

When it begins and what are the first erotic behaviors?

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this research was to analyze the ages of the first erotic behaviors of a sample of people living in the city of Campeche, Mexico; It was an ex post-facto investigation with a correlational scope and a quantitative approach. The sample was non-probabilistic of 512 people to whom an adhoc questionnaire was applied in order to know the age of some of their first sex / erotic experiences. After analyzing the results, it was identified that the strongest correlations ($p < 0.010$) were found between the age at which oral sex was given to another person for the first time and the age at which it was experienced to be masturbated by another person. No significant correlations were found between the number of sexual partners and the time of relationship with the current partner, nor between the number of sexual partners and the ages of initiation of erotic-sexual behaviors. Intercourse is associated with the initiation of other sexual behaviors without reproductive purposes.*

KEYWORDS: Sexual debut, age of sexual initiation, erotic behaviors, adolescence.

INTRODUCTION

Sexuality is a fundamental area within the development of the human being and requires research due to the implications that sexual behavior has on health (Inmaculada & Bermudez, 2011). These implications have been recognized to the point of developing a definition of sexual health, understood as a state of physical, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality, which requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relations, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free from all coercion, discrimination and violence (WHO, 2020). For Hirmas, González, Aranda and González (2008) express the importance of sexuality mentioning that the changes observed in the development of sexuality are related to modifications in other areas of social and personal life, dynamics immersed - in turn- in the processes of modernization of current societies.

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The concept of sexuality was expanded over time to include in its definition the search for pleasurable and not exclusively reproductive ends, it began to be considered as one more component of the integral development of the person and today, it continues to develop. This implied new patterns of behavior and various ways of accessing the exploration of the body (Gómez & Salinas, 2010). At present, various sexual behaviors have been integrated into the practice of the average man and woman whose purpose is not reproduction but the search for pleasure and that do not generate conflicts of adaptability in people (Cajiao, 2007, cited in Gómez and Salinas, 2010).

In this way, society delimits the context that, in turn, regulates sexuality; that is, it allows or limits certain behaviors in order to facilitate group life. This rejection or acceptance has been transformed over time, so that through the visibility and acceptance of certain sexual behaviors it will be possible to understand the current context of sexuality (Gómez & Salinas, 2010).

On the other hand, sexual stereotypes are generally accepted and little questioned beliefs that could contribute to how men and women should express their sexuality (Pérez & Prengo, 2012). Hirmas, González, Aranda and González (2008) report that perhaps the most profound social influence on people's sexuality comes from pre-established gender roles, social norms and values that determine the power, responsibilities and behaviors of women and men.

There are sexual stereotypes around the age of onset and frequency of various sexual behaviors that go beyond reproduction. This has generated greater stigma considering that in the West, for much of the twentieth century, a patriarchal hegemonic system prevailed that perpetuates the unique value of intercourse for reproductive purposes. At the same time, pleasure is considered a privilege where discourses on bodies, beauty, morality, human rights, public policies, among others, converge. This favors the investigation of the intersection of those and the tensions between social norms, individual practices, emotions and sensations in everyday life (Cerón, 2016). Therefore, it is important to know what sexual behaviors are practiced and the general context of them, age of onset and how they relate to erotic pleasure to promote sexual health. On the other hand, the age of sexual onset represents a transition to new health needs. Since the beginning of sexual life also involves exposure to risks of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, so monitoring the age of the beginning of erotic practices is necessary to establish modifications in sexual and reproductive health services (Gayet & Gutiérrez, 2014).

As stated by Apaza-Guzmán and Vega-González (2018), data on the onset of sexual activity worldwide estimate that the average age in developed countries is 9-13 years in males and 11-14 years in females. For Holguín, Mendoza, Esquivel, Sánchez, Daraviña and Acuña (2013) the repercussions of the early onset of sexual activity has generated great interest from several disciplines (particularly the social and health sciences) to establish the factors that determine the age of the first sexual intercourse, focusing on identifying factors of the social and family context that are associated with

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the sexual behavior of adolescents (sex, socio-economic level, ethnic group, family structure, among others), while others have evaluated psychological and individual factors, of which little is known. Many factors can influence the early or late onset of sexual activity. International studies show that the factors that are best associated with a delay in the onset of sexual activity in adolescents are religiosity and good academic performance, while alcohol and/or drug consumption, the influence of peers and the history of older couples are factors that favor their precocity (González, Molina, Montero, & Martínez, 2013).

Another study in El Salvador found that the following factors were associated with a higher likelihood of having sex: perceiving siblings (OR = 1.8, 95% CI: 1.2–2.7) or friends (OR = 1.7, 95% CI: 1.3–2.2) to support having sex. Parental supervision was found as protective factors (OR = 0.5, 95% CI: 0.4–0.7); receiving messages supporting abstinence from friends (OR = 0.7, 95% CI 0.6–1.0) or siblings (OR = 0.7, 95% CI 0.5–0.8) and receiving pro-marriage messages from parents (OR = 0.4, 95% CI 0.3–0.6), so we concluded that messages provided by family and friends are factors that appear to influence the onset of sexual activity in young people, so they should be taken into account in sexual health promotion programs (Ruiz-Canela, López, Calatrava, & Irala, 2012).

