yes, an important construction, a large part of identity is construction and deconstruction too. Especially deconstruction in some cases, but that's it, it's a continuous gain of sense, of self-knowledge and of configuration. We're always configuring, we are not created one way forever". These parenting models appear at an early age and become models for developing individuals. In this sense, participant 3 signals that: "...if the person had a boy, and buys them traditional boy things, traditional boy colors and then the child assumes that he is a boy, this is the answer given by their parents, who are sources of love and admiration, this is why I believe that the separation that the person experiments between gender and sex happens". These processes are interceded by the behaviors that are considered normal, and those who do not follow them are considered to have personal and social problems. Currently, these absolutist concepts are being modified and are presented differently than those from yesteryear. Participant 6 warns that: "...I could tell you about certain masculine attitudes from 20 years ago, speaking loud, showing off, but the truth is that one also finds them in other gender tendencies and identities ...".

Subcategory 2: Gender Role

There is a new construction regarding masculine and feminine roles, independently conceived from the biological sex assigned at birth and more as an expression of an individual's identity, like a personal integration of gender expressions. This is evident in the following quote: "...I don't know why that for me, for example, the topic

of femininity is for both. We all develop like a feminine instinct, everybody... I tell my husband that he also has a type of femininity, I mean, they're subtle things, like being tough, one tends to think of tough males, macho, and that women tend to be weaker" (participant 1). In this sense, participant 3 describes how individuals express their humanity, and therefore, express an identity "for me, there are no masculine or feminine behaviors, I mean, rather there are human beings, right, and these human beings build their identity, and many times that identity, let's say, doesn't coincide with the sex they were assigned at birth."

Subcategory 3: Biological Sex

Biological sex is physiological, endocrine and genetic expressions that are scientifically established as typical of a determined species. The discrepancies between sex and gender are expressed in the conducts associated with roles, as participant 3 signals: "...as for men, well I think that the behaviors have nothing to do with sex, there are masculine and feminine behaviors, so I wouldn't dare say that a man is defined by certain behaviors, I think that deep down, what defines them is their sex...". Participant 8 indicates "I believe that forgetting about the biology that is given by nature is a mistake, and in this sense, I consider it like flat earth", signaling that genetic aspects cannot be covered up by gender expressions. The point is to move towards understanding the discrepancies and agreements between gender and sex. In this sense, participant 5 comments "...I believe that more than prejudices, because one understands that in fact some people born with one sex and whose identity is another are abused because of this, I mean, there are extremes".

Subcategory 4: Sexual Orientation

This is the affective expression conveyed for another individual, personally or publicly. These manifestations challenge the predominant heterosexism. The concept includes bisexuality, homosexuality and heterosexuality, which are confused with concepts of gender expression such as trans or cis. These elements cause confusion amongst

the subjects, as described by participant 3: “There has been like an explosion of concepts, and one gets confused as to what is bisexual, homosexual, transgender, right, and cisgender, etc.”. Similarly, participant 2 indicates: “...there’s always been that idea of the degenerate, that is everyone’s biggest prejudice. Deviating from the norm, definitely, saying this is weird, this is degenerate, or this makes a man a man, the stereotype of a lesbian having masculine qualities, for example.” In this sense, openness to the expression of sexual orientation in work spaces is made invisible by predominant cultural patterns, as participant 4 states “I do not know of any specific cases of people who say hey, I am being careful because I work here, I do not want to express what I do out of fear, fortunately I have not heard that here, because if I did, it would be very sad”.

Category 2: Gender Self-concept

The gender self-concept is the personal administration of the dynamics established by individuals according to the roles and functions assigned to them, that they establish through objectives or goals that they value through self-efficiency, which reinforce the concept of an individual’s self-esteem, such as a positive or negative assessment of the abilities alluding to the classification and stereotypes validated in the expression of the identity, as long as they manifest themselves in agreement with their own interest or motivations.

Subcategory 1: Self-esteem

This is an individual’s’ personal worth based on achieving objectives or goals that produce satisfaction, self-recognition of abilities and efficiency when facing adversity. In this sense, participant 1 indicates: “I consider myself to be a very steadfast person, in general, everything I have accomplished in life has been the result of a lot of effort and perseverance in order to achieve my goals”. This recognition is also manifested in the dynamics that individuals maintain with others, where the ability to interact socially is valued, described as follows: “If I had to put

my finger on a characteristic, it would have to be that it does not show when I am stressed, so the people I work with tend not suffer the consequences of my stress; I tend to calm the environment. I guess that’s it, I’m pretty average in everything else” (Participant 6).

The prescriptive discourse emphasizes that the institution is focused on working together, as stated in its 2017 – 2021 Strategic Development Plan (SDP): “work together to promote a good organization climate within the Faculty”. Organization climate is based on collaborators’ sense of belonging; the plan refers to a “High sense of belonging amongst academic staff in the Faculty and the University” (2017 – 2021 SDP), as well as, making a contribution to the training of people from the different professional areas.

Subcategory 2: Self-efficiency

This is established as an objective or goal based on mental or written planning that is regulated through time management (What will I do, how will I do it and what resources do I have to achieve it), demonstrated in the following citation: “...well, in reality in any setting, when one proposes objectives, challenges, eh, one wants to achieve them, one wants to, um, reach the goal, and this leads to an increase in motivation, it’s like an intrinsic motivation, where I want to achieve it, how am I going to achieve it and doing things to achieve it” (Participant 1). In the work setting, Participant 10 describes, “...well, of course, there is greater regulation of academic processes...I would like to think that there is also a greater demand on academic performance. I am evaluated by the department chair, the dean, students, and every two or three years, I commit to an academic achievement agreement”. As for the prescriptive discourses, the 2017-2021 SDP indicates the following: “Responds to both institutional guidelines and strategic foci as well as the goals and commitments that we as a Unit have proposed in the context of our mission and vision”. The different departments contribute to the institution’s development and efficiency from their area of knowledge, as

manifested: “The department’s mission is to develop scientific research and provide undergraduate and postgraduate teaching in different areas, with high standards of quality” (Departments).

Subcategory 3: Authenticity

This is an individual’s self-expression regarding their interests and motivations, conveyed in all dimensions of life, both personal and professional, and that are related to the individual’s self-esteem and self-efficiency. In this sense, one of the approximations of authenticity refers to the value of work experiences, as described here: “I am a professional who likes what they do, at times I have had difficulties balancing my family life with my professional life, but it is something that I am working on every day, so little by little I am learning how to compliment everything” (Participant 1). Participant 2 refers to another expression of work experience that is related to personal ties “... I like to take the time to fully understand things, and maybe that’s why I really like to read philosophy; it’s been an important field of study for me and has always complimented everything that I do”. Authenticity is declared in achieving the proposed goals expressed in institutional management tools. In this sense, the 2017-2021 SDP declares “achieving the goals and obligations expressed in our SDP, and in this way, making our mission and vision a reality”. Specifically, the recognition of the training and perfection of professionals with a particular hallmark, which is declared as “Be recognized for the training and specialization of educational professionals, and for research and divulgation of pedagogical and disciplinary knowledge according to our institutional identity” 2017 – 2021 SDP).

Category 3: Role Subordination

Both professional and personal social roles are alternated or subordinated in terms of contextual demands. Response efficiency is conditioned by an individual’s time management skills and/or personal role prioritization. The development of these skills is based on response to the tension between the

personal and the professional in a constant quest for a more efficient response. However, in the academics’ case, subordination does not only depend on context but also personal limits, as job demands can be executed in other environments without the need to establish a specific space.