METHODOLOGY

The general objective of the study was to analyze the ages of the first erotic behaviors of a sample of people living in the city of Campeche, Mexico. The specific objectives were to compare the ages of onset of the first erotic behaviors between men and women, as well as to relate the ages of onset of the different erotic behaviors.

An ex post-facto, non-experimental and cross-sectional design was used. Data were collected in a single time; The approach was quantitative and had a correlational descriptive scope.

Participants

The City of Campeche is located in southeastern Mexico. The State of the same name is one of the smallest in population with about one million inhabitants in the entire State. The city of Campeche has an approximate population of 300 thousand inhabitants, which makes it a small and provincial city.

A non-probability convenience sampling was carried out, obtaining a sample of 512 participants aged between 18 and 59 years with a mean age of 28.16 years. All participants signed an informed consent prior to data collection.

Instrument

An initial questionnaire of 15 items was developed asking about the age at which some erotic/sexual behaviors were first experienced, as well as other general data such as the

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development -UK number of sexual partners and formal (significant) areas of those who participated. The reagents were validated through peer review. The judging results allowed to modify the wording and the words of some reagents, which were reviewed and endorsed in their final version by the Ethics and Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities of the Autonomous University of Campeche. The final questionnaire consisted of 9 items.

Procedure

People who participated in the study were contacted by the snowball method. Prior to the application of the instrument, an informed consent letter was delivered explaining the objectives of the study. Only those who signed the letter were included in the teacher. After data collection, they were processed using the statistical package for social sciences SPSS in its version 23 and examined through a mean analysis, a student's "t" test for independent samples to identify significant differences between men and women, as well as a correlational analysis.

Ethical considerations

All subjects gave informed consent for inclusion prior to participating in the study. The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and the protocol was approved by the Ethics and Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and the Department of Graduate and Research of the Autonomous University of Campeche. All procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards of the committee responsible for human experimentation of the Autonomous University of Campeche, Mexico; the National Code of Ethics for Psychological Research, the National and Local Health Act and the Declaration of Helsinki of 1975, revised in 2000.

RESULTS

Table 1. Descriptive statistics on first erotic-sexual behaviors

	Minimal	Maximum	Mean
Number of people you have had sexual/erotic relations with in your lifetime	0	5	1.61
Age at which you first experienced a tongue kiss	8	20	14.52
Age at which you first experienced intercourse (penetration)	12	25	16.65
Age at which you first experienced masturbation	5	25	14.66
Age at which you first experienced masturbating another person	5	25	17.16
Age at which you first experienced someone masturbating you	12	25	16.84
Age at which you first experienced another person performing oral sex on you	13	25	17.30
Age at which you first experienced performing oral sex on someone	13	25	17.62
Number of formal (significant) partners you have had in your lifetime	0	9	2.20

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When analyzing the data collected around the age of onset of the first erotic-sexual experiences, it is observed that the behaviors that obtained the minimum age of experimentation were those related to masturbation, as well as the kissing of the tongue, while the behaviors that were experienced at a greater age were those related to oral sex. The erotic-sexual behavior that on average was experienced at a younger age was tongue kissing, while the behavior that on average was experienced at an older age was performing oral sex on someone. In general, the average age at which erotic-sexual behavior is experienced is 16.54 years. Regarding the number of erotic sexual partners, the average was 1.61 while the minimum and maximum values were zero and five respectively, there is a higher average number of significant couples (2.20) compared to the number of erotic sexual partners.

Table 2. Comparison of means of the first sex/erotic behaviors by gender.

	Gender	Mean	t	Sig. (bilateral)
Number of people you have had sexual/erotic relations with in your lifetime	Man	1.85	4.030	.000*
	Woman	1.38		
Age at which you first experienced a tongue kiss	Man	14.44	-.512	.609
	Woman	14.59		
Age at which you first experienced intercourse (penetration)	Man	16.42	-1.357	.176
	Woman	16.88		
Age at which you first experienced masturbation	Man	13.43	-6.672	.000*
	Woman	15.98		
Age at which you first experienced masturbating another person	Man	16.89	-1.560	.120
	Woman	17.44		
Age at which you first experienced someone masturbating you	Man	16.55	-2.002	.047*
	Woman	17.14		
Age at which you first experienced another person performing oral sex on you	Man	17.12	-1.307	.193
	Woman	17.50		
Age at which you first experienced performing oral sex on someone	Man	17.28	-2.411	.017*
	Woman	17.96		
Number of formal (significant) partners you have had in your lifetime	Man	2.20	.000	1.000
	Woman	2.20		

After analyzing the mean age of men and women with respect to the age of their first erotic-sexual experiences with the "t" test for independent samples; significant differences were found in the number of people with whom erotic and sexual relations have been had; At the age when masturbation was first experienced, having someone else masturbate you and performing oral sex on someone. Regarding the number of people with whom sexual relations have been maintained, it was men who obtained the highest average (1.85); On the other hand, in terms of masturbation, having another person masturbate and giving oral sex to someone, it was women who experienced such behaviors at a higher age compared to men. No significant differences were found in other factors evaluated. In general, men experienced different erotic sexual behaviors at younger ages compared to women.