Subcategory 1: Role Rotation

Social roles are rotated according to context, opposing each other in subordination and rotation depending on demands. Regarding this, Participant 1 indicates: “...I think that the first years are more like that... when you are a mother, you also have to delegate some professional things...because being a mother is time consuming and you do not have a lot of time to work on your professional things”. In this sense, Participant 5 mentions: “...I think that being a woman, worker, mother is always complicated...”. As a result of this, the role’s counter position is made tense in the personal-professional space relationship. This is manifested in the following quote: “So the pace changes greatly; before becoming a mom, I used to work a ton from Monday to Monday, and there were no other worries, but now I can’t, now I only do work things during work hours, and then its family life” (Participant 1). In the academics’ case, professional roles depend on an individual’s personal decisions, as subordination does not totally obey context. On the contrary, they respond to work demands, as Participant 3 highlights: “Because it’s so demanding, and at the end of the day, requires so much time, there are a lot of people that I know that have neglected their family life, their marriage, the children, or their own relaxation, that’s why I have always been careful”. In the prescriptive discourses, possibilities are determined based on the institution’s projections for their collaborators (students, administrative staff, academics, etc.) that allow them to carry out priority areas (administration, research, teaching and outreach). This is manifested in the following citation: “...will be a roadmap that will allow us to project our academic work in the areas of

teaching research, community outreach and administration” (2017 – 2021 SDP).

Subcategory 2: Subordination Factors

The rotation of roles is influenced by job demands and time management tools. These go against demands from one’s personal life, causing tension in both areas, which is understood as subordination factors. Participant 1 indicates: “I think that an academic career is very demanding too, so one tries to remain in the front line within their academic the training they have received...”. In this sense, Participant 3 says: “If the job begins to expand and requires a lot from you, you begin to put off other areas of your life”. These challenges rotate between personal and professional roles. This lack of time and these job demands that challenge personal functions are described by Participant 9 “... an obstruction to new demands, time perhaps, one can say OK, it is a factor, but honestly, I think that time, and perhaps others may not agree with me, but it’s a lack of time, for me, perfection is difficult, I believe that we are constantly trying to be better”.

Category 4: Social Construction

The social construction of an individual’s sexual identity is manifested as the acceptance of roles and functions that are chosen by them as a way of responding to their own interests at a professional level and a personal level, some of which respond to determined emotional ties that are a family legacy or to the decision to form a family. However, these roles and functions in terms of self-imposed demands are intertwined, and it is the individuals who assume the demands according to their needs, even if they surpass an absolutist vision of what is expected from a determined sex or gender.

Subcategory 1: Classifications

Classifications are established by characteristics that include both the personal and the professional, that individuals express in roles such as child, parent or their work or academic lives. In this sense, Participant 2 says: “...they are given, for example, by a

qualification, being a language teacher. My classmates and I experienced this, we were educated together, or getting a doctorate, you’re expected to do certain things that align with what other doctors in the Faculty do” In this sense, Participant 4 indicates: “I am a physical education teacher”. Participant 3 tells us: “Let’s see, I am Chilean, from Talcahuano, I am a teacher, I am a mother, I am Christian...”, indicating the classifications that represent her, bypassing the professional and starting with a nationality, a place of origin, a social role, and a spiritual association. This is also manifested in Participant 5’s discourse: “I am a woman, mother of two teenagers, I am a worker, I am an early-childhood teacher, and I am a person who is in search of tranquility and mental peace above all else.” Among the documents analyzed, it is observed that a sense of identity and belonging is promoted amongst academics and students at the undergraduate, postgraduate, and continuing education levels (2017 – 2021 SDP, Departments, graduate profiles).

Subcategory 2: Stereotypes

Stereotypes are expectations associated with sex or gender. They can be translated to what is expected of ... Participant 1 indicates: “I think that socially, yes, one is expected to do certain actions”. However, these stereotypes transcend the binary vision and focus on what the individual wants and is capable of doing, more than a response to what society expects. In this sense, Participant 4 says: “I don’t believe in roles, I do not follow them, I do not follow the role, because I associate roles with stereotypes”, disagreeing that roles respond to a social stereotype. This sentiment is also manifested by Participant 3: “...in my house, I am in charge of my daughter, right, it’s the two of us, so I can’t say: oh, but that is a man’s role, so I don’t do that, because then there would be incomplete tasks, so I have to do everything, I have to go to the mechanic; one can’t say oh no, that’s a very masculine thing to do.” Stereotypes within the institution are centered on participation, productivity and mobility based on quality standards and the communication of knowledge. In this sense,

the institution states the following: “Promote academic student mobility within and outside the institution” (2017 – 2021 SDP), as well as: “Strengthen undergraduate and graduate students’ participation in research projects and publications” (2017 – 2021 SDP). With the objective of continual improvement, the institution declares: “Improve the Faculty’s scientific production by strengthening the academic body” (2017 – 2021 SDP); with the objective of maintaining quality standards in order to: “communicate knowledge to the community” (Department).

Category 5: Principal of Inclusion

The perspective of inclusion is a recognition of the other as a unique individual with whom an encounter produces an act of disruption in one or both. This openness is manifested through language as a form of inviting others or making them invisible.

Subcategory 1: Alterity Relationships

This is manifested as a focus of recognizing the other as a unique entity, recognizing difference and singularities. In this sense, it is a personal openness that seeks out and welcomes individuals. However, it goes against the standardizing perspective, which is an obstacle for recognizing the other as a legitimate being. This began to appear during the 20th Century, according to what Participant 2 shares: “...I believe in this, I believe the 20th Century, just like the 19th Century focused on language, worried about linguistics, language as a philosophical perspective, cognitive perspective, etc. I think the 20th Century is the century of the sense of alterity, of differences, you know, of what is unlike the unitary.” This recognition of the other as a legitimate being starts with the academic’s personal space or openness. In this sense, Participant 1 says: “Being receptive, working with my peers, teamwork, being supportive, having a good, trusting network, because I think, uhm...working with people also means making contacts that are not only professional, but also trustworthy...”. From the prescriptive discourses, we find evidence of the objective of “working together to strengthen a good

work environment withing the Faculty” (2017 – 2021). Meanwhile, through training, they aim to “Relate the field and study of special education with the human diversity phenomenon, positioning students’ future professional work in the framework of the inclusion of specific educational support needs in diverse contexts” (Graduate profile).

Subcategory 2: Interpellation perspective

Interpellation is the moment when something within us transforms, something shakes us, knocks us down. It comes from our life projections and presents itself facing the other. We configure our identity while also thinking about the identity of others as an act of opposition and truth. This is manifested in Participant 6’s words: “...when we think of our gender identity, without a doubt we do it while also thinking about others...”.

Interpellation appears in life experiences, in encounters with others where an occurrence throws us to the ground and transforms us. In this sense Participant 5 indicates: “...look, for different reasons, from an early age my life has been full of experiences that have thrown me to the ground, have held me to the ground, have made my stand up, grow...”.

Subcategory 3: Inclusive Language

Inclusive language is the openness of active discourse to the other’s receptiveness, where overlapping a sex or gender with another is avoided. It is a way of interacting in which everyone participates. In this sense, Participant 1 points out: “I am very close with my students, I try to be super empathetic, of course maintaining roles, but I try to get to know my students and they feel confident telling me things...”. It’s mainly manifested as a communicative intention, as Participant 4 states: “...I always try to use a more inclusive language, I mean, I don’t know if it’s very inclusive, but I try to ensure that everything is reflected in my language, both female and male students, someone with a disability, that’s what I do with language.” In the prescriptive discourse, generic language is used to refer to collaborators in their different roles, such as student body, administrative staff, and

academic body. In this sense, it is declared that work is “the fruit of a diagnostic process and critical reflection carried out by our community through active and articulated work by members of the Faculty council and the different Departments” (2017 – 2021 SDP), which includes participation “Undergraduate and graduate students from the Faculty of Education” (2017 – 2021 SDP).

Subcategory 4: Sexist Language

Sexist language is the generic expression of a specific sex or gender that makes the other sex or gender invisible. In this sense, Participant 1 indicates: “the guys crack up sometimes, because I show up, I don’t know, with dice, and when they come in the room, I ask ‘Do you want to play dice with me?’”, manifesting an omission of the female sex and gender in their language. As Participant 3 says: “I think that the guys have a hard time participating, even within the semester, or maybe everyone does participate, but differently”, reiterating an approximation of male participation. In this sense, Participant 6 mentions: “...they (masculine 3rd person plural) are obviously skilled in a set of knowledge, operations and competencies ...”. In the prescriptive discourses, it is declared that: “we invite everybody, academics (masculine), administrative workers (masculine) and students to contribute and work together” (2017 – 2021 SDP), centered on a vision of the masculine gender, and making the feminine sex and/or gender invisible.