Table 3										
<i>Correlations of first erotic-sexual behaviors</i>										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1										
2										
3										
4	_*	_*	**							
5			**	**						
6			**	**	**					
7		_*	**	**	**	**				
8			**	**	**	**	**			
9			**	**	**	**	**	*		
10	_*	*		_*						

*. The correlation is significant at the 0.05 (bilateral) level.

**. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 (bilateral) level.

1: Age, 2: Number of sexual/erotic partners, 3: Age of first tongue kiss, 4: Age of first intercourse, 5: Age of first masturbation, 6: Age of first masturbation to another person, 7: Age at which another person masturbated you, 8: Age at which another person performed oral sex on you for the first time, 9: Age at which you performed oral sex on someone else, 10: Number of formal (significant) partners.

The table above shows those statistically significant relationships found when performing the correlation analysis. It is observed that the age of the participant only correlates negatively with the age of first intercourse and positively with the number of significant partners. It is also observed that the greater the number of sexual partners, the lower the age of initiation of intercourse, the lower the age at which another person practices masturbation and the greater the number of formal partners. Likewise, the older the first tongue kiss, the first intercourse and the first masturbation, the older the other sexual behaviors except for the number of significant partners; At the same time, strong correlations are found between the age of experimentation of behaviors associated with masturbation and the age of onset of behaviors associated with the practice of oral sex.

DISCUSSION

The results show that the average age for the onset of coital sexual relations is 16.65 years, this coincides with what was exposed by Rivera-Rivera and collaborators (2016) who conducted an investigation with 9893 students between 14-19 years finding that the average age of onset of coital sexual life is 16 years. These authors add that it is men who have sexual intercourse at an earlier age, which also supports the data obtained in the present study since it was found that the average age at which penetrative sex was first experienced was 16.42 in the case of men and 16.88 years in the case of women; however, this difference was not statistically significant. In the same way, González-Garza and Hernández-Serrato (2005) also found no significant differences in the age of initiation of sexual intercourse between men and women.

Likewise, the results show a relationship between the age of experimentation of intercourse and the current age of the participants, which agrees with the results of Rodríguez and Traverso (2012) who also found a positive relationship between these

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two variables; In addition to this, these authors also report a negative correlation between the age of first intercourse and the number of sexual partners that have been had, data that also coincide with what was found in this research.

In the present research, significant relationships were found between the age of onset of masturbation and oral sex with coital sexual relations, contrary to what was identified by García, Méndez, Fernández and Cuesta (2012) who, although in their sample of adolescents studied, 84.8% declared having initiated some sexual behavior, such as intimate kissing, and 65% performing masturbatory practices: Just under a third, had been initiated into vaginal sexual intercourse practices.

For their part, Rodríguez and Traverso (2012) found significant differences in the age at which men and women first experienced the behaviors of: kissing, masturbating, masturbating the partner, and practicing oral sex; In the present research, only significant differences were found in the behaviors of masturbating, being masturbated by another person and having oral sex.

These results also coincide with Escalante, Cerrón, Salazar, & Mendonez (2008), who describe that in general, the age of onset of vaginal intercourse does not show differences related to gender; In this research, as in the present study, significant differences were found regarding the initiation of masturbation and gender. The Durex report (2006) points out the tendency to start at increasingly younger ages, and with little difference between the sexes.

Contrary to the results of the investigations of Gutiérrez-Martínez, Bermúdez, Teva & Buela-Casal; Spitalnick et al; Teva, Bermúdez & Buela Casal (cited in Teva & Bermúdez, 2011) found no relationship between the number of sexual partners and erotic sexual behaviors, this probably due to cultural differences in the research participants.

It is concluded that, with respect to gender, although there are no significant differences between the number of formal partners, there are in terms of the number of sexual partners, with men having a higher average. Regarding erotic-sexual behaviors, in general there are no significant differences in most of these, the exceptions being masturbation, another person masturbating and doing oral sex to someone, in these behaviors and in all others, it is men who initiate them at younger ages. On the other hand, there are significant correlations between the different erotic-sexual behaviors, all positive, which suggests that starting any of these behaviors at an early age increases the chances of experiencing other sexual behaviors at an early age.

Likewise, the number of formal and sexual partners is not related to the age of onset of sexual behaviors.

The results obtained add to the importance of Comprehensive Sex Education as a means to promote sexual health. Knowing the age of onset of some of the first erotic / sexual behaviors allows us to identify sectors of the population in which it is important to

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LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study is limited to a sample from southeastern Mexico that does not represent the Mexican population. It is necessary to expand the number of participants and include interviews to access qualitative data that allow to contrast and complement the quantitative data.

Declaration of conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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