Category 6: Diversity Principle

The diversity principle seeks to respond to the human differences that converge within the educative realm. This leads academics to resort to a range of strategies that allow for the participation of all students. This category was not found in the analyzed prescriptive discourses.

Subcategory 1: Perspectives of Differences

Differences are based on the recognition of people as culturally diverse individuals as a

differentiating element. While there are unifying elements, individuals are validated through their differences. In this sense, Participant 2 signals: “In asymmetrical relationships, right, the difference is what must allow each of us to make the world a better place”. Based on this, Participant 1 says: “yes, even in terms of inclusion on the classroom. I had the opportunity to see classrooms with many cultures, totally, and the way they work and integrate is very interesting, there are students from Africa, Chinese students, Spanish students, Chileans, totally different cultures, and the teachers succeeded in doing it, in integrating them...”.

Subcategory 2: Universal Design for Learning

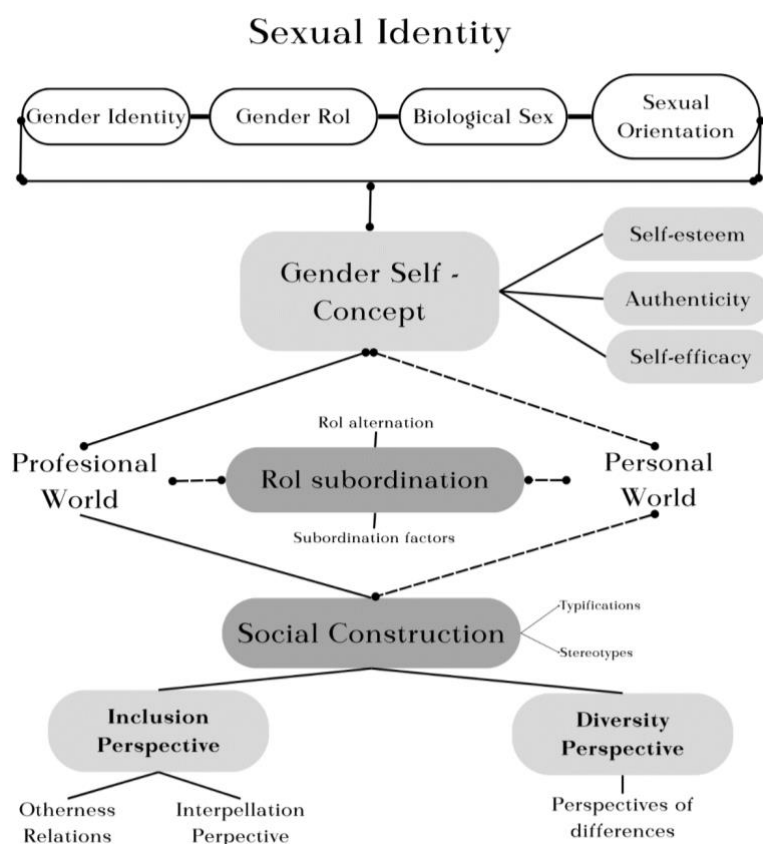
The main strategies used by academics are games, oral presentations, personal interests incorporated into classwork, group projects and relaying experiences. Referring to strategies based on sharing personal experiences, Participant 2 describes: “we also work with sharing experiences, the experiences that the students bring to the university classrooms. Each one of them is a type of traveler or theorist; they go to the schools with theories and then come back to tell those of us who were not there through accounts of the most significant things. Therefore, they participate from their experience and participate in the classroom with their experience, not just with what they had to read. They bring their life, and that is a deep participation that begins to circulate”. In relation to the oral presentation strategies, Participant 2 indicates “...one strategy is...that students present. They also give expository speeches on things that interest them, so they develop oral skills, but these oral skills and these speeches have a participative component, not only because naturally they are presenting and they are standing in front of their peers showing their findings, justifying and explaining, but also because I always ask them to relate the theoretical with their own experiences and also experience the theory as who they are”. Strategies based on students’ personal interests are described, and in this sense, Participant 8 indicates “I think that it is

important to teach them though entertaining didactics, that above all grabs their attention, that is able to surprise them, that leads to a classroom dynamic that does not repeat itself or is varied, and also listen to them. Understanding what is interesting for them, to connect that to my new content and better transfer it, and obviously games, which is one of the areas that I teach”.

Discussion

Based on what was found on sexual identity in the active and prescriptive discourses, next we present a diagram that incorporates the categories and subcategories as a way of understanding the configuration of the academics’ meanings.

Figure 2. Configuration of the meaning of Sexual Identity.



We established the relationship between the prescriptive and active discourse in terms of sexual identity shown by practicing academics and management tools in a higher education institution that trains teachers.

From the active and prescriptive discourses, sexual identity is manifested as an identifying process. In other words, it is the way that individuals associate with a model of masculinity or femininity (Álvarez and Álvarez, 2021; Antonucci and Meske, 2021; Balanta and Obisto, 2022; Sauleda et al.,

2021). For Meler (2008), these processes begin with the morphological conceptualizations that Castellanos et al. (2017) refer to as biological sex.

These differentiation processes are a first approximation toward masculinity or femininity, however, for Lacan (2010) they are centered on the linguistic structures, unlike the Piagetian conceptions that focus on biological differences, making it a first approximation to the concept of gender.

Within the institution, the manifestation of sexual identity is subject to the institution's demands. In this sense, Eagly (1987) describes the importance within communities of separating the roles and functions of what Killerman (2017) describes as gender roles. Assigning them leads to gaps and expectations, as individuals must line up with the dynamics of other members of the community (Mead, 1973).

Gender identity (Bardi et al., 2005; Castellanos et al., 2017; García-Leiva, 2005) becomes a deeper element than sexual identity. This is the component that we hide, that becomes part of our privacy. It is a personal space, which for Lacan (2010) is the space where individuals begin to value language. In other words, it is the point where we find ourselves in a personal and reflexive dialogue. It is here where sexual identity changes and becomes a transformative experience (Granados et al., 2017).

This transforming process can be seen in the gender roles that individuals assume, both in the prescriptive and the active discourses they are manifested in the positions assumed both inside and outside the institution (Martell et al., 2018). This configuration, between the private and the public, makes up the academic body's gender self-concept.

The community's answer reveals itself as the demands they consider necessary for performance. The purpose of these assignments is to regulate the academic body's skills and motivations (Mischel, 1973; Escobar-Jiménez, 2022). This construction is manifested by the identity theory proposed by Stryker (2002), which begins with the construction of self-esteem, self-efficiency and authenticity (Stets and Burke, 2014; Vitório de Souza et al., 2022). A relationship is established between the active and the prescriptive, as in the professional realm, the individuals respond to teaching, management, outreach and research dimensions, while in their personal realm, their private and family lives.

According to Stryker (2002) social structures facilitate or restrict the individuals' options, which are seen in the tensions between the work and personal worlds declared by the participants (Sauleda et al., 2021). This process is understood from the social constructionism theory proposed by Berger and Luckmann (2003), as individuals assume classifications as a way of directing behavior, mainly in the academic world, as it is assumed *a priori* that professionals manifest actions that can be verified or refuted by members of the community.

If we observe this process from the point of view of the inclusion principle, the goal is for educational spaces to generate strategies that allow for eliminating or minimizing barriers that can limit learning or participation (Booth and Ainscow, 2000).

Based on this, alterity relationships form a part of communities and identities (Castro and Contreras, 2021) as a way of meeting someone who is known or unknown. Participants refer to the importance of the bond generated between colleagues and the student body as one of the important factors of identity construction (Soares de Castro et al., 2022). In this way, the configuration of the *I* is influenced by several factors (Castro and Contreras, 2021).

These dialogic processes should be understood as a space free of prejudices (Skliar and Larrosa, 2009), and therefore, as a place in which differences are valued, where the configuration of the *I* and sexual identity are built and rebuilt (Bárcena and Mélich, 2000; Verdejo-Muñoz, 2020). In this sense, alterity shows us the importance of the occurrence not as an experiment, but rather as an experience.

In this sense, these occurrences are overwhelming, questioning and disruptive (Mayer, 2020), since they go against our ableist vision of the world. From both the active and the prescriptive discourse, inclusion encourages individuals to reflect on the way they associate with others. These experiences question the individualist visions and differences. For Mayer (2020), this

questioning always knocks us down, breaks us and transforms us, therefore, we deconstruct (Derrida, 2020).

What happens after this questioning does not get lost in space. On the contrary, it is something that emerges from the individuals, something we call experience (Skliar and Larrosa, 2009). Because of this, individuals generate a legacy intervention. In other words, these configurations, which are preconceived from social structures, are transformed and reconfigured. Tension between the traditional world and a new world is seen in the active discourse, where the identifying processes are found to be in constant deconstruction. Therefore, it is not possible to theorize about identity, rather it should be interpreted (Berger and Luckmann, 2003).

The diversity principle is laid out as a way of labeling so that existence of a different individual can be understood and shown (Skliar, 2007). While this is manifested in the active discourses, it is not seen in the prescriptive discourses, as there are no citations that show diversity in the analyzed documents. These contradictions are present as the line between us and them is still installed in the discourses. The act of comprehending diversity comes from not understanding it (Skliar, 2007), which means losing knowledge of legacy. Therefore, the act of constructing and reconstructing our identity is an interpellation process (Mayer, 2020) and alterity process (Castro and Contreras, 2021) that allows us to intervene in the legacy, and therefore, erase this line of not understanding.

Conclusion

The configuration of the meaning of sexual identity is manifested as a self-concept of gender. That is to say, individuals value who they are based on self-esteem, reflecting on how capable they are or are not of certain tasks or functions. This is determined from self-efficiency, which is the degree of efficiency they have for the task. Later, this makes sense for individuals based on authenticity, which is

the degree to which they are able to express themselves in different contexts.

Although it is understood that sexual identity is made up of gender identity and role, biological sex and sexual orientation, these components are articulated and configured in an expression of identity as a concept. This topic is socialized and reconfigured based on social interactions. In this study we approached these interactions as alterity relationships, an occurrence that allows for finding another.

In order for this encounter with another to be different from a simple occurrence, in the moment something within has to break, or as proposed, something must be questioned. This is when something within the gender self-concept transforms. Therefore, it is an error to speak of identity as a fixed concept. We build it every day because identity reflection is constant and permanent. The experiences that shape us and make an impression on us are variable, and therefore, we are constantly experiencing things that make us question or wonder.

That our diversity is given by each encounter with another that makes an impression on us is not unique. Although many of us have similar experiences, it is our reflections that are integrated into our identity configuration. In other words, we are the result of a dialogic relationship between ourselves and the world.

These so-called unifying elements are certain markers of experience that allow for establishing common points between different members of a community, such as being a child, parent or academic. These codes, which come from the work and professional world, are elements that make it possible for us to integrate into different spaces. Professional or emotional connections are established.

Finally, we are individuals in crisis. Our sexual identity is in constant interpellation in a relationship of alterity as a way of validating ourselves as diverse agents. In this way, we give foundation to our self-concept of gender through the configuration of the meaning of

other agents, whether they be colleagues, friends, students, family members, etc.

In the work realm, speaking of an institutional identity is, to a certain extent, denying personal identity. There is no collective identity. Institutions are made up of collaborators who contribute elements that make up the institutional vision from their own configuration. However, when the collaborators change, so does the institution. Therefore, what I am is also a part of who we are.

This study is not without limitations. It focuses on the discourses of a group of academics belonging to the same higher educational institution, and only from one specific Faculty. The tools that were analyzed for the prescriptive discourses did not incorporate the entire study plan and did not cover the courses (learning outcomes and contents).

Projections focus on broadening the sample of participants, incorporating the student body's vision, analyzing different levels of the education system or including academics from other faculties. We also recommend including other educational institutions from different geographical areas and incorporating quantitative elements in order to conduct a mixed study.

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